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PROSE OF YESTERDAY

DICKENS TO GALSWORTHY

Selected and Edited by
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FOREWORD

To the celebrated reaction against all things Victorian, including Victorian literature, another reaction has now set in. Perhaps we have learnt the lesson of becoming modesty. Perhaps when we survey what the twentieth century has been able to write in the way of books, now that a third of that century has already passed, we begin to see the magnitude of the Victorian literary achievement in its proper light. "There were giants in the earth in those days." It is true that the reigns of Edward VII and George V saw the publication of some classic works, but it is a further cause for modesty that even these classics were mostly the work of writers whose initial success was while the Queen was still alive. No one would think of Kipling or Galsworthy or Arnold Bennett, or even Thomas Hardy, as Victorian : yet no one of them was born after 1867, and the Queen did not die till 1901.

Not only were there giants then, but Titans too, and even mere mortals, such as Anna Sewell, Francis Burnand, Jerome K. Jerome, Thomas Hughes, Stanley Weyman, Conan Doyle, who, if they hardly rank as great masters of literature, were capable of writing books which have an obstinate knack of surviving the profusion of immortal masterpieces which, according at any rate to the advertisements, have been pouring from the printing-press ever since.

The books written in every generation must naturally and rightly make a special appeal to the

members of their own generation : only by reading our proper share of current literature can we keep our minds fresh and abreast of the times. But our knowledge cannot be very deep, or our power of literary discrimination just, unless we found our experience and taste upon the classics, and the purpose of this small collection of prose extracts is to emphasise how securely our Victorian prose stands among the classics and how many are the Victorian prose-writers, both greater and less, who contributed to establishing that classical era. Not only did Dickens create his immortal troupe of characters, but Hughes created Tom Brown, Lewis Carroll Humpty Dumpty, Conan Doyle Sherlock Holmes, Galsworthy Soames Forsyte. Ruskin was a master of style, but so also were Pater and Froude. George Meredith was a daring thinker, but so also was Samuel Butler. Charles Kingsley was not the only master moralist, Benjamin Jowett was a master too. Charles Reade, Hardy, and Stevenson were master story-tellers, and so was Stanley Weyman. Macaulay was not the only historian who was a stylist : Bosworth Smith could also spare time from his duties as a Harrow housemaster to be both historian and stylist. In fact, in consequence of the giants, there was " God's plenty " in those days, with a good deal to teach us if we aspire to produce anything like a measure of plenty in these days of our own.

It is true that some qualities of the work are not quite as we would have them now : the over-emphasised piety of *Tom Brown* dates, the dialogue of Charles Reade walks on stilts together with that of Conan Doyle, the solution to the plots of Stanley Weyman falls a trifle pat. Nevertheless, in these great mortals as in the giants the spirit is there : the eternal fire burns which neither the War nor anti-Victorian prejudice could quench.

FOREWORD

For nearly fifty years we have listened to anti-Victorian chatter and to excited enthusiasm for the smart, clever, enlightened literature of the twentieth century. Caught in the whirl of current ecstasy, we have read this and that daily masterpiece, at the bidding of publishers, critics, and even the authors themselves, in reverent wonder ; wonder induced not only by the cleverness of the books—for many of them are very clever—but the thought that anyone could ever have been content with the narrow, complacent, didactic, moralising days of Victorian letters. And then one's eyes wander perchance over one's favourite bookshelves : the shelf, for instance, in reach of one's bed, which holds the favourite literary night-caps. These shelves must be bulging by this time with new masterpieces and post-War classics. Or have we lent them to someone ? Or did we only borrow them from the Library ? Or did we only read them in the train and leave them there ? Anyway, something has happened, for the books we see are not they : some of their covers are rather tattered, and the pages are thumbed. And the names of the books ? That is my *Pickwick*, and that is the copy of *Alice in Wonderland* I had with me in the War, and that's the *Sherlock Holmes* I had at school, and I was given that copy of *Black Beauty* when I was ten. And that's *Happy Thoughts* : Haven't you read it ? I always think it's one of the funniest books ever written. No, I'm afraid I can't lend you any of these, because I'm always reading them. Anyway they're only old books : if you come downstairs I've got several splendid new books which only came out this season ; I'd love you to borrow them ; and it doesn't really matter about letting me have them back.

G. B.

CONTENTS

CONTENTS

CONTENTS

NURSE'S STORIES

THERE are not many places that I find it more agreeable to revisit when I am in an idle mood, than some places to which I have never been. For, my acquaintance with those spots is of such long standing, and has ripened into an intimacy of so affectionate a nature, that I take a particular interest in assuring myself that they are unchanged.

I never was in Robinson Crusoe's Island, yet I frequently return there. The colony he established on it soon faded away, and it is uninhabited by any descendants of the grave and courteous Spaniards, or of Will Atkins and the other mutineers, and has relapsed into its original condition. Not a twig of its wicker houses remains, its goats have long run wild again, its screaming parrots would darken the sun with a cloud of many flaming colours if a gun were fired there, no face is ever reflected in the waters of the little creek which Friday swam across when pursued by his two brother cannibals with sharpened stomachs. After comparing notes with other travellers who have similarly revisited the Island and conscientiously inspected it, I have satisfied myself that it contains no vestige of Mr. Atkins's domesticity or theology, though his track on the memorable evening of his landing to set his captain ashore, when he was decoyed about and round about until it was dark, and his boat was stove, and his strength and spirits failed him, is yet plainly to be traced. So is the hill-top on which Robinson was struck dumb with joy when the rein-

stated captain pointed to the ship, riding within half a mile of the shore, that was to bear him away, in the nine-and-twentieth year of his seclusion in that lonely place. So is the sandy beach on which the memorable footstep was impressed, and where the savages hauled up their canoes when they came ashore for those dreadful public dinners, which led to a dancing worse than speech-making. So is the cave where the flaring eyes of the old goat made such a goblin appearance in the dark. So is the site of the hut where Robinson lived with the dog and the parrot and the cat, and where he endured those first agonies of solitude, which—strange to say—never involved any ghostly fancies ; a circumstance so very remarkable, that perhaps he left out something in writing his record ? Round hundreds of such objects, hidden in the dense tropical foliage, the tropical sea breaks evermore ; and over them the tropical sky, saving in the short rainy season, shines bright and cloudless.

Neither was I ever belated among wolves, on the borders of France and Spain ; nor did I ever, when night was closing in and the ground was covered with snow, draw up my little company among some felled trees which served as a breastwork, and there fire a train of gunpowder so dexterously that suddenly we had three or four score blazing wolves illuminating the darkness around us. Nevertheless, I occasionally go back to that dismal region and perform the feat again ; when indeed to smell the singeing and the frying of the wolves afire, and to see them setting one another alight as they rush and tumble, and to behold them rolling in the snow vainly attempting to put themselves out, and to hear their howlings taken up by all the echoes as well as by all the unseen wolves within the woods, makes me tremble.

I was never in the robbers' cave, where Gil Blas lived, but I often go back there and find the trap-

door just as heavy to raise as it used to be, while that wicked old disabled Black lies everlastingly cursing in bed. I was never in Don Quixote's study, where he read his books of chivalry until he rose and hacked at imaginary giants, and then refreshed himself with great draughts of water, yet you couldn't move a book in it without my knowledge, or with my consent. I was never (thank Heaven) in company with the little old woman who hobbled out of the chest and told the merchant Abudah to go in search of the Talisman of Oromanes, yet I make it my business to know that she is well preserved and as intolerable as ever. I was never at the school where the boy Horatio Nelson got out of bed to steal the pears : not because he wanted any, but because every other boy was afraid : yet I have several times been back to this Academy, to see him let down out of window with a sheet. So with Damascus, and Bagdad, and Brobdingnag (which has the curious fate of being usually misspelt when written), and Lilliput, and Laputa, and the Nile, and Abyssinia, and the Ganges, and the North Pole, and many hundreds of places—I was never at them, yet it is an affair of my life to keep them intact, and I am always going back to them.

But, when I was at Dullborough one day, revisiting the associations of my childhood, my experience in this wise was made quite inconsiderable and of no account, by the quantity of places and people—utterly impossible places and people, but none the less alarmingly real—that I found I had been introduced to by my nurse before I was six years old, and used to be forced to go back to at night without at all wanting to go. If we all knew our own minds (in a more enlarged sense than the popular acceptation of that phrase), I suspect we should find our nurses responsible for most of the dark corners we are forced to go back to, against our wills.

The first diabolical character who intruded himself on my peaceful youth (as I called to mind that day at Dullborough) was a certain Captain Murderer. This wretch must have been an offshoot of the Blue Beard family, but I had no suspicion of the consanguinity in those times. His warning name would seem to have awakened no general prejudice against him, for he was admitted into the best society and possessed immense wealth. Captain Murderer's mission was matrimony, and the gratification of a cannibal appetite with tender brides. On his marriage morning, he always caused both sides of the way to church to be planted with curious flowers ; and when his bride said, " Dear Captain Murderer, I never saw flowers like these before : what are they called ? " he answered, " They are called Garnish for houselamb," and laughed at his ferocious practical joke in a horrid manner, disquieting the minds of the noble bridal company, with a very sharp show of teeth, then displayed for the first time. He made love in a coach and six, and married in a coach and twelve, and all his horses were milk-white horses with one red spot on the back which he caused to be hidden by the harness. For, the spot *would* come there, though every horse was milk-white when Captain Murderer bought him. And the spot was young bride's blood. (To this terrific point I am indebted for my first personal experience of a shudder and cold beads on the forehead.) When Captain Murderer had made an end of feasting and revelry, and had dismissed the noble guests, and was alone with his wife on the day month after their marriage, it was his whimsical custom to produce a golden rolling-pin and a silver pie-board. Now, there was this special feature in the Captain's courtships, that he always asked if the young lady could make pie-crust ; and if she couldn't by nature or education, she was taught. Well. When the

bride saw Captain Murderer produce the golden rolling-pin and silver pie-board, she remembered this, and turned up her laced-silk sleeves to make a pie. The Captain brought out a silver pie-dish of immense capacity, and the Captain brought out flour and butter and eggs and all things needful, except the inside of the pie ; of materials for the staple of the pie itself, the Captain brought out none. Then said the lovely bride, " Dear Captain Murderer, what pie is this to be ? " He replied, " A meat pie." Then said the lovely bride, " Dear Captain Murderer, I see no meat." The Captain humorously retorted, " Look in the glass." She looked in the glass, but still she saw no meat, and then the Captain roared with laughter, and suddenly frowning and drawing his sword, bade her roll out the crust. So she rolled out the crust, dropping large tears upon it all the time because he was so cross, and when she had lined the dish with crust and had cut the crust all ready to fit the top, the Captain called out, " *I* see the meat in the glass ! " And the bride looked up at the glass, just in time to see the Captain cutting her head off ; and he chopped her in pieces, and peppered her, and salted her, and put her in the pie, and sent it to the baker's, and ate it all, and picked the bones.

Captain Murderer went on in this way, prospering exceedingly, until he came to choose a bride from two twin sisters, and at first didn't know which to choose. For, though one was fair and the other dark, they were both equally beautiful. But the fair twin loved him, and the dark twin hated him, so he chose the fair one. The dark twin would have prevented the marriage if she could, but she couldn't ; however, on the night before it, much suspecting Captain Murderer, she stole out and climbed his garden wall, and looked in at his window through a chink in the shutter, and saw him having his teeth filed sharp. Next day

she listened all day, and heard him make his joke about the house-lamb. And that day month, he had the paste rolled out, and cut the fair twin's head off, and chopped her in pieces, and peppered her, and salted her, and put her in the pie, and sent it to the baker's, and ate it all, and picked the bones.

Now, the dark twin had had her suspicions much increased by the filing of the Captain's teeth, and again by the house-lamb joke. Putting all things together when he gave out that her sister was dead, she divined the truth, and determined to be revenged. So, she went up to Captain Murderer's house, and knocked at the knocker and pulled at the bell, and when the Captain came to the door, said : " Dear Captain Murderer, marry me next, for I always loved you and was jealous of my sister." The Captain took it as a compliment, and made a polite answer, and the marriage was quickly arranged. On the night before it, the bride again climbed to his window, and again saw him having his teeth filed sharp. At this sight she laughed such a terrible laugh at the chink in the shutter, that the Captain's blood curdled, and he said : " I hope nothing has disagreed with me ! " At that, she laughed again, a still more terrible laugh, and the shutter was opened and search made, but she was nimbly gone, and there was no one. Next day they went to church in a coach and twelve, and were married. And that day month, she rolled the pie-crust out, and Captain Murderer cut her head off, and chopped her in pieces, and peppered her, and salted her, and put her in the pie, and sent it to the baker's, and ate it all, and picked the bones.

But before she began to roll out the paste she had taken a deadly poison of a most awful character, distilled from toads' eyes and spiders' knees ; and Captain Murderer had hardly picked her last bone, when

he began to swell, and to turn blue, and to be all over spots, and to scream. And he went on swelling and turning bluer, and being more all over spots and screaming, until he reached from floor to ceiling and from wall to wall; and then, at one o'clock in the morning, he blew up with a loud explosion. At the sound of it, all the milk-white horses in the stables broke their halters and went mad, and then they galloped over everybody in Captain Murderer's house (beginning with the family blacksmith who had filed his teeth) until the whole were dead, and then they galloped away.

Hundreds of times did I hear this legend of Captain Murderer, in my early youth, and added hundreds of times was there a mental compulsion upon me in bed, to peep in at his window, as the dark twin peeped, and to revisit his horrible house, and look at him in his blue and spotty and screaming stage, as he reached from floor to ceiling and from wall to wall. The young woman who brought me acquainted with Captain Murderer had a fiendish enjoyment of my terrors, and used to begin, I remember—as a sort of introductory overture—by clawing the air with both hands, and uttering a long low hollow groan. So acutely did I suffer from this ceremony in combination with this infernal Captain, that I sometimes used to plead I thought I was hardly strong enough and old enough to hear the story again just yet. But, she never spared me one word of it, and indeed commended the awful chalice to my lips as the only preservative known to science against "The Black Cat"—a weird and glaring-eyed supernatural Tom, who was reputed to prowl about the world by night, sucking the breath of infancy, and who was endowed with a special thirst (as I was given to understand) for mine.

This female bard—may she have been repaid my debt of obligation to her in the matter of nightmares

and perspirations !—reappears in my memory as the daughter of a shipwright. Her name was Mercy, though she had none on me. There was something of a shipbuilding flavour in the following story. As it always recurs to me in a vague association with calomel pills, I believe it to have been reserved for dull nights when I was low with medicine.

There was once a shipwright, and he wrought in a Government Yard, and his name was Chips. And his father's name before him was Chips, and *his* father's name before *him* was Chips, and they were all Chipses. And Chips the father had sold himself to the Devil for an iron pot and a bushel of tenpenny nails and half a ton of copper and a rat that could speak ; and Chips the grandfather had sold himself to the Devil for an iron pot and a bushel of tenpenny nails and half a ton of copper and a rat that could speak ; and Chips the great-grandfather had disposed of himself in the same direction on the same terms ; and the bargain had run in the family for a long long time. So, one day, when young Chips was at work in the Dock Slip all alone, down in the dark hold of an old Seventy-four that was haled up for repairs, the Devil presented himself, and remarked :

" A Lemon has pips,
And a Yard has ships,
And *I*'ll have Chips ! "

(I don't know why, but this fact of the Devil's expressing himself in rhyme was peculiarly trying to me. Chips looked up when he heard the words, and there he saw the Devil with saucer eyes that squinted on a terrible great scale, and that struck out sparks of blue fire continually. And whenever he winked his eyes, showers of blue sparks came out, and his eyelashes made a clattering like flints and steels striking lights. And hanging over one of his arms by the handle was

an iron pot, and under that arm was a bushel of tenpenny nails, and under his other arm was half a ton of copper, and sitting on one of his shoulders was a rat that could speak. So, the Devil said again :—

" A Lemon has pips,
And a Yard has ships,
And *I*'ll have Chips ! "

(The invariable effect of this alarming tautology on the part of the Evil Spirit was to deprive me of my senses for some moments.) So, Chips answered never a word, but went on with his work. " What are you doing, Chips ? " said the rat that could speak. " I am putting in new planks where you and your gang have eaten old away," said Chips. " But we'll eat them too," said the rat that could speak ; " and we'll let in the water and drown the crew, and we'll eat them too." Chips, being only a shipwright, and not a Man-of-war's man, said, " You are welcome to it." But he couldn't keep his eyes off the half a ton of copper or the bushel of tenpenny nails ; for nails and copper are a shipwright's sweethearts, and shipwrights will run away with them whenever they can. So, the Devil said, " I see what you are looking at, Chips. You had better strike the bargain. You know the terms. Your father before you was well acquainted with them, and so were your grandfather and great-grandfather before him." Says Chips, " I like the copper, and I like the nails, and I don't mind the pot, but I don't like the rat." Says the Devil, fiercely, " You can't have the metal without him—and *he's* a curiosity. I'm going." Chips, afraid of losing the half a ton of copper and the bushel of nails, then said, " Give us hold ! " So, he got the copper and the nails and the pot and the rat that could speak, and the Devil vanished. Chips sold the copper, and he sold the nails, and he would have sold the pot ;

but whenever he offered it for sale, the rat was in it, and the dealers dropped it, and would have nothing to say to the bargain. So, Chips resolved to kill the rat, and, being at work in the Yard one day with a great kettle of hot pitch on one side of him and the iron pot with the rat in it on the other, he turned the scalding pitch into the pot, and filled it full. Then, he kept his eye upon it till it cooled and hardened, and then he let it stand for twenty days, and then he heated the pitch again and turned it back into the kettle, and then he sank the pot in water for twenty days more, and then he got the smelters to put it in the furnace for twenty days more, and then they gave it him out, red hot, and looking like red-hot glass instead of iron—yet there was the rat in it, just the same as ever ! And the moment it caught his eye, it said with a jeer :—

" A Lemon has pips,
And a Yard has ships,
And *I*'ll have Chips ! "

(For this Refrain I had waited since its last appearance, with inexpressible horror, which now culminated.) Chips now felt certain in his own mind that the rat would stick to him ; the rat, answering his thought, said, " I will—like pitch ! "

Now, as the rat leaped out of the pot when it had spoken, and made off, Chips began to hope that it wouldn't keep its word. But, a terrible thing happened next day. For, when dinner-time came, and the Dock-bell rang to strike work, he put his rule into the long pocket at the side of his trousers, and there he found a rat—not that rat, but another rat. And in his hat, he found another ; and in his pocket-handkerchief, another ; and in the sleeves of his coat, when he pulled it on to go to dinner, two more. And from that time he found himself so fright-

fully intimate with all the rats in the Yard, that they climbed up his legs when he was at work, and sat on his tools while he used them. And they could all speak to one another, and he understood what they said. And they got into his lodging, and into his bed, and into his teapot, and into his beer, and into his boots. And he was going to be married to a corn-chandler's daughter; and when he gave her a workbox he had himself made for her, a rat jumped out of it, and when he put his arm round her waist, a rat clung about her; so the marriage was broken off, though the banns were already twice put up—which the parish clerk well remembers, for, as he handed the book to the clergyman for the second time of asking, a large fat rat ran over the leaf. (By this time a special cascade of rats was rolling down my back, and the whole of my small listening person was overrun with them. At intervals ever since, I have been morbidly afraid of my own pocket, lest my exploring hand should find a specimen or two of those vermin in it.)

You may believe that all this was very terrible to Chips; but even all this was not the worst. He knew besides, what the rats were doing, wherever they were. So, sometimes he would cry aloud, when he was at his club at night, "Oh! Keep the rats out of the convicts' burying-ground! Don't let them do that!" Or, "There's one of them at the cheese downstairs!" Or, "There's two of them smelling at the baby in the garret!" Or, other things of that sort. At last, he was voted mad, and lost his work in the Yard, and could get no other work. But King George wanted men, so before very long he got pressed for a sailor. And so he was taken off in a boat one evening to his ship, lying at Spithead, ready to sail. And so the first thing he made out in her as he got near her, was the figure-head of the old

Seventy-four, where he had seen the Devil. She was called the Argonaut, and they rowed right under the bowsprit where the figure-head of the Argonaut, with a sheepskin in his hand and a blue gown on, was looking out to sea ; and sitting staring on his forehead was the rat who could speak, and his exact words were these : " Chips ahoy ! Old boy ! We've pretty well eat them too, and we'll drown the crew, and will eat them too ! " (Here I always became exceedingly faint, and would have asked for water, but that I was speechless.)

The ship was bound for the Indies ; and if you don't know where that is, you ought to, and angels will never love you. (Here I felt myself an outcast from a future state.) The ship set sail that very night, and she sailed, and sailed, and sailed. Chips's feelings were dreadful. Nothing ever equalled his terrors. No wonder. At last, one day he asked leave to speak to the Admiral. The Admiral giv' leave. Chips went down on his knees in the Great State Cabin. " Your Honour, unless your Honour, without a moment's loss of time, makes sail for the nearest shore, this is a doomed ship, and her name is the Coffin ! " " Young man, your words are a madman's words." " Your Honour, no ; they are nibbling us away." " They ? " " Your Honour, them dreadful rats. Dust and hollowness where solid oak ought to be ! Rats nibbling a grave for every man on board ! Oh ! Does your Honour love your Lady and your pretty children ? " " Yes, my man, to be sure." " Then, for God's sake, make for the nearest shore, for at this present moment the rats are all stopping in their work, and are all looking straight towards you with bare teeth, and are all saying to one another that you shall never, never, never, never, see your Lady and your children more." " My poor fellow, you are a case for the doctor. Sentry, take care of this man ! "

So, he was bled and he was blistered, and he was this and that, for six whole days and nights. So, then he again asked leave to speak to the Admiral. The Admiral giv' leave. He went down on his knees in the Great State Cabin. " Now, Admiral, you must die ! You took no warning ; you must die ! The rats are never wrong in their calculations, and they make out that they'll be through, at twelve to-night. So, you must die !—With me and all the rest ! " And so at twelve o'clock there was a great leak reported in the ship, and a torrent of water rushed in and nothing could stop it, and they all went down, every living soul. And what the rats—being water-rats—left of Chips, at last floated to shore, and sitting on him was an immense overgrown rat, laughing, that dived when the corpse touched the beach and never came up. And there was a deal of seaweed on the remains. And if you get thirteen bits of seaweed, and dry them and burn them in the fire, they will go off like in these thirteen words as plain as plain can be :—

" A Lemon has pips,
And a Yard has ships,
And *I*'ve got Chips ! "

CHARLES DICKENS

THE BEAR

DENYS and Gerard walked silently, each thinking of the separation at hand ; the thought checked trifling conversation, and at these moments it is a relief to do something, however insignificant. Gerard asks Denys to lend him a bolt. " I have often shot with a long-bow, but never with one of these ! "

" Draw thy knife and cut this one out of the cub," said Denys slily.

" Nay, nay, I want a clean one."

Denys gave him three out of his quiver.

Gerard strung the bow, and levelled it at a bough that had fallen into the road at some distance. The power of the instrument surprised him ; the short but thick steel bow jarred him to the very heel as it went off, and the swift steel shaft was invisible in its passage ; only the dead leaves, with which November had carpeted the narrow road, flew about on the other side of the bough.

" Ye aimed a thought too high," said Denys.

" What a deadly thing ! no wonder it is driving out the long-bow—to Martin's much discontent."

" Ay, lad," said Denys triumphantly, " it gains ground every day, in spite of their laws and their proclamations to keep up the yewen bow, because, forsooth, their grandsires shot with it, knowing no better. You see, Gerard, war is not pastime. Men will shoot at their enemies with the hittingest arm and the killingest, not with the longest and missingest."

" Then these new engines I hear of will put both bows down ; for these with a pinch of black dust, and a leaden ball, and a child's finger, shall slay you Mars and Goliath, and the Seven Champions."

" Pooh ! pooh ! " said Denys warmly ; " petrone nor harquebuss shall ever put down Sir Arbalest. Why, we can shoot ten times while they are putting their charcoal and their lead into their leathern smoke belchers, and then kindling their matches. All that is too fumbling for the field of battle ; there a soldier's weapon needs be aye ready, like his heart."

Gerard did not answer, for his ear was attracted by a sound behind them. It was a peculiar sound, too, like something heavy, but not hard, rushing softly over the dead leaves. He turned round with some little curiosity. A colossal creature was coming down the road at about sixty paces distance.

He looked at it in a sort of calm stupor at first, but the next moment he turned ashy pale.

" Denys ! " he cried. " Oh, God ! Denys ! "

Denys whirled round.

It was a bear as big as a cart-horse.

It was tearing along with its huge head down, running on a hot scent.

The very moment he saw it Denys said in a sickening whisper—

" THE CUB ! "

Oh ! the concentrated horror of that one word, whispered hoarsely, with dilating eyes ! For in that syllable it all flashed upon them both like a sudden stroke of lightning in the dark—the bloody trail, the murdered cub, the mother upon them, *and it.* DEATH.

All this in a moment of time. The next, she saw them. Huge as she was, she seemed to double herself (it was her long hair bristling with rage) : she raised her head big as a bull's, her swine-shaped jaws opened wide at them, her eyes turned to blood and flame, and she rushed upon them, scattering the leaves about her like a whirlwind as she came.

" Shoot ! " screamed Denys, but Gerard stood shaking from head to foot, useless.

" Shoot, man ! ten thousand devils, shoot ! too late ! Tree ! tree ! " and he dropped the cub, pushed Gerard across the road, and flew to the first tree and climbed it. Gerard the same on his side ; and as they fled, both men uttered inhuman howls like savage creatures grazed by death.

With all their speed one or other would have been torn to fragments at the foot of his tree ; but the bear stopped a moment at the cub.

Without taking her bloodshot eyes off those she was hunting, she smelt it all round, and found, how her Creator only knows, that it was dead, quite dead. She gave a yell such as neither of the hunted ones had

ever heard, nor dreamed to be in nature, and flew after Denys. She reared and struck at him as he climbed. He was just out of reach.

Instantly she seized the tree, and with her huge teeth tore a great piece out of it with a crash. Then she reared again, dug her claws deep into the bark, and began to mount it slowly, but as surely as a monkey.

Denys's evil star had led him to a dead tree, a mere shaft, and of no very great height. He climbed faster than his pursuer, and was soon at the top. He looked this way and that for some bough of another tree to spring to. There was none ; and if he jumped down, he knew the bear would be upon him ere he could recover the fall, and make short work of him. Moreover, Denys was little used to turning his back on danger, and his blood was rising at being hunted. He turned to bay.

" My hour is come," thought he. " Let me meet death like a man." He kneeled down and grasped a small shoot to steady himself, drew his long knife, and clenching his teeth, prepared to job the huge brute as soon as it should mount within reach.

Of this combat the result was not doubtful.

The monster's head and neck were scarce vulnerable for bone and masses of hair. The man was going to sting the bear, and the bear to crack the man like a nut.

Gerard's heart was better than his nerves. He saw his friend's mortal danger, and passed at once from fear to blindish rage. He slipped down his tree in a moment, caught up the cross-bow, which he had dropped in the road, and running furiously up, sent a bolt into the bear's body with a loud shout. The bear gave a snarl of rage and pain, and turned its head irresolutely.

" Keep aloof ! " cried Denys, " or you are a dead man."

" I care not " ; and in a moment he had another bolt ready and shot it fiercely into the bear, screaming, " Take that ! take that ! "

Denys poured a volley of oaths down at him. " Get away, idiot ! "

He was right : the bear finding so formidable and noisy a foe behind him, slipped growling down the tree, rending deep furrows in it as she slipped. Gerard ran back to his tree and climbed it swiftly, but while his legs were dangling some eight feet from the ground, the bear came rearing and struck with her fore paw, and out flew a piece of bloody cloth from Gerard's hose. He climbed, and climbed ; and presently he heard as it were in the air a voice say, " Go out on the bough ! " He looked, and there was a long massive branch before him shooting upwards at a slight angle : he threw his body across it, and by a series of convulsive efforts worked up it to the end.

Then he looked round panting.

The bear was mounting the tree on the other side. He heard her claws scrape, and saw her bulge on both sides of the massive tree. Her eye not being very quick, she reached the fork and passed it, mounting the main stem. Gerard drew breath more freely. The bear either heard him, or found by scent she was wrong : she paused ; presently she caught sight of him. She eyed him steadily, then quietly descended to the fork.

Slowly and cautiously she stretched out a paw and tried the bough. It was a stiff oak branch, sound as iron. Instinct taught the creature this : it crawled carefully out on the bough, growling savagely as it came.

Gerard looked wildly down. He was forty feet from the ground. Death below. Death moving slow but sure on him in a still more horrible form.

His hair bristled. The sweat poured from him. He sat helpless, fascinated, tongue-tied.

As the fearful monster crawled growling towards him, incongruous thoughts coursed through his mind. Margaret : the Vulgate, where it speaks of the rage of a she-bear robbed of her whelps—Rome—Eternity.

The bear crawled on. And now the stupor of death fell on the doomed man ; he saw the open jaws and bloodshot eyes coming, but in a mist.

As in a mist he heard a twang : he glanced down ; Denys, white and silent as death, was shooting up at the bear. The bear snarled at the twang, but crawled on. Again the cross-bow twanged, and the bear snarled, and came nearer. Again the cross-bow twanged ; and the next moment the bear was close upon Gerard, where he sat, with hair standing stiff on end, and eyes starting from their sockets, palsied. The bear opened her jaws like a grave, and hot blood spouted from them upon Gerard as from a pump. The bough rocked. The wounded monster was reeling ; it clung, it stuck its sickles of claws deep into the wood ; it toppled, its claws held firm, but its body rolled off, and the sudden shock to the branch shook Gerard forward on his stomach with his face upon one of the bear's straining paws. At this, by a convulsive effort, she raised her head up, up, till he felt her hot fetid breath. Then huge teeth snapped together loudly close below him in the air, with a last effort of baffled hate. The ponderous carcass rent the claws out of the bough, then pounded the earth with a tremendous thump. There was a shout of triumph below, and the very next instant a cry of dismay, for Gerard had swooned and, without an attempt to save himself, rolled headlong from the perilous height.

Denys caught at Gerard, and somewhat checked his fall ; but it may be doubted whether this alone would have saved him from breaking his neck, or a

limb. His best friend now was the dying bear, on whose hairy carcass his head and shoulders descended. Denys tore him off her. It was needless. She panted still, and her limbs quivered, but a hare was not so harmless ; and soon she breathed her last ; and the judicious Denys propped Gerard up against her, being soft, and fanned him. He came to by degrees, but confused, and feeling the bear all around him, rolled away, yelling.

" Courage," cried Denys, " le diable est mort."

" Is it dead ? quite dead ? " inquired Gerard from behind a tree ; for his courage was feverish, and the cold fit was on him just now, and had been for some time.

" Behold," said Denys, and pulled the brute's ear playfully, and opened her jaws and put in his head, with other insulting antics ; in the midst of which Gerard was violently sick.

Denys laughed at him.

" What is the matter now ? " said he ; " also, why tumble off your perch just when we had won the day? "

" I swooned, I trow."

" But *why* ? "

Not receiving an answer, he continued, " Green girls faint as soon as look at you, but then they choose time and place. What woman ever fainted up a tree? "

" She sent her nasty blood all over me. I think the smell must have overpowered me. Faugh ! I hate blood."

" I do believe it potently."

" See what a mess she has made me ! "

" But with her blood, not yours. I pity the enemy that strives to satisfy you."

" You need not to brag, Maître Denys ; I saw you under the tree, the colour of your shirt."

" Let us distinguish," said Denys, colouring ; " it is permitted to tremble *for a friend.*"

Gerard, for answer, flung his arms round Denys's neck in silence.

" Look here," whined the stout soldier, affected by this little gush of nature and youth, " was ever aught so like a woman ? I love thee, little milksop—go to. Good ! behold him on his knees now. What new caprice is this ? "

" Oh, Denys, ought we not to return thanks to Him who has saved both our lives against such fearful odds ? " And Gerard kneeled, and prayed aloud. And presently he found Denys kneeling quiet beside him, with his hands across his bosom after the custom of his nation, and a face as long as his arm. When they rose, Gerard's countenance was beaming.

CHARLES READE

THE FUTURE LIFE

IT is well also that we should sometimes think of the forms of thought under which the idea of immortality is most naturally presented to us. It is clear that to our minds the risen soul can no longer be described, as in a picture, by the symbol of a creature half-bird, half-human, nor in any other form of sense. The multitude of angels, as in Milton, singing the Almighty's praises, are a noble image, and may furnish a theme for the poet or the painter, but they are no longer an adequate expression of the kingdom of God which is within us. Neither is there any mansion, in this world or another, in which the departed can be imagined to dwell and carry on their occupations. When this earthly tabernacle is dissolved, no other habitation or building can take them in : it is in the language of ideas only that we speak of them.

First of all there is the thought of rest and freedom from pain ; they have gone home, as the common

saying is, and the cares of this world touch them no more. Secondly, we may imagine them as they were at their best and brightest, humbly fulfilling their daily round of duties—selfless, child-like, unaffected by the world; when the eye was single and the whole body seemed to be full of light; when the mind was clear and saw into the purposes of God. Thirdly, we may think of them as possessed by a great love of God and man, working out His will at a further stage in the heavenly pilgrimage. And yet we acknowledge that these are the things which eye hath not seen nor ear heard and therefore it hath not entered into the heart of man in any sensible manner to conceive them. Fourthly, there may have been some moments in our own lives when we have risen above ourselves, or been conscious of our truer selves, in which the will of God has superseded our wills, and we have entered into communion with Him, and been partakers for a brief season of the Divine truth and love, in which like Christ we have been inspired to utter the prayer, "I in them, and thou in me, that we may be all made perfect in one." These precious moments, if we have ever known them, are the nearest approach which we can make to the idea of immortality. (*Phaedo*, i. 182.)

BENJAMIN JOWETT

A READING FROM "CORIOLANUS"

CRADLED at last in blissful self-complacency, she took her knitting, and sat down tranquil. Drawn curtains, a clear fire, a softly-shining lamp, gave now to the little parlour its best—its evening charm. It is probable that the three there present felt this charm; they all looked happy.

"What shall we do now, Caroline?" asked Mr. Moore, returning to his seat beside his cousin.

" What shall we do, Robert ? " repeated she playfully. " You decide."

" Not play at chess ? "

" No. "

" Nor draughts, nor backgammon ? "

" No, no ; we both hate silent games, that only keep one's hands employed—don't we ? "

" I believe we do. Then, shall we talk scandal ? "

" About whom ? Are we sufficiently interested in anybody to take a pleasure in pulling their character to pieces ? "

" A question that comes to the point. For my part —unamiable as it sounds—I must say, 'No '."

" And I, too. But it is strange, though we want no third—fourth, I mean " (she hastily and with contrition glanced at Hortense) "—living person among us, so selfish we are in our happiness, though we don't want to think of the present existing world, it would be pleasant to go back to the past ; to hear people that have slept for generations in graves that are perhaps no longer graves now, but gardens and fields, speak to us and tell us their thoughts, and impart their ideas."

" Who shall be the speaker ? What language shall he utter—French ? "

" Your French forefathers don't speak so sweetly, nor so solemnly, nor so impressively as your English ancestors, Robert. To-night you shall be entirely English ; you shall read an English book."

" An old English book ? "

" Yes, an old English book—one that you like ; and I will choose a part of it that is toned quite in harmony with something in you. It shall waken your nature, fill your mind with music : it shall pass like a skilful hand over your heart, and make its strings sound. Your heart is a lyre, Robert ; but the lot of your life has not been a minstrel to sweep it, and it is often silent. Let glorious William come near

and touch it ; you will see how he will draw the English power and melody out of its chords."

" I must read Shakespeare."

" You must have his spirit before you ; you must hear his voice with your mind's ear ; you must take some of his soul into yours."

" With a view to making me better ; is it to operate like a sermon ? "

" It is to stir you—to give you new sensations. It is to make you feel your life strongly, not only your virtues, but your vicious, perverse points."

" Dieu ! que dit-elle ? " cried Hortense, who hitherto had been counting stitches in her knitting, and had not much attended to what was said, but whose ear these two strong words caught with a tweak.

" Never mind her, sister ; let her talk : now just let her say anything she pleases to-night. She likes to come down hard upon your brother sometimes ; it amuses me, so let her alone."

Caroline who, mounted on a chair, had been rummaging the bookcase, returned with a book.

" Here's Shakespeare," she said, " and there's *Coriolanus*. Now, read, and discover by the feelings the reading will give you at once how low and how high you are."

" Come, then, sit near me, and correct when I mispronounce."

" I am to be the teacher, then, and you my pupil ? "

" Ainsi, soit-il ! "

" And Shakespeare is our science, since we are going to study ? "

" It appears so."

" And you are not going to be French, and sceptical, and sneering ? You are not going to think it a sign of wisdom to refuse to admire ? "

" I don't know."

" If you do, Robert, I'll take Shakespeare away,

and I'll shrivel up within myself, and put on my bonnet and go home."

" Sit down ; here I begin."

" One minute, if you please, brother," interrupted Mademoiselle, " when the gentleman of a family reads, the ladies should always sew. Caroline, dear child, take your embroidery ; you may get three sprigs done to-night."

Caroline looked dismayed.

" I can't see by lamp-light ; my eyes are tired, and I can't do two things well at once. If I sew, I cannot listen ; if I listen, I cannot sew."

" Fi, donc ! Quel enfantillage ! " began Hortense.

Mr. Moore, as usual, suavely interposed.

" Permit her to neglect the embroidery for this evening. I wish her whole attention to be fixed on my accent, and to ensure this, she must follow the reading with her eyes ; she must look at the book."

He placed it between them, reposed his arm on the back of Caroline's chair, and thus began to read.

The very first scene in *Coriolanus* came with smart relish to his intellectual palate, and still as he read he warmed. He delivered the haughty speech of Caius Marcius to the starving citizens with unction ; he did not say he thought his irrational pride right, but he seemed to feel it so. Caroline looked up at him with a singular smile.

" There's a vicious point hit already," she said ; " you sympathise with that proud patrician who does not sympathise with his famished fellow-men, and insults them : there, go on."

He proceeded. The warlike portions did not rouse him much ; he said all that was out of date, or should be ; the spirit displayed was barbarous, yet the encounter single-handed between Marcius and Tullus Aufidius he delighted in. As he advanced, he forgot to criticise ; it was evident he appreciated the power,

the truth of each portion ; and stepping out of the narrow line of private prejudices, began to revel in the large picture of human nature, to feel the reality stamped upon the characters who were speaking from that page before him.

He did not read the comic scenes well, and Caroline, taking the book out of his hand, read these parts for him. From her he seemed to enjoy them, and indeed she gave them with a spirit no one could have expected of her, with a pithy expression, with which she seemed gifted on the spot, and for that brief moment only. It may be remarked, in passing, that the general character of her conversation that evening, whether serious or sprightly, grave or gay, was as of something untaught, unstudied, intuitive, fitful ; when once gone, no more to be reproduced as it had been, than the glancing ray of the meteor, than the tints of the dew-gem, than the colour or form of the sunset cloud, than the fleeting and glittering ripple varying the flow of a rivulet.

Coriolanus in glory ; Coriolanus in disaster ; Coriolanus banished, followed like giant shades one after the other. Before the vision of the banished man Moore's spirit seemed to pause. He stood on the hearth of Aufidius's hall, facing the image of greatness fallen, but greater than ever in that low estate. He saw " the grim appearance," the dark face " bearing command in it," " the noble vessel with its tackle torn." With the revenge of Caius Marcius Moore perfectly sympathised ; he was not scandalised by it ; and again Caroline whispered :—

" There I see another glimpse of brotherhood in error."

The march on Rome, the mother's supplication, the long resistance, the final yielding of bad passions to good, which ever must be the case in a nature worthy the epithet of noble, the rage of Aufidius at what he

considered his ally's weakness, the death of Coriolanus, the final sorrow of his great enemy—all scenes made of condensed truth and strength came on in succession, and carried with them in their deep, fast flow the heart and mind of reader and listener.

"Now, have you felt Shakespeare?" asked Caroline, some ten minutes after her cousin had closed the book.

"I think so."

"And have you felt anything in Coriolanus like you?"

