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# FOR ABIGAIL.

A WEST COUNTRY STORY.

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### CHAPTER I.

#### THE SECRET OUT.

"Time takes out the sting of pain: our sorrows after a certain period have been so often steeped in a medium of thought and passion that they 'unmould their essence;' and all that remains of our original impressions is what we would wish them to have been."—HAZLITT.

JOHN VIVIAN had been absent from his home nearly eighteen years. Like many another Cornish miner, he had gone out to California in the hope of making his fortune. But as the years had dragged slowly away the hope had become more and more dim. Fortunes were not so easily made, and not one in a hundred of those who had left their English homes to come to this far-off land had found his golden dreams come true. Now and then it was reported that some miner from the old country had fallen across a streak of luck, and had made his little "pile." But in most instances the "pile" was scarcely a fortune, and in further speculation, with the hope of increasing it, the little heap of gold dust melted far more rapidly than it had been gathered together, and the miner found himself at the end of a few weeks just where he started, having nothing.

This had been the case with John Vivian more than once. Indeed, on two occasions he had found himself the possessor of two thousand dollars. But what was a fortune of £400 with which to set out on a journey to England? One quarter of it would have melted by the time he reached the

old country.. No; he had come to California to make his fortune, and it would be too great a humiliation to return almost as poor as when he left.

So he steadily toiled on, while the days flew past one after another, and all unconsciously lengthened into months and years. He could hardly realize sometimes that he had been away so long. The first year or two had seemed an interminable period, and his heart often ached with an unutterable hunger for a sight of the dear faces he had left behind, the faces of wife and children, but gradually the soreness passed out of his heart, and the longing became less and less intense, till now, after the lapse of eighteen years, it had nearly died out altogether. Occasionally he looked at a group of portraits he had in his possession, taken only a few months previously. But though he tried very hard, he failed to realise that those tall young men, standing one on each side of that pleasant, matronly-looking woman, were his sons.

His wife he could recognise. In features she had changed but little: a little older-looking; a few silver threads here and there in her dark-brown hair he could detect; but otherwise she was unchanged. Not so, however, the lads. Paul was only three when he left home, and David a baby of one brief year, just learning to walk, and delighting his mother with his feats of locomotion. How was it likely that he should recognise in these young men the children of eighteen years ago?

In the little village of Penwharf people had almost given up expecting John Vivian's return, and had long since ceased to talk about him, unless his name should crop up by accident, and then women, and men too, expressed their surprise that a man who professed to be a Christian should leave his wife for so many years to battle with the world alone, and bring up her boys as best she could.

But then the people of Penwharf did not know everything; and there is more in most people's lives than the outside world ever dreams of. But that, perhaps, is saying very little after all. For the outside world, as a rule, has no

dreams outside itself. Most people are so wrapped up in their own selfishness, that they don't care two straws about anybody else, except as subjects to gossip about.

People gossiped freely about John Vivian in the years gone by, and said some very hard things, which, had he heard, would have hurt him sorely. But of late, as we have before intimated, his name was very rarely mentioned. The old people who knew him were dead. The young people had never seen him, and the middle-aged folk had almost forgotten what he was like.

Yet the hard things that had been said and thought, would probably have been considerably softened down had all been known. John Vivian had carried away from home a secret grief, for which he felt there was no healing except in Heaven. And Mary, his wife, had been left to nurse a sorrow that was all the more bitter because it was chiefly of her own causing. They had come to Penwharf a few months before David was born, bringing with them Paul, a plump little fellow of less than two. Of course, no one suspected that Paul was not their own child, and neither of them was disposed to enlighten the villagers on the subject.

Yet such was the case. John Vivian had found Paul on his doorstep, nearly eighteen months before, as he was going to his work at the mine early in the morning.

The child was fast asleep, and though the early summer morning was chilly, the little fellow seemed comfortable and warm. John's heart gave a great bound as he tenderly gathered up the bundle of clothes and looked at the sweet chubby face of the sleeping infant. It seemed as though God had sent the child in answer to his longing.

His wedded life had extended over four years now, and no little life having yet been given to bless their union, his heart went out in a moment to this little stray, and rushing back into the bedroom, where his wife was still sleeping, he startled her out of her extra nap by exclaiming,

"Do look here, Mary, at what I have found."



"If you've found anything that's worth anything," she answered, crossly, "it'll be a wonder."

"Well, open your eyes and look," he exclaimed, "for you'll never guess."

"I don't want to guess," was the reply; "I'm too sleepy. Put it on the window sill, whatever it is, and I'll look at it when I get up."

"I can't do that," he said; "I'm afraid I shall hurt it. Do rouse yourself, Mary."

But just at that moment a fretful cry came from the bundle he held in his arms, which obviated the necessity of any further persuasion on his part.

Mary was wide awake now. "Why, it's a baby, John!" she exclaimed, with a look of wonder in her eyes.

"Ay, and a bonny baby it is too," he replied.

"But what are you doing with it?" she said, with a sudden flash of anger darting from her eyes.

"I found it on the doorstep," he answered.

"That may be true," she said, huskily; "but you know the hussy who laid it there."

"By Heaven, Mary," he said, growing pale to the lips, "I do not. How dare you suggest such a thing? How could such a thought have ever found its way into your heart?"

She saw that she had wronged and hurt him, and so replied more gently, "It seems so strange that the child should be laid on our doorstep, John."

"Perhaps the porch around the door offered a tempting shelter," he said. "But, anyhow, our duty is clear, and that is, to take care of it till its friends are found."

"I don't see that," she replied. "Why not go and tell the policeman, and get it taken to the workhouse at once?"

"I couldn't do it," he replied. "I feel as though Heaven had sent the child to us. We have no children of our own, Mary, why not keep this one till its friends turn up? And if its friends are never found, why—who can tell?—the little waif may be a joy and blessing to us in years to come."

•     •

"A joy and blessing, eh?" she answered, sulkily; "more likely a trouble and curse. I don't believe any good ever comes of harbouring strange children in this way."

"You are vexed, Mary, because your sleep has been disturbed," he said, after a pause, and with a pained look in his eyes. "But I'll go and tell the policeman if you very much wish it."

"You'd better be off to your work now," she said, "and we'll talk about the matter when you come back. I don't want you to lose a day's wage over the child."

He lifted his head as though about to reply, but perhaps thought better of it, for no word escaped his lips, but casting another look at the fair dimpled face of the child, he stole silently out of the room, and was soon on his way to the mine.

When he returned in the afternoon he found his wife sitting on a low chair with the baby on her knee. For several seconds he stood looking at her through the open door. He thought he had never seen her with such a happy look upon her face since she had been his wife. She had not heard his footstep, and so did not know he was standing a little back from the open door watching her unobserved.

When at length his own shadow fell upon the floor her face clouded in a moment. John saw it and wondered, as he had often wondered, why his home-coming had never seemed to bring brightness or joy to his wife. She did not hold up her face to be kissed as most wives would have done, and he did not offer to kiss her. Their married life had never been characterized by any outward expression of affection. She was not a demonstrative woman—at least, she never seemed so to her husband, and he, when he found that she did not care for his caresses, respected her wishes and tried to please her in every way.

"Shall I take the baby to the workhouse now?" he said, coming and standing in front of her.

"No, John, not to-day," she said, without lifting her eyes. "I think we will keep him a few days. He is not a

tramp's baby. His clothes are beautifully made, and though the material is not rich it is good. And sec, there is a mark on several of his things, worked in red silk, like two P's, or a couple of swords crossed, or a pair of scissors," and she held up for her husband's inspection a monogram, thus



He looked at it silently for a few moments, and then said, "You are right, Mary, this is no gipsy waif or base-born child. Perhaps his friends will be turning up directly, and then the mystery will be explained."

"He's a beautiful baby," she said, the bright look coming back again to her face, "and as good as he is beautiful. Why, he has scarcely cried for the whole day."

"I'm glad he's given no trouble," he said, and he bent down and touched the child's dimpled cheek with his large forefinger, at which the little waif looked up with an unmistakable smile.

"Why, he knows me already," said the kindly miner. "Give him to me a bit, Mary; I'll hold him while you get the tea."

"Hold him, indeed," she said; "as if he were a horse that would bolt."

"I'll not hurt him," he said, taking him tenderly from her arms. "I wonder what we shall call him, Mary."

"Peter or Paul," she said, "or perhaps Philip; something that begins with a P, anyhow."

"Let's call him Paul," he said. "It's a good name; and let's pray that he may grow up to be worthy of it."

"Paul is nicer than Peter, anyhow," she said, "so perhaps we could not do better."

\* And so it was agreed that the child's name should be Paul. And as no one came to dispute it, or to claim the little fellow, he grew up as Paul Vivian, the son of John Vivian the miner.

As John Vivian's house at that time stood quite alone by the roadside, nearly a week passed away before anyone knew of their possession of a baby. All the talk that week was of

a boat disappearing from Port Stormel. On the very morning that John Vivian had his "find" Frankey Hooper discovered his "loss."

"I wonder if the disappearance of Frankey's boat has anything to do with little Paul!" John said, one evening.

"I don't know," said his wife, rather crossly, "and I'm not going to talk about Paul as if we 'found' him. I told Susan Blake, when she called this afternoon, that it's a little orphan we've 'adopted.'"

"Oh, indeed!" said John, lifting his eyebrows, as if he were by no means certain that that was the proper way to put it.

He did not discuss the question, however, and as the few people who called now and then manifested very little interest in the matter, John Vivian was saved from any temptation to equivocate.

When Paul was about eighteen months old his foster-parents removed to Penwharf, John Vivian having got work at Wheal Anthony, a tin mine about a mile out of the village. Here, six months later, David was born, and then all the love of Mary Vivian, that had been given to her foster-son, was given to her own baby boy.

From thenceforth she seemed to care for nothing but little David. If her husband received little show of affection from her before, he received less from her now. For Paul's sake she had never neglected him, but for "baby's" sake both he and Paul were neglected.

So matters went on, and, instead of improving, grew worse, until one day, when David was about a year old, John quite lost his patience — a most unusual thing for him — and began to reproach his wife for her neglect.

Then Mary fired up, and the secret she had hidden for years she in her passion let out. She told her husband that she had never loved him, and never could; that she married him to spite Nicholas Bray, with whom she had had a quarrel; that she had tried to be a good wife and do her duty, but her heart she had given to another.

John's face was positively haggard when she finished speaking. For a while he stood staring at her like one stricken dumb. Once or twice his pale lips moved as though he was about to speak, but the words died upon his tongue.

"Why do you look at me in that way?" she said. "Why don't you speak? You have wrung the confession from me with your constant complaining. Perhaps you will be satisfied now."

"I did not know, Mary, or I would not have complained," he said, in a choked voice. "I will go out for a little bit to recover myself. I cannot answer you now," and, taking up his hat, he strode out of the house.

The sweet September day was dying over the western hills when he found himself in the open air. To the right was a path leading over the hill to Wheal Anthony. To the left a zig-zag road across the valley, and up the slope past Farmer Tresillian's home, and out over the bluff to the rugged cliffs that overlooked the sea. In front the winding valley of Penwharf, which about four miles away touched the blue waters of the English Channel.

He did not hesitate a moment in deciding which course to take, and in a comparatively short time he had crossed the bluff, and was standing on the cliffs, with the shining waters of the sea surging at his feet. He did not attempt to descend to the beach, for the tide was at its flood, but he sat down, at length, and tried to think; tried to shape his future course of action; tried to brace himself for the struggle that lay before him.

Slowly the day faded into darkness, while the stars came out one by one, and looked down upon him with kindly eyes. Up from the heaving waters of the restless sea came a low-toned song, soft and soothing as a mother's lullaby, while far out in the distance the shadows deepened with a growing sense of mystery and awe.

O to get away from his trouble, to hide himself among those outer shadows that were deepening all the while, to

forget the words that rankled in his heart like thorns, and banished joy and hope! At first this was only an indefinite longing, but by-and-bye it grew into shape, and hardened at length into a fixed determination.

It was late when he returned to his home, and his wife, angry with herself that she had let her secret out, angry with her husband because he was her husband, received him in no very friendly mood.

He did not heed her chiding, however, but when he had a chance of speaking, he said:

"They are shortening hands at Wheal Anthony, next week, Mary."

"And what of that?" she asked, sharply.

"I expect I shall have to go," he said.

"Just like your luck," she replied.

"I expect I shall have to do what many an old comrade has done," he said.

"And what is that?"

"Go abroad! There's a chance of making a fortune in California. I don't care much for money myself, but I would like to make a lady of you, Mary. It would be some compensation, you know."

She did not reply. His kindness and gentleness touched her heart strangely. She felt almost that she could love him now, but her pride shut her mouth and steeled her heart.

"I will write to you often; that is, if you consent to my going."

"Consent!" and her eyes flashed again. "Don't imagine that I will put a straw in your way."

"God knows I want to do the right thing," he said. "We will part friends, for I have loved you truly, and love you still."

She did not reply, and so the conversation dropped. During the next few days she helped him with his packing, though she rarely spoke, and by the end of the following week John Vivian had spoken all his good-byes, and had turned his face towards the sunset.

## CHAPTER II.

### THOSE BOYS.

"There's something in a noble boy,  
A brave, free-hearted, careless one,  
With his unchecked, unbidden joy,  
His dread of books and love of fun ;  
And in his clear and ruddy smile  
Unshaded by a thought of guile,  
And unrepressed by sadness ;  
Which brings me to my childhood back,  
As if I trod its very track,  
And felt its very gladness."

—N. P. WILLIS.

"DAVID gets all the love and Paul all the lickings," was a frequent remark of the people at Penwharf. Not that Mary Vivian was an unkind woman, or meant to be unjust. On the contrary, she was anxious to do her duty by the children honestly and fairly. But love made her blind to the faults of her own child, while the very fact that Paul was not her own son made her blind to his virtues.

Indeed, according to her sincere belief, Paul had no virtues ; or if so, they were so few and feeble as not to be worth taking into account ; while David in her eyes was a little saint. And so it happened that if ever David was discovered in any mischief, Mary was quite sure that no blame was attaching to him. Paul must be at the bottom of it. That was a settled conviction in her own mind. And though she might be unable to trace any connection between Paul and the offence of her own child, yet all the same she was quite convinced that the connection did exist ; and Paul would be punished accordingly ; while poor wronged, ill-used David would be pitied, and condoled with, and cried over, until he had a vague feeling that his offences were virtues,

and that to do a wrong in his case would be almost an impossibility.

Such treatment could not possibly be without its influence on two growing lads. In Penwharf it was a frequent remark that "Mary Vivian was going just the right way to spoil both the boys. And that it was a pity her husband did not come home and take the boys in hand himself." And, in truth, it did seem a pity. A firm, yet gentle hand was what both the boys seemed to need.

It must be said, however, that Paul took his "lickings" with wonderful equanimity and good humour, nor did he seem conscious of any injustice in the treatment he received. He was a merry, mischievous, light-hearted young dog, who could never sit still five minutes on a stretch. His foster-mother said he could not keep still even when he was asleep. That he led David into numberless scrapes there could be no doubt; David was two years his junior, and the younger naturally looked up to the elder. Moreover, David was diffident, lacking altogether in self-confidence, easily led, and not very far-seeing, while Paul was resolute, confident, and brimming over with mirth and mischief. By the time Paul had reached his teens, he was fully convinced in his own mind that he had received a double dose of original sin, and that he was deserving of all the punishment he received.

It was well for him perhaps that he looked at the matter in this philosophic light, otherwise he might have resented his mother's favouritism, and grown up with an embittered feeling in his heart.

Other people might see favouritism; he did not, and indeed he was so fond of David that he would rather suffer punishment any day himself than that David should be punished. And many a time at school he had borne voluntarily, and without a murmur, the stripes that ought to have fallen on David's back.

Being so healthily constituted, the rough winds of neglect, and the stern ways of severity, instead of making him bitter,



and defiant, only made him self-reliant and firm of purpose. And so he grew up with the most lovable of dispositions, in spite of the treatment he received.

David, however, on the contrary, was being steadily moulded into a milksop, if not into a hypocrite. If his mother could see no wrong in him, why should he look for wrong in himself? Moreover, his brother Paul was anything but a good boy—of that there could be no doubt whatever. His mother had insisted upon it so often and so continuously, that he could not do other than believe it. It is true he could not see very clearly where the wrong came in. Paul was very kind to him, and generous almost to a fault; but then that might be to cover some deep design of wickedness. Anyhow, his mother had always been able to trace any faults in him to Paul's evil influence, and his mother was wiser than he, and therefore ought to know.

And so he grew up with the feeling that Paul was his just and legitimate scapegoat; and as the years passed away, instead of being grateful to his brother for so often bearing his punishments, he was annoyed with him because he did not do so more frequently.

When David was about ten years of age, he came blubbering home from school one evening, complaining that he had not only been kept in, but that the master had caned him as well.

"Caned you?" said his mother, indignantly; "and did he not cane Paul also?"

"No! Paul was at the top of the class."

"But I'm sure that it was he who deserved it, and not you; but come to your mammy, my darling, and tell her all about it."

And the next moment David was on his mother's lap, his hot cheek pressed against hers, while into her sympathetic ear he poured the story of his wrongs.

"He had only been drawing some figures of animals on his slate instead of writing his dictation," he said,

"and he thought it was a shame he should be punished for that."

"And who taught you to draw animals, my darling?" his mother asked.

Instantly David's face brightened. Till now he had been utterly unable to see how Paul could be in any way responsible for his wrong-doing. Now his mother's question had made it all as clear as day.

"It was Paul who taught me, mammy," he said, with a fresh burst of sobbing. "Indeed, I am sure I should never have thought of drawing animals on the slate but for him."

"I'm sure you would not, my darling," said his mother. "As usual, he is at the bottom of the mischief, as, alack, he always is."

"Don't you wish he were a good boy like me?" said David, consolingly.

"Indeed, I do, my child," said his mother with evident sincerity. "You have never given me an hour's anxiety since you were born, while Paul has been a constant trouble."

"I think it's too bad that I should be punished when it's all his fault, don't you, mammy?"

"I do, indeed, my darling," said his mother, caressingly.

"If he were punished as well, it wouldn't be half as hard to bear," whimpered David.

"My own ill-used boy," she whispered, stroking his hair fondly at the same time, "I'll see to it that you are not wronged for nothing."

Not long after Paul burst into the room, like a fresh sea breeze. He had been scampering across hill and dale in an exciting game of "hunt the fox," and was all excitement still to his finger tips. But seeing David on his mother's lap, he sobered down in a moment.

"Oh, Davie," he said, "I'm so sorry you got kept in, we've had such a jolly run all round by Wheal Anthony. You would have enjoyed it."

"But I didn't get the chance," whimpered David.

"I don't know how you could enjoy yourself," said his mother reproachfully, "when you knew that your brother was being wrongfully punished, and all through you."

"All through me, mother?" said Paul, raising his eyebrows in astonishment.

"Yes, all through you! David was kept in and caned for drawing animals on his slate. But who taught him to draw animals?"

"Well, I reckon I did, mother, but you can never tell Davie's cows from his elephants."

"That's neither here nor there," said his mother, reproachfully. "Don't you see how it is through you that he has got into trouble?"

Paul thought a moment, and then said, "I'm very sorry, mother, but I didn't mean to get him into trouble. On my word and honour, I didn't."

"But you admit you are as bad as he?"

"Well, come to that, I reckon I'm a great deal worse," the boy answered with a smile.

"And so you'll admit that you deserve punishment as much as David?"

But Paul remained silent. His mother's casuistry was a little bit above his comprehension. He supposed she was right, but he could not exactly see how. He felt, however, that he was a most unfortunate lad. Not only did he get himself into trouble, but he was constantly getting David into trouble as well. Certainly it was very hard on poor Davie if all the fault were his own. Yet he had meant no evil. He would rather screen his brother any day than get him into difficulty. And yet to be punished for what he had done altogether unintentionally seemed rather hard lines.

Mary Vivian regarded his silence as a tacit admission of his deserts, which she proceeded to deal him with no sparing hand.

David looked on with a smile of satisfaction on his thin

lips, and a feeling of triumph in his heart, while Paul took his punishment as he would take a dose of very nauseous medicine, pulling a very wry face over it, but trying to believe that it was necessary for him, and that in some occult way it would do him good in the long run.

Episodes of this kind had naturally a very demoralising effect on David. By slow and almost imperceptible degrees his moral sense became perverted. To connect his brother Paul with his own transgressions settled into a fixed habit; and if a fib was needed to make the chain of evidence complete, he felt very little compunction in manufacturing one.

And yet David was not by any means a vicious lad. Indeed, he could scarcely be called mischievous; he was naturally so timid and diffident that he rarely indulged in the rough sport common to boys of his own age. Paul was far more mischievous than he, and was a ringleader in most of the horse-play that went on in the village. Outwardly, therefore, David seemed much the better boy of the two. He was quiet, bookish, and not at all given to harum-scarum ways.

What he needed was less coddling and more rigorous discipline. Had he been thrown more upon himself, left to fight his own battles, and bear his own punishment, he would in all probability have developed more strength of character, and faced the world with a steadier light in his eye.

Paul, with his keen intuition, began to see very early in life that so much petting and humouring was doing David harm instead of good. He did not much mind a thrashing himself to save his brother's back, though he began to see after awhile that it would be much better for David if he bore his own burden. The boys also began to parody H. S. Leigh's lines, and say—

“Paul is always getting licked,  
'Cause Dave turns out a fool.”

“I wouldn't be so soft if I were you,” said Paul to him one day, when he found him whimpering because he had been knocked down in a game of “keep the castle.”

"You've no feeling," whined David; "you don't know how they hurt me."

"Oh, very likely you're hurt," said Paul; "every boy gets hurt as goes real earnest into the game. I've been hurt millions an' millions of times. But what's the odds? Squalling don't mend it. Why don't you laugh the other side of your mouth? It'll do you lots more good."

"It's very easy to talk," whined David; "but I wish I hadn't been persuaded to play."

"Oh, nonsense!" said Paul. "All boys play that have any pluck in 'em. Only milksops want to be always coddled."

"If you call me a milksop," said David, with more energy than was usual with him, "I'll tell mother."

"I thought you were goin' to say you'd fight me," laughed Paul, "for that 'ud be much more sensible."

"No, it wouldn't," said David. "It's very wrong to fight, 'specially for brothers; you know that, Paul."

"And don't you think it would be wrong for one brother to tell on another? You know, Davie, I've had lots of hidings on your account."

"You ain't had more than you deserved," said David, spitefully.

"Well I ain't sure about that," said Paul with a laugh. "I'm beginning to think that you would have been all the better if you had had some of them yourself."

"Ask mother what she thinks," said David.

"No, I sha'n't do anything of the sort," said Paul. "I don't believe in going to mother about every little thing as if I were a baby. We're big boys now, Davie, and it's time we began to look after ourselves a bit."

"Oh yes," said David, "you would like to do all your wickedness without mother knowing."

"Now look here, David," and Paul caught him by the button of his jacket and looked him steadily in the eye. "It ain't fair of you to say that. You know I don't want to do any wickedness at all. I like a good rollicking game, and so

do most boys. And another thing; I like fair play. And I don't split on a fellow, and I take my whippings myself, and I don't try to get somebody else to take 'em for me, there now."

"Oh, you're mean to talk in that way," said David, ready to whimper again.

"Come now, Davie," said Paul good-humouredly, "let's be friends, and stick up for each other, through thick and thin, and if we get knocked down, let's pick ourselves up again an' bear our bruises without complaining. Mother's plenty to try her in other ways, an' we oughtn't to worry her with every finger-ache we've got. But there's Tom Pernance calling; they're in for a game of leap-frog, so I'm off."

David, however, did not follow his example. He waited till Paul had joined the other boys, and then he made his way home, to tell his mother all that had happened to him during the afternoon.

## CHAPTER III.

### HUSBANDS AND WIVES.

"Always there is a black spot in our sunshine, and it is, even as I have said, the shadow of ourselves."—CARLYLE.

"And tell me how love cometh ?  
It comes—unsought, unsent !  
And tell me how love goeth ?  
That was not love which went."

—*From the German.*

PENWHARF, like many another district in Cornwall, was partly "mining" and partly agricultural. Three-fourths of the men and boys of the village, and not a few of the girls, found employment at Wheal Anthony, which was just over the brow of the hill and altogether out of sight; the remaining fourth found employment on the farms that were scattered all up and down the country side. Of course, there was the usual contingent of tradespeople, but they formed but a very small proportion of the whole.

Penwharf was beautifully situated at a point where the valley of the Wharf took a sudden bend. Old people said that "Pen" meant point or elbow, and that Penwharf was the point or elbow of the river. This, however, was disputed by younger men who had dabbled a little in antiquarian researches. The question, however, is one of no consequence as far as our story is concerned.

That the village was a picturesque one everybody admitted. Situated as it was in a bend of the valley the ground sloped up on every side, forming a natural amphitheatre, and protecting it from most of the gales that raged.

The village had grown without contriving. Had it been planned, in all probability it would have been spoiled. There was a most delightful *abandon* in the manner the houses had

been arranged. Every builder of a cottage had followed his own sweet will, the result being a picturesqueness that in some instances bordered on the grotesque. Of public buildings the place had none, save and except a school-house and a Methodist chapel, which latter had been so arranged that if it failed as a place of worship, or became too straight, it might be converted into cottages. The parish church was three miles away.

The most pretentious residence in the neighbourhood was that of Farmer Tresillian, a delightful old barracks, roomy, rambling, and romantic, and rejoicing in the name of Rosevallon Manor, though "Manor" was nearly always left out in speaking of it.

Now, as Enoch Tresillian will play some small part in our story, it may not be amiss at this stage of our narrative to introduce him to the reader. He was a tall, spare man, reserved in manner, and proud in bearing. It was his boast that "Tresillian" was one of the oldest names in the county, and even more honourable than that of Trelawney, and it was his constant endeavour to live as became the dignity of so august a name. Though reserved in manner, he was, on the whole, a good neighbour, always ready to do his duty when it became clear to him what his duty was.

Besides being the possessor of so ancient and honourable a name, he was also owner of Rosevallon Estate, consisting of eighty acres of land. Besides this, he farmed another hundred acres, adjoining his own freehold, and which he rented from Lord Gwennap. Hence he was a man of undoubted respectability, and also of some considerable influence.

Mr. Tresillian was also a religious man. Every Sunday morning, rain or sunshine, he drove over the hills to St. Hildred's Church, and every Sunday evening he walked through the village to the Methodist chapel. In these little excursions, his wife and children—Abigail and Tom,—always accompanied him, unless the weather should be unusually stormy, in which case he went alone.



Ruth Tresillian, his wife, was a splendid woman in every sense of the word. To quote a village saying, "she was large, lovable, and lovely," nor did that saying go beyond the truth. If ever patience, benevolence, and strength, were written upon a human face, they were written on hers. It was like a benediction to see her smile, while a message from her lips went straight to the heart, and was rarely, if ever, forgotten.

She was not a great talker, however. She always did more than she promised. She never gave people room to talk about what she *intended* to do, though they had plenty of opportunity of talking about what she *did*. She was not a fussy woman; never talked about herself. She was denied membership at the Methodist chapel on that account. She would not go to the class meeting or speak her experience in the "Love Feast." Her own religious experience was a matter she could not prate about. She bore her testimony by deeds, not by words. Some narrow souls said that she had never been converted, or she would be only too glad to speak her experience in the class meeting. Said that the Lord had no dumb children, and as she was dumb in matters of religion, therefore she was not the Lord's. Said that her good deeds in the sight of Heaven were only filthy rags, and hence should not be recognised by Christian people as good deeds at all. Said a great many other things equally wise and original, but which we have not time to repeat.

Enoch Tresillian was very proud of his wife, and well he might be. She was the inspiration of all that was best in his life, and without her influence the chances are he would have settled down into a haughty, stingy, money-grub. But she was like summer sunshine to him, bringing out all that was best in his nature. She did not know this herself. Her husband in her sight was a very pure, honourable man, full of kindly impulses, though not given to gush, generous without ostentation. In truth she gave him credit for much more generosity than he possessed, and saw in him virtues that were invisible to other eyes.

They lived very happily together, never having any cross words, or, if he should speak crossly, she would not answer him back. Why should she answer him back? Was he not fidgetted and worried by the cares of a large farm, by the stupidity and carelessness of workpeople, by the unpropitiousness of the weather, by the continuance of bad times? It was not her place, therefore, to answer him back when he spoke crossly, or sulk because he did not notice her. So she reasoned with herself. Her place was to meet his frowns with a smile, and soften as much as she could the cares of a harassing life.

Poor Mary Vivian in her loneliness and longing, often envied the mistress of Rosevallion Manor. She and her husband seemed so happy together. She could walk to chapel leaning upon his arm, could sit by his side in the pew, and take counsel with him in the training of the children: while she—and poor Mary would draw a long sigh at the thought—had to walk through life alone. In those days she longed, with an unutterable longing, for her husband's return; but she was too proud to let him know that she wanted him back. He wrote her a letter every fortnight full of kindness and affection, and every month he sent her a remittance more than sufficient to meet her needs, but he rarely said anything about returning now. During the first year of his absence he told her, in almost every letter, that she had only to give him a hint that she would like to have him back, and he would return as fast as the power of steam could bring him. But the hint was never given. Her stubborn pride always stayed her hand when about to write the words, and so the weary years passed on.

She had told her husband one secret, which she had kept from him for seven long years, and which had fallen like sudden night upon the hope of his life, and had driven him forth an exile from his home. Why should she not tell him another secret, which would have been as the dawn of a new day to him, and would have brought him from the other side

of the world to sit by her side and help her to bear the burden of life?

In a fit of blind passion she had told him one secret. Why could she not tell him the other in the yearning of her strong love? For she did love her husband now. Loved him with all the strength of her nature, and this was the secret she longed to tell him, and yet would not.

Five years after her husband left home, Nicholas Bray came to work at Wheal Anthony. Mary had not seen her old lover for nearly eight years, and when at length she saw him, she could scarcely believe her own eyes. Was this the man to whom she had given her maiden heart? Was this the ideal she had cherished in her memory for so many years? Alas! how had the mighty fallen. Could it be possible, she thought, that she had *loved* this coarse, sensual, besotted man? Was it for this loud-tongued, blustering clown, that she had sent her brave, patient husband into exile?

Poor Mary locked herself in her bedroom during the whole of that afternoon, and nearly wept herself ill. At last her eyes were opened. At last she saw her husband as he really was, a man in a thousand, too patient to repine, too noble and pure to push himself where he was not wanted, though that place was his own home. What she suffered from that day forward, no one ever knew, for she made no sign. Day by day she stiffened her neck with pride, became, if possible, more reserved with her neighbours, more indulgent toward David, more severe with Paul.

In Penwharf she maintained a dignified position. She had been able out of her husband's allowance to re-furnish her cottage with considerable taste, while she always dressed herself and her children with care. Moreover, she was better educated than most of her neighbours, and avoided in her speech the Cornish dialect as much as possible.

Perhaps it was on this account that at the annual children's party at Rosevallion, Paul and David Vivian were always in-

vited. Christmas on this account was looked forward to with more eagerness by them than any other season of the year.

At this little party or ball—for Ruth Tresillian allowed the children to dance if they liked, or such of them as knew how, another proof, according to the saints of Penwharf, of her unregenerate nature—at this little ball, the whole house was given up to the youngsters. And what a house it was to make merry in! For once in their lives the children who came were not cramped for room. There seemed no end to the long corridors and queer passages and odd corners, and on this night every portion of it would be brought into requisition.

Mary would come later on in the evening for the purpose of taking her boys home, and would sit awhile with Mrs. Tresillian and watch the children at their fun.

"How happy they seem!" she would say, with a pleased look at her own boys.

"Yes, they make a bonny picture," Mrs. Tresillian would reply.

"And what a beautiful girl your Abigail is. Look at her now dancing with our Paul. Where that boy learnt to dance I cannot imagine, for I should never think of having him taught, and I'm sure his father would not. But really they look very graceful and pretty, don't they?"

"Yes, Abigail is a very graceful dancer. She always reminds me of the phrase, 'the poetry of motion.'"

"I never heard the saying before, but it is certainly very expressive. But I hope we don't do wrong in letting the children dance."

To this Mrs. Tresillian makes no reply, but a smile of compassion plays over her large benevolent face; while Mary's brow contracts into something like a frown as she notices how much more graceful in his movements Paul is than David, and how the elder boy appears far more at ease and at home than the younger.

"My Abigail and your Paul seem quite friends," Mrs. Tresillian remarks at length. "Look at the puss walking away leaning on his arm, as if they were quite grown-up people. Dear, dear; how soon the young chits learn old-fashioned ways."

"I'm afraid Paul is getting too forward," Mary remarks deprecatingly. "He should not forget where he is. Children are apt to forget the respect due to their betters."

"Please don't talk in that way," Mrs. Tresillian replies quickly. "I hope I shall never see in my children any assumption of superiority. The accidents of birth count for nothing in the sight of Heaven. Your children are equal to mine any day."

"It's very kind of you to say so," Mary answers, with a pleased look. "And I must say on the whole my children are very good. Especially David, he is such a trustful, affectionate lad. Paul is more wilful and determined, and is often getting his brother into trouble. I hope he will grow out of his mischievous ways after a bit."

"Boys are none the worse for a little pluck and spirit," Mrs. Tresillian remarks. "And I'm sure Paul is a most generous boy. But there goes the refreshment bell, so I must leave you for awhile."

In the great roomy farm kitchen there are two long tables running from end to end, laden with such dainties as children delight in. Paul Vivian manages somehow to get a seat next to Abigail again, and when he squeezes himself in with a broad smile upon his face, she welcomes him with a look of pleasure. At present, at least, she is not troubled by any feeling of caste. How will it be when she grows older?

## CHAPTER IV.

### BY THE SEA.

"We live together years and years,  
And leave unsounded still,  
Each other's depths of hopes and fears,  
Each other's depths of will :  
We live together day by day,  
And some chance look or tone  
Lights up, with instantaneous ray,  
An inner world unknown."

—LORD HOUGHTON.

BY the time she was sixteen Abigail Tresillian gave promise of possessing all her mother's gentleness and sweetness of disposition, and more than her mother's share of good looks. In all the country side there was no one so universally praised and admired as Abigail, and this, not because she was the daughter of Farmer Tresillian, but because she was such a true child of nature. Her every movement, and word, and tone, was perfectly natural and unaffected.

"Abigail never simpers, or cuts her words, or puts on airs." was a frequent remark of the Penwharf folk. "She is just herself and nobody else. As free as though she was only a miner's child, and didn't live in a grand house."

Abigail never thought of the house in which she lived or of the name she bore. To be a Tresillian of Rosevallion was to her brother Jack a fact of immense importance. To Abigail it was nothing. Why should it be? There was no room in her generous heart as yet for pride of that nature. If people were good and gentle and kind, if they loved their neighbours and loved God, what did it matter about the size of the house in which they lived?

She could not understand why her brother Jack took so much pride in his name, or why he carried his head so high.

There was a time when he used to play with the village boys and seemed as one of them, but of late he had assumed an importance and a superiority which she could not understand. He had even gone so far as to counsel her in the matter—had hinted that she did not properly respect her position in life.

"I don't know exactly what you mean by that," Abigail said. "I always respect people when they are good and honest."

"Oh, yes, that is all right enough, as far as it goes," Jack said loftily. "But then you know, Abie, we are not expected to associate now with common people."

"You mean by common folk, bad people?" Abigail said.

"No, not bad people exactly, but cottage people, miners and farm labourers, and such like."

"The Vivians are cottage people," said Abigail. "Would you call them common folk?"

"Well," said Jack, with a curl of the lip, "they *are* better than most of their class, and we have treated them in the past almost as equals; but for my own part, I don't intend to make as much of them in the future."

"Oh, Jack! I'm sorry you've been away to boarding-school, if that's what you have learnt; you didn't talk in this way before you went."

"My simple little sister," Jack said, patronisingly. "But *you* are going to boarding-school next term, so it is to be expected you will learn a few things."

"I hope I shall never learn to despise my friends because they are poor," she said, with quivering lip. "Suppose we should become poor, should we be the worse for that?"

"Oh, I don't know," he said, impatiently; "but when you get to my age, Abie, you will see things differently."

• Jack was two years older than Abigail—he might have been ten by the way he talked. He was tall for his age, straight as a rule, and strikingly handsome. His father said that "he was every inch a Tresillian," and on more than one occasion told him so. It was a foolish thing to do. The boy had a sufficiently large development of pride already, without

having it fostered and strengthened. To have put the curb on would have been a much more sensible thing.

Jack carried out his resolve respecting the Vivians. Paul had been one of his chief friends up to the time of his going to boarding-school. Now on his return, however, all this was changed. Paul and Jack were just about the same age, and at the time the latter was sent away to have the finishing touches put on his education, the former was apprenticed to the village carpenter.

Paul felt the snub very keenly, and for days and days it rankled in his heart, and made his life a misery. At first he could not understand it. Was Jack Tresillian any the better because he had been to a boarding-school? Was he, Paul Vivian, any the worse because he was learning to be a carpenter? He had heard people talk about "caste" and "class distinctions," but they were meaningless phrases to him till now. At last, however, his eyes were opened. He was but the son of a miner; Jack was the son of a farmer and land-owner. And between the two there was a great gulf fixed. But who had fixed the gulf? That was a question which puzzled him sorely, and which continued to puzzle him all the more as time passed on.

He began to see that life could never be exactly as it had been. Abigail was going away to school next, and by the time she got back she would have forgotten him also. He had always met her on terms of equality; and brother and sister could scarcely be more friendly than they had been. Now it suddenly flashed upon him that he had been presumptuous in the past; that he had been assuming a position that people like the Tresillians would not acknowledge.

What then? Was he to toady to these people? Was he to profess a humility he did not feel? Was he to step down, take a lower seat, and admit from henceforth that he was not as good as they? No; he could not, and he would not. He was what he had always been, and because he was learning how to earn an honest living he was surely none the worse



He did not reply for several seconds. He walked to the edge of the rock, and then came back again and sat down by her side.

"You do not despise me, then, because I am a carpenter?" he said, with an effort.

"Despise you, no! Why should I despise you?"

"Your brother Jack thinks you are a story above us cottage folk."

"I cannot help what Jack thinks," she said. "But if he thinks that, I am very sorry. I am afraid he has learnt a few things at boarding-school that he had better not have learnt."

"You are going away to boarding-school soon, I hear. Don't you think you will learn the same things?"

"I am sure I never shall," she said, with energy.

"I don't know," he said, more to himself than to her. "It seems to me that most folks change as they get older."

"That is very likely," she answered. "But they need not forget their old friends on that account."

"I think I shall go away soon," he said, after a pause.

"You go away?"

"Yes, why not?"

"Oh, I don't know, only I never thought of you going away. And I never heard you speak of it."

"The wish has only come to me to-day," he said. "While I was sitting up there on the cliff just now, looking out over the sea, the desire rushed over me like a sudden breeze. I never felt like it before, and now I can hardly think of anything else."

For awhile there was silence between them, save for the crush and music of the incoming tide. Paul's eyes were wandering out over the sea again, and she was looking steadily at him.

"Mother says it is not safe to act on sudden impulses," she said at length.

He gave a little start, as though suddenly called back from

dreamland. "Perhaps your mother is right," he answered, slowly.

"And you are so young to go abroad," she said, after another pause.

"I shall mend of that every day," he said, with a smile.

"But to go away into a strange land and live all amongst strangers must be horrid," she said.

"If I went, I should go to my father," he replied. Then, with a sudden burst of feeling, he added, "Oh, Abie, you don't know how I long sometimes to see my father and to have his counsel."

"Would it not be better if he should come home to you?" she said.

"Perhaps it would; I don't know. But I don't think he ever says anything about coming home now."

"And if you went to him, you would stay away also for years and years, and perhaps never come home again."

"Very likely," he said, slowly. "I should soon be forgotten, and nobody would care much whether I came home or stayed away."

"You don't know that," she said. "Because Jack has slighted you a little, you think we are all alike."

"If you treated me as Jack has done, I should never want to come home any more," he answered.

She made no reply to that. And for a long time they sat in silence, each one busy with his and her own thoughts. All around them the sea was singing under the soft summer sky, but they did not heed the song. Paul was away in dreamland again, and Abigail was straying on its borders.

Suddenly Paul started up. "Abie," he said, excitedly, "I've forgotten all about the tide. I hope we have not stayed here too long." And rushing to the edge of the rock, he gave a loud exclamation of concern.

"What is it?" she said, starting to her feet.

"The sea is all about us, Abie. What shall we do?"

## CHAPTER V.

### TAKEN TO TASK.

"In spite of all the fools that pride has made  
'Tis not on man a useless burden laid ;  
Pride has ennobled some, and some disgraced,  
It hurts not in itself, but as 'tis placed ;  
When right its views know none but virtue's bound,  
When wrong it scarcely looks one inch around."

—STILLINGFLEET.

IT is proverbially a much easier thing to ask a question than it is to answer it. And, indeed, when Paul asked the question recorded at the close of the last chapter he had no anticipation of its being answered by his companion. He would have to supply the answer himself, if answer was to be found at all.

Abigail looked at the swelling flood, that made of the rock on which they stood, a little island, with a feeling of dismay in her heart. To her it seemed an absolute certainty that they would both be drowned. She knew that at high water the rock would be completely engulfed. Hence to remain where they were until the tide retreated again was altogether out of the question. To reach the shore without a boat seemed equally impossible.

"Oh! Paul, we shall both drown," she said, wringing her hands.

"We'll not say that till we *are* drowned," he said, with a smile.

"Oh! Paul, what a funny idea. But, really, is there any chance of escape?"

"While there's life there's hope," he said, looking grave.  
"But I've been very foolish, Abie. It's all my fault. I ought to have remembered that the tide was coming in."

"You are no more to blame than I am. You did not bring me out here; I came of my own free will. But what are you doing?"

"I am trying the depth of the water," he said, clambering down the side of the rock.





"All right, Abie, I've reached the bottom now."—p. 83

"Oh, don't do that," she said. "You'll be drowned if you do."

"We shall be drowned if I don't," he said, with a smile.

"Oh, how can you talk so? Don't you think we ought to be saying our prayers?"

"I am praying a bit," he said, "but the best kind of prayer now will be to try to save our lives."

"Oh, don't go down any farther," she said a moment later, "you'll be out of sight soon, and then what shall I do?"

"All right, Abie," he called out cheerfully, "I've reached the bottom now."

"But what am I to do?" she said, "you are so much taller than I am. I never can get down there."

"No need you should," he said; "I want to keep you dry, if possible. But be quick about it."

"What do you want me to do?" she said.

"Get on my shoulder," he replied. "Come on to this point of rock—quick."

"Oh, I shall fall," she said, with a little cry.

"No, you won't, if you keep your heart up. That's right, clutch my hair, and hold on like grim death."

"Oh! Paul, I shall hurt you."

"Never mind if you pull every blessed hair out," he said, with a laugh, "but I think they are pretty tight in. Now, then! hold your feet up." And Paul marched along through the rising tide with Abigail sitting securely on his shoulder.

Fortunately there were no pits or hollows in the beach, or the consequences might have been serious. As it was, every step brought him into shallower water, and in a few minutes they were both standing high—and, as far as Abigail was concerned, perfectly dry—upon the shingle.

Paul, however, was wet to the armpits, but that he did not mind in the least; indeed he rather enjoyed it. The whole experience was so novel that, now all danger was past, he was fain to indulge in a hearty burst of laughter, and most likely would have done so but for the scared look on Abigail's face.

"Oh, Paul!" she said, as soon as her feet touched the hard

shingle. And then her eyes filled and her lips began to tremble.

"Why, Abie," he said, "it is all over now."

But she could make no reply. Sitting down on the dry sand, she hid her face in her pocket-handkerchief and began to cry.

For awhile he stood looking at her in silence.

"Come, Abie," he said at length, "there's nothing in it. There never has been a bit of danger. I could have carried you if you had been twice as heavy."

"I shall be better directly," she said from behind her handkerchief, and the next moment she smiled up at him through her tears.

"Why, Abie," he said, "your face is like an April day."

"Please don't make fun of me," she said, with a little sob, but still smiling. "I know I'm a dreadful coward. Oh, I wish I was strong and brave like you."

"Now you are making fun of me," he replied.

"No, Paul, I am not," she said, suddenly growing serious again. "I think you are a real hero. And I shall never forget you, Paul, — never, never!"

"You think so now," he said, returning her grave look, "because you are a bit excited and nervous; but by to-morrow, when you have thought it over, you will see that there is nothing in it."

"Oh, no, Paul, you are mistaken in that."

"Why, I only waded ashore," he answered. "Any numskull could have done that. There was no chance of drowning unless I meant suicide."

"If you hadn't been brave and clear-headed," she said, "we should have remained there on the rock till this time, wringing our hands, and crying for help."

"Well, Abie," he said, with a smile, "I won't dispute with you any more. You always look the generous side of everything. It is your nature, and you can't help it. I only wish there were more folks like you. The world would then be a much nicer place to live in than it is now."

"Please don't talk about being generous," she said, starting

to her feet. "Here I have been so wrapped up in myself that I have forgotten you were standing here in your wet clothes. Oh! Paul, you will catch your death of cold, and it will be all my fault."

He laughed again but made no other answer, and a minute later they were climbing the zig-zag path that led over the cliff.

Wet and uncomfortable as Paul was in body, he was in a happier frame of mind than he had been for many a long day. Abigail had shown him more of her heart than she had ever done before, and he felt that, come what might, she would remain his true friend.

Very little was said during their journey over the bluffs and down the shaded lane to Rosevallion. At the gate he pressed her hand more tightly than he had been in the habit of doing, and, with a hasty "Good afternoon," he marched on down the lane in the direction of his home. Once only he turned, and that when he had gone but a few steps. She stood watching him, her hand upon the gate, her face radiant with smiles. How beautiful she looked in the golden glow of the westering sun!

Many a long year after that he pictured her standing thus. He had no suspicion then that when they met again they would meet as strangers. Abigail, full of the adventures of the afternoon, went into the house, and in her artless and honest way narrated all that had happened.

She did not notice how her father's brow clouded as she began to talk, and how the cloud grew darker and darker as she proceeded with her story. Jack, too, sat silent, casting furtive glances at his father every now and then.

When she had finished there was silence for a second or two, then her father spoke out:

"Abigail," he said, and his voice was low and stern, "I am grieved and shocked—nay, more, I am indignant. I did not think that a daughter of mine, a Tresillian, could so far forget herself as to go out on a lonely rock, alone with a village carpenter."



"I am sure, pa——" Abigail began, looking up with an expression of astonishment in her eyes, but she was not allowed to proceed.

"Silence!" thundered Mr. Tresillian. "I have heard your story. It wants no comment or defence. I have always had doubts as to the wisdom of inviting common people's children to your Christmas parties, but I have yielded to your mother in this, and now the folly of it is made clear."

"Enoch," said his wife, "you are looking at the matter much too seriously. I am sure there has been nothing——"

"Will you allow me to speak in my own house?" he said, severely. "Anyhow, whether proper or improper, the thing shall be stopped. Do you think I am going to let my children lower themselves to the level of cowboys?"

"There is no fear of my doing so, father," said Jack, pompously.

"I am glad to hear it, my boy," said his father, with a wintry smile. "You are a Tresillian, every inch of you, and I have no fear but you will keep your proper position, and make other people keep theirs. But Abigail, unfortunately, is not a Tresillian; she takes after her mother."

"Who is a Penhale," interposed his wife.

"I do not say a word against the Penhales," he said, drawing himself up. "It is an old county name, I admit. But, Ruth, you are like all your family, you have no proper pride. You might be a Beel or Brown or Biddix by the way you talk sometimes, and Abigail takes after you."

"Abigail is a very good girl," was the quick reply.

"But sadly indiscreet," said her father. "And such folly as we have heard of to-day must be stopped, and stopped at once. Abigail, are you listening?"

"Yes, pa."