"Perhaps I have."

"Was he not faulty as well as great?"

Moore nodded.

"And what was his fault? What made him hated by the citizens? What caused him to be banished by his countrymen?"

"What do you think it was?"

"I ask again :—

'Whether 'twas pride,
Which out of daily fortune ever taints
The happy man? whether defect of judgment,
To fail in the disposing of those chances
Which he was lord of? or whether nature,
Not to be other than one thing; not moving
From the casque to the cushion, but commanding peace
Even with the same austerity and garb
As he controlled the war?'"

"Well, answer yourself, Sphinx."

"It was a spice of all: and you must not be proud to your workpeople; you must not neglect chances of soothing them, and you must not be of an inflexible nature, uttering a request as austerely as if it were a command."

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

DEATH OF MR. EARNSHAW

But the hour came, at last, that ended Mr. Earnshaw's troubles on earth. He died quietly in his chair one October evening, seated by the fireside. A high wind blustered round the house, and roared in the chimney ; it sounded wild and stormy, yet it was not cold, and we were all together—I, a little removed from the hearth, busy at my knitting, and Joseph reading his Bible near the table (for the servants generally sat in the house then, after their work was done). Miss Cathy had been sick, and that made her still ; she leaned against her father's knee, and Heathcliff was lying on the floor with his head in her lap. I remember the master, before he fell into a doze, stroking her bonny hair—it pleased him rarely to see her gentle—and saying—

" Why canst thou not always be a good lass, Cathy ? " And she turned her face up to his, and laughed, and answered, " Why cannot you always be a good man, father ? " But as soon as she saw him vexed again, she kissed his hand, and said she would sing him to sleep. She began singing very low, till his fingers dropped from hers, and his head sank on his breast. Then I told her to hush, and not stir, for fear she would wake him. We all kept as mute as mice a full half-hour, and should have done longer, only Joseph, having finished his chapter, got up and said that he must rouse the master for prayers and bed. He stepped forward, and called him by name, and touched his shoulder ; but he would not move ; so he took the candle and looked at him. I thought there was something wrong as he set down the light ; and seizing the children each by an arm, whispered them to " frame upstairs, and make little din—they might pray alone that evening—he had summat to do."

" I shall bid father good-night first," said Catherine, putting her arms round his neck, before we could hinder her. The poor thing discovered her loss directly—she screamed out, " Oh, he's dead, Heathcliff ! he's dead ! " And they both set up a heart-breaking cry.

I joined my wail to theirs, loud and bitter ; but Joseph asked what we could be thinking of to roar in that way over a saint in heaven. He told me to put on my cloak and run to Gimmerton for the doctor and the parson. I could not guess the use that either would be of, then. However, I went, through wind and rain, and brought one—the doctor—back with me ; the other said he would come in the morning. Leaving Joseph to explain matters, I ran to the children's room : their door was ajar, I saw they had never lain down, though it was past midnight ; but they were calmer, and did not need me to console them. The little souls were comforting each other with better thoughts than I could have hit on : no parson in the world ever pictured heaven so beautifully as they did, in their innocent talk ; and, while I sobbed and listened, I could not help wishing we were all there safe together.

EMILY BRONTE

ENGLAND'S FORGOTTEN WORTHIES

THOSE five volumes of Hakluyt may be called the Prose Epic of the modern English nation. They contain the heroic tales of the exploits of the great men in whom the new era was inaugurated ; not mythic, like the Iliads and the Eddas, but plain broad narratives of substantial facts, which rival legend in interest and grandeur. What the old epics were to the royally or nobly born, this modern epic is to the common

people. We have no longer kings or princes for chief actors, to whom the heroism like the dominion of the world had in time past been confined. But, as it was in the days of the Apostles, when a few poor fishermen from an obscure lake in Palestine assumed, under the Divine mission, the spiritual authority over mankind, so, in the days of our own Elizabeth, the seamen from the banks of the Thames and the Avon, the Plym, and the Dart, self-taught and self-directed, with no impulse but what was beating in their own royal hearts, went out across the unknown seas fighting, discovering, colonising, and graved out the channels, paving them at last with their bones, through which the commerce and enterprise of England has flowed out over all the world. We can conceive nothing, not the songs of Homer himself, which would be read among us with more enthusiastic interest than these plain massive tales ; and a people's edition of them in these days, when the writings of Ainsworth and Eugène Sue circulate in tens of thousands, would perhaps be the most blessed antidote which could be bestowed upon us. The heroes themselves were the men of the people—the Joneses, the Smiths, the Davises, the Drakes ; and no courtly pen, with the one exception of Raleigh, lent its polish or its varnish to set them off. In most cases the captain himself, or his clerk or servant, or some unknown gentleman volunteer, sat down and chronicled the voyage which he had shared ; and thus inorganically arose a collection of writings which, with all their simplicity, are for nothing more striking than for the high moral beauty, warmed with natural feeling, which displays itself through all their pages. With us, the sailor is scarcely himself beyond his quarter-deck. If he is distinguished in his profession, he is professional merely ; or if he is more than that, he owes it not to his work as a sailor, but to independent domestic

culture. With them, their profession was the school of their nature, a high moral education which most brought out what was most nobly human in them ; and the wonders of earth, and air, and sea, and sky, were a real intelligible language in which they heard Almighty God speaking to them.

J. A. FROUDE

ATTACK ON THE STOCKADE

ALL day long a careful watch was kept among the branches of the mighty ceiba-tree. And what a tree that was ! The hugest English oak would have seemed a stunted bush beside it. Borne up on roots, or rather walls, of twisted board, some twelve feet high, between which the whole crew, their ammunitions, and provisions, were housed roomily, rose the enormous trunk full forty feet in girth, towering like some tall light-house, smooth for a hundred feet, then crowned with boughs, each of which was a stately tree, whose top-most twigs were full two hundred and fifty feet from the ground. And yet it was easy for the sailors to ascend ; so many natural ropes had kind Nature lowered for their use, in the smooth lianas which hung to the very earth, often without a knot or leaf. Once in the tree, you were within a new world, suspended between heaven and earth, and as Cary said, no wonder if, like Jack when he climbed the magic beanstalk, you had found a castle, a giant, and a few acres of well-stocked park, packed away somewhere amid that labyrinth of timber. Flower-gardens at least were there in plenty ; for every limb was covered with pendent cactuses, gorgeous orchises, and wild pines ; and while one-half the tree was clothed in rich foliage, the other half, utterly leafless, bore on every twig brilliant yellow flowers, around

which humming-birds whirled all day long. Parrots peeped in and out of every cranny, while, within the airy woodland, brilliant lizards basked like living gems upon the bark, gaudy finches flitted and chirruped, butterflies of every size and colour hovered over the topmost twigs, innumerable insects hummed from morn till eve ; and when the sun went down, tree-toads came out to snore and croak till dawn. There was more life round that one tree than in a whole square mile of English soil.

And Amyas, as he lounged among the branches, felt at moments as if he would be content to stay there for ever, and feed his eyes and ears with all its wonders—and then started sighing from his dream, as he recollected that a few days must bring the foe upon them, and force him to decide upon some scheme at which the bravest heart might falter without shame. So there he sat (for he often took the scout's place himself), looking out over the fantastic tropic forest at his feet, and the flat mangrove-swamps below, and the white sheet of foam-flecked blue ; and yet no sail appeared ; and the men, as their fear of fever subsided, began to ask when they would go down and refit the ship, and Amyas put them off as best he could, till one noon he saw slipping along the shore from the westward, a large ship under easy sail, and recognised in her, or thought he did so, the ship which they had passed upon their way.

If it was she, she must have run past them to La Guayra in the night, and have now returned, perhaps, to search for them along the coast.

She crept along slowly. He was in hopes that she might pass the river's mouth : but no. She lay too close to the shore ; and, after a while, Amyas saw two boats pull in from her, and vanish behind the mangroves.

Sliding down a liana, he told what he had seen.

The men, tired of inactivity, received the news with a shout of joy, and set to work to make all ready for their guests. Four brass swivels, which they had brought up, were mounted, fixed in logs, so as to command the path; the musketeers and archers clustered round them with their tackle ready, and half a dozen good marksmen volunteered into the cotton-tree with their arquebuses, as a post whence "a man might have very pretty shooting." Prayers followed as a matter of course, and dinner as a matter of course also; but two weary hours passed before there was any sign of the Spaniards.

Presently a wreath of white smoke curled up from the swamp, and then the report of a caliver. Then, amid the growls of the English, the Spanish flag ran up above the trees, and floated—horrible to behold—at the mast-head of the *Rose*. They were signalling the ship for more hands; and, in effect, a third boat soon pushed off and vanished into the forest.

Another hour, during which the men had thoroughly lost their temper, but not their hearts, by waiting; and talked so loud, and strode up and down so wildly, that Amyas had to warn them that there was no need to betray themselves; that the Spaniards might not find them after all; that they might pass the stockade close without seeing it; that, unless they hit off the track at once, they would probably return to their ship for the present; and exacted a promise from them that they would be perfectly silent till he gave the word to fire.

Which wise commands had scarcely passed his lips, when, in the path below, glanced the head-piece of a Spanish soldier, and then another and another.

"Fools!" whispered Amyas to Cary; "they are coming up in single file, rushing on their own death. Lie close, men!"

The path was so narrow that two could seldom come

up abreast, and so steep that the enemy had much ado to struggle and stumble upwards. The men seemed half unwilling to proceed, and hung back more than once ; but Amyas could hear an authoritative voice behind, and presently there emerged to the front, sword in hand, a figure at which Amyas and Cary both started.

" Is it he ? "

" Surely I know those legs among a thousand, though they are in armour."

" It is my turn for him now, Cary, remember ! Silence, silence, men ! "

The Spaniards seemed to feel that they were leading a forlorn hope. Don Guzman (for there was little doubt that it was he) had much ado to get them on at all.

" The fellows have heard how gently we handled the Guayra squadron," whispers Cary, " and have no wish to become fellow-martyrs with the captain of the *Madre Dolorosa*."

At last the Spaniards get up the steep slope to within forty yards of the stockade, and pause, suspecting a trap, and puzzled by the complete silence. Amyas leaps on the top of it, a white flag in his hand ; but his heart beats so fiercely at the sight of that hated figure, that he can hardly get out the words :—

" Don Guzman, the quarrel is between you and me, not between your men and mine. I would have sent in a challenge to you at La Guayra, but you were away ; I challenge you now to single combat."

" Lutheran dog, I have a halter for you, but no sword ! As you served us at Smerwick, we will serve you now. Pirate and ravisher ! you and yours shall share Oxenham's fate, as you have copied his crimes, and learn what it is to set foot unbidden on the dominions of the King of Spain."

" The devil take you and the King of Spain

together ! " shouts Amyas, laughing loudly. " This ground belongs to him no more than it does to me, but to the Queen Elizabeth, in whose name I have taken as lawful possession of it as you ever did of Caraccas. Fire, men ! and God defend the right ! "

Both parties obeyed the order ; Amyas dropped down behind the stockade in time to let a caliver bullet whistle over his head ; and the Spaniards recoiled as the narrow face of the stockade burst into one blaze of musketry and swivels, raking their long array from front to rear.

The front ranks fell over each other in heaps ; the rear ones turned and ran ; overtaken, nevertheless, by the English bullets and arrows, which tumbled them headlong down the steep path.

" Out, men, and charge them. See ! the Don is running like the rest ! " And scrambling over the abattis, Amyas and about thirty followed them fast ; for he had hope of learning from some prisoner his brother's fate.

Amyas was unjust in his last words. Don Guzman, as if by miracle, had been only slightly wounded ; and seeing his men run, had rushed back and tried to rally them, but was borne away by the fugitives.

However, the Spaniards were out of sight among the thick bushes before the English could overtake them ; and Amyas, afraid lest they should rally and surround his small party, withdrew sorely against his will, and found in the pathway fourteen Spaniards, but all dead. For one of the wounded, with more courage than wisdom, had fired on the English as he lay ; and Amyas's men, whose blood was maddened both by their desperate situation and the frightful stories of the rescued galley-slaves, had killed them all before their captain could stop them.

" Are you mad ? " cries Amyas, as he strikes up one fellow's sword. " Will you kill an Indian ? "

And he drags out of the bushes an Indian lad of sixteen, who, slightly wounded, is crawling away like a copper snake along the ground.

" The black vermin has sent an arrow through my leg ; and poisoned too, most like."

" God grant not : but an Indian is worth his weight in gold to us now," said Amyas, tucking his prize under his arm like a bundle. The lad, as soon as he saw there was no escape, resigned himself to his fate with true Indian stoicism, was brought in, and treated kindly enough, but refused to eat. For which, after much questioning, he gave as a reason, that he would make them kill him at once ; for fat him they should not ; and gradually gave them to understand that the English always (so at least the Spaniards said) fatted and ate their prisoners like the Caribs ; and till he saw them go out and bury the bodies of the Spaniards, nothing would persuade him that the corpses were not to be cooked for supper.

However, kind words, kind looks, and the present of that inestimable treasure—a knife, brought him to reason ; and he told Amyas that he belonged to a Spaniard who had an " encomienda " of Indians some fifteen miles to the south-west ; that he had fled from his master, and lived by hunting for some months past ; and having seen the ship where she lay moored, and boarded her in hope of plunder, had been surprised therein by the Spaniards and forced by threats to go with them as a guide in their search for the English. But now came a part of his story which filled the soul of Amyas with delight. He was an Indian of the Llanos, or great savannas which lay to the southward beyond the mountains, and had actually been upon the Orinoco. He had been stolen as a boy by some Spaniards, who had gone down (as was the fashion of the Jesuits even as late as 1790) for the pious purpose of converting the savages by the simple process of

catching, baptizing, and making servants of those whom they could carry off, and murdering those who resisted their gentle method of salvation. Did he know the way back again? Who could ask such a question of an Indian? And the lad's black eyes flashed fire, as Amyas offered him liberty and iron enough for a dozen Indians, if he would lead them through the passes of the mountains, and southward to the mighty river, where lay their golden hopes. Hernando de Serpa, Amyas knew, had tried the same course, which was supposed to be about one hundred and twenty leagues, and failed, being overthrown utterly by the Wikiri Indians; but Amyas knew enough of the Spaniards' brutal method of treating those Indians, to be pretty sure that they had brought that catastrophe upon themselves, and that he might avoid it well enough by that common justice and mercy toward the savages which he had learned from his incomparable tutor, Francis Drake.

CHARLES KINGSLEY

MR. POULTER

THERE was a great improvement in Tom's bearing, for example, and some credit on this score was due to Mr. Poulter, the village schoolmaster, who, being an old Peninsular soldier, was employed to drill Tom —a course of high mutual pleasure. Mr. Poulter, who was understood by the company at the Black Swan to have once struck terror into the hearts of the French, was no longer personally formidable. He had rather a shrunken appearance, and was tremulous in the mornings, not from age, but from the extreme perversity of the King's Lorton boys, which nothing but gin could enable him to sustain with any firmness. Still, he carried himself with martial erectness, had

his clothes scrupulously brushed, and his trousers tightly strapped ; and on the Wednesday and Saturday afternoons, when he came to Tom, he was always inspired with gin and old memories, which gave him an exceptionally spirited air, as of a superannuated charger who hears the drum. The drilling-lessons were always protracted by episodes of warlike narrative, much more interesting to Tom than Philip's stories out of the *Iliad* ; for there were no cannon in the *Iliad*, and besides, Tom had felt some disgust on learning that Hector and Achilles might possibly never have existed. But the Duke of Wellington was really alive, and Bony had not been long dead—therefore Mr. Poulter's reminiscences of the Peninsular War were removed from all suspicion of being mythical. Mr. Poulter, it appeared, had been a conspicuous figure at Talavera, and had contributed not a little to the peculiar terror with which his regiment of infantry was regarded by the enemy. On afternoons, when his memory was more stimulated than usual, he remembered that the Duke of Wellington had (in strict privacy, lest jealousies should be awakened) expressed his esteem for that fine fellow Poulter. The very surgeon who attended him in the hospital after he had received his gun-shot wound, had been profoundly impressed with the superiority of Mr. Poulter's flesh : no other flesh would have healed in anything like the same time. On less personal matters connected with the important warfare in which he had been engaged, Mr. Poulter was more reticent, only taking care not to give the weight of his authority to any loose notions concerning military history. Any one who pretended to a knowledge of what occurred at the siege of Badajos, was especially an object of silent pity to Mr. Poulter ; he wished that prating person had been run down, and had the breath trampled out of him at the first go-off, as he himself

had—he might talk about the siege of Badajos then! Tom did not escape irritating his drilling-master occasionally, by his curiosity concerning other military matters than Mr. Poulter's personal experience.

"And General Wolfe, Mr. Poulter? wasn't he a wonderful fighter?" said Tom, who held the notion that all the martial heroes commemorated on the public-house signs were engaged in the war with Bony.

"Not at all!" said Mr. Poulter, contemptuously. "Nothing o' the sort! . . . Heads up," he added, in a tone of stern command, which delighted Tom, and made him feel as if he were a regiment in his own person.

"No, no!" Mr. Poulter would continue, on coming to a pause in his discipline. "They'd better not talk to me about General Wolfe. He did nothing but die of his wound; that's a poor haction, I consider. Any other man 'ud have died o' the wounds I've had. . . . One of my sword-cuts 'ud ha' killed a fellow like General Wolfe."

"Mr. Poulter," Tom would say, at any allusion to the sword, "I wish you'd bring your sword and do the sword-exercise!"

For a long while Mr. Poulter only shook his head in a significant manner at this request, and smiled patronisingly, as Jupiter may have done when Semele urged her too ambitious request. But one afternoon, when a sudden shower of heavy rain had detained Mr. Poulter twenty minutes longer than usual at the Black Swan, the sword was brought—just for Tom to look at.

"And this is the real sword you fought with in all the battles, Mr. Poulter?" said Tom, handling the hilt. "Has it ever cut a Frenchman's head off?"

"Head off? Ah! and would, if he'd had three heads."

" But you had a gun and bayonet besides ? " said Tom. " *I* should like the gun and bayonet best, because you could shoot 'em first and spear 'em after. Bang ! Ps-s-s-s ! " Tom gave the requisite pantomime to indicate the double enjoyment of pulling the trigger and thrusting the spear.

" Ah, but the sword's the thing when you come to close fighting," said Mr. Poulter, involuntarily falling in with Tom's enthusiasm, and drawing the sword so suddenly that Tom leaped back with much agility.

" Oh, but, Mr. Poulter, if you're going to do the exercise," said Tom, a little conscious that he had not stood his ground as became an Englishman, " let me go and call Philip. He'll like to see you, you know."

" What ! the humpbacked lad ? " said Mr. Poulter, contemptuously. " What's the use of *his* looking on ? "

" Oh, but he knows a great deal about fighting," said Tom ; " and how they used to fight with bows and arrows, and battle-axes."

" Let him come then. I'll show him something different from his bows and arrows," said Mr. Poulter, coughing, and drawing himself up, while he gave a little preliminary play to his wrist.

Tom ran in to Philip, who was enjoying his afternoon's holiday at the piano, in the drawing-room, picking out tunes for himself and singing them. He was supremely happy, perched like an amorphous bundle on the high stool, with his head thrown back, his eyes fixed on the opposite cornice, and his lips wide open, sending forth, with all his might, impromptu syllables to a tune of Arne's, which had hit his fancy.

" Come, Philip," said Tom, bursting in ; " don't stay roaring ' la la ' there—come and see old Poulter do his sword-exercise in the carriage-house ! "

The jar of this interruption—the discord of Tom's tones coming across the notes to which Philip was

vibrating in soul and body, would have been enough to unhinge his temper, even if there had been no question of Poulter the drilling-master ; and Tom, in the hurry of seizing something to say to prevent Mr. Poulter from thinking he was afraid of the sword when he sprang away from it, had alighted on this proposition to fetch Philip—though he knew well enough that Philip hated to hear him mention his drilling-lessons. Tom would never have done so inconsiderate a thing except under the severe stress of his personal pride.

Philip shuddered visibly as he paused from his music. Then turning red, he said, with violent passion—

" Get away, you lumbering idiot ! Don't come bellowing at me—you're not fit to speak to anything but a cart-horse ! "

It was not the first time Philip had been made angry by him, but Tom had never before been assailed with verbal missiles that he understood so well.

" I'm fit to speak to something better than you—you poor-spirited imp ! " said Tom, lighting up immediately at Philip's fire. " You know I won't hit you, because you're no better than a girl. But I'm an honest man's son, and *your* father's a rogue—everybody says so ! "

Tom flung out of the room, and slammed the door after him, made strangely heedless by his anger ; for to slam doors within the hearing of Mrs. Stelling, who was probably not far off, was an offence only to be wiped out by twenty lines of Virgil. In fact, that lady did presently descend from her room, in double wonder at the noise and the subsequent cessation of Philip's music. She found him sitting in a heap on the hassock, and crying bitterly.

" What's the matter, Wakem ? What was that noise about ? Who slammed the door ? "

Philip looked up, and hastily dried his eyes. " It was Tulliver who came in . . . to ask me to go out with him."

" And what are you in trouble about ? " said Mrs. Stelling.

Philip was not her favourite of the two pupils ; he was less obliging than Tom, who was made useful in many ways. Still, his father paid more than Mr. Tulliver did, and she meant him to feel that she behaved exceedingly well to him. Philip, however, met her advances towards a good understanding very much as a caressed mollusc meets an invitation to show himself out of his shell. Mrs. Stelling was not a loving, tender-hearted woman : she was a woman whose skirt sat well, who adjusted her waist and patted her curls with a preoccupied air when she inquired after your welfare. These things, doubtless, represent a great social power, but it is not the power of love—and no other power could win Philip from his personal reserve.

He said, in answer to her question, " My toothache came on, and made me hysterical again."

This had been the fact once, and Philip was glad of the recollection—it was like an inspiration to enable him to excuse his crying. He had to accept eau-de-Cologne, and to refuse creosote in consequence ; but that was easy.

Meanwhile Tom, who had for the first time sent a poisoned arrow into Philip's heart, had returned to the carriage-house, where he found Mr. Poulter, with a fixed and earnest eye, wasting the perfections of his sword-exercise on probably observant but inappreciative rats. But Mr. Poulter was a host in himself ; that is to say, he admired himself more than a whole army of spectators could have admired him. He took no notice of Tom's return, being too entirely absorbed in the cut and thrust—the solemn one, two, three,

four ; and Tom, not without a slight feeling of alarm at Mr. Poulter's fixed eye and hungry-looking sword, which seemed impatient for something else to cut besides the air, admired the performance from as great a distance as possible. It was not until Mr. Poulter paused and wiped the perspiration from his forehead, that Tom felt the full charm of the sword-exercise, and wished it to be repeated.

" Mr. Poulter," said Tom, when the sword was being finally sheathed, " I wish you'd lend me your sword a little while to keep."

" No, no, young gentleman," said Mr. Poulter, shaking his head decidedly, " you might do yourself some mischief with it."

" No, I'm sure I wouldn't—I'm sure I'd take care and not hurt myself. I shouldn't take it out of the sheath much, but I could ground arms with it, and all that."

" No, no, it won't do, I tell you ; it won't do," said Mr. Poulter, preparing to depart. " What 'ud Mr. Stelling say to me ? "

" Oh, I say, do, Mr. Poulter ! I'd give you my five-shilling piece if you'd let me keep the sword a week. Look here ! " said Tom, reaching out the attractively large round of silver. The young dog calculated the effect as well as if he had been a philosopher.

" Well," said Mr. Poulter, with still deeper gravity, " you must keep it out of sight, you know."

" Oh, yes, I'll keep it under the bed," said Tom, eagerly, " or else at the bottom of my large box."

" And let me see, now, whether you can draw it out of the sheath without hurting yourself."

That process having been gone through more than once, Mr. Poulter felt that he had acted with scrupulous conscientiousness, and said, " Well, now, Master Tulliver, if I take the crown-piece, it is to make sure as you'll do no mischief with the sword."

"Oh, no, indeed, Mr. Poulter," said Tom, delightedly handing him the crown-piece, and grasping the sword, which, he thought, might have been lighter with advantage.

"But if Mr. Stelling catches you carrying it in?" said Mr. Poulter, pocketing the crown-piece provisionally while he raised this new doubt.

"Oh, he always keeps in his up-stairs study on Saturday afternoons," said Tom, who disliked anything sneaking, but was not disinclined to a little stratagem in a worthy cause. So he carried off the sword in triumph, mixed with dread—dread that he might encounter Mr. or Mrs. Stelling—to his bedroom, where, after some consideration, he hid it in the closet behind some hanging clothes. That night he fell asleep in the thought that he would astonish Maggie with it when she came—tie it round his waist with his red comforter, and make her believe that the sword was his own, and that he was going to be a soldier. There was nobody but Maggie who would be silly enough to believe him, or whom he dared allow to know that he had a sword; and Maggie was really coming next week to see Tom, before she went to a boarding-school with Lucy.

If you think a lad of thirteen would not have been so childish, you must be an exceptionally wise man, who, although you are devoted to a civil calling, requiring you to look bland rather than formidable, yet never, since you had a beard, threw yourself into a martial attitude, and frowned before the looking-glass. It is doubtful whether our soldiers would be maintained if there were not pacific people at home who like to fancy themselves soldiers. War, like other dramatic spectacles, might possibly cease for want of a "public."

GEORGE ELIOT

STUBB KILLS A WHALE

If to Starbuck the apparition of the Squid was a thing of portents, to Queequeg it was quite a different object.

" When you see him 'quid," said the savage, honing his harpoon in the bow of his hoisted boat, " then you quick see him 'parm whale.' "

The next day was exceedingly still and sultry, and with nothing special to engage them, the Pequod's crew could hardly resist the spell of sleep induced by such a vacant sea. For this part of the Indian Ocean through which we then were voyaging is not what whalemen call a lively ground ; that is, it affords fewer glimpses of porpoises, dolphins, flying-fish, and other vivacious denizens of more stirring waters, than those off the Rio de la Plata, or the in-shore ground off Peru.

It was my turn to stand at the foremast-head ; and with my shoulders leaning against the slackened royal shrouds, to and fro I idly swayed in what seemed an enchanted air. No resolution could withstand it ; in that dreamy mood losing all consciousness, at last my soul went out of my body ; though my body still continued to sway as a pendulum will, long after the power which first moved it is withdrawn.

Ere forgetfulness altogether came over me, I had noticed that the seamen at the main and mizzen mast-heads were already drowsy. So that at last all three of us lifelessly swung from the spars, and for every swing that we made there was a nod from below from the slumbering helmsman. The waves, too, nodded their indolent crests ; and across the wide trance of the sea, east nodded to west, and the sun over all.

Suddenly bubbles seemed bursting beneath my closed eyes ; like vices my hands grasped the shrouds ;

some invisible, gracious agency preserved me ; with a shock I came back to life. And lo ! close under our lee, not forty fathoms off, a gigantic Sperm Whale lay rolling in the water like the capsized hull of a frigate, his broad, glossy back, of an Ethiopian hue, glistening in the sun's rays like a mirror. But lazily undulating in the trough of the sea, and ever and anon tranquilly spouting his vapoury jet, the whale looked like a portly burgher smoking his pipe of a warm afternoon. But that pipe, poor whale, was thy last. As if struck by some enchanter's wand, the sleepy ship and every sleeper in it all at once started into wakefulness ; and more than a score of voices from all parts of the vessel, simultaneously with the three notes from aloft, shouted forth the accustomed cry, as the great fish slowly and regularly spouted the sparkling brine into the air.

" Clear away the boats ! Luff ! " cried Ahab. And obeying his own order, he dashed the helm down before the helmsman could handle the spokes.

The sudden exclamations of the crew must have alarmed the whale ; and ere the boats were down, majestically turning, he swam away to the leeward, but with such a steady tranquillity, and making so few ripples as he swam, that thinking after all he might not as yet be alarmed, Ahab gave orders that not an oar should be used, and no man must speak but in whispers. So seated like Ontario Indians on the gunwales of the boats, we swiftly but silently paddled along ; the calm not admitting of the noiseless sails being set. Presently, as we thus glided in chase, the monster perpendicularly flitted his tail forty feet into the air, and then sank out of sight like a tower swallowed up.

" There go flukes ! " was the cry, an announcement immediately followed by Stubb's producing his match and igniting his pipe, for now a respite was granted.

After the full interval of his sounding had elapsed, the whale rose again, and being now in advance of the smoker's boat, and much nearer to it than to any of the others, Stubb counted upon the honour of the capture. It was obvious, now, that the whale had at length become aware of his pursuers. All silence of cautiousness was therefore no longer of use. Paddles were dropped, and oars came loudly into play. And still puffing at his pipe, Stubb cheered on his crew to the assault.

Yes, a mighty change had come over the fish. All alive to his jeopardy, he was going " head out " ; that part obliquely projecting from the mad yeast which he brewed.*

" Start her, start her, my men ! Don't hurry yourselves ; take plenty of time—but start her ; start her like thunder-claps, that's all," cried Stubb, spluttering out the smoke as he spoke. " Start her, now ; give 'em the long and strong stroke, Tashtego. Start her, Tash, my boy—start her, all ; but keep cool, keep cool—cucumbers is the word—easy, easy —only start her like grim death and grinning devils, and raise the buried dead perpendicular out of their graves, boys—that's all. Start her ! "

" Woo-hoo ! Wa-hee ! " screamed the Gay-Header in reply, raising some old war-whoop to the skies ; as every oarsman in the strained boat involuntarily bounced forward with the one tremendous leading stroke which the eager Indian gave.

* It will be seen in some other place of what a very light substance the entire interior of the sperm whale's enormous head consists. Though apparently the most massive, it is by far the most buoyant part about him. So that with ease he elevates it in the air, and invariably does so when going at his utmost speed. Besides, such is the breadth of the upper part of the front of his head, and such the tapering cut-water formation of the lower part, that by obliquely elevating his head, he thereby may be said to transform himself from a bluff-bowed sluggish galliot into a sharp-pointed New York pilot-boat.

But his wild screams were answered by others quite as wild. "Kee-hee! Kee-hee!" yelled Daggoo, straining forwards and backwards on his seat, like a pacing tiger in his cage.

"Ka-la! Koo-loo!" howled Queequeg, as if smacking his lips over a mouthful of Grenadier's steak. And thus with oars and yells the keels cut the sea. Meanwhile, Stubb retaining his place in the van, still encouraged his men to the onset, all the while puffing the smoke from his mouth. Like desperadoes they tugged and they strained, till the welcome cry was heard—"Stand up, Tashtego!—give it to him!" The harpoon was hurled. "Stern all!" The oarsmen backed water; the same moment something went hot and hissing along every one of their wrists. It was the magical line. An instant before, Stubb had swiftly caught two additional turns with it round the loggerhead, whence, by reason of its increased rapid circlings, a hempen blue smoke now jetted up and mingled with the steady fumes from his pipe. As the line passed round and round the loggerhead, so also, just before reaching that point, it blisteringly passed through and through both of Stubb's hands, from which the hand-cloths, or squares of quilted canvas sometimes worn at these times, had accidentally dropped. It was like holding an enemy's sharp two-edged sword by the blade, and that enemy all the time striving to wrest it out of your clutch.

"Wet the line! wet the line!" cried Stubb to the tub oarsman (him seated by the tub) who, snatching off his hat, dashed the sea-water into it.* More turns were taken, so that the line began holding its place. The boat now flew through the boiling water like

* Partly to show the indispensableness of this act, it may here be stated that, in the old Dutch fishery, a mop was used to dash the running line with water; in many other ships, a wooden piggin, or bailer, is set apart for that purpose. Your hat, however, is the most convenient.

a shark all fins. Stubb and Tashtego here changed places—stem for stern—a staggering business truly in that rocking commotion.

From the vibrating line extending the entire length of the upper part of the boat, and from its now being more tight than a harpstring, you would have thought the craft had two keels—one cleaving the water, the other the air—as the boat churned on through both opposing elements at once. A continual cascade played at the bows ; a ceaseless whirling eddy in her wake ; and, at the slightest motion from within, even but of a little finger, the vibrating, cracking craft canted over her spasmodic gunwale into the sea. Thus they rushed ; each man with might and main clinging to his seat, to prevent being tossed to the foam ; and the tall form of Tashtego at the steering oar crouching almost double, in order to bring down his centre of gravity. Whole Atlantics and Pacifics seemed passed as they shot on their way, till at length the whale somewhat slackened his flight.

" Haul in—haul in ! " cried Stubb to the bowsman ! and, facing round towards the whale, all hands began pulling the boat up to him, while yet the boat was being towed on. Soon ranging up by his flank, Stubb, firmly planting his knee in the clumsy cleat, darted dart after dart into the flying fish ; at the word of command, the boat alternately sterning out of the way of the whale's horrible wallow, and then ranging up for another fling.

The red tide now poured from all sides of the monster like brooks down a hill. His tormented body rolled not in brine but in blood, which bubbled and seethed for furlongs behind in their wake. The slanting sun playing upon this crimson pond in the sea, sent back its reflection into every face, so that they all glowed to each other like red men. And all the while, jet after jet of white smoke was agonisingly shot

from the spiracle of the whale, and vehement puff after puff from the mouth of the excited headsman; as at every dart, hauling in upon his crooked lance (by the line attached to it), Stubb straightened it again and again, by a few rapid blows against the gunwale, then again and again sent it into the whale.

"Pull up!—pull up!" he now cried to the bowsman, as the waning whale relaxed in his wrath. "Pull up!—close to!" and the boat ranged along the fish's flank. When reaching far over the bow, Stubb slowly churned his long sharp lance into the fish, and kept it there, carefully churning and churning, as if cautiously seeking to feel after some gold watch that the whale might have swallowed, and which he was fearful of breaking ere he could hook it out. But that gold watch he sought was the innermost life of the fish. And now it is struck; for, starting from his trance into that unspeakable thing called his "flurry," the monster horribly wallowed in his blood, overwrapped himself in impenetrable, mad, boiling spray, so that the imperilled craft, instantly dropping astern, had much ado blindly to struggle out from that phrensied twilight into the clear air of the day.

And now abating in his flurry, the whale once more rolled out into view; surging from side to side; spasmodically dilating and contracting his spout-hole, with sharp, cracking, agonised respirations. At last, gush after gush of clotted red gore, as if it had been the purple lees of red wine, shot into the frighted air; and falling back again, ran dripping down his motionless flanks into the sea. His heart had burst!

"He's dead, Mr. Stubb," said Daggoo.

"Yes; both pipes smoked out!" and withdrawing his own from his mouth, Stubb scattered the dead ashes over the water; and, for a moment, stood thoughtfully eyeing the vast corpse he had made.

HERMAN MELVILLE

EFFECT OF MOUNTAIN SCENERY ON SHAKESPEARE

SHAKESPEARE seems to have been sent essentially to take universal and equal grasp of the *human* nature ; and to have been removed, therefore, from all influences which could in the least warp or bias his thoughts. It was necessary that he should lean *no* way ; that he should contemplate, with absolute equality of judgment, the life of the court, cloister, and tavern, and be able to sympathise so completely with all creatures as to deprive himself, together with his personal identity, even of his conscience, as he casts himself into their hearts. He must be able to enter into the soul of Falstaff or Shylock with no more sense of contempt or horror than Falstaff or Shylock themselves feel for or in themselves ; otherwise his own conscience and indignation would make him unjust to them ; he would turn aside from something, miss some good, or overlook some essential palliation. He must be utterly without anger, utterly without purpose ; for if a man has any serious purpose in life, that which runs counter to it, or is foreign to it, will be looked at frowningly or carelessly by him. Shakespeare was forbidden of Heaven to have any *plans*. To *do* any good or *get* any good, in the common sense of good, was not to be within his permitted range of work. Not, for him, the founding of institutions, the preaching of doctrines, or the repression of abuses. Neither he, nor the sun, did on any morning that they rose together, receive charge from their Maker concerning such things. They were both of them to shine on the evil and good ; both to behold unoffendedly all that was upon the earth, to burn unappalled upon the spears of kings, and undisdaining, upon the reeds of the river.

Therefore, so far as nature had influence over the early training of this man, it was essential to its perfectness that the nature should be quiet. No mountain passions were to be allowed in him. Inflict upon him but one pang of the monastic conscience ; cast upon him but one cloud of the mountain gloom ; and his serenity had been gone for ever—his equity—his infinity. You would have made another Dante of him ; and all that he would have ever uttered about poor, soiled, and frail humanity would have been the quarrel between Sinon and Adam of Brescia,—speedily retired from, as not worthy a man's hearing, nay, not to be heard without heavy fault. All your Falstaffs, Slenders, Quicklys, Sir Tobys, Lances, Touchstones, and Quinces, would have been lost in that. Shakespeare could be allowed no mountains ; nay, not even any supreme natural beauty. He had to be left with his kingcups and clover ;—pansies—the passing clouds—the Avon's flow—and the undulating hills and woods of Warwick ; nay, he was not to love even these in any exceeding measure, lest it might make him in the least overrate their power upon the strong, full-fledged minds of men. He makes the quarrelling fairies concerned about them ; poor lost Ophelia find some comfort in them ; fearful, fair, wise-hearted Perdita trust the speaking of her good will and good hostess-ship to them ; and one of the brothers of Imogen confide his sorrow to them,—rebuked instantly by his brother for " wench-like words " ; * but any thought of them in his mighty

* " With fairest flowers
While summer lasts, and I live here, Fidele,
I'll sweeten thy sad grave. Thou shalt not lack
The flower that's like thy face—pale primrose, nor
The azured harebell—like thy veins ; no, nor
The leaf of eglantine, whom not to slander,
Outsweetened not thy breath. The ruddock would
With charitable bill . . . bring thee all this ;

men I do not find : it is not usually in the nature of such men ; and if he had loved the flowers the *least* better himself, he would assuredly have been offended at this, and given a botanical turn of mind to Caesar, or Othello.

And it is even among the most curious proofs of the necessity to all high imagination that it should paint straight from the life, that he has *not* given such a turn of mind to some of his great men ;—Henry the Fifth, for instance. Doubtless some of my readers, having been accustomed to hear it repeated thoughtlessly from mouth to mouth that Shakespeare conceived the spirit of all ages, were as much offended as surprised at my saying that he only painted human nature as he saw it in his own time. They will find, if they look into his work closely, as much antiquarianism as they do geography, and no more. The commonly received notions about the things that had been, Shakespeare took as he found them, animating them with pure human nature, of any time and all time ; but inquiries into the minor detail of temporary feeling, he despised as utterly as he did maps ; and whereso-ever the temporary feeling was in anywise contrary to that of his own day, he errs frankly, and paints from his own time. For instance in this matter of love of flowers ; we have traced already, far enough for our general purposes, the medieval interest in them,

> Yea, and furrowed moss besides, when flowers are none,
> To winter-ground thy corse.
> *Gui.* Prithee, have done,
> And do not play in wench-like words with that
> Which is so serious."

Imogen herself, afterwards, in deeper passion, will give weeds —not flowers,—and something more :

> " And when
> With wildwood leaves and weeds, I have strewed his grave,
> And on it said a century of prayers,
> Such as I can, twice o'er, I'll weep, and sigh,
> And, leaving so his service, follow you."

whether to be enjoyed in the fields, or to be used for types of ornamentation in dress. If Shakespeare had cared to enter into the spirit even of the early fifteenth century, he would assuredly have marked this affection in some of his knights, and indicated even then, in heroic tempers, the peculiar respect for loveliness of *dress* which we find constantly in Dante. But he could not do this ; he had not seen it in real life. In his time dress had become an affectation and absurdity. Only fools, or wise men in their weak moments, showed much concern about it; and the facts of human nature which appeared to him general in the matter were the soldier's disdain, and the coxcomb's care of it. Hence Shakespeare's good soldier is almost always in plain or battered armour ; even the speech of Vernon in *Henry the Fourth*, which, as far as I remember, is the only one that bears fully upon the beauty of armour, leans more upon the spirit and hearts of men—" bated, like eagles having lately bathed " ; and has an under-current of slight contempt running through the following line, " Glittering in golden coats, *like images* " ; while the beauty of the young Harry is essentially the beauty of fiery and perfect youth, answering as much to the Greek, or Roman, or Elizabethan knight as to the medieval one ; whereas the definite interest in armour and dress is opposed by Shakespeare in the French (meaning to depreciate them), to the English rude soldierliness :—

"*Con.* Tut, I have the best armour of the world. Would it were day!
Orl. You have an excellent armour, but let my horse have his due."

And again :—

" My lord constable, the armour that I saw in your tent to-night, are those stars, or suns, upon it ? "

while Henry, half proud of his poorness of array, speaks of armorial splendour scornfully ; the main idea being still of its being a gilded show and vanity :—

" Our gayness and our *gilt* are all besmirched."

This is essentially Elizabethan. The quarterings on a knight's shield, or the inlaying of his armour, would never have been thought of by him as mere " gayness or gilt " in earlier days.* In like manner, throughout every scale of rank or feeling, from that of the French knights down to Falstaff's " I looked he should have sent me two-and-twenty yards of satin, as I am true knight, and he sends me security ! " care for dress is always considered by Shakespeare as contemptible ; and Mrs. Quickly distinguishes herself from a true fairy by a solicitude to scour the *chairs of order*—and " each fair instalment, coat, and several crest " ; and the association in her mind of the flowers in the fairy rings with the

" Sapphire, pearl, and rich embroidery,
Buckled below fair knighthood's bending knee ; "

while the true fairies, in field simplicity, are only anxious to " sweep the dust behind the door " ; and

" With this field dew consecrate,
Every several chamber bless
Through this palace with sweet peace."

Note the expression " Field dew consecrate." Shakespeare loved courts and camps ; but he felt that sacredness and peace were in the dew of the Fields only.

* If the reader thinks that in Henry the Fifth's time the Elizabethan temper might already have been manifesting itself, let him compare the English herald's speech, Act II. Scene II. of *King John* ; and by way of specimen of Shakespeare's historical care, or regard of medieval character, the large use of *artillery* in the previous scene.

There is another respect in which he was wholly incapable of entering into the spirit of the Middle Ages. He had no great art of any kind around him in his own country, and was, consequently, just as powerless to conceive the general influence of former art, as a man of the most inferior calibre. Therefore it was, that I did not care to quote his authority respecting the power of imitation. If it had been needful to add his testimony to that of Dante, I might have quoted multitudes of passages wholly concurring with that, of which the "fair Portia's counterfeit," with the following lines, and the implied ideal of sculpture in *The Winter's Tale*, are wholly unanswerable instances. But Shakespeare's evidence in matters of art is as narrow as the range of Elizabethan art in England, and resolves itself wholly into admiration of two things,—mockery of life (as in this instance of Hermione as a statue), or absolute splendour, as in the close of *Romeo and Juliet*, where the notion of *gold* as the chief source of dignity of aspect, coming down to Shakespeare from the times of the Field of the Cloth of Gold, and, as I said before, strictly Elizabethan, would interfere seriously with the pathos of the whole passage, but for the sense of sacrifice implied in it :—

> "As *rich* shall Romeo by his lady lie ;
> Poor sacrifices of our enmity."

And observe, I am not giving these examples as proof of any smallness in Shakespeare, but of his greatness ; that is to say, of his contentment, like every other great man who ever breathed, to paint nothing but *what he saw* ; and therefore giving perpetual evidence that his sight was of the sixteenth, and not of the thirteenth century, beneath all the broad and eternal humanity of his imagination. How far in these modern days, emptied of splendour, it may be necessary for great men having certain sympathies for those

earlier ages, to act in this differently from all their predecessors ; and how far they may succeed in the resuscitation of the past by habitually dwelling in all their thoughts among vanished generations, are questions, of all practical and present ones concerning art, the most difficult to decide ; for already in poetry several of our truest men have set themselves to this task, and have indeed put more vitality into the shadows of the dead than most others can give the presences of the living. Thus Longfellow, in *The Golden Legend*, has entered more closely into the temper of the Monk, for good and for evil, than ever yet theological writer or historian, though they may have given their life's labour to the analysis ; and, again, Robert Browning is unerring in every sentence he writes of the Middle Ages ; always vital, right, and profound ; so that in the matter of art, with which we have been specially concerned, there is hardly a principle connected with the medieval temper, that he has not struck upon in those seemingly careless and too rugged rhymes of his. There is a curious instance, by the way, in a short poem referring to this very subject of tomb and image sculpture ; and illustrating just one of those phases of local human character which, though belonging to Shakespeare's own age, he never noticed, because it was specially Italian and un-English ; connected also closely with the influence of mountains on the heart, and therefore with our immediate inquiries. I mean the kind of admiration with which a southern artist regarded the *stone* he worked in ; and the pride which populace or priest took in the possession of precious mountain substance, worked into the pavements of their cathedrals, and the shafts of their tombs.

Observe, Shakespeare, in the midst of architecture and tombs of wood, or freestone, or brass, naturally thinks of *gold* as the best enriching and ennobling

substance for them ; in the midst also of the fever of the Renaissance he writes, as every one else did, in praise of precisely the most vicious master of that school—Giulio Romano ; but the modern poet,* living much in Italy, and quit of the Renaissance influence, is able fully to enter into the Italian feeling, and to see the evil of the Renaissance tendency, not because he is greater than Shakespeare, but because he is in another element, and has *seen* other things. I miss fragments here and there not needed for my purpose in the passage quoted, without putting asterisks, for I weaken the poem enough by the omissions, without spoiling it also by breaks.

" *The Bishop orders his Tomb in St. Praxed's Church*

" As here I lie
In this state chamber, dying by degrees,
Hours, and long hours, in the dead night, I ask
Do I live—am I dead ? Peace, peace seems all :
St. Praxed's ever was the church for peace.
And so, about this tomb of mine. I fought
With tooth and nail to save my niche, ye know ;
Old Gandolf † cozened me, despite my care.
Shrewd was that snatch from out the corner south
He graced his carrion with.
Yet still my niche is not so cramped but thence
One sees the pulpit o' the epistle-side,
And somewhat of the choir, those silent seats ;
And up into the aery dome where live
The angels, and a sunbeam's sure to lurk.
And I shall fill my slab of basalt there,
And 'neath my tabernacle take my rest,
With those nine columns round me, two and two,
The odd one at my feet, where Anselm ‡ stands ;

* Browning. † The last bishop.
‡ His favourite son ; nominally his nephew.

Peach-blossom marble all.
Swift as a weaver's shuttle fleet our years :
Man goeth to the grave, and where is he ?
Did I say basalt for my slab, sons ? Black—
'Twas ever antique-black * I meant ! How else
Shall ye contrast my frieze to come beneath ?
The bas-relief in bronze ye promised me,
Those Pans and Nymphs ye wot of, and perhance
Some tripod, thyrsus, with a vase or so,
The Saviour at His sermon on the mount,
St. Praxed in a glory, and one Pan,
And Moses with the tables . . . but I know
Ye marked me not ! What do they whisper thee,
Child of my bowels, Anselm ? Ah, ye hope
To revel down my villas while I gasp,
Bricked o'er with beggar's mouldy travertine,
Which Gandolf from his tomb-top chuckles at !
Nay, boys, ye love me—all of jasper, then !
There's plenty jasper somewhere in the world—
And have I not St. Praxed's ear to pray
Horses for ye, and brown Greek manuscripts ?
That's if ye carve my epitaph aright,
Choice Latin, picked phrase, Tully's every word,
No gaudy ware like Gandolf's second line—
Tully, my masters ? Ulpian serves *his* need."

I know no other piece of modern English, prose or poetry, in which there is so much told, as in these lines, of the Renaissance spirit—its worldliness, inconsistency, pride, hypocrisy, ignorance of itself, love of art, of luxury, and of good Latin. It is nearly all that I said of the central Renaissance in thirty pages of the

* "Nero Antico" is more familiar to our ears ; but Browning does right in translating it ; as afterwards "cipollino" into "onion-stone." Our stupid habit of using foreign words without translation is continually losing us half the force of the foreign language. How many travellers hearing the term "cipollino" recognise the intended sense of a stone splitting into concentric coats, like an onion ?

Stones of Venice put into as many lines, Browning's being also the antecedent work. The worst of it is that this kind of concentrated writing needs so much *solution* before the reader can fairly get the good of it, that people's patience fails them, and they give the thing up as insoluble ; though, truly, it ought to be the current of common thought like Saladin's talisman, dipped in clear water, not soluble altogether, but making the element medicinal.

It is interesting, by the way, with respect to this love of stones in the Italian mind, to consider the difference necessitated in the English temper merely by the general domestic use of wood instead of marble. In that old Shakespearian England, men must have rendered a grateful homage to their oak forests, in the sense of all that they owed to their goodly timbers in the wainscot and furniture of the rooms they loved best, when the blue of the frosty midnight was contrasted, in the dark diamonds of the lattice, with the glowing brown of the warm, fire-lighted, crimson-tapestried walls. Not less would an Italian look with a grateful regard on the hill summits, to which he owed, in the scorching of his summer noonday, escape into the marble corridor or crypt palpitating only with cold and smooth variegation of the unfevered mountain veins. In some sort, as both in our stubbornness and our comfort, we not unfitly describe ourselves typically as Hearts of Oak, the Italians might in their strange and variegated mingling of passion, like purple colour, with a cruel sternness, like white rock, truly describe themselves as hearts of Stone.

Into this feeling about marble in domestic use, Shakespeare, having seen it even in northern luxury, could partly enter, and marks it in several passages of his Italian plays. But if the reader still doubts his limitation to his own experience in all subjects of

imagination, let him consider how the removal from mountain influence in his youth, so necessary for the perfection of his lower human sympathy, prevented him from ever rendering with any force the feelings of the mountain anchorite, or indicating in any of his monks the deep spirit of monasticism. Worldly cardinals or nuncios he can fathom to the uttermost ; but where, in all his thoughts, do we find St. Francis, of Abbot Samson ? The " Friar " of Shakespeare's plays is almost the only stage conventionalism which he admitted ; generally nothing more than a weak old man, who lives in a cell, and has a rope about his waist.

While finally, in such slight allusions as he makes to mountain scenery itself, it is very curious to observe the accurate limitation of his sympathies to such things as he had known in his youth ; and his entire preference of human interest, and of courtly and kingly dignities, to the nobleness of the hills. This is most marked in *Cymbeline*, where the term " mountaineer " is, as with Dante, always one of reproach, and the noble birth of Arviragus and Guiderius is shown by their holding their mountain cave as

> " A cell of ignorance ; travelling abed ;
> A prison for a debtor " ;

and themselves, educated among hills, as in all things contemptible :—

> " We are beastly ; subtle as the fox for prey ;
> Like warlike as the wolf, for what we eat ;
> Our valour is to chase what flies ; our cage
> We make a choir, as doth the prisoned bird."

A few phrases occur here and there which might justify the supposition that he had seen high mountains, but never implying awe or admiration. Thus Demetrius :—

" These things seem *small* and *indistinguishable*,
Like far-off mountains turned into clouds."

" Taurus snow," and the " frosty Caucasus," are used merely as types of purity or cold ; and though the avalanche is once spoken of as an image of power, it is with instantly following depreciation :—

" Rush on his host, as doth the melted snow
Upon the valleys, whose low vassal seat
The Alps doth spit, and void his rheum upon."

There was only one thing belonging to hills that Shakespeare seemed to feel as noble—the pine tree, and that was because he had seen it in Warwickshire, clumps of pine occasionally rising on little sandstone mounds, as at the place of execution of Piers Gaveston, above the lowland woods. He touches on this tree fondly again and again :—

" As rough,
Their royal blood enchafed, as the rud'st wind,
That by his top doth take the mountain pine,
And make him stoop to the vale."

" The strong based promontory
Have I made shake, and by the spurs plucked up
The pine and cedar."

Where note his observance of the peculiar horizontal roots of the pine, spurred as it is by them like the claw of a bird, and partly propped, as the aiguilles by those rock promontories at their bases which I have always called their spurs, this observance of the pine's strength and animal-like grasp being the chief reason for his choosing it, above other trees, for Ariel's prison. Again :—

" You may as well forbid the mountain pines
To wag their high tops, and to make no noise
When they are fretted with the gusts of heaven."

And yet again :—

" But when, from under this terrestrial ball,
He fires the proud tops of the eastern pines."

We may judge, by the impression which this single feature of hill scenery seems to have made on Shakespeare's mind, because he had seen it in his youth, how his whole temper would have been changed if he had lived in a more sublime country, and how essential it was to his power of contemplation of mankind that he should be removed from the sterner influences of nature. For the rest, so far as Shakespeare's work has imperfections of any kind—the trivialness of many of his adopted plots, for instance, and the comparative rarity with which he admits the ideal of an enthusiastic virtue arising out of principle ; virtue being with him, for the most part, founded simply on the affections joined with inherent purity in his women, or on mere manly pride and honour in his men ; *—in a word,

* I mean that Shakespeare almost always implies a total difference in *nature* between one human being and another ; one being from the birth pure and affectionate, another base and cruel ; and he displays each, in its sphere, as having the nature of dove, wolf, or lion, never much implying the government or change of nature by any external principle. There can be no question that in the main he is right in this view of human nature : still, the other form of virtue does exist occasionally, and was never, as far as I recollect, taken much note of by him. And with this stern view of humanity, Shakespeare joined a sorrowful view of Fate, closely resembling that of the ancients. He is distinguished from Dante eminently by his always dwelling on last causes instead of first causes. Dante invariably points to the moment of the soul's choice which fixed its fate, to the instant of the day when it read no farther, or determined to give bad advice about Penestrino. But Shakespeare always leans on the force of Fate, as it urges the final evil ; and dwells with infinite bitterness on the power of the wicked, and the infinitude of result dependent seemingly on little things. A fool brings the last piece of news from Verona, and the dearest lives of its noble houses are lost ; they might have been saved if the sacristan had not stumbled as he walked. Othello mislays his handkerchief, and there remains nothing for him but death. Hamlet gets hold of the wrong foil, and the rest is silence.

whatever difference, involving inferiority, there exists between him and Dante, in his conceptions of the relation between this world and the next, we may partly trace, as we did the difference between Bacon and Pascal, to the less noble character of the scenes around him in his youth ; and admit that, though it was necessary for his special work that he should be put, as it were, on a level with his race, on those plains of Stratford, we should see in this a proof, instead of a negation, of the mountain power over human intellect. For breadth and perfectness of condescending sight, the Shakespearian mind stands alone ; but in *ascending* sight it is limited. The breadth of grasp was innate ; the stoop and slightness of it were given by the circumstances of scene : and the difference between those careless masques of heathen gods, or unbelieved, though mightily conceived visions of fairy, witch, or risen spirit, and the earnest faith of Dante's vision of Paradise, is the true measure of the difference in influence between the willowy banks of Avon, and the purple hills of Arno.

JOHN RUSKIN

AN OLD WAR HORSE

CAPTAIN had been broken in and trained for an army horse ; his first owner was an officer of cavalry going out to the Crimean War. He said he quite enjoyed the training with all the other horses, trotting

Edmund's runner is a moment too late at the prison, and the feather will not move at Cordelia's lips. Salisbury a moment too late at the tower, and Arthur lies on the stones dead. Goneril and Iago have on the whole, in this world, Shakespeare sees, much of their own way, though they come to a bad end. It is a pin that Death pierces the king's fortress wall with ; and Carelessness and Folly sit sceptred and dreadful, side by side with the pin-armed skeleton.

together, turning together, to the right hand or to the left, halting at the word of command, or dashing forward at full speed at the sound of the trumpet, or signal of the officer. He was, when young, a dark, dappled iron grey, and considered very handsome. His master, a young, high-spirited gentleman, was very fond of him, and treated him from the first with the greatest care and kindness. He told me he thought the life of an army horse was very pleasant; but when it came to being sent abroad, over the sea in a great ship, he almost changed his mind.

"That part of it," said he, "was dreadful! Of course we could not walk off the land into the ship; so they were obliged to put strong straps under our bodies, and then we were lifted off our legs in spite of our struggles, and were swung through the air over the water, to the deck of the great vessel. There we were placed in small close stalls, and never for a long time saw the sky, or were able to stretch our legs. The ship sometimes rolled about in high winds, and we were knocked about, and felt bad enough. However, at last it came to an end, and we were hauled up, and swung over again to the land; we were very glad, and snorted, and neighed for joy, when we once more felt firm ground under our feet.

"We soon found that the country we had come to was very different to our own, and that we had many hardships to endure besides the fighting; but many of the men were so fond of their horses, that they did every thing they could to make them comfortable, in spite of snow, wet, and all things out of order."

"But what about the fighting?" said I *; "was not that worse than anything else?"

"Well," said he, "I hardly know; we always liked to hear the trumpet sound, and to be called out,

* Black Beauty, the horse who is the connecting character of the book.

and were impatient to start off, though sometimes we had to stand for hours, waiting for the word of command ; and when the word was given, we used to spring forward as gaily and eagerly as if there were no cannon balls, bayonets, or bullets. I believe so long as we felt our rider firm in the saddle, and his hand steady on the bridle, not one of us gave way to fear, not even when the terrible bombshells whirled through the air and burst into a thousand pieces.

" I, with my noble master, went into many actions together without a wound ; and though I saw horses shot down with bullets, pierced through with lances, and gashed with fearful sabre-cuts ; though we left them dead on the field, or dying in the agony of their wounds, I don't think I feared for myself. My master's cheery voice, as he encouraged his men, made me feel as if he and I could not be killed. I had such perfect trust in him, that whilst he was guiding me, I was ready to charge up to the very cannon's mouth. I saw many brave men cut down, many fall mortally wounded from their saddles. I had heard the cries and groans of the dying, I had cantered over ground slippery with blood, and frequently had to turn aside to avoid trampling on wounded man or horse, but, until one dreadful day, I had never felt terror ; that day I shall never forget."

Here old Captain paused for a while and drew a long breath ; I waited, and he went on.

" It was one autumn morning, and, as usual, an hour before daybreak our cavalry had turned out, ready caparisoned for the day's work, whether it might be fighting or waiting. The men stood by their horses waiting, ready for orders. As the light increased, there seemed to be some excitement among the officers ; and before the day was well begun, we heard the firing of the enemy's guns.

" Then one of the officers rode up and gave the

word for the men to mount, and in a second, every man was in his saddle, and every horse stood expecting the touch of the rein, or the pressure of his rider's heels, all animated, all eager ; but still we had been trained so well, that, except by the champing of our bits, and the restive tossing of our heads from time to time, it could not be said that we stirred.

" My dear master and I were at the head of the line, and as all sat motionless and watchful, he took a little stray lock of my mane which had turned over on the wrong side, laid it over on the right, and smoothed it down with his hand ; then patting my neck, he said, ' We shall have a day of it to-day, Bayard, my beauty ; but we'll do our duty as we have done.' He stroked my neck that morning, more, I think, than he had ever done before ; quietly on and on, as if he were thinking of something else. I loved to feel his hand on my neck, and arched my crest proudly and happily ; but I stood very still, for I knew all his moods, and when he liked me to be quiet, and when gay.

" I cannot tell all that happened on that day, but I will tell of the last charge that we made together : it was across a valley right in front of the enemy's cannon. By this time we were well used to the roar of heavy guns, the rattle of musket fire, and the flying of shot near us ; but never had I been under such a fire as we rode through on that day. From the right, from the left, and from the front, shot and shell poured in upon us. Many a brave man went down, many a horse fell, flinging his rider to the earth ; many a horse without a rider ran wildly out of the ranks : then terrified at being alone with no hand to guide him, came pressing in amongst his old companions, to gallop with them to the charge.

" Fearful as it was, no one stopped, no one turned back. Every moment the ranks were thinned, but as

our comrades fell, we closed in to keep them together ; and instead of being shaken or staggered in our pace, our gallop became faster and faster as we neared the cannon, all clouded in white smoke, while the red fire flashed through it.

" My master, my dear master, was cheering on his comrades with his right arm raised on high, when one of the balls, whizzing close to my head, struck him. I felt him stagger with the shock, though he uttered no cry ; I tried to check my speed, but the sword dropped from his right hand, the rein fell loose from the left, and sinking backward from the saddle he fell to the earth ; the other riders swept past us, and by the force of their charge I was driven from the spot where he fell.

" I wanted to keep my place by his side, and not leave him under that rush of horses' feet, but it was in vain ; and now, without a master or a friend, I was alone on that great slaughter ground ; then fear took hold on me, and I trembled as I had never trembled before ; and I too, as I had seen other horses do, tried to join in the ranks and gallop with them ; but I was beaten off by the swords of the soldiers. Just then, a soldier whose horse had been killed under him, caught at my bridle and mounted me ; and with this new master I was again going forward : but our gallant company was cruelly overpowered, and those who remained alive after the fierce fight for the guns, came galloping back over the same ground. Some of the horses had been so badly wounded that they could scarcely move from the loss of blood ; other noble creatures were trying on three legs to drag themselves along, and others were struggling to rise on their fore-feet, when their hind legs had been shattered by shot. Their groans were piteous to hear, and the beseeching look in their eyes as those who escaped passed by, and left them to their fate,

I shall never forget. After the battle the wounded men were brought in, and the dead were buried."

"And what about the wounded horses?" I said; "were they left to die?"

"No, the army farriers went over the field with their pistols, and shot all that were ruined; some that had only slight wounds were brought back and attended to, but the greater part of the noble willing creatures that went out that morning, never came back! In our stables there was only about one in four that returned.

"I never saw my dear master again. I believe he fell dead from the saddle. I never loved any other master so well. I went into many other engagements, but was only once wounded, and then not seriously; and when the war was over, I came back again to England, as sound and strong as when I went out."

I said, "I have heard people talk about war as if it was a very fine thing."

"Ah!" said he, "I should think they never saw it. No doubt it is very fine when there is no enemy, when it is just exercise and parade, and sham-fight. Yes, it is very fine then; but when thousands of good brave men and horses are killed, or crippled for life, it has a very different look."

"Do you know what they fought about?" said I.

"No," he said, "that is more than a horse can understand, but the enemy must have been awfully wicked people, if it was right to go all that way over the sea on purpose to kill them."

ANNA SEWELL

THE FIGHT

IT was drawing towards the close of Arthur's first half-year at Rugby, and the May evenings were

lengthening out. Locking-up was not till eight o'clock, and everybody was beginning to talk about what he would do in the holidays. The shell, in which form all our *dramatis personae* now are, were reading amongst other things the last book of Homer's *Iliad*, and had worked through it as far as the speeches of the women over Hector's body. It is a whole school-day, and four or five of the School-house boys (amongst whom are Arthur, Tom, and East) are preparing third lesson together. They have finished the regulation forty lines, and are for the most part getting very tired, notwithstanding the exquisite pathos of Helen's lamentation. And now several long four-syllabled words come together, and the boy with the dictionary strikes work.

"I am not going to look out any more words," says he; "we've done the quantity. Ten to one we shan't get so far. Let's go out into the close."

"Come along, boys," cries East, always ready to leave the grind, as he called it; "our old coach is laid up, you know, and we shall have one of the new masters, who's sure to go slow and let us down easy."

So an adjournment to the close was carried *nem. con.*, little Arthur not daring to uplift his voice; but, being deeply interested in what they were reading, stayed quietly behind, and learnt on for his own pleasure.

As East had said, the regular master of the form was unwell, and they were to be heard by one of the new masters, quite a young man, who had only just left the University. Certainly it would be hard lines, if, by dawdling as much as possible in coming in and taking their places, entering into long-winded explanations of what was the usual course of the regular master of the form, and others of the stock contrivances of boys for wasting time in school, they could not spin out the lesson so that he should not work them

through more than the forty lines ; as to which quantity there was a perpetual fight going on between the master and his form, the latter insisting, and enforcing by passive resistance, that it was the prescribed quantity of Homer for a shell lesson, the former that there was no fixed quantity, but that they must always be ready to go on to fifty or sixty lines if there were time within the hour. However, notwithstanding all their efforts, the new master got on horribly quick ; he seemed to have the bad taste to be really interested in the lesson, and to be trying to work them up into something like appreciation of it, giving them good spirited English words, instead of the wretched bald stuff into which they rendered poor old Homer ; and construing over each piece himself to them, after each boy, to show them how it should be done.

Now the clock strikes the three-quarters ; there is only a quarter-of-an-hour more ; but the forty lines are all but done. So the boys, one after another, who are called up, stick more and more, and make balder and ever more bald work of it. The poor young master is pretty near beat by this time, and feels ready to knock his head against the wall, or his fingers against somebody else's head. So he gives up altogether the lower and middle parts of the form, and looks round in despair at the boys on the top bench, to see if there is one out of whom he can strike a spark or two, and who will be too chivalrous to murder the most beautiful utterances of the most beautiful woman of the old world. His eye rests on Arthur, and he calls him up to finish construing Helen's speech. Whereupon all the other boys draw long breaths, and begin to stare about and take it easy. They are all safe ; Arthur is the head of the form and sure to be able to construe, and that will tide on safely till the hour strikes.

Arthur proceeds to read out the passage in Greek before construing it, as the custom is. Tom, who isn't paying much attention, is suddenly caught by the falter in his voice as he reads the two lines—

ἀλλὰ σὺ τόν γ' ἐπέεσσι παραιφάμενος κατέρυκες,
σῇ τ' ἀγανοφροσύνῃ καὶ σοῖς ἀγανοῖς ἐπέεσσιν.

He looks up at Arthur. "Why, bless us," thinks he, "what can be the matter with the young 'un? He's never going to get floored. He's sure to have learnt to the end." Next moment he is reassured by the spirited tone in which Arthur begins construing, and betakes himself to drawing dogs' heads in his note-book, while the master, evidently enjoying the change, turns his back on the middle bench and stands before Arthur, beating a sort of time with his hand and foot, and saying, "Yes, yes," "very well," as Arthur goes on.

But as he nears the fatal two lines, Tom catches that falter again and looks up. He sees that there is something the matter, Arthur can hardly get on at all. What can it be?

Suddenly at this point Arthur breaks down altogether, and fairly bursts out crying, and dashes the cuff of his jacket across his eyes, blushing up to the roots of his hair, and feeling as if he should like to go down suddenly through the floor. The whole form are taken aback, most of them stare stupidly at him, while those who are gifted with presence of mind find their places and look steadily at their books, in hopes of not catching the master's eye and getting called up in Arthur's place.

The master looks puzzled for a moment, and then seeing, as the fact is, that the boy is really affected to tears by the most touching thing in Homer, perhaps in all profane poetry put together, steps up to him and lays his hand kindly on his shoulder, saying,

" Never mind, my little man, you've construed very well. Stop a minute, there's no hurry."

Now as luck would have it, there sat next above Tom on that day, in the middle bench of the form, a big boy, by name Williams, generally supposed to be the cock of the shell, therefore of all the school below the fifths. The small boys, who are great speculators on the prowess of their elders, used to hold forth to one another about William's great strength, and to discuss whether East or Brown would take a licking from him. He was called Slogger Williams, from the force with which it was supposed he could hit. In the main he was a rough good-natured fellow enough, but very much alive to his own dignity. He reckoned himself the king of the form, and kept up his position with the strong hand, especially in the matter of forcing boys not to construe more than the legitimate forty lines. He had already grunted and grumbled to himself, when Arthur went on reading beyond the forty lines. But now that he had broken down just in the middle of all the long words, the Slogger's wrath was fairly roused.

" Sneaking little brute," muttered he, regardless of prudence, " clapping on the waterworks just in the hardest place ; see if I don't punch his head after fourth lesson."

" Whose ? " said Tom, to whom the remark seemed to be addressed.

" Why, that little sneak Arthur's," replied Williams.

" No, you shan't," said Tom.

" Hullo ! " exclaimed Williams, looking at Tom with great surprise for a moment, and then giving him a sudden dig in the ribs with his elbow, which sent Tom's books flying on to the floor, and called the attention of the master, who turned suddenly round, and seeing the state of things, said—

" Williams, go down three places, and then go on."

The Slogger found his legs very slowly, and proceeded to go below Tom and two other boys with great disgust, and then turning round and facing the master, said. " I haven't learnt any more, sir ; our lesson is only forty lines."

" Is that so ? " said the master, appealing generally to the top bench. No answer.

" Who is the head boy of the form ? " said he, waxing wroth.

" Arthur, sir," answered three or four boys indicating our friend.

" Oh, your name's Arthur. Well now, what is the length of your regular lesson ? "

Arthur hesitated a moment, and then said. " We call it only forty lines, sir."

" How do you mean you call it ? "

" Well, sir, Mr. Graham says we ain't to stop there when there's time to construe more."

" I understand," said the master. " Williams, go down three more places, and write me out the lesson in Greek and English. And now, Arthur, finish construing."

" Oh ! would I be in Arthur's shoes after fourth lesson," said the little boys to one another ; but Arthur finished Helen's speech without any further catastrophe, and the clock struck four, which ended third lesson.

Another hour was occupied in preparing and saying fourth lesson, during which Williams was bottling up his wrath ; and when five struck and the lessons for the day were over, he prepared to take summary vengeance on the innocent cause of his misfortune.

Tom was detained in school a few minutes after the rest, and on coming out into the quadrangle, the first thing he saw was a small ring of boys, applauding Williams, who was holding Arthur by the collar.

" There, you young sneak," said he, giving Arthur

a cuff on the head with his other hand, " what made you say that——"

" Hullo ! " said Tom, shouldering into the crowd, " you drop that, Williams ; you shan't touch him."

" Who'll stop me ? " said the Slogger, raising his hand again.

" I," said Tom ; and suiting the action to the word, struck the arm which held Arthur's collar so sharply, that the Slogger dropped it with a start, and turned the full current of his wrath on Tom.

" Will you fight ? "

" Yes, of course."

" Huzza, there's going to be a fight between Slogger Williams and Tom Brown."

The news ran like wild-fire about, and many boys who were on their way to tea at their several houses turned back and sought the back of the chapel, where the fights come off.

" Just run and tell East to come and back me," said Tom to a small School-house boy, who was off like a rocket to Harrowell's, just stopping for a moment to poke his head into the School-house hall, where the lower boys were already at tea, and sing out, " Fight ! Tom Brown and Slogger Williams."

Up start half the boys at once, leaving bread, eggs, butter, sprats, and all the rest, to take care of themselves. The greater part of the remainder follow in a minute, after swallowing their tea, carrying their food in their hands to consume as they go. Three or four only remain, who steal the butter of the more impetuous, and make to themselves an unctuous feast.

In another minute East and Martin tear through the quadrangle, carrying a sponge, and arrive at the scene of action just as the combatants are beginning to strip.

Tom felt he had got his work cut out for him, as he stripped off his jacket, waistcoat, and braces. East

tied his handkerchief round his waist, and rolled up his shirt-sleeves for him : " Now, old boy, don't you open your mouth to say a word, or try to help yourself a bit, we'll do all that ; you keep all your breath and strength for the Slogger." Martin meanwhile folded the clothes, and put them under the chapel rails ; and now Tom, with East to handle him and Martin to give him a knee, steps out on the turf, and is ready for all that may come : and here is the Slogger too, all stripped, and thirsting for the fray.

It doesn't look a fair match at first glance : Williams is nearly two inches taller, and probably a long year older than his opponent, and he is very strongly made about the arms and shoulders ; " peels well," as the little knot of big fifth-form boys, the amateurs, say ; who stand outside the ring of little boys, looking complacently, but taking no active part in the proceedings. But down below he is not so good by any means ; no spring from the loins, and feeblish, not to say shipwrecky, about the knees. Tom on the contrary, though not half so strong in the arms, is good all over, straight, hard, and springy, from neck to ankle, better perhaps in his legs than anywhere. Besides, you can see by the clear white of his eye and fresh bright look of his skin, that he is in tip-top training, able to do all he knows ; while the Slogger looks rather sodden, as if he didn't take much exercise and ate too much tuck. The timekeeper is chosen, a large ring made, and the two stand up opposite one another for a moment, giving us time just to make our little observations.

" If Tom'll only condescend to fight with his head and heels," as East mutters to Martin, " we shall do."

But seemingly he won't, for there he goes in, making play with both hands. Hard all, is the word ; the two stand to one another like men ; rally follows rally in quick succession, each fighting as if he thought

to finish the whole thing out of hand. " Can't last at this rate," say the knowing ones, while the partisans of each make the air ring with their shouts and counter-shouts, of encouragement, approval, and defiance.

" Take it easy, take it easy—keep away, let him come after you," implores East, as he wipes Tom's face after the first round with wet sponge, while he sits back on Martin's knee, supported by the Madman's long arms, which tremble a little from excitement.

" Time's up," calls the timekeeper.

" There he goes again, hang it all ! " growls East, as his man is at it again as hard as ever. A very severe round follows, in which Tom gets out-and-out the worst of it, and is at last hit clean off his legs, and deposited on the grass by a right-hander from the Slogger.

Loud shouts rise from the boys of Slogger's house, and the School-house are silent and vicious, ready to pick quarrels anywhere.

" Two to one in half-crowns on the big 'un," says Rattle, one of the amateurs, a tall fellow, in thunder-and-lightning waistcoat, and puffy good-natured face.

" Done ! " says Grove, another amateur of quieter look, taking out his note-book to enter it, for our friend Rattle sometimes forgets these little things.

Meantime East is freshening up Tom with the sponges for next round, and has set two other boys to rub his hands.

" Tom, old boy," whispers he, " this may be fun for you, but it's death to me. He'll hit all the fight out of you in another five minutes, and then I shall go and drown myself in the island ditch. Feint him—use your legs ! draw him about ! he'll lose his wind then in no time, and you can go into him. Hit at his body too ; we'll take care of his frontispiece by-and-by."

Tom felt the wisdom of the counsel, and saw already that he couldn't go in and finish the Slogger off at mere hammer and tongs, so changed his tactics completely in the third round. He now fights cautious, getting away from and parrying the Slogger's lunging hits, instead of trying to counter, and leading his enemy a dance all round the ring after him. " He's funking ; go in, Williams," " Catch him up," " Finish him off," scream the small boys of the Slogger party.

" Just what we want," thinks East, chuckling to himself, as he sees Williams, excited by these shouts and thinking the game in his own hands, blowing himself in his exertions to get to close quarters again, while Tom is keeping away with perfect ease.

They quarter over the ground again and again, Tom always on the defensive.

The Slogger pulls up at last for a moment, fairly blown.

" Now then, Tom," sings out East, dancing with delight. Tom goes in in a twinkling, and hits two heavy body blows, and gets away again before the Slogger can catch his wind ; which when he does he rushes with blind fury at Tom, and being skilfully parried and avoided, over-reaches himself and falls on his face, amidst terrific cheers from the School-house boys.

" Double your two to one ? " says Grove to Rattle, note-book in hand.

" Stop a bit," says that hero, looking uncomfortably at Williams, who is puffing away on his second's knee, winded enough, but little the worse in any other way.

After another round the Slogger too seems to see that he can't go in and win right off, and has met his match or thereabouts. So he too begins to use his head, and tries to make Tom lose patience, and come in before his time. And so the fight sways on, now one and now the other getting a trifling pull.

Tom's face begins to look very one-sided—there are little queer bumps on his forehead, and his mouth is bleeding ; but East keeps the wet sponges going so scientifically, that he comes up looking as fresh and bright as ever. Williams is only slightly marked in the face, but by the nervous movement of his elbows you can see that Tom's body blows are telling. In fact half the vice of the slogger's hitting is neutralised, for he daren't lunge out freely for fear of exposing his sides. It is too interesting by this time for much shouting, and the whole ring is very quiet.

" All right, Tommy," whispers East ; " hold on's the horse that's to win. We've got the last. Keep your head, old boy."

But where is Arthur all this time ? Words cannot paint the poor little fellow's distress. He couldn't muster courage to come up to the ring, but wandered up and down from the great fives'-court to the corner of the chapel rails. Now trying to make up his mind to throw himself between them, and try to stop them ; then thinking of running in and telling his friend Mary, who he knew would instantly report to the Doctor. The stories he had heard of men being killed in prize-fights rose up horribly before him.

Once only, when the shouts of " Well done, Brown!" " Huzza for the School-house ! " rose higher than ever, he ventured up to the ring, thinking the victory was won. Catching sight of Tom's face in the state I have described, all fear of consequences vanishing out of his mind, he rushed straight off to the matron's room, beseeching her to get the fight stopped, or he shall die.

But it's time for us to get back to the close. What is this fierce tumult and confusion ? The ring is broken, and high and angry words are being bandied about ; " It's all fair," " It isn't," " No hugging ; " the fight is stopped. The combatants, however, sit

there quietly tended by their seconds, while their adherents wrangle in the middle. East can't help shouting challenges to two or three of the other side, though he never leaves Tom for a moment, and plies the sponges as fast as ever.

The fact is, that at the end of the last round, Tom seeing a good opening had closed with his opponent, and after a moment's struggle had thrown him heavily, by help of the fall he had learnt from his village rival in the Vale of White Horse. Williams hadn't the ghost of a chance with Tom at wrestling ; and the conviction broke at once on the Slogger faction, that if this were allowed their man must be licked. There was a strong feeling in the school against catching hold and throwing, though it was generally ruled all fair within certain limits ; so the ring was broken and the fight stopped.

The School-house are over-ruled—the fight is on again, but there is to be no throwing ; and East in high wrath threatens to take his man away after next round (which he don't mean to do by the way), when suddenly young Brooke comes through the small gate at the end of the chapel. The School-house faction rush to him. " Oh, hurra ! now we shall get fair play."

" Please, Brooke, come up, they won't let Tom Brown throw him."

"Throw whom ? " says Brooke, coming up to the ring. " Oh ! Williams, I see. Nonsense ! of course he may throw him if he catches him fairly above the waist."

Now, young Brooke, you're in the sixth, you know, and you ought to stop all fights. He looks hard at both boys. " Anything wrong ? " says he to East, nodding at Tom.

" Not a bit."

" Not beat at all ? "

" Bless you, no ! heaps of fight in him. Ain't there, Tom ? "

Tom looks at Brooke and grins.

" How's he ? " nodding at Williams.

" So, so ; rather done, I think, since his last fall, He won't stand above two more."

" Time's up ! " the boys rise again and face one another. Brooke can't find it in his heart to stop them just yet, so the round goes on, the Slogger waiting for Tom, and reserving all his strength to hit him out should he come in for the wrestling dodge again, for he feels that that must be stopped, or his sponge will soon go up in the air.

And now another new-comer appears on the field, to wit the under-porter, with his long brush and great wooden receptacle for dust under his arm. He has been sweeping out the schools.

" You'd better stop, gentlemen," he says ; " the Doctor knows that Brown's fighting—he'll be out in a minute."

" You go to Bath, Bill " is all that that excellent servitor gets by his advice. And being a man of his hands, and a staunch upholder of the School-house, can't help stopping to look on for a bit, and see Tom Brown, their pet craftsman, fight a round.

It is grim earnest now, and no mistake. Both boys feel this, and summon every power of head, hand, and eye to their aid. A piece of luck on either side, a foot slipping, a blow getting well home, or another fall, may decide it. Tom works slowly round for an opening, he has all the legs, and can choose his own time ; the Slogger waits for the attack, and hopes to finish it by some heavy right-handed blow. As they quarter slowly over the ground, the evening sun comes out from behind a cloud and falls full on Williams' face. Tom darts in, the heavy right-hand is delivered, but only grazes his head. A short rally at close quarters,

and they close ; in another moment the Slogger is thrown again heavily for the third time.

" I'll give you three to two on the little one in half-crowns," says Grove to Rattle.

" No thank'ee," answers the other, diving his hands further into his coat-tails.

Just at this stage of the proceedings the door of the turret which leads to the Doctor's library suddenly opens, and he steps into the close, and makes straight for the ring, in which Brown and the Slogger are both seated on their seconds' knees for the last time.

" The Doctor ! the Doctor ! " shouts some small boy who catches sight of him, and the ring melts away in a few seconds, the small boys tearing off, Tom collaring his jacket and waistcoat and slipping through the little gate by the chapel, and round the corner to Harrowell's with his backers, as lively as need be. Williams and his backers making off not quite so fast across the close. Grove, Rattle, and the other bigger fellows trying to combine dignity and prudence in a comical manner, and walking off fast enough, they hope, not to be recognised, and not fast enough to look like running away.

Young Brooke alone remains on the ground by the time the Doctor gets there, and touches his hat, not without a slight inward qualm.