"Then understand, from this day forward that you do not speak to that Vivian."

• "Not speak to him, pa!"

"No! Nor look at him, if you can avoid it. He is no fit companion for you. I wonder what the world is coming to when miners' children set themselves up as the equals of farmers' sons and daughters."

"But he is well educated and well-behaved, pa," said Abigail, timidly.

"Do not answer me in that way again," was the stern reply. "I have forbidden you to associate with him, or even speak to him, unless I am with you, and understand I mean to be obeyed in this matter. Now, go to your room."

With downcast eyes and trembling lip Abigail instantly obeyed; Jack followed her before she reached the door.

"Abie," he said, as soon as the door was closed behind them, "you would have saved yourself this scrape if you had taken my advice. The governor is evidently pretty mad, and rightly so. I can't understand what you mean associating with a low lad like that."

"He isn't *low*," said Abigail, with flashing eyes. "He is no more low than you are. He is a gentleman."

"Bah!" said Jack, loftily. "You talk like a simpleton. A carpenter a gentleman!"

"And why not?" said Abigail, her eyes full of tears. "I don't see why it is not as honourable to work in a carpenter's shop as to work on a farm."

"You don't see because you are a simpleton," said Jack, with lofty scorn.

"This is the second time you have called me a simpleton," said Abigail, her eyes flashing again. "How would you like me to retort and call you a prig!"

For a moment he looked at her in surprise.

"Abie," he said, "I am ashamed of you. It is evidently time you went to school to learn good behaviour."

"And I am surprised at you," she said, with a look of defiance upon her face. "You don't think it wrong to call me names, but if I retort you are shocked."

"It's not proper in a girl," he said.

"And it's not proper in a boy," she answered back. "And I can't help telling you this, that I think the way you have treated Paul Vivian is downright mean. You used to be very good friends. He has never done anything to forfeit your friendship. He has always behaved like a gentleman."

"Paul Vivian is a cad," Jack answered, with a sneer.

"I say he is not," she said, with a look of defiance. For she was now thoroughly roused, and would stand her ground to the last.

"Anyhow," he said, "the governor has put an end to your folly. I suppose you will not defy him as you have defied me."

"If I were you, I would not call father 'the governor,'" she said, without heeding his question. "It does not sound at all nice," and without waiting for him to reply, she hurried away to her own room.

Meanwhile Mr. Tresillian and his wife were further discussing the matter in the dining-room.

"I am sure, Enoch, you have made a mistake," she said to him, as soon as Abigail had left. "You would have gained your end much better by being less severe."

"That is always the way with you, Ruth," he said, crossly. "But for my own part I have not much faith in your milk-and-water methods. Abigail is quixotic and soft-hearted, and that young scamp of a Vivian would be making love to her next."

"Don't call names, Enoch," she replied. "The lad is not a scamp. He is intelligent and well-behaved, and if you had told Abigail that you did not approve of her going off alone with him, or with anyone else—that she was getting too old to act any longer as a child—she would have seen the force of it in a moment, and I am sure you would not have occasion to speak to her again on the subject."

"I don't anticipate I shall have to speak to her again on the subject as it is," he replied, with a frown.

• "Perhaps not. But I know you are anxious that she

should not *think* about him ; that she should let him slip out of her memory and out of her life entirely."

"That is exactly what I do wish," he said.

"But by forbidding her to speak to him," she went on, "you produce the precisely opposite result. He will fill all her thoughts now. She thinks you ought to be grateful to him for saving her life, instead of which he is to be frowned upon and ignored ; and I know that in the child's heart there will rankle a sense of wrong and injustice, and if she exalts him into a martyr and a hero, it will be largely the result of this treatment."

"Oh, stuff and nonsense !" he said, testily. "But if I see anything of that in her, I'll soon put my foot upon it."

"You would do much better to put your foot on Jack's pride and pedantry," she said.

"Jack is a Tresillian," he said, loftily. "I have no fear of Jack."

"I wish he had more of Abigail's spirit," she replied. "I grieve to see his arrogant ways, and I grieve that you encourage him in it."

"Just like you, Ruth," he said, with something like a smile. "But then you are a Penhale, and you have none of you any proper pride."

"Pride is a commodity, Enoch, that one may easily have too much of," she answered ; "and I am sure Jack has too much of it, and instead of fostering it, as you do, you would do well to check it."

"Oh ! nonsense, Ruth. Jack is a chip of the old block, a lad that we ought to be proud of. He will keep up the dignity of the family name. Ay, add lustre to it," he said, with a wave of the hand.

"Oh, well," she said, with a sigh, "time will tell ; but we will not discuss the matter further now."

"Very good," he said, with the air of a man who felt that he had got the best of the argument. "I am quite willing to let the subject drop."

"By no means, Abigail," he said, sternly. "Do not allude to this matter again."

"Very well, papa," she said meekly ; and with bent head she retraced her steps slowly to the house.

Saturday had come again, and during the week she had never seen Paul. Indeed, she had purposely avoided going into the village, or anywhere else, where she thought she might be likely to meet him.

And he, as he had wandered about the village and up the Rosevallion lane, and out over the bluffs in the quiet of the evenings, had wondered why she never showed her face. He was curious to know if she had got over her fright, and whether she thought as seriously of their little adventure as at the first.

But every evening when it was dusk, he returned to his home disappointed, and a little bit piqued ; and without noticing his mother or David would bury himself in a book, and so remain till bed time.

On Saturday afternoon, however, he felt sure he would see her. And so, after dinner, he carefully dressed himself in his holiday suit of tweed, and made his way in the direction of Rosevallion. Mary Vivian looked at him almost with pride as he left the house. He was so tall, so well-knit, so handsome. He had said nothing to her as yet about the desire that had come to him the week before, to sail away over the seas and visit his father on the other side of the world. But the desire was still in his heart, and she would hear of it by-and-bye.

Branching from Rosevallion lane was a footpath that ran along by the orchard hedge, and then struck out across the fields in the direction of St. Hildred Churchtown. Between the orchard and the field was a large pond, around which the footpath ran, close to its edge. The pond was fed by a clean stream of water that gushed out of the hillside near the house, and which had fretted a channel for itself close to the garden wall. This stream of water was a great delight to Abigail.

She liked its constant ripple night and day. Its music was more soothing than a lullaby. In the hot summer days she laved her hands and face in it, and during the sultry night its gentle murmur seemed like a cooling breath from the sea.

It must not be supposed, however, that the duck pond was merely for the convenience of the ducks. Its main purpose was to feed the water-wheel a little lower down, which was connected with the barn by a long iron rod, and did all the work of thrashing and winnowing the corn.

On the afternoon in question Paul, instead of going out on the bluffs in the direction of the sea, took the footpath along by the orchard hedge round by the pond, and then out across the fields. He walked very slowly, stopping now and then to look back. But if Abigail saw him she kept out of sight. For a full mile he walked in the direction of St. Hildred, then turned round and began slowly to retrace his steps. Now and then the house was lost to view, but on reaching a high ridge, that commanded a view of the whole farmstead, he sat down on a stile and fixed his eyes on the garden and orchard; but, though he sat there a full half hour, the only persons he saw were Jack Tresillian and Buck, the stable-boy.

"What a fool I am," he said to himself at length, "fooling about in this way! I really don't know why I am so anxious to see Abie more than anybody else. I daresay there will be some game stirring by this. I'll be off back and see," and, suiting the action to the word, he jumped off the stile and made his way across the field at a swinging pace.

On reaching the pond, however, he halted, and for a while stood with his hands behind his back, apparently looking at the ducks, but in reality seeing nothing.

Suddenly a footstep sounded behind him, but, before he could turn fully round, his feet were knocked from underneath him, and he fell to the ground; the next moment two pairs of hands caught him up, and, almost before he knew what had happened, he found himself struggling in the water.

Fortunately the pond was not deep, though there was a

considerable accumulation of mud at the bottom, and when he had struggled to his feet; and had wiped the mud out of his eyes, he saw Jack Tresillian and Buck on the bank, twisting themselves about in a fit of uncontrollable laughter.

"So it was you who did this cowardly trick, was it?" said Paul, shaking his fist at Jack.

"Yes, it was," said Jack, as soon as he could speak, "and if you will come up here we will give you a second dose of it," and he went off into another fit of laughter.

"Yes, Maister Vivian," said Buck, "we air quite ready for you if you wishes a bit more."

"You are two contemptible cowards," said Paul, growing white to the very lips.

"We don't believe in lazy loafers mooning about where they are not wanted," said Jack. "I hope this will be a warning to you."

"Don't know 'bout that," said Buck, with a grin; "he be fond of the watter. Las' week he went into the say an' nearly drowned Miss Abie."

"If you will remain where you are two minutes longer," said Paul, struggling through the mud in their direction, "you shall understand what I am fond of."

"Lor'! don't he talk big!" said Buck. "It seems to me he ain't 'ad quite enough. Shall us wait an' give 'im a second helpin', Maister Jack?"

"Yes, Buck," said Jack, in a whisper. "Don't let him get out. When he is climbing up the bank, give him a push."

"Ay, that I will!" said Buck, with a leer. "I'll let 'im get fair out; for the 'igher he be, the bigger the splash."

In this Buck was as good as his word. He let Paul get clear out of the water, and then, with a sudden movement, attempted to push him back again. But Paul was too quick for him. As soon as Buck was near enough, he caught him by the leg and drew himself clear up the bank.

There was a brief struggle, a loud cry, and a big splash, and then Buck disappeared, while Paul made a rush for Jack

Tresillian, with the object of sending him after his servant. But the young farmer was not to be caught. Hastily leaping the orchard hedge, he ran toward the house with all possible haste, leaving Buck to struggle out of the water as best he could.

"You coward!" Paul called after him. But he got no reply.

In the meanwhile, however, Buck was shouting at the top of his voice, "Help! help! Murder! I'm drowning!"

"You deserve to drown," said Paul, coming back to the brink of the pond to have a look at his foe.

"It ain't my fault at all," whined Buck. "Maister Jack made me do it. He said as 'ow you were a-gettin' too huppish, an' wanted takin' down."

"Oh, indeed!" said Paul.

"He did, sure 'nough," said Buck, humbly. "I've nothin' agin you more'n anybody else. But he made me do it, an' I 'ave to do what I'm towld."

"You are a mean coward, at any rate," said Paul. "But I'll not waste further words on you," and he turned on his heel and marched away.

Buck had clambered up the bank almost before Paul was out of sight, and, with the water streaming out of his clothes, made straight for the house. He expected to get a word of commiseration from his young master. But Jack was nowhere to be seen.

Abigail had heard the sound of angry voices proceeding from the neighbourhood of the duck pond, and had rushed out into the garden to see what it meant, and so had come suddenly face to face with her brother.

"Why, Jack," she said, "what are you running for? Is anything the matter?"

"We are only having a lark," he said, looking apprehensively back over his shoulder, but seeing he was not being followed, he came to a sudden stop.

"What lark are you having?" she asked.



"That cad Paul Vivian has been loitering about here again, and so we've paid him out."

"You've paid him out?" she said, repeating the words after him, as though she did not quite comprehend his meaning.

"Ay, we've cooled his courage, I guess," Jack said, drawing himself up to his full height. "He knew that the governor and ma had gone to town, I expect, and so came loitering about here, trying to get you into another scrape. But I reckon he'll not come again very quick."

"What have you done to him?" she said, quickly, her eyes flashing.

"We've thrown him into the duck pond."

"And left him to drown?" she demanded.

"Oh, no; he got out much too soon, and, after throwing Buck in, he made a rush for me."

"And you ran away?"

"Well, rather," he said, trying to put a bold face on the matter. "I wasn't going——"

But she did not let him finish the sentence. "Jack," she said, "I am ashamed of you," and there was such a look of scorn upon her face as he had never seen before.

"Who cares whether you are ashamed or no?" he said defiantly.

"To be mean is bad enough," she went on, without heeding him, "but to be a coward——"

"Look here," he said quickly, "I'm not going to be talked to in this way by a chit of a girl like you. Do you know that I'm nearly a man?"

"I know you are old enough to be nearly a man," she said, pointedly.

For a moment he looked at her without speaking, then turned on his heel and walked into the house.

Her first impulse was to follow him, but she thought better of it, and the next moment she was making her way down the garden in the direction of the pond. She felt very

excited; almost angry. She could not at all understand why her father and brother had taken such a sudden dislike to Paul Vivian. Until just recently they had always been very friendly toward him. He and David had come to Rosevallion ever since she could remember, and they had played together as equals and friends, but now, since Jack had returned from boarding-school, everything was changed. The Vivians were regarded as no longer fit companions for them, and she had been commanded never to speak to Paul again. What was the meaning of it all?

The next moment Buck stood before her, looking the picture of misery and humiliation. Abigail could hardly keep from smiling as she looked at him. His face, hands, and clothes were all covered with green water-weed and slime. His ears were full, his hair tangled and muddy, his feet plashing in his ponderous shoes.

"Why, Buck," she said, "you look very wet."

"Ay," he said, dolefully, "he thraved me into the pond."

"Who threw you in, Buck?" she asked, her eyes brimming over with merriment.

"He," said Buck, with a jerk of his thumb over his shoulder. "Him as is just turnin' the coander."

"I don't see anyone," she said.

"Oh, well, he's got out o' sight; but 'twas Paul Vivian."

"But you are almost a man, Buck."

"Very likely, miss; but he's 'mazin' strong."

"But why did he throw you in?" she asked, determined if possible to have Buck's version of the story.

"I'm too wet an' shivery now, miss, to tell'ee all the stoary, miss, if you wouldn't mind excusin' me," said Buck, in a deprecatory tone. "But I don't say as 'ow I wasn't desarvin' of it after all; but I'll go now, if you please, miss," and he hobbled away in the direction of the kitchen, leaving Abigail alone to her meditations.

## CHAPTER VII.

PASSED BY.

"Who steals my purse steals trash ; 'tis something, nothing ;  
'Twas mine, 'tis his, and has been slave to thousands.  
But he who filches from me my good name,  
Robs me of that which not enriches him,  
And makes me poor indeed."—SHAKESPEARE.

**D**URING all the next week Paul remained indoors nursing a bad cold, and nursing his anger. He did not tell his mother and David how he got into the pond ; but they soon found out from other quarters. Indeed, Paul was the talk of the village for the whole week, and when at length he ventured out of doors, he had to run the gauntlet of many a cutting gibe and tantalising question. Jack Tresillian's version of the story had got the start. Moreover, it was ably backed up and supplemented by Buck, and as the days passed on, none of it was spilled by being passed from lip to lip. On the contrary, the story grew by the telling, as most stories do, until in a few days it began to look black for Paul.

"He had been found trespassing in the orchard," the story went. "On being discovered he took to his heels, Jack Tresillian and Buck giving chase. When close to the pond he caught his foot in a stone, and went head foremost into the water, and had it not been for the timely assistance of his pursuers, would have been drowned."

This was the substance of the story which Paul heard when at length he ventured out of doors again. But there is so much in the way of telling a story. A few shakes of the head, an occasional lowering of the voice, an apprehensive look round the room, a mysterious whisper, a significant gesture now and then, and the simplest, and most innocent form of words becomes pregnant with the deepest and darkest meanings.

Paul might have been a common poacher by the way the village gossips clacked and chattered, and shook their heads, and looked mysterious day by day.

He was too proud, however, or too indignant to reply. If people chose to believe this trumped-up story, they were welcome to do so. He shut his lips tightly, and kept them shut, refusing to discuss the matter with anyone.

As time went on the gossips spoke of this as the first step in Paul's fall. Up to this point he had been regarded as "carnal," though not "immoral." He had never manifested any very religious tendencies. Had resisted all the excitements of revival meetings. Had refused to accompany his mother and David to the class meeting. Had never joined the Band of Hope, and had often made fun of some of the local preachers, who occasionally "held forth" in the pulpit of the Methodist chapel. All this, of course, was bad enough. It showed very clearly that he was still unregenerate. Yet notwithstanding this, nearly everybody liked him. He was so open, frank, and generous. So full of life and fun. He looked at you so steadily, when you spoke to him, and the light in his eye was so kindly and clear. And when he spoke there was such a ring of sincerity in his voice, that you could not doubt the truth of what he said.

It is true he lacked the humility of David. But then David had been converted when quite young, and had gone regularly to class since he was twelve, and had adopted a style of speech that savoured of pietism.

Paul, on the contrary, was abrupt, outspoken, and independent, with an occasional touch of hauteur in his tone—a sure indication, according to some very good people, that he was still "in the gall of bitterness and in the bonds of iniquity." Still, while there could be no doubt that Paul was "carnal,"—*very* carnal, some people thought—no one ever thought of him as being immoral.

After the episode of the duck pond, however, opinion changed in some degree. Why had he been in the orchard

at all? And if he did not mean mischief, why did he try to run away? And why had young Tresillian flung him over? Evidently, there was more in all this than appeared on the surface.

Then it suddenly occurred to some of the wisecrackers of Penwharf that they had heard of other things in the years gone by, which they had not thought anything of at the time, but which, interpreted in the light of to-day, might mean a great deal. He had been given to practical jokes. Numberless stories could be told of his exploits in this direction. Might not these jokes mean a great deal more than merely a love of fun? Evidently, Paul was in a bad way, and needed watching.

Of course the majority of people pool-pooled the insinuation that he was any other than he had always appeared to be—a bright, healthy, cheerful young fellow, as full of kindness and generosity as he was full of fun.

The chatter died away after a week or two. Meanwhile, Paul steadily avoided coming into contact with any of the Rosevallion people. The treatment he had received was not only most ungenerous, but palpably and cruelly unjust. Evidently, what Jack had done was approved of by the other members of the family, or he would have heard something to the contrary. But even Abigail had not come to him to say that she disapproved of Jack's conduct, and so he was led to the conclusion that she was like all the others. The thought was very painful to him; Abigail had always been his ideal of feminine grace and virtue. It is true he had predicted that she would change with years; that she would become proud, perhaps vain; that she would forget the companions of her childhood and youth, and seek for friends in higher social circles, but that she should change so quickly and suddenly was what he was altogether unprepared for. He had been confined to the house for more than a week, but she had never called to inquire after him. If Abigail was like she once was, that never could have been. She had been in the habit of dropping into the Vivians' pretty

cottage at any time and at all hours of the day. But since that adventure on the rocks she had never once crossed the threshold, though she had been seen in the village again and again. His mother and David began to remark about it at length, and to ask what he had done to offend the Tresillians, and what lay at the bottom of their treatment of him.

"I know of nothing, except their detestable pride," he answered, with some energy.

"What do you mean by that?" his mother asked.

"I mean that they think we are not good enough to associate with them. Jack as good as told me that directly he returned from boarding school, and now Abie has evidently taken up with the same idea."

"Well, Paul," she answered quietly, "I don't think, perhaps, we ought to complain. I have always told you and David that we were not their equals, and it is hardly to be expected that now you are nearly grown up you can continue on the same terms."

"I never could see it in that light, mother," he said, with flashing eyes, "and I don't believe I ever shall. I consider myself as good as Jack Tresillian any day."

"I wonder you don't think yourself a little better," chimed in David, with a sanctimonious drawl.

"Well, David, come to that, in plain words, I do. There, now."

"I guessed as much," said David, "and yet you blame them for being proud. I would begin with the beam in my own eye first, if I were you."

"I suppose, then, you are quite prepared to be treated as belonging to an inferior class?" said Paul, with a touch of scorn in his voice.

"I hope I know my position," said David, "which is evidently more than you do."

Paul was silent for several seconds. Then he got up from the chair on which he had been sitting, and went and stood before his brother, and, looking him straight in the eyes, he said, "David, our father is a good and honest man, and

against our mother no living soul can breathe a word, and I believe you and I have lived respectably, so far. If you choose to be a door mat, that's your own look-out, but I tell you no man shall wipe his boots on me." Saying which he turned on his heel and stalked out of the house.

It was the third Saturday afternoon since his adventure on the rocks. The weather was beautifully fine, and on all sides the harvest was in full swing. In times past he had been in the habit of lending Mr. Tresillian a helping hand on Saturday afternoons while the harvest lasted, and had earned many a compliment for his dexterity in sheaf-binding and mow-making. Indeed, Mr. Tresillian had often said that there was not a better harvest hand in the parish than Paul Vivian, and that he could beat his son Jack out of sight in making a mow, though Jack had been on the farm all the days of his life.

Those turns in the harvest field had always been pleasant times to Paul. He never looked upon what he did in the light of labour. The work was a real pleasure. To be out in the sunny fields tying up the shining sheaves, singing snatches of songs that mingled pleasantly with the ring of the scythes, laughing at stale and silly jokes, telling stories over the "crowst" and cocoa, carrying in the sheaves in the dewy eventide, and in the light of the great red harvest moon, and then the quiet saunter home to supper in the big kitchen at Rosevallion, with Abigail sometimes by his side. All that was like a beautiful dream, a pleasant break in the dull routine and monotony of his daily life.

But this year he had not been invited to help. He could hear, floating down into the quiet valley from the Rosevallion fields, the ring of the reapers' scythes, and the laughter of the girls and men, and he almost longed to join the merry workers and toss about the shining corn, as he had done in the years gone by.

"Well, well," he thought, "it doesn't matter. I shall go away soon, and perhaps never come back again. We can't

be always boys and girls. I shall learn to forget Abie as she has forgotten me. She might have dropped me a little more gently, however, but I expect her people have put her up to it, so I will think of her as kindly as I can."

And with this reflection he quickened his pace along the foot-walk by the river side. To reach the sea by the side of the Wharf was at least four miles, but he thought it was better to take the long way than go by Rosevallion and run the risk of meeting any of the Tresillians. Then it suddenly occurred to him that they would all be in the harvest field, Abigail with the rest most likely, and the road over the bluffs was much the pleasanter way. So when he reached the bend of the river he struck out for the Rosevallion road, and was soon in the pleasant and grateful shadow of the trees.

He walked along at a very leisurely pace with knitted brows, and eyes bent upon the ground, for he was in anything but a happy frame of mind.

Suddenly he looked up with a start, a light but firm foot-step fell upon his ear, and the next moment, around the corner, Abigail Tresillian appeared in sight. She was dressed all in white, with a white kerchief round her neck, fastened with a brooch upon her bosom, revealing her fair and shapely neck. In her hand she was swinging her straw hat, which was brightened by a band of pink ribbon. Her bright brown hair was streaming in the wind, and looking almost golden, where the glints of sunshine through the trees fell upon it; her lips just a little apart, showing two rows of pearly teeth, her cheeks abloom with the glow of health.

Paul caught his breath as the fair vision burst upon him: He thought he had never seen her look so beautiful before. Indeed, he thought that in all his life he had never seen so fair a picture.

Then another thought struck him. How would she meet him? Would she come with outstretched hand and parted lips as she had always done? Would she say she was glad to see him as she had done the last time they met? Should he discover that all his fears had been groundless, and that she was



the Abigail of old, or would his worst forebodings be realised? He saw her pause and drop her eyes, while the colour deepened upon her cheeks. What did it mean? Was she going to turn back? No; she was coming on with firm and resolute steps, but with her eyes bent upon the ground. She was on the same side of the road that he was. In a few moments they were bound to meet face to face. Of course, she would greet him with smiles and pleasant words as she had always done.

The next moment she lifted up her face, and their eyes met, but only for a moment; she did not drop her eyes again, but she looked beyond him, as though something had arrested her attention at the end of the lane. Still on she came, then suddenly crossed the road and passed him by on the other side.

He looked at her steadily, his heart smitten with sudden numbness: then turned slowly as she passed him, and watched her down the lane; he saw her head droop, and she gave up swinging her hat, but she did not look back.

Then his heart began to throb wildly, forcing the blood in a torrent to his face; and, clenching his fists till his nails cut into the palms of his hands, he turned and strode rapidly up the lane. Had someone come and stabbed him with knives he could not have felt it more acutely. He felt his blood tingling to his finger tips. His brain swam; his eyes were almost blind. But he rushed on, taking no heed of the way; seeing nothing, hearing nothing: scarcely able to think. Then suddenly he paused, for he had reached the edge of the cliff, and before him, stretched in all its glory of freedom and strength, the ever changing, yet ever beautiful, sea. And then came over him again the longing of three weeks before, but with tenfold intensity—the longing to sail away and away, and still farther away, out there into the dim grey distance, beyond the faint horizon line, beyond where the most distant shadows fell, to lose himself in that dreamy haze, to forget the heartache and the pain, and begin a new life that should have no solitary link to connect it with the old.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### THE COASTGUARD.

"Human character evermore publishes itself. The most fugitive deed and word, the mere air of doing a thing, the intimated purpose, expresses character. If you act, you show character; if you sit still, if you sleep, you show it."—EMERSON.

IN several respects Paul Vivian was strikingly like the man he called his father. Both were passionately fond of the sea. Both sought in its many-toned music a solace for their griefs. Both were keenly and painfully sensitive; and both courted solitude when stabbed by cruel words or by an equally cruel silence. Fifteen years before, John Vivian had battled with himself on these same lonely cliffs and in sight of the same great sea. And while he had so battled there had come over him the same great longing as now filled the heart of his foster-child. Paul was tingling to his finger tips with passion when he reached the cliffs. He felt as though he would like to annihilate the whole family of Tresillians. Jack's pompous and sarcastic words had hurt him far less than Abigail's cruel silence. To be deliberately ignored, passed by as though he were a log of wood, was the most humiliating experience he had ever known. He would not have believed it possible of Abigail, had he not experienced it, and for the moment he was almost blinded with anger and disappointment.

But the sight of the sea was like a powerful tonic. It lifted him out of himself. Its great unrest; its mournful monotone, as the waves broke slowly on the shingle; its suggestions of mystery, and, above all, its vastness; its unmeasured length and breadth and depth, all made him feel as though he and his little griefs were nothing, and God and Nature all and in all.

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He had not been walking ten minutes along the cliff path, watching the far-off shadows fade and fall, watching the bright bands of light come and go, and change their shapes a thousand times, watching the distant horizon line melt in a general haze, and then reveal itself at a greater distance still, before all his passion had evaporated.

"Abigail has her reasons," he said to himself; "I know she is good at heart. Perhaps she has discovered, what Heaven knows is the truth, that I care more for her than for anything else in the world, and it may be she wants to put a stop to it."

And Paul threw himself full length upon the grass, and began to pluck a piece of mugwort to pieces. He was only eighteen, and disappointments strike hard at that age. Moreover, it is perhaps the most impressionable period of a young man's life. He knew it was silly to think of love. "I suppose it's a boyish fancy," he said to himself. "I shall grow out of it when I get away from here. Abie wants me to forget her, that's clear, and I'll respect her wish. I'll never tease her again."

The next moment he was startled by the sound of a foot-fall near him, and looking up he espied the burly form of Toby Wrench—the coastguard, as he was always termed—close upon him. Toby was a man of considerable importance in the neighbourhood, though perhaps no one held Tobias Wrench as of so much account as Toby did himself. He was in her Majesty's service, that one fact of itself in Toby's eyes was sufficient to clothe him with a dignity and importance that no one else in the neighbourhood could approach. Moreover, he occupied a position of tremendous responsibility. The whole coast for twenty miles, measuring the ins and outs of the cliffs, was under his charge. Indeed, Toby was not at all certain but that he was responsible for the good behaviour of the English Channel for all this distance.

Then, besides this, Toby had been a sailor, and had seen

service on many seas, and had been wrecked on nearly every dangerous coast known to mariners. Indeed, Toby's adventures, if fully written out, would make one of the most astonishing volumes ever penned.

Nothing pleased Toby better than to get some of the village children about him and narrate to them a number of blood-curdling adventures in which he had figured as the principal hero. To the older people he was much more reticent. He found that they were not as good listeners as the children, moreover, they very rudely called in question some of his statements. But the children listened open-mouthed to his stories of shipwreck on desert islands, his adventures with cannibals and wild beasts, and his miraculous escapes from the most imminent perils, and never thought of questioning a single detail.

It will be readily understood, therefore, that Mr. Tobias Wrench was held in much higher esteem by the juveniles than by their elders. Indeed, the grown people of Penwharf and neighbourhood looked with decided disfavour upon him. They said he was by no means a fit companion for boys; that he bristled all over with vices and possessed no virtues at all. He drank, smoked, played cards, used profane language, and was, above all, an awful liar.

This, of course, was a terrible indictment, but it did not deter the juveniles from "havin' a crack wi' Toby" whenever they had the opportunity. There was something very genial and kindly in his deep blue eyes, and in the curve of his full thick lips; while his welcome was always so hearty and his voice so cheery that they would have been less than boys had they not enjoyed his society.

"I wonder you don't write a book," Paul Vivian had said to him once, years and years ago. "I'm sure, Mr. Tobias, it would make a very good book;" they always called him Mr. Tobias to his face.

And Toby took a large quid of tobacco out of his mouth, wiped his lips with the back of his hand, gave a hitch to his

the weather, the women, as has husbands in furrin parts, about the mails, the mussel-gatherers about the tides, the fishermen down to Portstress to see if I've obsarved any pilchards a-knockin' 'bout, the sarvant gels to explain their dreams, an' heaps of other things. You see, Paul, I'm a kind o' walkin' dictionary. I s'pose I know more 'bout everything than everybody else in the parish put together, though I say it as shouldn't, for I hate boastin', as everybody knows."

"You've had a large experience," said Paul.

"That's true, Paul. No man livin' has had a larger, nor haaf so large, though I say it as oughtn't. Why, once when we was driven on the banks of Newfoundland, and went all to pieces on the rocks——"

"I thought the banks of Newfoundland were sandbanks," said Paul, "and a long way from the coast."

"People who has never been away from the smoke of their own chimbleys always thinks they know a lot about furrin parts," said Toby, severely.

"I beg pardon," said Paul. "We know nothing except what we learn at school and from books. The fact is, Mr. Tobias, you ought to bring out your new book and put us all straight."

Toby brightened up instantly at this suggestion. "The truth is, Paul, I'm a-goin' to do it as soon as I can ketch up my jobs a bit. I feel I owe it as a duty to the British public."

"It's a pity you are so busy," said Paul.

"That's true," said Toby. "I'm a-goin' out now to Penstruggle Head, to relieve Ben Cobbledick. We've received a hint that a bit o' smugglin' is goin' on in the neighbourhood o' Portstress, and so we cutters men have to keep our eyes open;" and Toby closed one of his, by way of giving emphasis to this remark.

"I'll go with you as far as the head, if you don't mind," said Paul. "The truth is, I want to have a little talk with you about California, for I intend to go there as soon as I can raise the wind."

"Californey," said Toby. "Well, then, I'm your man, Paul. There ain't a man livin' as knows as much about that country as I do, though I oughtn't to say it p'raps, for it sounds like boastin', and you know, Paul, I hate boastin'."

"I know you've been there," said Paul.

"Been there! I should just think I have. Why, I know every yard of the country, one may say, from north to south," interposed Toby.

"And I thought, too, you might be able to give me a few hints about the voyage and such like," went on Paul.

"To be sure I could, if you really needed it," said Toby, "but this is all a joke about going to Californey."

"No, I'm quite in earnest," said Paul. "I want to get away from here and have a fresh start in life."

"Ah, Paul, all young folks be alike," said Toby, in a compassionate tone. "They always think every other place is better than the one they're in. I used to think the same. But it's a great mistake, boy, a very great mistake. My own opinion is that thou'll not mend thyself by going away."

"But suppose you had stayed at home all your life, where would you have been now?" Paul asked.

This question, for a moment, seemed to stagger Toby completely. He stopped suddenly short in his walk, gave his trousers a most energetic hitch, closed first one eye and then the other, then opened both very wide, took his quid out of his mouth, wiped his lips with the back of his left hand, then with his right returned the quid to his mouth again, and finally stared at Paul, as though not quite certain what he meant by asking such a question.

"Where should I ha' been," he said, at length, "if I'd ha' stayed at home all my life? Well, boy, I reckon I should ha' been to home."

"Yes, of course, but what would you have known?" said Paul. "What experience would you have had?"

"Ah, boy," said Toby, with a gasp, "that's a deep question, a very deep question. Knowledge such as mine costs a deal,

and a man must value knowledge afore he'll think it worth the price."

"But what do you think about it?" said Paul.

"I think too much to say in a word," said Toby. "But come with me to my cuddy, an' when Cobbledick's gone we'll talk it over."

To this proposition Paul readily assented. He knew the old man could impart to him a good deal of information if he would. The only difficulty would be in separating the fiction from the fact. But even that he thought he could manage by a little judicious cross-questioning.

Paul had always been a favourite of Toby's, and the old sailor seemed quite pleased to have him for a listener again.

On reaching Penstruggle Head, Ben Cobbledick was at once released from his watch and Toby took his place. The cuddy was a large circular room, with a fireplace directly opposite the door, and several narrow slits in the walls which commanded a view at all points of the compass. A large wooden settle and a couple of chairs completed the furniture of the place.

"This room is chilly, even in summer," said Paul, "let's sit outside in the sunshine."

"As you wish," said Toby. "But if you'll excuse me, I'll bring out a chair."

"All right," said Paul, flinging himself on the dry turf, and gazing wistfully at the great shining sea that rolled away into infinite space, "there's nothing like being comfortable when you have a chance."

"Ay," said Toby, "an' that reminds me of the time when I was wrecked on the coast of Labrador." And Toby went off into one of his wonderful narratives, of which Paul did not hear a tithe. The evening came on apace, and the shadows deepened on the sea. The white gulls wheeled and croaked above their heads, and the waves sobbed and sang on the rocks below. Toby smoked and talked, and talked and smoked, while Paul lay on the turf, at his feet, wrapped

in reverie. He heard a word now and then, but Toby's voice sounded afar off, and mingled in curious fashion with the moaning of the sea.

At length Toby's voice suddenly ceased. And Paul leaped to his feet.

"I've a great deal more to tell'e," said Toby, after a pause, "but not to-day."

"I will come again some other time," Paul answered. "I was a bit down in the dumps when you met me, but you've done me good. I'm really much obliged to you, Mr. Tobias," and he held out his hand.

"Good night," said Toby, giving his hand a vigorous squeeze. "Come again soon, for ye're heartily welcome."

Homeward through the soft evening twilight he slowly sauntered, with no remnant of the old anger left. Past Rosevallion Manor, with even slower steps. Through the tall thorn hedge he saw Abigail walking in the garden alone. Most of the others were still in the harvest field. He was strongly tempted to go to her, and ask for an explanation of her treatment of him. But he put the feeling aside, though he stood watching her for several minutes. She looked so fair, so beautiful, that it was almost pain to take his eyes from her. But he turned away at length with a resolute look upon his face. The hope that had grown, and grown almost imperceptibly, would have to be given up. Abigail was not for him. Nor was that the only hope that would have to be sacrificed, as he learned to his sorrow, before he slept that night.



"Stuff and nonsense," she said, impatiently. "Because the Rosevallon folks are letting you know your true position your vanity is hurt. But that is what comes of presuming too much."

"I don't know that I've presumed at all," he said. "And don't think, mother, that I'm ashamed of my position, for I'm not. Don't think that I object to wear fustian or work for my living. It is not that at all. But I can't tell you everything."

"No, I suppose not," she said, pointedly; "but I think I can guess. But please let us have no more of this foolish talk."

Before he could reply, David came into the room with hurried and unsteady steps, stared stupidly round the room, and then dropped into a chair without speaking to anyone.

"Hullo, Davie, what's the matter?" Paul asked, regarding him attentively.

"Oh! nothing much," he answered, shading his eyes with his hand, as though the light of the lamp was too strong for them.

"You look tired, my son," said his mother. "The walk is too long for you."

"Oh, don't bother," he said, crossly. "The chemicals have got into my head and made me a bit stupid, that's all."

"Have you been making experiments?" his mother asked.

"Of course, we are always doing that," he answered.

"But I didn't know there were any classes on Saturday night," said Paul.

"Well, there are not generally," he answered. "But the exam. comes off next month, and so we are putting in extra nights."

"Oh, indeed!" said Paul.

"Yes, indeed. Is there anything else you want to know."

But Paul was silent, though he was not satisfied. He **knew** that David was taking lessons in chemistry; and in one or two other subjects, under the head master of St.

Hildred Grammar School. But he was by no means certain he had spoken all the truth to-night.

Though David was sixteen, he still remained at school, and nothing was ever said about his leaving it. Paul was working at the carpenter's bench when he was fifteen, but David was much too tender a plant for such rough work, so his mother thought. She hoped when he grew up he would be able to earn his living without "soiling his hands;" and she believed that by giving him a good education such a desirable end would be realized.

It was a foolish fancy of hers. But such fancies often come into the heads of working people respecting their sons. They have worn homespun themselves all their life, and worked in the smithy or in the mine, and have been content and happy. But for their sons they desire a very different lot. And too often the boys grow up with an idea that labour is dishonourable, that to wear fustian is not respectable, and that to wield anything heavier than a pen is unbecoming. And this stupid idea is fostered and encouraged by the parents to such a degree sometimes that the lads not only grow up to despise work, but to despise their parents because they are working people; and when at length they are thrown upon their own resources they discover how helpless they are. Unable to work, and ashamed to learn, too proud to start at the bottom, and unfit to come in at the top, they drift down and down to join the great crowd of incapables that throng the streets of all our great towns and cities to-day, and who are at once a source of anxiety and a source of danger.

The great army of "the unemployed" in London is constantly recruited from our smaller towns and villages. Young men, taught no trade, nor trained to follow a useful calling, drift into that great dust-bin of the country, full of hope at first that they will make a fortune by their wits, or find the streets of that wonderful city paved with gold. A hope, alas, that in nearly every case ends in disappointment and in

blank despair ; for fortunes are not made nowadays without effort. And the golden streets are only for those who are willing to work with might and main.

Mary Vivian's love for her son blinded her to his best interests. Her constant endeavour to shield him from the rough winds of the world was very mistaken kindness. But she did what she thought would be for the best, and had no misgiving respecting the future.

On the morning after the conversation we have recorded all three went to chapel, and to outsiders seemed a very happy and very united little family. But at night Paul refused to go. He knew that the Tresillians always attended chapel in the evenings, and he had no wish to see any of them. He went out over the hills instead, in the direction of Wheal Anthony, and did not return again till it was nearly bed time. This he did each Sunday night till Abigail went away to school.

His mother and David professed to be very much scandalised by such proceedings, while some of the wiseacres of the village saw in it only fresh evidence of his downward drift. Paul was getting into bad repute. He had been found trespassing in Rosevallion orchard. He had been seen on Penstruggle Head with Toby Wrench, and he had spent several Sunday evenings rambling out on the hills instead of going to a place of worship. What other evidence was needed to show that he was getting into very bad ways indeed ?

Paul heard very little of what was said, or, if he heard, he did not heed. He was not the one to be turned from his purpose by what gossips might say. He had his own ideas of what was right and proper, and he followed them steadily and persistently.

After Abigail had gone to school, and the evenings became dark and cold, he sometimes accompanied his mother and David to chapel on Sunday evenings, but with by no means uniform regularity. On moonlight nights he occasionally went as far as Penstruggle Head to have a talk with Toby,

or, if Toby was not on the "look-out," he would drop into his cottage in Bracken Hollow and sit in the broad chimney while Toby smoked his pipe and gave his interpretations of Scripture. For even Toby so far respected the Sabbath that he refrained, on that day, from narrating any of his wonderful and impossible adventures.

By Christmas Paul was working as a journeyman carpenter in Wheal Anthony Mine. His mother opposed his going. She wanted him to remain a year or two longer with Jerry Flammack as an "improver;" but the offer of a pound a week at Wheal Anthony was too strong a temptation to be resisted.

"You'll never learn anything at the mine," his mother said. "You'll have nothing to do but the roughest kind of work."

"I know that, mother," he said; "but I shall get a pound a week, and that is a great deal."

"You seem very eager to get money," she said.

"I am," he answered. "It seems a shame to keep poor father toiling in California while I earn nothing at home."

"What a wonderful affection you have developed for your father lately," she said, a little bit cynically.

"I've got a great yearning to see him and know him," he answered.

"And have you still the same desire to go abroad?"

"Yes. It's for that I tolerate the idea of Wheal Anthony, and the unpleasant work I shall have sometimes to do underground. But I hope by the time I am twenty-one I shall have saved enough to go to father."

She gave a little sigh as she answered, "He may be home by then. Oh, I wish I could think so," then checked herself suddenly, and darted a hurried glance at Paul.

But he did not seem to have taken any notice of her words, for he did not reply, and after a long pause she went on again.

"Of course, when you are twenty-one you must think and

act for yourself. But till then, I hope you'll remember what you owe to me."

"I hope I shall never forget that, mother," he said, with a world of affection lighting up his large clear eyes, "I want to do the right thing always."

"I hope you do," she said, pointedly.

He looked up at her, with a smile, but did not reply. He knew what she meant, but he was not disposed to argue with her, and so the conversation came to a sudden stop.

He saw but little of David now. He had to be at Wheal Anthony every morning by eight o'clock, and, as he worked overtime whenever he had the opportunity, it was frequently eight or nine o'clock in the evening when he returned. Much of his work he did not like, especially the underground work. It was laborious, unpleasant, and sometimes dangerous. But he never complained. His pay was regular and sure, and week by week he put aside a little, and saw in the increasing store the realisation of his hopes.

Christmas came again, but it brought him very little pleasure. The happy Christmas-tides of years ago, and the merry parties of Rosevallion were things of the past. He tried to think about them as little as possible. He heard that Abigail was home from school for her Christmas holidays, and a few days before the new year he heard that there had been quite a large party of young people at Rosevallion Manor, but he made no inquiries respecting the one or the other. Between the present and the past a great gulf was fixed; sometimes he looked across with wistful eyes, but only for a moment. The past was done with. It was the future he had to face, and he faced it without flinching.

Yet he was very restless and ill at ease all the time Abigail was at home. He was angry with himself that he was constantly hungering for a sight of her face, angry with her that she made his life so miserable. He thought he was going to forget her, instead of which she was constantly in his thoughts. He longed to see her, and yet dreaded a meeting. And so the

days passed on, days that were a constant battle and a constant pain.

On the Sunday evening after Christmas Day he knew she would be at the chapel. She had never stayed away on his account, though David had informed him that none but Mrs. Tresillian now ever looked across to their pew. Jack and Abigail kept their eyes fixed upon the preacher all the while.

Paul was strongly tempted to go to chapel and have a look at her. If she never looked toward their pew, he could look at her as long as he pleased without encountering her gaze. It was a hard battle for him, but he gained the victory at last. If he was to forget her, it was not to be accomplished by feasting his eyes on her at every opportunity.

So he stayed at home and read a book instead ; at least, he tried to read, for often he turned the pages mechanically and did not know that he had done so. And still on every page was the sweet, grave face of Abigail, with the large brown eyes and tender mouth.

He was glad when the Sabbath was ended, and the next morning he was off over the hills before it was dawn, not at all sorry that another week of toil had commenced. When Abigail went back to school again, he seemed to breathe more freely. She had come and gone, and he had never seen her. He had been consistent with his resolution. He had put his heart-hunger aside, conquered his desire to see her, and on the whole he felt better and stronger for the conflict.

It was nearly his first lesson in moral science, but it was not lost upon him. He began to see, though dimly, how strength came through conflict, and courage through victory, and then there rose up before him a vision of manhood such as he had never seen before. By an instinct deep and true he felt there was something greater, grander, than wealth or fame, or even requited love, and that was to be the master of himself, to be able to say to every bad passion and to every ignoble longing, "So far shalt thou come, and no farther." On the whole, he had not done badly. True, no great moral

issue had been involved. But in the conflict with himself he had stood his ground. He had not yielded to selfish desire, and he had got his reward already in the consciousness of strength increased.

And so gain had come through loss, and suffering, and disappointment. Might it not be always so? Here was a faint glimmer of a truth that was full of comfort and inspiration. By losing Abigail he might win himself—his higher nature—from selfishness and base desire.

From that day his work became less irksome. He fancied he saw his duty before him, straight and clear. And duty henceforth was more than toil, it was also discipline. He was preparing himself for what lay before him, and come what might he would not shirk it, but look at it and through it, to the grander issues that lay beyond.

Ah, me, how easy it is to make good resolutions in moments of deep emotion! In the flush of his first victory over himself, Paul felt strong enough for anything. But the day was coming when his moral courage would be tested to the utmost. He did not see what was looming in the distance, as the months rolled on. It was well he did not, or his heart might have failed him ere the day of testing came.

## CHAPTER X.

### ABIGAIL'S DIARY.

"Ah! the women are quick enough—they're quick enough. They know the rights of a story before they hear it, and can tell a man what his thoughts are before he knows them himself."—GEORGE ELIOT.

JANUARY 20th.—Here I am, back at school again, and, on the whole, I am glad to be here.

There, I have written the first sentence in my diary, and I am thankful to have it off my mind, for I have been puzzling myself for the last hour how to begin. I wonder if people who write books find the first sentence or two the most difficult part? I think, if I were to write a book, that would bother me more than anything, for so much depends on a good beginning.

But here am I, at the very outset, rushing off at a tangent, as they say. Well, it doesn't matter. I'm not writing for other eyes to read, and so I can ramble on at my own sweet will. I think people who write for the Press must feel an awful restraint sometimes. The very thought that the eyes of the critics will be on all that they write must make them feel dreadfully nervous, at least, I am sure it would me.

Well, my dear diary, no critic's eye will be on you, that's a comfort, and so I shall talk to you freely and without restraint. I am glad Ethel Gray put me up to keeping a diary, I think it will be just splendid. When I am down-hearted or in trouble I shall be able to come here and open all my heart to you—just tell you everything.

Poor little Ethel, what a sweet, winsome little creature she is, and how bravely she bears her lot! She will have to be a governess when she leaves school, for both her father and her mother are dead, and some friends are paying for her education now until the time she is able to earn her own



living. It must be very hard for her, but she does not seem to mind ; she always looks the bright side of things.

I wish I were able to do so, but a great cloud has come over my life ever since that day last July, and no breeze has come up to blow it away. I never thought, at one time, I should be glad to get away from Rosevallion, and yet, if I must tell the whole truth, it was quite a relief to get back here to school again.

Of course I was delighted to get home for Christmas. It is always such a joy to be with mother ; her smile is like a benediction. I don't think there is another such beautiful mother in all the world beside. And then the party we had was very nice ; but it was not like the old parties we used to have years ago. I kept feeling all the while that all would have been different if only Paul had been there ; but his name was never mentioned, and I could not bring myself to talk about him, even to mother. And yet he was in my thoughts all the while, and his face was constantly before me.

What a splendid face he has ! I wish I could tell you just what he is like. But I don't feel as though I could put it into words. He is so tall—quite grown up, in fact. His hair is very dark and very glossy, with just a disposition to curl a little bit about his ears. His forehead is broad, but not exactly high, though high enough. I call it a noble forehead. His eyes are large, lustrous, and very dark. They look all the darker because of his eyelashes, which are quite black and very long. His mouth is large, though not too large, and very firm ; his chin is prominent, but finely rounded, and gives a kind of dignity to his face. His nose is straight, I think Grecian would be the proper name for it. But it is, after all, the expression that gives the grandeur to his face ; and that I cannot describe. His brother David is not unlike him in feature, but in expression they are the very opposite of each other. David, too, has dark hair and a straight nose and large eyes, and yet his face is not a bit noble. His mouth is weak, and he never looks you straight

in the eyes. But Paul's lips set firmly, and his look is as steady as the sun ; and when he smiles it is just as you see it out in the fields sometimes on an April day when the wind is chasing the clouds across the sky. Now the fields are all dark and sombre-looking, but lo ! while you look the shadow of the cloud passes away, and all the fields are smiling in the light of the sunshine.

I like to see Paul smile. His face lights up just like the fields when the sun comes out. Ah, me ! I wonder if I shall ever see him smile again, or see him at all for that matter, for I suppose he will go abroad as soon as ever he has the chance, and then perhaps, he will never come home again.