" Hah ! Brooke. I am surprised to see you here. Don't you know that I expect the sixth to stop fighting ? "

Brooke felt much more uncomfortable than he had expected, but he was rather a favourite with the Doctor for his openness and plainness of speech ; so blurted out, as he walked by the Doctor's side, who had already turned back—

" Yes, sir, generally. But I thought you wished us to exercise a discretion in the matter too—not to interfere too soon."

" But they have been fighting this half-hour and more," said the Doctor.

" Yes, sir ; but neither was hurt. And they're the sort of boys who'll be all the better friends now, which they wouldn't have been if they had been stopped any earlier—before it was so equal."

" Who was fighting with Brown ? " said the Doctor.

" Williams, sir, of Thompson's. He is bigger than Brown, and had the best of it at first, but not when you came up, sir. There's a good deal of jealousy between our house and Thompson's, and there would have been more fights if this hadn't been let go on, or if either of them had had much the worst of it."

" Well but, Brooke," said the Doctor, " doesn't this look a little as if you exercised your discretion by only stopping a fight when the School-house boy is getting the worst of it ? "

Brooke, it must be confessed, felt rather gravelled.

" Now remember," added the Doctor, as he stopped at the turret-door, " this fight is not to go on—you'll see to that. And I expect you to stop all fights in future at once."

" Very well, sir," said young Brooke, touching his hat, and not sorry to see the turret-door close behind the Doctor's back.

THOMAS HUGHES

A FIRE AT SEA

ON the troubled breast of the Atlantic, a little to the southward of that great collection of seaweed, known by the name of the Sargasso Sea, lay a large ship.

She was in distress, for her flag was hoisted with the Union Jack down. The nature of her distress was apparent from a column of thick smoke that issued

from the fore-hatch. The most terrible of all calamities had befallen her—she was on fire !

That she was an emigrant ship was apparent from the great number of human beings—men, women, and children—who crowded her decks. Before the fire broke out she had weathered a severe gale, the effects of which had not yet passed away, for, although there was little wind, the waves were still high, and the burning ship rolled and plunged heavily.

How the fire originated no one could tell, but the instant it was discovered, the captain, who was a brave and able man, took prompt measures for its extinction. But his utmost efforts failed of success, because (the old story) there was *not suitable machinery on board for the extinction of fire !* The owners of this ship, however, were not, like too many, utterly regardless of human life. On the contrary, they had done a great deal—much more than is done by many ship-owners—for the comfort and safety of those who had entrusted their lives to them. There were boats on board sufficient to carry the entire crew and passengers ; and two of these were lifeboats. There was also a large supply of life-buoys and life-jackets ; the latter being made of cork, in such a form that the wearers might be able to work in them without inconvenience. But in preparing the ship for sea, fire had not been sufficiently considered. There was no fire-engine aboard. Buckets there were, and these were plied with vigour, but, as we have said, without success.

Finding that the fire continued to gain strength, the captain ordered the ship to be scuttled ; in other words, to be flooded by opening the lower ports and letting the sea rush in. The ship was one of those old East Indiamen, which in former days carried guns and marines like our men-of-war. The ports were soon knocked out, and the sea burst in, foaming and splashing like a mill-race when the sluice is drawn as

it swept towards the hold, carrying boxes, bulk-heads, loose furniture, and all before it. When it poured in a mighty cataract into the hold, the terrified multitude that crowded the upper deck entertained the hope for a few minutes that the fire would certainly be put out. Their hope was quickly crushed, for the ship soon gave signs of being waterlogged and threatened to settle down, rendering it necessary to close the ports before the fire was subdued.

A wail of despair rose from them when this was done, for now they knew that the ship was doomed, and that death in two of its most appalling forms stared them in the face. The scene that followed was heart-rending. The more timid among the passengers lost self-command. Some fell on their knees, and with bitter cries implored God to have mercy on them. Others took passionate farewell of each other, or sat clinging to each other in the silence of despair. Many became frantic, rushed about the decks and tore their hair, and a few of the braver spirits moved calmly and silently about, doing anything that required to be done, or coolly making preparation for the last struggle.

Among these last were several women, who, sustained by the Christian's hope, went about comforting their companions and calming the poor children. In some cases they became the centres of little groups of men and women, who listened intently while they read the word of God, or joined with them in prayer. Many cursing lips had become silent now, or tremblingly attempted to call on our Saviour, for the first time, *in earnest.*

Meanwhile the officers and crew were not idle. Preparation was made to lower the boats. The life-buoys and belts were got ready, and everything was done to facilitate the abandoning of the vessel before she should be utterly consumed.

The ordinary ship's boats were converted into life-boats by the simple contrivance of fastening small empty casks all round them under the seats, and a large-sized cask in the stern and bow of each.

As the sea was still running high, the operation of lowering was a matter of difficulty and danger. The women and children were put into the first boat while it hung suspended at the davits. Two men stood by to detach the hooks that held the boat by the bow and stern the instant she should touch the water. This was the moment of danger ; for, if one man should succeed in this and the other fail, the inevitable consequence would be that the stern or the bow of the boat would be jerked into the air, and the people in her hurled into the sea.

Four boats were lowered and cast off in safety. The fifth, which contained men chiefly, with only two or three women and no children, was upset. The man in the bow could not detach his hook ; it remained fast while the stern hook was cast off ; and when the ship rose it hung suspended by the bow. Instantly the people in her were struggling in the waves. The captain, knowing that this might occur, had ordered a dozen of the strongest of his men to put on cork life-belts, and stand in the main chains to be in readiness. These at once leaped into the sea, and supported the people, until another boat was lowered for them. But a misfortune here befell them. While one of the boats was swinging it was dashed against the ship's side so violently as to be stove in and rendered useless. This accident happened also to another boat, so that, even by overloading those that remained, it would now be impossible to accommodate everyone.

In this dilemma, the captain at once gave orders to heave overboard all the spare spars and the hen-coops, together with enough of cordage for the con-

struction of a raft. This was promptly done, and the raft was sufficiently far advanced in the course of an hour to admit of the emigrants being placed upon it.

It was during the formation of this raft that the great value of the life-belts became manifest. While the spars were in a loose and half-fastened state, the men were obliged to work in the water. To have done this without the support of the belts would have been very exhausting, almost impossible ; but with their floating power the men could work with both hands, and move about almost as freely in the water as on land.

The life-buoys were also of the greatest value at this time ; for the burning ship became so hot, before the raft was ready, that the passengers were obliged to jump overboard and get upon it as they best could, or float about until there was room for them all. In these circumstances the buoys were the means of saving the lives of some who could not swim.

It was late in the evening when the raft was commenced, and night was far advanced before it was completed. During all this time the boats remained close to it, after having hauled it a short distance from the burning ship, which latter was now a mass of flame from the deck to the mast-heads, rendering the whole scene as bright as day. After the rigging was consumed, and the masts had fallen over the side, the hull continued to burn, for a considerable time, with less flame but with a dull red glow that afforded sufficient light to the workers. It was fortunate the light lasted so long, for the night was so dark that it would otherwise have been almost impossible to have worked at the raft—tossed and rolled about as it was by the heavy sea.

It was a strange weird sight, that busy glowing scene of disaster out upon the black ocean at midnight ; and wonderful—unaccountable—did it ap-

pear in the eyes of the night-watch on board the *Trident*, as that ship came over the sea, ploughing up the water before a steady breeze which had sprung up soon after the sun went down.

" What can it be ? " said Mr. Denham to the captain when they first observed the light on the horizon.

" A steamer, perhaps," replied the captain.

" No steamer ever spouted fire like that," said Bax, who was the only other passenger on deck, all the others having gone to rest ; " the steamers on the American lakes and rivers do indeed spout sparks and flames of fire like giant squibs, but then they burn wood. Ocean steamers never flare up like that. I fear it is a ship on fire."

" Think you so ? steer straight for it, captain," said Mr. Denham, whose heart, under the influence of bad health, and, latterly, of considerable experience in the matter of human suffering, had become a little softer than it used to be.

The ship's course was altered, and long before the wreck was reached her decks swarmed with men and women who had got up in haste at the first mention of the word " fire,"—some of them with a confused notion that their own vessel was in danger !

It was indeed a novel and terribly interesting sight to most of those on board the *Trident*. At first they saw the burning vessel like a red meteor rising on the waves and disappearing in the hollows ; then the flames grew fierce, and spread a halo round the doomed ship that shone out vividly against the surrounding darkness. This latter was rendered intensely deep by contrast with the light. Then the masts went over the side, and a bright volume of sparks and scattered tongues of flame shot up into the sky, after which the hull shone like a glow-worm until they drew quite near. The busy workers at the raft were too anxiously intent on their occupation to ob-

serve the approach of the *Trident*, whose black hull was nearly invisible, and whose small lanterns might well have been overlooked on such an occasion.

" They don't see us," observed Mr. Denham.

This was abundantly evident. Within the circle of red light, they could see the raft and the boats floating close to it ; the men in cork-jackets toiling in the water and on floating spars, with ropes, handspikes, and axes. It was not until the *Trident* herself came within the circle of light, and hove-to, with flapping sails, that the people in the boats became aware of her presence.

Then, indeed, there arose a shout of joy such as could be uttered only by men and women snatched suddenly and unexpectedly from the very jaws of death. Again and again it burst forth, and was replied to by the people in the *Trident*, many of whom were so excited by the scene, and so overjoyed at the thought of having come up in time to save so many human beings, that they burst into tears ; while others went down on their knees and thanked God fervently.

Seeing that the people were getting excited, and knowing that order must be preserved, if the work that lay before them was to be done speedily and without accident, the captain sprang into the rigging, ordered the women and children to go below, and assured the male passengers that if any of them showed a disposition to be obstinate or unruly they also should be ordered below. This had the desired effect. Order was at once restored, and the captain then called for volunteers from among the stoutest of those on board to go into the chains, and lift the women and children out of the boats.

The appeal was responded to by all the strong men in the ship—foremost and strongest among whom was our friend Bax. From among these the captain

selected the men that seemed best able for the work they undertook to do ; and this, be it understood, was no child's play.

The state of the sea rendered it extremely difficult and dangerous to bring the boats alongside, heavily laden as they were with human beings. To get the men on board would be difficult enough, even although they would in most cases be able to spring, and lay hold of ropes, and otherwise help themselves ; but to get out the women and children by such means was not to be thought of. The men of the *Trident* who had the strongest arms and chests were therefore sent into the chains, where they leaned forward in slings with outstretched arms, and whenever the boats sheered up close enough they caught women or children in their vice-like grasp and dragged them on board.

Bax, owing to his unusual strength and breadth of shoulders, was peculiarly fitted for this laborious duty. His long reach of arm enabled him to stretch far beyond the others, and in several instances he caught hold of and rescued women after his companions had failed. Thus a much larger portion of the work fell upon him than on any of the others.

In this sort of work Tommy Bogey was of no use whatever ; and severely did his youth and want of physical strength press upon his spirits that night, poor boy ! But Tommy's nature would not allow him to sit down and do nothing. Feeling that he could not do manly work, he set himself with right good-will to womanly employment. He assisted in carrying the children below when they were handed over the side, helped to strip them, and brought dry clothing and blankets, besides doing an immense amount of what may be termed stewardess' work for the poor ladies. There were others on board who worked willingly and well, but none who were so ubiquitous as he ; none who knew so thoroughly

what to do and how to do it, and none, certainly, who did everything with such a superabundance of energy.

Once or twice Tommy stopped in the middle of these occupations to see how Bax was getting on ; for to his rather partial eyes it seemed that his friend was doing the whole work, and that everybody else was merely looking on !

On one of these occasions he saw Bax sustaining the weight of an old man and a young woman.

The girl was the old man's daughter ; she had clung to him in the boat and refused to let him go, having lost self-command through terror. Ignorant of this, and observing that the old man could not help himself, Bax grasped him under the arms the first time he came within reach. The boat was immediately swept away by the passing wave, leaving the old man and the girl, who still clung with a death-like grasp to him, suspended in the air. Bax's great strength enabled him to support this double weight, but he could not draw them up. A comrade stooped to assist him, but the strain on the sling was so great that it gave way, and Bax, with his burden, fell into the sea like lead.

Tommy saw this happen. There were plenty of loose ropes about. He seized the end of one and leaped overboard instantly. He sank for a second or two, and on coming to the surface looked hastily round. A hand was raised above the water near him. He knew it to be that of his friend, and struck out for it, but it disappeared. Again it rose, and there was a convulsive grasping of the fingers. Tommy made one stroke and placed the rope in it. The fingers closed like a vice. Next moment the ship rose and lifted Bax completely out of the water, with the old man and the girl still clinging to him. Before the ship sank again the boat sheered up, and they were all pulled into it !

To leap on board the *Trident* again, and resume his position with a new and stronger sling, was comparatively easy work for Bax. Tommy clambered up, too, close behind him. Passing a strong rope round his friend's waist, he said quietly:

"It won't do to risk that again."

"True, Tommy," said Bax; "run below, and fetch me a glass o' brandy, lad. That last plunge almost floored me."

The boy leaped over the side and dived below. He reappeared in a few seconds with a tin can, with which he clambered over the side into the chains, and held it to his friend's lips. Bax drained it at a draught, and Tommy left him without another word.

The whole of this scene was enacted with the utmost speed and energy. The spectators seemed to be paralysed with amazement at the quiet self-possession of the man and the boy, both of whom appeared to divine each other's thoughts, and to work into each other's hands with the precision and certainty of a machine; they did it all, too, as if they were entirely alone in the work. Until now they had been watched with breathless anxiety; but when Tommy gave Bax the can of brandy, and then gravely went below with a baby that had just been rescued in his arms, there arose a wild cheer of admiration, not unmingled with laughter, from those who had witnessed his conduct.

But their attention was soon turned again to the boats, two of which still remained with their freight on the heaving water. Many incidents of a thrilling nature were enacted that night. One of the most interesting, perhaps, occurred soon after that which has just been related.

In one of the boats was the young wife of an emigrant, who, having been compelled to separate from his wife and child when they left the burning ship in the first boat, had come alongside of the

Trident in another boat. Being an active man, he had caught a rope and hauled himself on board some time before his wife was rescued. The poor young mother had tied her infant tightly to her bosom by means of a shawl, in order to make sure that she should share its fate, whatever that might be.

When the boat sheered up alongside, her husband was standing in the chains, anxious to render her assistance. The woman chanced to come near to Bax, but not sufficiently so to grasp him. She had witnessed his great power and success in saving others, and a feeling of strong confidence made her resolve to be caught hold of by him, if possible. She therefore drew back from the grasp of a stout fellow who held out his brawny arms to her.

Bax noticed this occur twice, and understood the poor woman's motive. Feeling proud of the confidence thus placed in him, he watched his opportunity. The boat surged up, but did not come near enough. It swept away from the ship, and the poor woman's hands played nervously about the folds of the shawl, as she tried to adjust them more securely round her infant. Again the boat rose on a wave ; the woman stood ready, and Bax stooped. It did not come quite near enough, but the disappointed woman, becoming desperate, suddenly put her foot on the gunwale, stood up at full length, and stretched out her arms. Bax just caught her by the hands when the boat was swept from under her.

Similar incidents had occurred so often that little anxiety was felt ; but our hero's strength was now thoroughly exhausted. He could not haul her up, he could only hold on and shout for assistance. It was promptly rendered, but before the poor woman could be rescued the infant slipped from the shawl, which the straightening of the mother's arms and her suspended position had loosened. A cry burst

from the agonised father, who stooped, and stood in the attitude of one ready to plunge into the sea. The mother felt the child slipping, and a piercing shriek escaped from her as she raised her knees and caught it between them. With muscular power, intensified by a mother's love, she held the infant in this strange position until both were drawn up and placed in safety on the deck !

This was the last of Bax's achievements on that eventful night. He was so thoroughly worn out by the long-continued and tremendous exertions he had been called on to make, that his strength, great though it was, broke down. He staggered down into the cabin, flung himself, wet as he was, on a couch, and almost instantly fell into a sleep so deep that he could not be roused for more than a moment or two at a time. Seeing this, Tommy bade the bystanders leave him alone for a few minutes until he should come back, when, according to his own expression, " he would screw him up all right and tight ! " Everyone was by this time so thoroughly convinced that the boy was quite able to manage his friend that they stood still awaiting his return with much curiosity.

Tommy soon returned with a tumbler of hot brandy and water, followed by the steward with a pile of blankets.

" Hold that a minute," said the boy, handing the tumbler to a little old gentleman who stood swaying to and fro with the motion of the vessel, and staring at Bax as if he had been a half-drowned sea-monster.

" Now, then," cried Tommy, punching his friend severely in the ribs, seizing the hair of his head with both hands, and shaking him until his neck seemed dislocated—to the surprise of all and the horror of not a few !

The result was that Bax grumbled angrily, half awoke, and raised himself on one elbow.

"Drink, you tom-tit!" said the boy, catching the tumbler from the old gentleman, and applying it to his friend's lips.

Bax smiled, drank, and fell back on the pillow with a deep sigh of satisfaction. Then Tommy spread blanket after blanket over him, and "tucked him in" so neatly and with such a business-like air, that two or three mothers then present expressed their admiration and wonder in audible whispers.

While Bax was being thus carefully tended by Tommy and a knot of sympathisers, the passengers and crew vied with each other in making the rescued people as comfortable as circumstances would permit.

Meanwhile the *Trident* was again laid on her course, and, thus crowded with human beings, steered before favouring breezes for the shores of old England.

R. M. BALLANTYNE

THE GREAT WINTER

IT must have snowed most wonderfully to have made that depth of covering in about eight hours. For one of Master Stickles' men, who had been out all the night, said that no snow began to fall until nearly midnight. And here it was, blocking up the doors, stopping the ways, and the watercourses, and making it very much worse to walk than in a saw-pit newly used. However, we trudged along in a line; I first, and the other men after me; trying to keep my track, but finding legs and strength not up to it. Most of all, John Fry was groaning; certain that his time was come, and sending messages to his wife, and blessings to his children. For all this time it was snowing harder than it ever had snowed before, so far as a man might guess at it; and the leaden

depth of the sky came down, like a mine turned upside down on us. Not that the flakes were so very large ; for I have seen much larger flakes in a shower of March, while sowing peas ; but that there was no room between them, neither any relaxing, nor any change of direction.

Watch, like a good and faithful dog, followed us very cheerfully, leaping out of the depth, which took him over his back and ears already, even in the level places ; while in the drifts he might have sunk to any distance out of sight, and never found his way up again. However, we helped him now and then, especially through the gaps and gateways ; and so after a deal of floundering, some laughter, and a little swearing, we came all safe to the lower meadow, where most of our flock was hurdled.

But behold, there was no flock at all ! None, I mean, to be seen anywhere ; only at one corner of the field, by the eastern end, where the snow drove in, a great white billow, as high as a barn, and as broad as a house. This great drift was rolling and curling beneath the violent blast, tufting and combing with rustling swirls, and carved (as in patterns of cornice) where the grooving chisel of the wind swept round. Ever and again the tempest snatched little whiffs from the channelled edges, twirled them round and made them dance over the chime of the monster pile, then let them lie like herring-bones, or the seams of sand where the tide has been. And all the while from the smothering sky, more and more fiercely at every blast, came the pelting, pitiless arrows, winged with murky white, and pointed with the barbs of frost.

But although for people who had no sheep, the sight was a very fine one (so far at least as the weather permitted any sight at all) ; yet for us, with our flock beneath it, this great mount had but little charm.

Watch began to scratch at once, and to howl along the sides of it ; he knew that his charge was buried there, and his business taken from him. But we four men set to in earnest, digging with all our might and main, shovelling away at the great white pile, and fetching it into the meadow. Each man made for himself a cave, scooping at the soft, cold flux, which slid upon him at every stroke, and throwing it out behind him, in piles of castled fancy. At last we drove our tunnels in (for we worked indeed for the lives of us), and all converging towards the middle, held our tools and listened.

The other men heard nothing at all ; or declared that they heard nothing, being anxious now to abandon the matter, because of the chill in their feet and knees. But I said, " Go, if you choose all of you. I will work it out by myself, you pie-crusts ; " and upon that they gripped their shovels, being more or less of Englishmen ; and the least drop of English blood is worth the best of any other, when it comes to lasting out.

But before we began again, I laid my head well into the chamber ; and there I hears a faint " ma-a-ah," coming through some ells of snow, like a plaintive, buried hope, or a last appeal. I shouted aloud to cheer him up, for I knew what sheep it was, to wit, the most valiant of all the wethers, who had met me when I came home from London, and been so glad to see me. And then we all fell to again ; and very soon we hauled him out. Watch took charge of him at once, with an air of the noblest patronage, lying on his frozen fleece, and licking all his face and feet, to restore his warmth to him. Then fighting Tom jumped up at once, and made a little butt at Watch, as if nothing had ever ailed him, and then set off to a shallow place, and looked for something to nibble at.

Further in, and close under the bank, where they had huddled themselves for warmth, we found all the rest of the poor sheep packed, as closely as if they were in a great pie. It was strange to observe how their vapour and breath, and the moisture exuding from their wool had scooped, as it were, a coved room for them, lined with a ribbing of deep yellow snow. Also the churned snow beneath their feet was as yellow as gamboge. Two or three of the weaklier hoggets were dead, from want of air, and from pressure; but more than three-score were as lively as ever; though cramped and stiff for a little while.

"However shall us get 'em home?" John Fry asked in great dismay, when we had cleared about a dozen of them; which we were forced to do very carefully, so as not to fetch the roof down. "No manner of maning to draive 'un, drough all they girt driftnesses."

"You see to this place, John," I replied, as we leaned on our shovels a moment, and the sheep came rubbing round us; "let no more of them out for the present; they are better where they be. Watch, here boy, keep them!"

Watch came, with his little scut of a tail cocked as sharp as duty, and I set him at the narrow mouth of the great snow *antre*. All the sheep sidled away, and got closer, that the other sheep might be bitten first, as the foolish things imagine; whereas no good sheep-dog even so much as lips a sheep to turn it.

Then of the outer sheep (all now snowed and frizzled like a lawyer's wig) I took the two finest and heaviest, and with one beneath my right arm, and the other beneath my left, I went straight home to the upper sheppey, and set them inside, and fastened them. Sixty and six I took home in that way, two at a time on each journey; and the work grew harder and harder each time, as the drifts of the snow were

deepening. No other man should meddle with them ; I was resolved to try my strength against the strength of the elements ; and try it I did, ay, and proved it. A certain fierce delight burned in me, as the struggle grew harder ; but rather would I die than yield ; and at last I finished it. People talk of it to this day ; but none can tell what the labour was, who have not felt that snow and wind.

Of the sheep upon the mountain, and the sheep upon the western farm, and the cattle on the upper barrows, scarcely one in ten was saved ; do what we would for them. And this was not through any neglect (now that our wits were sharpened), but from the pure impossibility of finding them at all. That great snow never ceased a moment for three days and nights ; and then when all the earth was filled, and the topmost hedges were unseen, and the trees broke down with weight (wherever the wind had not lightened them), a brilliant sun broke forth and showed the loss of all our customs.

All our house was quite snowed up, except where we had purged a way, by dint of constant shovellings. The kitchen was as dark and darker than the cider-cellar, and long lines of furrowed scollops ran even up to the chimney-stacks. Several windows fell right inwards, through the weight of the snow against them ; and the few that stood, bulged in, and bent like an old bruised lanthorn. We were obliged to cook by candle-light ; we were forced to read by candle-light ; as for baking, we could not do it, because the oven was too chill ; and a load of faggots only brought a little wet down the sides of it.

For when the sun burst forth at last upon that world of white, what he brought was neither warmth, nor cheer, nor hope of softening ; only a clearer shaft of cold, from the violent depths of sky. Long-drawn alleys of white haze seemed to lead towards

him, yet such as he could not come down, with any warmth remaining. Broad white curtains of the frost-fog looped around the lower sky, on the verge of hill and valley, and above the laden trees. Only round the sun himself, and the spot of heaven he claimed, clustered a bright purple-blue, clear, and calm, and deep.

That night such a frost ensued as we had never dreamed of, neither read in ancient books, or histories of Frobisher. The kettle by the fire froze, and the crock upon the hearth-cheeks ; many men were killed, and cattle rigid in their head-ropes. Then I heard that fearful sound, which never I had heard before, neither since have heard (except during that same winter), the sharp yet solemn sound of trees burst open by the frost-blow. Our great walnut lost three branches, and has been dying ever since ; though growing meanwhile, as the soul does. And the ancient oak at the cross was rent, and many score of ash trees. But why should I tell all this ? the people who have not seen it (as I have) will only make faces, and disbelieve ; till such another frost comes ; which perhaps may never be.

This terrible weather kept Tom Faggus from coming near our house for weeks ; at which indeed I was not vexed a quarter so much as Annie was ; for I had never half approved of him, as a husband for my sister ; in spite of his purchase from Squire Bassett, and the grant of the Royal pardon. It may be, however, that Annie took the same view of my love for Lorna, and could not augur well of it ; but if so, she held her peace, though I was not so sparing. For many things contributed to make me less good-humoured now that my real nature was ; and the very least of all these things would have been enough to make some people cross, and rude, and fractious. I mean the red and painful chapping of my face and

hands, from working in the snow all day, and lying in the frost all night. For being of a fair complexion, and a ruddy nature, and pretty plump withal, and fed on plenty of hot victuals, and always forced by my mother to sit nearer the fire than I wished, it was wonderful to see how the cold ran revel on my cheeks and knuckles. And I feared that Lorna (if it should ever please God to stop the snowing) might take this for a proof of low and rustic blood and breeding.

And this I say was the smallest thing ; for it was far more serious that we were losing half our stock, do all we would to shelter them. Even the horses in the stables (mustered all together, for the sake of breath and steaming) had long icicles from their muzzles, almost every morning. But of all things the very gravest, to my apprehension, was the impossibility of hearing, or having any token of or from my loved one. Not that those three days alone of snow (tremendous as it was) could have blocked the country so ; but that the sky had never ceased, for more than two days at a time, for full three weeks thereafter, to pour fresh piles of fleecy mantle ; neither had the wind relaxed a single day from shaking them. As a rule, it snowed all day, cleared up at night, and froze intensely, with the stars as bright as jewels, earth spread out in lustrous twilight, and the sounds in the air as sharp and crackling as artillery ; then in the morning, snow again, before the sun could come to help.

It mattered not what way the wind was. Often and often the vanes went round, and we hoped for change of weather ; the only change was that it seemed (if possible) to grow colder. Indeed, after a week or so, the wind would regularly box the compass (as the sailors call it) in the course of every day, following where the sun should be, as if to make a mock of him. And this of course immensely added

to the peril of the drifts ; because they shifted every day ; and no skill or care might learn them.

I believe it was on Epiphany morning, or somewhere about that period, when Lizzie ran into the kitchen to me, where I was thawing my goose-grease, with the dogs among the ashes—the live dogs, I mean, not the iron ones, for them we had given up long ago—and having caught me, by way of wonder (for generally I was out shovelling, long before my " young lady " had her nightcap off), she positively kissed me, for the sake of warming her lips perhaps, or because she had something proud to say.

" You great fool, John," said my lady, as Annie and I used to call her, on account of her airs and graces ; " what a pity you never read, John ! "

" Much use, I should think, in reading ! " I answered, though pleased with her condescension ; " read, I suppose, with roof coming in, and only this chimney left sticking out of the snow ! "

" The very time to read, John," said Lizzie, looking grander ; " our worst troubles are the need, whence knowledge can deliver us."

" Amen," I cried out ; " are you parson or clerk ? Whichever you are, good morning."

Thereupon I was bent on my usual round (a very small one nowadays), but Eliza took me with both hands, and I stopped of course ; for I could not bear to shake the child, even in play, for a moment, because her back was tender. Then she looked up at me with her beautiful eyes, so large, unhealthy and delicate, and strangely shadowing outward, as if to spread their meaning ; and she said—

" Now, John, this is no time to joke. I was almost frozen in bed last night ; and Annie like an icicle. Feel how cold my hands are. Now, will you listen to what I have read about climates ten times worse than this ; and where none but clever men can live ? "

" Impossible for me to listen now. I have hundreds of things to see to ; but I will listen after breakfast to your foreign climates, child. Now attend to mother's hot coffee."

She looked a little disappointed, but she knew what I had to do ; and after all she was not so utterly unreasonable ; although she did read books. And when I had done my morning's work, I listened to her patiently ; and it was out of my power to think that all she said was foolish.

For I knew common sense pretty well, by this time, whether it happened to be my own, or any other person's, if clearly laid before me. And Lizzie had a particular way of setting forth very clearly whatever she wished to express and enforce. But the queerest part of it all was this, that if she could but have dreamed for a moment what would be the first application made me by of her lesson, she would rather have bitten her tongue off than help me to my purpose.

She told me that in the Arctic Regions, as they call some places a long way north, where the Great Bear lies all across the heavens, and no sun is up, for whole months at a time, and yet where people will go exploring, out of pure contradiction, and for the sake of novelty, and love of being frozen—that here they always had such winters as we were having now. It never ceased to freeze, she said ; and it never ceased to snow ; except when it was too cold ; and than all the air was choked with glittering spikes ; and a man's skin might come off of him, before he could ask the reason. Nevertheless the people there (although the snow was fifty feet deep, and all their breath fell behind them frozen, like a log of wood dropped from their shoulders), yet they managed to get along, and make the time of the year to each other, by a little cleverness. For seeing how the snow was spread, lightly over everything, covering

up the hills and valleys, and the foreskin of the sea, they contrived a way to crown it, and to glide like a flake along. Through the sparkle of the whiteness, and the wreaths of windy tossings, and the ups and downs of cold, any man might get along with a boat on either foot, to prevent his sinking.

She told me how these boats were made ; very strong and very light, of ribs with skin across them ; five feet long, and one foot wide ; and turned up at each end, even as a canoe is. But she did not tell me, nor did I give it a moment's thought myself, how hard it was to walk upon them without early practice. Then she told me another thing equally useful to me ; although I would not let her see how much I thought about it. And this concerned the use of sledges, and their power of gliding, and the lightness of their following ; all of which I could see at once, through knowledge of our own farm-sleds ; which we employ in lieu of wheels, used in flatter districts. When I had heard all this from her, a mere chit of a girl as she was, unfit to make a snowball even, or to fry pancakes, I looked down on her with amazement, and began to wish a little that I had given more time to books.

R. D. BLACKMORE

ROUNDING CAPE HORN

ALAS ! it was only now they were upon the dreaded Cape, their terror throughout their voyage. Instead of proving, as they hoped, a gateway into the soft Pacific, the wild channel was but the avenue to destruction. " The day of our passage was the last cheerful day that the greatest part of us would ever live to enjoy," says the Chaplain, mournfully ; and it is here that the tragic interest of his narrative begins.

Before they were well out of the shadow of the rocks, the terrible truth burst upon them. The blue sky darkened over, the wind changed, the tide turned—"furiously," says the historian. A violent current (he can use no milder words), aided by the "fierceness and constancy of the westerly winds," drove them to eastward. For forty days, almost without intermission, they were driven and tossed, playthings of the waters, up and down in miserable zigzags, about the awful Cape; now menaced by "mountainous waves," any one of which, had it broken fairly over them, would have sent them to the bottom; now dashed almost to pieces by the rolling of the ship—their sails torn off by the winds, split by the frost—their rigging covered with ice, their bodies benumbed and disabled by the cold. Sometimes a fog came on; and the Commodore, himself struggling for bare life, fired forlorn guns every half-hour—flashes of despair to keep the perishing ships together. Yet all this time, in the height of their misery, there still lingered a cheerful assurance of hope. According to all they knew, they had been making their way steadily towards the Pacific. It could not but be near at hand, and their toils near a close. And with every day of storm the longing for that sea of peace, for those isles, and "opulent coasts," must have grown on the weary crews, who, any hour, any moment—so they thought—might suddenly glide into the rippling waters and sunny calm. It may be supposed, accordingly, what was the consternation of the sailors, thus strained to the supreme struggle, when they found that they had been betrayed by an insidious current completely out of their course, and saw once more the awful rocks of Tierra del Fuego frowning out of the mists upon their lee.

Before this time scurvy, most dreaded of all the dangers of a long sea-voyage, had made its fatal

appearance among them. With their feeble old pensioners and rapidly-made-up crews, sickness had been rife in the ships from the very beginning of the voyage ; and it is evident that Anson's good sense and good feeling had forestalled sanitary science so far as to do all that was possible for the ventilation and cleanliness of his crowded vessel. So early as November the sickly condition of the crews and the want of air between the decks had been reported to him ; and by the time they arrived at St. Catherine's it was found necessary to give the *Centurion* a " thorough cleansing, smoking it between the decks, and after all, washing every part well with vinegar," —a precaution made needful by the " noisome stench " and vermin, which had become " intolerably offensive." This being so when things went comparatively well, it may be imagined what these decks must have got to be when every comfort and almost every hope had abandoned the unhappy mass of suffering men, drenched with salt water, frozen with cold, worn with continual labour, who flung themselves upon them to die. During their terrible beatings about Cape Horn, the scurvy took stronger and stronger hold upon them. In April they lost forty-three men from it on board the *Centurion* alone ; in May double that number ; in June, before they reached Juan Fernandez, " the disease extended itself so prodigiously that, after the loss of about two hundred men, we could not at last muster more than six foremast men in a watch capable of duty." The officers themselves (and, still more remarkably, the officers' servants) seem to have escaped the attacks of this disease, fortified either by the tremendous burden of responsibility, or by that curious force of high spirit and finer mettle which carries so many absolutely weaker men through the perils which slay the strongest. Our Chaplain records the character-

istics of the disease with that grave and calm simplicity which distinguishes his style, revealing its full horrors, yet never dwelling unduly on them. Some of its victims, he describes, lay in their hammocks eating and drinking, in cheerful spirits, and with vigorous voices ; yet in a moment, if but moved from one place to another, still in their hammocks, died out of hand, all vital energy being gone from them. Some who thought themselves still able for an attempt at duty would fall down and die among their comrades on attempting a stronger pull or more vigorous strain than usual. Every day, while winds and waves, roaring and threatening round, held over the whole shipload another kind of death, must the dim-eyed mariners with failing strength and sinking spirit have gathered to the funeral of their dead. By this time their companion ships had all disappeared, and the *Centurion* alone, with its sick and dying, tossed about almost at the will of the waves upon that desolate sea. At last there came a moment when, destruction being imminent, " the master and myself," our brave Chaplain, undertook the management of the helm, while every available soul on board set to work to repair and set the sails and secure the masts, to take advantage once more in desperation of a favourable change of wind. This was their last storm ; but not even then were the troubles of this terrible voyage at an end. They missed Juan Fernandez by one of those mistakes which come in with bewildering certainty at such moments of desperation to enhance all sufferings. " The Commodore himself was strongly persuaded that he saw it," but, overpowered by the scepticism of his officers, changed his course in over-precaution. Then at last the high hearts of the expedition gave way. The water was failing, to add to all the rest ; men were dying five and six every day. " A general dejection prevailed among us," says the

historian. It was at this moment, when hope and heart were wellnigh gone, that the island of their hopes, all smiling in the sullen seas, with soft woods and grassy slopes and sweet streams of running water, suddenly burst like a glimpse of paradise upon their hungering eyes.

Nothing can be more touching than the sober, simple story, as it describes this deliverance out of despair. The feeble creatures, to whom water had become the first of luxuries, hastened on deck as fast as their tottering limbs would carry them, to gaze with eyes athirst at a great cascade of living water flinging itself, with the wantonness of nature, over a rock a hundred feet high into the sea. The first boat sent on shore brought back heaps of *grass*, having no time to search for better vegetables. The spectre crew were four hours at work, with the assistance of all the ghosts from below who could keep their feeble legs, to raise the cable, when it was necessary to change their anchorage, and could not manage it with all their united strength. But yet the haven was reached, the tempest over for the moment. The ship had but settled to her moorings when a tiny sail bore bravely up upon the newly arrived, and proved to be the *Trial*, valorous little sloop, which had held its own against all the dangers encountered by the *Centurion*, and now found its way to the trysting-place, with only its captain, lieutenant, and three men able to stand by the sails. A fortnight later, some of the sailors, gazing out from a height upon the sea, saw, or fancied they saw, another sail faintly beating about the horizon. In five days more it appeared again, making feeble futile attempts to enter the safe shelter in which Anson lay. The watchful Commodore sent out instant help, risking his boats and refreshed convalescent men to save his consort, and by this timely help kept them alive,

until, after three weeks or more of fruitless attempts, the *Gloucester* at last got into the bay, having lost three-fourths of her crew. Three weather-beaten hulks, with torn sails and broken masts ; three groups of worn-out men escaped as from the dead, looked each other in the face in this lull of fate. With the whisper of the soft woods in their ears, and delicious noise and tinkle of running water, instead of the roaring of the winds and the sea, what salutations, from the edge of the grave, must have been theirs ! The brave Commodore set to work, without the loss of an hour, to remove the sick to shore : not a man among them laboured harder than he, the leader, and his officers followed his example, willingly or unwillingly. From one vessel after another the helpless and suffering were landed, to be healed and soothed out of their miseries. Green things of better quality than grass, and fresh fish, and flesh of goats, and new-made bread, consoled the worn-out wretches, and rest stole into the souls of the almost lost. Anson for his own part, with a touch of sentiment which speaks out of the utter silence in which he is content to leave himself, with a power beyond that of words, chose for himself an idyllic resting-place in this moment of repose.

" I despair of conveying an adequate idea of its beauty," says our Chaplain—who, let us hope, shared it with his master. " The piece of ground that he chose was a small lawn that lay on a little ascent, at the distance of about half a mile from the sea. In the front of his tent there was a large avenue cut through the woods to the seaside, which, sloping to the water with a gentle descent, opened a prospect of the bay and the ships at anchor. This lawn was screened behind by a tall wood of myrtle, sweeping round it in the form of a theatre.

. . . There were, besides, two streams of crystal water which ran on the right and left of the tent, within one hundred yards' distance, and were shaded by the trees which skirted the lawn on either side."

He thinks some faint idea of " the elegance of this situation " may be gleaned from a print which, unfortunately, is not to be found in the edition before us. A certain suppressed poetry of mind must have been in the man who, after such desperate encounter with primitive dangers, pitched his lonely tent between those running rills, with the bay and his ships at anchor softly framed at his feet by the sweet myrtle boughs. Does not the reader hear the sudden hush in the stormy strain—

" A sound as of a hidden brook,
In the leafy month of June."

With what a profound harmony does this momentary vision of repose and tender quiet fall into the tale, all ajar with the danger of warring winds and waves !

While Anson was drawing this breath of tranquillity and health, and taking up again, undismayed, the thread of his plans against the enemy, the other admiral, Vernon, with his splendid fleet and armament, had collapsed all into nothing. Long before, indeed, in April, while dauntless Anson, without a thought of turning back in his mind, was going through his agony round Cape Horn, the struggle was over for that rival who had outshone, outnumbered, and swallowed up his poor little expedition. The big fleet which sailed amid the cheers of England had beat back, all broken, disgraced, and discomfited, to Jamaica—driven miserably away from before the face of that old Spanish foreshadowing of a grim Sebastopol, known as Carthagena—ere our little squadron painfully got itself together in the bay,

at Juan Fernandez. Our Commodore, of course, could know nothing of that disaster, and indeed was still pondering in his mind how even yet, even now, his ragged shipwrecked band might carry something home to balance the conquests of those rustling gallants. Never could a greater contrast have been; and it was well for England that the chief seaman of so critical an age was not poor popular Vernon recriminating with his General at Jamaica, but Anson, musing alone on the island lawn, just out of the jaws of death, planning a thousand daring adventures, with his eyes fixed on the deceitful quiet of that Southern Sea.

MRS. OLIPHANT

THE PUNISHMENT OF SHAHPESH, THE PERSIAN, ON KHIPIL, THE BUILDER

THEY relate that Shahpesh, the Persian, commanded the building of a palace, and Khipil was his builder. The work lingered from the first year of the reign of Shahpesh even to his fourth. One day Shahpesh went to the riverside where it stood, to inspect it. Khipil was sitting on a marble slab among the stones and blocks; round him stretched lazily the masons and stonecutters and slaves of burden; and they with the curve of humorous enjoyment on their lips, for he was reciting to them adventures, interspersed with anecdotes and recitations and poetic instances, as was his wont. They were like pleased flocks whom the shepherd hath led to a pasture freshened with brooks, there to feed indolently; he, the shepherd, in the midst.

Now, the King said to him, "O Khipil, show me my palace where it standeth, for I desire to gratify my sight with its fairness."

Khipil abased himself before Shahpesh, and answered, " 'Tis even here, O King of the age, where thou delightest the earth with thy foot and the ear of thy slave with sweetness. Surely a site of vantage, one that dominateth earth, air, and water, which is the builder's first and chief requisition for a noble palace, a palace to fill foreign kings and sultans with the distraction of envy ; and it is, O Sovereign of the time, a site, this site I have chosen, to occupy the tongues of travellers and awaken the flights of poets ! "

Shahpesh smiled and said, " The site is good ! I laud the site ! Likewise I laud the wisdom of Ebn Busrac, where he exclaims :—

" ' Be sure, where Virtue faileth to appear,
For her a gorgeous mansion men will rear ;
And day and night her praises will be heard,
Where never yet she spake a single word.' "

Then said he, " O Khipil, my builder, there was once a farm-servant that, having neglected in the seed-time to sow, took to singing the richness of his soil when it was harvest, in proof of which he displayed the abundance of weeds that coloured the land everywhere. Discover to me now the completeness of my halls and apartments, I pray thee, O Khipil, and be the excellence of thy construction made visible to me ! "

Quoth Khipil, " To hear is to obey."

He conducted Shahpesh among the unfinished saloons and imperfect courts and roofless rooms, and by half-erected obelisks, and columns pierced and chipped, of the palace of his building. And he was bewildered at the words spoken by Shahpesh ; but now the King exalted him, and admired the perfection of his craft, the greatness of his labour, the speediness of his construction, his assiduity ; feigning not to behold his negligence.

Presently they went up winding balusters to a marble terrace, and the King said, " Such is thy devotion and constancy in toil, O Khipil, that thou shalt walk before me here."

He then commanded Khipil to precede him, and Khipil was heightened with the honour. When Khipil had paraded a short space he stopped quickly, and said to Shahpesh, " Here is, as it chanceth, a gap, O King ! and we can go no further this way."

Shahpesh said, " All is perfect, and it is my will thou delay not to advance."

Khipil cried, " The gap is wide, O mighty King, and manifest, and it is an incomplete part of thy palace."

Then said Shahpesh, " O Khipil, I see no distinction between one part and another ; excellent are all parts in beauty and proportion, and there can be no part incomplete in this palace that occupieth the builder four years in its building : so advance, do my bidding."

Khipil yet hesitated, for the gap was of many strides, and at the bottom of the gap was a deep water, and he one that knew not the motion of swimming. But Shahpesh ordered his guard to point their arrows in the direction of Khipil, and Khipil stepped forward hurriedly, and fell in the gap, and was swallowed by the water below. When he rose the second time, succour reached him, and he was drawn to land trembling, his teeth chattering. And Shahpesh praised him, and said, " This is an apt contrivance for a bath, Khipil, O my builder ! well conceived ; one that taketh by surprise ; and it shall be thy reward daily when much talking hath fatigued thee."

Then he bade Khipil lead him to the hall of state. And when they were there Shahpesh said, " For a privilege, and as a mark of my approbation, I give

thee permission to sit in the marble chair of yonder throne, even in my presence, O Khipil."

Khipil said, " Surely, O King, the chair is not yet executed."

And Shahpesh exclaimed, " If this be so, thou art but the length of thy measure on the ground, O talkative one ! "

Khipil said, " Nay, 'tis not so, O King of splendours ! blind that I am ! yonder's indeed the chair."

And Khipil feared the King, and went to the place where the chair should be, and bent his body in a sitting posture, eyeing the King, and made pretence to sit in the chair of Shahpesh, as in conspiracy to amuse his master.

Then said Shahpesh, " For a token that I approve thy execution of the chair, thou shalt be honoured by remaining seated in it up to the hour of noon ; but move thou to the right or to the left, showing thy soul insensible of the honour done thee, transfixed thou shalt be with twenty arrows and five."

The King then left him with a guard of twenty-five of his body-guard ; and they stood around him with bent bows, so that Khipil dared not move from his sitting posture. And the masons and the people crowded to see Khipil sitting on his master's chair, for it became rumoured about. When they beheld him sitting upon nothing, and he trembling to stir for fear of the loosening of the arrows, they laughed so that they rolled upon the floor of the hall, and the echoes of laughter were a thousandfold. Surely the arrows of the guards swayed with the laughter that shook them.

Now, when the time had expired for his sitting in the chair, Shahpesh returned to him, and he was cramped, pitiable to see ; and Shahpesh said, " Thou hast been exalted above men, O Khipil ! for that

thou didst execute for thy master has been found fitting for thee."

Then he bade Khipil lead the way to the noble gardens of dalliance and pleasure that he had planted and contrived. And Khipil went in that state described by the poet, when we go draggingly, with remonstrating members,

> " Knowing a dreadful strength behind,
> And a dark fate before."

They came to the gardens, and behold, these were full of weeds and nettles, the fountains dry, no tree to be seen—a desert. And Shahpesh cried, " This is indeed of admirable design, O Khipil ! Feelest thou not the coolness of the fountains ?—their refreshingness ? Truly I am grateful to thee ! And these flowers, pluck me now a handful, and tell me of their perfume."

Khipil plucked a handful of the nettles that were there in the place of flowers, and put his nose to them before Shahpesh, till his nose was reddened ; and desire to rub it waxed in him, and possessed him, and became a passion, so that he could scarce refrain from rubbing it even in the King's presence. And the King encouraged him to sniff and enjoy their fragrance, repeating the poet's words :—

" Methinks I am a lover and a child,
A little child and happy lover, both !
When by the breath of flowers I am beguiled
From sense of pain, and lulled in odorous sloth.
So I adore them, and that no mistress sweet
Seems worthier of the love which they awake :
In innocence and beauty more complete,
Was never maiden cheek in morning lake.
Oh, while I live, surround me with fresh flowers
Oh, when I die, then bury me in their bowers ! "

And the King said, " What sayest thou, O my builder? that is a fair quotation, applicable to thy feelings, one that expresseth them? "

Khipil answered, " 'Tis eloquent, O great King! comprehensiveness would be its portion, but that it alludeth not to the delight of chafing."

Then Shahpesh laughed, and cried, " Chafe not! it is an ill thing and a hideous! This nosegay, O Khipil, it is for thee to present to thy mistress. Truly she will receive thee well after its presentation! I will have it now sent in thy name, with word that thou followest quickly. And for thy nettled nose, surely if the whim seize thee that thou desirest its chafing, to thy neighbour is permitted what to thy hand is refused."

The King set a guard upon Khipil to see that his orders were executed, and appointed a time for him to return to the gardens.

At the hour indicated Khipil stood before Shahpesh again. He was pale, saddened; his tongue drooped like the tongue of a heavy bell, that when it soundeth giveth forth mournful sounds only: he had also the look of one battered with many beatings. So the King said, " How of the presentation of the flowers of thy culture, O Khipil? "

He answered, " Surely, O King, she received me with wrath, and I am shamed by her."

And the King said, " How of my clemency in the matter of the chafing? "

Khipil answered, " O King of splendours I made petition to my neighbours whom I met, accosting them civilly and with imploring, for I ached to chafe and it was the very raging thirst of desire to chafe that was mine, devouring eagerness for solace of chafing. And they chafed me, O King; yet not in those parts which throbbed for the chafing, but in those which abhorred it."

Then Shahpesh smiled and said, " 'Tis certain that the magnanimity of monarchs is as the rain that falleth, the sun that shineth : and in this spot it fertilizeth richness ; in that encourageth rankness. So art thou but a weed, O Khipil ! and my grace is thy chastisement."

Now, the King ceased not persecuting Khipil, under pretence of doing him honour and heaping favours on him. Three days and three nights was Khipil gasping without water, compelled to drink of the drought of the fountain, as an honour at the hands of the King. And he was seven days and seven nights made to stand with stretched arms, as they were the branches of a tree, in each hand a pomegranate. And Shahpesh brought the people of his court to regard the wondrous pomegranate-shoot planted by Khipil, very wondrous, and a new sort, worthy the gardens of a King. So the wisdom of the King was applauded, and men wotted he knew how to punish offences in coin, by the punishment inflicted on Khipil, the builder. Before that time his affairs had languished, and the currents of business instead of flowing had become stagnant pools. It was the fashion to do as did Khipil, and fancy the tongue a constructor rather than a commentator ; and there is a doom upon that people and that man which runneth to seed in gabble, as the poet says in his wisdom :

" If thou wouldst be famous, and rich in splendid fruits,
Leave to bloom the flower of things, and dig among the roots."

Truly after Khipil's punishment there were few in the dominions of Shahpesh who sought to win the honours bestowed by him on gabblers and idlers : as again the poet :

" When to loquacious fools with patience rare
I listen, I have thoughts of Khipil's chair:
His bath, his nosegay, and his fount I see—
Himself stretch'd out as a pomegranate-tree.
And that I am not Shahpesh I regret,
So to inmesh the babbler in his net.
Well is that wisdom worthy to be sung,
Which raised the Palace of the Wagging Tongue ! "

And whoso is punished after the fashion of Shahpesh, the Persian, on Khipil, the Builder, is said to be one " in the Palace of the Wagging Tongue " to this time.

GEORGE MEREDITH

THE MOCK TURTLE'S STORY

" ONCE," said the Mock Turtle at last, with a deep sigh, " I was a real Turtle."

These words were followed by a very long silence, broken only by an occasional exclamation of " Hjckrrh ! " from the Gryphon, and the constant heavy sobbing of the Mock Turtle. Alice was very nearly getting up and saying " Thank you, sir, for your interesting story," but she could not help thinking there *must* be more to come, so she sat still and said nothing.

" When we were little," the Mock Turtle went on at last, more calmly, though still sobbing a little now and then, " we went to school in the sea. The master was an old Turtle—we used to call him Tortoise——"

" Why did you call him Tortoise, if he wasn't one ? " Alice asked.

" We called him Tortoise because he taught us," said the Mock Turtle angrily : " really you are very dull ! "

" You ought to be ashamed of yourself for asking

such a simple question," added the Gryphon ; and then they both sat silent and looked at poor Alice, who felt ready to sink into the earth. At last the Gryphon said to the Mock Turtle, " Drive on, old fellow ! Don't be all day about it ! " and he went on in these words :

" Yes, we went to school in the sea, though you mayn't believe it——"

" I never said I didn't ! " interrupted Alice.

" You did," said the Mock Turtle.

" Hold your tongue ! " added the Gryphon, before Alice could speak again. The Mock Turtle went on :—

" We had the best of educations—in fact, we went to school every day——"

" *I've* been to a day-school, too," said Alice ; " you needn't be so proud as all that."

" With extras ? " asked the Mock Turtle a little anxiously.

" Yes," said Alice, " we learned French and music."

" And washing ? " said the Mock Turtle.

" Certainly not ! " said Alice indignantly.

" Ah ! then yours wasn't a really good school," said the Mock Turtle in a tone of great relief. " Now at *ours* they had at the end of the bill, ' French, music, *and washing*—extra.' "

" You couldn't have wanted it much," said Alice ; " living at the bottom of the sea."

" I couldn't afford to learn it," said the Mock Turtle with a sigh. " I only took the regular course."

" What was that ? " inquired Alice.

" Reeling and Writhing, of course, to begin with," the Mock Turtle replied ; " and then the different branches of Arithmetic—Ambition, Distraction, Uglification, and Derision."

" I never heard of ' Uglification,' " Alice ventured to say. " What is it ? "

The Gryphon lifted up both its paws in surprise. "Never heard of uglifying!" it exclaimed. "You know what to beautify is, I suppose?"

"Yes," said Alice doubtfully: "it means—to—make—anything—prettier."

"Well, then," the Gryphon went on, "if you don't know what to uglify is, you are a simpleton."

Alice did not feel encouraged to ask any more questions about it, so she turned to the Mock Turtle, and said, "What else had you to learn?"

"Well, there was Mystery," the Mock Turtle replied, counting off the subjects on his flappers, "—Mystery, ancient and modern, with Seaography: then Drawling—the Drawling-master was an old conger-eel, that used to come once a week: *he* taught us Drawling, Stretching, and Fainting in Coils."

"What was *that* like?" said Alice.

"Well, I can't show it you myself," the Mock Turtle said: "I'm too stiff. And the Gryphon never learnt it."

"Hadn't time," said the Gryphon: "I went to the Classical master, though. He was an old crab, *he* was."

"I never went to him," the Mock Turtle said with a sigh: "he taught Laughing and Grief, they used to say."

"So he did, so he did," said the Gryphon, sighing in his turn: and both creatures hid their faces in their paws.

"And how many hours a day did you do lessons?" said Alice, in a hurry to change the subject.

"Ten hours the first day," said the Mock Turtle: "nine the next, and so on."

"What a curious plan!" exclaimed Alice.

"That's the reason they're called lessons," the Gryphon remarked: "because they lessen from day to day."

This was quite a new idea to Alice, and she thought it over a little before she made her next remark. "Then the eleventh day must have been a holiday."

"Of course it was," said the Mock Turtle.

"And how did you manage on the twelfth?" Alice went on eagerly.

"That's enough about lessons," the Gryphon interrupted in a very decided tone.

LEWIS CARROLL

THE RIGHTS OF ANIMALS

IT will be seen from the foregoing chapters that the Erewhonians are a meek and long-suffering people, easily led by the nose, and quick to offer up common sense at the shrine of logic, when a philosopher arises among them, who carries them away through his reputation for especial learning, or by convincing them that their existing institutions are not based on the strictest principles of morality.

The series of revolutions on which I shall now briefly touch shows this even more plainly than the way (already dealt with) in which at a later date they cut their throats in the matter of machinery; for if the second of the two reformers of whom I am about to speak had had his way—or rather the way that he professed to have—the whole race would have died of starvation within a twelvemonth. Happily common sense, though she is by nature the gentlest creature living, when she feels the knife at her throat, is apt to develop unexpected powers of resistance, and to send doctrinaires flying, even when they have bound her down and think they have her at their mercy. What happened, so far as I could collect it from the best authorities, was as follows:—

Some two thousand five hundred years ago the

Erewhonians were still uncivilised, and lived by hunting, fishing, a rude system of agriculture, and plundering such few other nations as they had not yet completely conquered. They had no schools or systems of philosophy, but by a kind of dog-knowledge did that which was right in their own eyes and in those of their neighbours; the common sense, therefore, of the public being as yet unvitiated, crime and disease were looked upon much as they are in other countries.

But with the gradual advance of civilisation and increase in material prosperity, people began to ask questions about things that they had hitherto taken as matters of course, and one old gentleman, who had great influence over them by reason of the sanctity of his life, and his supposed inspiration by an unseen power, whose existence was now beginning to be felt, took it into his head to disquiet himself about the rights of animals—a question that so far had disturbed nobody.

All prophets are more or less fussy, and this old gentleman seems to have been one of the more fussy ones. Being maintained at the public expense, he had ample leisure, and not content with limiting his attention to the rights of animals, he wanted to reduce right and wrong to rules, to consider the foundations of duty and of good and evil, and otherwise to put all sorts of matters on a logical basis, which people whose time is money are content to accept on no basis at all.

As a matter of course, the basis on which he decided that duty could alone rest was one that afforded no standing-room for many of the old-established habits of the people. These, he assured them, were all wrong, and whenever anyone ventured to differ from him, he referred the matter to the unseen power with which he alone was in direct communication, and the unseen power invariably assured him that he was right. As regards the rights of animals he taught as follows :—

" You know," he said, " how wicked it is of you to kill one another. Once upon a time your forefathers made no scruple about not only killing, but also eating their relations. No one would now go back to such detestable practices, for it is notorious that we have lived much more happily since they were abandoned. From this increased prosperity we may confidently deduce the maxim that we should not kill and eat our fellow-creatures. I have consulted the higher power by whom you know that I am inspired, and he has assured me that this conclusion is irrefragable.

" Now it cannot be denied that sheep, cattle, deer, birds, and fishes are our fellow-creatures. They differ from us in some respects, but those in which they differ are few and secondary, while those that they have in common with us are many and essential. My friends, if it was wrong of you to kill and eat your fellow-men, it is wrong also to kill and eat fish, flesh, and fowl. Birds, beasts, and fishes have as full a right to live as long as they can unmolested by man, as man has to live unmolested by his neighbours. These words, let me again assure you, are not mine, but those of the higher power which inspires me.

" I grant," he continued, " that animals molest one another, and that some of them go so far as to molest man, but I have yet to learn that we should model our conduct on that of the lower animals. We should endeavour, rather, to instruct them, and bring them to a better mind. To kill a tiger, for example, who has lived on the flesh of men and women whom he has killed, is to reduce ourselves to the level of the tiger, and is unworthy of people who seek to be guided by the highest principles in all, both their thoughts and actions.

" The unseen power who has revealed himself to me alone among you, has told me to tell you that you ought by this time to have outgrown the barbarous

habits of your ancestors. If, as you believe, you know better than they, you should do better. He commands you, therefore, to refrain from killing any living being for the sake of eating it. The only animal food that you may eat, is the flesh of any birds, beasts, or fishes that you may come upon as having died a natural death, or any that may have been born prematurely, or so deformed that it is a mercy to put them out of their pain ; you may also eat all such animals as have committed suicide. As regards vegetables you may eat all those that will let you eat them with impunity."

So wisely and so well did the old prophet argue, and so terrible were the threats he hurled at those who should disobey him, that in the end he carried the more highly educated part of the people with him, and presently the poorer classes followed suit, or professed to do so. Having seen the triumph of his principles, he was gathered to his fathers, and no doubt entered at once into full communion with that unseen power whose favour he had already so pre-eminently enjoyed.

He had not, however, been dead very long, before some of his more ardent disciples took it upon them to better the instruction of their master. The old prophet had allowed the use of eggs and milk, but his disciples decided that to eat a fresh egg was to destroy a potential chicken, and that this came to much the same as murdering a live one. Stale eggs, if it was quite certain that they were too far gone to be able to be hatched, were grudgingly permitted, but all eggs offered for sale had to be submitted to an inspector, who, on being satisfied that they were addled, would label them " Laid not less than three months " from the date, whatever it might happen to be. These eggs, I need hardly say, were only used in puddings, and as a medicine in certain cases where an emetic

was urgently required. Milk was forbidden inasmuch as it could not be obtained without robbing some calf of its natural sustenance, and thus endangering its life.

It will be easily believed that at first there were many who gave the new rules outward observance, but embraced every opportunity of indulging secretly in those flesh-pots to which they had been accustomed. It was found that animals were continually dying natural deaths under more or less suspicious circumstances. Suicidal mania, again, which had hitherto been confined exclusively to donkeys, became alarmingly prevalent even among such for the most self-respecting creatures as sheep and cattle. It was astonishing how some of these unfortunate animals would scent out a butcher's knife if there was one within a mile of them, and run right up against it if the butcher did not get it out of their way in time.

Dogs, again, that had been quite law-abiding as regards domestic poultry, tame rabbits, sucking pigs, or sheep and lambs, suddenly took to breaking beyond the control of their masters, and killing anything that they were told not to touch. It was held that any animal killed by a dog had died a natural death, for it was the dog's nature to kill things, and he had only refrained from molesting farmyard creatures hitherto because his nature had been tampered with. Unfortunately the more these unruly tendencies became developed, the more the common people seemed to delight in breeding the very animals that would put temptation in the dog's way. There is little doubt, in fact, that they were deliberately evading the law ; but whether this was so or no they sold or ate everything their dogs had killed.

Evasion was more difficult in the case of the larger animals, for the magistrates could not wink at all the pretended suicides of pigs, sheep, and cattle that were brought before them. Sometimes they had to convict,

and a few convictions had a very terrorising effect—whereas in the case of animals killed by a dog, the marks of the dog's teeth could be seen, and it was practically impossible to prove malice on the part of the owner of the dog.

Another fertile source of disobedience to the law was furnished by a decision of one of the judges that raised a great outcry among the more fervent disciples of the old prophet. The judge held that it was lawful to kill any animal in self-defence, and that such conduct was so natural on the part of a man who found himself attacked, that the attacking creature should be held to have died a natural death. The High Vegetarians had indeed good reason to be alarmed, for hardly had this decision become generally known before a number of animals, hitherto harmless, took to attacking their owners with such ferocity that it became necessary to put them to a natural death. Again, it was quite common at that time to see the carcase of a calf, lamb, or kid exposed for sale with a label from the inspector certifying that it had been killed in self-defence. Sometimes even the carcase of a lamb or calf was exposed as "warranted still-born," when it presented every appearance of having enjoyed at least a month of life.

As for the flesh of animals that had *bona fide* died a natural death, the permission to eat it was nugatory, for it was generally eaten by some other animal before man got hold of it; or failing this it was often poisonous, so that practically people were forced to evade the law by some of the means above spoken of, or to become vegetarians. This last alternative was so little to the taste of the Erewhonians, that the laws against killing animals were falling into desuetude, and would very likely have been repealed, but for the breaking out of a pestilence, which was ascribed by the priests and prophets of the day to the lawless-

ness of the people in the matter of eating forbidden flesh. On this, there was a reaction ; stringent laws were passed, forbidding the use of meat in any form or shape, and permitting no food but grain, fruits, and vegetables to be sold in shops and markets. These laws were enacted about two hundred years after the death of the old prophet who had first unsettled people's minds about the rights of animals ; but they had hardly been passed before people again began to break them.

I was told that the most painful consequence of all this folly did not lie in the fact that law-abiding people had to go without animal food—many nations do this and seem none the worse, and even in flesh-eating countries such as Italy, Spain, and Greece, the poor seldom see meat from year's end to year's end. The mischief lay in the jar which undue prohibition gave to the consciences of all but those who were strong enough to know that though conscience as a rule boons, it can also bane. The awakened conscience of an individual will often lead him to do things in haste that he had better have left undone, but the conscience of a nation awakened by a respectable old gentleman who has an unseen power up his sleeve will pave hell with a vengeance.

Young people were told that it was a sin to do what their fathers had done unhurt for centuries ; those, moreover, who preached to them about the enormity of eating meat, were an unattractive academic folk, and though they over-awed all but the bolder youths, there were few who did not in their hearts dislike them. However much the young person might be shielded, he soon got to know that men and women of the world—often far nicer people than the prophets who preached abstention—continually spoke sneeringly of the new doctrinaire laws, and were believed to set them aside in secret, though they dared not do

so openly. Small wonder, then, that the more human among the student classes were provoked by the touch-not, taste-not, handle-not precepts of their rulers, into questioning much that they would otherwise have unhesitatingly accepted.

One sad story is on record about a young man of promising amiable disposition, but cursed with more conscience than brains, who had been told by his doctor (for as I have above said disease was not yet held to be criminal) that he ought to eat meat, law or no law. He was much shocked and for some time refused to comply with what he deemed the unrighteous advice given him by his doctor; at last, however, finding that he grew weaker and weaker, he stole secretly on a dark night into one of those dens in which meat was surreptitiously sold, and bought a pound of prime steak. He took it home, cooked it in his bedroom, when every one in the house had gone to rest, ate it, and though he could hardly sleep for remorse and shame, felt so much better next morning that he hardly knew himself.

Three or four days later, he again found himself irresistibly drawn to this same den. Again he bought a pound of steak, again he cooked and ate it, and again, in spite of much mental torture, on the following morning felt himself a different man. To cut the story short, though he never went beyond the bounds of moderation, it preyed upon his mind that he should be drifting, as he certainly was, into the ranks of the habitual law-breakers.

All the time his health kept on improving, and though he felt sure that he owed this to the beef-steaks, the better he became in body, the more his conscience gave him no rest; two voices were for ever ringing in his ears—the one saying, "I am Common Sense and Nature; heed me, and I will reward you as I rewarded your fathers before you." But

the other voice said : " Let not that plausible spirit lure you to your ruin. I am Duty ; heed me, and I will reward you as I rewarded your fathers before you."

Sometimes he even seemed to see the faces of the speakers. Common Sense looked so easy, genial, and serene, so frank and fearless, that do what he might he could not mistrust her ; but as he was on the point of following her, he would be checked by the austere face of Duty, so grave, but yet so kindly ; and it cut him to the heart that from time to time he should see her turn pitying away from him as he followed after her rival.

The poor boy continually thought of the better class of his fellow-students, and tried to model his conduct on what he thought was theirs. " They," he said to himself, " eat a beefsteak ? Never." But they most of them ate one now and again, unless it was a mutton chop that tempted them. And they used him for a model much as he did them. " He," they would say to themselves, " eat a mutton chop? Never." One night, however, he was followed by one of the authorities, who was always prowling about in search of law-breakers, and was caught coming out of the den with half a shoulder of mutton concealed about his person. On this, even though he had not been put in prison, he would have been sent away with his prospects in life irretrievably ruined ; he therefore hanged himself as soon as he got home.

SAMUEL BUTLER

THE HAPPY THINKER IS CALLED

SECOND day at Boodels. 6.30 A.M. *exact* time.—It's wonderful to me how Boodels (of Boodels) manages to get up at half-past six in the morning, after going

to bed at 3.20. He *does* do it, with a horn, too, which he comes to my bedside and blows (*his* idea of hearty fun !) and with dogs, which he brings into one's room. I didn't see the animals last night ; now I do. I don't like them—at least, in my bedroom. There's one Skye, a black-and-tan, a pug, and an undecided terrier. He explains that two of 'em always sleep in his room, and he then makes them jump on my bed.

Happy Thought.—Always lock your bedroom door, on account of sleep-walkers. I recollect a story of a monk stabbing a mattress, and somebody going mad afterwards, which shows how necessary it is to lock the door of your cell. At all events, it keeps out any one with a horn, and dogs.

6.35.—Boodels says (while dogs are scampering about), " Lovely morning, old boy," and pulls up my blinds. I like to find out it's a lovely morning for myself, and pull up my own blinds, or else I get a headache. The undecided terrier and the pug are growling at what they can see of me above the counterpane. I try (playfully, of course, because Boodels is my host) to kick them off, but they only snap at my toes. Boodels says, " They think they're rats. Ah, they're as sensible as Christians, when they know you." They don't know me, however, and go on taking my toes for rats.

6.35 to 6.45.—Boodels says, " We'll have a little air, eh ? " and opens both windows. He says, " There, that's better." I reply, " Yes, that's better," and turn on my side, trying to imagine, by shutting my eyes, that Boodels, with dogs, is not in the room.

Happy Thought (*made in my note-book suddenly under the clothes. Always have note-book under my pillow, while collecting materials.*) " Poodles " rhymes to " Boodles."

He then says, examining his horn, " This is how

they get you up in Switzerland ; " and then he blows it by way of illustration. He says, " That wouldn't come in badly in an entertainment, would it ? " He suggests that it would come in capitally when I give a public reading. At this point, the voice of James, the footman, summons the dogs below. Rush—scamper—rush—avalanche of dogs heard tumbling downstairs.

Boodels says, " James always feeds 'em." I reply, sleepily, " Very kind." Boodel says, " What ? " I answer, rather louder, that " it's very kind," and keep my eyes shut. Boodels won't take a hint. He goes on—" Look at this horn ! ain't it a rum 'un ? " and I am obliged to open my eyes again. I ask him, feebly, " where he got it ? " Boodels says " What ? " (I begin to think he's deaf.) And I have to repeat, " Where did you get it ? " He then begins a story about a fellow in Switzerland, who, etc., which I lose about the middle, and am recalled to consciousness by his shaking the pillow, and saying " Hi ! Hi ! You're asleep ! " I explain, as if hurt by the insinuation, " No, only thinking." Whereupon Boodels says, " Ought to *think* about getting up." [This is what *he* calls being happy at a repartee. I find he rather prides himself on this.] " Breakfast in half an hour ? " I say, " Yes, in half an hour," lazily. He is silent for a minute. I doze. He then says, " What ? " And I repeat, more lazily, to show him I've no idea of getting up yet awhile, " Yes, in half an hour." Boodels goes away. I doze. He reappears, to ask me some question which begins, " Oh, do you think that——" But he changes his mind, and says, " Ah, well, it doesn't matter ! " adding, in a tone of remonstrance " You're not getting up ! " and disappears again, leaving, as I afterwards found, the door open.

I doze * * * * Something in my room. I look, inquiringly, over the side of the bed. A bulldog, alone !

White, with bandy legs, a black muzzle, and showing his teeth : what a fancier, I believe, would call a beauty. Don't know how to treat bulldogs. Wish Boodels would shut the door when he goes out. I look at the dog. The dog doesn't stir but twitches his nostrils up and down. I *never* saw a dog do that before. I say to myself, in order to inspirit myself, " He can't make me out." I really don't like to get up while he's there.

Happy Thought.—To keep my eye on him, sternly. He keeps his eye more sternly on me. Failure.

Happy Thought.—To pat the bed-clothes and say " Poor old boy, then ! Did um, a poor old fellow, then ! a leetle mannikin, then ; a poo' little chappy man, then "—and other endearing expressions : his eye still on me unflinchingly. Then in a laudatory tone, " He was a fine dog then, he was ! " and encouragingly, " Old boy, then ! old fellow ! " His eye is mistrustful ; bulldogs never growl when they're going to fly at you ; he doesn't growl.

Happy Thought.—If you hit a bulldog over the front legs, he's done. If not, I suppose you're done. [This for my chapter, in *Typical Developments*, on " Nature's Defences." If you wound a lion in his forepaw, he'll come up to you. On second thought, p'raps, he'd come up to you if you didn't. Bulldogs always spring at your throat. If in bed, you can avoid that by getting under the clothes.

Happy Thought.—One ought always to have a bell by the bed in case of robbers, and a pistol.

7·45.—The dog has been here for a quarter of an hour and I can't get up. Willks, the butler, appears with my clothes and hot water. The dog welcomes him—so do I, gratefully. He says, " Got Grip up here

with you, Sir? He don't *h*offen make friends with strangers." I say, without explanation, "Fine dog, that," as if I'd had him brought to my room to be admired. Willks, the butler, informs me that "Master wouldn't take forty pounds for that dog, Sir"; and I say, with surprise, "Wouldn't he?" Butler repeats, "No, Sir, not forty pounds—he's been offered thirty." Whereupon, finding I've been on a wrong tack (*N.B.* Never be on a wrong tack with the butler), I observe, knowingly, as if I was making a bargain, "Ah, I should have thought about thirty—not more, though." Butler says, "Yes, Sir, Master could get that," and I answer positively, "Oh, yes, of course," which impresses the butler with the notion that I'd give it myself any day of the week. Think the butler likes me better after this: because if I'd give thirty pounds for a dog, what would I give to a Butler?

I calculate upon getting ten minutes more in bed. "What's the exact time?" The butler has a watch, and is ready. "8.10." "*Exact?*" "Exact." "Then" (by way of a further delay) "bring my clothes, please." They are here. "Oh, well" (last attempt), "my boots." Been here some time. Then I *must* get up, that's all. That *is* all, and I get up.

SIR FRANCIS BURNAND

LA GIOCONDA

La Gioconda is, in the truest sense, Leonardo's masterpiece, the revealing instance of his mode of thought and work. In suggestiveness, only the *Melancholia* of Dürer is comparable to it; and no crude symbolism disturbs the effect of its subdued and graceful mystery. We all know the face and hands of the figure, set in its marble chair, in that circle of fantastic rocks, as in some faint light under

sea. Perhaps of all ancient pictures time has chilled it least. As often happens with works in which invention seems to reach its limit, there is an element in it given to, not invented by, the master. In that inestimable folio of drawings, once in the possession of Vasari, were certain designs by Verrocchio, faces of such impressive beauty that Leonardo in his boyhood copied them many times. It is hard not to connect with these designs of the elder, by-past master, as with its germinal principle, the unfathomable smile, always with a touch of something sinister in it, which plays over all Leonardo's work. Besides, the picture is a portrait. From childhood we see this image defining itself on the fabric of his dreams ; and but for express historical testimony, we might fancy that this was but his ideal lady, embodied and beheld at last. What was the relationship of a living Florentine to this creature of his thought ? By what strange affinities had the dream and the person grown up thus apart, and yet so closely together ? Present from the first incorporeally in Leonardo's brain, dimly traced in the designs of Verrocchio, she is found present at last in *Il Giocondo's* house. That there is much of mere portraiture in the picture is attested by the legend that by artificial means, the presence of mimes and flute-players, that subtle expression was protracted on the face. Again, was it in four years and by renewed labour never really completed, or in four months and as by stroke of magic, that the image was projected ?

The presence that rose thus so strangely beside the waters is expressive of what in the ways of a thousand years men had come to desire. Hers is the head upon which all " the ends of the world are come," and the eyelids are a little weary. It is a beauty wrought out from within upon the flesh, the deposit, little cell by cell, of strange thoughts and fantastic reveries and

exquisite passions. Set it for a moment beside one of those white Greek goddesses or beautiful women of antiquity, and how would they be troubled by this beauty, into which the soul with all its maladies has passed! All the thoughts and experience of the world have etched and moulded there, in that which they have of power to refine and make expressive the outward form, the animalism of Greece, the lust of Rome, the mysticism of the middle age with its spiritual ambition and imaginative loves, the return of the Pagan world, the sins of the Borgias. She is older than the rocks among which she sits; like the vampire, she has been dead many times, and learned the secrets of the grave; and has been a diver in deep seas, and keeps their fallen day about her; and trafficked for strange webs with Eastern merchants: and, as Leda, was the mother of Helen of Troy, and, as Saint Anne, the mother of Mary; and all this has been to her but as the sound of lyres and flutes, and lives only in the delicacy with which it has moulded the changing lineaments, and tinged the eyelids and the hands. The fancy of a perpetual life, sweeping together ten thousand experiences, is an old one; and modern philosophy has conceived the idea of humanity as wrought upon by, and summing up in itself, all modes of thought and life. Certainly Lady Lisa might stand as the embodiment of the old fancy, the symbol of the modern idea.

WALTER PATER

THE BATTLE OF CANNAE

THE delay of the last few days seemed irksome enough to the rival armies; but what must it have seemed to the citizens at home? News had reached the city that the armies were facing each other, and

that everything was prepared for a decisive conflict. They had ventured their all, or nearly their all, on this one throw. The stake was laid down, and the throw must be made, but it was hard to have so much time to ask themselves what if they should lose? Omens and portents seemed to fill the air, as before the Trasimene Lake, and busy-tongued rumour passed from mouth to mouth, sending the citizens in crowds to the temples to seek from the gods by supplications what they could no longer gain or lose by any exertions of their own. It was the resource of the destitute, and they knew it, but it helped them to kill the period of suspense.

Once more it was Varro's turn for the command, and as the sun rose he began to transfer his army to the northern side of the river, and after joining the contingent in the smaller camp there, drew the whole out in battle array, facing the south. Nearly opposite Cannae the Aufidus, whose general course is north-east, takes a sharp bend to the south. Afterwards, for some distance, it runs east, and then, once more, turning northward, reaches the line of its former course. The loop or link thus formed Hannibal marked out as the grave of the Roman army, the grave of fifty thousand men; and into it, as a preparatory step, he now threw his own small force, while Varro was crossing the stream higher up. His infantry did not number half that of the Romans; but they were many of them veterans, and all of them men on whom he knew by experience that he could rely. His cavalry were only slightly superior in numbers to the enemy, but how vastly superior in every military quality the result was to prove. In the centre of his line of battle were the Spaniards, clothed in white tunics edged with purple, and armed with swords equally suited for thrusting or for striking. Next them were the Gauls, who, naked to the waist,

and armed with long swords, fitted to their gigantic stature, but pointless, and therefore suited for striking only, seemed as though they were the warriors of Brennus come to life again with one more terrible than many Brennuses to lead them. This part of his force Hannibal threw forward in the form of a semicircle or a wedge, while, on their flanks and some way to the rear, he placed the best part of his infantry, the heavy-armed Africans, eager, many of them, doubtless, to flesh, for the first time, in Roman hearts the Roman weapons which they bore. Beyond these again, and forming the left wing of the whole army, were the heavy Gallic and African cavalry, eight thousand strong. On the right wing he posted his light-armed Numidians, reduced by the waste of life attending such campaigns as Hannibal's to two thousand men all told, but with spirit and fidelity enough to their great leader to fight on to their very last man and last horse. Hasdrubal led the heavy cavalry on the left, and Maharbal the Numidians on the right, while Hannibal, with his brother Mago near him, stationed himself in the centre to direct the general operations of the battle. He had been obliged to leave ten thousand men on the other side of the river to guard his camp against surprise, and was able therefore to put only thirty thousand men into line of battle : thirty thousand against the Roman eighty thousand ! The odds were heavy indeed against him in point of numbers ; but it must be remembered that his wings rested on the sides of the loop which he had himself selected, and could not be outflanked by the enemy. Varro, whether because he distrusted his raw levies, or because he saw, when it was too late to remedy it, that unless he massed his troops together, half of his whole army would be outside the fray, increased the depth of his maniples from ten to sixteen, hoping by sheer weight to bear down all resistance

and drive the Carthaginians into the river. He was, in fact, only penning his sheep more closely for the slaughter.

After the usual preliminary skirmish of the light-armed troops, the eight thousand heavy cavalry on Hannibal's left charged the two thousand four hundred Roman cavalry opposed to them. These last were picked men, belonging, most of them, to the best Roman families, men of equestrian and senatorial rank. They withstood the charge bravely for a time, and grappled horse to horse and man to man with the barbarians. But they were overpowered by numbers, and only a small remnant escaped from the field. Unlike Rupert at Naseby, Hasdrubal held his eager cavalry well in hand. He forbade them to pursue those who were already routed, and passing behind the whole Roman line fell on the rear of the Italian cavalry, who were stationed on the other wing, and who had hitherto been held in check by the skilful evolutions of the mere handful of Numidians. These admirable horsemen had avoided coming to close quarters, in which they must have been crushed by numbers, but had managed to keep their vastly more numerous enemy employed till Hasdrubal came thundering on their rear. Attacked now by the uninjured Numidians in front and by Hasdrubal's cavalry, flushed with success, behind, the Italian cavalry broke and fled. Hasdrubal, not yet sated with victory, left the Numidians to render an account of their flying foes, and turned his attention to the Roman centre. Here, so far, matters had gone well for the Romans ; but it was so far only. The semicircle of Gauls and Spaniards whom Hannibal had pushed forward in his centre, had been gradually forced back, or rather had fallen back in accordance with his plan, first to a level with, and then right past, the heavy Africans on their flanks. The convex line

of battle had thus become concave, and it seemed that the whole would be driven headlong into the river by the overwhelming masses of the Romans, who, as they yielded, kept pressing on, or were themselves pressed on by those behind and at their flanks, into every inch of ground left vacant for them. But just at the critical moment Hasdrubal fell upon their rear, and the heavy Libyan infantry, who had hardly yet taken part in the battle, wheeling inward at the same time from right and left, attacked them on both flanks. Denser and denser grew the mass of terrified Romans, pressed on all four sides at once. Huddled together without room to draw, much less to wield, their swords, they stood or struggled in helpless imbecility, seeing their comrades on the circumference of the fatal circle cut down, one after the other, and doomed to wait in patience till their own turn should come. The question was no longer whether, but simply when, the stroke would fall on each. Few Romans indeed within that fatal ring were destined to escape. As at the Trasimene, it was a simple butchery ; but it was a butchery which required treble the number of victims. The Romans were never cowards, but those who stood near the centre of that seething mass must needs have died, like cowards, many times before their death. " The thicker the hay," said Alaric long afterwards, in an outburst of brutality, " the easier it is mown." But not even Alaric's imagination could have pictured such a harvest of death as this of Cannae, and even the muscles of his brawny Visigoths would have been wearied out before they had slain, as the Carthaginians did on this fatal day, a number of the enemy which, man for man, vastly exceeded their own.