I should like to know if he really thinks I am false and cruel. We had been such good friends even from being little children, and never a wrong word had passed between us. And then for me to pass him by without speaking must have been a great surprise to him, and only three weeks before, out there on the rock, I had told him I should never forget him—never, never ! And as to that I never shall forget him as long as I live ; but he does not know it, and that is the painful part of it, if not to him, to me.

I cannot understand even yet why father forbade my speaking to him. He could not know what pain he was giving me. He never will know how much he has made me suffer. The evening before I left home, last September, he took me aside, saying he wanted to speak to me.

I knew what was coming, and my heart fluttered terribly for a moment, but I braced myself up, resolving that I would not betray what I felt.

"You are going away to-morrow morning, Abigail," he said.

"Yes, papa," I answered.

"I hope you will study hard," he said gravely, "and be very particular as to your conduct."

"I will try," I said.

"Remember you are a Tresillian," he said ; "you have been apt to forget that hitherto."

I knew what he referred to, so I did not reply, and after a moment he went on again,—

"You take after your mother in many things. You have quixotic notions, and have not the family pride that you ought to have. You know what I refer to more particularly?"

"Yes, pa," I replied.

"Have you met that young man since?"

"Yes, pa."

"You have?" and his face became almost livid for a moment. "And have you spoken to him?"

"No, pa."

"Nor he to you?"

"No."

"That's well. He is not a fit companion for such as you. Has he ever sought to communicate with you in any way?"

"No, pa."

"That's right. I am glad he understands his position at last. I can't say I altogether approve of what Jack did in pushing him into the pond. Still, on the whole, he might have done a worse thing. Those common people, if you give them an ell they take a yard. Moreover, as a rule, they are so thick-skinned, that they cannot take a hint. You have to take very strong measures to get an idea into their heads at all."

I felt very angry all the while he was saying this, but by a strong effort I held my peace. I remembered the old saying, that "the least said is the soonest mended," and acted upon it. I hoped the interview might end here, but it didn't.

"I want you to remember also," he said, "that, though you bear an old county name, we are not rich. In a sense, our family has fallen into decay during the last generation or two, and, unfortunately, I have not succeeded in improving the family fortune. Some of my speculations have turned out badly. But by giving you and Jack a first-rate education, I am hopeful that you will be able to take your true places in the social scale. I think I need not speak more

plainly than this. Some future time I may have to do so. I hope you will be very happy at school, very diligent, and very careful."

I said I would try to do my best, and then the interview ended. I have thought over the conversation many times since then, and I feel quite convinced in my own mind that he meant very much more than he said. But his aversion of Paul Vivian is a constant surprise to me.

I was strongly tempted to make another appeal to him to allow me to explain to Paul that he had forbidden me to speak to him, but I saw by his manner that no good would come of it. And so, I suppose, the misery must go on until time shall wear off its keen edge.

To be thought false, and proud, and cruel, by one whose good opinion is very precious to you, is very hard to be borne. And Paul must think that I am that. He has carefully avoided me ever since that day I passed him in the lane. I did not look at him. I could not, and yet I felt his eyes upon me as though he could read my very heart. Oh! I wish he could read my heart, and then he would know that in the sense he thinks, I am neither proud nor false.

I longed to see him when I was home for the Christmas holidays, but he never once showed himself. I do not wonder at it. He is not the one to be "cut dead," as Jack would say, a second time, if he knows it. Father spoke about his not being able to take a hint; but then father does not know him, and I do not think he has ever tried to know him.

Each Sunday evening when I went to chapel I looked across to the Vivians' pew, but Paul was not there. I wonder if he stayed away just to avoid me, or if what I overheard father saying one evening has any truth in it!

He was talking with mother on their way back from chapel, Jack and I following a pace or two behind. I think Jack must have thought me very stupid, for all the while he was talking I was listening to what father was saying.

"From all I hear he is getting into bad ways," father was

saying. "On a Sunday evening, as we can see for ourselves, he is rarely ever at chapel, and I am told that he spends a great many of his evenings with Toby Wrench ; and we know that he is scarcely a helpful companion for young men."

"Toby is peculiar," said my mother, "but I have yet to be convinced that he is a bad man. Indeed in some respects he is a very estimable old man."

"I am sorry, Ruth, to hear you say so," father replied, and then some young people came laughing and chattering down the lane, and I could not hear anything further.

I know that Paul is wilful, and what his mother calls "headstrong," but I am quite sure he will not do anything that he believes to be wrong. I would give almost anything to have one more long chat with him—just such a chat as we had out on Crab Rock that beautiful July afternoon.

How I was frightened, though ! I really thought we should both be drowned, and if he had shown very much fear I am sure I should have screamed. But he looked so brave and resolute that I couldn't give way, as I should otherwise have done. I felt like a queen as I sat upon his shoulder while he waded through the water. How strong he was, and how steadily he carried me. And then when he set me down on the dry shingle I felt like a coward, and began to cry like a silly girl. But I could not help it for the life of me.

And because I said he was brave he said it was just my kind, generous way of looking at everything, and would not have it that there was anything in his conduct that called for a word of praise.

How quickly his opinion of me must have changed. He thought me generous then. I wonder what he thinks I am now. It was only a week after that that Jack pushed him into the pond, and a fortnight later I passed him without even a look of recognition. Does he hate me, I wonder ? for I know how sensitive he is, and how keenly he feels every slight. Of course he thinks I approve of Jack's conduct. How is it possible for him to think otherwise ?

It is this that troubles me all the while. But for this, perhaps, I should forget him and the past would fade away like the memory of a pleasant dream. But to be misunderstood and misjudged, and given no chance of explanation, is what rankles in my heart from week to week.

January 25th.—I have been reading over what I have written, and have come to the conclusion that if any stranger should chance to get hold of my diary, he or she, as the case might be, would think me a silly girl to trouble about what a village carpenter might think. On the face of it, it does all look very absurd. But, then, a stranger could not be supposed to know everything. It would trouble me to be misunderstood by a beggar. But to knowingly give pain to a friend, and not be allowed to explain, is a real grief. Paul and I have grown up together from childhood as friends and equals, and I can never bring myself to look upon him as my inferior. It is true he now works in a mine, and, I suppose, wears fustian. But that makes no difference to *him*. In heart he is still the same. And I am sure he will do honest work, and speak the truth, and always do his duty, and so he is as truly a gentleman as though he rode in a carriage.

I have put the question to Ethel, as though it were an imaginary case. And she is just of my way of thinking. She is a dear girl, is Ethel, and always looks at a thing so justly, and she says that if she were compelled—say, by her guardians—to “cut” a friend, and could offer no explanation, she would never be able to look that friend in the face again.

That is just how I feel. Father, without knowing it, has laid a very heavy burden upon me. I am not certain I could carry it if I were at home always, for I have a feeling that if I were to meet Paul again I should be compelled, in spite of myself, in spite of father's command, in spite of everything, to go and apologise to him, and then say good-bye for ever.

So, perhaps, it is as well that I am not at home, for here the burden is not so hard to bear.

## CHAPTER XI.

### A SERIOUS CHARGE.

“ For he who thinks to stand alone,  
Alone shall surely fall ;  
Our very words are not our own,  
But held in trust for all.  
The bitter tears that secret flow  
In solitary pain,  
May freshen other lives, although  
Our barren hopes can never know  
Their fertilising rain ;  
And we who work, and we who weep,  
Nor weep nor work in vain,  
If other hands our harvest reap,  
And other hearts with joy shall leap,  
To garner up our grain ! ”

—WHYTE MELVILLE.

WE must now pass over a period of two years with as few words as possible. Paul continued to work at Wheal Anthony with an energy that never flagged, and with a growing interest in his labour. David also kept up his studies with commendable diligence, and physically promised to be the rival of his elder brother. Toby continued to narrate his impossible exploits to the village children on week days, and often to discuss theology with Paul on the Sunday. Abigail came and went, but was rarely seen in Penwharf. During the summer vacations she spent a great deal of her time in visiting relatives and schoolmates in other parts of the county, and when at home she was rarely seen out of doors. Report, however, said that she grew more beautiful year by year, and more reserved also.

Jack set himself up as a gentleman, cultivated the acquaintance of the “squireen” of the county, rode after the hounds whenever the opportunity offered, and even, it is said, patronized the turf. He rendered his father no help, how-

ever, in the management of the farm, while in pride of the family name he even exceeded Mr. Tresillian himself.

Mrs. Tresillian often looked troubled and careworn, and even in her smile there was a suggestion of sadness as if some secret trouble was eating at her heart. Mr. Tresillian, always severe and melancholy-looking, showed little change. He certainly did not get any more cheerful as he got older, but that was scarcely to be expected, for he had had many losses, and the seasons had been unfavourable for several years in succession.

Between the Vivians and Tresillians there was now no communication whatever. Mr. Tresillian, however, did use his influence to get David installed as assistant-master of the village school, and it was, no doubt, largely through his influence that David got the post.

Forty pounds a year with the privilege of wearing broad-cloth every day, and mixing in the best society the parish offered, was a position not to be thought lightly of. It was the one position that Mary had always coveted for her son, and now that he had got it her delight knew no bounds.

David, too, began to lift up his head, and to look people a little more steadily in the face, though he never had, and was never likely to have, the fearless look of his brother Paul. He had never been taught the necessity of self-reliance; never encouraged to lean upon himself and face the world in the strength of his own heart. On the contrary, all this had been distinctly discouraged. In some vague way, it is true, his mother had told him to lean upon God. But her teaching in this direction was wholly lost upon him, for she herself had carried all his burdens, save those he had managed to get upon Paul's shoulders. And so he had grown up with a feeling that he was to trouble himself about nothing that by any possibility could be laid upon others.

Hence the self-reliance and force of character that were such marked features in Paul were entirely absent in David. He was weak, yielding, and selfish. He dreaded responsi-



lity, and had a horror of trouble of every kind. He was not vicious, and if left alone would never have distinguished himself by any deed of virtuous daring or vicious excess. But it was not possible he could be left alone. His mother had kept him straight while he stayed at home. But in his frequent visits to St. Hildred, he had made the acquaintance of a number of young men, many of them older than himself, and most of them of stronger wills than he possessed. And poor David was always at the mercy of the stronger will.

He knew that he was a coward, but would never own to it; and would often do what he regretted and what he felt was wrong, rather than submit to the taunt, "Oh, Vivian's afraid to do it." And when he saw trouble looming in the distance, the outcome of his own weakness and folly, he would use all his ingenuity to escape it, it mattered not by what crooked methods, nor did he much care upon whom the trouble fell so long as he escaped.

His mother still looked upon him as a "Band of Hope boy," but he had long since broken his pledge, and had more than once returned to his home considerably the worse for liquor. But she utterly unsuspecting, had accepted his explanation that the chemicals had got into his head and made him stupid.

Yet with an amount of cunning one would hardly have supposed he possessed, he was careful never to be unsteady on his feet, except on the darkest nights when he was not likely to be recognised, or even seen. Moreover, he had rightly conjectured that even if he were seen, people would at once conclude that he was Paul. He knew he was not unlike his brother. In height and general build they were almost precisely the same, while even in feature there was a general, indeed some people thought a striking, likeness; both were dark and clean-faced. Both dressed alike—they had always done that from children, and so in the village lanes on a dark night it was almost impossible to tell one from the other. There had been whispers more than once in the village that

Paul Vivian had been seen going towards his home, late at night, considerably the worse for drink. None of these whispers, however, reached Paul's ears, though David heard them, and inwardly chuckled.

He often felt very mean and contemptible, and yet he had not the courage either to give up this vice or bear the penalty of his wrong-doing. He had made companions of young men whom he felt were steadily dragging him down. From drinking he had been led on to gamble, and what other evils he might be led into he dared not contemplate. But he had not the courage or strength to cut the fetters that bound him, or keep away from the social club which threatened to be his ruin.

He felt thankful that he was no longer considered a church member. In consequence of the classes he had to attend at St. Hildred, he had not been able to put in an appearance at the class meeting for six consecutive months. This, according to Methodist rule, amounted to self-excommunication. Over against David's name the ominous words were written, "ceased to meet," and his name was accordingly dropped. Nothing had been said or even hinted against his moral character.

"He has not been to class for six months," said his leader at the quarterly leaders' meeting, "and that's quite enough. According to rule his name must be dropped. I'm not going to keep dummy names on my books."

James Polskiddy, another leader, ventured to remark that he had not kept away wilfully.

"He attends science lessons, falsely so called," said Joel Quirk, the first speaker, "on the very same night. If he was ill it would be different."

"But is it not absolutely necessary he should attend the science classes?" questioned James Polskiddy.

"No!" thundered Joel, "nothing is absolutely necessary i' this world but the saving of our souls."

"But may not the cutting him off from fellowship with us have a damaging influence upon him?" James said, in a nervous tone.

"Just like you, James," said Joel, in a stern tone of voice. "You'll be saying next, I expect, that a man can be a Christian and not meet in class."

"I shouldn't like to say the contrary," said James.

"You wouldn't?" said Joel, jumping to his feet. "If this is the way class leaders talk, no wonder the church languishes."

But James did not pursue the conversation farther. Joel Quirk was the main pillar of the church and he did not wish needlessly to offend him.

So David ceased to be a member, and was very grateful when he learned the decision of the leaders' meeting, for he felt he was not fit to pose before the world as a Christian.

Paul, though he saw but little of David, had a strong suspicion that he had got into bad company, and was getting into bad ways, and once had attempted to remonstrate with him. But David turned upon him with an energy that nearly took Paul's breath away.

"A pretty brother you are to counsel anyone!" said David fiercely. "When you scarcely ever go to church or chapel, and often spend your Sunday evenings with that lying reprobate, Toby Wrench. Take your advice to yourself, Mr. Paul."

After that Paul said no more. But matters were rapidly coming to a head.

Paul had reached his twenty-first year. David was nineteen. The former was beginning to make preparations for going abroad, the latter had been installed as assistant-master of the village school, when one morning the rumour ran through the village from end to end that Paul Vivian had been seen reeling through Penwharf, the night before, "beastly drunk."

It was no longer a whisper. People talked about it freely, openly. He had been seen by half a dozen people, all of whom had certified, in the most unhesitating fashion, that they had seen Paul rambling homeward almost helplessly intoxicated.

In Ned Newlyn's smithy that Saturday afternoon the matter was debated with great energy. Everyone seemed sorry,

for no vice is regarded in Cornwall with greater abhorrence than drunkenness. And then Paul was so young, so handsome, so generous, so full of promise, that the pity of it seemed all the greater.

Of course there were several who did not profess any surprise at all. They were sorry, they said, but they had seen what was coming for a long time; they had heard whispers before; for the last three or four years Paul had been taking to wrong ways; if people sowed the wind they had to reap the whirlwind: with many other sage observations.

"Ah, well," said Ned Newlyn, dusting the anvil with his apron, and seating himself on it, "the fat's in the fire at last."

"That's true," observed three or four in reply. "But what'll be the upshot o' it?"

"He'll be turned out o' the Sunday-school as sure as nails is nails," said Bill Nancarrow, who was an official in that institution.

"It's a wisht (sad) plight to be in arter all," said Adam Barnicoat, "for he's a very good teacher. There ain't a more interestin'er in the skule according to my thinkin', an' ole the lads are amazin' fond of him."

"That may be true," said Nancarrow. "But what be the officials of the school to do? For the credit of the institution the thing can 'ardly be allowed."

"Well, I reckon we be none o' us perfect," said Adam.

"That's neither here nor there," said Joel Quirk, who had just dropped into the smithy, and who had heard the latter part of the conversation, "I believe in discipline. What's the use of havin' rules ef you don't enforce 'em? A taylor as gets drunk openly, defiantly — why, there's only one course open for us. I say he must be dismissed."

"Well, I'm ov your way ov thinking," said Nancarrow. "I should be sorry to be 'ard on anybody. But the interests of the whole skule have to be considered."

"Well," said Newlyn the smith, "I can't make it up no road; Paul Vivian never struck me as bein' a lad likely to give way to drink, or to any vice for that matter, an' ef it

hadn't been that so many 'ad seen him, I should be disposed to say there was some mistake somewhere."

"Weren't it a very dark night last night?" questioned Adam Barnicoat.

"Fairish," said Nancarrow. "But anybody could tell Paul Vivian, dark or light; there ain't nobody in the place like 'im except his brother David."

"Well," said Adam, stoutly, "how d'ye know 'twern't 'im?"

"Adam," said two or three of the men aghast, "you'd better mind what you're sayin'."

"I only axed a civil question," said Adam.

"But, sir," said Mr. Quirk, severely, "you ought to know there ain't the least shadow of suspicion on David. He was a member of my class till six months ago, an' he always had a very edifyin' experience. I'm sorry he allowed science—falsely so called—to interfere with religion. However, though he have ceased to meet, he's no doubt still a exemplary young man. He's a member of the Band of Hope—a pledged teetotaler. Don't hint at such a thing again, Barnicoat!"

"I ain't got no wish to say nothin' agin nobody," said Adam, deferentially. "But, at the same time, I ain't a-goin' to hear Paul ballyragged without defendin' him."

"You can defend 'im as much as you like," said Joel, pompously, "only don't cast your suspicions on innocent people," and he glanced deliberately round the smithy to mark the effect of his words, fixing his eyes at length on Adam. Then he cleared his throat, raised his hands, and was evidently about to deliver a speech, when the doorway was suddenly darkened, and Tobias Wrench stood before them.

"Afternoon, gentlemen," said Toby, nodding from one to another of the occupants of the smithy.

"Afternoon, Mr. Wrench," said two or three voices.

"We've just been talking about a friend of yours," said Newlyn at length.

"'Deed," said Toby, "an' who might that be?"

"Paul Vivian."

"You're right," said Toby, with a wave of his hand. "He *is* a friend of mine, an' what's more, I'm a friend of his'n."

"Doubtful," grunted Mr. Quirk.

"Who said 'doubtful'?" said Toby, staring hard at Joel. "I say there's nothin' doubtful 'bout it. We've been close friends these many years."

"Then so much the worse for him," said Joel.

"Sir," thundered Toby, "do you know who you be a-talkin' to? Do you know I'm in her Majesty's service? Do you know I've sailed the world over? Do you know I'm no ignorant land-lubber that's never been out of the smoke of his own chimbley? Do you know I won't stand no nonsense from any man livin'? If you don't know these things, then I tell 'em to you now. I'm a man of few words, an' I hate boastin'. But if my words are few they're true, an' to the point, an' I repeat, and let no grocer or draper contradict, I am the friend of Paul Vivian."

Mr. Quirk cleared his throat to make an elaborate reply to this onslaught, but before he could begin Newlyn said, "I s'pose you've heard that your friend was seen drunk last night?"

"I have," said Toby, "an' I just dropped in to say that it's a—lie."

"No, it ain't a lie neither," said Nancarrow. "I seed 'im myself."

"In the dark," sneered Toby.

"It was light 'nough for that, anyhow."

"Don't you b'lieve him, gentlemen," said Toby, with a wave of his hand. "Why, bless you, I met a man once in the city of Melbourne in the open day, spoke to him, shook hands wi' him, inquired after his family an' sich like, an' would you b'lieve it, though I was talkin' with him a quarter of an hour it warn't 'im at all. No, it warn't! That very moment when I was a-talkin' to him in the streets o' Melbourne he was dischargin' ship at Calcutta."

"But how d'you make that out, Mr. Tobias?" said Newlyn, with an incredulous twinkle in his eye. •

"That's just it," said Toby. "I'm givin' a case in point. I'm argyin' from analogy, as it were. Nancarrow says as he seed him. I say 'twern't him at all."

"But I'm not the only one," said Nancarrow, testily. "Five or six of us seed 'im. There's no mistake 'bout it; I wish there was."

"You've all been moon-struck, every one of 'e," said Toby. "Why, bless you, there was a case out in Rio, when I was there, of a man accused of stealin' a hoss; an' four hundred an' ninety-six witnesses swore that they seed a certain man walkin' off with that same hoss. Five hundred and seventy-three witnesses, mind you!"

"You said four hundred and ninety-six just now," said Nancarrow.

"Then I made a mistake," said Toby; "but a witness or two more or less ain't of much consequence. But what I was going to say is this: that though seven hundred people swore that they seed this man walkin' off that hoss, the funny thing was that that man wasn't in the country at the time; and what's more remarkable, he never had been in that country in his life."

This was such a staggerer that no one had the courage to reply for several seconds, while Toby glanced around him with an air of triumph.

Mr. Quirk was heard to mutter "Bosh!" under his breath. Nancarrow coughed and scratched his head. Adam Barnicoat put his finger and thumb to his chin in a meditative aspect, while Newlyn gave an incredulous whistle. Just then Paul Vivian himself was seen approaching.

"Ah!" said Toby, glancing through the open door. "If here ain't the lad hisself. Now we'll get at the truth."

"An' what if he can't deny it?" said Nancarrow.

"But I tell you he will deny it," said Toby.

"We shall sec," was the reply; and then silence fell on the little group.

## CHAPTER XII.

### WHAT SHOULD HE DO ?

“We shape ourselves the joy or fear  
Of which the coming life is made,  
And fill our future atmosphere  
With sunshine or with shade.  
The tissues of the life to be,  
We weave with colours all our own,  
And in the field of destiny  
We reap as we have sown.”

—ANON.

PAUL had been anxious and troubled all the day. He had been working overtime the day before, and did not get home till after ten o'clock. He found his mother waiting for David, and, noticing that she looked tired, he said, “I’ll wait for Davie, mother; you go to bed. I daresay he’ll be home by the time I’ve finished supper.”

“Thank you, Paul,” she said, “I’ll be glad to get to bed, for I’ve had a bad headache all the day.” And kissing him good-night she went upstairs.

Half an hour later poor David reeled into the room helplessly intoxicated.

“Oh, Davie!” said Paul, anxiously, “what is the matter with you?”

“Chemicals — hic! — my boy, chem — em — icals,” David replied, with a drunken leer.

Paul’s heart sank. There was no longer any doubt upon his mind as to what was the matter with his brother.

“Well, keep quiet,” he said, “and don’t wake mother, she has a bad headache. I’ll help you upstairs, and by morning I hope you will be right again.”

“All right,” he said. “I’ll keep quiet. There’s nothing like sleep for removing chemicals.”



Paul did not reply, but he unlaced and took off his boots, and almost carried him upstairs; and after seeing him safely in bed he returned to the sitting-room and sat for a long time staring into the fire.

What if David had been seen and recognized! was his thought. It was not so late but that many of the Penwharf people might be abroad; and if he had been recognized then the chances were he was ruined for life. The Penwharf people were terribly bitter against drunkenness. And in a teacher of the young they would not tolerate it for a day. And if David lost his situation at the school what could he do? He would be able to get no other place. It was by favour he got the position he now held; and if he were driven from it disgraced it would break his mother's heart.

Paul went to bed at length, but it was far on into the morning before he fell asleep. And all the next forenoon at the mine he was haunted by the fear that David had been seen and recognized. He was almost afraid to speak with anyone lest he should learn that the secret was out. But the forenoon passed away and he heard no whisper of the matter, and he began to hope that no one had seen his brother on the previous night.

On entering Ned Newlyn's smithy however, he experienced a sudden revulsion of feeling. The awkward silence which fell upon the little company affected him strangely. Moreover, there was something in their looks that aroused again all his worst fears. They did not look straight at him, and altogether there was an air of restraint that smote him with apprehension the moment he came into their presence.

Toby was the first to break the silence. "We've been talking about you, Paul," he said.

"About *me*?" he questioned. Then it was not about David after all, and he began to breathe freely again.

"Ay," said Toby. "There's a mean, nasty, lyin' report out about you, an' as your friend I've been denyin' it straight an' strong."

"What is the report?" Paul asked quietly.

"The report," said Toby, "is that you were a-seen last night somewhere towards 'leven o'clock reeling through Penwharf beastly drunk."

Paul caught his breath, and grew white to the lips.

"And now, Paul," continued Toby, "I want you to look at us all straight in the face, and say out loud an' square that it's a mean, cowardly, contemptible, howdacious lie."

But Paul did not speak. He looked helplessly round the room, and then his eyes fell, while an ominous silence dropped down on the little group, that was almost painful in its intensity. The villagers looked from one to the other with significant glances, but no one spoke or moved.

Then Toby, pale and trembling, approached Paul and laid his hand upon his shoulder.

"Paul," he said, and there was a pathos and tremor in the old man's voice that no one had ever noticed before—"Paul, my boy, hold up your head an' speak out. I've pledged my word an' honour that the report is a himpident an' howdacious lie. Speak out an' we'll all believe 'e. Speak out an' deny it."

"He can't deny it," said Bill Nancarrow. "I towld 'e he couldn't deny it, for I seed 'im myself."

"You saw me?" said Paul, raising his head, and looking him straight in the face.

"Iss, I did," said Nancarrow, stoutly; "an' I'm not the only one."

"Who else?" Paul asked, without taking his eyes from him.

"Oh, several. Jack Towle, an' Jacob Menhenick, an' Tom Tresurga, an' Sam Polgooth, an'——"

"It's a cowardly lie!" shouted Toby.

"If it's a lie, let him deny it," said Nancarrow.

"Iss, iss, that's fair," said several voices; "if it ain't true let him deny it hisself."

But Paul's eyes were bent upon the ground again, his brow was contracted, his lips worked as if in pain. He was

fighting the fiercest battle he had ever known, and was by no means certain yet what the end would be.

True-hearted and generous as he was, his first thoughts were of David. Here was escape from disgrace. He could still retain his position at the school, his mother would be saved from the bitterest grief.

Then another thought suggested itself. Was it the kindest thing even to David to be always screening him from the consequences of his wrong-doing? Was not this the great mistake that had been made all through his life? Would not David have been a better lad, if he had been compelled to bear his own burden, and suffer the punishment that was due to him?

And besides all this, it was only staving off the evil day for a few weeks or months. The truth was bound to be out sooner or later, unless David made a complete change in his life, and that seemed hardly probable. Moreover, by bearing his punishment, it was only encouraging him in wrong-doing.

What should he do? That was the question which clamoured persistently for an answer. David was his brother, and he loved him very truly and sincerely. And to let this disgrace overtake him, if he could stave it off, would seem a very cruel and unbrotherly thing. But then the alternative! By shielding David the disgrace would fall upon himself.

He could easily prove that Bill Nancarrow and all the others were mistaken. He had been at Wheal Anthony till nearly ten o'clock, and could call witnesses to prove it. Besides, if he were to give the lie direct, as Toby wished, suspicion would instantly fall upon his brother, and inquiries would be instituted without delay, the result of which he could easily foresee.

Very likely the truth would come out if he said nothing. Once let suspicion fall on David, and nothing could stop the Penwharf people from probing the matter to the very bottom. Moreover, some of the miners who lived at Trenance, a village two miles beyond Wheal Anthony, and who had seen

him at the mine on the evening in question, might volunteer a direct denial of this report if they got to hear of it, without waiting for any word of his, in which case David would have to defend himself as well as he could.

What should he do? That was the question which still pressed for an answer. He felt that every eye in the smithy was fixed upon him. He knew his silence was being regarded as an admission of the truth of the charge. Well, what did it matter? He was only a journeyman carpenter. He would not lose his situation, even if it were believed that he was becoming a drunkard. Besides, he would soon be gone now from Penwharf, and "to be out of sight was to be out of mind."

Then across his mind there flashed a thought of Abigail. For the good opinion of the Penwharf people generally he did not care very much, but for Abigail's good opinion—well, yes, he *did* care! It was of no use trying to hide the truth. He could not hide it if he would. For a moment he saw her as on that summer evening, well-nigh three years ago, standing in the lane, with her hand upon the gate, and the light of the glowing west upon her face. She was still more to him than all else in the world beside.

Could he tacitly admit that he was a drunkard? Of course she would hear all about it, and if he offered no word of denial she was bound to believe the charge was true. But what then? What did it matter? He was going away, probably never to come home again. She would forget him, and in time, no doubt, he would forget her, and so, whether she thought well of him or ill of him, it did not matter in the least.

So he tried to reason with himself; but his heart protested against any such conclusion. It *did* matter. Abigail's good opinion was more to him than everything else beside. He might never see her again, but to live within her memory, with no stain upon his name, that was a hope he had always cherished.

True she shunned him now, and for more than two years he had never seen her, and month by month he had tried to forget her, and the more he tried the more he couldn't forget, until he sometimes wondered if he ever should forget her. Nay, more; there flashed across his mind sometimes the conviction that he did not want to forget her. He felt that now. In this sharp, fierce battle which he was fighting with himself, he realised this as he had never realised it before. Deep down in his heart there was still the unspoken hope that some day, he knew not when, he would be able to take her hands in his and look into her eyes and tell her that he loved her.

It seemed a foolish hope—so foolish that, whenever it began to take shape, he tried to banish it from his thoughts; but it remained there all the same—unspoken, almost unthought, vague, far off, undefined, yet very real and very sweet.

He was going away that he might forget her, he said to himself, for while he remained in Penwharf that was impossible. There was not a pleasant nook for miles around but was sweet and fragrant with memories of Abigail; but away beyond the seas, where there would be nothing to remind him of her, and where her name would never be mentioned, surely there he would forget her. But though he forced himself to think thus, the hope, which was deeper than his thought, refused to die. Fortune might favour him in that distant land, and chance might bring them together yet again. But if he went away with this stain upon his name, the dream must end for ever. Well, would it not be better so? Better, surely, the hope should be blotted out utterly than that it should tantalise him through all his life. Then his thoughts flew back to David. He was weak and yielding—more sinned against, perhaps, than sinning. And if he could screen him, was it not his duty to do so, even though the bolt fell on his own head?

All these thoughts, which have taken us a long time to

write down, flashed like lightning through his mind. There was still a breathless silence in the smithy. Every eye was still fixed upon him, but the conclusion was now irresistible.

Paul raised his head at length, and looked swiftly round the place, then, without a word, walked slowly away.

When he had disappeared everyone drew a long breath. Toby stood quite still, with a look of helpless consternation upon his face.

Nancarrow was the first to speak.

"There, now," he said, "didn't I say he couldn't deny it?" and he looked fiercely at Toby.

But the old man did not reply. For a moment he scratched his head with an air of great perplexity, and then marched sedately out of the place.

Meanwhile Paul had hurried to his home, where he found David alone, Mrs. Vivian having gone into the village on a shopping expedition.

"Good afternoon, Davie," was Paul's greeting. "Have you heard what is being said in the village?"

"Yes; I've heard you were seen drunk last night," David said, without raising his eyes.

"Has anyone spoken directly to you about it?"

"Yes, two or three;" and David fidgeted uneasily in his chair.

"And what did you say?"

"Well, what could I say?" he answered, with downcast eyes, and a deepening colour on his cheeks.

"I didn't ask what you could have said," was the severe reply, "but what you did say."

"Well, I said it was a great pity, and I was very sorry."

"You were very sorry! You did not say that you were the drunkard?"

"Well, hardly. You don't take me for such a fool as that, I hope?"

"David," said Paul, severely, "there's a worse thing than being a fool; and to speak plainly, you have been a fool to

carry on as you have been doing lately. It's only by the merest accident suspicion has fallen on me. But the truth is bound to come out sooner or later. I'm going away soon, and who is to be your scapegoat then? Indeed, I am not at all certain that I am doing right now, in allowing the suspicion to rest upon myself."

"You can't help yourself," said David defiantly, for Paul's words had stung him to the quick.

"How do you make that out?" Paul asked.

"Because your conduct has been so curious during the last year or two that people were quite prepared for such a rumour, while of me no one would suspect such a thing. I am believed to be a teetotaler. You never would join the Band of Hope."

"And you don't mind being a hypocrite as well as a drunkard?" Paul said bitterly.

"I'm not a drunkard," said David, starting to his feet. "I admit I got over the bay last night, and yet I took very little. I've never been used to it, you see, so a very little drop upsets me. I know I oughtn't to have touched it; but the other fellows were so pressing, and one does not like to be singular and a butt for everyone's ridicule. I'm very sorry I touched it; it shall not happen again."

"I'm glad to hear you say that, Davie," Paul answered more gently than he had hitherto spoken. "And if I could be sure you would stick to your resolve I would not mind being your scapegoat again, as I've been many times in the past."

"Fortunately for me you can't help yourself," David replied, with a touch of defiance in his voice.

"But I give you to understand," said Paul growing white to the lips, "that I can help myself. I could call a dozen, ay, forty, men from Trenance, who saw me working at Wheal Anthony till nearly ten o'clock; and I've a good mind to expose you and clear myself. Your cowardly selfishness doesn't deserve the least consideration. You care

nothing for me. You are perfectly indifferent to my sufferings, so long as you can escape. And I tell you, you don't deserve to escape; it looks like putting a premium on wickedness. Such heartless selfishness is intolerable, and I wonder you are not ashamed of yourself."

David fairly cowed before the torrent of Paul's words, and the fierce light in his eyes.

"Come, come, Paul," he said, pleadingly; "don't cut up so; don't expose me; you see everything is at stake with me. I know it is hard on you, but you won't lose your situation through it. And I *should* lose mine if it were known. And then think of mother——"

But Paul stopped him with a gesture of impatience and disgust. "A lot you care about mother," he said bitterly. "Let's have no more of your cant, or you'll drive me to do what you'll regret."

"I think you are very hard on a fellow," David said, sulkily.

"If I saw any real evidence of regret, any real consideration for mother or me, I wouldn't mind so much," Paul answered.

"Come, Paul," he said, "that's too bad. I know I've been foolish, I know I've got you into trouble, and I am downright sorry. I am, in very truth. But you are strong, and you will live it down, and I promise you I won't get you into any such like trouble again."

"And I promise you that you will not have the chance of doing so. The next time anything of the sort happens you bear your own penalty, so I give you fair warning. But here comes mother, so we'll say no more on the subject."



## CHAPTER XIII.

### A DAY OF REST.

"Surely all nature owns the Sabbath hour,  
Else why this peace so sweetly hovering round,  
This silence, eloquent, yet so profound,  
That holds us in its deep, mysterious power?"—BAYNES.

ON the following morning, after David had gone to the Sunday-school, Paul took a book and stretched himself on the sofa, and commenced to read. Soon after his foster-mother came into the room, and on catching sight of him started back with an exclamation of surprise.

"Why, Paul," she exclaimed, "how you did frighten me. I thought you had gone to school with David."

"No, mother," he said, quietly, "I'm not going to school to-day."

"Not going to school," she said, sharply, "what new fad have you got hold of now?"

"I don't know that it is any fad at all," he said, with a smile.

"But it is your teaching day," she said after a pause. "Had you forgotten that?"

"No, mother," he answered, his colour rising, "I had not forgotten it, but I am not going to teach again."

"Not going to teach again?" she exclaimed, bringing out the words slowly. "Well, I wonder what next!"

Paul did not reply for a moment. It was very evident she had not heard the rumour that was floating about the village. Hence to explain his conduct in a way that would be satisfactory to her he felt would be an impossibility.

"I can't explain everything," he said at length. "But I have thought, all things considered, that I had better not attempt to teach again, so I have sent in my resignation."

"You have thought, all things considered," she said, in a mocking tone, "that you had better not teach again. Would you kindly explain, Mr. Paul, what those 'all things considered' are?"

He was hurt by her words, but not so much as by her tone. To hear his own mother mocking him, mistrusting him, he felt was the most painful part of the whole affair. And yet he could not explain it to her. He could not tell her that her own best beloved David was drunk on Friday night, and that suspicion had fallen upon himself. He could not confess himself guilty of a fault of which he was innocent. He could only shut his mouth, and sit silent under misrepresentation and abuse and cold looks.

"You do not answer me," she said at length. "Is it so bad that you cannot tell your mother?"

"I would rather let the matter rest," he said, uneasily. "I am no longer a child. I have my reasons for what I do, and I think they are sufficient reasons. If you would trust me, mother, to do what I think is best, I should be very thankful."

Then she broke out angrily. "I wish I could trust you," she said, "but I cannot, I am always apprehensive of trouble. You are taking to such curious ways. First you give up going to chapel, then you take up with Toby Wrench, now you give up Sunday-school, and what the next move will be Heaven only knows. I know you are dissatisfied with your home and want to get away from it; but for what earthly reason no one can tell. I see people shake their heads when your name is mentioned, though they will tell me nothing. But they arouse my suspicions and make me imagine all kinds of dreadful things. Your father little thought what he was doing when he left me with the care of you. Had you been like David things would have been different; he goes to chapel and to school, and keeps out of bad company, and has grown up to be a gentleman. Why can't you be a little more like your brother?"

Then Paul got angry, for his mother's words had stung him like wasps.

"I don't want to be like David," he said, "I am very thankful I am not like him. I hope I may never be."

"Worse and worse," she exclaimed. "How can you expect me to trust you, or to have hope in you, while you despise goodness, and glory in your own wickedness?"

"Mother," he said, with a fierce light burning in his large liquid eyes, "I neither do the one nor the other. And some day, perhaps, you will learn how you have wronged me in your thoughts——"

"Me wronged you!" she exclaimed, nearly letting the secret out that she had hidden from him and from others during all these years. "You, a—a—no, I will not say it. But this is hard and cruel, after clothing you and educating you, and doing my best for you, that I should be accused of wronging you."

"I wish you would not misunderstand me," he said. "I have never complained of my home or of the manner in which you have treated me, but when you accuse me of despising goodness and glorying in wickedness, I think at least you should have some proof of it."

"Proof of it? Have I not had the proof from your own lips?" she exclaimed. "Have you not told me just this very minute that you did not want to be like David?"

"Yes," he said, "and what of that?"

"What of that! Oh, Paul, Paul!" and she took out her handkerchief and began to wipe her eyes.

"Yes, what of that?" he repeated.

But she did not reply. She only darted a reproachful look at him and then hurriedly left the room. He lay back on the sofa again when she had gone, and tried once more to read. But somehow all interest had gone out of the book, though it had always been a favourite volume of his. Slowly he turned the leaves in a very listless fashion. Then his eye fell upon a verse against which he had placed a pencil

mark. And as he read it again, it seemed to burn with a new meaning.

“And all through life I see a cross,  
Where sons of God yield up their breath;  
There is no gain except by loss,  
There is no life except by death,  
There is no vision but by faith,  
No glory but by bearing shame,  
No honour but by taking blame,  
And that eternal passion saith,  
Be emptied of glory and self and name.”

He tried to read on, but somehow he could not succeed, the words he had just read banished everything else. Were they true? Was it a fact that there was no gain except by loss—

“No glory but by bearing shame,  
No honour but by taking blame—”

or was this merely a poet's fancy? The philosophy seemed a little bit above his comprehension, and yet he had a feeling that the poet had expressed a great truth.

He was debating this question when he heard the outer door open and shut, and looking through the window he saw his mother walking away to chapel.

He could not repress a sigh when he noticed that her head was bent, and that she walked with slower steps than usual. He knew that she was sad because she had to walk to chapel alone while he lay idly at home, and yet how could he help her? He could not go to be stared at by a hundred curious eyes. He knew that in the Sunday-school that morning his resignation would be read, and, of course, would be accepted. He did not suppose the matter would be debated. But there would be low whispers and head shakings and a show of hands; and then they would file into chapel, and some few would pray for him, and others would thank God that they were not such as he. It was a curious position to be in. He had been trying all his life to do the right thing, had striven hard to keep his conscience clean, and yet here he was branded as a reprobate. Even his mother did not believe in him, could not trust him, had no hope in his future;

while some of the very pious people of the village almost shuddered at the mention of his name.

In the Sunday-school his resignation would be accepted as a tacit admission of his fall, while his silence as to the cause of his resignation, the absence of any word of regret or contrition, would be so much additional evidence of the fearfully hardened state he had got into.

He could hardly help smiling as these thoughts passed through his mind. Then Walter Smith's beautiful lines rang again through the chambers of his memory.

"There is no gain except by loss,  
There is no life except by death.

\*            \*            \*  
No glory but by bearing shame,  
No honour but by taking blame."

"Well, be it so," he said to himself. "I've got the blame and the shame at any rate. But whether I shall ever be worthy of any honour or glory I very much question."

A few minutes later there was a loud knock at the outer door, and a moment after Toby stood before him.

"I seed your mother go into chapel," he began, almost before he got into the room, "an' I guessed you wouldn't be a-comin' out. You wouldn't care to be stared at like. But, lor', what's being stared at, when one's used to it? I remember once having to face three million and a half of——"

"It was very good of you to come," said Paul, with a smile, anxious to cut short Toby's wonderful story.

"I couldn't help comin'," said Toby, closing one eye, and wiping the other with the back of his hand. "I've been so puzzled over this matter that I couldn't sleep."

"Oh, 'tisn't worth worrying about," said Paul, with a smile, though his eyes had a suspicion of tears in them.

"P'raps not," said Toby, giving his trousers a vigorous and most unnecessary hitch. "An' yet I be worried. I know, in a place like this, such a thing goes agin a young man. He gets looked down on, an' is sometimes druv into worse ways by the manner in which he's treated. In my young days a

fellow was thought all the better of if he could get drunk occasional. But I've lived long 'nough, Paul, to see the other side of that question, and now I'm next door to teetotal."

"That's best, no doubt," said Paul.

"You think so?" questioned Toby, opening both eyes very wide.

"You never doubted it, did you?"

"Well, blame me if I know my latitude at present," said Toby. "I'm at sea, which I've often been, but I've about lost my reckonings at present. You didn't deny nothin', there's the puzzle, an' by your silence you as good as admitted everything."

"I know," said Paul, "and there the matter must rest at present."

"I don't know 'bout that," Toby replied. "Fact is there's some reef or rock here as ain't on the chart, an' I'm a-goin' to take soundings."

"Please don't," said Paul. "If you are my friend, let the matter rest."

"Humph!" said Toby, again shutting his right eye, and staring very hard at Paul with the other. "I reckon the compass is gone overboard."

"Perhaps so," said Paul. "But in all sincerity I would like this matter to be allowed to rest. In time I may live it down. I know, in a place like Penwharf, it's an awful slur, but——"

"'Twer'n't you," interjected Toby; "if it were, you'd 'a said so. You'd have expressed regret, and promised it shouldn't have happened again. I guess I've found my bearings again."

Paul could not help laughing.

"I've know'd it all along," went on Toby, "though it's difficult to steer in a fog, and I've been in a fog since yesterday. But the wind's sprung up a bit again."

"Look here, Mr. Tobias——" said Paul, looking grave, for he feared lest the old man, getting on the right track, should prove the truth about David.

"Yes, I'm a-lookin'," said Toby.

"Promise me that, whatever you think, you'll say nothing. It won't help me. The more it is discussed, the longer it'll live in the memory of the people."

"I don't quite make you out," said Toby, grasping his hand, "but I'll do as you wish," and, with another hitch to his trousers, he took his departure.

After awhile David and his mother returned from chapel, but both were in a very silent mood. Even over the dinner table scarcely a word was spoken, and when the repast was ended Paul took his hat and went out for a ramble alone. The cold east winds that had prevailed during all the month of March had given place to southerly breezes on the advent of April, causing the hedgerows everywhere to burst into the freshest green, and bringing out the primroses in all the sheltered nooks. Paul could not prevent his spirits rising when he reached the top of the hill, and looked down into the quiet valley with its green encircling hills. Over all the scene lay the golden sunshine, save where here and there a cloud shadow fell; but the shadow only lingered for a moment; even while he looked it sped on and on till out of sight. It was like a sermon to him; or a message of peace and hope from a far-off land. The shadow was upon his life just now, just as it rested a few minutes since on one of the Rosevallion fields. But the gentle south wind had borne away the cloud, and the sunshine lay upon the field again. So perhaps the shadows would pass away from his life, if he could only have patience to wait.

Just then a deep musical voice fell upon his ear singing a snatch of a well-known Methodist hymn:—

"When I can read my title clear  
To mansions in the skies,  
I'll bid farewell to every fear  
And wipe my weeping eyes.  
Should earth against my soul engage  
And——"

The singing suddenly ceased, for the singer had caught sight of Paul and pause! abruptly.

"Good afternoon, James," said Paul, looking up into James Polskiddy's face with a smile.

"Afternoon, Paul, and how be'e to day?" was the ready and pleasant greeting.

"I'm all right, thanks. All the better for this bright sunshine," Paul answered. "How beautiful the country is beginning to look already. There's something very exhilarating about the spring time—don't you think so?"

"That there is," said James. "It always makes me think of God's unfailin' kindness. He's always doing something to gladden this toilsome life of ours. Have you seen the cuckoo's flowers in Gunney's plantation? A perfect brake of 'em. I gathered a big handful and took 'em down to poor Abel Knuckey and he *was* pleased to see 'em."

"Is Abel no better?" Paul asked, quickly.

"Iss, he's better'n he was, a goodish bit, but it'll be several weeks afore he'll be able to work again. An' it's coming rather tight on 'im."

"I'm sure it must be," said Paul, "for of course he'll have nothing coming in."

"Well, a few of us have worked a stem for him now and then," said James. "A little, you see, is better than nothin'."

"If I were a miner, I'd gladly work a few stems for him," said Paul. "But I suppose I should be of no use. What's his job when he's working?"

"Fillin' kibbles down in the sump."

"Oh, I could do that," said Paul, quickly. "Look here, James, I'll be able to work two or three stems for him this week, and will be glad to do it."

"I'm sure it's very good of you," said James; "and Abel *will* be delighted, for he'd never expect such a thing."

Paul laughed just a little bit bitterly.

"Nobody expects anything but badness from me, eh, James?"

"I don't know what other people expect," said James



looking at Paul, with grave earnest eyes ; “but I expect great things of you some day. I don’t understand this last affair ; but, with patience, all things will come straight.”

And with a smile and a wave of his hand James continued his way down the winding road into the valley, and a minute or two later his clear tenor voice was heard once more in song. Paul sat still on the stile and listened.

“Nearer, my God, to Thee ;  
Nearer to Thee,  
E’en though it be a cross  
That raiseth me.  
Still all my song shall be,  
Nearer my God to Thee,  
Nearer to Thee.”

Fainter and fainter grew the voice as the singer descended farther and farther into the valley.

“Still like a traveller,  
The sun gone down,  
Darkness comes over——”

Then the voice died away in the distance, and Paul could hear only the twitter of the birds in the trees around him.

Leaping over the stile he made his way along the brow of the hill in the direction of Rosevallion. He had no object in view. He was out just for a ramble. He never thought of the way he was taking, and just now his heart was full of the rest and quiet and brightness of this Sabbath afternoon, while through his brain still rang the echo of the hymn that James Polskiddy had been singing :—

“E’en though it be a cross  
That raiseth me.”

On, on, he went, pausing now and then to pluck an early wild flower. Then suddenly he stopped. He found himself close to Rosevallion without being aware of it, while a few yards in front of him was Abigail Tresillian.

## CHAPTER XIV.

### LOVE AND DUTY.

"The doers of the word I sing,  
Who with a generous heart,  
Their sacrifice to duty bring,  
And well perform their part ;  
Nor parley they with weak excuse,  
Nor at their lot repine,  
But give, and say, This Heaven may use,  
For it is Heaven's, not mine."—ANON.

PAUL had no idea till this moment that Abigail was at home. He knew nothing about terms or vacations. For the last two years and a half he had heard of her coming and going, but he had never seen her. With a resolution that had never faltered he had carefully avoided all chance of meeting her whenever it was reported that she was at home. Often the longing to see her was almost irresistible, but he resolutely crushed it down. His duty seemed clear in that direction ; and yet through all hope refused to die.

So sudden and unexpected was her appearance this Sunday afternoon, that for a moment his heart seemed to stop, then the blood rushed in a torrent to his neck and face. Like a flash the thought swept across his brain that she had heard all, and that the faint hope he had cherished so long would have to be given up at last.

She had not seen him yet, for her eyes were turned in the opposite direction, but ten or a dozen yards away their paths would intersect each other, and they would meet almost face to face.