For eight hours the work of destruction went on, and at the end not less than fifty thousand men lay dead upon the ground. Æmilius Paullus, the Illyrian

hero, who, though wounded by a sling early in the day, had clung to his horse, heartening on his men, till he dropped exhausted from his saddle ; the proconsul Servilius ; the late high-spirited Master of the Horse Minucius ; both quaestors, twenty-one military tribunes, sixty senators, and an unknown number of knights, were among the slain. Nearly twenty thousand Roman prisoners were taken, whether on the field itself, in the pursuit, or in the two camps which were among the prizes of Hannibal's gigantic victory. Of the rest, Varro, with a few horsemen only, had the good or the ill fortune to escape to Venusia ; and it was with difficulty that, after some days, he managed to rally a few thousand stragglers or malingerers at Canusium—all that now remained of the Roman army. Amidst all this slaughter, the conqueror had lost only five thousand five hundred of his infantry, and but two hundred of those matchless cavalry to whom the victory was mainly due. " Send me on with the cavalry," said Maharbal to Hannibal, in the exultation of the moment, " do thou follow behind, and, in five days, thou shalt sup in the Capitol." He might well think so at the time, for the worst fears of the Romans, the highest hopes of Hannibal, had been more than realised ; the double stake had been played and had been lost—lost, it would seem then—irretrievably. So many knights lay dead that, as the story goes, Mago, when sent, some time afterwards, by Hannibal to Carthage with tidings of his victory, emptied on the floor of the Senate-house three bushels of golden rings taken from equestrian fingers. It was a trophy of victory which the Carthaginian aristocracy, who, as has been already pointed out, commemorated the number of their campaigns by that of their rings, and who had, many of them, joined the opposition to the noble Barcine gens, could not fail to appreciate.

The news, which was necessarily slow in reaching Carthage, reached Rome apace. It was, as the saying is, " in the air " even before the first courier with his disastrous tidings appeared at the Appian gate, and rumour, as was natural, went even beyond the truth. It was believed that both consuls were dead and that no portion of the army had survived. Livy, the most graphic of historians or of romancers, fairly shrinks from the attempt to picture the scene of horror which followed. Each flying messenger, as he reached the walls, fancied himself, or was fancied by the Romans, to be but the forerunner of the dread Hannibal himself. He knew not, indeed, as he drew near the city, whether the Numidian cavalry were not, even then, before him, as their own messengers. A panic-stricken multitude, thinking that all save their lives was lost, made for the gates, and, for a moment it seemed likely that Hannibal when he came would find Rome indeed, but no Roman citizens within her.

Any other state must have succumbed to such a blow ; but now, as after the Trasimene, it was the Senate, or what remained of it, who saved the city from being abandoned by her own children. They alone preserved their presence of mind ; and it was the old ex-dictator, Fabius, who was, once more, the soul of their deliberations. By his advice the gates were closed to prevent the exodus of the inhabitants. The citizens should not be saved, so he willed it, unless the city was saved with them. Messengers were sent along the southern military roads to see, as Livy pathetically expresses it, " if the gods, touched by one pang of pity, had left aught remaining to the Roman name," and to bring the first tidings of the expected advance of Hannibal. It was difficult for the Senate to deliberate at all ; for the cries of thousands of women outside the Senate-house, who

were bewailing their absent husbands, or fathers, or sons, as though they were all dead, drowned the voices of those who spoke. Orders were issued that the women, if wail they must, should wail within their own houses, and henceforward silence, mournful indeed, but dignified, was observed in the public streets. All assemblies of the people were prohibited. M. Junius Pera was named Dictator, the city legions were called out; the whole male population—some fourteen thousand slaves and criminals, and boys still clothed in the garb of childhood among them—were armed, and the angry gods were propitiated, as best they might, by the punishment of guilty Vestals, and by the burying alive of Greek and Gallic men and women in the Roman Forum.

After a few days more hopeful news came. A despatch arrived from Varro himself, saying that he had escaped from the carnage, and was doing his best to reorganise and to rally the ten thousand demoralised fugitives who had, at last, found their way to Canusium. More important still, Hannibal was not on his way to Rome, but was still encamped on the field of Cannae. The Romaners breathed more freely; but from other parts of the Roman world tidings of fresh danger, fresh disaster, or fresh shame came pouring in. One Carthaginian fleet was threatening Lilybaeum, another Syracuse. The force sent northwards to watch the Gauls had fallen into an ambuscade and had been cut off to a man. Worse still, a body of Roman nobles who had escaped from Cannae, thinking that all was lost save their honour, had determined, regardless even of their honour, to fly beyond the seas, and would have carried their purpose out had not the young Scipio rushed in amongst them, sword in hand, and sworn that he would slay anyone who would not bind himself never to desert his country.

And why did not Hannibal march at once on the panic-stricken city? Roman historians and Roman generals could not refrain from expressing their thankfulness and their surprise at his dilatoriness or his blindness. In Juvenal's time Roman schoolboys declaimed upon it in their weekly themes. Maharbal, the master of the Numidian cavalry—if, indeed, the story be true, and not what the Romans imagined ought to have been true—exclaimed, in an outburst of vexation at the chance which was thrown away, that the gods had taught Hannibal how to win, but not how to use, a victory; and the greatest master of modern warfare, Napoleon himself, has joined in the general chorus of condemnation. But perhaps the best and the all-but-sufficing answer to those who say that Hannibal ought to have advanced on Rome, is the simple fact that Hannibal himself, the foremost general of all time, and statesman as well as general, did not attempt it. Moreover, all the arguments which, we have seen, held good after Trasimene against such an advance, held equally good now. There were still the stone walls of the city. There was still the population of Latium and of the surrounding country, as yet untouched by the war, hostile to him to a man; still—after the first few days of panic, of which Hannibal, laden with booty and with half Italy between him and Rome, could hardly have taken advantage—the unbroken resolution of the citizens themselves. Hannibal never liked sieges, and was seldom successful in those he undertook; he forbore at this moment to besiege even Canusium with its feeble and panic-stricken defenders. Finally, his long-cherished hope of the defection of the Italian allies seemed now at length to be not only within his sight, but, if only he was patient or prudent, already almost within his grasp. The battle of Cannae had been too much for the resolution of Apulia; Samnium had

already in part joined him ; Lucania and Bruttium rose in revolt. The Greek cities in the south were prepared to hail him as their deliverer ; Campania, it was whispered, was wavering in the balance, and ready at the sight of the conqueror to go over to Carthage. Thus deprived of her allies, Rome, he hoped, would fall almost by her own weight.

Never did the self-control and the true nobility of soul of Hannibal, never did the unbending resolution of the Roman Senate, display itself more conspicuously than at this moment. Never in the very moment of victory did Hannibal lose his head. The good of his country was even now nearer to his heart—and doubtless it was the only thing that was nearer to his heart—than his hatred to Rome. Thinking that it might be advantageous to Carthage to conclude peace, and that she might now do so almost on her own terms, he called the Roman prisoners together—almost the only occasion in his life on which he brought himself to speak a friendly word to any Roman—and told them that he did not wish that the strife which he was waging should be internecine ; he was willing to take a ransom for them, and some of their number might go on their parole to Rome to negotiate the matter. Even in the first flush of his victory, he bade Carthalo offer terms of peace, if he saw that the Roman wishes turned in that direction. But the Romans also rose to the emergency. Fifty years before, as has been already related, they had told the victorious Epirot that Rome never negotiated with an enemy so long as he was on Italian soil ; and the answer which they had given to Pyrrhus then in words, they gave now to a general greater than Pyrrhus, and crowned with a far more overwhelming victory, by their deeds. They spoke no word and thought no thought of peace. Their want of troops was urgent, but they refused, as the story goes, to buy

with money men who had disgraced themselves by surrender ; and when Varro neared the city, obnoxious though he was to the aristocracy on account of his low birth and his career, and branded with the defeat of Cannae, not one word of reproach was uttered against him. His efforts only, not his failures or mistakes, were remembered, and the citizens went forth in a body to meet him, and thanked him, in words that are ever memorable, for not having despaired of the republic. The Roman historians have a right, here at least, to congratulate themselves that they were not as were the Carthaginians. The defeated Roman general received a vote of thanks for his unsuccessful efforts ; a defeated Carthaginian would have been nailed to a cross.

R. Bosworth Smith

EGDON HEATH

A saturday afternoon in November was approaching the time of twilight, and the vast tract of unenclosed wild known as Egdon Heath embrowned itself moment by moment. Overhead the hollow stretch of whitish cloud shutting out the sky was as a tent which had the whole heath for its floor.

The heaven being spread with this pallid screen and the earth with the darkest vegetation, their meeting-line at the horizon was clearly marked. In such contrast the heath wore the appearance of an instalment of night which had taken up its place before its astronomical hour was come : darkness had to a great extent arrived hereon, while day stood distinct in the sky. Looking upwards, a furze-cutter would have been inclined to continue work ; looking down, he would have decided to finish his faggot and go home. The distant rims of the world and of the firma-

ment seemed to be a division in time no less than a division in matter. The face of the heath by its mere complexion added half an hour to evening ; it could in like manner retard the dawn, sadden noon, anticipate the frowning of storms scarcely generated, and intensify the opacity of a moonless midnight to a cause of shaking and dread.

In fact, precisely at this transitional point of its nightly roll into darkness the great and particular glory of the Egdon waste began, and nobody could be said to understand the heath who had not been there at such a time. It could best be felt when it could not clearly be seen, its complete effect and explanation lying in this and the succeeding hours before the next dawn : then, and only then, did it tell its true tale. The spot was, indeed, a near relation of night, and when night showed itself an apparent tendency to gravitate together could be perceived in its shades and the scene. The sombre stretch of rounds and hollows seemed to rise and meet the evening gloom in pure sympathy, the heath exhaling darkness as rapidly as the heavens precipitated it. And so the obscurity in the air and the obscurity in the land closed together in a black fraternization towards which each advanced half-way.

The place became full of a watchful intentness now ; for when other things sank brooding to sleep the heath appeared slowly to awake and listen. Every night its Titanic form seemed to await something ; but it had waited thus, unmoved, during so many centuries, through the crises of so many things, that it could only be imagined to await one last crisis—the final overthrow.

It was a spot which returned upon the memory of those who loved it with an aspect of peculiar and kindly congruity. Smiling champaigns of flowers and fruit hardly do this, for they are permanently har-

monious only with an existence of better reputation as to its issues than the present. Twilight combined with the scenery of Egdon Heath to evolve a thing majestic without severity, impressive without showiness, emphatic in its admonitions, grand in its simplicity. The qualifications which frequently invest the façade of a prison with far more dignity than is found in the façade of a palace double its size lent to this heath a sublimity in which spots renowned for beauty of the accepted kind are utterly wanting. Fair prospects wed happily with fair times ; but alas, if times be not fair ! Men have oftener suffered from the mockery of a place too smiling for their reason than from the oppression of surroundings oversadly tinged. Haggard Egdon appealed to a subtler and scarcer instinct, to a more recently learnt emotion, than that which responds to the sort of beauty called charming and fair.

Indeed, it is a question if the exclusive reign of this orthodox beauty is not approaching its last quarter. The new Vale of Tempe may be a gaunt waste in Thule : human souls may find themselves in closer and closer harmony with external things wearing a sombreness distasteful to our race when it was young. The time seems near, if it has not actually arrived, when the chastened sublimity of a moor, a sea, or a mountain will be all of nature that is absolutely in keeping with the moods of the more thinking among mankind. And ultimately, to the commonest tourist, spots like Iceland may become what the vineyards and myrtle-gardens of South Europe are to him now ; and Heidelberg and Baden be passed unheeded as he hastens from the Alps to the sand-dunes of Scheveningen.

The most thorough-going ascetic could feel that he had a natural right to wander on Egdon : he was keeping within the line of legitimate indulgence when

he laid himself open to influences such as these. Colours and beauties so far subdued were, at least, the birthright of all. Only in summer days of highest feather did its mood touch the level of gaiety. Intensity was more usually reached by way of the solemn than by way of the brilliant, and such a sort of intensity was often arrived at during winter darkness, tempests, and mists. Then Egdon was aroused to reciprocity ; for the storm was its lover, and the wind its friend. Then it became the home of strange phantoms ; and it was found to be the hitherto unrecognised original of those wild regions of obscurity which are vaguely felt to be compassing us about in midnight dreams of flight and disaster, and are never thought of after the dream till revived by scenes like this.

It was at present a place perfectly accordant with man's nature—neither ghastly, hateful, nor ugly : neither commonplace, unmeaning, nor tame ; but, like man, slighted and enduring ; and withal singularly colossal and mysterious in its swarthy monotony. As with some persons who have long lived apart, solitude seemed to look out of its countenance. It had a lonely face, suggesting tragical possibilities.

THOMAS HARDY

THE GREAT FOREST AFTER LONDON

THE old men say their fathers told them that soon after the fields were left to themselves a change began to be visible. It became green everywhere in the first spring, after London ended, so that all the country looked alike.

The meadows were green, and so was the rising wheat which had been sown, but which neither had nor would receive any further care. Such arable

fields as had not been sown, but where the last stubble had been ploughed up, were overrun with couch-grass, and where the short stubble had not been ploughed, the weeds hid it. So that there was no place which was not more or less green ; the foot-paths were the greenest of all, for such is the nature of grass where it has once been trodden on, and by-and-by, as the summer came on, the former roads were thinly covered with the grass that had spread out from the margin.

In the autumn, as the meadows were not mown, the grass withered as it stood, falling this way and that, as the wind had blown it ; the seeds dropped, and the bennets became a greyish-white, or, where the docks and sorrel were thick, a brownish-red. The wheat, after it had ripened, there being no one to reap it, also remained standing, and was eaten by clouds of sparrows, rooks, and pigeons, which flocked to it and were undisturbed, feasting at their pleasure. As the winter came on, the crops were beaten down by the storms, soaked with the rain, and trodden upon by herds of animals.

Next summer the prostrate straw of the preceding year was concealed by the young green wheat and barley that sprang up from the grain sown by dropping from the ears, and by quantities of docks, thistles, oxeye daisies, and similar plants. This matted mass grew up through the bleached straw. Charlock, too, hid the rotting roots in the fields under a blaze of yellow flower. The young spring meadow-grass could scarcely push its way up through the long dead grass and bennets of the year previous, but docks and thistles, sorrel, wild carrots, and nettles, found no such difficulty.

Footpaths were concealed by the second year, but roads could be traced, though as green as the sward, and were still the best for walking, because the tangled

wheat and weeds, and, in the meadows, the long grass, caught the feet of those who tried to pass through. Year by year the original crops of wheat, barley, oats, and beans asserted their presence by shooting up, but in gradually diminished force, as nettles and coarser plants, such as the wild parsnips, spread out into the fields from the ditches and choked them.

Aquatic grasses from the furrows and water-carriers extended in the meadows, and, with the rushes, helped to destroy or take the place of the former sweet herbage. Meanwhile the brambles, which grew very fast, had pushed forward their prickly runners farther and farther from the hedges till they had now reached ten or fifteen yards. The briars had followed, and the hedges had widened to three or four times their first breadth, the fields being equally contracted. Starting from all sides at once, these brambles and briars in the course of about twenty years met in the centre of the largest fields.

Hawthorn bushes sprang up among them, and, protected by the briars and thorns from grazing animals, the suckers of elm-trees rose and flourished. Sapling ashes, oaks, sycamores, and horse-chestnuts lifted their heads. Of old time the cattle would have eaten off the seed leaves with the grass so soon as they were out of the ground, but now most of the acorns that were dropped by birds, and the keys that were wafted by the wind, twirling as they floated, took root and grew into trees. By this time the brambles and briars had choked up and blocked the former roads, which were as impassable as the fields.

No fields, indeed, remained, for where the ground was dry, the thorns, briars, brambles, and saplings already mentioned filled the space, and these thickets and the young trees had converted most part of the country into an immense forest. Where the ground was naturally moist, and the drains had become choked

with willow roots, which, when confined in tubes, grow into a mass like the brush of a fox, sedges and flags and rushes covered it. Thorn bushes were there too, but not so tall ; they were hung with lichen. Besides the flags and reeds, vast quantities of the tallest cow-parsnips or " gicks " rose five or six feet high, and the willow herb with its stout stem, almost as woody as a shrub, filled every approach.

By the thirtieth year there was not one single open place, the hills only excepted, where a man could walk, unless he followed the tracks of wild creatures or cut himself a path. The ditches, of course, had long since become full of leaves and dead branches, so that the water which should have run off down them stagnated, and presently spread out into the hollow places and by the corner of what had once been fields, forming marshes where the horsetails, flags, and sedges hid the water.

As no care was taken with the brooks, the hatches upon them gradually rotted, and the force of the winter rains carried away the weak timbers, flooding the lower grounds, which became swamps of larger size. The dams, too, were drilled by water-rats, and the streams percolating through, slowly increased the size of these tunnels till the structure burst, and the current swept on and added to the floods below. Mill-dams stood longer, but, as the ponds silted up, the current flowed round and even through the mill-houses, which, going by degrees to ruin, were in some cases undermined till they fell.

Everywhere the lower lands adjacent to the streams had become marshes, some of them extending for miles in a winding line, and occasionally spreading out to a mile in breadth. This was particularly the case where brooks and streams of some volume joined the rivers, which were also blocked and obstructed in their turn, and the two, overflowing, covered the country around ;

for the rivers brought down trees and branches, timbers floated from the shore, and all kinds of similar materials, which grounded in the shallows or caught against snags, and formed huge piles where there had been weirs.

Sometimes, after great rains, these piles swept away the timbers of the weir, driven by the irresistible power of the water, and then in its course the flood, carrying the balks before it like battering rams, cracked and split the bridges of solid stone which the ancients had built. These and the iron bridges likewise were overthrown, and presently quite disappeared, for the very foundations were covered with the sand and gravel silted up.

Thus, too, the sites of many villages and towns that anciently existed along the rivers, or on the lower lands adjoining, were concealed by the water and the mud it brought with it. The sedges and reeds that arose completed the work and left nothing visible, so that the mighty buildings of olden days were by these means utterly buried. And, as has been proved by those who have dug for treasures, in our time the very foundations are deep beneath the earth, and not to be got at for the water that oozes into the shafts that they have tried to sink through the sand and mud banks.

From an elevation, therefore, there was nothing visible but endless forest and marsh. On the level ground and plains the view was limited to a short distance, because of the thickets and the saplings which had now become young trees. The downs only were still partially open, yet it was not convenient to walk upon them except in the tracks of animals, because of the long grass which, being no more regularly grazed upon by sheep, as was once the case, grew thick and tangled. Furze, too, and heath covered the slopes, and in places vast quantities of fern. There had always been copses of fir and beech

and nut-tree covers, and these increased and spread, while bramble, briar, and hawthorn extended around them.

By degrees the trees of the vale seemed as it were to invade and march up the hills, and, as we see in our time, in many places the downs are hidden altogether with a stunted kind of forest. But all the above happened in the time of the first generation. Besides these things a great physical change took place; but, before I speak of that, it will be best to relate what effects were produced upon animals and men.

In the first years after the fields were left to themselves, the fallen and over-ripe corn crops became the resort of innumerable mice. They swarmed to an incredible degree, not only devouring the grain upon the straw that had never been cut, but clearing out every single ear in the wheat-ricks that were standing about the country. Nothing remained in these ricks but straw, pierced with tunnels and runs, the home and breeding-place of mice, which thence poured forth into the fields. Such grain as had been left in barns and granaries, in mills, and in warehouses of the deserted towns, disappeared in the same manner.

When men tried to raise crops in small gardens and enclosures for their sustenance, these legions of mice rushed in and destroyed the produce of their labour. Nothing could keep them out, and if a score were killed, a hundred more supplied their place. These mice were preyed upon by kestrel hawks, owls, and weasels; but at first they made little or no appreciable difference. In a few years, however, the weasels, having such a superabundance of food, trebled in numbers, and in the same way the hawks, owls, and foxes increased. There was then some relief, but even now at intervals districts are invaded, and the granaries and the standing corn suffer from these depredations.

This does not happen every year, but only at intervals, for it is noticed that mice abound very much more in some seasons than others. The extraordinary multiplication of these creatures was the means of providing food for the cats that had been abandoned in the towns, and came forth into the country in droves. Feeding on the mice, they became, in a very short time, quite wild, and their descendants now roam the forests.

In our houses we still have several varieties of the domestic cat, such as the tortoise-shell, which is the most prized, but when the above-mentioned cats became wild, after a while the several varieties disappeared, and left but one wild kind. Those which are now so often seen in the forest, and which do so much mischief about houses and enclosures, are almost all greyish, some being striped, and they are also much longer in the body than the tame. A few are jet black; their skins are then preferred by hunters.

Though the forest cat retires from the sight of man as much as possible, yet it is extremely fierce in defence of its young, and instances have been known where travellers in the woods have been attacked upon unwittingly approaching their dens. Dropping from the boughs of a tree upon the shoulders, the creature flies at the face, inflicting deep scratches and bites, exceedingly painful, and sometimes dangerous, from the tendency to fester. But such cases are rare, and the reason the forest cat is so detested is because it preys upon fowls and poultry, mounting with ease the trees or places where they roost.

Almost worse than the mice were the rats, which came out of the old cities in such vast numbers that the people who survived and saw them are related to have fled in fear. This terror, however, did not last so long as the evil of the mice, for the rats,

probably not finding sufficient food when together, scattered abroad, and were destroyed singly by the cats and dogs, who slew them by thousands, far more than they could afterwards eat, so that the carcases were left to decay. It is said that, overcome with hunger, these armies of rats in some cases fell upon each other, and fed on their own kindred. They are still numerous, but do not appear to do the same amount of damage as is occasionally caused by the mice, when the latter invade the cultivated lands.

The dogs, of course, like the cats, were forced by starvation into the fields, where they perished in incredible numbers. Of many species of dogs which are stated to have been plentiful among the ancients, we have now nothing but the name. The poodle is extinct, the Maltese terrier, the Pomeranian, the Italian greyhound, and, it is believed, great numbers of crosses and mongrels have utterly disappeared. There was none to feed them, and they could not find food for themselves, nor could they stand the rigour of the winter when exposed to the frost in the open air.

Some kinds, more hardy and fitted by nature for the chase, became wild, and their descendants are now found in the woods. Of these, there are three sorts which keep apart from each other, and are thought not to interbreed. The most numerous are the black. The black wood-dog is short and stoutly made, with shaggy hair, sometimes marked with white patches.

There can be no doubt that it is the descendant of the ancient sheep-dog, for it is known that the sheep-dog was of that character, and it is said that those who used to keep sheep soon found their dogs abandon the fold, and join the wild troops that fell upon the sheep. The black wood-dogs hunt in packs of ten or more (as many as forty have been counted), and are the pest of the farmer, for, unless his flocks are protected at night within stockades or enclosures, they

are certain to be attacked. Not satisfied with killing enough to satisfy hunger, these dogs tear and mangle for sheer delight of blood, and will destroy twenty times as many as they can eat, leaving the miserably torn carcases on the field. Nor are the sheep always safe by day if the wood-dogs happen to be hungry. The shepherd is, therefore, usually accompanied by two or three mastiffs, of whose great size and strength the others stand in awe. At night, and when in large packs, starving in the snow, not even the mastiffs can check them.

No wood-dog, of any kind, has ever been known to attack man, and the hunter in the forest hears their bark in every direction without fear. It is, nevertheless, best to retire out of their way when charging sheep in packs, for they then seem seized with a blind fury, and some who have endeavoured to fight them have been thrown down and seriously mauled. But this has been in the blindness of their rush ; no instance has ever been known of their purposely attacking man.

These black wood-dogs will also chase and finally pull down cattle, if they can get within the enclosures, and even horses have fallen victims to their untiring thirst for blood. Not even the wild cattle can always escape, despite their strength, and they have been known to run down stags, though not their usual quarry.

The next kind of wild wood-dog is the yellow, a smaller animal, with smooth hair inclining to a yellow colour, which lives principally upon game, chasing all from the hare to the stag. It is as swift, or nearly as swift, as the greyhound, and possesses greater endurance. In coursing the hare, it not uncommonly happens that these dogs start from the brake and take the hare, when nearly exhausted, from the hunter's hounds. They will in the same way

follow a stag, which has been almost run down by the hunters, and bring him to bay, though in this case they lose their booty, dispersing through fear of man, when the hunters come up in a body.

But such is their love of the chase, that they are known to assemble from their lairs at the distant sound of the horn, and, as the hunters ride through the woods, they often see the yellow dogs flitting along side by side with them through bush and fern. These animals sometimes hunt singly, sometimes in couples, and as the season advances, and winter approaches, in packs of eight or twelve. They never attack sheep or cattle, and avoid man, except when they perceive he is engaged in the chase. There is little doubt that they are the descendants of the dogs which the ancients called lurchers, crossed, perhaps, with the greyhound, and possibly other breeds. When the various species of dogs were thrown on their own resources, those only withstood the exposure and hardships which were naturally hardy, and possessed natural aptitude for the chase.

The third species of wood-dog is the white. They are low on the legs, of a dingy white colour, and much smaller than the other two. They neither attack cattle nor game, though fond of hunting rabbits. This dog is, in fact, a scavenger, living upon the carcases of dead sheep and animals, which are found picked clean in the night. For this purpose it haunts the neighbourhood of habitations, and prowls in the evening over heaps of refuse, scampering away at the least alarm, for it is extremely timid.

It is perfectly harmless, for even the poultry do not dread it, and it will not face a tame cat, if by chance the two meet. It is rarely met with far from habitations, though it will accompany an army on the march. It may be said to remain in one district. The black and yellow dogs, on the contrary, roam about the

forest without apparent home. One day the hunter sees signs of their presence, and perhaps may, for a month afterwards, not so much as hear a bark.

This uncertainty in the case of the black dog is the bane of the shepherds; for, not seeing or hearing anything of the enemy for months together, in spite of former experience their vigilance relaxes, and suddenly, while they sleep, their flocks are scattered. We still have, among tame dogs, the mastiff, terrier, spaniel, deer-hound, and greyhound, all of which are as faithful to man as ever.

RICHARD JEFFERIES

THE YELLOW PAINT

IN a certain city there lived a physician who sold yellow paint. This was of so singular a virtue that whoso was bedaubed with it from head to heel was set free from the dangers of life, and the bondage of sin, and the fear of death for ever. So the physician said in his prospectus; and so said all the citizens in the city; and there was nothing more urgent in men's hearts than to be properly painted themselves, and nothing they took more delight in than to see others painted. There was in the same city a young man of a very good family but of a somewhat reckless life, who had reached the age of manhood, and would have nothing to say to the paint: "To-morrow was soon enough," said he; and when the morrow came he would still put it off. So he might have continued to do until his death; only, he had a friend of about his own age and much of his own manners; and this youth, taking a walk in the public street, with not one fleck of paint upon his body, was suddenly run down by a water-cart and cut off in the heyday of his nakedness. This shook the other to the soul; so that I

never beheld a man more earnest to be painted ; and on the very same evening, in the presence of all his family, to appropriate music, and himself weeping aloud, he received three complete coats and a touch of varnish on the top. The physician (who was himself affected even to tears) protested he had never done a job so thorough.

Some two months afterwards, the young man was carried on a stretcher to the physician's house.

" What is the meaning of this ? " he cried, as soon as the door was opened. " I was to be set free from all the dangers of life ; and here have I been run down by that self-same water-cart, and my leg is broken."

" Dear me ! " said the physician. " This is very sad. But I perceive I must explain to you the action of my paint. A broken bone is a mighty small affair at the worst of it ; and it belongs to a class of accident to which my paint is quite inapplicable. Sin, my dear young friend, sin is the sole calamity that a wise man should apprehend ; it is against sin that I have fitted you out ; and when you come to be tempted, you will give me news of my paint."

" Oh ! " said the young man, " I did not understand that, and it seems rather disappointing. But I have no doubt all is for the best ; and in the meanwhile, I shall be obliged to you if you will set my leg."

" That is none of my business," said the physician ; " but if your bearers will carry you round the corner to the surgeon's, I feel sure he will afford relief."

Some three years later, the young man came running to the physician's house in a great perturbation. " What is the meaning of this ? " he cried. " Here was I to be set free from the bondage of sin ; and I have just committed forgery, arson, and murder."

" Dear me," said the physician. " This is very serious. Off with your clothes at once." And as soon as the young man had stripped, he examined

him from head to foot. " No," he cried with great relief, " there is not a flake broken. Cheer up, my young friend, your paint is as good as new."

" Good God ! " cried the young man, " and what then can be the use of it ? "

" Why," said the physician, " I perceive I must explain to you the nature of the action of my paint. It does not exactly prevent sin ; it extenuates instead the painful consequences. It is not so much for this world, as for the next ; it is not against life ; in short, it is against death that I have fitted you out. And when you come to die, you will give me news of my paint."

" Oh ! " cried the young man, " I had not understood that, and it seems a little disappointing. But there is no doubt all is for the best : and in the meanwhile, I shall be obliged if you will help me to undo the evil I have brought on innocent persons."

" That is none of my business," said the physician ; " but if you will go round the corner to the police office, I feel sure it will afford you relief to give yourself up."

Six weeks later, the physician was called to the town gaol.

" What is the meaning of this ? " cried the young man. " Here am I literally crusted with your paint ; and I have broken my leg, and committed all the crimes in the calendar, and must be hanged tomorrow ; and am in the meanwhile in a fear so extreme that I lack words to picture it."

" Dear me," said the physician. " This is really amazing. Well, well ; perhaps, if you had not been painted, you would have been more frightened still."

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

THE KING'S STRATAGEM

In the days when Henry the Fourth of France was as yet King of Navarre only, and in that little kingdom of hills and woods which occupies the south-western corner of the larger country, was with difficulty supporting the Huguenot cause against the French court and the Catholic League—in the days when every little moated town, from the Dordogne to the Pyrenees, was a bone of contention between the young king and the crafty queen-mother, Catherine de Medicis, a conference between these warring personages took place in the picturesque town of La Réole. And great was the fame of it.

La Réole still rises grey, time-worn, and half-ruined on a lofty cliff above the broad green waters of the Garonne, forty odd miles from Bordeaux. It is a small place now, but in the days of which we are speaking it was important, strongly fortified, and guarded by a castle which looked down on some hundreds of red-tiled roofs, rising in terraces from the river. As the meeting-place of the two sovereigns it was for the time as gay as Paris itself. Catherine had brought with her a bevy of fair maids of honour, and trusted more perhaps in the effect of their charms than in her own diplomacy. But the peaceful appearance of the town was as delusive as the smooth bosom of the Gironde ; for even while every other house in its streets rang with music and silvery laughter, each party was ready to fly to arms at a word if it saw that any advantage could be gained thereby.

On an evening shortly before the end of the conference two men were seated at play in a room, the deep-embrasured window of which looked down from a considerable height upon the river. The hour was

late ; below them the town lay silent. Outside, the moonlight fell bright and pure on sleeping fields, on vineyards, and dark far-spreading woods. Within the room a silver lamp suspended from the ceiling threw light upon the table, but left the farther parts of the chamber in shadow. The walls were hung with faded tapestry, and on a low bedstead in one corner lay a handsome cloak, a sword, and one of the clumsy pistols of the period. Across a high-backed chair lay another cloak and sword, and on the window seat, beside a pair of saddle-bags, were strewn half a dozen trifles such as soldiers carried from camp to camp—a silver comfit-box, a jewelled dagger, a mask, a velvet cap.

The faces of the players, as they bent over the cards, were in shadow. One—a slight, dark man of middle height, with a weak chin—and a mouth that would have equally betrayed its weakness had it not been shaded by a dark moustache—seemed, from the occasional oaths which he let drop, to be losing heavily. Yet his opponent, a stouter and darker man, with a sword-cut across his left temple, and the swaggering air that has at all times marked the professional soldier, showed no signs of triumph or elation. On the contrary, though he kept silence, or spoke only a formal word or two, there was a gleam of anxiety and suppressed excitement in his eyes ; and more than once he looked keenly at his companion, as if to judge of his feelings or to learn whether the time had come for some experiment which he meditated. But for this, an observer looking in through the window would have taken the two for that common conjunction—the hawk and the pigeon.

At last the younger player threw down his cards, with an exclamation.

" You have the luck of the evil one," he said bitterly. " How much is that ? "

" Two thousand crowns," the other replied without emotion. " You will play no more ? "

" No ! I wish to Heaven I had never played at all ! " was the answer. As he spoke the loser rose, and moving to the window stood looking out. For a few moments the elder man remained in his seat, gazing furtively at him ; at length he too rose, and, stepping softly to his companion, he touched him on the shoulder. " Your pardon a moment, M. le Vicomte," he said. " Am I right in concluding that the loss of this sum will inconvenience you ? "

" A thousand fiends ! " the young gamester exclaimed, turning on him wrathfully. " Is there any man whom the loss of two thousand crowns would not inconvenience ? As for me——"

" For you," the other continued smoothly, filling up the pause, " shall I be wrong in supposing that it means something like ruin ? "

" Well, sir, and if it does ? " the young man retorted, and he drew himself up, his cheek a shade paler with passion. " Depend upon it you shall be paid. Do not be afraid of that ! "

" Gently, gently, my friend," the winner answered, his patience in strong contrast to the other's violence. " I had no intention of insulting you, believe me. Those who play with the Vicomte de Noirterre are not wont to doubt his honour. I spoke only in your own interest. It has occurred to me, Vicomte, that the matter may be arranged at less cost to yourself."

" How ? " was the curt question.

" May I speak freely ? " The Vicomte shrugged his shoulders, and the other, taking silence for consent, proceeded : " You Vicomte, are governor of Lusigny for the King of Navarre ; I, of Créance, for the King of France. Our towns lie but three leagues apart. Could I by any chance, say on one of these fine nights, make myself master of Lusigny, it would

be worth more than two thousand crowns to me. Do you understand ? "

" No," the young man answered slowly, " I do not."

" Think over what I have said, then," was the brief answer.

For a full minute there was silence in the room. The Vicomte gazed from the window with knitted brows and compressed lips, while his companion, seated near at hand, leant back in his chair, with an air of affected carefulness. Outside, the rattle of arms and hum of voices told that the watch were passing through the street. The church bell rang one o'clock. Suddenly the Vicomte burst into a forced laugh, and, turning, took up his cloak and sword. " The trap was well laid, M. le Capitaine," he said almost jovially ; " but I am still sober enough to take care of myself—and of Lusigny. I wish you good night. You shall have your money, do not fear."

" Still, I am afraid it will cost you dearly," the Captain answered, as he rose and moved towards the door to open it for his guest. And then, when his hand was already on the latch, he paused. " My lord," he said, " what do you say to this, then ? I will stake the two thousand crowns you have lost to me, and another thousand to boot—against your town. Oh, no one can hear us. If you win you go off a free man with my thousand. If you lose, you put me in possession—one of these fine nights. Now, that is an offer. What do you say to it ? A single hand to decide."

The younger man's face reddened. He turned ; his eyes sought the table and the cards ; he stood irresolute. The temptation came at an unfortunate moment ; a moment when the excitement of play had given way to depression, and he saw nothing outside the door, on the latch of which his hand was

laid, but the bleak reality of ruin. The temptation to return, the thought that by a single hand he might set himself right with the world was too much for him. Slowly—he came back to the table. "Confound you!" he said passionately. "I think you are the devil himself!"

"Don't talk child's talk!" the other answered coldly, drawing back as his victim advanced. "If you do not like the offer you need not take it."

But the young man was a born gambler, and his fingers had already closed on the cards. Picking them up idly he dropped them once, twice, thrice on the table, his eyes gleaming with the play-fever. "If I win?" he said doubtfully. "What then? Let us have it quite clearly."

"You carry away a thousand crowns," the Captain answered quietly. "If you lose you contrive to leave one of the gates of Lusigny open for me before next full moon. That is all."

"And what if I lose, and do not pay the forfeit?" the Vicomte asked, laughing weakly.

"I trust to your honour," the Captain answered. And, strange as it may seem, he knew his man. The young noble of the day might betray his cause and his trust, but the debt of honour incurred at play was binding on him.

"Well," said the Vicomte, with a deep breath, "I agree. Who is to deal?"

"As you will," the Captain replied, masking under an appearance of indifference an excitement which darkened his cheek, and caused the pulse in the old wound on his face to beat furiously.

"Then do you deal," said the Vicomte.

"With your permission," the Captain assented. And gathering the cards he dealt them with a practised hand, and pushed his opponent's six across to him.

The young man took up the hand and, as he sorted

it, and looked from it to his companion's face, he repressed a groan with difficulty. The moonlight shining through the casement fell in silvery sheen on a few feet of the floor. With the light something of the silence and coolness of the night entered also, and appealed to him. For a few seconds he hesitated. He made even as if he would have replaced the hand on the table. But he had gone too far to retrace his steps with honour. It was too late, and with a muttered word, which his dry lips refused to articulate, he played the first card.

He took that trick and the next ; they were secure.

"And now?" said the Captain who knew well where the pinch came. "What next?"

The Vicomte compressed his lips. Two courses were open to him. By adopting one he could almost for certain win one more trick. By the other he might just possibly win two tricks. He was a gamester, he adopted the latter course. In half a minute it was over. He had lost.

The winner nodded gravely. "The luck is with me still," he said, keeping his eyes on the table that the light of triumph which had leapt into them might not be seen. "When do you go back to your command, Vicomte?"

The unhappy man sat, as one stunned, his eyes on the painted cards which had cost him so dearly. "The day after to-morrow," he muttered at last, striving to collect himself.

"Then shall we say—the following evening?" the Captain asked courteously.

The young man shivered. "As you will," he muttered.

"We quite understand one another," continued the winner, eyeing his man watchfully, and speaking with more urgency. "I may depend on you, M. le Vicomte, I presume—to keep your word?"

" The Noirterres have never been wanting to their word," the young nobleman answered stung into passing passion. " If I live I will put Lusigny into your hands, M. le Capitaine. Afterwards I will do my best to recover it—in another way."

" I shall be most happy to meet you in that way," replied the Captain, bowing lightly. And in one more minute the door of his lodging had closed on the other ; and he was alone—alone with his triumph, his ambition, his hopes for the future—alone with the greatness to which his capture of Lusigny was to be the first step. He would enjoy that greatness not a whit the less because fortune had hitherto dealt out to him more blows than caresses, and he was still at forty, after a score of years of roughest service, the governor of a paltry country town.

Meanwhile, in the darkness of the narrow streets, the Vicomte was making his way to his lodgings in a state of despair difficult to describe, impossible to exaggerate. Chilled, sobered, and affrighted he looked back and saw how he had thrown for all and lost all, how he had saved the dregs of his fortune at the expense of his loyalty, how he had seen a way of escape—and lost it for ever ! No wonder that as he trudged through the mud and darkness of the sleeping town his breath came quickly and his chest heaved, and he looked from side to side as a hunted animal might look, uttering great sighs. Ah, if he could have retraced the last three hours ! If he could have undone that he had done !

In a fever, he entered his lodging, and securing the door behind him stumbled up the stone stairs and entered his room. The impulse to confide his misfortunes to some one was so strong upon him that he was glad to see a dark form half sitting, half lying in a chair before the dying embers of a wood fire. In those days a man's natural confidant was his valet,

the follower, half friend, half servant, who had been born on his estate, who lay on a pallet at the foot of his bed, who carried his *billets-doux* and held his cloak at the duello, who rode near his stirrup in fight and nursed him in illness, who not seldom advised him in the choice of a wife, and lied in support of his suit.

The young Vicomte flung his cloak over a chair. "Get up, you rascal!" he cried impatiently. "You pig, you dog!" he continued, with increasing anger. "Sleeping there as though your master were not ruined by that scoundrel of a Breton! Bah!" he added, gazing bitterly at his follower, "you are of the *canaille*, and have neither honour to lose nor a town to betray!"

The sleeping man moved in his chair but did not awake. The Vicomte, his patience exhausted, snatched the bonnet from his head, and threw it on the ground. "Will you listen?" he said. "Or go, if you choose look for another master. I am ruined! Do you hear? Ruined, Gil! I have lost all—money, land, Lusigny itself—at the cards!"

The man, roused at last, stooped with a sleepy movement, and picking up his hat dusted it with his hand, then rose with a yawn to his feet.

"I am afraid, Vicomte," he said, in tones that, quiet as they were, sounded like thunder in the young man's astonished and bewildered ears, "I am afraid that if you have lost Lusigny—you have lost something which was not yours to lose!"