"No," he said to himself ; "she shall not see me," and he suddenly stooped, and began to knot his bootlace. From underneath the rim of his hat he saw her cross his path, her shadow almost falling upon him ; then he heard the garden

gate click, and he knew he was free from observation. His first impulse was to get away from the place as quickly as possible, but the next moment the sound of voices arrested him, and looking through the quickset hedge, he saw that someone had come out of the house to meet Abigail, and that the two were evidently bent on a stroll round the garden, in the warm sunshine.

"One of her schoolmates," he muttered to himself, "and a sweet face, too," and he drew nearer the hedge that he might have a better look.

"A cat may look at a king, they say," he said to himself, with a smile, "and I am in a public thoroughfare. It may be rude, but one doesn't see a pretty picture like this every day."

And truly it was a pretty picture. With hands locked in each other's, the two girls strolled leisurely along the path, that led with a broad sweep all round the garden. Ethel Gray, Abigail's favourite schoolfellow, had been only too glad to accept Mr. and Mrs. Tresillian's invitation to spend the Easter vacation at Rosevallion, and Abigail was delighted to have her there.

Paul, however, had no eyes for Ethel. All his attention was centred on Abigail. Since that day she passed him without speaking he had never seen her. And two years and a half he discovered had wrought a great change. She was no longer a girl. That was his first feeling. Long dresses had taken the place of her comparatively short skirts. Her sunny hair was no longer the sport of the wind, but was twisted into a shining coil at the back of her head. She was taller, too, and, as it appeared, more slender, while her free and easy manner had given place to a kind of stately grace. There seemed less of mirth, too, about her eyes, and more of soberness about her sweet, grave mouth. Indeed, the child had vanished. She was now a woman.

The realisation of this fact brought with it a feeling akin to pain. He could have wished she had been a girl still.

He felt that the gulf between them had widened and deepened. They could never meet again as they had met in the old days. Even had there been no shadow upon his name, the chasm between them was too wide to be bridged.

Yet he had to admit to himself that she was more beautiful than ever her girlhood had promised. There was a nobleness and strength about her face which he had never noticed before, and a sweet tenderness about her mouth, that banished every suggestion of haughtiness or pride. One had only to look at her face to know that she was good and kind and unselfish.

Now in the sweep of the path they were drawing nearer to where he stood, and their voices fell more distinctly upon his ear.

"Your Romeo has sadly fallen," he heard Ethel say.

"Oh, don't, Ethel," was the quick reply in a voice that was like music to Paul.

"I did not mean to hurt you, dear," Ethel answered, "but your pa and ma have been talking about it nearly all the while you have been out, and so it was uppermost in my thoughts."

"And does ma believe it?" Abigail asked.

"I think so," was the reply. "Indeed, she could hardly do otherwise; the evidence leaves no room for doubt."

"To those who do not know him that may be so," Abigail answered. "But I shall not believe it yet."

"But he has as good as admitted it, your pa says. And has sent in his resignation as a teacher."

Paul started back at these words, feeling as guilty as though he had been caught stealing. It had never occurred to him till this moment that he was the Romeo of whom they had been speaking. Yet, notwithstanding this guilty feeling, he could not help waiting for Abigail's answer.

"That is a feeble faith that goes out in darkness at the first gust of wind, and but a poor friendship that is poisoned to death by the first breath of slander."

"God bless her," he said to himself, as he drew a sigh of relief. He could have broken through the hedge and fallen at her feet and worshipped her. But he curbed his feelings, as he had long since learned to do, and, after waiting a few minutes longer, he hurried swiftly down the path, and was soon beyond the Rosevallion domain.

Abigail's words had been like new life to him. A dozen things that had long perplexed him now became clear. The barrier which had come between was not of her raising. There were many things which perplexed him still. But Abigail had not changed, nor forgotten him, nor lost faith in him, and that for the present was quite enough to satisfy him.

How joyfully the birds sang in the trees as he hurried along! How the daisies smiled up at him from all the windswept fields! How the brooklet laughed as it skipped down the hill-side to join the stately Wharf! How the shadows played hide and seek in all the hedgerows! He did not mind the gossip now; the burden he had taken upon himself seemed light as air. The sting had been taken out of his pain. The deepest stab all along had been the thought that Abigail would think evil of him. But now that he knew she believed in him still all the rest was easy.

He looked so cheerful and happy when at length he entered his home that both his mother and David glanced up at him in surprise.

Then Mary heaved a heavy sigh. His cheerfulness was intensely painful to her. It seemed as though he was rejoicing that he had broken every religious tie, and the thought stabbed her like a knife. She was a very religious woman according to her light, which is perhaps not saying very much for "If the light that is in you be darkness, how great is that darkness."

Tea was a very hurried and silent meal, for Paul was late and had kept the others waiting. Almost directly it was over David and his mother started for the six o'clock service

at the chapel. They did not ask him to accompany them, so he was spared the pain of excusing himself.

But scarcely had the echoes of their footfalls died away than the door was opened without any premonitory knock, and Mr. Joel Quirk stood before him.

Paul looked up with an expression of annoyance on his frank, handsome face.

"Excuse me a-comin' to see you," said Joel, with the manner of a man who has set himself to do a painful duty and was determined to go through with it.

Paul made no reply, but waited patiently for Mr. Quirk to proceed.

"I could not go to chapel," went on Joel after a pause. "Indeed, I should be goin' agin my conscience if I didn't come to warn you agin the evil of your ways, an' entreat you to turn over a new leaf, an' turn your feet onto His testimonies, as it were."

"It is very kind of you, I am sure," said Paul, gravely, "and I appreciate your good intentions."

"I am glad to hear you say that," said Mr. Quirk, looking uncomfortable, and fidgeting uneasily with his hat, which he held in his hand. Evidently Paul's answer was not what he expected, and he seemed at a loss how to proceed.

"Won't you take a chair?" Paul said at length, by way of helping him out of his difficulty.

"No, thank'ee," was the quick reply. "I'd prefer to stand, if it's all the same to you."

"Oh, it's quite the same to me," said Paul with a smile; "only as you so rarely pay us a visit, I would like you to be comfortable now you have come."

"Oh, I'm comfortable enough," said Mr. Quirk, uneasily; "that is, I'm not tired, or anything of that sort, an' I've done a good deal of sittin' down to-day."

"Yes, of course," said Paul. "I suppose you've been to chapel and school?"

"Yes, I started this mornin' for the seven o'clock prayer

meetin', went into school at nine, into the chapel for sarvice at half-past ten. Home to dinner, back to school again at half-past two, home to tea, and then I comed on here, or I should have gone to chapel again."

"Pretty full day, that," said Paul. "You can hardly say that the Sabbath is a day of rest, I should think."

"There's such a thing as rest in sarvice," answered Mr. Quirk with more dignity than he had yet assumed, for he felt that he was getting no nearer the object of his visit.

"Quite true," said Paul; "doing nothing is often a wearisome business. One is always happiest when engaged in some useful occupation."

"That's a very sensible remark of yours," Joel observed, with knitted brows; "an' excuse me for sayin' it, but it's very surprisin' that a young man of so much sense an' with such a good edication should get into sich bad ways. I hope you'll excuse me if I'm clumsy over this job, but it ain't as easy as I thought it ud be. But I have it on my conscience, as it were, and—and—well, I can't say it proper, as I'd like to, and the little speech I made up afore I comed have clean gone like out of my head. Did you ever feel that way, as it were?"

"Well, I can't say that I ever did," Paul observed, with a broad smile; "the fact is, I've never been much given to speech-making. Talking is always cheap. It is what a man does that tells."

"Sensible again," Joel observed, shifting his position and staring hard out of the window, as though uncertain what to do or say next.

"Beautiful sunset, isn't it?" Paul observed, after a long pause.

"I wasn't thinkin' about the sunset," said Joel, shortly. "I was thinkin' about more serious things; but somehow I can't get on with 'em to-night."

"Can I assist you in any way?" Paul asked, with a sly twinkle in his eye.



"That's a very sensible remark of yours," Joel observed.—p. 114





Joel turned and looked at Paul for a moment as if undecided in what spirit to take his reply. But Paul's perfectly frank expression completely disarmed him.

"I can't make you out," said Joel.

"No?"

"No, I can't; you're neither penitent nor defiant."

"Which from your standpoint, I presume, is a mistake?" Paul questioned.

"I wanted to reason with you on righteousness, temperance, and a judgment to come, as it were," said Joel, wiping the perspiration from his forehead.

"I'm sure I shall not dispute with you on those subjects," said Paul. "And if you'll sit down, or stand if you'd rather, and give me your views on those questions I promise you I'll give you all my attention."

"That ain't easy," said Joel. "If you'd oppose me, I'd go ahead. But somehow I'm not in trim to-night, I ain't said nothin' I meant to say afore I comed. You've took the wind out of my sails, as it were."

"Well, come again when you're in better trim, Mr. Quirk," said Paul, with a smile, "I'm sure you'll get a patient listener in me."

"That ain't it exactly. But there, I see I ain't doin' no good, as it were, an' I'd better leave you," and Joel put on his hat and prepared to take his departure.

"I shall not forget your kindness in coming, at any rate," Paul said, opening the door for his guest.

Joel looked at him again as if not certain whether Paul was sincere or was only poking fun at him. His face, however, gave no evidence of insincerity. And with a grunt which was intended for a "good evening," Joel took his departure.

For a few moments Paul stood in the open doorway, looking after the retreating figure of his neighbour.

"Joel means well," he said to himself, "I'm sorry he felt so uncomfortable while he was here, I fear he'll think I'm a

dreadful reprobate," and with this reflection he turned and closed the door, and threw himself once more into his easy chair.

For the next hour he lived in a blissful day dream. He forgot Joel, forgot David, forgot everything, in fact, save Abigail, and the words she had spoken that afternoon. For the first time for many a long month he allowed his fancy to have full play; he built his airy castles, and filled them with all imaginable delights. In blissful bowers he sat and talked with Abigail, or rambled by shady pools, or along the banks of happy streams, with Abigail leaning upon his arm. He saw no face but hers, heard no words but those which fell from her lips, and they were like music in his ears. How beautiful she was! No angel, he thought, could have a fairer face than hers.

He knew it was foolish so to dream, so to let his fancy play. But it did not matter. His waking hours were painful enough, and David and his mother would be home soon, and then the dream would end.

On the following day he worked what the miners term "a doubler," that is, he did his own day's work and then worked a "core," for Abel Knuckey. This he repeated on the Wednesday, and on Friday he went once more down into the "sump," to fill Abel's place, but that day's work was never completed.

Two hours after the "second core" men had gone underground it became evident that something had happened.

Up from the various footways the miners rushed, one after another with blanched and terror-stricken faces, and then stood in excited groups at the pits' mouths.

In a few minutes all the hands that worked upon the floors were seen rushing toward the engine shaft, around whose mouth the largest number of miners had gathered.

Most of them felt sure what had happened before they got near the shaft. There had always been a possible danger to Wheal Anthony ever since East Besowsa, an adjoining mine, had been "knecked." This disused mine was now full of

water, and though it was generally believed that there was a thick wedge of earth between the two mines, yet no one knew exactly how thick the division was, nor how great its power of resistance. Behind was an enormous weight of water, and if once it found a vent into Wheal Anthony, the latter mine was certain to be flooded, and that very quickly.

This, indeed, was what had happened.

"Tapp'd Besowsa," was the sententious reply to all inquiries, and everyone knew what that meant.

"Anybody drown'd?" was always the second inquiry.

But to that no certain answer could be given. All the miners who worked in the upper parts of the mine had been warned in time, and had escaped. For those working at the bottom the greatest fears were entertained.

"Who are they?" somebody asked.

"Down in the sump were James Polskiddy, Bill Nancarrow, and Paul Vivian," replied Captain Perkins, the manager of the mine. "Vivian was working a core for Able Knuckey, who is on the sick list."

"Poor fellows, I fear it's all up with them," was the general answer.

The next moment those standing close to the pit's mouth saw far down in the gloom another figure climbing up the ladder with all possible haste.

A moment of terrible suspense followed, and then Adam Barnicoat lifted up his face to the light, and was greeted with a cheer; a few moments later he stood among the crowd on the bank.

"Seen anything of the sump men, Adam?" Captain Perkins asked, in anxious tones.

"Nothin', cap'n, I fear it's a gone case with 'em. It was they as tapp'd Besowsa."

"Then it's all up with them, I guess, for they had no ladder. Who were at the ta'kle?"

"Tom and Ned Body," Adam answered. "Have they come up?"

But to that question there was no reply, none had seen them, at any rate.

The next moment a fresh murmur ran through the crowd. The click of feet on the iron staves of the ladders was heard far down the shaft.

"Stand back," shouted Captain Perkins, "some more men are coming."

What a moment of suspense that was! The ladders were carried six feet above the top of the shaft, and the men and women who stood around held their breath as they watched. Then shout after shout rang out. Four loud shouts, and then a low murmur that ended in a wail.

The first to appear in sight was Tom Body, then his brother Ned, then Bill Nancarrow, and last James Polskiddy. Paul Vivian was not among them.

"Isn't Vivian coming?" Captain Perkins asked, but the new arrivals only shook their heads.

"But he was working with you?"

"Ay, but he's finished his core," James Polskiddy answered, brushing the tears out of his eyes with his grimy hands.

"How is that?" a dozen voices inquired.

Then Bill Nancarrow, who had not spoken till now, raised a white stricken face to the crowd.

"Comrades," he said, "he's gived his life for me."

"For you?" they answered, "you were no friend of his."

"That's so," he answered, "but he did it all the same. James and I were in the 'end,' and Paul at the shaft filling kibbles. Well, in a moment we struck water, and with a shout James and I rushed for the shaft. Paul had his foot in the kibble when we got there, James was the second to get his foot in, I the last, and we signall'd to wind up. But Tom an' Ned, who were at the ta'kle, couldn't move the three of us. Well, mates, it was a awful moment, I know'd I ought to get out. In a moment or two more the three of us would be drown'd. But Paul settled it. He was out of the

kibble in a moment. 'One of us must drown,' he said, 'let it be me. You have wives and families, I have neither.' We were moving up by this time, for the kibble bein' lightened Tom and Ned were pulling away. 'Good-bye, mates,' we heard him saying, far down below us. 'Give my love to mother and David, and tell them I'm not afraid.' Those were the last words we heard him speak, an' I guess in another second the water was over his head."

When Nancarrow had finished speaking, there was silence for several seconds, broken only by the sobbing of the women. Then several men who were standing on the outskirts of the crowd rushed off into the village to carry the mournful tidings of Paul Vivian's death.

## CHAPTER XV.

### VINDICATED.

“With as much zeal, devotion, piety,  
He always lived as other saints do die ;  
Still with his soul severe account he kept,  
Wiping all debts out ere he slept ;  
Then down in peace and innocence he lay,  
Like the sun's laborious light,  
Which still in water sets at night,  
Unsuiled with his journey of the day.”—COWLEY.

BY nightfall it was ascertained that all the miners had escaped save Paul Vivian. Respecting his fate there was no doubt whatever. With a candour and generosity that were new to him, Billy Nancarrow told everywhere the story of Paul's noble courage and self-sacrifice, and everywhere the story was listened to with tears.

“It would be all over in a minute,” Billy said to Mary Vivian, who had gone into violent hysterics on first hearing the news, and who had sent for Nancarrow later in the evening that she might get all the particulars from his lips.

Mary and her beloved David were sitting down to an early cup of tea when a small boy—who had outstripped his elders in his race to Penwharf with the sad news—burst into the room and shouted out the words,—

“Your Paul has been drowned.”

At first both she and David were incredulous, believing that the lad, who was known to be a mischievous character, was playing on them some cruel joke. But a few moments later several miners arrived and confirmed the sad tidings.

Then for an hour David, assisted by one or two neighbours, had to give all his attention to his mother. She cried, and raved, and laughed in turns ; declared that Paul was no son of hers, and then again that he was her first-born and best

beloved. Now she reproached herself with having been unkind to him, and now complained that he had broken her heart. But after awhile she grew calm, and seemingly resigned, and then it was that Billy Nancarrow was sent for, that she might hear all the story.

He looked quite pale and feeble when he entered the house, as though he had only just risen from a bed of sickness, and as soon as he had taken a seat he plunged at once into the recital as if anxious to get it ended.

"It would be all over in a minute," he said. "He would suffer scarce nothing at all. You see the old mine was tapped at the bottom, and that was a mercy for us all except poor Paul, an' he might have saved his life only he gived it to me. I can't make it out, for I have never been a friend of his, as it were."

And Mary hid her face in her apron and sobbed, murmuring to herself, "Poor Paul, he was with all his faults a kind and generous boy."

"Yes, ma'am," said Nancarrow, "none can ever deny that. You see it wasn't for hisself that he was working at all, but for poor Abel Knuckey. It was the third core he was givin' this week; but he's done his work now."

And Nancarrow took from his pocket a red cotton handkerchief and blew his nose violently.

"Well, go on, William," Mary said at length, "I want to hear all the story."

"Well, as I said," Nancarrow went on, after a pause, "we was working in the end, James Polskiddy an' me, when all of a sudden the water burst through. The hole couldn't have been very big, but the force of it I never seed the like of. It came straight out like a solid bar, with a hiss and a rush as were terrible. We knowed in a minute what had happened, an' made for the shaft for dear life. James was first; and Paul, hearing him shout, dropped his shovel and 'ad his foot in the kibble in a moment. They waited for me just a second. But it were no use. The men at the ta'kle couldn't haul up the three of us. I know'd 'twere my duty to get



out as I was last. But I couldn't do it somehow. But before anyone could speak Paul was out in the water with a splash.

"'One of us must drown,' he said, 'and you have wives and families, I have neither.' And then up we went, for the Bodys who were at the ta'kle, guessing something was up, were pulling like mad.

"But we heard Paul calling after us. And, oh! it must have been terrible to feel himself left alone there in the dark with the cold water rising all round him. But it would soon be over, for the water rose terribly fast."

Then there was silence in the room again for several seconds. Mary, with her face buried in her apron, was sobbing quietly, and rocking herself to and fro. David stood looking out of the window with a white, scared face and trembling lips, but he neither asked a question nor ventured a remark.

"You said he called after you," Mary said at length, in a broken voice. "Could you hear what he said?"

"Oh, yes, we heard quite plain. He said, 'Good-bye, mates,' an' his voice was quite cheerful an' bright like, as though he weren't troubled a bit. 'Good-bye, mates,' he said, 'an' give my love to mother an' David, and tell them I'm not afraid.' Those were his very words, an' I shall never forget 'em to my dying day."

At this Mary burst into a violent fit of weeping, while even David could no longer restrain his tears. A moment latter there came a timid knock at the door, and James Pol-skiddy came quietly into the room.

Mary looked up at him for a moment, but did not speak. To and fro she rocked herself in her helpless misery, feeling as though her burden was greater than she could bear.

"Don't take on so," James said at length, in tones of sympathy. "He died nobly; giving his life for his fellows."

"If I could only believe he was better off I could bear it better," Mary sobbed. "But you know poor Paul was never converted." . .

"Well, in our sense of that word," said James, hesitatingly, "perhaps he wasn't; that is, he did not go through any outward form of it. But I know this, he was a good lad, spite of everything people may say, and he's fallen into the hands of a good God."

"Works are but filthy rags," moaned Mary. "Even good works are but that, and 'except ye be converted,' the Saviour has said, 'ye cannot enter the Kingdom of Heaven.'"

"Yes, I know all that," James said. "And yet I have no fear about him on that score."

"Oh, James," said Mary, reproachfully, "Paul was not fit for Heaven."

"He was more fit for Heaven than the other place," persisted James. "He was ready to die for his fellows, for those who hadn't been no particular friends of his. Think of it. An' then imagine the good God sending a great generous soul like his to dwell for ever among devils, and mean wicked souls. It ain't reasonable, an' I for one can't believe it."

"Oh, James," sighed Mary, "I know you hold peculiar views; and I almost wish I could believe what you believe. But I dare not. The teaching of the Bible is so plain."

"Ay, it's pretty plain if folks 'ud let it alone," said James. "But the parsons and such like have so doctored it up that one hardly knows his whereabouts. However, I ain't no doubts whatever 'bout Paul. He weren't perfect; none of us are. But he was brave, an' honest, an' truthful, an' ever ready to do a kind deed."

"Perhaps he had time for a prayer before he died," Mary answered with a sob. "Oh, I do hope in his last moments he made his peace with God."

"He called out after us when we were leaving him all alone to die that he wasn't afraid," James replied, "so I think he must have felt he was in safe hands."

"We can only hope," Mary answered. "But I do thank you and William for your sympathy very much."

"But don't forget," James said, "that there is One above whose sympathy is a million times greater than ours."

"I try to think that too," she answered; and then the conversation ended.

Meanwhile Paul's name was on everybody's lips. The news of the flooding of Wheal Anthony, and of Paul Vivian being overtaken by the rising water and drowned, soon travelled far beyond the limits of Penwharf and Trenance. Nor did the story lose anything in the telling. Paul Vivian had always been a favourite with those who knew him, notwithstanding a general belief that he was getting into bad ways. But all that had been told to his discredit seemed to be forgotten now. The vague whispers and rumours which had been floating about for months and years were completely overshadowed by the great facts of his heroism and generosity. He had died while working for a sick man, and more than all had voluntarily, at the last, given his life for his comrade.

Such generosity was not of such frequent occurrence as to have become common. Indeed, it was something new in the history of most people, and raised Paul at once to the rank of a hero. The revulsion of feeling in Penwharf was very great. Most people felt that they had misjudged him in the past. It was quite true he had made no *profession* of religion, true that he had neglected the house of prayer, true also that he had been often seen with Toby Wrench. But these were negative sins, if sins they were. What did they know of positive evil in him? Absolutely nothing. He had been accused of drunkenness and had not denied it. That certainly looked black against him, and yet, in face of this crowning act of his life, was the charge true, or were those who averred they had seen him drunk mistaken?

To most people the latter alternative began to look the more reasonable, and even those who were fully convinced of Paul's sadly unregenerate state felt that he had in some measure atoned for the past by this last act of sublime heroism and self-sacrifice.

Yet very few, if any, of these people believed that the Great Judge of all would take this into account. So blinded had they been by human creeds and dogmas, that they conscientiously believed that what was beautiful and noble in their eyes was in the sight of Heaven but "filthy rags." They had been taught from childhood that there was no merit in good works, that God would not take deeds of righteousness into account at all. And so, however noble or praiseworthy Paul's last act might be in *their* eyes, *God* would not look at it or consider it in any way.

They had an instinctive feeling, which they dared not put into words, that this was not just as it ought to be. It hardly seemed right or fair. Nor could they understand why God had made them capable of appreciating such heroism while He himself placed upon it no value whatever.

But the text, "My ways are not your ways," came to their rescue, and with that they tried to be satisfied.

Their one hope of Paul's eternal safety rested on the probability that before the dark waters closed over him for ever he would offer a prayer to God, and commit his soul into His hands. If he did that it was all right. They had more faith in the efficacy of five minutes of prayer than in five years of doing good.

Abigail Tresillian did not hear the sad news until the following morning. She had gone into the village with Ethel Gray to make one or two much-needed purchases at the shop of Joel Quirk. She was returning to school again on the following Monday for her last term.

Mr. Quirk seemed unusually quiet that morning, as well as unusually slow. In truth he could not get Paul out of his mind, while their conversation of the previous Sunday evening was constantly recurring to him. Had he done his duty? Had he spoken as faithfully to him as he ought to have done? Mr. Quirk was not quite sure that he had done so, hence his conscience was not altogether at rest.

"I suppose you have heard the sad news?" Joel said,

after a long silence, but without lifting his eyes to Abigail.

"Sad news? No; I have heard nothing," Abigail answered.

Joel started. He had introduced the subject in the form of a question. Not that he doubted for a moment that Abigail had heard all about it. It was just his way of starting a conversation.

"Not heard of the flooding of Wheal Anthony?" he said in a tone of astonishment.

"No, Mr. Quirk," she replied; "when did it happen?"

"Yesterday afternoon, not long after the second core men went down," he said. "They tapped the old mine at the bottom, or else the loss of life might have been serious. As it is, all the men got out safely except Paul Vivian."

She caught her breath for a moment, and Ethel Gray rushed to her side, but she soon recovered herself, though she made no attempt to speak.

"You see," Joel went on, "Paul was takin' a core for Abel Knuckey, who's on the sick list. I believe it was the third core he was takin' for Abel this week. It was very kind of him. I don't know another fellow in Penwharf as 'ud 'ave done as much. But you see his kindness have 'ad a sad end."

"But had he no chance of escape?" Ethel asked, for Abigail seemed to have no power of speech left.

"Well, ess, 'ee might 'ave got out," said Joel, relapsing into broad Cornish; "but 'ee gived his chance to Bill Nan-carrow. It was a very fine thing to do. I didn't think 'ee 'ad it in him."

"He was always generous and noble," Abigail said, with an effort, while a rush of tears blinded her eyes for a moment, but which she instantly wiped away.

"Well," said Joel, slowly, "he seemed to 'ave more in 'im than most ov us gived 'im credit for. We 'ad thought for a long'time he was goin' to the bad altogether. He 'ad taken

to drink, you see, an' to bad company, an' to desecration ov the Sabbath. It's a wisht thing, when you come to think ov it. Generous as he was, I fear—nay, I may say I know—he wasn't converted. It's very wisht, Miss Abigail, very wisht."

But Abigail did not reply. She paid her small bill in silence, and then walked quickly away. Nor did she speak again until she got into Rosevallion Lane. Then, turning to Ethel with trembling lips, she said,—

"You will not disparage my hero again, Ethel?"

"No, never!" was the quick reply.

"He has died nobly," Abigail said, with swimming eyes.

"Like his great Master, he has given his life for others."

"I am sorry I ever thought evil of him," Ethel answered, slowly.

"You will not again, darling," Abigail answered, with something like a sob. Then silence fell between them. On reaching home, Abigail locked herself in her room, so that no one might see her grief. Nor did anyone suspect how much she suffered. Paul had always been her ideal of manly independence, and courage, and truth, and she felt as though the world could never be the same to her again now that he was gone. And yet there was a glow of triumph even in her sorrow. He had vindicated his character by his death, and given the lie to the cruel insinuation which had been circulated in connection with his name.

When she came down to lunch, all traces of her grief had disappeared. And while her father and Jack discussed the loss to the shareholders of Wheal Anthony by this unfortunate accident, and her mother spoke in tones of pity of "poor Mrs. Vivian," Abigail discreetly kept silence; and so not even Mrs. Tresillian ever guessed how much she mourned the loss of her former friend.

## CHAPTER XVI.

### FIGHTING DEATH.

“ Moments there are in life, alas ! how few,  
When casting cold, prudential doubts aside,  
We take a generous impulse for our guide,  
And following promptly what the heart thinks best,  
Commit to Providence the rest,  
Sure that no after-reckoning will arise  
Of shame or sorrow ; for the heart is wise.”—SOUTHEY.

LIFE never seemed so sweet to Paul Vivian, or death so terrible, as when his comrades left him alone to die. He had said “Good-bye” with cheerful courage, and had sent a message to his mother that he was not afraid, and at the time he meant it. And yet scarcely had the words escaped his lips than a great horror came over him, that for the moment unmanned him completely. Life was a very precious thing after all, and death was a monster a thousand times more hideous than he had ever imagined. In the first rush of excitement, and in the glow of a large benevolence, it seemed an easy thing to take his foot out of the kibble and give place to his comrade. But now that they were ascending swiftly through the black shaft, and long before the descending kibble could reach the bottom the water would have closed over his head, his courage for the moment gave place to fear. It seemed horrible to die like a rat in a hole, forsaken of all men, while the water rose higher and higher, and checked the very beating of his heart.

It seemed to him, too, as though the black water was full of horrible reptiles and creeping things. How they sported and splashed in this hideous cauldron ! How they fastened round his legs and climbed up the sides of the shaft, and reached out their slimy arms to touch his face ! He could

feel them winding and unwinding their snaky coils around his body and legs. He could hear the hiss and gurgle as they opened and shut their horrible mouths. Now one was twining its cold slimy tentacle about his neck, while another had pierced his clothes with its horrible tooth, and was sucking the blood from his heart. Horrors! how long was this to last? Was unconsciousness never to overtake him? Would friendly death never end this agony? Or was he dead already? Was this the "after death" which he had heard so often described, and had shuddered so often at the thought of?

But no, he was still in the body. Up around him the inky water was still rising. It had reached his arm-pits. A few moments more and all would be over; and those slimy monsters that were crawling all over him would feed upon his flesh to their hearts' content. How they were chattering their hideous jaws at the prospect, and untwisting their horrible lengths as though to make room for the repast! He could see their hideous eyes now flashing fire in the darkness. They were all getting ready together to spring upon him. Merciful Heaven! would the agony never end?

It seemed ages since his comrades left him, and yet the descending kibble had not reached him yet. Of course, it never would reach him. It would touch his dead body by-and-bye. But *he* would be gone—fled away out of the darkness up into the Eternal light.

This thought was like a great arm of love embracing him. The fear passed away as suddenly as it came. He was safe in the Everlasting Arms. A beautiful smile passed over his face, while his lips moved in prayer, "Oh, my Father, keep near Thy child."

The water was up to his neck now, and breathing became more and more difficult. But the darkness was no longer peopled with the horrible creatures that tormented him a moment ago, nor was the water any longer cold. But how buoyant it was, compressed within the narrow walls of the



shaft. Every moment he was being lifted off his feet. But what of that. He could not swim, and he was thankful he could not, for that would be but to prolong the death-struggle.

Now the water was above his chin, and was washing over his mouth. He shut his lips tightly, and breathed through his nose. The struggle could not last much longer now, and then eternal peace. He reached out his hands, and clasped them in one last supplication. The next moment he touched something floating on the water. Quickly he felt around its edge, got his hands above it, and pressed it down.

It was the little wooden platform, or "sollar," on which he had been working. Could he get upon it? Would it bear his weight? He could but try. Drowning men had been saved by less substantial straws than this. Indeed, this solar was a miniature raft. How he got on it he never knew. But he became conscious at length that he was rising steadily up the shaft, borne upward by the constantly increasing volume of water.

Two or three fathoms up he met the descending kibble. He heard it splash in the water by his side, and reached out his hand and touched the chain. He felt doubly secure now. If the raft failed him he could climb up by the kibble chain. Still up! He tried to shout to let his comrades know that he was still alive, but somehow the sound seemed to die in his throat. He thought he heard the sound of voices far above him; he thought, too, he saw a glimmer of light. Oh, if they would only leave a lighted candle behind them! The next moment the feeble ray disappeared, and the murmur of voices died away in silence.

But the torrent of water from the old mine was increasing every moment. He knew that by the rate he was borne up the shaft. He had hold of the chain, and was letting it slip through his hand.

Up! up! What should he do when he reached the solar? For, unfortunately, this shaft did not run straight

up to the surface, nor within fifty fathoms of the surface. Should he be able to find his way along the level to the footway? If he could once gain that and get his hands upon the ladder, he would be safe. But the chances were he would be drowned in the level before he could get half way there.

But having had such a miraculous escape so far, he was not without hope that the kindly hand of Providence might lead him to the surface in safety. Several times his little raft came perilously near upsetting. But fortunately the sides of the shaft were comparatively smooth, while the chain enabled him to steer a straight course upward.

At length his hand touched the windlass, and in a moment he clambered on to the platform and began groping in the darkness for the "level" or tunnel. But here a new danger met him. He knew there were two levels, one running out to the footway and the other running in an opposite direction and ending in a network of "drifts" and "backs" and "cross-cuts."

Unfortunately he found himself in the wrong level, though he had gone a considerable distance before he discovered it. The water was splashing round his feet when he started; before he had gone fifty yards it had reached his knees. Still on he pushed through the darkness, though the swiftly-rising water terribly impeded his progress. Now the water had reached his hips, and a moment later a sharp stone projecting from the roof caught him on the head, inflicting a terrible wound. With a groan he sank to the ground, and the water closed over him. At last it seemed the end had come. Of what use was it to struggle any longer? He might as well lie still. The pangs of death would be only of short duration, and then eternal peace.

But the instinct of life was strong, and, in spite of the wound, he was soon on his feet again, though hope had well-nigh gone. Evidently he had got into the wrong level. Of what use was it attempting to go on? It would end in a *cul-de-sac*, and he might as well die where he was as a few yards

further east or west. There was no hope of floating on the water here, for the roof was close to his head. And he raised his hand to ascertain how far the roof was above him.

Oh! what was the meaning of this? His hand went up into space. Was this a "winze" leading up into some of the "backs," or was it simply a hole caused by a fall of roof? Instantly he began to grope about, and the next moment he could have shouted for joy, for his hand grasped the stave of a ladder, and up he went, higher, higher, higher. He was out of the water now, and life had a lease of a few more minutes, and even that seemed something to be thankful for.

He began to think after a while that he had reached one of the "footways," and that there was before him a straight climb to the surface. But it was a hope that did not continue long. The winze through which he was climbing continually narrowed as he ascended, till at length he could hardly drag his body through it. Then the ladder gave out, and despair seized him once more.

He began to wish now he had died at the bottom. After all this effort there was only death. His escapes were no escapes at all. They only lengthened out the death agony; they but prolonged the torture. Standing on the topmost rung of the ladder, and pressing his elbows against the narrow sides of the winze, he offered up another prayer to Heaven.

"O Father of love and pity," he prayed, "if it be Thy will that I should live, give me of Thy strength."

How long he stood there he never knew. It almost seemed to him as though he slept. That a moment of forgetfulness had stolen over him he knew. Perhaps many moments. But he was brought to himself by feeling the cold water creeping about his feet once more.

Again he braced himself for the struggle. To climb the winze without a ladder would tax all his strength, and it needed as well a miner's skill. Fortunately, the winze from this point, instead of being perpendicular, took a slant. That was doubtless the reason a ladder had been dispensed with.

He could but fail, and he was certainly stronger for the rest. Pressing his back against one side, and his knees against the other, he edged himself slowly on and up, but the water was rising faster than he could climb. Now he reached a place where the sides had been secured with timber, and this gave him a chance of climbing with toes and nails, and put him for a few seconds beyond the reach of the water. But he felt that the struggle could not last much longer. His strength was nearly spent. The blood was still trickling down his face from the cut in his head; his hands and knees were torn and bleeding. His clothes were nearly rent from his back. One of his shoes he had lost altogether. Could he have seen himself at that moment, he would not have recognised the figure.

At length, after what seemed an interminable period, he got out—as he expressed it to himself—at the top of the chimney, and found himself in a large gallery; he knew that by the echo he raised, and by the purity of the atmosphere. But whether there was any hope of real deliverance for him or not he did not know. He knew that he must have ascended a considerable height into the “working” of the mine, but whether he had reached high-water-mark or not, it was impossible to tell. As yet, the floor on which he stood was dry, but five minutes hence it might be a foot or two feet deep in water. He must still struggle up, if there was any possibility of doing it. So he began hurriedly to grope about in the darkness, and at length stumbled over a heap of rubbish, and lay on the ground for several seconds completely stunned. Getting up at length, he began groping his way onward again, and by-and-bye found himself in a narrow “pass,” which gradually slanted upwards. He was fearfully cut and bleeding, and all but exhausted, but he gave himself no time to rest. If he should fail now, death would seem a hundred times harder than at the first. Still forward and upward he pressed, now erect, and now crawling on hands and knees.

At length a pause—what was this? A miner's jacket, left by someone in his eagerness to escape. Well, there it must lie. He must hurry on for dear life. The next moment he lay unconscious upon the ground. He had struck his head against the roof. There was a short, sharp spasm of pain, and then oblivion.

It seemed a sad ending for so brave a struggle. He lay with his head upon a miner's jacket, tormented no longer with alternate hopes and fears. From the wounds in his head the blood dropped slowly, saturating the jacket on which he lay, but he no longer felt any pain. Steadily, higher rose the water, but he no longer feared its advance. There in the darkness and silence he lay after his hard, bitter fight. He had done his best. Had fought for his life to the very last, and now like a warrior, the battle over, he rested from the conflict, insensible alike to the glory of victory or to the pain of defeat.

## CHAPTER XVII.

### STILL UPWARD.

"We live in deeds, not years—in thoughts, not breaths ;  
In feelings, not in figures on a dial.  
We should count time by heart-throbs. He most lives  
Who thinks most,—feels the noblest,—acts the best."

—P. J. BAILEY.

PAUL lay for many hours quite unconscious. But the water had found its level several feet below the place where he rested. And so he remained untouched by the flood that had threatened his life. Very slowly consciousness returned, and very terrible was the darkness to him as he threw his arms wildly about and tried to recollect where he was and what had happened to him. And when at length his reason unravelled the tangled thread, and memory recalled to him his recent struggle, he made a frantic effort to regain his feet, then fell exhausted and fainting on the ground once more. How long the second period of unconsciousness lasted he had no more means of judging than of the first. But when at length he came to himself his mind was much clearer than before the relapse, and he was able very calmly to consider the situation.

He felt too weak and exhausted to move, but his memory was now quite clear, and all his mental faculties on the alert.

"And so there's life in the old dog yet," he said to himself with a smile. "Well, I suppose I ought to be thankful, but whether I am or not, I am by no means certain."

He made no attempt to get up from his recumbent position. He had a feeling that if he attempted to do so he might faint again, and he had no desire for a renewal of that experience.

"I expect the water has found its level," he went on after a long pause. "People who are born to be hanged will not be drowned, they say. I wonder what I was born for? To

be starved, I expect. That seems to be the fate that is in store for me now."

And he smiled somewhat bitterly, but a moment later a smile of a very different character overspread his face. There had come over him a feeling that God had spared his life, and spared it for some wise purpose—that there was some work in the future that he would be expected to do, and that his life had been lengthened out that he might do it. And clasping his hands together he prayed again. "Oh, Father in heaven, help me!" that was all his prayer. Over and over again he repeated that one sentence, and felt even while he repeated it that his prayer was being answered.

After awhile he slept with his head still on the miner's jacket—slept and dreamed of Abigail. He thought that they were sitting together again on Crab Rock, with the sea singing all about them, and the sunlight dancing on the rippling waves, away, away, into infinite space. But somehow his head was bare, and the sunshine beating on him gave him the acutest pain. But Abigail laid his head upon her lap and spread her umbrella over them both; then she took her pocket-handkerchief and dipped it in a little pool by her side and placed it upon his throbbing brow, and then all the pain went away, and for gratitude he looked up into her face and smiled, but did not speak. And she bent her head and kissed his lips. "Oh, Abigail, my love, my life!" he said, and then he awoke—awoke to darkness and pain, and to a feeling of despair.

But "hope springs eternal in the human breast." And hope would not die in his. After awhile he raised his head, and tried to make his pillow a little more comfortable.

"Hullo!" he said to himself; "what is this? A match-box, as I'm a living man. Ay, and there are matches in it, too." And the next moment a match burst into flame, and nearly blinded him with its brilliance. He had been so long in the darkness that for the moment even the light of a match was more than he could bear.

When it had burnt itself out he did not strike another for several minutes. "I must be sparing of my wealth," he said, "and I must make the most of the light while it lasts. I wonder whose 'pitch' this is. There may be other treasures, too, left in the hurry of escape. I must make a search, if I can."

After awhile he sat up. But he felt so dizzy that he was fain to lie down again. But he would not be beaten if he could help it. Examining the jacket once more, he found in another pocket the miner's "crib," or lunch.

"Ah!" he said with a smile, "this may come in handy yet; I shall not starve to-day, anyhow."

After awhile he struck another match; there were so few that he had to be very sparing with his light. A few yards away he saw a pick, a mallet, and some drills.

"They've been 'stopping' on this 'back,' that's very evident," he said to himself. "I wish I knew the way out of it. There must be another way out than that by which I got here, or the air would have got foul by this."

And he struck another match and crawled forward on his hands and knees, looking in all directions while he did so.

"I expect one might crawl about here for a month," he said to himself, "for this old mine has been worked so long that it is literally honeycombed. I must be careful I don't tumble down through some old winze and get drowned, though, or 'the last end of that man will be worse than the first.'"

So he went on striking his matches and examining the cavern, and the more he examined the more bewildered he got; there seemed to be "ends," and "gunneys," and "cross cuts," and "passes" in all directions. Truly he might wander about for any length of time without finding his way out of it. He had, however, in his search come across a second jacket carefully folded up, with a crib securely packed away in one of the pockets, but though he searched very carefully, no fresh supply of matches could be found.



"There ought to be some candles somewhere," he said to himself. "Miners never work without a day's supply near them, and it's hardly likely they would wait to pick up their candles while they left their jackets behind. Oh, if I could only find a few I should be right."

But though he looked right and left, he looked in vain.

"Ah, well," he said to himself, "I must be content, I suppose, to remain in the darkness until someone finds me." He had now only two matches left, and he resolved to rest awhile before striking these, for he was already terribly exhausted with the efforts he had made.

Placing one of the two jackets under his head, and throwing the other over him, he laid down on the hard floor and gave himself up to reflection.

"I wonder what day it is," he said to himself. "It seems a small eternity since the struggle commenced. Let me see. It would be about four o'clock on Friday afternoon when Gr<sup>eat</sup> Besowsa was tapped. Well, I guess it must be at least Saturday afternoon now. Perhaps it's Sunday morning. How funny to think of all the people going to chapel in the bright warm sunshine and I a prisoner here all alone in the dark! Of course they think I am dead. That is funny. I wonder what they are saying about me. Of course I shall be the principal subject of conversation, unless there are others locked up in this old mine. But no, as we were at the bottom I fancy all the others would have plenty of time to escape. I guess I am here alone. Well, if this be Sunday morning I shall have to wait here another twenty hours at least, but if it be only Saturday morning a forty or forty-eight hours' vigil is before me. Well, I shall not starve, at any rate, that's one comfort, and by thinking my best thoughts perhaps the long watch can be endured."

So he communed with himself while the slow minutes dragged themselves along. The darkness and silence were terribly oppressive, while the pain in his head and limbs at times seemed almost unendurable. But he was naturally

brave and courageous, so he made no moan. Moreover, his deliverance had been so wonderful, and his feeling of thankfulness was so strong, that there was no room left in his heart for a murmur or a complaint. Indeed, more than once he tried to sing. A snatch of an old Methodist hymn kept constantly recurring to his memory—

“I'll praise my Maker while I've breath,  
And when my voice is lost in death  
Praise shall employ my nobler powers.  
My days of praise shall ne'er be past,  
While life, or thought, or being last,  
Or immortality endures.”

After a long time—he knew not how long—he slept again; but only for a few minutes. And when he awoke the darkness was so terribly oppressive that he could no longer resist the temptation of striking one of his matches. He felt as though he could bear the darkness no longer and keep his reason. It began to be peopled again with all kinds of horrible things that were creeping over him in all directions, and filling him with a nameless terror. So, sitting up, he struck one of his two matches and held it high above his head, while he glanced swiftly round his prison.

“Hallelujah!” he shouted. It was the first word that leaped to his lips and seemed the most appropriate; for not three yards away, hanging against the wall, was a bunch of candles.

His light went out before he could reach them, but he was able to find them in the dark without any difficulty, and then he sat down and breathed hard.

He remembered he had only one match left, and if that should fail, his hope would go out in darkness as dense as that which now surrounded him. For a while he made no attempt to light the match. He sat quite still, while the perspiration stood in big drops upon his brow. He felt sick and faint. This last excitement seemed too much for his overwrought strength. If, with the candles in his hand, the

match should fail him, the darkness would be intolerable. He felt as if he would not be able to keep his reason under such a disappointment.

After awhile the feeling of faintness passed away, and getting out his pocket-knife, he very deliberately severed the wick of one of the candles, and then with his finger and thumb carefully trimmed it, that it might light easily. This done he drew a long breath, then placed the candle between his knees in an upright position, took the match between his right finger and thumb, and held the box in his left. But the old faintness came over him again for a moment, and so he waited till it had passed away.

After a while his hand grew steady once more. And half hoping, half despairing, he placed the end of the match against the box and rubbed it with a gentle pressure, but there was no glimmer of light. A second time, pressing it more firmly, but no solitary spark was emitted. A third time and a fourth quickly and despairingly, but still darkness. And then it seemed to him that his heart stopped, and he fell backward in a dead faint.

How long he remained unconscious he never knew, but when he came to himself the whole truth flashed across his mind in a moment, and with a loud groan he raised himself to a sitting posture once more. He still held the match and the box tightly gripped. Mechanically his fingers had tightened when the faintness stole over him, and so they had not fallen from his hands.

"The Lord help me," he said, swaying himself to and fro, "or I shall lose my reason. Will deliverance ever come, I wonder, or shall I die here in this darkness?"

Then suddenly the thought flashed across his mind, "Had he been attempting to strike the wrong end of the match?"

The action that followed was almost as quick as the thought, and the next moment the match burst into a flame, and, to his unspeakable joy, he was able to light his candle without difficulty.

He could have danced for very gladness when he saw the candle burning steadily before him. Surely never a solitary candle ever gave so much light before. After the pitch darkness in which he had lived so long, the cavern seemed light as noonday. And leaning his head against the wall of his prison he tried to sing—

“I'll praise my Maker while I've breath.”

The next moment he burst into tears; happy, blessed, refreshing tears. He felt now in very truth that God had given his life back to him again, and there and then, with hands clasped and eyes uplifted, he consecrated that life to God.

He made no attempt to move for a long time. To feast his eyes on the light seemed enough to satisfy him for the present. Moreover, he was not certain that he had strength enough to move. He had tasted no food since Friday noon. How long was that ago? he wondered. It seemed almost years; and then, besides, he had lost a great deal of blood, which had weakened him very considerably. The miner's crib was still carefully wrapped up in the jacket. Could he eat anything if he tried? He certainly felt no appetite. On the contrary, he almost turned sick at the thought of food. Still he could make the attempt, and if he failed he would be none the worse for trying.

So he carefully unwrapped the “pasty” and resolutely attacked it. After the first mouthful he thought he would have to give up the attempt. His mouth was so dry that it was almost impossible to swallow anything. So laying down the pasty he commenced a search for something to drink. After awhile he discovered a small caddy in which was a can of blasting powder, several “gads” (iron wedges), a copper tamping rod, one or two pick-hills, and a small pitcher almost full of clean water. Instantly he raised the pitcher to his lips and took a long draught, and then returned to his pasty.

He felt already considerably better, and with the help of frequent drinks he was able to dispose of at least half the pasty.

This done he put the other half in his jacket pocket, hung the candles to the neck button of his shirt, and started out on an exploring expedition. His progress was necessarily slow, for notwithstanding the repast, he was still very weak ; moreover, having only one shoe he had to walk with great care, for his unprotected foot was so scratched and gashed as to be painful almost past endurance. To tell of all the passes up which he toiled, the winzes through which he crawled, the ends from which he had to beat a painful retreat, would prove wearisome to the reader.

But never once did he falter. Hope was high within him, and life seemed doubly sweet after what he had passed through. Steadily higher he clambered his painful way, and at length reached what seemed a straight and well-defined level. Along this he pushed with all the haste he could command, and by-and-bye, to his unspeakable joy, reached the ordinary footway to the surface. His course was now clear. Unless his strength failed him altogether, he would get sooner or later up into the light, and breathe again the fresh air of heaven. How far he was from the surface he had not the remotest idea. Nor did the question trouble him. Grasping the ladder firmly, he commenced the ascent with a strange thrill in his heart.

"How glad mother will be!" was his thought. And so he forgot himself ; forgot his weakness and pain in thinking of the joy that the knowledge of his safety would bring to others.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

### THE HERO OF WHEAL ANTHONY.

"Ah, me! what depths of unavailing tenderness there lie in human hearts!—depths that are never plumbed until the heavy millstone of a great grief is dropped into them by the hand of God, and the eddies that widen and spread to the verge of the shores of life settle back into silence and stillness as it sinks down into the darkness where no light penetrates but the love of our Father in heaven."—HOLME LEE.

TOBY WRENCH spent the whole of Saturday at Wheal Anthony, and nothing could induce him to leave the place. "The coast must look arter itself for once," he said to Captain Perkins. "I can't bring myself to go away till I know what's become of the boy," and the old man drew his sleeve across his eyes with evident emotion.