As he spoke he struck the embers with his boot, and the fire, blazing up, shone on his face. The Vicomte saw, with stupor, that the man before him was not Gil at all—was indeed the last person in the world to whom he should have betrayed himself. The astute smiling eyes, the aquiline nose, the high forehead, and projecting chin, which the short beard and moustache scarcely concealed, were only too well known to

him. He stepped back with a cry of despair. " Sir ! " he said, and then his tongue failed him. His arms dropped by his sides. He stood silent, pale, convicted, his chin on his breast. The man to whom he had confessed his treachery was the master whom he had agreed to betray.

" I had suspected something of this," Henry of Navarre continued, after a lengthy pause, and with a tinge of irony in his tone. " Rosny told me that that old fox, the Captain of Créance, was affecting your company somewhat too much, M. le Vicomte, and I find that, as usual, his suspicions were well-founded. What with a gentleman who shall be nameless, who has bartered a ford and a castle for the favour of Mademoiselle de Luynes, and yourself, and another I know of—I am blest with some faithful followers, it seems ! For shame ! for shame, sir ! " he continued, seating himself with dignity in the chair from which he had risen, but turning it so that he confronted his host, " have you nothing to say for yourself ? "

The young noble stood with bowed head, his face white. This was ruin, indeed, absolute irremediable ruin. " Sir," he said at last, " your Majesty has a right to my life, not to my honour."

" Your honour ! " Henry exclaimed, biting contempt in his tone.

The young man started, and for a second his cheek flamed under the well-deserved reproach ; but he recovered himself. " My debt to your Majesty," he said, " I am willing to pay."

" Since pay you must," Henry muttered softly.

" But I claim to pay also my debt to the Captain of Créance."

The King of Navarre stared. " Oh," he said. " So you would have me take your worthless life, and give up Lusigny ? "

" I am in your hands, sire."

" Pish, sir ! " Henry replied in angry astonishment. " You talk like a child. Such an offer, M. de Noirterre, is folly, and you know it. Now listen to me. It was lucky for you that I came in to-night, intending to question you. Your madness is known to me only, and I am willing to overlook it. Do you hear ? I am willing to pardon. Cheer up, therefore, and be a man. You are young ; I forgive you. This shall be between you and me only," the young prince continued, his eyes softening as the other's head sank lower, " and you need think no more of it until the day when I shall say to you, ' Now, M. de Noirterre, for Navarre and for Henry, strike ! ' "

He rose as the last words passed his lips, and held out his hand. The Vicomte fell on one knee, and kissed it reverently, then sprang to his feet again. " Sire," he said, his eyes shining, " you have punished me heavily, more heavily than was needful. There is only one way in which I can show my gratitude, and that is by ridding you of a servant who can never again look your enemies in the face."

" What new folly is this ? " Henry asked sternly. " Do you not understand that I have forgiven you ? "

" Therefore I cannot give up Lusigny to the enemy, and I must acquit myself of my debt to the Captain of Créance in the only way which remains," the young man replied firmly. " Death is not so hard that I would not meet it twice over rather than again betray my trust."

" This is midsummer madness ! " said the King hotly.

" Possibly," replied the Vicomte, without emotion ; " yet of a kind to which your Grace is not altogether a stranger."

The words appealed to that love of the fanciful and the chivalrous which formed part of the young King's nature, and was one cause alike of his weakness

and his strength. In its more extravagant flights it gave opportunity after opportunity to his enemies, in its nobler and saner expressions it won victories which all his astuteness and diplomacy could not have compassed. He stood now, looking with half-hidden admiration at the man whom two minutes before he had despised.

"I think you are in jest," he said presently and with some scorn.

"No, sir," the young man answered gravely. "In my country they have a proverb about us. 'The Noirterres,' say they, 'have ever been bad players but good payers.' I will not be the first to be worse than my name!"

He spoke with so quiet a determination that the King was staggered, and for a minute or two paced the room in silence, inwardly reviling the obstinacy of this weak-kneed supporter, yet unable to withhold his admiration from it. At length he stopped, with a low exclamation.

"Wait!" he cried. "I have it! *Ventre Saint Gris*, man, I have it!" His eyes sparkled, and, with a gentle laugh, he hit the table a sounding blow. "Ha! ha! I have it!" he repeated gaily.

The young noble gazed at him in surprise, half suspicious, half incredulous. But when Henry in low, rapid tones had expounded his plan, the young man's face underwent a change. Hope and life sprang into it. The blood flew to his cheeks. His whole aspect softened. In a moment he was on his knee, mumbling over the prince's hand, his eyes moist with gratitude. Nor was that all; the two talked long, the murmur of their voices broken more than once by the ripple of laughter. When they at length separated, and Henry, his face hidden by the folds of his cloak, had stolen to his lodgings, where, no doubt, more than one watcher was awaiting him with

a mind full of anxious fears, the Vicomte threw open his window and looked out on the night. The moon had set, but the stars still shone peacefully in the dark canopy above. He remembered, his throat choking with silent emotion, that he was looking towards his home—the round towers among the walnut woods of Navarre which had been in his family since the days of St. Louis, and which he had so lightly risked. And he registered a vow in his heart that of all Henry's servants he would henceforth be the most faithful.

Meanwhile the Captain of Créance was enjoying the sweets of his coming triumph. He did not look out into the night, it is true—he was over old for sentiment—but pacing up and down the room he planned and calculated, considering how he might make the most of his success. He was still comparatively young. He had years of strength before him. He would rise high and higher. He would not easily be satisfied. The times were troubled, opportunities were many, fools not few ; bold men with brains and hands were rare.

At the same time he knew that he could be sure of nothing until Lusigny was actually in his possession ; and he spent the next few days in painful suspense. But no hitch occurred nor seemed likely. The Vicomte made him the necessary communications ; and men in his own pay informed him of dispositions ordered by the governor of Lusigny which left him in no doubt that the loser intended to pay his debt.

It was, therefore, with a heart already gay with anticipation that the Captain rode out of Créance two hours before midnight on an evening eight days later. The night was dark, but he knew his road well. He had with him a powerful force, composed in part of thirty of his own garrison, bold hardy fellows, and in part of six score horsemen, lent him by the governor

of Montauban. As the Vicomte had undertaken to withdraw, under some pretence or other, one-half of his command, and to have one of the gates opened by a trusty hand, the Captain foresaw no difficulty. He trotted along in excellent spirits, now stopping to scan with approval the dark line of his troopers, now to bid them muffle the jingle of their swords and corselets that nevertheless rang sweet music in his ears. He looked for an easy victory ; but it was not any slight misadventure that would rob him of his prey. If necessary he would fight and fight hard. Still, as his company wound along the river-side or passed into the black shadow of the oak grove, which stands a mile to the east of Lusigny, he did not expect that there would be much fighting.

Treachery alone, he thought, could thwart him ; and of treachery there was no sign. The troopers had scarcely halted under the last clump of trees before a figure detached itself from one of the largest trunks, and advanced to the Captain's rein. The Captain saw with surprise that it was the Vicomte himself. For a second he thought that something had gone wrong, but the young noble's first words reassured him. " It is arranged," M. de Noirterre whispered, as the Captain bent down to him. " I have kept my word, and I think that there will be no resistance. The planks for crossing the moat lie opposite the gate. Knock thrice at the latter, and it will be opened. There are not fifty armed men in the place."

" Good ! " the Captain answered, in the same cautious tone. " But you——"

" I am believed to be elsewhere, and must be gone. I have far to ride to-night. Farewell."

" Till we meet again," the Captain answered ; and without more ado he saw his ally glide away and disappear in the darkness. A cautious word set the troop in motion, and a very few minutes saw them

standing on the edge of the moat, the outline of the gateway tower looming above them, a shade darker than the wrack of clouds which overhead raced silently across the sky. A moment of suspense while one and another shivered—for there is that in a night attack which touches the nerves of the stoutest—and the planks were found, and as quietly as possible laid across the moat. This was so skilfully done that it evoked no challenge, and the Captain crossing quickly with a few picked men, stood in the twinkling of an eye under the shadow of the gateway. Still no sound was heard save the hurried breathing of those at his elbow, the stealthy tread of others crossing, the persistent voices of the frogs in the water beneath. Cautiously he knocked three times and waited. The third rap had scarcely sounded before the gate rolled silently open, and he sprang in, followed by his men.

So far so good. A glance at the empty street and the porter's pale face told him at once that the Vicomte had kept his word. But he was too old a soldier to take anything for granted, and forming up his men as quickly as they entered, he allowed no one to advance until all were inside, and then, his trumpet sounding a wild note of defiance, two-thirds of his force sprang forward in a compact body while the other third remained to hold the gate. In a moment the town awoke to find itself in the hands of the enemy.

As the Vicomte had promised, there was no resistance. In the small keep a score of men did indeed run to arms, but only to lay their weapons down without striking a blow when they became aware of the force opposed to them. Their leader, sullenly acquiescing, gave up his sword and the keys of the town to the victorious Captain ; who, as he sat his horse in the middle of the market-place, giving

his orders and sending off riders with the news, already saw himself in fancy Governor of Angoulême and Knight of the Holy Ghost.

As the red light of the torches fell on steel caps and polished hauberks, on the serried ranks of pikemen, and the circle of whitefaced townsfolks, the picturesque old square looked doubly picturesque and he who sat in the midst, its master, doubly a hero. Every five minutes, with a clatter of iron on the rough pavement and a shower of sparks, a horseman sprang away to tell the news at Montauban or Cahors ; and every time that this occurred, the Captain, astride on his charger, felt a new sense of power and triumph.

Suddenly the low murmur of voices about him was broken by a new sound, the distant beat of hoofs, not departing but arriving, and coming each moment nearer. It was but the tramp of a single horse, but there was something in the sound which made the Captain prick his ears, and secured for the arriving messenger a speedy passage through the crowd. Even at the last the man did not spare his horse, but spurred through the ranks to the Captain's very side, and then and then only sprang to the ground. His face was pale, his eyes were bloodshot. His right arm was bound up in blood-stained cloths. With an oath of amazement, the Captain recognised the officer whom he had left in charge of Créance, and he thundered, " What is this ? What is it ? "

" They have got Créance ! " the man gasped, reeling as he spoke. " They have got—Créance ! "

" Who ? " the Captain shrieked, his face purple with rage.

" The little man of Béarn ! The King of Navarre ! He assaulted it five hundred strong an hour after you left, and had the gate down before we could fire a dozen shots. We did what we could, but we were

but one to seven. I swear, Captain, that we did all we could. Look at this ! "

Almost black in the face, the Captain swore another oath. It was not only that he saw governorship and honours vanish like Will-o'-the-wisps, but that he saw even more quickly that he had made himself the laughing-stock of a kingdom ! And that was the truth. To this day, among the stories which the southern French love to tell of the prowess and astuteness of their great Henry, there is none more frequently told, none more frequently made the subject of mirth, than that of the famous exchange of Créance for Lusigny ; the tradition of the move by which, between dawn and sunrise, without warning, without a word, he gave his opponents mate.

STANLEY WEYMAN

JIM

To the white men in the waterside business and to the captains of ships he was just Jim—nothing more. He had, of course, another name, but he was anxious that it should not be pronounced. His incognito, which had as many holes as a sieve, was not meant to hide a personality but a fact. When the fact broke through the incognito he would leave suddenly the seaport where he happened to be at the time and go to another—generally farther east. He kept to seaports because he was a seaman in exile from the sea, and had Ability in the abstract, which is good for no other work but that of a water-clerk. He retreated in good order towards the rising sun, and the fact followed him casually but inevitably. Thus in the course of years he was known successively in Bombay, in Calcutta, in Rangoon, in Penang, in Batavia—and in each of these halting-places was just Jim the water-

clerk. Afterwards, when his keen perception of the Intolerable drove him away for good from seaports and white men, even into the virgin forest, the Malays of the jungle village, where he had elected to conceal his deplorable faculty, added a word to the monosyllable of his incognito. They called him Tuan Jim : as one might say—Lord Jim.

Originally he came from a parsonage. Many commanders of fine merchant-ships come from these abodes of piety and peace. Jim's father possessed such certain knowledge of the Unknowable as made for the righteousness of people in cottages without disturbing the ease of mind of those whom an unerring Providence enables to live in mansions. The little church on a hill had the mossy greyness of a rock seen through a ragged screen of leaves. It had stood there for centuries, but the trees around probably remembered the laying of the first stone. Below, the red front of the rectory gleamed with a warm tint in the midst of grass-plots, flower-beds, and fir-trees, with an orchard at the back, a paved stable-yard to the left, and the sloping glass of green-houses tacked along a wall of bricks. The living had belonged to the family for generations ; but Jim was one of five sons, and when after a course of light holiday literature his vocation for the sea had declared itself, he was sent at once to a " training-ship for officers of the mercantile marine."

He learned there a little trigonometry and how to cross top-gallant yards. He was generally liked. He had the third place in navigation and pulled stroke in the first cutter. Having a steady head with an excellent physique, he was very smart aloft. His station was in the fore-top, and often from there he looked down, with the contempt of a man destined to shine in the midst of dangers, at the peaceful multitude of roofs cut in two by the brown tide of the

stream, while scattered on the outskirts of the surrounding plain the factory chimneys rose perpendicular against a grimy sky, each slender like a pencil, and belching out smoke like a volcano. He could see the big ships departing, the broad-beamed ferries constantly on the move, the little boats floating far below his feet, with the hazy splendour of the sea in the distance, and the hope of a stirring life in the world of adventure.

On the lower deck in the babel of two hundred voices he would forget himself, and beforehand live in his mind the sea-life of light literature. He saw himself saving people from sinking ships, cutting away masts in a hurricane, swimming through a surf with a line ; or as a lonely castaway, barefooted and half naked, walking on uncovered reefs in search of shellfish to stave off starvation. He confronted savages on tropical shores, quelled mutinies on the high seas, and in a small boat upon the ocean kept up the hearts of despairing men—always an example of devotion to duty, and as unflinching as a hero in a book.

" Something's up. Come along."

He leaped to his feet. The boys were streaming up the ladders. Above could be heard a great scurrying about and shouting, and when he got through the hatchway he stood still—as if confounded.

It was the dusk of a winter's day. The gale had freshened since noon, stopping the traffic on the river, and now blew with the strength of a hurricane in fitful bursts that boomed like salvoes of great guns firing over the ocean. The rain slanted in sheets that flicked and subsided, and between whiles Jim had threatening glimpses of the tumbling tide, the small craft jumbled and tossing along the shore, the motionless buildings in the driving mist, the broad ferry-boats pitching ponderously at anchor, the vast landing-stages heaving up and down and smothered in sprays.

The next gust seemed to blow all this away. The air was full of flying water. There was a fierce purpose in the gale, a furious earnestness in the screech of the wind, in the brutal tumult of earth and sky, that seemed directed at him, and made him hold his breath in awe. He stood still. It seemed to him he was whirled around.

He was jostled. "Man the cutter!" Boys rushed past him. A coaster running in for shelter had crashed through a schooner at anchor, and one of the ship's instructors had seen the accident. A mob of boys clambered on the rails, clustered round the davits. "Collision. Just ahead of us. Mr. Symons saw it." A push made him stagger against the mizzen-mast, and he caught hold of a rope. The old training-ship chained to her moorings quivered all over, bowing gently head to wind, and with her scanty rigging humming in a deep bass the breathless song of her youth at sea. "Lower away!" He saw the boat, manned, drop swiftly below the rail, and rushed after her. He heard a splash. "Let go; clear the falls!" He leaned over. The river alongside seethed in frothy streaks. The cutter could be seen in the falling darkness under the spell of tide and wind, that for a moment held her bound, and tossing abreast of the ship. A yelling voice in her reached him faintly: "Keep stroke, you young whelps, if you want to save anybody! Keep stroke!" And suddenly she lifted high her bow, and, leaping with raised oars over a wave, broke the spell cast upon her by the wind and tide.

Jim felt his shoulder gripped firmly. "Too late, youngster." The captain of the ship laid a restraining hand on that boy, who seemed on the point of leaping overboard, and Jim looked up with the pain of conscious defeat in his eyes. The captain smiled sympathetically. "Better luck next time. This will teach you to be smart."

A shrill cheer greeted the cutter. She came dancing back half full of water, and with two exhausted men washing about on her bottom boards. The tumult and the menace of wind and sea now appeared very contemptible to Jim, increasing the regret of his awe at their inefficient menace. Now he knew what to think of it. It seemed to him he cared nothing for the gale. He could affront greater perils. He would do so—better than anybody. Not a particle of fear was left. Nevertheless he brooded apart that evening while the bowman of the cutter—a boy with a face like a girl's and big grey eyes—was the hero of the lower deck. Eager questioners crowded round him. He narrated : " I just saw his head bobbing, and I dashed my boat-hook in the water. It caught in his breeches and I nearly went overboard, as I thought I would, only old Symons let go the tiller and grabbed my legs—the boat nearly swamped. Old Symons is a fine old chap. I don't mind a bit him being grumpy with us. He swore at me all the time he held my leg, but that was only his way of telling me to stick to the boat-hook. Old Symons is awfully excitable—isn't he ? No—not the little fair chap—the other, the big one with a beard. When we pulled him in he groaned, ' Oh, my leg ! oh, my leg ! ' and turned up his eyes. Fancy such a big chap fainting like a girl. Would any of you fellows faint for a jab with a boat-hook ?—I wouldn't. It went into his leg so far." He showed the boat-hook, which he had carried below for the purpose, and produced a sensation. " No, silly ! It was not his flesh that held him—his breeches did. Lots of blood, of course."

Jim thought it a pitiful display of vanity. The gale had ministered to a heroism as spurious as its own pretence of terror. He felt angry with the brutal tumult of earth and sky for taking him unawares and checking unfairly a generous readiness for narrow

escapes. Otherwise he was rather glad he had not gone into the cutter, since a lower achievement had served the turn. He had enlarged his knowledge more than those who had done the work. When all men flinched, then—he felt sure—he alone would know how to deal with the spurious menace of wind and seas. He knew what to think of it. Seen dispassionately, it seemed contemptible. He could detect no trace of emotion in himself, and the final effect of a staggering event was that, unnoticed and apart from the noisy crowd of boys, he exulted with fresh certitude in his avidity for adventure, and in a sense of many-sided courage.

JOSEPH CONRAD

PACKING

WE made a list of the things to be taken, and a pretty lengthy one it was, before we parted that evening. The next day, which was Friday, we got them all together, and met in the evening to pack. We got a big Gladstone for the clothes, and a couple of hampers for the victuals and the cooking utensils. We moved the table up against the window, piled everything in a heap in the middle of the floor, and sat round and looked at it.

I said I'd pack.

I rather pride myself on my packing. Packing is one of those many things that I feel I know more about than any other person living. (It surprises me myself, sometimes, how many of these subjects there are.) I impressed the fact upon George and Harris, and told them that they had better leave the whole matter entirely to me. They fell into the suggestion with a readiness that had something uncanny about it. George put on a pipe and spread himself over the

easy-chair, and Harris cocked his legs on the table and lit a cigar.

This was hardly what I intended. What I had meant, of course, was, that I should boss the job, and that Harris and George should potter about under my directions, I pushing them aside every now and then with, "Oh, you ——!" "Here, let me do it." "There you are, simple enough!"—really teaching them, as you might say. Their taking it in the way they did irritated me. There is nothing does irritate me more than seeing other people sitting about doing nothing when I'm working.

I lived with a man once who used to make me mad that way. He would loll on the sofa and watch me doing things by the hour together, following me round the room with his eyes, wherever I went. He said it did him real good to look on at me, messing about. He said it made him feel that life was not an idle dream to be gaped and yawned through, but a noble task, full of duty and stern work. He said he often wondered now how he could have gone on before he met me, never having anybody to look at while they worked.

Now, I'm not like that. I can't sit still and see another man slaving and working. I want to get up and superintend, and walk round with my hands in my pockets, and tell him what to do. It is my energetic nature. I can't help it.

However, I did not say anything, but started the packing. It seemed a longer job than I had thought it was going to be; but I got the bag finished at last, and I sat on it and strapped it.

"Ain't you going to put the boots in?" said Harris.

And I looked round, and found I had forgotten them. That's just like Harris. He couldn't have said a word until I'd got the bag shut and strapped, of course. And George laughed—one of those irritating

senseless, chuckle-headed, crack-jawed laughs of his. They do make me so wild.

I opened the bag and packed the boots in ; and then, just as I was going to close it, a horrible idea occurred to me. Had I packed my tooth-brush ? I don't know how it is, but I never do know whether I've packed my tooth-brush.

My tooth-brush is a thing that haunts me when I'm travelling, and makes my life a misery. I dream that I haven't packed it, and wake up in a cold perspiration, and get out of bed and hunt for it. And, in the morning, I pack it before I have used it, and have to unpack again to get it, and it is always the last thing I turn out of the bag ; and then I repack and forget it, and have to rush upstairs for it at the last moment and carry it to the railway station, wrapped up in my pocket-handkerchief.

Of course I had to turn every mortal thing out now, and, of course, I could not find it. I rummaged the things up into much the same state that they must have been before the world was created, and when chaos reigned. Of course, I found George's and Harris's eighteen times over, but I couldn't find my own. I put the things back one by one, and held everything up and shook it. Then I found it inside a boot. I repacked once more.

When I had finished, George asked if the soap was in. I said I didn't care a hang whether the soap was in or whether it wasn't ; and I slammed the bag to and strapped it, and found that I had packed my tobacco-pouch in it, and had to re-open it. It got shut up finally at 10.5 P.M., and then there remained the hampers to do. Harris said that we should be wanting to start in less than twelve hours' time, and thought that he and George had better do the rest; and I agreed and sat down, and they had a go.

They began in a light-hearted spirit, evidently in-

tending to show me how to do it. I made no comment; I only waited. When George is hanged Harris will be the worst packer in this world; and I looked at the piles of plates and cups, and kettles, and bottles, and jars, and pies, and stoves, and cakes, and tomatoes, etc., and felt that the thing would soon become exciting.

It did. They started with breaking a cup. That was the first thing they did. They did that just to show you what they *could* do, and to get you interested.

Then Harris packed the strawberry jam on top of a tomato and squashed it, and they had to pick out the tomato with a teaspoon.

And then it was George's turn, and he trod on the butter. I didn't say anything, but I came over and sat on the edge of the table and watched them. It irritated them more than anything I could have said. I felt that. It made them nervous and excited, and they stepped on things, and put things behind them, and then couldn't find them when they wanted them; and they packed the pies at the bottom, and put heavy things on top, and smashed the pies in.

They upset salt over everything, and as for the butter! I never saw two men do more with one-and-twopence worth of butter in my whole life than they did. After George had got it off his slipper, they tried to put it in the kettle. It wouldn't go in, and what *was* in wouldn't come out. They did scrape it out at last, and put it down on a chair, and Harris sat on it, and it stuck to him, and they went looking for it all over the room.

"I'll take my oath I put it down on that chair," said George, staring at the empty seat.

"I saw you do it myself, not a minute ago," said Harris.

Then they started round the room again looking

for it ; and then they met again in the centre, and stared at one another.

" Most extraordinary thing I ever heard of," said George.

" So mysterious ! " said Harris.

Then George got round at the back of Harris and saw it.

" Why, here it is all the time," he exclaimed, indignantly.

" Where ? " cried Harris, spinning round.

" Stand still, can't you ! " roared George, flying after him.

And they got it off, and packed it in the teapot.

Montmorency was in it all, of course. Montmorency's ambition in life is to get in the way and be sworn at. If he can squirm in anywhere where he particularly is not wanted, and be a perfect nuisance, and make people mad, and have things thrown at his head, then he feels his day has not been wasted.

To get somebody to stumble over him, and curse him steadily for an hour, is his highest aim and object ; and, when he has succeeded in accomplishing this, his conceit becomes quite unbearable.

He came and sat down on things, just when they were wanted to be packed ; and he laboured under the fixed belief that, whenever Harris or George reached out their hand for anything, it was his cold, damp nose that they wanted. He put his leg into the jam, and he worried the teaspoons, and he pretended that the lemons were rats, and got into the hamper and killed three of them before Harris could land him with the frying-pan.

Harris said I encouraged him. I didn't encourage him. A dog like that don't want any encouragement. It's the natural, original sin that is born in him that makes him do things like that.

The packing was done at 12.50 ; and Harris sat

on the big hamper, and said he hoped nothing would be found broken. George said that if anything was broken it *was* broken, which reflection seemed to comfort him. He also said he was ready for bed. We were all ready for bed.

JEROME K. JEROME

PTERODACTYLS

IT was destined that on this very morning—our first in the new country—we were to find out what strange hazards lay around us. It was a loathsome adventure, and one of which I hate to think. If, as Lord John said, the glade of the iguanodons will remain with us as a dream, then surely the swamp of the pterodactyls will for ever be our nightmare. Let me set down exactly what occurred.

We passed very slowly through the woods, partly because Lord John acted as scout before he would let us advance, and partly because at every second step one or other of our professors would fall, with a cry of wonder, before some flower or insect which presented him with a new type. We may have travelled two or three miles in all, keeping to the right of the line of the stream, when we came upon a considerable opening in the trees. A belt of brushwood led up to a tangle of rocks—the whole plateau was strewn with boulders. We were walking slowly towards these rocks, among bushes which reached over our waists, when we became aware of a strange low gabbling and whistling sound, which filled the air with a constant clamour and appeared to come from some spot immediately before us. Lord John held up his hand as a signal for us to stop, and he made his way swiftly, stooping and running, to the line of rocks. We saw him peep over them and give a gesture of amazement. Then he

stood staring as if forgetting us, so utterly entranced was he by what he saw. Finally he waved us to come on, holding up his hand as a signal for caution. His whole bearing made me feel that something wonderful but dangerous lay before us.

Creeping to his side, we looked over the rocks. The place into which we gazed was a pit, and may, in the early days, have been one of the smaller volcanic blow-holes of the plateau. It was bowl-shaped, and at the bottom, some hundreds of yards from where we lay were pools of green-scummed, stagnant water, fringed with bulrushes. It was a weird place in itself, but its occupants made it seem like a scene from the Seven Circles of Dante. The place was a rookery of pterodactyls. There were hundreds of them congregated within view. All the bottom area round the water-edge was alive with their young ones, and with hideous mothers brooding upon their leathery, yellowish eggs. From this crawling flapping mass of reptilian life came the shocking clamour which filled the air. But above, perched each upon its own stone, tall, grey, and withered, more like dead and dried specimens than actual living creatures, sat the horrible males, absolutely motionless save for the rolling of their red eyes or an occasional snap of their rat-trap beaks as a dragon-fly went past them. Their huge, membranous wings were closed by folding their forearms, so that they sat like gigantic old women, wrapped in hideous web-coloured shawls, and with their ferocious heads protruding above them. Large and small, not less than a thousand of these creatures lay in the hollow before us.

Our professors would gladly have stayed there all day, so entranced were they by this opportunity of studying the life of a prehistoric age. They pointed out the fish and dead birds lying about among the rocks as proving the nature of the food of these crea-

tures, and I heard them congratulating each other on having cleared up the point why the bones of this flying dragon are found in such great numbers in certain well-defined areas, as in the Cambridge Greensand, since it was now seen that, like penguins, they lived in gregarious fashion.

Finally, however, Challenger, bent upon proving some point which Summerlee had contested, thrust his head over the rock and nearly brought destruction upon us all. In an instant the nearest male gave a shrill, whistling cry, and flapped its twenty-foot span of leathery wings as it soared up into the air. The females and young ones huddled together beside the water, while the whole circle of sentinels rose one after the other and sailed off into the sky. It was a wonderful sight to see at least a hundred creatures of such enormous size and hideous appearance all swooping like swallows with swift, shearing wing-strokes above us ; but soon we realised that it was not one on which we could afford to linger. At first the great brutes flew round in a huge ring, as if to make sure what the exact extent of the danger might be. Then the flight grew lower and the circle narrower, until they were whizzing round and round us, the dry, rustling flap of their huge slate-coloured wings filling the air with a volume of sound that made me think of Hendon aerodrome upon a race day.

" Make for the wood and keep together," cried Lord John, clubbing his rifle. " The brutes mean mischief."

The moment we attempted to retreat the circle closed in upon us, until the tips of the wings of those nearest to us nearly touched our faces. We beat at them with the stocks of our guns, but there was nothing solid or vulnerable to strike. Then suddenly out of the whizzing, slate-coloured circle a long neck shot out, and a fierce beak made a thrust at us. Another and another followed. Summerlee gave a cry and put

his hand to his face, from which the blood was streaming. I felt a prod at the back of my neck, and turned dizzy with the shock. Challenger fell, and as I stooped to pick him up I was again struck from behind and dropped on the top of him. At the same instant I heard the crash of Lord John's elephant-gun, and, looking up, saw one of the creatures with a broken wing struggling upon the ground, spitting and gurgling at us with a wide-opened beak and blood-shot, goggled eyes, like some devil in a mediaeval picture. Its comrades had flown higher at the sudden sound, and were circling above our heads.

"Now," cried Lord John, "now for our lives!"

We staggered through the brushwood, and even as we reached the trees the harpies were on us again. Summerlee was knocked down, but we tore him up and rushed among the trunks. Once there we were safe, for those huge wings had no space for their sweep beneath the branches. As we limped homewards, sadly mauled and discomfited, we saw them for a long time flying at a great height against the deep blue sky above our heads, soaring round and round, no bigger than wood-pigeons, with their eyes no doubt still following our progress. At last, however, as we reached the thicker woods they gave up the chase, and we saw them no more.

"A most interesting and convincing experience," said Challenger, as we halted beside the brook and he bathed a swollen knee. "We are exceptionally well informed, Summerlee, as to the habits of the enraged pterodactyl." SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE

THE POTTER'S CRAFT

PROBABLY no one in the Five Towns takes a conscious pride in the antiquity of the potter's craft, nor

in its unique and intimate relation to human life, alike civilised and uncivilised. Man hardened clay into a bowl before he spun flax and made a garment, and the last lone man will want an earthen vessel after he has abandoned his ruined house for a cave, and his woven rags for an animal's skin. This supremacy of the most ancient of crafts is in the secret nature of things, and cannot be explained. History begins long after the period when Bursley was first the central seat of that honoured manufacture ; it is the central seat still—" the mother of the Five Towns," in our local phrase—and though the townsmen, absorbed in a strenuous daily struggle, may forget their heirship to an unbroken tradition of countless centuries, the seal of their venerable calling is upon their foreheads. If no other relic of an immemorial past is to be seen in these modernised sordid streets, there is at least the living legacy of that extraordinary kinship between workman and work, that instinctive mastery of clay which the past has bestowed upon the present. The horse is less to the Arab than clay is to the Bursley man. He exists in it and by it ; it fills his lungs and blanches his cheek ; it keeps him alive and it kills him. His fingers close round it as round the hand of a friend. He knows all its tricks and aptitudes ; when to coax and when to force it, when to rely on it and when to distrust it. The weavers of Lancashire have dubbed him with an epithet on account of it, an epithet whose hasty use has led to many a fight, but nothing could be more illuminatively descriptive than that epithet, which names his vocation in terms of another vocation. A dozen decades of applied science have of course resulted in the interposition of elaborate machinery between the clay and the man ; but no great vulgar handicraft has lost less of the human than potting. Clay is always clay, and the steam-driven contrivance that will

mould a basin while a man sits and watches has yet to be invented. Moreover, if in some coarser process the hands are superseded, the number of processes has been multiplied tenfold ; the ware in which six men formerly collaborated is now produced by sixty ; and thus, in one sense, the touch of finger on clay is more pervasive than ever before.

Mynors' works was acknowledged to be one of the best, of its size, in the district—a model three-oven bank, and it must be remembered that of the hundreds of banks in the Five Towns the vast majority are small, like this : the large manufactory with its corps of jacket-men,[1] one of whom is detached to show visitors round so much of the works as is deemed advisable for them to see, is the exception. Mynors paid three hundred pounds a year in rent, and produced nearly three hundred pounds' worth of work a week. He was his own manager, and there was only one jacket-man on the place, a clerk at eighteen shillings. He employed about a hundred hands, and devoted all his ingenuity to prevent that wastage which is at once the easiest to overlook and the most difficult to check —the wastage of labour. No pains were spared to keep all departments in full and regular activity, and owing to his judicious firmness the feast of St. Monday, that canker eternally eating at the root of the prosperity of the Five Towns, was less religiously observed on his bank than perhaps anywhere else in Bursley. He had realised that when a workshop stands empty the employer has not only ceased to make money, but has begun to lose it. The architect of " Providence Works " (Providence stands god-father to many commercial enterprises in the Five Towns) knew his business and the business of the potter, and he had designed

[1] *Jacket-man* : the artisan's satiric term for anyone who does not work in shirt-sleeves, who is not actually a producer, such as a clerk or a pretentious foreman.

the works with a view to the strictest economy of labour. The various shops were so arranged that in the course of its metamorphosis the clay travelled naturally in a circle from the slip-house by the canal to the packing-house by the canal: there was no carrying to and fro. The steam installation was complete: steam once generated had no respite; after it had exhausted itself in vitalising fifty machines, it was killed by inches in order to dry the unfired ware and warm the dinners of the work-people.

Henry took Anna to the canal-entrance, because the buildings looked best from that side.

"Now how much is a crate worth?" she asked, pointing to a crate which was being swung on a crane direct from the packing-house into a boat.

"That?" Mynors answered. "A crateful of ware may be worth anything. At Minton's I have seen a crate worth three hundred pounds. But that one there is only worth eight or nine pounds. You see, you and I make cheap stuff."

"But don't you make any really good pots—are they all cheap?"

"All cheap," he said.

"I suppose that's business?" He detected a note of regret in her voice.

"I don't know," he said, with the slightest impatient warmth. "We make the stuff as good as we can for the money. We supply what every one wants. Don't you think it's better to please a thousand folks than to please ten? I like to feel that my ware is used all over the country and the colonies. I would sooner do as I do than make swagger ware for a handful of rich people."

"Oh, yes," she exclaimed, eagerly accepting the point of view. "I quite agree with you." She had never heard him in that vein before, and was struck by his enthusiasm. And Mynors was in fact always

very enthusiastic concerning the virtues of the general markets. He had no sympathy with specialities, artistic or otherwise. He found his satisfaction in honestly meeting the public taste. He was born to be a manufacturer of cheap goods on a colossal scale. He could dream of fifty ovens, and his ambition blinded him to the present absurdity of talking about a three-oven bank spreading its productions all over the country and the colonies ; it did not occur to him that there were yet scarcely enough plates to go round.

" I suppose we had better start at the start," he said, leading the way to the slip-house. He did not need to be told that Anna was perfectly ignorant of the craft of pottery, and that every detail of it, so stale to him, would acquire freshness under her naïve and inquiring gaze.

In the slip-house begins the long manipulation which transforms raw, porous, friable clay into the moulded, decorated, and glazed vessel. The large whitewashed place was occupied by ungainly machines and receptacles through which the four sorts of clay used in the common " body "—ball clay, China clay, flint clay, and stone clay—were compelled to pass before they became a white putty-like mixture meet for shaping by human hands. The blunger crushed the clay, the sifter extracted the iron from it by means of a magnet, the press expelled the water, and the pug-mill expelled the air. From the last reluctant mouth slowly emerged a solid stream nearly a foot in diameter, like a huge white snake. Already the clay had acquired the uniformity characteristic of a manufactured product.

Anna moved to touch the bolts of the enormous twenty-four-chambered press.

" Don't stand there," said Mynors. " The pressure is tremendous, and if the thing were to burst——"

She fled hastily. "But isn't it dangerous for the workmen?" she asked.

Eli Machin, the engineman, the oldest employee on the works, a moneyed man and the pattern of reliability, allowed a vague smile to flit across his face at this remark. He had ascended from the engine-house below in order to exhibit the tricks of the various machines, and that done he disappeared. Anna was awed by the sensation of being surrounded by terrific forces always straining for release and held in check by the power of a single wall.

"Come and see a plate made: that is one of the simplest things, and the batting-machine is worth looking at," said Mynors, and they went into the nearest shop, a hot interior in the shape of four corridors round a solid square middle. Here men and women were working side by side, the women subordinate to the men. All were preoccupied, wrapped up in their respective operations, and there was the sound of irregular whirring movements from every part of the big room. The air was laden with whitish dust, and clay was omnipresent—on the floor, the walls, the benches, the windows, on clothes, hands, and faces. It was in this shop, where both hollow-ware presses and flat presses were busy as only craftsmen on piece-work can be busy, that more than anywhere else clay was to be seen "in the hand of the potter." Near the door a stout man with a good-humoured face flung some clay on to a revolving disk, and even as Anna passed a jar sprang into existence. One instant the clay was an amorphous mass, the next it was a vessel perfectly circular, of a prescribed width and a prescribed depth; the flat and apparently clumsy fingers of the craftsman had seemed to lose themselves in the clay for a fraction of time, and the miracle was accomplished. The man threw these vessels with the rapidity of a Roman candle throwing off coloured

stars, and one woman was kept busy in supplying him with material and relieving his bench of the finished articles. Mynors drew Anna along to the batting-machine for plate-makers, at that period rather a novelty and the latest invention of the dead genius whose brain has reconstituted a whole industry on new lines. Confronted with a piece of clay, the batting-machine descended upon it with the ferocity of a wild animal, worried it, stretched it, smoothed it into the width and thickness of a plate, and then desisted of itself and waited inactive for the flat presser to remove its victim to his more exact shaping machine. Several men were producing plates, but their rapid labours seemed less astonishing than the preliminary feat of the batting-machine. All the ware as it was moulded disappeared into the vast cupboards occupying the centre of the shop, where Mynors showed Anna innumerable rows of shelves full of pots in process of steam-drying. Neither time nor space nor material was wasted in this ant-heap of industry. In order to move to and fro, the women were compelled to insinuate themselves past the stationary bodies of the men. Anna marvelled at the careless accuracy with which they fed the batting-machines with lumps precisely calculated to form a plate of a given diameter. Everyone exerted himself as though the salvation of the world hung on the production of so much stuff by a certain hour ; dust, heat, and the presence of a stranger were alike unheeded in the mad creative passion.

" Now," said Mynors the cicerone, opening another door which gave into the yard, " when all that stuff is dried and fettled—smoothed, you know—it goes into the biscuit oven ; that's the first firing. There's the biscuit oven, but we can't inspect it because it's just being drawn."

He pointed to the oven near by, in whose dark

interior the forms of men, naked to the waist, could dimly be seen struggling with the weight of saggars [1] full of ware. It seemed like some release of martyrs, this unpacking of the immense oven, which, after being flooded with a sea of flame for fifty-four hours, had cooled for two days, and was yet hotter than the Equator. The inertness and pallor of the saggars seemed to be the physical result of their fiery trial, and one wondered that they should have survived the trial. Mynors went into the place adjoining the oven and brought back a plate out of an open saggar ; it was still quite warm. It had the *matt* surface of a biscuit, and adhered slightly to the fingers : it was now a " crook " ; it had exchanged malleability for brittleness, and nothing mortal could undo what the fire had done. Mynors took the plate with him to the biscuit-warehouse, a long room where one was forced to keep to narrow alleys amid parterres of pots. A solitary biscuit-warehouseman was examining the ware in order to determine the remuneration of the pressers.