In his restless wanderings about the mine, many of the miners kept him company, though no one had thought of venturing down for the purpose of ascertaining how high the water had risen. The pumping engine was working away at about twice her normal rate of speed, and it was thought that by Monday some impression would have been made on the flood.

"I think an exploring party ought to be sent down," he said to the captain. "Ef the lad's still livin', he oughtn't to be forsaken in this way."

"There isn't the ghost of a chance of his being alive," said the captain; "and it is folly to risk the lives of the living for the sake of the dead."

"But nobody's sartin he is dead," persisted Toby, at which a number of miners, who were standing round, burst into a scornful laugh.

"Oh, it's all very well for 'e to laugh," said Toby, somewhat hotly. "But a man as have got any gumption may keep himself afloat a mighty long time."

"Where's he goin' to float to when he's bang agin the roof?" one of the miners asked. "He ain't at say, man."

"I never said he was at sea," said Toby, giving his trousers a desperate hitch, and deliberately closing one of his eyes. "But, lor' bless you! if you'd seen a millionth part of what I've seen, you'd be surprised at nothin'. Why, bless you! once when we were a-cruisin' in the Gulf of Mexico, we fished up a boat that had been under water a matter of three weeks, and that same boat 'ad a man in her, stark dead, as we supposed; but, lor' bless you! he wer'n't dead at all, but just fast asleep. When we took 'im aboard, he just yawned and opened his eyes, and then coolly asked for a quid of 'bacca, as natural as anything."

"Well, this ain't the Gulf of Mexico, or any other gulf," was the reply, and the man walked away, followed by all the others. By sundown Toby found himself quite alone. He had tried to persuade himself that there was just a chance Paul might be alive, but with very poor success. And as the hours passed away, the hope became more and more feeble, and almost went out in despair. And yet somehow he could not bring himself to leave the mine. He knew it was on record that in the case of the flooding of "East Wheal Rose" by a waterspout, one of the miners, a young man, found his way to the surface two days afterwards, and appearing before his sweetheart without warning, she was so frightened that she went into fits, and never recovered her reason again.\* That being so, there was still a hope—a very feeble one, it is true—that Paul Vivian might still be alive.

Toby, however, was the only one who entertained such a hope. With everyone else his death was regarded as an absolute certainty. And as the shadows of that Saturday evening began to gather round the forsaken mine, Toby was fain to accept the inevitable, and return disconsolate to his home.

It was a beautiful April evening. The sky was without a

\* A fact.

cloud. In the west the range tints deepened toward the horizon, to a band of crimson, but eastward paled to the loveliest green. What breeze there had been during the day had now died away into perfect stillness. The silence was unbroken, save when now and then a thrush in a clump of trees not far away burst forth into a few joyous notes, then suddenly ceased as though conscious of the fact that its joy was out of harmony with the melancholy that brooded over the place.

Toby sat on a rude bench silently smoking, but with his eye fixed upon a ladder that protruded from a shaft not a dozen yards away. He was in a very melancholy mood. The quiet of the forsaken mine in the deepening shadows was oppressive, while the occasional notes of the thrush jarred upon the silence, like a discord in music. He had one of his eyes shut as usual, but suddenly he opened it, and opened it very wide, then he opened his mouth, wider and wider, while his breath came and went in gasps. His pipe dropped from his hand and broke in a hundred pieces. He tried to speak, but his tongue clave to the roof of his mouth. He tried to rise from his seat, but he seemed held down by some invisible power. Then out of the mouth of the dark shaft appeared a face, with the light of the west upon it, hideous, haggard, and drawn, covered with blood and dirt, lit up with eyes that seemed ready to start from their sockets and surmounted by a mass of blood-stained and tangled hair. A moment later the shoulders appeared in sight, then the body. Toby tried to scream or groan, but failed, and after another horrible moment the man stood on the platform and looked wildly about him.

Toby's mouth had closed by this time, but his teeth were chattering like a man smitten with ague. He never thought for a moment that this could be Paul. He could not imagine Paul to be like this.

The next moment Paul's eye lighted upon him. "What, Mr. Tobias!" he said, and at the sound of his voice Toby



fell on the floor, and began to roll about in a fit of hysterical laughter.

"Oh, lor," he shouted, "if 'taint him after all. Ha, ha, ha! The Lord be praised! Ha, ha! I know'd—ha, ha, ha!—I did, I did, I did."

"Come, Mr. Tobias," said Paul at length, "won't you speak to me?"

"Oh, ay! ha, ha, ha!" said Toby. "As soon as I can git over the joy a bit—ha, ha, ha! The Lord help me, I'm nearly bustin'."

"Then you are glad to see me?" said Paul.

"Glad?" said Toby, struggling at last to his feet, while the tears streamed down his face. "Glad, boy? Why, glad ain't nothin' to it. Give us thy hand. Oh, lor!" And Toby went off into another fit of uncontrollable laughter.

So for another five minutes Toby laughed and cried, and then, at Paul's request, hobbled away to the engine-house to prepare the engineer for Paul's coming, and a bath for his reception.

At first the engineer was incredulous, and absolutely refused to believe Toby's story until Paul himself appeared upon the scene, and even then, for the moment, he was almost ready to faint with fright. After a warm bath and a change of raiment, however, Paul began to look a little more like himself, while Toby started off to Penwharf to carry the news to Mrs. Vivian, and to send a conveyance to fetch home Paul.

Mary Vivian was putting crape upon her bonnet when Toby entered. David was sitting before the fire with a book in his hand. The latter showed no trace of grief at all upon his face, but his mother evidently felt very acutely the loss of Paul. Her face was pale and almost haggard; while her eyes bore unmistakable traces of sleeplessness and suffering.

She looked up with a sigh when Toby entered, and motioned him to a seat. But he did not sit down. For a moment or two he looked at her in silence, and then said—

"I wouldn't put on black if I were you until I was sartin he was dead. At least, I think not."

"But I am certain he is dead," she said, with a sigh. "Why will you talk in this way?"

"Well," said Toby, giving his trousers a hitch, and closing an eye, "I talk this way because p'r'aps I know more than you do."

"Well, what do you know?" she said, sharply. She had no love for Toby, and rather resented his intrusion.

"I've just come from Wheal Anthony," he said.

"Well, and what then?"—and at her inquiry David lifted his head, and fixed his eyes on Toby.

"Well, I've discovered it's very possible Paul is alive. It's been found out that there's one way he may escape as was never thought of before."

Mary laid down her work at this, and twisted round in her chair. She was very white, and her hand trembled visibly. "Do you say this," she said, "to torment me, or is there any real hope?"

"There's a very real hope," said Toby with another hitch at his trousers. "Indeed, there's a strong probability, almost amounting to a certainty, that he'll be got out alive."

"Mr. Wrench," she said, rising to her feet and looking him straight in the eyes, "tell me what you know. Tell me everything. Is—is——"

"Yes, ma'am," said Toby, "he's living."

David sprang to his feet as though he had been shot at these words, then sat down again with a look of horror upon his face.

"Humph!" said Toby, opening both eyes very wide, "what's the matter with you?" But David did not appear to hear the question, and Toby did not repeat it. Nevertheless, it furnished him food for reflection for a considerable time after.

"You say Paul is living?" said Mary, after a brief pause. "Are you sure?—quite sure?"

"As sure as I'm here," said Toby. "I've seen 'im, talked wi' 'm; shook his hand, bless yer. It's a won'eful story."

But you'll hear it all in good time. I'm goin' to get a trap now to fetch 'im home. Have the bed ready ; for he's weak and considerably bruised, but he'll be as right as ninepence in a day or two."

At this point David got up from his chair and stretched himself, as though he had been aroused from a nap. He looked anxious and apprehensive, and certainly gave Toby the impression that he was not overjoyed at his brother's safety.

In truth, David's feelings were of a mixed kind. He was both glad and sorry that Paul was alive—glad because he loved his brother after a certain fashion ; sorry because his coming back to life would mean trouble for himself. Believing Paul was dead, he had gone that morning into his room, found his keys, unlocked his box, and appropriated all Paul's savings, with which he had paid some gambling debts, which were threatening serious trouble.

Of course, Paul's return would mean discovery, and perhaps disgrace. Hence the news that Toby brought was, on the whole, more painful than pleasant.

"I will go back with you to Wheal Anthony," he said to Toby. "I should like to be among the first to give Paul welcome."

"An' very right too," said Toby. "But it will take me some little time to get a trap ready."

"Then I will walk on," said David with a sigh of relief. He had come to the determination to go to Paul and make a clean breast of it—tell him the debt was an old one, and that, believing he was dead, he thought he might lawfully appropriate his savings, and so end the trouble that was hanging over him.

The resolve was a good one ; but, like many another good resolution that David had formed, he lacked the courage and honesty to carry it into effect. Paul, especially at this time when his heart was overflowing with thankfulness for his strange deliverance, would no doubt have forgiven him freely.

Bitter as the disappointment would have been, and terribly as he would have resented his brother's meanness, there can be no doubt had he seen David truly repentant and sincere, he would have spoken the words to him he desired.

By the time David reached the engine house where Paul was patiently awaiting the conveyance that was to take him home, his good resolution had almost completely evaporated. His greeting of Paul was a curious mixture of sincerity and affectation. Paul was too overjoyed to notice any suspicion of coldness, and in his delight and gratitude he kissed his brother on the brow, and wrung his hands again and again.

Once or twice David was on the point of telling Paul what he had done, and asking his forgiveness, but his moral cowardice prevented him each time. He would still trust to that chapter of accidents which hitherto had stood him in good stead. He might be able to put the money back again before Paul should discover the theft, or something else altogether unexpected might happen. At any rate he would take his chance as he had done before.

Toby told no one what was wanted with the trap. He knew that if the news leaked out all Penwharf would turn out to accompany Paul home; and so, with the exception of the driver, he set out alone to Wheal Anthony, and as it was now quite dark no one recognized Paul on their return. He was safe in bed ere the whisper ran through the village, but when once it was started it did not stop till every man, woman, and child had heard of it. For two or three hours the pretty cottage of the Vivians was besieged with eager villagers. "Was it true that Paul was living?" "How did he escape?" "Who first saw him?" "Was he very much hurt?" "Did he get to 'grass' (the surface) alone?" and a dozen other questions that were poured forth with a volubility that was almost alarming.

Paul, however, steadily refused to see anyone save his mother, David, Toby, and the doctor. The latter dressed his wounds and administered soothing draughts, while the former

nursed him with a loving tenderness and solicitude that left nothing to be desired.

For a few days he was very feverish, but that gradually gave way as the wounds healed, and within a week he declared that he felt almost well enough to go to work again. Every day scores of people called, and many of them begged for permission to see him. But Paul was firm, and was backed up by the doctor.

"I'm going to see no one till I get downstairs," he said, and he stuck to his resolution. One exception only he made, and that was in the case of the chairman of the Wheal Anthony Mining Company—Sir George Penrith, Bart.

Sir George had come over early in the week to consult with the manager as to what should be done to free the mine of water in the least possible time. Naturally he had been very much interested in the story of Paul's heroism and marvellous escape, and expressed a very strong desire to see him.

Paul had frequently seen Sir George at Wheal Anthony, but had never spoken to him. He was a little bit excited when his mother came upstairs and informed him that Sir George Penrith was below, and wanted to see him.

"Oh, dear, I suppose I must see him," he said; "but I had rather than anything he had kept away a week longer."

The meeting, however, was not the painful ordeal that he expected. On the contrary, Sir George's visit was a most delightful one. Paul felt at ease with him directly, and was drawn to him in a moment. It seemed as though between the two there existed a strange and striking affinity, and instead of Sir George staying about five minutes, as he intended, he stayed an hour. They chatted about all kinds of subjects save the one that was uppermost in the baronet's mind. Respecting his conduct towards his comrades Paul was silent. Their parting was more like that of friends and equals than of comparative strangers, and each expressed the hope that he would soon see the other again.

"Isn't Sir George splendid?" Paul said to his mother, as

soon as the baronet had gone. "And what a grand, handsome face he has, and what splendid eyes! I'm sure he is good and noble, you can feel it in the ring of his voice."

"He's a magnificent young fellow," said Sir George to his wife when he reached home on the following day. "He has a face and head like an Apollo, and the most beautiful eyes I think I ever saw. I expected to find a sort of diamond in the rough—a country clown with a small brain and a large heart. But nothing of the sort. These Vivians are evidently quite superior people of their class. His mother is good-looking and well-behaved; a little bit affected, perhaps. But I think she was a little nervous before me, and that may account for it. The second son is assistant master in the village school, and really looks a very gentlemanly young fellow. But this Paul, the hero of Wheal Anthony, is, I can assure you, something out of the common. I should like you to see him, my dear."

"I think I will have to accompany you on your next visit," she said, with a smile.

"Just the thing," he said. "It will be a pleasant little 'out' for you."

When the time came, however, for Sir George's next visit he was laid up with an attack of gout. This was a great disappointment to Lady Penrith, but a greater disappointment to Captain Perkins, who was very anxious to have the chairman's advice on certain important matters connected with the working of the mine.

"Look here, Paul," said Captain Perkins one bright afternoon, "you are nearly yourself again, and I want you to go over to Ferndale to see Sir George, and explain this matter to him, and ask him what is to be done. I can't get away myself. The affair can't very well be explained by letter; Sir George is laid up with the gout and can't come here. It will be a nice little run for you. Sir George will be delighted to see you, and the change will do you good. Now, what do you say?"

"Well, I really don't know what to say," said Paul, with a smile.

"Then I'll say it for you," said the captain. "You will start to-morrow morning by the ten train, and to-night I'll bring over the drawings and explain everything," and with a hearty shake of the hand Captain Perkins departed.

## CHAPTER XIX.

### A GLIMPSE OF HIGH LIFE.

“The free, fair homes of England!—  
Long, long in hut and hall  
May hearts of native proof be reared  
To guard each hallowed wall.”—MRS. HEMANS.

THE next morning Paul started for Ferndale with a feeling of pleasant expectancy. He had never been out of his native county. Indeed, he had never been twenty miles away from Penwharf, hence an excursion into the pleasant and picturesque county of Devonshire was quite an event in his somewhat prosaic life.

He was still pale and hollow-eyed, but this rather added to than detracted from his personal appearance. Dressed in his newest and most fashionable suit he looked every inch a gentleman. There was nothing gawky or dowdy about his style or address. Many of the young men of his acquaintance, when dressed in their Sunday clothes, looked thoroughly uncomfortable, and never seemed to know exactly what to do with their hands, or where to place their feet. With Paul this was never so. He seemed to have an innate sense of the fitness of things. He was never self-conscious, and as a consequence was always natural. This, added to his handsome appearance, his tall and well-knit frame, his noble forehead and finely-chiselled face, made him the envy of half the young men in the parish.

It was a lovely May morning when he started. Nature smiled at him from every side. The fields and hills were clothed in the freshest green. By the roadside a clear, limpid stream ran laughing down to join the broader and statelier Wharf. In the meadows the “golden cups” shone in the morning light. The birds sang in all the trees as



though glad they were alive, and over all was the golden glow of the sunshine, glorifying and gladdening everything.

Paul paused when he reached the hill-top, and looked back at the little village lying so peacefully in the lap of the hills. He could trace every lane and the boundary of every garden, and with his eye he followed the windings of the Wharf, and caught the shimmer of the sea in the bay of Portstress. To the right, in the hollow, lay Wheal Anthony, and beyond that again Trenance, and to the left, sweetly nestled among its orchards and plantations, was Rosevallion Manor, and beyond it again the fields reaching out to the bluffs, and then the glorious sea. What a picture it was! Could a fairer be found, he wondered, on the face of the earth? He had no time for day-dreams, however. Trains would not wait, and time was passing on while he was standing still, so, with a little sigh, he turned on his heel and strode away in the direction of St. Hildred.

He was quite excited when the train came lumbering into the little station. A journey by rail was a new experience, and though he tried his best to keep cool, his heart would persist in beating at an alarming rate. Once fairly on the way, however, the excitement passed away, and he forgot himself completely in a contemplation of the beautiful and ever-changing scenery through which he passed.

Some of his fellow-passengers, who were journeying to London and elsewhere, were storming and fuming at the slowness of the train, and the "nuisance of stopping at every pettifogging little station." But to Paul the journey was passing all too quickly. The brief spasm of life and activity at the wayside stations was intensely amusing to him. The sudden alertness of the sleepy officials, the comic attempts on the part of the porters to "look alive," the terror of the farmers' wives with big baskets of butter on their arms, lest they should be left behind, the bewildered looks of children who were taking their first journey by rail, the easy-going nonchalance of commercial travellers who spent their life on

"the road," the tearful good-byes of miner emigrants driven from their homes by the stress of bad times and the heavy "royalty" on tin, the laboured rushing to and fro of rubicund and asthmatic farmers, who could not hit upon a convenient corner in which to bestow themselves, the laughter and chatter of the small crowd who came to see "what was to be seen," all made up a picture that lived long in Paul's memory, and took away all the tedium of the journey.

It was considerably past noon when he reached the wayside station, a few miles beyond Plymouth, at which he was to alight. He had a good mile to walk before he reached the gates of Ferndale, but he was rather glad of that. It would give him time to collect his thoughts, and help him to prepare for what he feared might be a painful ordeal. Meeting Sir George in his mother's cottage, and meeting him in his own mansion, were very different things.

At length he reached the massive wrought-iron gates that guarded the entrance to Ferndale Park, and paused for a few moments to admire their delicate and intricate design, and the curious heraldic shields that crowned the posts. A few minutes later he stood within, and saw stretching before him a seemingly endless distance of undulating park, with clumps of trees dotting it in all directions, and small flocks of deer browsing here and there. To the left the carriage-way was bordered with holly and box, and laurel and rhododendrons, the latter all in bloom, while noble chestnut trees formed an avenue almost as far as the eye could reach.

At length, after he had tramped what seemed at least a mile, the mansion came into sight—a plain but substantial building, wrought in freestone, and standing almost four square. The south and west fronts were approached by double terraces, and these again by winding paths, losing themselves behind clumps of evergreens and rhododendrons.

Paul paused and drew a long breath; he had never seen so fair a dwelling before, nor one so beautifully situated, and he began to wonder whether life was more happy, more

blessed, lived in a mansion like that, than lived in a quiet Cornish village in a little cottage home.

He did not know that within this stately mansion he first drew breath ; that he was heir of all this vast domain. How should he know ? The mystery surrounding his childhood had never been whispered in his ear. After an absence of twenty years he had come back to his own home, unrecognised and unknown. Sir George and Lady Penrith little dreamed that their first-born, and only child, whom they had never ceased to mourn as dead, was coming that day to greet them. Had they known, what joy there would have been, and what guests would have been there to give him welcome ! Had they known, he would not have been allowed to walk all the distance from Browbeck Station, or seek admission at a side door. But they did not know. Nevertheless he was received very graciously, and treated with marked respect. Even the stately footman who opened the door was quite won over by Paul's frank, handsome face and genial smile, and instead of showing him into the small "study," where such guests were generally received, he led the way at once to the library, and with a dignified bow intimated that he would inform Sir George at once.

For a few moments Paul felt very uncomfortable. He had never been in so grand a room before, and was almost overawed by its splendour. Above the bookshelves, which were carried to a height of about five feet, costly paintings adorned the walls. Standing upon the shelves were bronzes of exquisite workmanship and of beautiful design. Within the shelves was such an array of books as he had never before seen, and in bindings so handsome that he felt it would be almost a shame to touch them. The windows were draped with heavy curtains inwrought with gold. The furniture was of dark walnut, upholstered with crimson velvet. The overmantel was a cabinet of rare treasures, while gems of sculpture were arranged here and there in the most artistic manner.

Paul took in all this at a glance, and then with a little sigh

walked to the window, treading lightly on the rich Axminster carpet, and stood for some time gazing out over the wide expanse of country.

Close to the house was a broad terrace, with a flight of steps in the centre, and then another terrace, and below that a garden gay with flowers, losing itself in a well-kept lawn. Beyond the lawn a park, bounded in the distance by a river that glinted here and there among the trees. Beyond the river a hill rose up with sudden steepness, wooded to the top.

This also Paul took in at a glance, and sighed again. So much magnificence and beauty seemed to oppress him. And yet he had a feeling that it would be very pleasant to live amid such surroundings when one got used to them. Only familiarity might breed indifference, perhaps contempt. And so, on the whole, it might be as pleasant to live in a cottage as in a palace.

He returned to look at the pictures and bronzes and books after awhile, much wondering when Sir George would put in an appearance. The books interested him most. He had been a great reader for one in his circumstances, and many of the books here, though so richly bound, were old favourites of his. He was greatly amused at the arrangement. Classification there was none, except that which belonged to size and style of binding. History, poetry, theology, fiction, science, were mixed up in the most delightful jumble. "Wesley's Notes" were propped up by Darwin's "Descent of Man." Good old Richard Baxter kept loving company with Ouida, and Milton was next-door neighbour to Miss Braddon. The "Serious Call" was flanked on one side by Mark Twain, and on the other by Douglas Jerrold. "Robertson's Sermons" were safely wedged between Dickens and Thackeray. Kingsley's "Yeast" and Newman's "Apologia" were cheek by jowl; and Freeman and Froude metaphorically were arm-in-arm. Emerson found himself next-door neighbour to Wilkie Collins; and Robert Browning appeared to be in conversation with "Robinson Crusoe." Ruskin must have been pleased for once, for he was in the company of his favourite

novelist, Sir Walter Scott. But Matthew Arnold had been relegated to the society of George Whitefield. "Silas Marner" was leaning lovingly on "Paley's Evidences," while "Butler's Analogy" served as a prop for Lord Byron. Edwin Waugh for once found himself in serious company, being tightly jammed between Herbert Spencer and James Hinton. Carlyle found himself among the poets. Thomas Erskine appeared to be attentively studying "Barnes' Notes," while Renan was completely crushed beneath a pile of "Manton's Sermons."

Paul could not help smiling at the arrangement, and, after making a complete survey of the shelves, he pulled out a volume of Coventry Patmore's, the title of which he had never seen before, and threw himself into an easy chair and began to read.

"'Tis truth (although this truth's a star  
Too deep enskied for all to see),  
As poets of grammar, lovers are  
The fountains of morality.  
Child, would you shun the vulgar doom,  
In love disgust, in death despair?  
Know death must come and love must come,  
And so for each your soul prepare.  
Who pleasure follows pleasure slays;  
God's wrath upon himself he wreaks;  
But all delights rejoice his days  
Who takes with thanks, and never seeks.  
The wrong is made and measured by  
The right's inverted dignity.  
Change love to shame, as love is high  
So low in hell your bed shall be.  
How easy to keep free from sin!  
How hard that freedom to recall!  
For dreadful truth it is that men  
Forget the heaven from which they fall.  
Become whatever good you see,  
Nor sigh if——"

Suddenly the door opened, and Paul, looking up with a start, saw advancing toward him a lady, with hair as white

as wool, and yet without a wrinkle upon her face. This was his mother, Lady Penrith.

If he had only known! If she had only known, how different the meeting would have been! Paul sprang to his feet with a guilty kind of feeling as though he had been taking a liberty in touching one of those daintily bound books. Coventry Patmore was "shut up" with a bang. But the "angel in the house" was before him in very truth. A face so sweet and gentle as that which now beamed upon him he thought he had never seen before. Under the spell of her smile all his fear and awkwardness vanished, and somehow—he was never able to recall how—he found himself sitting again in the easy chair talking to Lady Penrith with as much ease and freedom as he would have felt talking to his foster-mother.

"I wanted to see you very much," she said to him. "My husband has told me all about you, and naturally I felt quite curious to see one who had acted so nobly."

Paul blushed at these words, and shifted uneasily in his chair, but he made no reply; and Lady Penrith, seeing that he did not care to talk about himself, began to question him as to the prospects of the mine.

This was a subject on which Paul could speak with great freedom, and so he readily answered all the questions that were addressed to him, enlarging here and there as occasion demanded.

But his questioner was very skilful, and all unconsciously Paul was led on to talk about himself, about his parents, about his own prospects and intentions, and even to give her an account of his escape in the flooding of the mine.

The moments passed away like a pleasant dream. It seemed quite a joy to talk to this sweet-voiced lady with the young face and white hair. His heart went out to her quite unconsciously. He felt as though he could entrust every secret of his life to her.

They had got on to talk about books, when he was sum-

moned to attend Sir George in his own "den," as he called the pleasant room which was set apart exclusively for his own use.

Sir George was seated on a low easy chair, his right leg swathed in bandages from the knee to the toe, his heel resting on an ottoman.

"Good afternoon, Vivian," he said, extending his hand. "I'm very glad to see you, though I hope you bring no bad news from Wheal Anthony."

"No, I think not," Paul answered. "The truth is, Captain Perkins seemed in some doubt as to what should be done at the forty fathom level, and sent me over to consult with you, as he could not leave himself."

"Well, what's amiss at the forty fathom?" Sir George asked, quickly.

"That will require a little explaining," Paul said, drawing some papers from his pocket. "I hope, sir, you are not too unwell to attend to it."

"Oh, no. My doctor has only just gone. He says I'm nearly right again. Bah! that's an ugly twinge, though. But go on, I'm all attention."

As the conversation for the next half hour was purely technical, and related entirely to the affairs of Wheal Anthony, we shall not record it here. Sufficient to say the result was entirely satisfactory.

Sir George was delighted with the intelligence of the young carpenter. Paul was equally delighted with the reception he had met with.

"Now then, Vivian," said Sir George, as Paul was folding up his papers, "what will you take?"

Paul looked confused. "I do not quite understand," he said.

"I mean what will you take to drink?"

"Oh, nothing, thank you; I'm not at all thirsty."

Sir George laughed. "Do you never drink except when you are thirsty?" he questioned.

"Never," said Paul.

"Well, that's good," he said, with a smile. "But you'll take a glass of sherry?"

"No, thank you, I never drink wine. I am a teetotaler."

"Oh, then, in that case, I'll not press you," said Sir George. "Indeed, I think you are very wise. It would be a good thing if we were all teetotalers. When did you sign the pledge?"

"I've signed no pledge at all," Paul answered, with a blush; "but I do not drink because I think I'm safer without it."

"Quite right," said Sir George, meditatively, and Paul blushed again, for he could not help wondering whether the baronet had ever heard the story that had been current in Penwharf for some time.

"Anyhow, if you are not thirsty, you must be hungry," said Sir George, looking up with a smile. And, touching a bell close to his chair, he gave orders to the old butler to have lunch laid in the dining-room.

A few minutes later Paul helped Sir George into that apartment, and sat down opposite the beautiful lady with the white hair. It seemed almost like a dream to him. A dream partly pleasant, partly painful. He felt uncomfortable with a liveried servant standing at the back of his chair. He was painfully ignorant of the manners of high society, and was constantly afraid lest he should make himself look ridiculous. But by watching his host and hostess he managed to get through the meal without making any monstrous hole in his manners, and with a sigh of relief he rose from the table at length, and bade Sir George and Lady Penrith good-bye.

A handsome dog-cart with coachman in livery was waiting for him on the terrace, and a few moments later he was bowling along the well-kept road through the beautiful park, half wondering whether he was awake or dreaming.



## CHAPTER XX.

### A STRANGE STORY.

“ And yet thou canst not know,  
And yet thou canst not see ;  
Wisdom and sight are slow  
In poor humanity.  
If thou couldst trust, poor soul,  
In Him who rules the whole,  
Thou wouldst find peace and rest ;  
Wisdom and sight are well, but trust is best.”

—ADELAIDE PROCTOR.

“**R**EMARKABLE young man that,” said Sir George after Paul had gone.

“ Very,” said his wife, coming back from the window, where she had been watching Paul drive away. “ He seems quite a gentleman.”

“ I can’t imagine what put it into my head to invite him to lunch with us,” said Sir George. “ I think it was curiosity to see how he would behave.”

“ It was scarcely a kind thing to do,” she answered, with a smile. “ I’m sure he felt dreadfully uncomfortable, though he behaved with great dignity and grace.”

“ Yes, the young fellow has been well brought up, that’s very clear. Do you know, I’ve quite taken to him !”

“ And so have I,” she answered slowly, with a little sigh ; and then there came into her eyes a dreamy far-away look, the meaning of which Sir George knew only too well.

“ Do you know our Philip would have been just his age had he lived ?” she said at length, looking up into his face.

“ I knew you had been thinking of that, my love,” he said tenderly ; “ but it is of no use brooding over the past.”

“ I do not very often,” she said, with a sigh. “ But the coming of this young man has touched my heart strangely.

He so reminds me of what you were when I knew you first."

"That is mere fancy, darling," he said kindly.

"Oh, no, it is not!" she said quickly. "It struck me the moment I saw him. Of course, it is only a mere coincidence, but a coincidence that has stirred many old and painful memories."

"Then the sooner you forget him again the better," he said playfully. "Suppose we have a little music by way of change."

"If you particularly wish it, love," she said, in a questioning tone. And receiving a nod and smile from him by way of reply, she seated herself at the piano, and for the next half-hour played such music as she knew her husband loved.

Then she retired to her own room and gave herself up to reflection; tried, as she had tried a thousand times before, to pierce the thick darkness that surrounded the early months of her motherhood. But the effort was a vain one. Memory lost itself in the gloom, and had no ray of light to shed.

The story, though brief, is a strange one—so strange, indeed, that we hesitate to tell it lest the reader should think we are romancing. But fact is often stranger than fiction. And necessity is laid upon us in order to make our narrative intelligible.

Katharine, or Katie Wilsden, was only a little over nineteen when she left her bright, busy London home to become Lady Penrith, and the mistress of Ferndale. For a year after her marriage her life seemed a happy dream. She loved her husband with growing affection, while he almost worshipped his dainty little wife. Then a baby boy was born, and soon after a dark cloud was seen rising above the horizon of their life. Lady Penrith did not recover her strength quickly, and this bodily weakness was succeeded by mental depression. The doctors at first made light of it, said that it was a frequent occurrence in young wives, especially in the

case of those who came away from city life to live in the quiet country. Said that a month or two would see her all right again. But the weeks slipped away, and she got no better. She recovered her physical strength, it is true, but mentally she became more and more depressed. Sir George took her to London, where she spent a month among her friends; took her to Paris, tried everything, in fact, to lift her out of the settled melancholy into which she had fallen, but nothing seemed to do her permanent good.

Then Sir George was suddenly summoned away to Spain. She seemed better, brighter, more cheerful when he left, and he was hopeful that she would soon be all right again. But scarcely was he out of sight than the depression returned with tenfold intensity, and she became haunted with a fear that something would happen to her baby boy. Her imagination became peopled with desperadoes, who wanted to rob her of her child. They were loitering about the house; they were only waiting a favourable opportunity to steal away her treasure. In vain her nurse, and the housekeeper, and a sister who was staying with her, tried to reason her out of this foolish fancy. She would not let her baby go out of her arms if she could help it.

On the fourth morning after Sir George's departure she and the baby were missing. Through all the day search was made in the grounds and about the neighbourhood. The lake was dragged, the rivers and plantations searched, and inquiries instituted in all directions, but without avail.

Sir George was communicated with, and hurried home with all possible haste. But no clue could be gained in any direction. So the weeks slipped away and lengthened into months, and still the mystery remained unsolved. At first Sir George was hopeful of finding her alive, but that hope gradually gave place to despair.

One morning, however, long after he had begun to mourn her as dead, he received a letter in his wife's handwriting. With blanched lips, he tore open the envelope, read a few

lines, and then hurried out of the house, ordered the coachman to put a horse in the dogcart, and was soon driving in the direction of the station. An hour later he was speeding northward by an express train, and by midnight found himself in the town of Newcastle.

Two days later he returned with his wife. She looked very pale and wasted, and in her glossy, brown hair were already threads of white, but the strange, startled expression had gone out of her eyes, while her conversation showed that she was now perfectly sane, but what had become of the baby she had not the remotest idea.

She had been found wandering in the streets of Newcastle, and had been taken to the county lunatic asylum, where, under kind and skilful treatment, she gradually recovered, though her memory of the past remained week after week a perfect blank. Then suddenly, like a flash, everything came back to her, save the events of those few months since she left her home.

Sir George did not seem to mind the loss of the baby, so great was his joy in having his wife restored to him. Moreover he thought he would have no difficulty now in tracing his wife's movements since she left her home, and so ascertaining the fate of the child. With this end in view he commenced a search in Newcastle, and carried it all through the counties of Northumberland, Durham, and a large portion of Yorkshire, until, utterly baffled, he abandoned it in despair.

Then for two years he travelled with his wife, making a voyage round the world, and, on his return to Ferndale, the doctors pronounced her perfectly cured; but her brown tresses all the while became more and more plentifully sprinkled with grey, till, by the time she was thirty, her hair was perfectly white.

That the loss of her child should be a constant grief to her can easily be imagined, and every day she tried to pierce the darkness of those months of wandering, but tried in

vain. Her memory of that period was a perfect blank. But the facts her memory failed to recall we will supply.

Dressed in an old stuff gown, a battered bonnet, and faded cloak, she made her way to Plymouth, haunted by the fear that some wicked people were intent on robbing her of her child. From thence she made her way into Cornwall, carrying her child on one arm and a small basket with tapes and pins on the other. It took her nearly a week to reach Port Stormel, and on passing John Vivian's lonely cottage in the silence of the summer night she laid her baby down to rest in the porch. Why she should do so, we cannot explain. What new phase of her delusion made her leave him there we cannot divine; we simply record the fact. From John Vivian's cottage it was not far to the little beach at Port Stormel. Perhaps the music of the sea enticed her, perhaps its mystery suited her mood, but, getting into Frankey Hooper's boat, she hoisted the little sail, and the land breeze sped her away. During the afternoon of the next day she fell in with the brig *Fury*, of Newcastle, and was taken on board. The captain and his wife, seeing her condition, did everything they could for her comfort. She was very quiet during the voyage, scarcely ever speaking a word, and affording no clue that would lead to her identity.

On arriving at Newcastle Captain Blower intended handing her over to the authorities to be taken care of. But she foiled him in this attempt. At the earliest possible moment she stepped ashore almost unobserved, and was soon lost in the crowd. But before the day closed she found a safe refuge, where she remained till her husband came to claim her.

Had John Vivian and his wife been living anywhere else than in the lonely cottage near Port Stormel, the chances are he would have fallen in with some newspaper account of the disappearance of Lady Penrith and her child, and would have communicated with Sir George on his finding a baby on his doorstep. But John Vivian did not see a newspaper once in

three months. He had no near neighbours at the time, and what neighbours he had were as ignorant of what was transpiring in the world around them as he was.

Long before he went to live at Penwharf, Lady Penrith had been restored again to her husband, and Sir George had informed Captain Perkins that his child was dead, and there the matter ended. Sir George was known by sight to most people at Penwharf; but he held no intercourse with anyone save the captain of Wheal Anthony, and that was of a purely business character. Of himself he rarely ever spoke, so that no one had but the most shadowy conception of the trouble that had befallen him during the early years of his married life.

Some years after John Vivian had gone to California, one of Mary Vivian's neighbours told her a garbled story respecting the disappearance of the wife and child of the chairman of Wheal Anthony years and years before. But it was not a subject that Mary was at all interested in, and it never occurred to her that Paul could be connected with the matter in any way. So the years sped on, as we have seen, and Paul had grown into a man. No one had ever told him that there was a secret surrounding his birth. He called Mary Vivian mother, and loved her as such, while for David he had the truest affection, despite his weakness and treachery.

The secret of his birth had been hidden so long that Mary Vivian never thought of revealing it now. It could do no good, she believed. It might do harm. She loved him very sincerely after her own fashion, was proud of him in some respects, though, of course, in her eyes he was not to be compared with her own well-beloved and badly-spoiled David.

It is true that since his display of heroism in the flooding of Wheal Anthony, he had gone up several degrees in her estimation, as he had in the estimation of everyone at Penwharf. To the story of his visit to Sir George at Ferndale she listened with great interest. To lunch with a live

baronet and his lady was a great thing for one bearing her name. It reflected credit on her for the manner in which she had trained him, though she could not help wishing all the while that it had been David instead of Paul.

Paul gave enthusiastic descriptions of the manner in which he had been received, of the beauty of the place, the wide extent of the park, the grandeur of the house, the magnificence of the furniture and fittings, and the wealth of books in the library.

"Oh, mother," he said, "I should so like you to have seen it all. It was like a dream of fairyland. I don't suppose I shall ever see anything like it again. But I am glad to have had just one glimpse of high life. But I don't hanker after it. I could be as happy here as there, though I should like the books."

Mary gave a little sigh, then said, "I am glad you are content, my boy."

That Paul would ever see the like again there seemed no probability whatever. He would be twenty-one now in a few weeks, and he was quite bent on carrying out the resolution that he had made three years before. He shrank from going back again to work in Wheal Anthony. He had suffered so much there, that it would be painful to go underground again.

Captain Perkins had promised him his full wages to the end of the month, by which time he said he hoped he would have recovered his usual tone.

Paul felt that he should never go back to Wheal Anthony again, but he said nothing then. He was not one to talk much about himself or his intentions. Nevertheless, when pay day came, instead of returning at once to Penwharf, he went off to St. Hildred and purchased a carpet bag and a few other things he would need for his long voyage.

His mother said nothing when he returned late in the evening, but at sight of the carpet bag David turned white to the very lips.

## CHAPTER XXI.

### THE TABLES TURNED.

“And such is man ! A soil which breeds,  
Or sweetest flowers, or vilest weeds ;  
Flowers lovely as the morning light,  
Weeds deadly as the aconite,  
Just as his heart is trained to bear  
The poisonous weed or flow’ret fair.”—JOHN BOWRING.

FOR several days David—metaphorically—had sat on a rail, not knowing on which side to drop. Sometimes he was half disposed to go to Paul and make a clean breast of it ; confess that he had taken the money, and ask his forgiveness. At other times he was resolved to brazen it out, and defy his brother to the last. But the longer he hesitated the weaker his good resolutions became. By nature weak and cowardly, he was made ten times more so by training, and yet when driven like a rat into a corner he could fight like a rat and use tooth and claw to some purpose. As the days passed away, his good impulses died with them. The flickering flame of his nobler nature flickered more and more feebly, and at last went out altogether. The evil triumphed as it generally does, if not boldly resisted at the beginning.

“Nobody had seen him take the money. Paul could not possibly prove that he had taken it. If Paul asserted he had taken it, and he denied it, his mother would take his word sooner than Paul’s.” Such was the style of his reasoning.

On the morning following that on which he had purchased his carpet bag, Paul went to his private box—into which he had been dropping his savings through a slit in the cover for more than two years—and opened it. He calculated that he had saved at least twenty pounds, and was all eagerness to count it. No sooner had he lifted the cover, however,



than he seemed paralysed. For several seconds he did not move a muscle, but his face became as white as the wall, while his eyes stared into the almost empty box as though they would start out of their sockets.

Then he let the lid fall with a bang, and with a deep groan he sank down on the floor. He comprehended all the truth in a moment. There was no mystery about it. Two people could get to his keys and open the box—his mother and David. He knew his mother had not done this; David, then, was the thief. From drunkenness, hypocrisy, and falsehood it was an easy step to dishonesty. It was the natural sequel to his previous conduct, only his descent was more rapid than might have been expected.

For several minutes Paul's heart was the arena of very conflicting emotions; grief, indignation, pity, disappointment, each had an innings and each struggled for supremacy, and in the end grief for David overcame even his own disappointment.

He heard David moving about in the room below getting ready for Sunday-school. He must have it out with him before he went. So getting up from the floor, he went to the door and called, without any trace of anger in his voice, "David, could you come here just for a minute?"

"Is it anything special?" David answered back. "I'm just off to school."

"There's plenty of time," Paul answered, looking at his watch, "and I need not detain you long."

"All right," David answered, bounding up the stairs, never dreaming from the tone of Paul's voice that he had discovered the theft. A moment later he stood in the doorway holding the door in his hand.

"Please come in and shut the door," said Paul, in a low tone, "I don't want mother to hear."

"There should be nothing in our conversation or conduct we should be anxious to hide from mother," David said, quite loudly, for he saw from Paul's white face and lips that

something unusual had occurred, and guessing the truth, was resolved to play a bold game. Mary hearing David's words as she was passing the foot of the stairs paused and listened.

"As you will," Paul answered, in the same low tone. "I only wanted to ask you one or two questions. In the first place, I ask you why you have opened my box and stolen my savings, and in the second place, I want to know what you have done with the money?" And he kept his eye steadily fixed on his brother while he spoke. But David did not quail.

For a moment there was silence in the room. Then David, drawing himself up to his full height, said, in well-feigned tones of indignation, "I hope that my ears have deceived me. Am I to understand that you seriously charge me with opening your box and stealing your money?"

"That is what I do charge you with," said Paul, slowly, "and what I want to know is why you have done so, and what you have done with it?"

"You are able, of course, to prove that I have done this?" said David, mockingly.

"Only you and mother could get to my box," said Paul, "and I know mother would not do such a dastardly deed."

"Oh, yes, there is a third person who could get to your box," said David, in contemptuous tones.

"A third person?" said Paul, in surprise.

"Yes, a third person, by name Paul Vivian. And now, most noble brother of mine, let me have my say. But first I will ask mother to come and listen, and judge between us."

And stepping outside the door, he called:—"Mother, come here quickly." A moment later she stood between the two.

David gave Paul no chance of speaking. He was resolved to have the first innings, and assuming a self-righteous air, he pointed his finger at Paul, who stood white and trembling, and exclaimed with a wave of his hand, "This hero so called of Wheal Anthony has crowned his heroism this morning

by charging me, his own brother, with dishonesty. For years he has gone on in his sly but none the less riotous ways, spending all he has earned, and now, in order to raise the wind, he professes to have saved a lot of money, and charges me with stealing it, in the hope, no doubt, that I, or you, mother, in order to shield my fair name and avoid scandal, will give him what he wants. I have heard of levying black-mail before now, but this is the most base and wicked attempt I ever heard of. What do you think of such conduct, mother?"

"I think it is shameful," she said, darting an indignant glance at Paul. "I wonder you could for shame, Paul, make such a charge."

But for the moment he was too astonished to speak. The tables had been turned upon him in a way he had never anticipated. He looked like a real culprit as he stood there white and trembling. He saw that judgment had gone against him. His word would have no weight with his mother against David's.

"You do not speak," she said, looking hard at him.

"He has nothing to say now he has been exposed," David said, mockingly.

Then Paul lifted up his head, and with a calm light burning in his eyes, he said: "God will judge between us some day. For nearly three years I have worked early and late to save. My savings I have dropped into this box. I open the box this morning and find I have been robbed. My disappointment is great. The hope of years has been broken. But my grief for one whom I have loved, and still love, is greater than either my disappointment or my despair."

"He talks like a churchman," said David, with a sneer.

"I think you had better get off to school and leave him to himself," answered his mother.

"Yes, you are right," he said; and, with a look of defiance at Paul, he turned and marched down the stairs, closely followed by his mother.

Half an hour later Paul stole quietly down the stairs and out of the house. Naturally he was in a very sober mood. He had received a shock that morning from which he felt he would not soon recover. He felt that his mother, who had been very tender toward him since his escape from Wheal Anthony, had become more estranged from him than ever. How she was so blind he could not imagine. The secret of her distrust toward him, and of her implicit confidence in David, was beyond his comprehension. If David were to swear that black was white she would almost believe him, while he had always been an object of distrust ever since he could remember. Under such circumstances he felt he had no chance; that home could never be what it ought to be; that life would always be a burden and a battle.

Once in the open air, however, his spirits unconsciously revived. The weather was just splendid. The glory of June lay on all the hills and fields, on all the rills and rivers. The gardens were abloom with flowers; the plantations vocal with the song of birds. And when he reached the hilltop overlooking Bracken Hollow, and saw shining before him the trackless sea, he felt as though he could sing for very gladness. In spite of disappointments, and blighted hopes, and human treachery, life was very sweet, and very precious. The great free ocean always made him forget his cares, and for the moment lifted him out of himself.

He found Toby sitting in the shadow of an apple tree, with a large Bible open on his knee. But the old man rose instantly on seeing Paul at the garden gate, and, laying the Bible tenderly on his chair, came to meet him.

"Why, Paul," he said, shutting his right eye and giving the usual hitch to his trousers, "this is an unexpected pleasure, but I be most heartily pleased to see thee, lad. I was thinkin' on'y this mornin' that our opporchunities of meetin' were getting fewer an' fewer."

"I don't know," said Paul, with the brightness vanishing from his face. "I don't think I shall be able to go abroad, after all."

"Not go?" said Toby in surprise, and with something like a sigh of relief.

"The truth is," said Paul, after a pause, "I have had a misfortune."

"A what?"

"A misfortune. I have lost all my savings."

"Has the Devon an' Cornwall Bank broke?"

"I didn't put it into a bank," said Paul. "I put it into a box."

"An' somebody's walked it, eh?"

"It's gone, anyhow."

"But you know who's took it."

"I know nothing for certain, so I must make the best of it."

"Humph!" said Toby at length. Then rolling up a quid of tobacco he put it into his mouth, closed his right eye, and repeated the word "Humph!"

"It seems as if the Fates have decreed that I shouldn't go," Paul said, a little bit sadly.

Then Toby opened his eye again, took the quid out of his mouth, gave his trousers a hitch, and laid his fat hand on Paul's shoulder.

"Look here, Paul," he said, "is this a very big disappointment? Is it almost harder than you can bear?"

"It is, Mr. Tobias," Paul answered. "I don't know how I shall bear it. It will be worse than martyrdom to go back and work at Wheal Anthony again."

"That'll do," said Toby. "I shall be sorry to lose 'e, boy, but don't trouble 'bout the money; I'll lend you all you want. Ef you can pay me back in time do so; ef you can't it'll be all right."

Before the old man had done speaking a lump had risen in Paul's throat, which prevented his replying, but he grasped Toby's hand with a vigour that left no doubt of his sincerity, then turned away his head to hide his emotion.

Toby took two or three turns round the garden and then





He found Toby sitting outside his cuddy.—p. 176

Paul joined him under the apple-tree, and for an hour they talked together very seriously, the older man giving the younger some very seasonable and useful advice.

On the following morning Paul went to St. Hildred again and completed the purchase of his outfit. Both David and his mother wondered where he got the money from, but neither of them made any remark. No word passed between any of them except what was absolutely necessary. Never before had the relationship been so strained. Paul was no more anxious to go than David was to get him out of the house. Even his foster-mother felt decidedly uncomfortable while he was about.

By Thursday evening all his arrangements had been completed, and after tea he started for a ramble as far as Penstruggle Head to have a last chat with Toby. Now that the time of his departure was so near he felt a little sad. He could not help wondering whether he would ever see the old home again, or look upon the faces of his friends. Though he had not been altogether happy for a long time past, and had been eager to get away that he might begin life again amid new surroundings, yet somehow he felt that no new surroundings could be more beautiful than the old. Right and left as he made his way out on the headland stretched the shining sea, rippling and flashing in the golden light of the sinking sun. It made him think of the heavenly country described in the Apocalypse, with its "sea of glass mingled with fire."

He found Toby sitting outside his cuddy smoking a long clay pipe, and apparently wrapped in meditation. At the sound of his footsteps the old man gave a start, and was on his feet in a moment.

"I'm fine an' glad to see 'e," he said, grasping Paul's hand. "An' it's good of you to come. I didn't expect it, for I know'd you must be busy."

"I've everything arranged for starting," Paul answered; "and so I came out for a last good-bye."



"It's very good of you," Toby said, sitting down again and brushing his hand across his eyes; and then silence fell between them.