They climbed a flight of stairs to the printing-shop, where, by means of copper-plates, printing-presses, mineral colours, and transfer-papers, most of the decoration was done. The room was filled by a little crowd of people—oldish men, women, and girls, divided into printers, cutters, transferrers, and apprentices. Each interminably repeated some trifling process, and every article passed through a succession of hands until at length it was washed in a tank and rose dripping therefrom with its ornament of flowers and scrolls fully revealed. The room smelt of oil and flannel and humanity ; the atmosphere was more languid, more like that of a family party, than in the pressers' shop ; the old women looked stern and

[1] *Saggars* : large oval receptacles of coarse clay, in which the ware is placed for firing.

shrewish, the pretty young women pert and defiant, the younger girls meek. The few men seemed out of place. By what trick had they crept into the very centre of that mass of feminity? It seemed wrong, scandalous that they should remain. Contiguous with the printing-shop was the painting-shop, in which the labours of the former were taken to a finish by the brush of the paintress, who filled in outlines with flat colour, and thus converted mechanical printing into handiwork. The paintresses form the *noblesse* of the banks. Their task is a light one, demanding deftness first of all; they have delicate fingers, and enjoy a general reputation for beauty; the wages they earn may be estimated from their finery on Sundays. They come to business in cloth jackets, carry dinner in little satchels; in the shop they wear white aprons, and look startlingly neat and tidy. Across the benches over which they bend their coquettish heads gossip flies and returns like a shuttle; they are the source of a thousand intrigues, and one or other of them is continually getting married or omitting to get married. On the bank they constitute "the sex." An infinitesimal proportion of them, from among the branch known as ground-layers, die of lead-poisoning—a fact which adds pathos to their frivolous charm. In a subsidiary room off the painting-shop a single girl was seated at a revolving table actuated by a treadle. She was doing the "band-and-line" on the rims of saucers. Mynors and Anna watched her as with her left hand she flicked saucer after saucer into the exact centre of the table, moved the treadle, and, holding a brush firmly against the rim of the piece, produced with infallible exactitude the band and the line. She was a brunette, about twenty-eight; she had a calm, vacuously contemplative face; but God alone knew whether she thought. Her work represented the summit of mono-

tony ; the regularity of it hypnotised the observer, and Mynors himself was impressed by this stupendous phenomenon of absolute sameness, involuntarily assuming towards it the attitude of a showman.

" She earns as much as eighteen shillings a week sometimes," he whispered.

" May I try ? " Anna timidly asked of a sudden, curious to experience what the trick was like.

" Certainly," said Mynors, in eager assent. " Priscilla, let this lady have your seat a moment, please."

The girl got up, smiling politely. Anna took her place.

" Here, try on this," said Mynors, putting on the table the plate which he still carried.

" Take a full brush," the paintress suggested, not attempting to hide her amusement at Anna's unaccustomed efforts. " Now push the treadle. There ! It isn't in the middle yet. Now ! "

Anna produced a most creditable band, and a trembling but passable line, and rose flushed with the small triumph.

" You have the gift," said Mynors ; and the paintress respectfully applauded.

" I felt I could do it," Anna responded. " My mother's mother was a paintress, and it must be in the blood."

Mynors smiled indulgently. They descended again to the ground floor, and following the course of manufacture came to the " hardening-on " kiln, a minor oven where for twelve hours the oil is burnt out of the colour in decorated ware. A huge, jolly man in shirt and trousers, with an enormous apron, was in the act of drawing the kiln, assisted by two thin boys. He nodded a greeting to Mynors and exclaimed, " Warm ! " The kiln was nearly emptied. As Anna stopped at the door the man addressed her.

" Step inside, miss, and try it."

" No, thanks ! " she laughed.

" Come now," he insisted, as if despising this hesitation. " An ounce of experience——" The two boys grinned and wiped their foreheads with their bare, skeleton-like arms. Anna, challenged by the man's look, walked quickly into the kiln. A blasting heat seemed to assault her on every side, driving her back ; it was incredible that any human being could support such a temperature.

" There ! " said the jovial man, apparently summing her up with his bright, quizzical eyes. " You know summat as you didn't know afore, miss. Come along, lads," he added with brisk heartiness to the boys, and the drawing of the kiln proceeded.

Next came the dipping-house, where a middle-aged woman, enveloped in a protective garment from head to foot, was lipping jugs into a vat of lead-glaze, a boy assisting her. The woman's hands were covered with the grey, slimy glaze. She alone of all the employees appeared to be cool.

" That is the last stage but one," said Mynors. " There is only the glost-firing," and they passed out into the yard once more. One of the glost-ovens was empty ; they entered it and peered into the lofty inner chamber, which seemed like the cold crater of an exhausted volcano, or like a vault, or like the ruined seat of some forgotten activity. The other oven was firing, and Anna could only look at its exterior, catching glimpses of the red glow at its twelve mouths, and guess at the Tophet, within, where the lead was being fused into glass.

" Now for the glost-warehouse, and you will have seen all," said Mynors, " except the mould-shop, and that doesn't matter."

The warehouse was the largest place on the works, a room sixty feet long and twenty broad, low, white-washed, bare, and clean. Piles of ware occupied the

whole of the walls and of the immense floor-space, but there was no trace here of the soilure and untidiness incident to manufacture ; all processes were at an end, clay had vanished into crock ; and the calmness and the whiteness atoned for the disorder, noise, and squalor which had preceded. Here was a sample of the total and final achievement towards which the thousands of small, disjointed efforts that Anna had witnessed were directed. And it seemed a miraculous, almost impossible, result ; so definite, precise, and regular after a series of acts apparently variable, inexact, and casual : so inhuman after all that intensely inhuman labour ; so vast in comparison with the minuteness of the separate endeavours. As Anna looked, for instance, at a pile of tea-sets, she found it difficult even to conceive that, a fortnight or so before, they had been nothing but lumps of dirty clay. No stage of the manufacture was incredible by itself, but the result was incredible. It was the result that appealed to the imagination, authenticating the adage that fools and children should never see anything till it is done.

ARNOLD BENNETT

THE HONDEKOETER

ENCOUNTERING his old friend Traquair opposite the Horse Guards, in the summer of 1880, James Forsyte, who had taken an afternoon off from the City, proceeded alongside with the words :

" I'm not well."

His friend answered : " You look bobbish enough. Going to the Club ? "

" No," said James. " I'm going to Jobson's. They're selling Smelter's pictures. Don't suppose there's anything, but I thought I'd look in."

" Smelter ? Selling his ' Cupid and Pish,' as he used to call it ? He never could speak the Queen's English."

" I'm sure I don't know what made him die," said James ; " he wasn't seventy. His '47 was good."

" Ah ! And his brown sherry."

James shook his head.

" Liverish stuff. I've been walking from the Temple ; got a touch of liver now."

" You ought to go to Carlsbad ; that's the new place, they say."

" Homburg," said James, mechanically. " Emily likes it—too fashionable for me. I don't know—I'm sixty-nine." He pointed his umbrella at a lion.

" That chap Landseer must ha' made a pretty penny," he muttered : " They say Dizzy's very shaky. *He* won't last long."

" M'm ! That old fool Gladstone'll set us all by the ears yet. Going to bid at Jobson's ? "

" Bid ? Haven't got the money to throw away. My family's growing up."

" Ah ! How's your married daughter—Winifred ? "

The furrow between James' brows increased in depth.

" She never tells me. But I know that chap Dartie she married makes the money fly."

" What is he ? "

" An outside broker," said James gloomily : " But so far as I can see, he does nothing but gallivant about to races and that. He'll do no good with himself."

He halted at the pavement edge, where a crossing had been swept, for it had rained ; and extracting a penny from his trouser pocket, gave it to the crossing-sweeper, who looked up at his long figure with a round and knowing eye.

" Well, good-bye, James. I'm going to the Club. Remember me to Emily."

James Forsyte nodded, and moved, stork-like, on to the narrow crossing. Andy Traquair ! He still looked very spry ! Gingery chap ! But that wife of his—fancy marrying again at his age ! Well, no fool like an old one. And, incommoded by a passing four-wheeler, he instinctively raised his umbrella—they never looked where they were going.

Traversing St. James' Square, he reflected gloomily that these new Clubs were thundering great places ; and this asphalt pavement that was coming in—he didn't know ! London wasn't what it used to be, with horses slipping about all over the place. He turned into Jobson's. Three o'clock ! They'd be just starting. Smelter must have cut up quite well.

Ascending the steps, he passed through the lobbies into the sale-room. Auction was in progress, but they had not yet reached the ' property of William Smelter, Esq.'

Putting on his tortoiseshell pince-nez, James studied the catalogue. Since his purchase of a Turner—some said ' not a Turner '—all cordage and drowning men, he had not bought a picture, and he had a blank space on the stairs. It was a large space in a poor light ; he often thought it looked very bare. If there were anything going at a bargain, he might think of it. H'm ! There was the Bronzino : ' Cupid and Pish ' that Smelter had been so proud of—a nude ; he didn't want nudes in Park Lane. His eye ran down the catalogue : " Claud Lorraine," " Bosboem," " Cornelis van Vos," " Snyders "—" Snyders "—m'm ! still life—all ducks and geese, hares, artichokes, onions, platters, oysters, grapes, turkeys, pears, and starved-looking greyhounds asleep under them. No. 17, " M. Hondekoeter." Fowls. 11 foot by 6. What a whopping great thing ! He took three mental steps into the middle of the picture and three steps out again. " Hondekoeter." His brother Jolyon had

one in the billiard room at Stanhope Gate—lot of fowls; not so big as that. "Snyders!" "Ary Scheffer"—bloodless-looking affair, he'd be bound! "Rosa Bonheur." "Snyders."

He took a seat at the side of the room, and fell into a reverie—with James a serious matter, indissolubly connected with investments. Soames—in partnership now—was shaping well; bringing in a lot of business. That house in Bryanston Square—the tenancy would be up in September—he ought to get another hundred on a re-let, with the improvements the tenant had put in. He'd have a couple of thousand to invest next Quarter Day. There was Cape Copper, but he didn't know; Nicholas was always telling him to buy 'Midland.' That fellow Dartie, too, kept worrying him about Argentines—he wouldn't touch them with a pair of tongs. And, leaning forward with his hands crossed on the handle of his umbrella, he gazed fixedly up at the skylight, as if seeing some annunciation or other, while his shaven lips, between his grey Dundrearys, filled sensually as though savouring a dividend.

"The collection of William Smelter, Esquire, of Russell Square."

Now for the usual poppycock! "This well-known collector," "masterpieces of the Dutch and French Schools"; "rare opportunity"; "Connoisseur"; all me eye and Betty Martin! Smelter used to buy 'em by the yard.

"No. 1. Cupid and Psyche: Bronzino. Ladies and Gentlemen: what shall I start it at—this beautiful picture, an undoubted masterpiece of the Italian School?"

James sniggered. Connoisseur—with his 'Cupid and Pish'!

To his astonishment there was some brisk bidding; and James' upper lip began to lengthen, as ever at any dispute about values. The picture was knocked

down and a ' Snyders ' put up. James sat watching picture after picture disposed of. It was hot in the room and he felt sleepy—he didn't know why he had come ; he might have been having a nap at the Club, or driving with Emily.

" What—no bid for the Hondekoeter ? This large masterpiece."

James gazed at the enormous picture on the easel, supported at either end by an attendant. The huge affair was full of poultry and feathers floating in a bit of water and a large white rooster looking as if it were about to take a bath. It was a dark painting, save for the rooster, with a yellowish tone.

" Come, gentlemen ? By a celebrated painter of domestic poultry. May I say fifty ? Forty ? Who'll give me forty pounds ? It's giving it away. Well, thirty to start it ? Look at the rooster ! Masterly painting ! Come now ! I'll take any bid."

" Five pounds ! " said James, covering the words so that no one but the auctioneer should see where they came from.

" Five pounds for this genuine work by a master of domestic poultry ! Ten pounds did you say, Sir ? Ten pounds bid."

" Fifteen," muttered James.

" Twenty."

" Twenty-five," said James ; he was not going above thirty.

" Twenty-five—why, the frame's worth it. Who says thirty ? "

No one said thirty ; and the picture was knocked down to James, whose mouth had opened slightly. He hadn't meant to buy it ; but the thing was a bargain—the size had frightened them ; Jolyon had paid one hundred and forty for his Hondekoeter. Well, it would cover that blank on the stairs. He waited till two more pictures had been sold ; then,

leaving his card with directions for the despatch of the Hondekoeter, made his way up St. James' Street and on towards home.

He found Emily just starting out with Rachel and Cicely in the barouche, but refused to accompany them—a little afraid of being asked what he had been doing. Entering his deserted house, he told Warmson that he felt liverish ; he would have a cup of tea and a muffin, nothing more ; then passing on to the stairs, he stood looking at the blank space. When the picture was hung, it wouldn't be there. What would Soames say to it, though—the boy had begun to interest himself in pictures since his run abroad? Still, the price he had paid was not the market value ; and, passing on up to the drawing-room, he drank his China tea, strong, with cream, and ate two muffins. If he didn't feel better to-morrow, he should have Dash look at him.

The following morning, starting for the office, he said to Warmson :

" There'll be a picture come to-day. You'd better get Hunt and Thomas to help you hang it. It's to go in the middle of that space on the stairs. You'd better have it done when your mistress is out. Let 'em bring it in the back way—it's eleven foot by six ; and mind the paint."

When he returned, rather late, the Hondekoeter was hung. It covered the space admirably, but the light being poor and the picture dark, it was not possible to see what it was about. It looked quite well. Emily was in the drawing-room when he went in.

" What on earth is that great picture on the stairs, James ? "

" That ? " said James. " A Hondekoeter ; picked it up, a bargain, at Smelter's sale. Jolyon's got one at Stanhope Gate."

" I never saw such a lumbering great thing."

" What ? " said James. " It covers up that space well. It's not as if you could see anything on the stairs. There's some good poultry in it."

" It makes the stairs darker than they were before. I don't know what Soames will say. Really, James, you oughtn't to go about alone, buying things like that."

" I can do what I like with my money, I suppose," said James. " It's a well-known name."

" Well," said Emily, " for a man of your age—Never mind ! Don't fuss ! Sit down and drink your tea."

James sat down, muttering. Women—always unjust, and no more sense of values than an old tom-cat !

Emily said no more, ever mistress of her suave and fashionable self.

Winifred, with Montagu Dartie, came in later, so that all the family were assembled for dinner ; Cicely having her hair down, Rachel her hair up—she had " come out " this season ; Soames, who had just parted with the little whiskers of the late 'seventies, looking pale and flatter-cheeked than usual. Winifred, beginning to be " interesting," owing to the approach of a little Dartie, kept her eyes somewhat watchfully on " Monty," square and oiled, with a " handsome " look on his sallow face, and a big diamond stud in his shining shirt-front.

It was she who broached the Hondekoeter.

" Pater dear, what made you buy that enormous picture ? "

James looked up, and mumbled through his mutton:

" Enormous ! It's the right size for that space on the stairs." It seemed to him at the moment that his family had very peculiar faces.

" It's very fine and large ! " Dartie was speaking ! " Um ! " thought James : " What does *he* want—money ? "

" It's so yellow," said Rachel, plaintively.

" What do *you* know about a picture ? "

" I know what I like, Pater."

James stole a glance at his son, but Soames was looking down his nose.

" It's very good value," said James, suddenly. " There's some first-rate feather painting in it."

Nothing more was said at the moment, nobody wanting to hurt the Pater's feelings, but, upstairs, in the drawing-room after Emily and her three daughters had again traversed the length of the Hondekoeter, a lively conversation broke out.

Really—the Pater ! Rococo was not the word for pictures that size ! And chickens—who wanted to look at chickens, even if you could see them ? But, of course, Pater thought a bargain excused everything.

Emily said :

" Don't be disrespectful, Cicely."

" Well, Mater, he does, you know. All the old Forsytes do."

Emily, who secretly agreed, said : " H'ssh ! "

She was always loyal to James, in his absence. They all were, indeed, except among themselves.

" Soames thinks it dreadful," said Rachel. " I hope he'll tell the Pater so."

" Soames will do nothing of the sort," said Emily. " Really your father can do what he likes in his own house—you children are getting very uppish."

" Well, Mater, you know jolly well it's awfully out of date."

" I wish you would not say ' awfully ' and ' jolly," Cicely."

" Why not ? Everybody does, at school."

Winifred cut in :

" They really are the latest words, Mother."

Emily was silent ; nothing took the wind out of her sails like the word ' latest,' for, though a woman of

much character, she could not bear to be behindhand.

" Listen ! " said Rachel, who had opened the door.

A certain noise could be heard ; it was James, extolling the Hondekoeter, on the stairs.

" That rooster," he was saying, " is a fine bird ; and look at those feathers floating. Think they could paint those nowadays ? Your Uncle Jolyon gave a hundred an' forty for his Hondekoeter, and I picked this up for twenty-five."

" What did I say ? " whispered Cicely. " A bargain. I hate bargains ; they lumber up everything. That Turner was another ! "

" 'Shh ! " said Winifred, who was not so young, and wished that Monty had more sense of a bargain than he had as yet displayed. " I like a bargain myself ; you know you've got something for your money."

" I'd rather have my money," said Cicely.

" Don't be silly, Cicely," said Emily ; " go and play your piece. Your father likes it."

James and Dartie now entered, Soames having passed on up to his room where he worked at night.

Cicely began her piece. She was at home owing to an outbreak of mumps at her school on Ham Common ; and her piece, which contained a number of runs up and down the piano, was one which she was perfecting for the school concert at the end of term. James, who made a point of asking for it, partly because it was good for Cicely, and partly because it was good for his digestion, took his seat by the hearth between his whiskers, averting his eyes from animated objects. Unfortunately, he never could sleep after dinner, and thoughts buzzed in his head. Soames had said there was no demand now for large pictures, and very little for the Dutch school—he had admitted, however, that the Hondekoeter was a bargain as

values went ; the name alone was worth the money. Cicely commenced her " piece " ; James brooded on. He really didn't know whether he was glad he had bought the thing or not. Every one of them had disapproved, except Dartie ; the only one whose disapproval he would have welcomed. To say that James was conscious of a change in the mental outlook of his day would be to credit him with a philosophic sensibility unsuited to his breeding and his age ; but he was uncomfortably conscious that a bargain was not what it had been. And while Cicely's fingers ran up and down—he didn't know, he couldn't say.

" D'you mean to tell me," he said, when Cicely shut the piano, " that you don't like those Dresden vases ? "

Nobody knew whom he was addressing or why, so no one replied.

" I bought 'em at Jobson's in '67, and they're worth three times what I gave for them."

It was Rachel who responded.

" Well, Pater, do you like them yourself ? "

" Like them ? What's that got to do with it ? They're genuine, and worth a lot of money."

" I wish you'd sell them, then, James," said Emily. " They're not the fashion now."

" Fashion ! They'll be worth a lot more before I die."

" A bargain," muttered Cicely, below her breath.

" What's that ? " said James, whose hearing was sometimes unexpectedly sharp.

" I said : ' A bargain,' Pater ; weren't they ? "

" Of course they were " ; and it could be heard from his tone that if they hadn't been, he wouldn't have bought them. " You young people know nothing about money, except how to spend it " ; and he looked at his son-in-law, who was sedulously concerned with his finger-nails.

Emily, partly to smooth James, whom she could see

was ruffled, and partly because she had a passion for the game, told Cicely to get out the card table, and said with cheery composure :

" Come along, James, we'll play Nap."

They sat around the green board for a considerable time playing for farthings, with every now and then a little burst of laughter, when James said : " I'll go Nap ! " At this particular game, indeed, James was always visited by a sort of recklessness. At farthing points he could be a devil of a fellow for very little money. He had soon lost thirteen shillings, and was as dashing as ever.

He rose at last, in excellent humour, pretending to be bankrupt.

" Well, I don't know," he said, " I always lose *my* money."

The Hondekoeter, and the misgivings it had given rise to, had faded from his mind.

Winifred and Dartie departing, without the latter having touched on finance, he went up to bed with Emily in an almost cheerful condition ; and, having turned his back on her, was soon snoring lightly.

He was awakened by a crash and bumping rumble, as it might be thunder, on the right.

" What on earth's that, James ? " said Emily's startled voice.

" What ? " said James : " Where ? Here, where are my slippers ? "

" It must be a thunderbolt. Be careful, James."

For James, in his nightgown, was already standing by the bedside—in the radiance of a night-light, long as a stork. He sniffed loudly.

" D'you smell burning ? "

" No," said Emily.

" Here, give me the candle."

" Put on this shawl, James. It can't be burglars ; they wouldn't make such a noise."

" I don't know," muttered James, " I was asleep." He took the candle from Emily, and shuffled to the door.

" What's all this ? " he said on the landing. By confused candle and night-light he could see a number of white-clothed figures—Rachel, Cicely, and the maid Fifine, in their nightgowns. Soames in his nightshirt, at the head of the stairs, and down below, that fellow Warmson.

The voice of Soames, flat and calm, said :

" It's the Hondekoeter."

There, in fact, enormous, at the bottom of the stairs, was the Hondekoeter, fallen on its face. James, holding up his candle, stalked down and stood gazing at it. No one spoke, except Fifine, who said : " La, la ! "

Cicely, seized with a fit of giggles, vanished.

Then Soames spoke into the dark well below him, illumined faintly by James' candle.

" It's all right, Pater ; it won't be hurt ; there was no glass."

James did not answer, but holding his candle low, returned up the stairs, and without a word went back into his bedroom.

" What was it, James ? " said Emily, who had not risen.

" That picture came down with a run—comes of not looking after things yourself. That fellow Warmson ! Where's the eau-de-Cologne ? "

He anointed himself, got back into bed, and lay on his back, waiting for Emily to improve the occasion. But all she said was :

" I hope it hasn't made your head ache, James."

" No," said James ; and, for some time after she was asleep, he lay with his eyes on the night-light, as if waiting for the Hondekoeter to play him another trick —after he had bought the thing and given it a good home, too !

Next morning, going down to breakfast he passed the picture, which had been lifted, so that it stood slanting, with its back to the stair wall. The white rooster seemed just as much on the point of taking a bath as ever. The feathers floated on their backs, curved like shallops. He passed on into the dining-room.

They were all there, eating eggs and bacon, suspiciously silent.

James helped himself and sat down.

"What are you going to do with it now, James?" said Emily.

"Do with it? Hang it again, of course!"

"Not really, Pater!" said Rachel. "It gave me fits last night."

"That wall won't stand it," said Soames.

"What! It's a good wall!"

"It really is too big," said Emily.

"And we none of us like it, Pater," put in Cicely, "it's such a monster, and so yellow!"

"Monster, indeed!" said James, and was silent, till suddenly he spluttered:

"What would you have me do with it, then?"

"Send it back; sell it again."

"I shouldn't get anything for it."

"But you said it was a bargain, Pater," said Cicely.

"So it was!"

There was another silence. James looked sidelong at his son; there was a certain pathos in that glance, as if it were seeking help, but Soames was concentrated above his plate.

"Have it put up in the lumber-room, James," said Emily, quietly.

James reddened between his whiskers, and his mouth opened; he looked again at his son, but Soames ate on. James turned to his teacup. And there went on within him that which he could not

express. It was as if they had asked him : " When is a bargain not a bargain ? " and he didn't know the answer, but they did. A change of epoch, something new-fangled in the air. A man could no longer buy a thing because it was worth more ! It was—it was the end of everything. And, suddenly, he mumbled : " Well, have it your own way, then. Throwing money away, I call it ! "

After he had gone to the office, the Hondekoeter was conducted to the lumber-room by Warmson, Hunt, and Thomas. There, covered by a dust-sheet to preserve the varnish, it rested twenty-one years, till the death of James in 1901, when it went forth and again came under the hammer. It fetched five pounds, and was bought by a designer of posters, working for a poultry-breeding firm.

JOHN GALSWORTHY

NOTES

Nurse's Stories. From " The Uncommercial Traveller," by Charles Dickens.

Charles Dickens (1812–1870) is almost certainly the most popular prose-writer in English literature, as Shakespeare is the most popular poet. Dickens and Shakespeare between them probably created more living characters than all the rest of our English authors together. Shakespeare had this advantage over Dickens that he could draw kings as easily as tapsters, whereas Dickens was less easy in drawing characters in the higher ranks of society : Dickens, nevertheless, in Mr. Pickwick achieved a perfect example of a natural gentleman. " The Uncommercial Traveller " is a collection of twenty-eight stories and sketches on topics where Dickens thought reform desirable : the papers, which are often Dickens at his best, were first published in " All the Year Round," and were re-issued in 1861.

The Bear. From " The Cloister and the Hearth," by Charles Reade.

Charles Reade (1814–1884), Lawyer and Fellow of Magdalen College, Oxford, excelled as a story-teller, and like Dickens, was an ardent reformer. " The Cloister and the Hearth," an historical romance set in the 15th century, was inspired by a study of the life of Erasmus and the works of Luther and Froissart.

The Future Life. From " Introduction to ' The Phaedo'," by Benjamin Jowett.

Benjamin Jowett (1817–1893), Regius Professor of Greek at Oxford, and the famous master of Balliol College, was the author of works both on scriptural and classical subjects. His translations of Plato and Introduction to Plato are among his notable writings.

A Reading from " Coriolanus." From " Shirley," by Charlotte Brontë.

Charlotte Brontë (1816–1855), was the eldest of the three brilliant literary sisters, Charlotte, Emily, and Anne. Their father was an Irish clergyman with a living in Yorkshire. Charlotte wrote four novels, "The Professor," "Jane Eyre," "Shirley," and "Villette." "Jane Eyre," in which the writer owed a debt to Thackeray, whom she venerated as her literary master, is the most famous of the four novels, but "Shirley," the scene of which is laid in Yorkshire during the Napoleonic wars, is scarcely inferior in power.

Death of Mr. Earnshaw. From "Wuthering Heights," by Emily Brontë.

Emily Brontë (1818–1848), in "Wuthering Heights," produced a novel which, despite its unequal standard, is regarded as one of the great tragical romances in our literature. The central figure of the story is the gloomy and vindictive Heathcliffe, originally a waif picked up in Liverpool by Mr. Earnshaw, and reared as one of his own children.

England's Forgotten Worthies. From "Short Studies on Great Subjects," by James Antony Froude.

James Antony Froude (1818–1894), who reacted against the Oxford High Church movement, was a fellow of Exeter College and two years before his death was elected Regius Professor of History at Oxford. Master of an eloquent style, often extremely beautiful in quality, he was a prolific, and often controversial writer. His longest work was his "History of England," issued in twelve volumes: among his shorter works his "Short Studies on Great Subjects," and his "English Seamen in the Sixteenth Century" retain their popularity.

Attack on the Stockade. From "Westward Ho!" by Charles Kingsley.

Charles Kingsley (1819–1875), a native of Devonshire, took Holy Orders and passed his life in a living in Hampshire. Kingsley is famous both as story-teller and poet. "Alton Locke," "Yeast," "Hypatia," "Hereward the Wake," "The Heroes," and "The Water Babies," are among his well-known prose works, and "Westward Ho!", a romantic tale of Elizabethan days, is the high-water mark of his success and popularity as a novelist.

Mr. Poulter. From "The Mill on the Floss," by George Eliot.

George Eliot (1819–1880) was the pen name of Mary Ann Evans, one of the greatest of women novelists. Her later novels, such as "Middlemarch" and "Daniel Deronda" are somewhat over-weighted with philosophy and religious prejudice, but the earlier books, "Scenes from Clerical Life," "Adam Bede," "The Mill on the Floss," and "Silas Marner," are wholly delightful pictures of the humours and pathos of life.

Stubb kills a Whale. From "Moby Dick," by Herman Melville.

Herman Melville (1819–1891), born in New York city, started life as a sailor before the mast, and sailed round the Cape of Good Hope at the age of twenty-two in a whaler. Moby Dick is the name of a particularly fierce and powerful whale; Melville's story of that title describes a search round nearly the whole globe for Moby Dick and Moby Dick's ultimate victory. In the course of the narrative Melville gives considerable information about the nature, habits, and anatomy of whales.

Effect of Mountain Scenery on Shakespeare. From "Modern Painters," by John Ruskin.

John Ruskin (1819–1900) devoted his life to expounding, in an immense number of volumes, his views on art, politics, and ethics. In 1869 he was appointed Slade Professor of Fine Arts in Oxford, but had to abandon the post eventually owing to ill-health. In "Modern Painters," his first and longest work, he set out to vindicate the painting of Turner, but as the book progressed the author developed his views on a variety of subjects. In his early writing Ruskin showed himself master of a highly-coloured, sumptuous style, but in his last books he writes with a simple economy of language which possesses another beauty of its own.

An Old War Horse. From "Black Beauty," by Anna Sewell.

Anna Sewell (1820–1878), born at Yarmouth, was a life-long invalid owing to her having sprained both ankles in childhood. In 1877 she published "Black Beauty," the autobiography of a horse, which had an immense vogue. The obvious purpose of the book is to inculcate kindness to animals.

The Fight. From " Tom Brown's School Days," by Thomas Hughes.

Thomas Hughes (1822–1896) was educated at Rugby under Dr. Arnold, and at Oriel College, Oxford. He became a member of the Chancery Bar, and in due course a Q.C., and a County Court Judge. He was a Liberal member of Parliament for Lambeth and Frome, and took part in founding a settlement in America.

" Tom Brown," in spite of the obvious respects in which it dates, especially in its sentimental emphasis, remains the foremost classic among books which describe English public-school life.

A Fire at Sea. From " The Life-boat," by R. M. Ballantyne.

R. M. Ballantyne (1825–1894), born in Edinburgh, wrote no less than eighty books, the majority of which were intended specifically for boy readers. He had the happiest knack of combining the telling of an exciting story with providing useful information on a variety of topics and with inculcating good morals.

The Great Winter. From " Lorna Doone," by R. D. Blackmore.

R. D. Blackmore (1825–1900) was educated at Blundell's School and Exeter College. He published several volumes of verse and a number of novels of which " Lorna Doone " is the most famous : the story is set in the reigns of Charles II and James II and the time of the Monmouth Rebellion.

Rounding Cape Horn. From " Historical Sketches of the Reign of George II," by Mrs. Oliphant.

Mrs. Oliphant (1828–1897), a vivid and voluminous writer, was author of numerous novels and lives, and of an autobiography in which she describes how by her pen she laboured to provide for her children and also those of her brother.

The Punishment of Shahpesh. From " The Shaving of Shagpat," by George Meredith.

George Meredith (1828–1909), born in Hampshire, was educated privately, and at a Moravian school in Germany. He supported himself, not without difficulty, by contributing to periodicals, and eventually became a reader to Chapman and Hall, the publishers. He was twice married. He achieved eminence both as a

novelist and poet. His fine sonnet-sequence, "Modern Love," is as haunting as any poetry of the 19th century. As a novelist he first won popularity by "Diana of the Crossways," published in 1885. "The Shaving of Shagpat," a series of burlesque Arabian fantasies, was an early work published in 1856.

The Mock Turtle's Story. From "Alice in Wonderland," by Lewis Carroll.

Lewis Carroll, the pen-name of Charles Lutwidge Dodgson (1832–1898), was a Student, in Holy Orders, and a mathematical lecturer at Christ Church, Oxford. "Alice's Adventures in Wonderland," and the sequel, "Through the Looking-Glass," written to amuse certain of Dodgson's youthful friends in Oxford, are the most famous of all children's books in English literature, and are appreciated equally, and probably more so, by adults. Dodgson, although the persons in the stories are apparently nonsensical, has something of Shakespeare's and Dickens's power of creating living human characters.

The Rights of Animals. From "Erewhon," by Samuel Butler.

Samuel Butler (1835–1902), son of Bishop Butler, was educated at Shrewsbury and Cambridge. He started his career as a sheep-breeder in New Zealand, but returned to England to settle in Clifford's Inn. He was a painter and composer as well as a satiric author; his most famous books are "Erewhon," an anagram of "nowhere," a satirical romance which is founded in part on his experience of New Zealand, and his autobiographical novel "The Way of All Flesh."

The Happy Thinker is Called. From "Happy Thoughts," by Sir Francis Burnand.

Sir Francis Burnand (1836–1917) was editor of "Punch" from 1880–1906, and "Happy Thoughts" first appeared as a series in the pages of "Punch." Burnand also wrote dramatic burlesques, including the famous "Cox and Box," which was set to music by Sullivan.

The Happy Thinker, *i.e.* the protagonist of "Happy Thoughts"—it is a pity the author gave him no name, which might have made the book and the character more celebrated—is a naïve member of comfortable Victorian society who spends his time paying country

house visits and in other pleasant pursuits in which he invariably depicts himself as a well-meaning booby.

La Gioconda. From "Leonardo da Vinci," by Walter Pater.

Walter Pater (1839–1894) was a Fellow of Brasenose College, Oxford. He made his fame as an essayist notably in sympathy with the Pre-Raphaelite ideals.

The Battle of Cannae. From "Carthage and the Carthaginians," by R. Bosworth Smith.

Reginald Bosworth Smith (1839–1908) was appointed a classical master to Harrow School in 1864. In due course he built "The Knoll," where he presided as Housemaster over a highly successful House till he retired from the school in 1901. Notable among his books are his life of Lord Lawrence and "Carthage and the Carthaginians," the latter being a collection of seven lectures first delivered before the Royal Institution.

Egdon Heath. From "The Return of the Native," by Thomas Hardy.

Thomas Hardy (1840–1928), born near Dorchester, first practised as an architect. He became eminent in literature as novelist, poet, and author of the epic drama "The Dynasts." An austere philosophy of gloom pervades his work, in which man is represented as the victim of an indifferent and heartless power. Hardy was awarded the Order of Merit and, despite his sombre creed, is buried in Westminster Abbey.

The Great Forest after London. From "After London," by Richard Jefferies.

Richard Jefferies (1848–1887) was the son of a Wiltshire farmer, which probably accounts for his notable powers of observing and describing Nature in his articles, sketches, and novels. "After London, or Wild England" is a curious vision of the future of England in which life has returned again to a condition of primitive wilderness.

The Yellow Paint. From "Fables," by Robert Louis Stevenson.

Robert Louis Stevenson (1850–1894), born in Edinburgh, was educated at Edinburgh University. He studied engineering and then law. He suffered from lung trouble which necessitated many journeys in search of health.

In 1888 he settled in Samoa, where he died and was buried. In the varied collection of essays, novels, and poetry which he wrote Stevenson maintained a brilliant standard of descriptive power in a faultless, though sometimes a somewhat mannered style.

The King's Stratagem. From "In King's Byways," by Stanley Weyman.

Stanley Weyman (1855–1928) was educated at Oxford and became a barrister. He is famous for his numerous romantic stories and novels, the scenes of almost all of which are laid in France. Though neither in style nor creation of characters is Weyman's work of the highest quality, he displays great ingenuity in devising his plots, an unflagging zest in telling a story, and a genuine power of creating a not very subtle atmosphere.

Jim. From "Lord Jim," by Joseph Conrad.

Joseph Conrad (1857–1924) was born in the Ukraine. His parents were Polish and his full name was Teodor Josef Konrad Korzeniowski. He accompanied his parents to northern Russia, to which on charges of revolutionary intrigue they were exiled. He was educated at Cracow. At the age of seventeen he went to sea in the Mediterranean. In 1878 he visited England, when he determined to sail thereafter under the British flag. He rose in the British Merchant Service to the rank of master-mariner. After ill-health had caused him to have to leave the sea in 1894 he devoted himself to writing his beautiful, powerful, sane but exotic novels, in which the sea as a subject not unnaturally predominates.

Packing. From "Three Men in a Boat," by Jerome K. Jerome.

Jerome K. Jerome (1859–1923), clerk, schoolmaster, and actor, was born in Walsall, but grew up in London. His story "Three Men in a Boat (to say nothing of the Dog)" is one of the most high-spirited of humorous books, while his morality play "The Passing of the Third Floor Back" provided a famous part for Sir Johnston Forbes-Robertson, and later proved an impressive film.

Pterodactyls. From "The Lost World," by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle.

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle (1859–1930) was a member of the medical profession and practised as a doctor at

Southsea till 1890. He won fame by creating Sherlock Holmes, the amateur detective, whose adventures he described in a cycle of stories. He wrote other popular romances, including " The White Company," " Rodney Stone," and " The Exploits of Brigadier Gerard," and a history of spiritualism in which subject he became much interested. His fantasy " The Lost World " was filmed with great success.

The Potter's Craft. From " Anna of the Five Towns," by Arnold Bennett.

Arnold Bennett (1867–1931), born in Staffordshire, started life as a solicitor's clerk, but soon devoted himself to journalism and literature. He won fame as a novelist by his stories of the Five Towns in the Midlands, namely Tunstall, Burslem, Hanley, Stoke-upon-Trent, and Longton. Much of Bennett's work is too photographic to rank as first-rate literature, but at times, as in his novel " Riceyman Steps " and his play " Milestones," written in conjunction with Edward Knoblock, he achieved work which is likely to endure.

The Hondekoeter. From " On Forsyte Change," by John Galsworthy.

John Galsworthy (1867–1933), educated at Harrow and Oxford, set himself throughout his work to present sympathetically the case of the " under-dog " in our social system. He was equally successful as a playwright and novelist. " Strife," " Justice," " The Skin Game," and " Loyalties," are specially notable among his plays, and in his novel " The Forsyte Saga " he drew a classic picture of upper middle-class society in the later Victorian age. This picture he continues in subsequent Forsyte stories up to the description of the typical Forsyte era caused by the Great War. " On Forsyte Change " was a collection of " apocryphal Forsyte tales " which appeared in 1930.

ESSAY QUESTIONS

1. *Nurse's Stories*, by Dickens. Write such a story as told by a nurse would be calculated to frighten a modern child of the post-War era.

2. *The Bear*, by Charles Reade. Write an account of this adventure told from the Bear's point of view.

3. *The Future Life*, by Jowett. Compare this passage with the Christian view of immortality.

4. *A Reading from "Coriolanus,"* by Charlotte Brontë. Invent and describe another Shakespeare reading in different circumstances.

5. *Death of Mr. Earnshaw*, by Emily Brontë. Discuss features in this passage which support the view that "Wuthering Heights" is one of the most powerful of English novels.

6. *England's Forgotten Worthies*, by Froude. Pay a similar tribute to some of England's forgotten soldiers.

7. *Attack on the Stockade*, by Charles Kingsley. Describe any other type of tree in the manner in which Kingsley describes the ceiba tree.

8. *Mr. Poulter*, by George Eliot. Contrast George Eliot's humour, as exemplified in this passage, with a kindred passage or character sketch in Dickens.

9. *Stubb kills a Whale*, by Herman Melville. Describe the killing of a shark or any other inhabitant of the sea.

10. *Effect of Mountain Scenery on Shakespeare*, by Ruskin. Discuss the effect of any type of scenery on any other English author.

11. *An Old War Horse*, by Anna Sewell. Tell the story of An Old Taxicab.

12. *The Fight*, by Thomas Hughes. What features in this passage are out of tune with school life of to-day?

13. *A Fire at Sea*, by R. M. Ballantyne. In what respects would one expect to find a ship of to-day better provided with the means of avoiding a fire, or of fighting one?

14. *The Great Winter*, by R. D. Blackmore. Describe a Great Summer.

15. *Rounding Cape Horn*, by Mrs. Oliphant. What signs

do you find in this narrative which suggest that the author is a woman ?

16. *The Punishment of Shahpesh.*

" East is East and West is West
And never the twain shall meet."

In what respects does this tale bear out the truth of this ?

17. *The Mock Turtle's Story*, by Lewis Carroll. Invent and tell in a similar style the Mock Turtle's account of the university he attended or the business house in which he worked.

18. *The Rights of Animals*, by Samuel Butler. Show in what respects this passage is a justifiable satire on our social outlook.

19. *The Happy Thinker is Called*, by Sir Francis Burnand. What features in this passage are typical of the pre-War era when it was written ?

20. *La Gioconda* by Walter Pater. Describe and analyse any other famous picture with which you are familiar.

21. *The Battle of Cannae*, by R. Bosworth Smith. Contrast the characteristics of the Romans and Carthaginians as evidenced by this passage.

22. *Egdon Heath*, by Thomas Hardy. What features in this passage show that Thomas Hardy was a great poet as well as a great novelist ?

23. *The Great Forest after London*, by Richard Jefferies. Imagine that Brighton, or Edinburgh, or Paris have similarly passed away, and describe what remains.

24. *The Yellow Paint*, by R. L. Stevenson. Invent and write a fable of your own.

25. *The King's Stratagem.* What weight does this story give to the criticism that Stanley Weyman invented difficulties for his heroes only in order to get them out of them?

26. *Jim*, by Joseph Conrad. What evidence does this passage give that the author was trained to the life of the sea ?

27. *Packing*, by Jerome K. Jerome. Consider whether or not the humour of Jerome K. Jerome dates.

28. *Pterodactyls*, by Conan Doyle. What features in this passage make it evident that the story was likely to prove as highly successful a film as was the case ?

29. *The Potter's Craft*, by Arnold Bennett. Describe any round of a factory or works which you yourself have made.

30. *The Hondekoeter*, by Galsworthy. Write a similar type of story concerned not with a picture but with a rare postage stamp.

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