Paul threw himself on the spongy turf as he had done three years before, and allowed his eyes to go wandering out over the pathless sea. But Toby had no wonderful story to tell to-night. He sat and smoked in silence while the soft summer twilight slowly deepened. The seagulls wheeled and croaked above their heads as they had done before, and the sea sobbed and sang at their feet. And still the shadows deepened, and the land breeze died away into the faintest whisper. But no word was spoken by either of them. Paul had come out for a last chat with Toby. Yet somehow, now that the old man was within reach of his voice, he had nothing to say. And so the minutes passed on, till at length the faint pale stars came out one by one, and the far-off horizon began to look weird and solemn, and the song of the sea changed into a sob.

Paul rose at length and shook himself. Toby rose at the same time and laid down his pipe, and in silence they grasped each other's hand.

"God bless you, my boy," Toby said at length, with quavering voice.

"God bless you, my friend," Paul answered. And so they parted.

On the following morning he kissed his foster-mother and David good-bye, and went forth from the old home, his eyes blinded with tears. Most of the villagers who were at liberty turned out to see him off and to wish him God-speed. He never knew how much he loved them all till then. Nor they how much they loved and admired him. He was thankful at length when he found himself in the train speeding away north.

At Plymouth there were ten minutes to wait.

"You can leave your traps in the carriage," the porter said. "You'll find 'em all safe. Train starts from next platform."

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Paul was glad to stretch his legs. Moreover, he wanted to buy a newspaper and one or two cheap books. So he got out and made his way round to the end of the station ; but before he reached the bookstall he stopped suddenly, while all the colour went out of his face.

Not five yards from where he stood was Abigail, leisurely scanning the books upon the stall. She had come to the station, perhaps, to meet some friend ; perhaps to purchase a volume ; perhaps to see some companion off by a previous train.

It mattered not why she had come. Sufficient for him she was there. For a moment he hesitated, not knowing what to do. This was his last opportunity. If he did not speak to her now in all probability he would never have another chance on earth. A moment only and his mind was made up. Three or four hasty steps and he stood by her side, and she looking up at the same moment their eyes met.

## CHAPTER XXII.

### A NEW EXPERIENCE.

"Praise from thy lips—what is it worth to me?  
They know, who know the worth of fame—a star  
Pluck't from high heaven to set upon the brow.  
Speak it again, for it is sweet to hear  
Praise from the voice we love ; and thine is soft,  
And hath a touch of tenderness, as 'twere  
A gentle flower grown musical."—DEROZIER.

THE moment was an anxious one for Paul. Would Abigail speak, or would she turn from him without a word? The question was soon answered. The momentary look of astonishment gave place to one of her frank, winsome smiles, and placing her gloved hand in his, she exclaimed, "Oh, Paul!" For the moment she seemed quite unable to say more. But it was quite enough.

"I was half afraid you would not speak," he said. "But it was my last chance, and so I ran the risk. I am so thankful you have spoken. I shall carry away with me a much lighter heart."

"Are you going away?" she asked, an eager, anxious look coming into her eyes.

"I am on my way to Liverpool," he answered. "The train goes out again in five minutes."

"Oh, Paul, let me tell you then while I have the chance. Perhaps we shall never meet again, and I would not like you to think ill of me when you are far away. I would not have passed you without speaking only pa made me promise. He would not even let me explain to you. It has been a harder burden for me to bear than for you. For I thought you would think me false and proud, and, oh, Paul——"

"I never thought you false," he said. "But I am not of

your class, and my reputation was not of the best—is not to-day in Penwharf, I fear. Your father would naturally think I was no longer a fit companion for you.”

“That was just what father did think,” she answered, with downcast eyes. “But, oh, Paul, believe me, I never did believe the cruel and unkind things that were said about you.”

“Never?” he questioned.

“Never!” was the quick reply. “Have I not known you all my life? Oh, Paul, could you doubt?”

“God bless you for those words,” he said, with a swift rush of tears to his eyes.

“This way for the Exeter and Bristol train. Any more going?” bawled out a porter along the platform, and Paul started at the words and turned pale.

“Farewell, Abie,” he said, “we shall meet in heaven.”

“Will you never come back again?” she asked, a soft blush tinging her cheeks.

“I don’t know,” he said, walking toward the train with bent head. “If I could hope—but no, it is foolish to hope for the impossible. I think I shall never come back again.”

She did not reply. And he got into the carriage, closed the door, and leaned out of the window. How beautiful she looked, standing there in the gloomy station! The promise of her childhood and girlhood had been more than realized. Crowds of people were rushing to and fro, but to Paul at least there was no face that could bear a moment’s comparison with that of Abigail. In his eyes she seemed more beautiful than ever, and the love of his life surged up into his heart like a torrent, and hushed all speech into silence. Doors were banging all along the train; porters rushing hither and thither; belated travellers hurrying up at the last minute. The precious moments were flying all too swiftly. The last opportunity for speech was passing away, and yet he stood before her as one dumb, feasting his eyes upon her beauty, and longing with an unutterable longing to tell her of his

love, and ask her for one word of hope ; but the word *was* never spoken.

The guard's shrill whistle sounded, the engine shrieked.

"Farewell, Abie," and he reached out his hand to her.  
"God bless you !"

She grasped his hand. The train began to move.

"Will you think of me sometimes ?"

"I shall never forget you, Paul."

He saw the tears come into her eyes. O for another moment to ask one more question ! Too late ; their hands unclasped. The distance between them quickly widened. He saw her for a moment longer, caught the flutter of her white pocket-handkerchief. Then the train whirled round a corner, and he saw her no more.

With a sigh he sat back in his corner, pulled his travelling cap over his eyes, and gave himself up to reflection. Hour after hour the train sped on, but he took no heed of the journey. He could think only of Abigail, of her exceeding beauty, and of the sweet farewell she had spoken. His fellow-travellers complained of the heat ; of the tedium of the journey, but he forgot it all in thinking of his love.

It was late in the evening when he arrived in Liverpool, and quite dark. He had arranged to stay at the house of an emigration agent off Old Hall Street. A number of Cornish miners who had come by the same train had made similar arrangements. Perhaps they could not have done better. A "lorry" was waiting to take their luggage, and when all their boxes and carpet bags had been bundled in, they clambered on the top, and were soon rattling away through the noisy streets to their place of destination.

The next morning he was stirring early, for the *City of Baltimore* was to sail at noon, and the steerage passengers had to be on board two or three hours before that. So after breakfast he purchased a few requisites, consisting of a straw mattress, a tin soup-plate, cup, spoon, and knife and fork. This done, he waited impatiently for the "lorry" to

come round, for he was curious to see what the vessel was like, and what kind of accommodation he would get for the next ten days or fortnight.

He had not long to wait. A second time the boxes and bags were tumbled into the "lorry." A second time he scrambled on to the top, and again they rattled away through the noisy, crowded streets. It was but a narrow glimpse he got of Liverpool, and that not of its most inviting part. He saw more rags and dirt during that short morning, than he had seen during all his life before. He was glad to exchange the murky atmosphere of the gloomy streets for the strong salt breeze that blew up the river, and when once on the tender he gave himself up to something like enjoyment of the scene. And what a scene it was! How full of life and movement and colour! After the quiet, restful life of Penwharf it seemed positively bewildering. Here were great lumbering, double-decked vessels, each capable of carrying a thousand people, called "ferry-boats." His notion of a ferry-boat was rudely dispelled. Indeed, his notions of many things had been suddenly knocked on the head. What would the Portstress fishermen say if they could see a scene like this! The great river crowded with shipping, tugs and ferry-boats rushing hither and thither; people of all nations crowding the landing-stage, jostling, pushing, shouting, swearing, as though this were the last opportunity they would ever have on earth of exercising themselves.

For a long time he seemed unable to comprehend the scene. The babel of noises distracted him. The constantly changing panorama gave to him a feeling of bewilderment. .

"Where on earth be all these people going to?" someone asked close to his elbow.

"I expect they be all going to America," was the reply.

"Then," said the first speaker, "where on airth be we going to find room to eat or sleep in? Big as the ship is, an' she is a mighty big un, she'll never hold 'em all, for see, they're crowding on still."

"Why, Joe," said his companion, with a laugh, "dost think this be the ship we are a-goin' to cross the hocean in?"

"I suppose so," was the reply.

"Then thee'd better how'd thy noise, or they'll lock thee up for a lunatic."

"Why?"

"Why? 'Cause this is only a tender. Thee wait a bit and keep thy mouth shut."

After awhile the tender began to move, and not long after they were rounding the stern of the *City of Baltimore*, which lay like a small island in mid-stream. Once on board the big ship and the crush was at an end. Paul was amazed at the size of the vessel. He had many times boarded the small schooners which came into Portstress, and had thought them of enormous size; but in comparison with this floating city they were but as toys. He had no time, however, for reflection. With the rest of his fellow-passengers he was anxious to secure as comfortable a berth as possible, and so he hurried away below on a voyage of exploration. For the first few minutes there was a great scramble and not a little confusion. "First come first served," appeared to be the order of the day. The "upper" berths were in greatest demand, but as far as Paul could see there was not a pin to choose between them. Anything more uninviting than those bare wooden bunks he had never seen nor imagined. In the end, most of the upper berths were secured by the more pertinacious and pugnacious portion of the company. And Paul found himself in one of the lower bunks, sandwiched between two pleasant-looking and apparently respectable young men.

"Company is more than position," was his reflection, as he spread out his straw mattress on the bare boards, and cast a glance every now and then at his companions, who were engaged in the same occupation.

"A rum business this, mate," said his left-hand neighbour at length, with a little laugh.

"Very," said Paul, "but I expect we shall get used to it after a bit."

"I've been in the habit of getting into bed at the side," was the response. "This crawling in head foremost over the foot-board is a caution."

"It's like hanging," said the third of the trio, who had not before spoken; "nothing when you get used to it."

"Have you been hanged often?" Paul asked, with a laugh.

"No," he said; "but I've been drowned several times."

"Then, by Jove, you're just the fellow to go to sea!" said speaker number one, with a merry laugh. "What's your name?"

"Harry Mack," was the reply. "What's yours?"

"George Ripley."

"And your comrade's?"

"Paul Vivian," was the reply.

"All right. Now we know each other. Suppose we go on deck; we shall meet again at bed time, at any rate."

For the next hour Paul stood leaning over the bulwarks watching the scene on the river and on the shore, then he took a stroll round the huge vessel, and, on passing near the purser's cabin, he heard a loud—and as it seemed to him—angry voice, exclaiming,

"I say no. It can't be done, and if you don't clear off the ship by the next tender, I'll hand you over to the police."

"Oh! but, sir, I'll work—do anything to pay up what I'm short," came the answer, in a pleading voice.

"Oh! that's all rubbish," was the reply. "We might fill the ship with passengers at that rate."

"But I do so want to go. I've been saving up for years," was the pleading answer.

"Very likely. But you haven't saved enough, so that ends the matter."

"Oh! but please——"

"I say once for all, no! It can't be done, so clear off, and don't attempt to stow yourself, or it will be worse for you."



The next moment a tall, thin figure staggered out of the door and came face to face with Paul.

"Hullo, my lad," said Paul, kindly, "what is the matter?"

"I thought he might let me go, but it's no go," was the reply.

"Where do you want to go?" Paul asked.

"To the tother side," was the answer. "Mother's dead and father's wed again, an' home is hell, an' wus."

"Is your home in Liverpool?"

"Ay."

"What age are you?" was Paul's next question.

"Seventeen."

"Seventeen? Nonsense! you mean fifteen?"

"I've 'ad no chance to grow," was the grim reply. "I've been nearly clemmed all the days of my life."

"What's clemmed?"

The lad laughed. "Why clemmed is clemmed, I s'pect."

"Do you mean neglected?"

"I mean, I ain't 'ad enough to ait."

"Oh, I see! And what's your name?"

"Chris Macpherson."

"And you want to go to New York?"

"Ay, but it ain't no go. I'm thirty bob short."

Paul looked at the lean figure clad in threadbare clothes, at the thin, pale face and large, clear, honest eyes, and heaved a sigh.

"Why do you want to go to America?" he asked at length.

"'Cause there ain't no chance for a poor fellow 'ere," was the quick reply. "If I gets a good sitiuation I always loses it again through father. He steals my wages an' pawns my clothes. Or he goes to the governor an' blows up, an' I gets the sack. Oh, you don't know what he is like!"

"And you think you could do better in America?" Paul asked.

"I couldn't do no worse," was the answer; "but there!

it ain't no use talking 'bout it;" and the lad's eyes filled. "It's no go. So I'll 'ave to struggle on, but I wish I were dead."

Paul turned away his head to hide the moisture that came into his own eyes. He wished he could help this poor waif. He felt certain he was honest and truthful. But, alas! how could he help him? He was so poor that he had to borrow money to pay his own passage. Thirty shillings would make a large hole in his small means, and without it he might be left stranded on the way.

"There comes the tender again wi' the quality," said Chris, "so I'll 'ave to be makin' myself scarce."

Paul did not reply, but he walked round to the other side of the ship and began to count his money.

"I think I can manage it," he said to himself at length. "If I can't, I'll sell my watch; but for a friend I shouldn't have been here, and now I'll be a friend to the lad."

Chris was leaning on the rail, with the tears streaming down his face, when Paul came back to him.

"Look here, Chris," he said, "I know what it is to be disappointed, and I know what it is to have a friend. So I will let you have thirty shillings if you can manage to get across with that."

"Oh, glory! then I can do it," he said, with his face brightening. "But please come with me, or else the purser'll think I've stole it."

In a few minutes the matter was settled, and Chris and his new friend were walking away together to the regions below. The lad looked an inch taller, and fifty per cent. handsomer than he did five minutes before. There was a vacant bunk just opposite the one occupied by Paul.

"You'd better appropriate this one," said Paul. "But how will you manage without a mattress?" •

"Oh, that won't trouble me," said Chris, with a grin. "I ain't used to no mattresses, or any such luxuries; I'll be as snug as Peter in the hinside of the whale here."

Paul laughed, and then they went on deck together to watch the arrival of the saloon passengers.

"Mighty big swells, ain't they?" said Chris, who had kept close to his new friend.

"Do you think so?" said Paul, with a smile. "

"Ay, but I guess there ain't one on 'em as feels as 'appy as I do."

"Do you feel happy, Chris?"

"Ay, I am fair ready to fly."

"You'll feel ready to be buried before you're a day older," George Ripley remarked, who had been standing by unobserved.

"When I do I'll ax you to perform the sarvice," said Chris, with a good-humoured laugh.

An hour later the good ship was ploughing her way down the river in the teeth of a stiffening breeze.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

### "ALIVE ON THE OCEAN WAVE."

"O'er the glad waves like a child of the sun,  
See, the tall vessel goes gallantly on ;  
Full to the breeze she unbosoms her sail,  
And her pennon streams onward, like hope, in the gale.  
The winds come around her, and murmur a song,  
And the surges rejoice as they bear her along."—T. K. HARVEY.

TWO days later, when the good ship was rolling and pitching in a dreary desert of foam, and the passengers—saloon and steerage alike—were prostrate in helpless and indescribable misery, it was a relief to Paul Vivian, at least, to hear a sweet treble voice near the foot of his bunk warbling forth in tuneful strains the notes of a familiar tune, though accompanied by words he had not heard before.

"Good lord, if it ain't that boy, Chris," moaned Harry Mack. "What a digestion he must have ! I wish——" but the sentence ended in a suggestive groan.

"Don't groan so, Mack," called Ripley from the other side of Paul, with grim humour, "this, too, is, like hanging, nothing when you get used to it."

"Hush, mates," said Paul ; "I want to hear what the boy is singing."

"The storm may roar without me,  
My heart may low be laid,  
But God is round about me,  
And can I be dismayed ?"

Most of the passengers in that division of the ship kept silence while the boy sang on. There seemed something very comforting and inspiring in the words. Through all the dreary night, while the vessel had reared and plunged, and the wild wind whistled through the rigging, and bent the tall masts, groans and curses had freely mingled ; and God's name

had been taken in vain a thousand times. Now that name rang out like a note of triumph, and touched many a heart with a sense of awe, and with a feeling of trust and confidence. To Paul the words came like a benediction. Never since that terrible experience in Wheal Anthony had he been without a sense of God's protecting care. He had felt day by day as though there was over him a special Providence. And so the words Chris sang fitted in with his deeper feeling. Out here on the desert sea, as well as down in the darkness of the mine, it was still true.

"But God is round about me,  
And can I be dismayed?"

Chris knew nothing of the thoughts that were passing through Paul's mind. He had heard a murmur of conversation, but he did not heed. He still sang on:—

"Green pastures are before me,  
Which yet I have not seen;  
Bright skies will soon be o'er me,  
Where the dark clouds have been.  
My hope I cannot measure;  
My path to life is free;  
My Saviour is my treasure,  
And He will walk with me."

"Oh, good Heavens!" moaned Harry Mack. "If once I set my eyes on 'green pastures' again I'll cut my hand off if ever——"

"Don't make any rash promises, Mack," called Ripley, "you'll soon be used to it now."

"It's this bottom-falling-out business that does for me," Harry moaned. "I can do with it while the blamed ship keeps going up and up, but that sudden drop, that unexpected sinking away like—I tell you it upsets my equilibrium completely. There she goes again. Ugh!——"

"You might be going to die, you groan so," said Paul, with a poor attempt at a laugh.

"I was afraid I was at the beginning," groaned Harry; "but now I'm afraid I'm not."

Then someone called from the bunks above them, "Give us another stave, boy. It'll help to drown the screeching of the women on the other side, if nothing else."

But Chris made no response; for the moment his thoughts were elsewhere. The dream of his life was coming true. He was crossing the great ocean to begin life afresh on the other side of the world, unfettered by the hindrances and difficulties which had beset him in the old home. How often he had strayed down to the landing-stage, or had sat on the river wall, and watched the great "Liners" steam grandly out to sea, and had longed for the time to come when he might stand on the deck of one of these noble vessels, and turn his face toward that new world of his hopes and dreams! And now, thanks to his unknown friend, his brightest hopes were being realised. He thought nothing of the storm which was raging, and had no fear of the great waves which ever and anon swept the decks. Those vessels he believed could live through any storm, and as the rolling and pitching produced in him no unpleasant sensations, he was as happy as a bird.

"Is that you, Chris?" Paul called out at length.

"Ay," was the ready answer. "Ain't it time you were a-getting up?"

"I wish I could get up," sighed Paul; "but I daren't lift my head."

"How's that?" Chris asked.

"Oh, lor, don't ask!" moaned Mack. "Couldn't you ask the captain to bore a hole, and send the blamed ship to the bottom?"

"You're a long time getting used to it, Harry," said Ripley.

"Have you got used to it?" Harry asked in a savage tone.

"Well, I do believe I'm improving," Ripley answered; "at least I don't want to die as badly as I did an hour ago. How are you feeling, Vivian?"

"Just at this moment my feelings are indescribable," Paul answered, with a long-drawn sigh.

"Come, boy, give us another stave," called the same voice from above.

"Ay, Chris, sing to us again," called Paul, as soon as he was able to speak. And then all conversation was hushed, and even the groaning ceased while the lad sang another of what he called his "meetin' hymns." Clear and sweet rang out the words :—

"Low is my heart, and high the tide  
Of troubles which doth round it rise;  
And drear the prospect far and wide :"

("Lor, that's true," interjected Harry Mack.)

"Yet from it I can lift my eyes,  
And resting them on Thee can prove  
The blessed comfort of Thy love.

"Thou art the Rock on which I stand,  
When round me rages life's rough sea,  
Mine anchor and my sheltering strand,  
The haven where my soul would be;  
Daily I feel and nightly prove  
The blessed comfort of Thy love."

There was silence in the place for several seconds after Chris had done singing. The sentiment was so new to some, so true to others, so sweet and comforting to all, that its effect was little less than wonderful. Vicious men ceased to blaspheme and to take God's name in vain, while praying men felt their faith raised to a higher plane. Paul experienced a new thrill of pleasure in the recollection of his kindly deed, and all anxiety as to whether he had done wisely or not vanished from his mind.

When Chris had done singing he staggered along to the companion-way, and soon found himself on deck. But the scene that greeted his eyes almost appalled him. The wide expanse of blue had disappeared, while a foamy hill of water surrounded the ship on every side, which constantly broke over her bows and swept the deck from stem to stern. Out of this hollow the vessel never seemed to rise. Pitch and

toss as she might, the hill of foam was always surrounding her. Distance was blotted out completely.

"Well, this are a caution!" said Chris to himself, while he clung to a rail for dear life. "Old hocean is having a big wash on to-day, and no mistake, and a mighty sight of suds she is making over it."

There were very few passengers about, and the stewards who were rushing hither and thither seemed in anything but a good humour. The galley fires had been put out more than once; breakfast was indefinitely delayed, and the few passengers who were proof against *mal de mer* were impatiently clamouring for attention.

Chris was not long in making the acquaintance of what may be termed the "scullery officials," and after awhile secured a jug of tea and some "hard tack," and made his way back to his late quarters.

"Chris, thou art an angel," exclaimed Harry Mack, when he discovered the result of the lad's errand. "My mouth is as dry as a camel's hoof. If only this blamed old tub would keep quiet for a minute I would give half my fortune."

"You'll soon be all right," said Chris. "They say upstairs as the wind's abatin', but the sea's like a barm tub."

"Is that so?" said Paul.

"Ay! An' if I was you I'd get up and 'ave a squint at it. The fresh hair'll do you good."

"Easier said than done," exclaimed Ripley, "I made an effort just now, and nearly brained myself."

"Anyhow," said Paul, "I'm going to try, though I dislocate all my internal economy in the attempt."

"Rash youth," exclaimed Mack, with a groan; "'if age did know what youth doth feel,' to quote the immortal Shakespeare, my dear old mother would be in hysterics by this."

"I wonder she let you come," said Ripley, with a laugh.

"Alas, she did not know, nor, alas, did I," Harry answered, with a groan. "But 'hope springs eternal in the human breast,' as the great Artemus Ward hath wisely said."



At this the others burst into a loud laugh, and Paul, seizing a momentary pause in the pitching of the vessel, slipped out of his bunk feet foremost, and with the assistance of Chris was soon on deck, expanding his lungs to the fresh air of heaven.

During the next hour the other two made their appearance on deck, and having secured a sheltered corner they remained in almost the same position for the rest of the day. Chris played the part of steward to the three of them. He seemed quite in his element, and, as he expressed it, was as happy as a bird.

Fortunately the voyage did not continue as it began. By the following day the gale had completely died away, and with it the agony of the passengers, with very few exceptions. George, Harry, Paul and Chris for the rest of the voyage were inseparable. Thrown together by an odd chance, or by the wisdom of an inscrutable Providence at the beginning of the voyage, there sprang up a friendship that deepened and strengthened as the days passed on, and which all of them sincerely hoped would not end when their brief voyage was over.

George Ripley was the son of a Dorsetshire farmer, and Harry Mack the son of a Devonshire clergyman. Both were on the same errand; both hoped to make a fortune by farming; and both were bound for the state of Nebraska. On the morning of the eleventh day they came on deck, and found themselves close to land. On the left were green, wooded hills sloping down to the water's edge, dotted here and there with pleasant villas, and stately mansions. On the right was Long Island, with its flat, sandy beach, and its long terrace of houses and hotels.

"Well, this is pleasant, anyhow," said George Ripley. "The first glimpse of the New World is decidedly prepossessing."

"May our further acquaintance tend to deepen our first impression," said Harry.

"Amen!" exclaimed Paul.

Chris remained silent. In a very short time they were in the Hudson River, backing into the slip. And then came the hurry and bustle of landing. The steerage passengers—the first to get on the ship—were the last to leave. On the wharf was quite a crowd of people waiting the arrival of friends. To watch their faces was to Paul quite an interesting study. There a woman with a baby in her arms, her eyes almost starting out of their sockets as she scans eagerly the crowd on the deck. To and fro her eyes wander the whole length of the vessel, while the look of anxiety deepens on her face. Then suddenly her eyes brighten and run over with happy tears, her face lights up with smiles as if by magic. She hoists her baby high above her head, and the little one crows and claps its hands, while someone from the deck—presumably the husband and father—responds.

By her side is an old man with a pocket-handkerchief tied to a walking-stick, which he frantically waves above the heads of his neighbours, tears all the while running down his wrinkled face. Near him are two young ladies, with disappointment plainly written on their faces. Evidently those they expected have not come. Others are laughing and chatting, and nodding to those on deck, and kissing hands, and carrying on generally in a most excited fashion.

"There seems no one to give us a welcome, Chris," George said to his companion, with a sigh.

"Guess they didn't know we was coming," said Chris, with great good-humour. "'Ad they known, all New York 'ud 'a turned out, you may depend."

"Ah, well, Chris," George Ripley said, "you must begin at once to let New York know that you have arrived."

"That's what I intend doin'. I'm a-goin' to let 'em see how a Britisher can work."

"That's right, Chris," Harry Mack put in. "I see you are in for making a fortune."

"That's my ticket to a nicety," said Chris. "I'm sorry

the rest of you is goin' West, but I've to stay 'ere for the present, an' for very pertickler reasons."

The others laughed at this, and Chris went on again. "But we shall meet again. At least, some on us will. The world ain't so big but we shall find each other."

"Amen to that sentiment," said Harry.

At last it came to their turn to leave the big ship, and to run the gauntlet of the Customs officials. Chris got through without difficulty, as all his worldly possessions were tied up in a blue pocket-handkerchief, much the worse for wear. Paul had only a carpet-bag, the examination of which did not take long. George and Harry possessed more luggage, and so did not get through quite so expeditiously.

Passing out of the broad shed into the open street at length, the three older men bade an affectionate good-bye to Chris. It seemed almost a cruel thing to leave him, a friendless waif, in the streets of a strange city, but they had helped him to the limit of their ability, and so could do no more.

Chris was quite cheerful. He had been used to the streets all his life, and knew how to shift for himself.

"Never fear," he said, "I'll drop on my feet, depend on it, an' some fine mornin' you'll be a-seein' me again."

So they parted, Chris making his way into Broadway, the other three crossing by the ferry to Jersey City.

## CHAPTER XXIV.

### CEDAR CREEK.

"The spring's gay promise melted into thee,  
Fair summer! and thy reign is here;  
Thy emerald robes are on each leafy tree;  
In the blue sky thy voice is rich and clear;  
And the free brooks have songs to bless thy reign—  
They leap in music 'midst thy bright domain."

—W. G. CLARK.

JOHN VIVIAN was sitting outside his cabin door on a low bench, with an open letter upon his knee. The day was Sunday; the month July; the time, five o'clock in the afternoon. The weather for some weeks had been intensely hot, and this afternoon was no exception to the rule—hence the miners of Cedar Creek spent as little of their Sunday indoors as possible. With the exception of the saloon at the far end of the camp, every house was empty; even the boarding-house was completely deserted. Here and there in the shadow of the trees groups of miners might be seen quietly smoking. Some, indeed, were lying full length upon the grass, fast asleep; and others were sitting apart, intently perusing the latest letter from home.

It was a quiet, sleepy place at the best of times, but on Sundays, when all labour was suspended and the noisy stamping machines were still, it was especially so. After the morning service, which was held in the dining-room of the boarding-house, there was nothing further to be done—save for the Chinese cooks—except to eat, sleep, read, or write letters, or take a saunter into the woods, unless they were disposed to go to the saloon, as some of the more reckless did, and drink and dance, or play cards till midnight.

On the whole, however, Cedar Creek was a well-behaved

place. Bill Filcher, the proprietor of the saloon in question, was in bad repute. He had done a roaring trade in times gone by; but the miners had learned wisdom by painful experience. The truth had slowly dawned upon them that to be Filcher's friend was to be their own enemy. He was a sharper of the worst type, cunning and unscrupulous. He had shot his man time and time again, and boasted of it, and was prepared to do the same again on the smallest provocation—hence he was to be avoided. Every man with any self-respect felt that, and so as time went on only those who had lost all self-respect frequented his saloon. The respectable portion of the community gave him and his saloon a wide berth.

John Vivian had built his cabin at the very opposite end of the camp. He wanted to be as far away from Filcher as possible. He was naturally a quiet man, fond of solitude and repose. He had been in Cedar Creek twelve years now. Previous to that he had worked in several mines in different parts of the State, hoping that by some sudden stroke of good luck he would make a fortune. But after half a dozen years of knocking about, and gathering no moss in the process, he was glad enough to settle down in Cedar Creek, and work for regular and settled wages. When he had been there two years he was raised to the position of underground boss, or overseer, and, concluding from this that his stay was likely to be of some considerable duration, he set to work in his spare minutes to build a cabin for himself.

This, for many a long month, if not a work of faith, was most emphatically a labour of love. After deciding that a small elevated plateau, a little back from the camp and close to the edge of the forest, was to be the site, he went steadily on with his work, never appearing to be in a hurry, and yet never relaxing his efforts till it was finally completed, the result being that John Vivian's cabin was not only one of the most substantial, but was decidedly one of the most cosy and convenient dwellings in the camp.

Like most Californian log cabins, the walls inside were papered with the picture pages of illustrated newspapers. Year by year Mary had sent him the Christmas numbers of the *Graphic* and *London News*, with an occasional number of *Punch* or the *British Workman*. These had been carefully utilised, together with rough portraits of American celebrities, political squibs, and an occasional number of *Leslie* or *Harper*. Unlike most of the cabins, these pictures had not been put on at haphazard. John had spent as much time over the affair as if he had been making a screen for a church bazaar, and had succeeded in producing a picture gallery of a very unique order.

The furniture was of a very primitive type, plain almost to ugliness, but seeing John had made it all himself, it reflected considerable credit upon his skill as a handicraftsman, and made up in strength and solidity for what it lacked in artistic finish.

The building and furnishing of his house had been in many ways a blessing to him. It saved him from brooding overmuch upon the past; kept him out of company that might have been harmful; and turned his thoughts out of channels into which they were too much disposed to run.

Naturally a thoughtful man, and yet never trained to think, fond of speculative questions, but not possessing the knowledge necessary to enable him to take an all-round view, and predisposed to take a pessimistic view of life and the world, he had unconsciously drifted away from the simple faith in which he had been reared, and was now without an anchorage of any kind. He was just drifting. For years the Bible, Bunyan, Baxter, Milton, and Wesley embraced the whole circle of his reading. He read through the Old Testament again and again; read it more frequently than he read the New, and found himself at length stumbling over the question of inspiration, and anxiously debating the morality of the "wars" of the Bible, instead of drinking in inspiration from the Psalms. He read Milton till his heart

protested against the poet's savage description of hell and hopeless torture of the damned. Read Bunyan and Baxter till the commercial idea of salvation as presented by them seemed positively hateful to him, and his soul revolted from the idea of a Divine Shylock demanding his pound of flesh. And yet he had not strength nor courage to free himself wholly from Puritanical dogma, and go to the New Testament with unprejudiced eyes, and construct a faith for himself.

The result was, his mind was in a state of chaos. He dared not let go, and yet felt that his hold was relaxing every day. To become an "unbeliever" was the most horrible idea that could be presented to him. To profess to believe when he did not was a species of hypocrisy he could not tolerate. That there might be a middle course did not occur to him. Milton, and Baxter, and John Wesley were learned men, and had, no doubt, interpreted the Bible truly. Hence protesting against their dogmas seemed like protesting against the Bible, and to deny their interpretations was simply to give up religion.

But he could not give up religion. To goodness and to God he clung with more tenacity than he clung to life itself, and all the while his faith in the dogmas of Christianity, and, as he supposed, in Christianity itself, was on the wane.

How to account for this he could not imagine. He was a puzzle to himself. He had never heard of "Religion and Dogma." Had never thought the two might be separated. To him religion and dogma were one, and indivisible, and with the decay of dogma, in his own mind, there had come upon him a great horror, that of being an "unbeliever."

Of late he had banished the subject of religion as much as possible from his mind, and on the day in question had not even gone to the service in the dining-room. He knew the brother who was appointed to give the exhortation that morning, and, judging from his previous efforts, felt it would be better for him to stay away.

On the previous day he had received a letter from home,

which contained an account of the flooding of Wheal Anthony and Paul's wonderful deliverance. Mary Vivian was not an imaginative woman, but she could tell a simple straightforward story as well as anyone. And in the present case she omitted no detail that had come to her knowledge.

It was a touching and heart-stirring letter, all the more heart-stirring from its artlessness. She never turned aside to moralize, she went straight on till she had finished, and concluded without comment of any kind. John found his eyes growing dim again and again as he read the letter, and more than once great tears rolled down his cheeks, which he hastily wiped away.

"God bless the lad," he said to himself, when he had finished; and after blowing his nose violently, he started to read it through again. After the third perusal, he went across to the cabin of Israel Truscott, his nearest neighbour, and a Cornishman, and read the letter to him.

Israel, who was naturally emotional, nearly sobbed aloud.

"I never heard the like," said Israel. "I guess it's the grandest thing of the century. Look 'ere, John, I'm off to the boarding-house to tell the lads what a son you've got."

That evening and next morning John did not lack company. The miners came up in batches of half a dozen, or ten, to hear the story, and never had a public reader a more attentive audience than John had on these occasions.

"Wall, I guess that's a purty smart lad," said Luke Abbott, a tall Yankee from Massachusetts. "A lad like that ought to come to Amurrica, where he can have scope for his faculties. I conclude it's a sin for a youth of his parts to be located in a perky little corner of the airth like that. He wants room to develop, he does. He wants to breathe the free air of this great Republic. You should send for him, Vivian; you should give him a chance."

"I think he is better where he is," said John, quietly. "There's not much scope, as you say. But that tells both ways."



"Wall, I guess I don't see that, mate," said Luke. "But anyhow, he's a smart lad, for a Britisher he's uncommon smart."

John had been reading the letter again during the afternoon as he sat in the shade outside the door of his cabin, and now with it lying open upon his knee he gave himself up to reflection.

Very vividly all the past came back to him again, and for a moment something of the old longing to see his wife and children stole into his heart. It was not often now that such feelings troubled him. As we stated at the beginning of this story, time had dulled the keen edge of his hunger, and as no hint ever came from his wife that she wanted him back, he concluded she would rather he stayed away, and so accepted the inevitable without demur.

That Paul intended or even desired to come and see him no hint had been given. Mary thought it was time enough to mention the matter when she saw Paul actually preparing to start. And as for many a long month the subject had not been alluded to, she had begun to think that he had finally decided to settle down at home. As for Paul himself he had been afraid to mention the matter in his letters lest his father should discourage him, and so John was quite ignorant of the fact that the lad, who was quite as dear to him as his own child, and whom his heart was hungering to see, was even now on the way to greet him.

The afternoon was almost oppressively still. From the camp below no sound of any kind disturbed the stagnant air. Now and then the tap, tap of the woodpecker in the depths of the forest that sloped away at the back of his cabin gave a deeper solemnity to the silence; but for that all was still.

John rose from his seat at length and stretched himself.

"I think I will go in and write to the lad," he said to himself. "He will be pleased to hear that I am proud of him," and he took a step toward the door of his cabin. The next moment he paused, arrested by the sound of voices and the cracking of a whip.

"Hullo!" he said, "What's up! Who can be out buggy-riding on a day like this, and over roads a foot thick with dust?"

The next moment a one-horse buggy hove in sight, and pulled up in front of the boarding-house. All the camp was astir in a moment; the sleepy ones sat up and rubbed their eyes; the smokers took the pipes out of their mouths and regarded the new-comers with inquisitive eyes, or, more correctly, one of the new-comers, for the driver of the buggy was known to many of them. But no one made any advance till Luke Abbott led the way.

"I guess, stranger," said Luke, pushing his broad-brimmed straw hat to the back of his head, and thrusting his hands deep into his trousers pockets, "that you are on the look-out for someone?"

"Yes," said Paul, for the reader will have concluded the new-comer was he. "I am wishful to see John Vivian, if he is hereabouts."

"The bearer of a message, likely?" questioned Luke.

"Well—yes——" said Paul, slowly.

"Nothing bad, I presume?"

"No, I think not," Paul said, with a smile.

"He's not expectin' you, I guess?"

"I am not aware that he is."

"You're lately from the old country, likely?"

"Yes, I've come direct."

"You bet, I know'd it. Maybe you're going to stay?"

"That will all depend on circumstances."

"Ah! just so. Would you mind now——"

"Well, just at present," said Paul, with a laugh, "I would like to be excused. You see, I am anxious to see John Vivian if he is here."

"Wall, I guess that's a natural desire, so I'll not detain you; that's him standing up yonder agin his door," and Luke pointed with his thumb in the direction of John's cabin.

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"Is that John Vivian standing by yonder cabin?" Paul asked eagerly.

"Yas, I guess that's him," Luke answered, with a drawl.

"Thanks," Paul answered, and the next moment he was bounding up the slope with all the haste he could command

## CHAPTER XXV.

### NEW FRIENDS.

"Time's glass is filled with varied sand,  
With fleeting joy and transient grief;  
We'll turn, and with no sparing hand,  
O'er many a strange, fantastic leaf;  
And fear not, but 'mid many a blot,  
There are some pages written fair,  
And flowers that time can wither not,  
Preserved, still faintly fragrant there."—DOUBLEDAY.

THE meeting was a silent one. Neither for the moment could trust himself to speak. John waited for Paul to come near, he could not stir himself; and when they met they clasped hands in silence, and stood for several seconds looking into each other's eyes. No introduction was needed. John recognised his foster-son in a moment, but he was too astonished to speak or move. A thousand questions rushed through his mind. Why had he come? Had he run away from home? Had he got into disgrace? Had something happened to his wife?—to David? Was he the bearer of evil tidings? But no word escaped his lips.

Paul was the first to break the silence. "My father," he said, and he laid his left hand on John's shoulder; then he bent forward and kissed him.

"God bless you, my boy!" was the response, and John dropped Paul's hand that he might search for his pocket-handkerchief to wipe away the swift and unbidden tears.

"You are glad to see me?" Paul asked, at length.

"Very glad; but are they well at home?"

"Quite well when I left."

"God be praised," John answered, reverently. "Then he took Paul's face between his hands and kissed him twice.

"You are a noble boy, Paul," he said at length. "I have

been reading your mother's letter for the twentieth time to-day ; it is there on the chair."

"You are not displeased that I have come?" Paul said, evasively.

"No, my boy. I have often hungered for a sight of your face. Yet I should never have persuaded you to have come here."

"I wanted so much to see you, father. It seemed so hard that you should toil here all alone, and my heart has ached for years to see you."

"And yet you gave no hint!"

"I was afraid you would discourage me."

"I might have done so ; but now you have come I cannot tell you how glad I feel."

"That is sufficient," Paul answered, with a swift rush of tears to his eyes. "Now I am content."

"Pardon me keeping you standing here ; you must be tired," John said. "Let us go inside ; we shall talk more freely there ;" and John led the way, taking his chair with him.

"What a snug little box you have," Paul said, as soon as he got inside the door.

"Yes, it's not amiss," John said, with a pleased smile, "I think it will serve for two."

"You might have known I was coming," was the laughing response.

"One never knows what will happen," was the reply, "and so I built it bigger than the usual run. Now, take the rocking-chair, it's not elegant, but it's easy, and I'll get tea ready while you look on, unless you would prefer to go down to the boarding-house."

"No, thank you," was the quick response ; "I would rather stay here a thousand times."

"That settles it, then," and a few minutes later a beef steak was frizzling joyfully in the pan, a drop table was lifted up and covered with a white cloth ; cups and plates appeared from a mysterious little cupboard in one of the corners,

and a most appetising meal was soon in a forward state of preparation.

Paul from his easy chair watched his father with a curious smile playing round the corners of his mouth. Long practice had made John quite an adept in household management, and in the art of cookery. And when Paul at length drew up his chair to the table and attacked the steak, he declared he had never tasted anything better in his life.

Yet the meal proceeded very slowly. Each had so much to say ; so many inquiries to make, so many questions to answer.

"It's just like a dream," said John. "I can hardly realise yet that it's all real."

"I can," said Paul. "I've been coming to it so long."

"But to me it's sudden and unexpected," was the answer.

"You'll soon get used to me," said Paul, with a laugh ; "if you don't get tired of me, I shan't mind."

"There's no fear of that, I think ; but now I want you to talk to me about your mother and David, and home matters generally. How does your mother look ?"

"Just as I always remember her," Paul answered. "To me she seems scarcely to have altered at all."

"From her portraits she looks older."

"Yet she is very young-looking."

"And is she cheerful and content ?"

"Yes, I think so. I think she wishes you were at home sometimes, but she never says much about it."

"And she sent no message ?"

"Oh, yes ! she sent her love and best wishes, and all that."

"But no request for me to return ?"

"Well, not exactly. I asked her if I should send you back."

"And what did she say ?"

"She said you would return when you thought fit, and she had no wish to interfere with your movements."

John heaved a sigh, but made no further remark.

"Yet I am sure she would like you to come home," Paul added, quickly.

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But if John heard he did not heed. He sat for a long time looking out of the window, but there was a far-away look in his eyes which indicated that his thoughts were back again in that ever-receding past—a past full of disappointment and pain.

He sighed again after awhile, and withdrew his eyes from the window with a sudden movement. "And David?" he questioned.

"He is well."

"And good?"

Paul winced, and changed colour. "He is mother's pride," he answered.

"Yes; her letters show that. I suppose he is quite the gentleman?"

Paul laughed. "That all depends on your definition of the word," he said.

"Just so; but in the ordinary sense, I mean."

"David is good-looking, and very gentlemanly in appearance," Paul said. "He has a good situation, he dresses well, and is very much respected."

"That's a comfort. Your mother says he has no bad habits, and is quite a credit to the family."

"Mother is very proud of him," Paul answered, after a pause.

"I am afraid you have not had your full share of her affection," John said, at length.

"Perhaps I have not deserved it," was the laughing rejoinder. "Anyhow, I don't complain."

John pushed back his chair and looked Paul steadily in the face as though he would read the character written on the young man's noble brow, and in his large liquid eyes. Paul bore the scrutiny without flinching.

"I think we shall be friends, Paul," John said, at length.

"I hope so, father," was the quick reply. "I have longed for your friendship and affection more than words can tell, and I hope I may never prove unworthy of your trust."

"I have no doubt on that score," was the ready answer. "I need the companionship of a younger man. I am in danger of growing morose living so much alone."

Before Paul could answer the doorway was darkened by a tall figure, and the next moment Luke Abbott stood before them.

"Evening, John," said Luke, taking his pipe out of his mouth. "I hope I don't intrude. Evening again, stranger," with a nod at Paul. "'Tain't unlikely, I guess, you may be relations?"

"This is my son Paul," said John, with a touch of pride in his voice. "And this, Paul, is Luke Abbott, one of the oldest of the Cedar Creek boys."

"You don't mean, now, this is the one we've been hearin' so much about?" said Luke, in seeming astonishment.

"The very same," said John.

"Wall, now," said Luke, with a drawl, "I had a kind o' presentiment it were him. Glad to make your acquaintance," extending his large hand to Paul. "I guess, now, you found the old country grown too small for your capabilities?"

"Oh, no, not at all," said Paul, with a laugh, grasping at the same time Luke's outstretched hand. "The old country is about the size it always has been."

"Which ain't sayin' much," was Luke's rejoinder. "As I was saying yesterday, there ain't no scope for a man of parts in a pumped-out island of that description, and I don't wonder, stranger, you've come here. In the free air of this mighty Republic there's room for a man. He can walk about without bein' in everlastin' danger of fallin' over cliff, or plantin' his foot in his neighbour's potato patch. You've done the right thing, and, as a free-born Amurrican, I give you welcome to this great country."

"Thanks," said Paul, with a laugh; "you are very kind, but to tell the truth my father, here, was the attraction, rather than the country."

"Wall, now," said Luke, dropping into a chair and stretch-



ing out his long legs to their full length, "that is what I call a very purty little speech. For a Britisher it's exceeding purty."

"You seem to have small respect for the Britisher," Paul answered, quickly.

"Thar, now, you make a mistake. The Britisher, as a rule, is a man of parts. Slow, it's true; cautious to excess; prejudiced to the backbone; proud as Lucifer on matters that are of no account. Thar's his weakness. What's history? What's in a name? What's aristocracy to a man who has to work for his living? There's where you Britishers make a mistake. You talk about your country having a history. What good is that to you? The youth of twenty has no history; the man of eighty has. But, blame me, I'd rather be the youth without the history, than the old man with it. You've got a history. What does that mean? Why, that you've grown old; you've had your day; you live in the past, and, like all old folk, you're suspicious of everything new. Now, we've got no history, and I'm glad of it. We ain't got no *past*, as it were, but we've got a future, and that's an everlastin' sight better. We respect you, nevertheless, as we'd respect our grandmother for her age and virtues, and sich like. But we pity you at the same time."

"Oh, I don't think you need," Paul said, good-humouredly; "it's a pity to waste good sentiment."

"Stranger," said Luke, after a pause, "you're smart, there's no denyin' it; an' perhaps you don't know it, but that's the reason you've come here. In the free air of this great Republic the Britisher renews his youth. As I said before, I give you welcome."

And Luke stretched out his hand, first to Paul, and then to John, and without another word took his departure.

"He's a good fellow," said John, after Luke had gone; "he boasts a little, after the fashion of his country, but his heart is in the right place."

"Oh, I like him immensely," said Paul, "and I quite

anticipate we shall be great friends," a prediction which was realised in a very few weeks.

Luke had scarcely taken his departure when Israel Truscott dropped in, and was followed in a few minutes by Ned Stephens, another Cornishman. By-and-bye half a dozen other "boys" from the old country who had heard of Paul's arrival came in to give him a welcome, until John's cabin became inconveniently crowded. But no one seemed to mind that—a boy fresh from home was always an object of interest.

What stories were told that night! What memories of the past were awakened! How old scenes and faces came back again, and incidents long forgotten started into life once more! Now and then a tear would be brushed swiftly away, and again the laughter would be long and loud. Before one tale was ended somebody was ready with another. And so the ball was kept a-rolling. John Vivian entered into the spirit of his comrades in a way that was quite new to him; and Paul forgot he was a stranger in a strange land. Amongst these new friends he felt quite at home, and quite relished the novelty of being the lion of the evening.

So the hours wore away till midnight struck, then Israel Truscott started up with a look of astonishment on his face.

"I'd no idea it was so late," he said.

"We none of us had, I reckon," said Ned Stephens.

"Oh, well, we don't get a boy fresh from home every day," said John. "I've been delighted to have your company."

"And so have I," said Paul. "I don't feel as though I had got into a strange place. I feel rather as though I had got home."

"Glad to hear it," was the general answer, and then one by one they took their departure.

For another hour father and son sat in the lamp-light quietly talking. Outside the night wind sighed around the gables of the little cabin, and moaned away in the pine forest which slanted up the hill-side.

At length John started up. "Paul," he said, "you must be very tired ; we will talk no more to-night. God bless you, my boy, and give you sweet sleep."

"And God bless you, my father," was the response, and so they parted for the night, and a few minutes later silence and darkness held undisturbed possession of the little cabin.

## CHAPTER XXVI.

### DOUBTS AND FEARS.

"Who shall hush the weary spirit's chiding,  
Who the aching void within shall fill?  
Who shall whisper of a peace abiding,  
And each surging billow calmly still?  
Blessed Healer! all our burdens lighten,  
Give us peace, Thine own sweet peace, we pray;  
Keep us near Thee till the morn shall brighten,  
And all mists and shadows flee away."

—From "*Tyra Anglicana*."

**W**ITHIN a week Paul had settled down to work. He was a good tradesman, and so found no difficulty in getting employment. Unlike most new arrivals he manifested no desire to go underground to dig for gold; and if he was ever tempted to go "prospecting" on his own account he put the temptation aside. He discovered that a man "with a trade in his fingers" was always at a premium, and he soon found himself with more work on hand than he could get through with. Many of the miners wanted cabins built and furniture made, and Paul's first attempts in these directions were so neat and tasteful, that orders thronged in upon him unsolicited, while his earnings seemed to him almost a fortune. So the weeks slipped away all too quickly, and the hot summer days gave place to golden autumn, and the woods burned with a glory and splendour of colour such as he had never seen before. Then came November with its strange, soft Indian summer; its shortening days, and weird and changeful lights and shadows; its glow of dawn and sunset, and its deep and oppressively silent nights. Then December came with its frost and snow, and winter for several months held undisputed sway.

Paul spent more and more time with his father as the days

grew shorter, and the respect and affection he felt for him at first deepened into a feeling akin to reverence. John Vivian was no ordinary man. His spirit was so gentle, so patient, so uncomplaining, that no one could be in his company long without learning to respect him, and even to love him. Paul watched this quiet, sad-eyed, gentle-spirited man moving about with an ever-growing admiration, and wondered what the secret was that kept him from his home—for that some secret difficulty existed he had no doubt. He had suspected it for years from unguarded words which had fallen from his mother's lips, and his suspicions had now been confirmed by the studied silence of his father.

Yet he made no attempt to find out what the secret was. If his father some day chose to tell him he would be very grateful, but if not, he would respect his silence, and conclude it was best he should not know.

They often talked together about what had transpired at Penxharf during all the years of his absence, and sometimes Paul read to his father out of his own favourite books. So the long evenings never seemed long, while on Saturday evenings there was often a good deal of fun and merriment knocking about. For since Paul's advent John's cabin had become the rendezvous of the "Cornish boys," and old stories were retold with a gusto not a little remarkable.

Those quiet evenings when Paul read to him were wonderful seasons to John. His range of reading had been exceedingly narrow till now. And so the newer books Paul read to him were an astonishment, and an unceasing delight. Novels he had religiously avoided, believing their perusal to be a sinful waste of time. Yet when Paul commenced to read to him "Adam Bede," he almost held his breath to listen, and night after night sat quite motionless—except a hasty movement of his hand now and then across his eyes—until the last page was reached. Yet he avoided any discussion respecting the merits of the book or the opinions expressed.

"Have you any other books of the same character?" he asked, after he had sat some time in silence.

"Oh, yes, I have a good many," Paul answered, "not all equal to 'Adam Bede,' perhaps; but you shall judge of their quality for yourself."

"It's a new pleasure to be read to," he answered, simply.

"I don't tire you?"

"Tire me! Why, I could sit up all night."

Paul laughed, then answered, "I'll begin with 'Hypatia' to-morrow night."

"Is that by the same writer?"

"No, but I think you will like it."

"You could make any book interesting, Paul; you are such a good reader."

"I am afraid you are not a very good judge of that," Paul said with a laugh. "Still I will take your word for it."

On the following evening Paul commenced "Hypatia," and read on evening after evening until it was completed. John listened with wide open eyes, and sometimes with open mouth. The book seemed to strike a new chord in his heart. Questions that had vaguely flitted through his mind were for the first time crystallized into sharp and definite forms. Doubts which he had vainly tried to suppress were here boldly dragged out into the light and bravely grappled with. Dogmas which he had been afraid to touch were struck at with a giant's hand and completely shattered. Old truths were made to burn with a new light. Old doctrines were reset.

"I will think about this," he said, when the book was finished. "We will have no more reading for a bit."

"As you will," said Paul, with a smile; "but suppose you think aloud, and so give me the benefit of your thoughts."

"Nay, lad, I would not like to shock you," was the sober answer.

"Perhaps I am not so easily shocked as you imagine."

which had been brought since he went out. The letter was from Toby Wrench, and ran as follows:—

“BRACKEN HOLLER, *January 25, 18—*

“MY DEAR PAWL,—I rite these fue lines hopin they will find you in good elth as they leaves me at present, which is a great marcy konsiderin how bissy I am, not havin a preshus minit to call my hone, but a man as sarves his Queen and country as to have is heye open constant, and must expect no sineycure ef he does his duty, which I always does, and a great deal more, though it's me as says it, which shouldn't, as I hate boastin, as everybody knows. And on that account I gived Joel Quirk the rough side of my tongue the other day for callin it into question. ‘You howdacous farisee,’ I said to him, ‘do you kno who I be? Do you know I've sailed round the world, and sarved my Queen and country faithful for fifty years? Do you kno I'm the coastguard, and not a skulkin land-lubber?’ at which he skulked away out of sight, not darin to say is soul was is own, as it were, which it isn't when you get to the right side of it, nor anybody else's, for that matter, since we've all been created out of nothin, which is a miracle I never could understand, and consequently there's a lot as will want explainin when we get into the world to come, if ever we do get there, as it were, which, for example, there's the case of Mr. Tresillian, of Rosevallion, a very excellent man, no doubt, self-opinionated and given to boastin occasional, which I very much dislike, but a natural failing of people who've never been properly edicated, nor travelled beyond the smoke of their own chimbleys, as it were, but havin lived up to his own lights, its not for me to blame him, though I do think he's brought up that son of his to think a sight too much of hisself, not but I think a proper pride is a very excellent quality in young men, and especially in young women, and that Miss Abigail is as promisin an example of the female sect as it has been my privilege to encounter for many a year, and no doubt she will made a excellent wife to the young man she is going to marry, seein he is well-off in this world's goods, and holds a mor'gage on Rosevallion farm, so people say, with a tendency to put the screw on Mr. Tresillian, if he does not come up to the point, as it were, which there is no necessity he should be screwed any more seeing his son have squeezed him, till he is as dry as a cork, and when he had to go abroad to escape the consequences, he took all as could be raked together, only secrets will come out, however much they may be hushed up, but young Trebarwith came down with the money handsome, so it is said, and agreed that the wedding should be done handsome and in the shortest possible time, which was very considerate, though it is said the young woman needed a tremenjous amount of perswadin, and don't even take to it now as well as might be expected under the circumstances, as it were, seein as how gratichude is not a feminine virtue, too much must not be expected, and young people don't always kno when they are well off, as I have ad occasion to remind you aforetime, although I hear you are doin very well, which seems quite clear from the remittance, which came safe to hand, and which you need not have denied yourself to send,

seein I don't suffer in respect of want, as the great apostle says, which I hope you continny to read, as containin all necessary gydance for this vale of tears, to such as have renounced the hidden things of darkness, to cote once more the words of inspiration, which is now my chief companion since I miss your bright smile comin over the hill and saying, 'Good evenin Mr. Tobias, and how are you to-night?' and I starts up sayin there he is at last, bless im, which is only my fancy playin tricks on me, which at my time of life comes hard, seein we do not make new friends every day, and it's very lonely sometimes in the long evenings awaiting for your coming as the lover for his mate, as it were, not that I am sentimentally inclined, but I do long for a sight of your face, which I hope the good Lord will grant me to see afore I die, not that I ail anything, and my appytite is amazin good, especially for ham rasher, which I always had a weakness for from being a ship's cook in my younger days, and my mother before me had the same relish as I've heard say, though that was afore my time, not being yet a old man by a very long way, and as clear in the hed as ever I was, though my sight is somewhat failin, what with salt water and the glare of the sun in furrin parts, which now you can speak of havin gone to the other side of the world, and found your worthy father, who must be very proud, and my respects to him, not havin the honour of his acquaintance, and with all affeckshun for you.—Your faithful and true friend,

"TOBIAS WRENCH."

Paul was so absorbed in the perusal of this letter that he barely noticed his father when he came in, and when at length he looked up his face was so pale and haggard that John was quite startled.

"Why, Paul," he said, "what is the matter? I hope you have received no bad news from home?"

"Oh, no; everybody seems well," he answered, with a forced smile. "The letter is from my old friend Toby."

"Did he say anything about mother or David?"

"Not a word, so I presume they are both well."

"I'm glad there's no bad news, but you must have got cold sitting in the doorway so long."

"I do feel a bit cold," he said, getting up from his seat and shaking himself. "I think I will follow your example and have a run in the woods."

"Only don't forget that dinner will be ready in an hour."

"All right!" was the cheerful answer, and off he stalked.

When dinner was ready John went to the door and looked right and left, but Paul was nowhere visible, so he returned



to the cabin and waited. Five minutes, ten minutes, twenty minutes, forty minutes, an hour, and still the welcome face did not appear in the doorway. John grew anxious at last, and went to the edge of the wood, and placing two fingers in his mouth, gave a shrill whistle, but there was no answering call. Twice—thrice he repeated this, but with the same result.

“What can have become of the boy?” he said to himself, anxiously. “I hope he has not got lost, or met with an accident.”

Then he called his name, “Paul! Paul!! Paul!!!” louder each time, but only the echo answered back.

“I do hope there’s nothing wrong,” he said to himself, starting down the hill toward the boarding-house for the purpose of ascertaining if he had been seen there.

But no one had seen him for the day, and with a heavy heart John returned again to his cabin. How dreary and solemn the afternoon seemed! Every few moments he went to the door and listened. Sometimes the snapping of a twig in the silent wood would bring an eager look into his face, but it would soon vanish, leaving him paler and more anxious-looking than before.

At length, when the daylight began to fade, he started up. “I can stand this no longer,” he said. “I must get the boys together, and we must start on the search at once.”

## CHAPTER XXVII.

### LOST IN THE WOODS.

"My life is cold, and dark, and dreary ;  
It rains, and the wind is never weary ;  
My thoughts still cling to the mouldering past,  
But the hopes of youth fall thick in the blast,  
And the days are dark and dreary."—LONGFELLOW.

PAUL never thought of the way he was taking, nor felt the pure, crisp snow crunching beneath his feet, nor saw the sunlight flickering on the long, white avenues, nor heard the tap of the woodpeckers in the silent forest depths. One thought only was burning into his very brain. Abigail—the beautiful dream of his youth, the hope and inspiration of his early manhood—Abigail, whom he loved as his life, was to be married—perhaps *was* married by this—and to a man she did not love—sacrificed to save her father from bankruptcy and her brother from shame. This much was clear from Toby's letter.

The old man's literary style, if characteristic, was by no means lucid, and in some cases it was difficult to determine with exactness what he did mean. His contempt for full-stops, and his utter defiance of the generally received rules of composition, did not help in the direction of perspicuity. Yet notwithstanding the general obscurity of Toby's quite original style, there could be no mistake as regarded his allusions to the Tresillian family. Unfortunate investments and bad harvests, together with Jack's reckless extravagance, had brought Enoch to the verge of bankruptcy ; and in order to raise money he had mortgaged the farm, Nick Trobarwith being the mortgagee.

"It's all as plain as a pikestaff," said Paul to himself, as he strode on through the silent forest glades. "That scapegrace

having got the old man in his power, has cast evil eyes on Abigail, and offers to take her in lieu of the money. Oh, the villain! if I were only near him I would wring his neck."

And Paul clenched his fists and strode on more rapidly than before, finding a measure of relief in this rapid march across the crunching snow.

"I thought I should conquer my love if I could get away from Penwharf," he said to himself. "But God help me! Such love as mine cannot be conquered. It has grown with my growth. It is part of my life. And now that shameless villain with his accursed money comes between us, and she, rather than see her father ruined, consents to the sacrifice. Oh, Abigail, Abigail!"

And the poor fellow groaned aloud in his anguish.

"And I have been gathering new hope of late," he went on after awhile. "And my savings were doubly precious for her sake. I have done almost the work of two, for her face has ever been before me, and the hope of winning her in time has been my inspiration, and now it is all over, and Abigail is lost to me for ever."

And he let his head drop till his chin touched his breast, but he never for a moment slackened his pace. On, on, still on, without a thought of time or distance, and unconscious alike of hunger and fatigue.

At length he reached an opening in the forest, where he drew himself up suddenly. "There must be a storm coming on, surely," he said to himself, "it has grown so dark!" and he began to scan the face of the sky above the belt of trees.

"Well, that is curious," he muttered, after a pause. "There's not a cloud to be seen. Anyhow I'd better return, or father's dinner will be spoiled. I wonder what time it is. Oh, bother! I've left my watch hanging at the head of my bunk; anyhow, I'd better make tracks for home," and turning on his heel he began to retrace his steps. He did not trouble himself about the unfamiliar aspect of the forest, nor about the steadily gathering gloom. His heart was too

full of Abigail to allow room for any other concern or anxiety.

So on he tramped with even pace, his hands in his pockets, his eyes bent upon the ground. Then suddenly he paused. "It can't be evening, surely," he said to himself. "For if so, where am I?"

Yet it did not occur to him even now that he was in any danger. He had come a straight course out, he had nothing to do but keep a straight course back. "I hope father'll not wait dinner for me," he said to himself, "but he'll wonder what's become of me, that's certain." And taking his hands out of his pockets, he quickened his steps to his most swinging pace.

At length he paused again, while a look of perplexity swept over his face. "I have passed this opening before," he said, "and with that curious tree on my right. I remember taking particular notice of it. Well, if that be so, it ought to be on my left now. My stars! it's a caution if I'm wandering round in a circle."

And he took off his hat and ran his fingers through his hair. "No, it can't be," he said, after a pause. "I must have been mistaken. If I keep straight on I shall stumble upon Cedar Creek directly."

By this time all the daylight had faded, and the stars had come out like brilliant points of light in the clear frosty air.

"There's one comfort, anyhow," he said to himself, with a smile. "With all this snow about, it will never be very dark, and I can't possibly be far from home now."

But minute after minute passed, and mile after mile was covered, and still the welcome lights of Cedar Creek were nowhere visible, and to make matters worse his strength began to fail him, and an uncomfortable suggestion of faintness had touched him more than once.

At length he paused again and leaned against a tree. "I fear it's no use going on in this haphazard fashion," he said. 'The chances are, I'm wandering round in a circle after all:

what a simpleton I was to come so far into the woods alone !”

Then a sudden thought struck him. “I started out due north,” he said, knitting his brow, “and the chances are I kept pretty straight ahead. That being so, I ought to be beating south now, in which case the Pole star will be at my back.” And Paul turned round and began to search for Sir Charles’s Wain above the bare branches of the trees.

A minute later a sudden exclamation escaped his lips. “Well, this is a go,” he said. “If I haven’t got my nose due north still ! What am I to do now ? That I’m lost there can be no doubt, and whether I shall be ever found again is doubtful. Well, it doesn’t much matter. The hope that has cheered me on has been taken away. If it were not for father I could lie down here in the snow quite content. I should soon be asleep, and there would be no earthly waking.”

But he put the suggestion aside and started on the tramp again, keeping the Pole star at his back. He had no hope of finding Cedar Creek. He did not know in what direction it lay. But he knew if he stood still he would be frozen, and for his father’s sake he felt it his duty to cling to life as long as possible. Moreover, the Cedar Creek boys would most probably come in search of him, so he would keep moving as long as his strength held out ; when that failed him he would lie down and sleep.

He was not greatly concerned as to what the result might be. Since morning the hope of his life had gone out. The shock had been so sudden and unexpected that it seemed to him as if there was nothing left worth living for. Abigail had been his hope and inspiration. For her he had toiled and saved. He had not always admitted this even to himself ; nay, he had often tried to persuade himself that this was not so. But all the while deep down in his heart there was the abiding hope that would not, *could* not die.

But now all was changed. He must no longer think of

her ; he must put her out of his heart. She was perhaps—though not yet out of her teens—a wife.

“Oh, heavens !” he groaned ; then for a moment hid his face in his hands.

But all the while his strength was rapidly ebbing out. He had been on the tramp since a little after noon, and had tasted no food since morning. But he had a resolute will, and would not yield till absolutely compelled.

He knew that sooner or later the boys would come in search of him, and his only idea now was to keep moving till they should strike across his track. But movement became more and more difficult. He wanted to lie down and rest. His feet seemed weighted with lead, and it was only by a great effort he could lift them at all.

By-and-bye all care and concern passed out of his heart. He knew his father would be very anxious, but he couldn't trouble about it any more. He could not trouble about anything. A strange numbness was creeping all over him. His eyelids drooped in spite of himself. Sweet, blessed sleep was coming ; stealing on like the darkness after sunset. He knew that to sleep meant to die, but he had no fear. He was almost past feeling. And yet he stumbled on in a mechanical way, but only for a little while.

But when at length he fell upon the ground he did not know it. He still fancied himself stumbling on over the frozen snow. Then, to his fancy, the darkness suddenly lifted, and winter's chill gave place to summer's glow, and instead of barren forests, green meadows with meandering streams opened out before him, and instead of silence was the sound of happy voices, and the laughter of children making hay in the fields. Then one voice rose sweet and clear above the rest, and out of the group of merry-makers Abigail came forth to meet him. She was clad in white as on that day he met her in the lane, and she passed him without recognition. But now she came toward him with open arms, and face beaming with smiles.

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"Oh, Paul, I have waited long for your coming," she said.

And at the sound of her voice his heart seemed to leap within him. She was more beautiful even than in the old days, and on her placid brow there was no touch of care.

"And you love me, Abigail?" he said, pressing eagerly forward.

"I have loved you always," she said, with her sweetest smile.

"My darling," he answered, and he reached out his arms to clasp her to his bosom; but ere he could do so the light went out in sudden darkness, and the music of her voice gave place to discordant sounds. And out of the darkness came lurid flashes of light and the tramping of heavy feet, as though an army had burst upon the plain. Then all grew still in deep and dreamless sleep.

When Paul opened his eyes again, the winter's sunshine was streaming through the window of his little room, and lying in bands of pale light across the narrow bed.

"Hullo!" he said, with a start. "If I haven't overslept myself," and he made a sudden effort to get out of bed. But the next moment he lay back with a groan, and a look of bewilderment upon his face.

"Why, what's the meaning of this?" he said, knitting his brows into a perfect frown. But before he could solve the problem his father came into the room with almost noiseless footfalls and a smile playing over his gentle face.

"Well, Paul, my boy, and how are you feeling now?"

"I don't know," Paul answered, still knitting his brows. "Why am I in bed in broad daylight? Have I been ill or something?"

"Don't you remember getting lost yesterday?"

"Getting lost?" he questioned, drawing his hand slowly across his eyes.

"Yes, you went out for a walk in the forest just before dinner, and I suppose you missed your way."

Then like a flash it all came back to him. "Oh, yes, I

remember now," he said, and he drew a long sigh. "It was very foolish of me. But I don't remember getting home."

"That's likely enough," John said, with a smile. "We found you lying on the ground about twenty minutes' walk from here, quite unconscious."

"I remember getting very tired and sleepy," he said, with another sigh.

"You had been wandering round in a circle," John answered. "I've been again this morning to the place where we found you, and your tracks are plainly visible in the snow."

"I remember fearing as much," Paul said, closing his eyes; "I'm sorry to have caused you so much trouble and anxiety."

"Oh, I don't mind that now I have you all safe again. But you were nearly gone when we found you."

"I wonder how many more narrow escapes I'm to have!" Paul said, with a poor attempt at a laugh. "I think I must have been born to be hanged. Most other ways of finishing me seem to fail."

"Ah, well, my boy, try and be thankful," John said solemnly. "And now I want you to take this beef tea; I've made it myself."

"Has it come to that?" Paul said, with a laugh.

"Come to what?"

"To beef tea. Am I an invalid?"

"I fear you'll not be able to get out of bed for a few days."

"I'll be up for dinner, see if I'm not."

This proved, however, but a vain boast. By evening a bad, feverish cold had begun to develop itself, and for several days he was utterly prostrate. It was not until the following Sunday that he was able to leave his bed, and even then only for a few hours.

"I've learnt a lesson I'm not likely to forget," he said to Luke Abbott, who had come in to keep him company.

"Guess you have," said Luke. "Experience is a dear



schoolmaster, but he teaches his lessons mighty well—that is, as a rule. Of course, there are some folks who never will learn; you couldn't get an idea into their heads, not by a surgical operation."

Paul laughed and Luke went on again. "It ain't no use Britishers doing here as they would in their own country. I guess a man couldn't lose himself in your garden patch if he was to try. There ain't no room. Take three strides in any direction, and he would be kicking at somebody's door; but here there's toe room and elbow room. It's no use a man fooling about in our primeval forests and thinking it a British plantation of alder sticks. A man might wander on here for everlasting, a'most, and be no nearer the end of it scarce than at starting."

"Oh, yes! on the question of bigness you have it," said Paul, "and I'll not argue the point."

"Guess you're wise in that," said Luke. "It ain't no use arguing agin facts, is it? But don't you go round thinking we've only bigness. I tell you we have quality as well. In the matter of timber we can lick creation. There's nothing equal to our maple on the face of the airth."

"Have you ever been in any other country?" Paul asked quietly.

"Wall, I guess not," Luke answered, scratching the back of his neck. "Fact is, it'll take an Amurrican a life-time to see his own country, and when he's seen that he don't want to see any other blamed country this side Jordan, he's ready then for Kingdom Come. But, good day; maybe I'll be droppin in again soon."

Another week of comparative inactivity and then Paul settled down to work once more in sober earnest. He tried to think as little as possible about Abigail, and quite expected that the next letter he or his father received from home would contain particulars of her approaching marriage. But when the letter came her name was not even mentioned, nor was it until the middle of May that, opening a letter

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from home, he saw the well-known and much-loved name upon the first page.

It was only a brief announcement, for Mrs. Vivian was very matter-of-fact in her letters, and rarely indulged in many words of comment.

“Paul will be sorry to hear that we are hourly expecting to hear tidings of Abigail Tresillian’s death. She has been ill nearly a month, and cannot possibly live much longer.”

That was all. The letter contained many other items of news, but the above brief paragraph was all that Paul saw.

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

### ABIGAIL'S DIARY.

" I think if thou could'st see  
With thy dim mortal sight,  
How meanings dark to thee  
Are shadows hiding light ;  
Truth's efforts crossed and vexed,  
Life's purpose all perplexed,—  
If thou could'st see them right,  
I think that they would seem all clear and wise and bright."  
—ADELAIDE PROCTOR.

**J**UNE 1ST.—It seems such a long time, my dear old diary, since I had a chat with you, and so much has happened since that I almost despair of writing it all down. But I will spend a little time with you each day as my strength will allow, for to you alone can I open my heart and tell the struggle which goes on from day to day. The dear beautiful mother always begins to cry when I speak to her about it, and hugs me so closely to her heart that my words die on my tongue, for I cannot bear to see her suffer, and I would rather bear my burden in silence than give her a moment's pain. How changed everything is from what it used to be ! Sitting here by the open window in these still summer days, with the soft June air stealing so gently into my room that I can scarcely feel its breath—I keep dreaming of the past. How far away it seems when I begin to compare it with the present ! and yet at times I forget the present and am back into the past again. I hear Jack calling " Abie, Abie, come here ! " in his rollicking fashion. I see his bright happy face upturned against the sky. And sometimes I hear a shrill whistle and a quick footstep in the lane, and I look up, half expecting to see Paul Vivian's handsome face beaming upon me over the garden gate.

Ah me ! I shall never see his face again, and Jack, I fear, is gone from us for ever. How strangely contradictory things are ! Jack's pride of family and name seems to have been his ruin. Being a Tresillian, he would not associate with young men who might have been to him a help and stay. And so his very pride has led him into shame. Mother, I know, almost feared it from the first. Coming events seem to have cast their shadows before. And ever since Jack left school the shadow has been on her heart.

Before that time she was always so bright and cheerful, and was almost the Lady Bountiful of the village. But she discovered about that time that father had become comparatively poor, and that Jack had developed very expensive tastes. She could no longer do among the poor what she had done, and so she shut herself up at home, parted with one of the servants, and did a good deal of the housework herself. She has never been so bright since. Father would not listen to her when she spoke about Jack, and with her clear vision she saw plainly enough what was coming, and the thought of it has been like a weight upon her heart for years.

Dear, beautiful mother ! How much she must have suffered ! While father was so pleased and gratified that Jack was admitted into the best society in the county, and never seemed to begrudge the money he was constantly in need of, mother saw in it only the beginning of the end. •

And then my schooling must have been a great tax upon them, but father looked upon it as a good investment. His meaning has come out very clearly since. I overheard him talking to mother one evening not so long ago—since Jack went away, in fact.

"It is a great disappointment to me," I heard him say. "My idea has always been to give my children such an education and get them into such society that they would be sure to marry well ; but Jack, alas ! has missed it."

"And Abigail is to be sacrificed in consequence," mother replied. •

"Sacrificed ! what nonsense ! " he answered, sharply. "It is just such an alliance as I have always desired."

"If the child's heart went with her hand it would be different," mother replied, with a little shake in her voice.

"Toot, toot ! mere sentiment," he said. "I believe, Ruth, on my soul, you would be content to throw her away on a penniless beggar like that Paul Vivian."

"If I were giving her to Paul Vivian I should be happy," mother replied, with spirit, "for I should know then I was giving her to a brave and noble man."

"There, there ! " he replied, hastily. "Just like you, Ruth. You have no proper pride, as I have always told you. But thank goodness you cannot have your own way this time."

"Alas ! Enoch, I have not often had my way," she answered, sadly. "It might have been better for all of us if I had."

"If you had, Jack would have married a milk-maid by this time, and Abigail would have been receiving love-letters from a common miner."

"And would it not have been better that Jack had married a milk-maid, provided she was honest and good, than have disgraced himself and us as he has done ? Oh ! Enoch, this proper pride, as you call it, has been our curse. Money and name we have thought more of—at least you have—than honest worth."

"Honest fiddlesticks," he replied, impatiently. "Your everlasting talk about 'honest worth' is mere radical clap-trap. I hate the sound of it."

"So much greater the pity," she replied. "For 'honest worth' will live and be revered when the name of Tresillian is forgotten."

"Ay, and folly will live as well," he said, leaving the room and banging the door behind him.

I suppose I ought not to have listened to the conversation, but I could not help it, and it has furnished me with food

for reflection during many a long day since. Somehow I can never bring myself to see things as father sees them. I always side with mother, and it was so noble of her to say, "If I were giving her to Paul Vivian I should be happy." She overlooks his poverty and name in the nobleness of his character.

I wonder if she has guessed my secret! I suppose I have loved Paul always. I know I have always admired him. But I dared not question my heart till after our last meeting in the station at Plymouth when he was going away. How handsome he looked, and how my heart thrilled while he held my hand in his! I know he wanted to tell me he loved me. I could see it in the glance of his eyes. Oh! I wish he had, for I would have promised to be his; and that promise would have held me fast like an anchor through all this terrible time. But there has been no promise to hold me, and I have been compelled to yield. It is not yet twelve months since he went, but, oh, it seems an age! I wish now that I could forget him, and I try my best; but the more I try the more he is present with me.

What hours I have sat here by the open window listening to the dreamy hum of the bees in the garden below, and the soft, almost imperceptible, sighing of the wind in the trees! and it has seemed somehow as though Paul sat with me and held my hand in his. How cruel these day-dreams are! How bitter is the awaking! I wonder if Paul thinks of me in his far-away home; or have new scenes banished me from his memory and his heart? It is sweet to think he loves me and dreams of me. And yet I would not like him to suffer as I have done, and must do, until the grave shall cover me and wrap me in its silence.

What a bundle of contradictions I am! I want Paul to forget me. At least I think I do. I know it would be best for him, and I would not like him to suffer on my account. And yet if I thought he had forgotten me it would almost break my heart. I want to forget him, and know it is best

I should, and yet to think of him is the sweetest pleasure of my life. And so I go on dreaming of him when I ought to be preparing for the stern future which lies before me.

I resisted father's proposal as long as I could. I hated the sight as well as the name of Nick Trebarwith. What was it to me that his name was an old one, that his house was fine, that he had lots of money and large estates! I did not want a fine house, and cared nothing for his name, while he himself was detestable—at least, I thought so then. I am getting to tolerate him now, but that is for father's sake. By sacrificing myself I am saving him from ruin, and the thought of saving father is my only comfort.

When father told me his circumstances then, of course I yielded. He was very humble, and there were tears in his eyes, while his voice was so pitiful that it nearly broke my heart. It seems that my money value is over three thousand pounds. I did not know I was worth so much. But that is the price Nick is willing to pay for me. Most men want a money dowry with their wives, father says, and so he thinks Nicholas Trebarwith is wonderfully generous in taking me with three thousand pounds less than nothing.

When the illness came upon me directly after I had given the promise, I hoped I was going to die, and I sometimes think dear, beautiful mother wanted me to die, too. I heard her say to father one day that she would rather think of me sleeping sweetly in the grave, beyond the reach of evil and sorrow, than think of me as the wife of "that man," and she laid such emphasis on the last two words. I do not know the grounds of her strong dislike to him, for she avoids the subject as much as possible.

The doctors all gave me up, I am told, and for several days I lay quite unconscious, and no one thought I would ever open my eyes again. Oh, that I had passed out into the silent land then, when I stood so long upon its threshold! Mother never prayed that I might recover—so she has told me since—she knew my heart was broken.

The doctors say I have recovered so slowly because I have made no effort to get better. How can I make an effort to get better when life offers me nothing to live for? To be the wife of Nicholas Trebarwith, though it means to live in a big house and have any number of servants to wait upon me, is so repugnant that I shudder every time I think of it. Oh, how shall I endure it when the time comes! I cannot think why God should have spared me for this. I think He might have willed for me some lighter cross. But since He has brought me back from the very gate of death, it seems as though this were His will. But oh! it is very hard.

Father is getting anxious lest I should not recover sufficiently in time for the wedding. What a mockery to call it wedding when there is no union of hearts! If I were preparing for my burial I think I should recover my cheerfulness.

I dreamt the other night that Paul had come to claim me, and was taking me to a little log cottage somewhere in the wilderness, and, oh, how happy I was! if it were only true I should get well and strong directly. People may sneer as much as they will about love in a cottage; but surely it is better than loathing in a mansion. But the more I think the more tangled everything seems. I don't know why I was allowed to love Paul if my very love is to stab my heart with perpetual sorrow. I do not know why I am compelled to live when life is such a constant burden and pain.

The mother came and sat with me for a long time this morning, but she was very silent, and in her eyes there was such a world of sadness. I tried my best to appear cheerful, but it is difficult to wear a smiling face when the heart is broken. Outside, in the old pear-tree that grows in the middle of the garden, a thrush was singing with all its might. It did me good to hear its rich, full notes. I felt thankful there was something in the world that felt quite happy. But the song seemed to grate on mother's heart.



"I wish that bird would cease," she said ; "its song hurts me."

I looked up before replying, and I saw her eyes were quite full of tears, and so the words I should have spoken died upon my tongue.

By-and-bye she drew close to me and kissed me, not once but many times. She did not speak, but she looked at me as though she could not look enough, and there was such a world of longing in her eyes.

"My beautiful mother," I said at last, and I took her glorious face between my poor thin hands and kissed her. And then she knelt down on the floor and hid her face in my lap, and began to cry, but only for a moment. She brushed away her tears hastily, and, taking my hand in hers, said, "Oh, my Abigail, I wish you could rouse yourself a little."

"I am getting a little stronger every day," I said.

"But you are so quiet," she said. "I would rather see you fretting than with this sad, patient look upon your face. You never complain, and no word of regret ever escapes your lips. Oh, my angel, I fear your heart is broken !" and she began to cry again.

"Don't cry, mother," I said, and I kissed her again. "God, who has brought me back to life, will give me strength to live."

• "That is all my comfort," she said, with a great light coming into her face. "I think it must be His will or He would have let you cross the Jordan when you stood so long upon its brink."

I did not reply. I could not. But I have thought a great deal since she left me on those few words.

The thrush ceased to sing when she went away ; and a great silence seemed to drop down on the garden and the house, broken only by the ripple of the stream down by the garden hedge. What long hours I have sat and lain here in this room listening to its music ! It has never changed its song since I can remember. Its familiar tones carry me back



And then she knelt down on the floor and hid her face in my lap.—p. 234



to the days of my childhood. Oh, if one could be a child always!

But as I have sat here to-day, listening and dreaming, I could almost fancy that words came into the brook's sad song.

"It is not His will; it is not His will," it kept repeating all the while. I suppose it is but the echo of my own sad heart, for though I try to believe it is the will of God I am constantly doubting.

It cannot have been His will that Jack should run father into debt, and how can what has followed be His will? And so everything is tangled and twisted, and I cannot unravel the skein.

But I will stop writing now for I am getting tired, and when I have locked you up, my dear old diary, I will come back here to the open window and dream again. The days are speeding on all too quickly; let me make the most of them while they last.

## CHAPTER XXIX.

### THE LARGER HOPE.

"He fought his doubts and gather'd strength,  
He would not make his judgment blind,  
He faced the spectres of the mind  
And laid them : thus he came at length  
To find a stronger faith his own ;  
And Power was with him in the night,  
Which makes the darkness and the light,  
And dwells not in the light alone." — TENNYSON.

**P**AUL'S first impulse on receiving news of Abigail's recovery was to fling up his hat and shout. A moment later, however, his feelings had undergone a complete revolution, and he sat down with a groan.

The second paragraph of the letter commenced :—

"She is to be married on her birthday, and so preparations are being made on a large scale. Squire Trebarwith is anxious to have a grand wedding, and Mr. Tresillian, though he has had so many losses, is prouder than ever."

"I would rather she had died," Paul said to himself, throwing the letter on the table. "To have thought of her as a white angel in Heaven would have been a comfort in my trouble, and a help to me in temptation, but to think of her as the wife of that man will be maddening to me all the days of my life," and he got up and walked about the room with clenched hands and knitted brow.

"I can't understand why God permits such wickedness," he said to himself. "Why should that sweet angel be sacrificed to the pride of Enoch Tresillian and to the villainy of his son? It is enough to shake one's faith in Providence, and to make one wonder whether God governs the world at all."

And Paul went and stood in the open doorway of the

cabin, that the sweet evening breeze might cool his hot brow. In the little garden which sloped away from the back of the dwelling, John Vivian was busy watering his few vegetables and flowers. Paul could not see him, but he could hear him singing, as he went on steadily with his work—

“Away my needless fears,  
And doubts no longer mine;  
A ray of heavenly light appears,  
A messenger Divine.  
Thrice comfortable hope  
That calms my stormy breast;  
My Father’s hand prepares the cup,  
And what He wills is best.”

Very sweetly the words floated on the still evening air, and touched Paul’s heart like a benediction.

“Dear old father,” he said to himself; “he has seemed so happy and peaceful during the last few months, notwithstanding his cough. If I were superstitious, I should think he was ripening for a better country.” And Paul fetched his hat and joined his father on the hill-side.

“If I sit indoors I shall mope,” was his reflection; “and, besides, I ought not to allow father to carry water up the hill. He is not at all strong, though he will not own to it.”

“Well, my son, you have been working late,” was John’s greeting. “I am afraid you will be over-doing it if you are not careful.”

“No fear of that,” was the laughing rejoinder; “besides, I’ve been at home some time.”

“I did not hear you come,” John said. “Have you seen the letter from mother? I left it on the table.”

“Yes, I’ve been reading it.”

“There’s more in it to interest you than me,” John said, a little bit sadly. “The truth is, I am altogether out of touch with what goes on in Penwharf, I’ve been away so long.”

“You would not find it greatly changed if you were to go home,” Paul answered. “It’s scarcely grown a bit for twenty years.”

"No, I suppose the place is the same," John replied, "but the people have changed. The old folks whom I knew are dead, and the children have grown out of recognition."

"Yes, that's quite true," Paul answered.

"It seems quite strange," John went on, "to think of Enoch Tresillian having a daughter old enough to be married."

"She ought not to be married," Paul said impulsively. "She is not twenty yet, and Trebarwith is nearly old enough to be her father."

John looked up with a surprised expression upon his face. It was not often Paul spoke with such vehemence.

"It seems her father does not object to the marriage," he said, after a pause.

"Her father is forcing her into it," Paul said, in as calm a voice as possible, for he had no wish to betray his secret.

"I do not understand," said John.

"Nor I," Paul answered; "that is, I do not understand fully. But it seems clear, from all I can gather, that Mr. Tresillian is practically bankrupt, and so Abigail is to be sold to the highest bidder."

"The Trebarwiths are rich people, I suppose," John said reflectively, after a long pause.

"Nick Trebarwith is; besides, he holds a heavy mortgage on Rosevallion."

"Oh, I see," John said; and he began again to water his flowers, while Paul caught up the pails and marched away down to the spring.

An hour later, when they sat in their little cabin and Paul had lighted the lamp, and John, deep in his rocking-chair, was pulling contentedly at his pipe, the latter looked up after a long interval of silence and said, "Would you mind reading me something, Paul?"

Paul gave a little start and then answered, "I shall be only too pleased to do so, father."

"You are quite sure it won't be troubling you too much?"

"Quite sure. Indeed, it will be no trouble at all, but a

pleasure." He might have added that it would be a relief to get away from his thoughts, for just then they were anything but pleasant. He added instead, "Is there anything particular you would like me to read."

"Well, yes," John answered slowly. "I should like to hear some bits out of that little red book of yours. 'In Memoriam,' I think you call it. I am not certain I understand it. I never could make much headway with poetry, except Wesley's Hymns. But some of the lines you read have kept running in my head ever since, and I get now and then glimpses of great meanings; but only glimpses. I should like to hear it again."

So Paul fetched the small, thin volume and opened it at the first page and began to read:—

"Strong Son of God, immortal Love,  
Whom we, that have not seen Thy face,  
By faith, and faith alone, embrace,  
Believing where we cannot prove;  
  
Thine are these orbs of light and shade.  
Thou madest Life in man and brute;  
Thou madest Death, and lo, Thy foot  
Is on the skull which Thou hast made.  
  
Thou wilt not leave us in the dust,  
Thou madest man, he knows not why;  
He thinks he was not made to die;  
And Thou hast made him: Thou art just."

"Hold, Paul," John said, taking his pipe out of his mouth. "Let me think of that. I do not remember hearing it before. It was farther on in the book where the words so touched me before about 'nothing walking with aimless feet;' but this is very beautiful. Read the last line again, so that I may fix it in my memory."

"And Thou hast made him: Thou art just."

"Ah, yes. If I had always believed that I should have been spared many a long night of doubt and trouble."

"Why, did you ever doubt that?" Paul asked, with a look of astonishment.



"Ah, my son," John answered in sad tones. "I cannot tell you all I have doubted. I used to think of an eternal hell of torment following a few foolish and sinful years on earth; of an Infinite Father handing over His own children to the care and companionship of devils; of sufferings terrible and remorseless, and no good to come from them, no soul to be purged thereby; of endless and countless generations spawned forth upon the strand of time, to wriggle and suffer for a few years in ignorance and darkness, and then to go out in endless night and endless suffering, for they know not what or why; of a God so fettered by His own attributes that He could not forgive His own child until He had extracted His pound of flesh; and many other things, taught me in my childhood, and never explained to me in my manhood, that my very sense of justice was outraged, my perception of goodness wronged and insulted, until I drifted on to the dark shore of doubt and lay stranded there for many a long day."

"And what now, father?" Paul asked in eager tones, for he had never seen him so moved before; never heard him speak with so much passion and emotion.

"Now, my boy," and a beautiful smile lit up his face, "now the light is breaking again. Since you came and read to me in the evenings, and we have talked together in the quiet gloaming, and I have thought and thought through the busy days, and through the solemn nights, new meanings have come to me; and through my doubts the light is beginning to shine."

"Oh, I am so glad," Paul said eagerly. "And yet I do not understand."

"And I fear I cannot explain it, my boy," John answered, with a world of tenderness shining in his eyes. "I am not good at putting my thoughts into shape. Besides, my thoughts have been so curious and vague."

"Excuse me, but I think you express your thoughts beautifully," Paul said, with a smile.

"Ah, my boy," and John returned the smile, "if you had groped in the darkness as I have done, then I could make perhaps my meaning clear. I had learnt a creed which contradicted itself at nearly every point; a creed which *said* that God was good, and yet ascribed to Him conduct which outraged every sense of right. A creed which *asserted* that God was abundant in mercy, and yet denied Him the right of showing mercy to a sinner until He had killed His own Son. A creed that made of the *physical* sufferings of Christ the pivot of *spiritual* redemption, and which turned the Atonement into a commercial bargain of the clumsiest nature. Is it any wonder that my heart revolted? I was asked to believe that black was white; that conduct which would be detestable in man was praiseworthy in God; that what would be accounted cruelty in a fellow creature was infinite love when applied to the Divine Being."

"And so you doubted God instead of doubting your creed?" Paul said, apprehending his father's position.

"That is just it," John said, sadly. "You will think me very foolish, but remember I have lived alone without books or teachers. My creed made God out to be a monster. To doubt my creed was to be an unbeliever; to be an unbeliever was to be damned; and if I was damned God would not care much as far as I could judge. Why should He? I was only one in countless millions; so many went to hell that one cry, more or less, would make no difference."

"But you had your New Testament?" Paul questioned.

"That is true, but I read my creed into it all, and so it did not help me much."

"But did it not occur to you that creeds are not infallible; that they are but the human dress in which men have had to clothe Divine Truth; that the dress might change—the clothes rot and fall into dust; that only the truth was immortal and would last for ever?"

"I am beginning to see that now," John said, with a smile. "That thought came to me one night back in the

winter while you were reading. It was what your poet calls 'a beam in darkness,' and it has been growing ever since."

"And with it your doubts have grown less?"

"Yes. I am beginning to realise that there may be a purpose—a wise, loving purpose—running through all that hitherto appeared purposeless. That hell, after all, may be as truly an expression of God's love as heaven; 'that nothing walks with aimless feet,' neither sin nor suffering, death nor the devil. Perhaps your poet does not mean all that. Will you find what he says and read?"

So Paul turned to the 54th stanza and read:—

"Oh, yet we trust that somehow good  
Will be the final goal of ill,  
To pangs of nature, sins of will,  
Defects of doubt and taints of blood."

"Yes, that is it," John said, eagerly, letting his pipe fall at the same time. "I could not put my thoughts into shape like that. But that is what I mean. Read on, Paul."

"That nothing walks with aimless feet;  
That not one life shall be destroyed,  
Or cast as rubbish to the void,  
When God hath made the pile complete;  
That not a worm is cloven in vain;  
That not a moth with vain desire  
Is shrivel'd in a fruitless fire,  
Or but subserves another's gain.  
Behold, we know not anything;  
I can but trust that good shall fall  
At last—far off—at last, to all,  
And every winter change to spring."

"To *all*," John murmured with closed eyes and clasped hands, "God grant that it may be so. No life destroyed. No wasted worth. No soul lost. Love overcoming all."

He did not hear the next verse, but he caught the one following:—

"The wish, that of the living whole  
No life may fall beyond the grave,  
Derives it not from what we have  
The likeliest God within the soul,

He held up his finger again. "Hush, Paul," he said. "That is new. Let me think of it. Let me grasp the thought if I can. This longing; this hope. Do we not derive it from what there is of God within us? And if it is God speaking within us, what then? Will He speak what is false? Will He whisper hopes only to mock us? Is the longing only to mislead us? Oh, Paul, if I could be sure. The hope is so bright, but my faith is so feeble."

"You are in sympathy with the poet, then?" said Paul.

"Nay, his faith was so strong and clear," was the answer.

"Not so, father. Listen to this—

"I stretch lame hands of faith, and grope,  
And gather dust and chaff, and call  
To what I feel is Lord of all,  
And faintly trust the larger hope."

"That will do for to-night," John said, after a moment's silence. "Fetch down the Bible and read a chapter, and I will pray. We have never had prayer together since you came, but we will to-night. I feel as though I had hold of the Father's hand, and I would like to speak to Him now He is near."

Paul looked at his father almost with a feeling of awe, and over his heart the question swept again, "Is he not ripening for a better country?" But he put it aside and went and fetched the Bible, and, opening it at St. John's Gospel, read the chapter commencing, "Let not your heart be troubled, ye believe in God, believe also in Me."

Now and then he looked up, and noted the rapt look upon his father's face, and wondered what it meant. When the chapter was ended the two men knelt down, and John prayed—a prayer so simple, so tender, so full of trust, that Paul wondered again. In the gentle utterance there was not the remotest shadow of a doubt. Had the longing lost itself in perfect faith? he wondered—the winter changed to spring? Truly it seemed so.

The prayer over, they rose from their knees, and grasped

each other's hands in silence, but on John Vivian's face there was a light that seemed not of earth, but was as though a ray from the heavenly country had fallen upon it, softening all the harsher features, and giving to the care-worn countenance a look of ineffable peace.

## CHAPTER XXX.

### PAUL MAKES A SUGGESTION.

"Be still, nor anxious thoughts employ ;  
Distrust embitters present joy ;  
On God for all events depend :  
You cannot want when God's your friend.  
Weigh well your part, and do your best ;  
Leave to your Maker all the rest."—COTTON.

AS the summer advanced Paul grew more and more anxious about his father's health. The hacking cough which had troubled him all the winter grew worse instead of better, while his appetite, always more or less fitful and capricious, threatened to fail him altogether.

John, however, made light of it. Said the summer months had always been trying to him ; that he had been often a great deal worse, and would soon be all right again. With these assurances Paul would fain be content, and tried to hope for the best. But in spite of his efforts his father's pale face constantly smote his heart with an uneasy feeling. He had seen men look that way before, had heard the Pen-wharf people speak of "miners' decline" when men drooped as his father was doing ; and feared, in spite of himself, that this brave, patient man—whom he loved with growing affection—was marked to fall.

But John appeared to have no such presentiment. He attributed his languor and loss of appetite to the hot weather, and had no doubt when the cooler weather came he would be as right as ever. Paul was, in some measure, re-assured by his uniform cheerfulness. John had always a smile for the handsome young man he called his son ; always a word to cheer when difficulties beset him in his work, and never a complaint to make of any kind. After the conversation recorded in the last chapter, John said very little about him-

self for many weeks, but he began to go to the service again on Sunday mornings, and to take a new interest in that Book of books, the Bible.

"Paul," he said, one Sunday evening as they sat together outside their cabin, "I have just finished the New Testament. I have read it straight through, during the last month, from beginning to end."

"Indeed," said Paul, looking up with a start, for he had been thinking of Abigail as he sat there among the lengthening shadows, and had been wandering in imagination with her out over the breezy bluffs of Rosevallion, toward the shining sea.

"I think I can only have read it in bits and scraps before," John said. "At any rate, it has seemed to me like a new book."

"It would seem like a new book to many other people, I expect, if they would read it in the same way," Paul answered.

"I am sure it would," John said. "The way sentences and verses have been torn away from their connections to support this dogma or that view, never appeared to me as it has done lately. I can understand now how the Bible can be made to prove anything!"

"Can you?" said Paul, with a smile.

"Why, it has been a perfect revelation to me," John went on. "During the winter and spring I have had a complete shaking up, as you know. The books you read to me brought fresh thoughts, and flashed new meanings into old truths, turned my old beliefs inside out, and interpreted the Bible on a new principle."

"On a new principle?" questioned Paul; "I don't quite see that."

"Not new to you, perhaps," was the answer, "for you have lived in the present; but new to me, for I have been living in the past. I learnt the Catechism before I began to read the New Testament, and then I read the New Testament to find in it confirmation of the Catechism."

"And quite right, if the Catechism was right," said Paul.

"And quite wrong if it wasn't," was the laughing rejoinder.

"Just so. But what now?"

"Why, I have been reading with scarcely any fixed opinions at all—without prejudices, if I may say so; and so it seems to me a new book."

"But the new principle?" persisted Paul.

"To read it in the light of one great central and eternal truth."

"And that truth?"

"God is Love."

Paul was silent. He scarcely saw the drift yet of his father's words. John got up and walked out to the edge of the shadows thrown by the forest trees, and stood for a moment with his head in the sunshine, his face aglow with its light. Paul looked up, and grew pale almost to the lips. Across his heart swept again that strange presentiment. "This man is ripening for a better land and a better life." Standing there, with his feet on the edge of the shadows, his head in the golden light of the glowing west, it seemed like the symbol of a deeper truth, a truth he could not shape into words, but which, nevertheless, stirred his heart to its very depths. For several seconds the miner stood there, then moved further out, till the light clothed him from head to foot like a mantle, and lay upon his head like a crown of glory; and into his eyes there came a look as though he saw beyond the sunset gates; and around his mouth a smile began to play as though he rejoiced in the contemplation of a scene so fair.

Paul heaved a sigh of relief when he came back again into the shadow, and sat down by his side.

"Do you see my meaning?" he asked, as though there had been no break in the conversation.

"Not quite," was the answer.

"Well, I have never heard it explained; but all I have heard and thought of late shapes itself into this: all truth



must agree—that is, every truth must agree with every other.”

“Yes, I see that,” answered Paul.

“Well, now, is there one truth in the Bible which is beyond cavil, or quibble, or doubt of any kind, a truth which cannot be twisted or perverted, a truth which is above theory or dogma? If there is such a truth, then I can test by it every other statement in the book, every dogma, and every doctrine. Do you see?”

“Yes, that is clear enough.”

“Well, I have such a truth. ‘God is Love.’ That is not a theory or an opinion, but a fact. You cannot get behind it. It is not a fact arrived at by any process of induction, it is a simple and direct statement. For the future that is my canon of interpretation.”

“Which is to say you will make every other passage of Scripture agree with it.”

“It is not a case of *make* at all. It does agree—must agree. And if there is a passage that appears not to agree, well, then, I have got hold of a wrong idea of the passage.”

“What would you make of the text, ‘For our God is a consuming fire’?” Paul asked.

“The very passage that first confronted me,” John said. “But I think I see through it. You have here a *figure* of speech. In the words ‘God is love’ you have the *fact*. The *figure* and *fact* seem to contradict each other. What must I do, then? Twist and pervert the *fact* in order to harmonize it with the *figure*, or explain the *figure* in harmony with the *fact*?”

“Well, I should say explain the *figure* to harmonize with the *fact*, if you can do so, but I do not see how it is possible.”

“You will if you think about it,” John said. “Is not fire a beneficent agent? Is it not man’s friend and servant? It may work mischief sometimes, it is true, but so may the sun, and the wind, and the rain, and so the *figure* used conveys the idea of blessing, not of cursing.”

“But what do you make of a *consuming* fire?” said Paul, now thoroughly interested in the subject.

"Just what I make of all the rest," John said, with a smile. "Sweep into the furnace all that is rotten, putrid, corrupt, foul-smelling, and what happens? It is consumed, cleansed, not destroyed, mind you, but broken up; its constituent elements (I'm not quite certain I'm making a right use of words), its various gases, separated from each other, and all cleansed. When the work is done nothing has been destroyed, but all purified. So I take it, God is a great cleansing or consuming fire, and when we have passed through the burning furnace of His hand we shall come out fit to live and fit to reign. Is it not beautiful?"

"I must think about it again," Paul said, looking up into his father's pale, patient face. "It is a passage which has often perplexed me."

"I fear I am not good in making my meanings clear," John said, "and, besides, I am only like the blind man upon whom the light began to break, 'I see men as trees walking.' I shall see more clearly by-and-bye," and he clasped his hands while a rapt expression swept over his face.

Paul looked up and wondered, as he had often done of late, at the change which had come over him. A new light had evidently broken upon his life; a new hope inspired his heart.

When Paul first came to Cedar Creek, nearly a year ago, a tinge of melancholy seemed to colour all his life. He was always patient and gentle; yet an undertone of sadness lurked in all his words, and echoed faintly through his laughter, as though hope had died within him, and life had nothing more to offer. But gradually, almost imperceptibly, a change had taken place. Gentle as the dawn a new and larger hope had risen in his soul; silent as the opening of a flower it came, refreshing as the breath of evening after a summer's sultry day. John wondered at himself at first. It was as though a weight had fallen from his heart. Yet when it fell he did not know, and he was afraid to enquire lest the spell should be broken, and the weight come back again. He did not heed that his face grew paler and more transparent and his

cough more persistent than it had ever been. He only knew he was happier than he had been for many a long year, while the path he was treading no longer narrowed downward into darkness, but broadened upward into clearer light and ever-growing beauty.

The daylight began to fade at length, and Paul rose to go in.

"We had better not stay out any longer," he said. "You must be careful of getting a fresh cold, for your cough has been rather troublesome to-day."

"Oh, it is nothing to worry about," was the cheerful answer.

"I am not so sure of that," said Paul. "The truth is you need a change. I have thought so for weeks past. You have been cooped up in this little creek for a dozen years and more. If you could get away for a change and rest, it would do you a world of good. Why don't you take a run home, and have a look at mother and David?"

This last suggestion was a sudden thought, and he had let it out without giving it a moment's consideration.

John gave a little start, and was silent for a few seconds, then, looking up with a smile, he said,

"Have you got tired of me so soon?"

"You dear old dad, you know I need not answer that question. I am not thinking of myself at all, but of you. I should feel lost without you. But if a change would add ten years to your life, would I selfishly stand in the way?"

"My boy, I know you would do anything for me," John said. "But I am not certain your scheme would work."

"Why so?"

"Well, to begin with, I have not saved enough to live at home without working. To take a little farm would be risky; for neither I nor mother know much about farming; and to go to work again in Wheal Anthony for fifteen shillings a week is scarcely an inviting prospect." He might have added that he was not at all certain his wife would care for him to come home, but on that point he was silent.

"But that is not my scheme," said Paul. "You might at least afford a twelve-months' holiday. I will keep the pot boiling for that length of time, anyhow. You might, while at home, see some business that would suit you. If not, you could come back again. Perhaps mother would return with you. 'But my scheme is a twelve-months' holiday—just that, and nothing more.'"

John was silent. Paul's words had evidently touched a sympathetic chord in his heart. That he would like to go home there could be no doubt. To visit his native land, and look once more upon the faces of those he loved, was the one hope which had cheered him on through years of toil and difficulty. Long years ago he would have returned, but that he believed his wife did not wish him to do so. She did not love him—had never done so. So she had told him. And during all the years of his absence she had never responded to his suggestions to come home with a single word of encouragement. If she did not love him when he lived at home it was hardly likely she loved him now after nearly twenty years of absence. Of late he had let the subject drop, and had sometimes seriously wondered whether he would ever go home again. But now Paul's suggestion had awakened again the old desire. At least, he might take a holiday and visit his native land, if he did not remain there.

"I don't know but that your idea is a good one, after all," he said at length. "I do think a change would do me good, and since the railway has been made across the continent, the journey is not such a long one. Pass me my pipe and 'bacca, lad; I'll have a smoke over it."

"And while you are burning your idol and meditating on my suggestion, I'll get supper ready," answered Paul.

For the rest of the evening very little more was said. Possessed of this new idea, John could think of nothing else, and the more he thought of it, the more it commended itself to him. The only difficulty in the way was his wife. Would she resent his home-coming? If he could only be

certain of a welcome from her, he would not hesitate a moment. But until he had ascertained her wishes in the matter, he could come to no decision.

"Look here, Paul," he said at length, "it's bedtime ; but I think I'll stay up a few minutes longer and write to mother. Don't you stay up unless you wish."

"Oh, if you're going to write, I'm off," said Paul, with a laugh ; "but I'll prophesy that both mother and David will jump at the idea."

"In which case I shall be leaving you alone about the end of August, unless you return with me."

Paul's heart gave a great bound. If he went home he might see Abigail again. She was not to be married till her birthday, which was near the end of September. He might be in time to catch one glimpse of her face before she became Nick Trebarwith's wife. But the feeling was only momentary.

"I must stay here to keep the house in repair," he said ; "and if mother comes out with you I shall have to enlarge it."

"My boy, imagination runs fast," John answered, with a smile ; "but, good-night, and pleasant dreams."

Long after Paul was asleep John sat at the table busily writing. No sound broke the oppressive stillness but the scratching of his pen. One after another the lights went out in the camp, till the light from John's cabin window alone illumined the darkness. A solitary Indian, passing onward like a spectre through the night, paused for a moment, and tried to get a glimpse of the room within, then moved away again with silent footfall, and vanished in the darkness. And still John wrote on, for he had much to say ; but the letter was finished at length, and after he had carefully read it through, and made one or two corrections, he neatly folded it, placed it in an envelope, and addressed it. Then, with a sigh, he took up his lamp and retired to his bedroom. But the dawn of a new day began to creep through the narrow window ere he :

## CHAPTER XXXI.

"IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN."

"In all my wanderings round this world of care,  
In all my grief, and God has given my share—  
I still had hopes my latest hours to crown,  
Amidst these humble bowers to lay me down ;  
To husband out life's taper at the close,  
And keep the flame from wasting by repose."—GOLDSMITH.

MARY VIVIAN debated with herself some considerable time as to the kind of reply she should send to her husband's letter. Had she followed the promptings of her heart, no debate would have been necessary. She would have sent him a message of love and approval by return of post. But where her husband was concerned she rarely allowed her heart to rule. She had got a notion into her head that he wanted to humiliate her, to compel her to plead with him to come home, and she had resolved from the first that she never would do so. "He had gone away of his own free will, and of his own free will he should come back," so she had said to herself again and again. That she often desired him to come back, often felt the need of his assistance in bringing up the boys, she freely admitted to herself, and yet her very need seemed but to harden her heart. "He shall never know," she would say to herself with hard set face. "He shall see I can do without him. I can be as firm and proud as he, and if he thinks I will bend my neck and ask him to return he shall find out his mistake."

She did not take into account the fact that he had gone away because he believed his presence was distasteful to her. She had told him in blunt and bitter words that she did not love him, and had married him only to spite another. But she lacked the refinement of feeling which he possessed, and

could not appreciate the motives which kept him away. "A husband's duty," she would say to herself, "is to live with his wife and children, and not to go away and sulk over hasty words."

She did not acknowledge it was a wife's duty to confess her mistake when she discovered it, and to let truth and love rule her life, and not pride. In her heart she knew all the while that she was in the wrong; that it was her duty to tell her husband she had discovered her mistake; that she no longer loved Nicholas Bray, but loved only him. But to do that she imagined would be to humble herself before her husband, to own herself conquered. "No," she said, "it shall never be."

So the years rolled on, as we have seen, and husband and wife remained apart. Again and again he had said in his letters how much he longed to come home, how his heart ached to see the children and her, and if she would only say the words, "she would like him to come," he would hurry away at once. Of late years, however, he had rarely alluded to the matter. It seemed clear enough to him she did not want him. As long as she received a maintenance she appeared to be satisfied, and so he allowed the subject to drop.

Mary was surprised to receive a second letter within a week, and more surprised when she had mastered the contents. For three days she carried it in her pocket, and then having decided what answer to make, she sat down to reply.

She was not in the best of humours, for she was quite alone. The village school was closed for the "Harvest Holiday," and David had taken advantage of a cheap excursion to London to visit the Metropolis. She was not over-pleased at his going, especially as he had objected to her accompanying him. Her eyes were not quite so fast closed as they had been respecting his real character. Since Paul went away several little matters had come to light which had made her very anxious. Had Paul been at home no suspicion

would have fallen upon David. Now there was no one else on whom it could fall. That there was anything really dishonourable in David's conduct she would not believe for a moment. To do so would be a reflection upon herself. She had devoted her best energies to the training of her son, and it would be too humiliating to suppose that her efforts had been wasted. Still she was not altogether satisfied. He spent so few of his evenings at home, kept such late hours when he was out, brought home companions who could talk about nothing but horse-racing and kindred sports; insisted upon having a latch-key, and grumbled loudly if she waited up for him, and, more than all, was so dissatisfied with his work at the school that she began to fear in spite of herself that he was getting into unsatisfactory ways.

She often wished during the long lonely evenings that her husband was at home; wished it not only for her own sake, but for David's. Now again, after a long silence on the subject, he had expressed a desire to come home, and only waited her approval. Should she say yes? She took his letter out of her pocket and read the first part of it again.

"My dear wife," it began. He generally commenced his letters "Dear Mary."

"You will be surprised to get another letter from me so soon; but Paul and I have been having a long talk to-day, and he has made a suggestion which has stirred my heart very deeply. He thinks I am not looking very well, and that I need a rest and change. Of course there is no reason for his anxiety. But he is such a kind, noble lad, is Paul, always thinking more about others than about himself. And his very love for me seems to make him anxious. I am always a little languid during the summer months, and this year the weather has been hotter than usual. I have no doubt I shall be all right again when the cooler weather comes. But Paul, bless him, wants me to take a twelve-months' rest and visit the old country, and you. He is getting large wages now, and he says he will gladly keep the 'pot boiling' while I am away. I don't want him to do that, of course, for I could afford such a trip as he suggests. But all this, Mary, opens up the old question. I do not wish to come back against your will. God knows how my heart has hungered for you and the children for years, and when Paul came he seemed like an angel from Heaven, and how much he has been to me during the last year no words can tell. I remember telling you that morning, when I found



him asleep in the porch of the old house down against Port Stormel, that he might prove a comfort and a blessing. Little did I think how prophetic my words would prove. He *has* been a comfort, Mary. In my little cabin he is like constant sunshine. He always has a smile for me, and is ever planning some little surprise to give me pleasure. He carved me a pipe out of a piece of hard wood, for my Christmas present, that would astonish you. It is quite a work of art, and the little knick-knacks he has made for the cabin—well, I could not begin to tell you about them. Comfort is not the word to express all he has been to me. He has been my salvation; almost. In my darkness he came like a ray of light. Oh, Mary, I am more than proud of him! The day's toil seems light in looking forward to an evening with Paul, and the Sabbaths are a delight spent in his company. I see more clearly what true religion means since he came here than ever I did before. Not that he talks about himself, for he doesn't. Nor does he parade religion in any way. He is as unaffected as a child. But I do believe he is trying his best to live what I heard a preacher once call 'the Christ life' on earth. And a sweeter life I have never seen. Everybody in the camp loves him. He is so true in everything. I look at him often, till tears of thankfulness come into my eyes. And when to-day he kept urging me to take a holiday, and his voice expressed so much anxiety and affection, I could not help thanking Heaven for such a son.

"Well, Mary, I have told you a great deal of this before. But I know it must please you to learn what a credit he is to your training. And now to come back again to the main object of this letter.—Will you let me know, Mary, by return, what your wishes are in the matter? God knows, I care more for your happiness than my own. Indeed, my own happiness is bound up in yours. Yet my heart is hungering for a sight of your face, and I long once more to look into my little David's eyes. I hope he is good, like Paul. If you would be happier as you are, you have only to say the word, and I will respect your wishes. Since Paul came my life is not lonely as it used to be, and I can be quite happy here with him if I know you are happy at home. Paul thinks you will be pleased to have me at home, and prophesies that both you and David will say by return 'Come.' I am not so sanguine myself. I am getting an elderly man now, and if when I was young you had but little space for me in your heart, it seems hardly likely you can care more for me to-day. But I leave the matter with you, and in the meanwhile shall wait very anxiously for your letter."

At this point Mary pushed the letter from her, and took up her pen. There were tears in her eyes, though her face was hard and set. She was angry with herself that her husband's words could touch her heart so quickly.

"I am like all the other silly women," she said, bitterly, "ready to fall down at the feet of a man as soon as he speaks

a pleasant word. I thought I had grown out of that nonsense. I daresay Paul has been retailing all the chance expressions he has overheard, and so he thinks I shall say 'Come,' by return of post. Ah, well, we shall see."

And she began to write in a hurried manner, never pausing until the letter was completed, and when she had sealed it, she put on her bonnet, and went out, taking the letter with her.

"I'd better send it off at once," she reflected, "or I may turn weak, and change my mind."

On the way to the post-office she passed Toby Wrench, but she would not look at him. Toby, seeing her coming, had given his trousers the usual hitch, and closed one of his eyes, preparatory to addressing her, but ere he could get the words out she had swept past him.

"Humph!" said Toby, turning on his heel, and looking after her; "proud woman, that. Awful proud. I wonder what she thinks'll become o' her. Of all things in the world I hate pride an' 'boastin' most." And Toby gave his trousers another hitch, and hobbled on his way.

"Proud old hypocrite," was Mary Vivian's reflection, as she swept past him. "He thinks because he's in the Queen's service, as he calls it, that everybody should curtsy to him. I'll teach him a lesson." And she raised her chin at least three inches, and marched on.

On leaving the post-office, she saw approaching, with very leisurely step, Abigail Tresillian. Instantly Mary's haughty manner disappeared, and with a pleasant smile upon her face she went to meet her. Always neat herself, Mary could not help admiring neatness and good looks in others. And certainly it would have been hard to find a fairer picture than Abigail presented that afternoon. She was dressed in simple white—as on that day Paul met her so many years ago—relieved here and there with bows of pale blue ribbon. A sailor's hat lay lightly on her wealth of shining hair, and in her hand she carried a light sunshade. Mary could not help

remarking how gracefully the folds of her dress fell round her perfect figure, and how easy and graceful was her every movement. She met Mary's outstretched hand with a smile of welcome; while the colour perceptibly deepened on her fair neck and face. She could never see Mary Vivian without thinking of Paul, and it was the thought of him that brought the colour to her cheek.

"I am glad to see you, Miss Abigail," Mary said, in her most deferential manner. "Are you nearly well again?"

"Oh, yes, thank you," she answered, while a smile, half sad, half sweet, lighted up her face. "I am not quite as strong as I was, though I think I am gathering strength daily."

"Joy is a wonderful healer," Mary said, firing a random shot, and watching her face narrowly to see what effect it would have.

"Joy?" questioned Abigail, with a look of surprise, while the colour faded from her face. "I do not quite understand."

"Preparing for the wedding is always a happy time for the bride," Mary answered.

"Is it?" was the simple answer, and the colour came back to her face again with a rush.

"Well, it's supposed to be, you know, and I've no doubt is in most instances."

"Yes, no doubt," was the quiet reply.

"And a busy time, too. I suppose you are making great preparations?"

"I am not doing much myself. I am not strong enough yet; and could I have my own way, I would have a quiet wedding. But pa and Mr. Trebarwith will not hear of it."

"Ay, the men always rule, or try to," Mary said, grimly. "And they'll continue to rule while the women tamely submit."

"I suppose it is our place to obey," Abigail answered, with a little sigh.

"No, I don't believe it is," Mary said, with energy.

"Ah! well, we will not discuss the question," was the

quiet answer. "Have you heard from abroad lately—that is, have you heard from your husband and—and Paul?"

"Yes, I heard from my husband on Monday, and Paul wrote to me the week before."

"And is he—I mean, are they both well?"

"Paul is very well. My husband complains of the heat, but the summers have always been a little trying to him."

"Would you remember me to Paul when next you write?" and a soft blush, sweet as the dawn, spread over Abigail's face while she spoke. "We have been such old friends, you know; and I should like to be remembered to him."

"I will do so with pleasure," Mary said. "He will be glad to know his old friends do not forget him," and then they parted.

"Poor child," Mary said to herself as she walked toward her home. "Anyone with half an eye can see she is not happy. Enoch Tresillian is sacrificing her to his hateful pride."

Poor Mary! She did not see, or would not see, that she was doing the same thing with her husband. She could see the mote in her neighbour's eye, but was unconscious of the beam in her own. The harvest of pride in Enoch Tresillian's family had long been patent to her. But she professed not to see that it was her own hateful and stubborn pride which kept her husband in exile, which kept her weak and yielding son without a father's counsel and protection, and which saddened and soured her own lonely life.

But for her own and Enoch Tresillian's pride, how different things would have been. Paul and Abigail might have been happy. Jack might have been a dutiful son at home. John Vivian might have lived in comfort in the bosom of his family; and David, with a firm hand to guide him, might have been a comfort to his parents.

Alas for those "might have beens." Sweet Maud Müller may be loved by the judge, and may love him in return. But pride silences the lover's tongue, and checks the current

of his strong affection. Lives which were intended of Heaven to flow together are kept apart, and hopes beautiful as the blush of morning end in darkness and pain, because pride blows upon them its poisonous breath. And Mrs. Grundy reigns supreme.

Enoch Tresillian was proud of his pride, and hugged it as a virtue. He could not see that it was the very bane of his life, and was plunging his family into irretrievable misery ; while poor Mary Vivian was as blind as he. But the day was surely coming when the eyes of both would be opened. And yet what avails the opened eyes if the light be gone ? Surely we had better never have the knowledge if by its light we see only the words "too late." But truth will not be mocked, and if we reject it to-day we must pay the penalty of our rejection by-and-bye.

## CHAPTER XXXII.

### TOO LATE.

Shun delays, they breed remorse,  
Take thy time, while time is lent thee ;  
Creeping snails have weakest force,  
Fly their fault, lest thou repent thee ;  
Good is best when soonest wrought,  
Lingering labours come to nought."—SOUTHWELL.

IT was the middle of September when Mary's letter reached her husband. The cooler weather had come, but he was no better. Indeed, he was decidedly worse. For nearly a fortnight he had been anxiously expecting her answer, and with each day's disappointment he seemed to lose something of his hold upon life. He had been very hopeful when he sent away his letter that his last appeal would be successful, more especially as Paul was so confident. But when the time came for receiving an answer, and the days passed on, one after another, and no letter came, he began to fear the worst. And so, as we said, nearly a fortnight passed away, and then the long-expected letter was brought up from the boarding-house.

With trembling hand he tore open the envelope, and eagerly devoured the contents. It was only a short letter, terse and straightforward, as Mary's letters usually were.

"You decided to go away without consulting me," the letter said ; "I don't see why you need consult me about coming home. We have been married five-and-twenty years, and I have never yet interfered with your movements. It is too late to begin now. If you like to come home, you may be quite sure I shall not put a straw in your way."

A few items of news were added to the foregoing, and the letter closed in the usual way. John's face grew paler with

each line he read, and when he had finished it he crumpled it in his hand and walked away into his little garden at the back of the cabin.

Written words are often cold and treacherous things. We read into them sometimes a great deal more than the writer ever intended, we interpret them according to the mood we happen to be in. This was the case with John Vivian.

"I believe she hates me," he said bitterly, to himself, "and she cannot help showing it now after nearly twenty years. Oh, Mary! Mary!" and the poor fellow raised his thin hands to his face, and something like a sob escaped his lips.

Three or four times he walked slowly round his garden, then he paused and straightened himself. Behind the forest the sun had disappeared, but on the eastern hills the light still glowed. John stood watching it for several minutes as it slowly faded, then he heaved a sigh and walked away toward his cabin.

"Paul will be in to supper directly," he said to himself. "I must not give way for his sake." But he looked so pale and haggard that Paul was quite startled when he came in at length.

"You are getting anxious, father, at not hearing from home," he said, looking wistfully into his large, sorrowful eyes.

"I have heard from home to-day, Paul."

"Oh, I did not know; and when will you start?"

"When I start, my boy, it will be on a longer journey than to England, and one from which I shall never return."

"What do you mean, father?" Paul asked, turning pale. "Has anything happened? Are you worse?"

"I am about as usual, my son," he said, with a sad smile, "but I am scarcely well enough to undertake a journey to England."

"But mother wishes you to come, and David will be so disappointed," said Paul, eagerly. "Besides, to get away

from this place will be like medicine to you. Perhaps, by the time you get there, you will be quite strong."

"I have not heard from David," John answered. "And mother's letter is only indefinite. But it has decided me not to go this year."

"Oh, I am so sorry," Paul said. "Not but that I should be awfully sorry to lose you, and Cedar Creek would seem like another place if you were away. But I am sure you need rest and change, and you ought to have it."

"I shall have both by-and-bye, my son," he answered. "So don't vex yourself about me."

"But I cannot help it," Paul said. "The cooler weather has come, and your cough sticks to you, and you are no stronger than you were in July."

John smiled a little sadly, and then answered, "One cannot recover in a day, my son. Have patience; I shall pick up again after a bit."

"God grant you may," Paul remarked. And then he went out to a long wooden trough at the end of the house—kept always full by a little mountain stream—to get his evening's ablution before supper.

Almost before the meal was ended, Israel Truscott came in, and a little later on Luke Abbott; and then two or three Cornish boys, who lived at the boarding house, put in an appearance. John got out all the chairs he had, and pipes were lighted all round, and after two or three whiffs, Luke started to tell a new yarn he had heard, and which he embellished by sundry reflections of his own, strengthening its weak places by touches from his own imagination, and adding a climax that was entirely original.

Paul said it reminded him of some of Toby Wrench's stories, and forthwith proceeded, with a very grave face, to tell one of them, much to the delight of the Cornish "boys," though Luke said he failed to see where the point came in.

"That's because the story caps yours," said Israel Truscott,



with a laugh. "You Yankees never like to be outdone by a Britisher."

"Wall," said Luke, with a drawl, "I don't deny that statement. We don't like being licked, and, what is more, we never air licked. There ain't a nation on this terrestrial globe as can lick us, and man for man we always come out on the top."

"All legs," put in Matt Snell. "Measure legs and you have it."

"And I guess heads have it, too," said Luke. "Excuse me, mates, for saying it, but you Britishers lack imagination, you do."

"That charge can't be laid at your door, anyhow," John Vivian put in, with a smile.

"Well, no, I guess I've that bump pretty well developed, that's the reason I've found fault with the story Paul has just told."

"Get away," laughed Truscott, "the humour of it was so fine that you hadn't wit enough to see it."

This was such a terribly severe home-thrust that all the others laughed aloud, in which Luke heartily joined, for he very rarely lost his temper, and always enjoyed a good point, though it told against himself.

In the present case it suggested to him some long-forgotten story, which he proceeded to tell in his own inimitable fashion, and which, needless to say, told heavily against the Britisher generally.

So the evening wore away in pleasant, if not in profitable fashion, and when the last guest had taken his departure, both Paul and John were quite ready for bed. To the latter, however, sleep was impossible. He did not know how strong his hope had been until now it was so rudely shattered. Mary's letter was like the blow of an axe cutting through the main root of a tree. His hold upon life had been lessened to a degree he had no conception of. Save for Paul, there was nothing left to live for; and if he died there was no one

to grieve for him but this young man, and he was not his son.

"I must go on here until I die," he said to himself, sadly. "I could not go home to be loathed. I love Mary too well to make her miserable by my presence; but, oh, I did hope for a little love from her before I died."

He tried to keep every hard and bitter feeling out of his heart, and in the main succeeded; but when morning came he was quite prostrate, and unable to go to his work. Paul hesitated no longer about sending for a doctor. Hitherto John had stubbornly opposed it, and Paul had to yield to his will; but now his case had grown so serious that he felt it would be criminal any longer to delay. A coach ran between Cedar Creek and Soudra—the nearest town of any importance—every other day: that is, it went to Soudra on one day and returned the next. Paul got to the boarding-house just before the hour of starting, and delivered his written message into the hands of Dan Crabtree, the driver. •

"Father is real ill," Paul explained to Dan, "and if Dr. Bell doesn't drive over himself to-night, don't you come without him to-morrow morning."

"That I won't," said Dan, with whom Paul was a great favourite. "But I hope that nothin' serious ails the boss."

"I don't know," said Paul, looking anxious; "he hasn't been quite well for a long time, and we've kept hoping he would mend; and all the while he's grown worse."

"Perhaps Bell'll soon set him right," Dan said, mounting the box and gathering up the reins in his hand; "but I must be moving, any road."

Paul returned to his father's bedside with a sad and troubled face. He could not help feeling that this was the beginning of the end. He had seen miners in Penwharf droop and fade in the same way; daily growing weaker in spite of every effort to keep up their strength, till at length they could hold up no longer, and then fading swiftly out of life. •

John looked up in surprise when Paul came into his room. "I thought you had gone to work, my son," he said, with a world of affection shining in his eyes.

"No, father; I could not go to work and leave you all alone," he said.

"It is very good of you," John answered, a little bit huskily. "But I should take no harm; I've often been alone in the years gone by. I hope by to-morrow I shall be all right again."

"I've sent a message to Dr. Bell, asking him to drive over and see you," Paul said, after a pause.

"Oh, well, he can do me no harm, I expect," he answered, with a wistful smile; "but I haven't much faith in doctors."

"It's always more satisfactory to see a doctor, whether we believe in them or not," Paul said, and then he went off into the little kitchen to cook something tasty for his father's breakfast.

On the following morning Dr. Bell drove over in his own buggy, and remained with John over an hour, making a very careful diagnosis of the case. He said very little, but his face was very grave when he came out of the room. Paul followed him out of the house, so that John should not overhear what was said. Paul was the first to speak.

"You look very grave, doctor," he said, "I hope it is not a very serious case?"

"I am sorry to say it is very serious," the doctor answered. "The truth is, the case is hopeless. I can patch him up for a few months, but nothing on earth can cure him."

Paul grew very white, and his lip trembled a little, but he kept his voice steady. "What is the disease he is suffering from?" he asked.

"Consumption," was the answer, "or what is often known in mining districts as 'miners' decline.' It is a very insidious disease, often deeply rooted even before its presence is suspected. In the case of your father it has been eating its way for years."

"And is there no cure?" Paul asked.

"None whatever. He may live a good many months with care, or a severe fit of coughing might rupture a blood vessel, and so end his life at any moment."

"You will come again, of course?"

"Yes, I will run over in a week's time or so; but I can do very little good. I will send a tonic by coach to-morrow, and a bottle of medicine for his cough. He will be out of doors in a day or two if the weather keeps mild, and, perhaps, will keep on his feet to the last. Let him take all the nourishing food he can eat, and keep worry from him as much as possible."

Paul went up into the garden after the doctor had left. He wanted to recover himself before he appeared before his father again. He knew he would be questioned closely respecting what the doctor had said, and he wanted to decide how much it would be safe to tell him. It was only by a strong effort he could control his feelings. All his worst fears had been realised to their full. The man whom he loved almost as his life was going away from him, on a journey from which he would never return. It seemed very hard. The love of his father had in some measure compensated him for the loss of Abigail, and now to lose him was like being robbed of everything he had on earth.

He felt, however, that for his father's sake he must not give way. And after taking three or four turns round the garden he went into the house and into his father's room.

"Well, my son," John said, greeting him with a pleasant smile, "and what does the doctor say?"

"Oh, he says you'll be out again and about your work in a few days."

John smiled a little, and then answered,

"But he did not say he could cure me."

"No, father, he did not. Why should he?"

"Yes, why should he? He knows I am past cure, Paul."

"You should not say that, father," Paul answered.

"Medical skill can do a great deal, and the blessing of God can do a great deal more."

"Yes, that is true, my boy. But the woodman has gone through the forest marking the trees that must fall, and he has left his mark on me."

"Don't say that, father," said Paul, piteously. "It was only a few weeks ago you would have it that nothing ailed you."

"I did hope so till within the last fortnight, though I have had fears for a long time past. Now I know, Paul. But don't fret, my boy, I am in good hands, and am quite content."

"If you give up in this way you will soon be really ill," Paul replied, making a desperate effort to control his feelings.

"For your sake, Paul, I won't give up any sooner than I can help," was the smiling answer. "For your sake, I will live as long as I can."

"That's good of you," Paul said, with a laugh, "and after that I shall expect you to get better right away."

"I'll do my best," was the reply. And he did. In a few days he was out of doors again, looking pale and languid, it is true, but apparently not much worse than he had been for a long time past.

During October he seemed to regain some of his lost strength, while his appetite was better than it had been for months past. Paul began to feel quite hopeful, in spite of what the doctor had told him, and to fancy that his complete recovery was only a work of time. To gather strength while the flowers drooped, and the leaves fluttered silently to the earth, was to him a very hopeful sign.

"You'll be able to weather the winter bravely, father," he said to him one day. "You are far better than you were a month ago."

"Yes, I'm a lot better," John answered. "Far better than I ever expected to be."

"And the Indian summer is yet to come," Paul said, cheerfully. "Oh, you'll get better, never fear."

"I hope so, Paul, for your sake," John answered, and then the conversation drifted away to other subjects.

So the days passed on, and October reached its last day. Paul was eagerly expecting, yet dreading, the next letter from home, which should tell of the marriage of Abigail. He was standing in the doorway, waiting the arrival of the coach which would bring, perhaps, the expected and yet dreaded news. Suddenly a cry from his father's room startled him, and rushing in, he found him lying on the bed, the pillow of which was saturated with blood.

He knew in a moment what had happened. The dreaded hemorrhage from the lungs had taken place, and with a low cry he bent over his father's prostrate form. His eyes were closed, his face almost as white as the unstained part of the pillow, but he still breathed.

"Anyone at home?" someone after awhile called from the next room. •

"Is that you, Israel?" Paul answered back.

"Ay, I've brought you a letter."

"Throw it on the table and come here; father is taken worse."

Instantly Israel was by his side, and for an anxious hour the two men did all they could for the sufferer. Then John opened his eyes and smiled feebly, and soon after fell asleep. Next morning, when the doctor arrived, he had rallied considerably, but for two or three days his life trembled in the balance, and no one could tell which way the scale would turn. Then the tide of life began to flow back again, but so slowly as to be almost imperceptible. •

In the meanwhile, the letter from home had been forgotten. Paul, in his anxiety about his father, had pushed it unheeding into a drawer, and there it had lain unread for more than a week. •

"It seems a long time since we heard from home," John

said one afternoon, as he sat propped up with pillows, trying to take a little tea.

"Oh! I had quite forgotten," Paul said, hurriedly. "A letter came the very evening you were taken worse, but anxiety about you drove it completely out of my mind. I wonder where I can have laid it!" and he instantly left the room. In a moment or two he was back again.

"Here it is, father," he said, cheerfully. "I'm sorry I am so forgetful."

John took the letter without a word, tore it open, and began to read—

"My darling husband," the letter began, "do come home to me at once. David has got into trouble, and is gone away I know not where. Oh; my husband! I have loved you, and longed for your coming all these years, but my proud and stubborn heart would not let me tell you. Now God has humbled me in the dust, and in my trouble I long for you. Oh, John, my love, my life, come home, and come quickly——"

At this point the letter fell from his hand, and with a low moan; "Too late, too late," he fell back unconscious upon the bed.

## CHAPTER XXXIII.

### NEARING HOME.

" Our lives are rivers, gliding free  
To that unfathomed, boundless sea,  
The silent grave !  
Thither all earthly pomp and boast  
Roll, to be swallowed up and lost  
In one dark wave."—LONGFELLOW.

SPRING had come again ; and John Vivian still lingered on the river's brink, waiting for the dividing of the waters. For nearly six months he had scarcely been outside the door of his little home, yet he never complained. He was thankful he was not confined to his bed. He could still dress himself without assistance, and occasionally do a few things about the house ; and the feeling that he was not altogether helpless and worthless was a great comfort to him. It had been a great grief to him that his wife's appeal had come too late, and it seemed at first as though he would never be able to reconcile himself to his fate. For more than nineteen years he had been in exile, and during nearly all that time he had longed—no one could tell how much—for that brief appeal, "John, come home." And now when it had come he could not respond. But resignation came to him at last, and he was able to bow his head in submission and say, "Thy will be done." It was like a perpetual benediction to be in his company during those last few months of his life. After a hard and bitter struggle he had come into the "perfect peace."

Every week he got a letter from his wife full of love and penitence and regret. These letters he cherished more than if they had been Bank of England notes. Over and over again he read them till he knew them by heart, and nearly



every day he devoted a few minutes in writing to her, for he could not write long at once. He could hardly realize the change that had come over her. This great trouble about David had broken down all her stubborn pride, and unstopped the fountain of her affection. John felt almost thankful for the trouble, for it had given back to him the love of his wife for which he had longed for so many years. What had become of David no one knew. He had got into debt and disgrace, and knowing that exposure was inevitable had run away. He had written one brief note to his mother, bearing the London postmark, about a week after he left home; since then nothing had been heard of him. But Mary still watched and waited, hoping for his return.

John, strange to say, troubled little about him. Between the two there seemed no strong affinity. David had very rarely written to his father, and when he had written, his letters were not of a character to draw out his father's affection. John liked to think of him as a baby just learning to walk; the up-grown David somehow never appealed very strongly to his heart; and now that David had got into disgrace, he had a feeling that it would be best for him to bear the penalty alone. He knew that the suffering which sin entailed was God's mercy to the sinner.

In those days Paul was almost ignored in Mary's letters. They were written exclusively for her husband, and to him they were so sacred that Paul was not even allowed the privilege of reading them. Till lately her letters had been common property, but all that was changed now. But Paul did not complain; nay, he rejoiced that whatever the estrangement between the two had been it had now passed away, and at last they knew each other as perhaps they had never done before.

He did sometimes wish his mother would send him a little home news. But since David's disgrace, village news and gossip seemed to have no interest for her. She had not even alluded to Abigail Tresillian's marriage. But that, perhaps,

was not to be wondered at, seeing David had run away about the time, and she was so full of concern about him that she could think of nothing else. He had sometimes been tempted to write and ask for particulars, but something had always restrained him. What good could come of knowing how she looked, and in what she was dressed, and who gave her away, and all other particulars? Besides, his mother did not see the wedding. She was too full of trouble at the time to take any interest in it, and so it would be useless to worry her now with a lot of questions she could not answer. Toby might have given him all particulars; but unfortunately he only wrote once in six months. He had written about a week before the wedding was to take place, and had given a very full and elaborate description of the preparations which were being made at Rosevallion; an epitome of the various opinions expressed anent the affair in Penwharf; as well as some original reflections of his own on the marriage state generally. His last letter, received less than a week ago, was chiefly devoted to a description of a very warm dispute he had had with Mr. Quirk, in which that gentleman had been made to "sing small," and was only too glad "to hide his diminished 'ed, as it were," with an occasional digression on the hateful vice of boasting. There was one vague allusion to Mr. Tresillian in which that gentleman's condition was used to illustrate the proverb that "pride shall have a fall." But in what way Mr. Tresillian's condition was an illustration of this, no hint was given. Abigail's name was not mentioned. He did not expect it would be. When people have been married a fortnight public interest in them ceases. Besides, if she were living at Trebarwith House she would not be often seen at Penwharf, and "Out of sight out of mind" is a proverb of universal application.

So Paul had to be content with such scraps of news as came to hand from time to time. Occasionally he received a letter from Chris Macpherson in a wonderful style of cali-

graphy, and now and then he got a brief note from Nebraska, sometimes from George Ripley, sometimes from Harry Mack, giving him an account of their experiences in farming. It was always a pleasure to him to receive those letters, and when he replied, he could never help expressing the hope that some day they would meet again. Chris had refunded the thirty shillings he had borrowed from Paul during the first six months of his sojourn in New York; and judging from his own accounts he was on the highway to fortune. But then Chris was naturally of a hopeful turn of mind, besides which his ideas of a fortune were by no means of an extravagant nature.

So the winter passed away, and the springtime came again—bright beautiful spring. Through all the woods, and over all the hills there passed a breath of life. The flowers came out of their hiding-places, and opened their beautiful eyes to see what it meant. The trees shook themselves in the warm south wind, and lo! they stood dressed in living green. In silent forest depths the bluebells nodded their heads to each other, and the modest violet lifted up its face to meet the sun's warm kiss, then drooped its head as if ashamed of what it had done. The birds sang to each other across the quiet valleys, and the whip-poor-will complained in distant dells.

John Vivian, looking out of his narrow window, smiled sadly at the bursting beauty of the spring. He had gathered strength in the autumn time. When the trees had shivered in the chill north wind, and the flowers had drooped and died, he grew more strong and hopeful, and even through the dreary winter he had held his own. But now when the balmy breath of spring began to blow softly up the valley, his feeble strength began to fail, and an oppressive languor stole slowly over him, benumbing his energies more and more.

He knew well enough what it meant. "I shall go away in the springtime," was his thought. "Now that the flowers have gladdened my eyes once more I shall take my departure, to the land where it is always springtime, and where decay

can never come. I have seen the flowers bloom, but I shall not see them fade. Long before the breath of autumn shall touch them I shall be sleeping in the quiet earth."

He did not express his thoughts, however, to anyone for many a day. He thought it better his friends should find out for themselves. Paul was quite assured in his own mind that as he had safely weathered the winter, he would be certain to live through the spring and summer. Why undeceive him? The life of the son seemed bound up almost in the life of the man he called his father, and he would learn the truth soon enough, without being told.

So, while Paul rejoiced in the prospect of the coming summer, and pictured to his father many a little excursion they would take together up the valley, and into the woods, John only smiled, knowing full well that it would never be.

He had no fear of going, and all his regrets had died away into sweet content. It was very hard at first. Life was just beginning to be a joy. After years of loneliness and neglect, companionship and love had come to him. Never had life been so precious. Never had the world seemed so bright.

But after a brief struggle victory had been given, and victory brought her crown of peace. He saw clearly enough, when the first anguish was passed, that the very things which made it sweet to live now made it sweet to die. Within the last year and a half the word "God" had become invested with a new meaning, and because of that the Bible was like a new revelation. While men believe that God is a tyrant, stern and unrelenting, cruel in His punishments and vindictive in His hate, they will of necessity interpret the Bible in a way that shall harmonize with their conceptions of its Author. But when men shall learn the truth, which Christ took such pains to teach, that God is their Father, then shall the Gospel of the Redeemer be to them "good tidings of great joy," and not till then.

Two years before John Vivian would have shrunk with instinctive horror at the thought of going to God, and would

have found it difficult to decide whether it would be better to be in hell, out of His sight, or in heaven, beneath the constant gaze of His terrible eye. But all that was changed now. God was no longer an omnipotent monster, but an all-embracing arm of love. He felt like a schoolboy at the end of the term, glad the lessons were nearly finished, and at times eager to get home that he might look upon his father's face.

He made no pretence of being holy, professed no freedom from sin, but he knew he was God's child, beloved of his Father in spite of his faults, dear to the great Heart of Love which could never forget its own.

For hours he would lie awake in the silent night thinking of the great change which had come over him, and rejoicing in the truth that had made all things new. All the horror of dying had passed away. It was only to fall asleep, and awake to the dawn of a new day, and to the joy of an endless life. • Had anyone told him, two years before, that he would sit in the beautiful springtime waiting for the coming of death with a smile of joyful anticipation upon his face, he would have told them that they raved. He was a wonder to himself.

So the days passed on and his weakness increased, till at length the effort of getting from his bed to his chair was almost more than he could endure.

"My father," Paul said to him one evening, with an anxious look in his eyes, "you do not get strong, as I hoped you would."

"No, my boy," he answered, "I am too far gone for that."

"Oh, no," Paul answered, "spring has only just begun. You will pick up again by-and-bye."

"You hope so, my boy, but I have known different for a long time past. When the flowers faded, I gathered strength, now I am fading while they bloom."

"Oh, no, father, do not talk in that way."

"It is best I should be no longer silent, Paul. We shall

not be long together now, and we should make the most of our time. There are many things I want to say."

"Oh, I wish," said Paul, with a swift rush of tears to his eyes, "that we could live together always."

"Ah, my boy, that cannot be. And yet it is a pleasure to know you are not tired of me."

"Tired of you? Oh, father!" and Paul's voice ended in a sob.

"Forgive me, Paul, for making such a remark," John said, after a pause. "I know you love me too well to grow weary of me."

Paul looked up with swimming eyes. "Oh, father," he said, "you are all I have to love."

"Oh, no! but we will not talk of that. But let me tell you once more what a comfort you have been to me. You have made my last days a joy; and when I look up into my Father's face, as I shall do soon, I shall thank Him that He gave me you."

Paul raised his eyes again, but did not speak, and for awhile there was silence in the room. After a time John spoke again.

"You will be kind to mother when I'm gone, Paul, and to David. I ought not to ask such a question, perhaps, and yet I want you to promise me."

"Mother shall never want a friend, nor David either, while I live," he answered, "do not be troubled on their account."

"You will understand why I wished you to promise me, when you have heard a secret that I am about to reveal to you."

"A secret?" questioned Paul in surprise.

"Yes, Paul! and one that deeply concerns you. I have long debated with myself whether I should reveal it or not. Your mother decided from the first not to do so; but I have come to the conclusion at last that you ought to know."

"If it is something that can do me no good, but might give me pain, I would rather not know," Paul answered.

"I do not know what its effect may be upon you, my boy, but I have a feeling that you ought to know, and so while I have the opportunity I will tell you."

Paul was silent again, and the next moment a knock came at the door which was followed by the lanky form of Luke Abbott, who had run in to inquire after John's health.

"The secret can wait," John whispered, and then extended his thin hand to the kindly American, whose presence was always welcome.

## CHAPTER XXXIV.

### "WITHIN THE VEIL."

"Then fell upon the house a sudden gloom,  
A shadow on those features pale and thin;  
And, softly, from that hushed and darkened room,  
Two angels issued, where but one went in."—LONGFELLOW.

A WEEK later, John Vivian lay in bed propped up with pillows, gasping away the small remnant of his life. He had told Paul the secret which had been hidden from him for so many years, and, with the telling, another link had been loosed which bound him to the earth.

It was Saturday afternoon, and Paul had left work at noon, and as quickly as possible had hurried to the bedside of the man he still called his father, for he knew the privilege of holding converse with him would soon be over now. It was plain to everyone that he was sinking fast. Dr. Bell had sent over a nurse from Soudan to wait upon him, and everything that human hands could do for his comfort was being done.

John seemed very grateful for the many kindnesses shown him. He did not know he was held in such high esteem in Cedar Creek till now, nor that the miners would be so genuinely sorry to lose him. He had lived so much to himself that he could not understand their affection. He did not know how his gentle, kindly ways had won all hearts.

"Well, my son," he said to Paul, when the latter came and sat by his bedside, "you have got home early to-day," and he reached out his wasted hand, which Paul took in, both his.

"I am glad you still call me your son," Paul said. "I have never known any father but you. I want to know no other. You are all the world to me. You have taught me •



lessons I shall never forget, and helped me to live a better life than I should have otherwise lived."

"Then we have been a blessing to each other, Paul. I know God sent you to me here. He saw my darkness and my doubt, saw me drifting on almost without hope, and so he sent you. And while we have talked together, and you have read to me, new light has come, new hope has risen in my heart, and now, in the deepening shadows, I have no fear, for Christ is with me. Oh, Paul, I never dreamed that it might be sweet to die."

"And have you no fear at all?" Paul asked, while the tears filled his eyes.

"No, Paul—none. God has taken all fear out of my heart, and filled me with His peace. I lie here watching the shadows moving across the wall, and listening to the moaning of the soft wind in the forest, and oh, I am so happy."

Paul turned away his head to hide the tears that had fallen on his cheek, and was silent; he had no answer to make to words like these.

"I have been trying to read a little this morning," John said, at length, "but I cannot get on very well; but I have marked a few verses; will you read them to me?"

Paul turned and took up the little volume which lay on the bed. It was quaint George Herbert's "Temple." He had never seen the book before, and wondered who had lent it to his father. It was open at a little poem called "Home," and without a pause he began to read:—

"Come, Lord, my head doth burn, my heart is sick,  
While Thou dost ever, ever stay:  
Thy long deferrings wound me to the quick,  
My spirit gaspeth night and day.  
Oh, show Thyself to me,  
Or take me up to Thee.

Yet if Thou stayest still, why must I stay?  
My God, what is this world to me?  
This world of woe? hence, all ye clouds away.  
Away; I must get up and see.

O loose this frame, this knot of man untie,  
That my free soul may use her wing,  
Which now is pinioned with mortality,  
As an entangled, hampered thing.

What have I left, that I should stay and groan ?  
The most of me to Heaven is fled :  
My thoughts and joys are all packed up and gone,  
And for their old acquaintance plead.  
Oh, show Thyself to me,  
Or take me up to Thee."

John did not speak when Paul had finished ; he lay with closed eyes, but with a smile of perfect content playing over his face. For a long time no sound broke the silence save the ticking of a watch hung against the bed-post. Then John spoke again. "There are one or two things more I want to say before I go," he said ; "and any moment now the Lord may take me up."

Paul was silent, and John continued :

"I have made you my executor, Paul, along with mother, and as soon as you can conveniently get away, after I am gone, I would like you to go home to her. She will need your help and counsel. I have saved a little—enough to keep her from want."

"She shall never want while I have strength to work," Paul answered.

"I have no anxiety respecting her," John said, with a smile, "and yet I want to make it as easy for you as I can. Will you listen carefully to what I'm going to say ?"

"I am all attention, father."

"You know Wheal Anthony well ?"

Paul nodded his head.

"She has scarcely ever paid her way, I think ?"

"That is so," Paul answered.

"And yet there is a fortune in that mine."

Paul started.

"A few weeks before I left home," John went on, "I discovered, quite accidentally, a lode rich in tin, and I went at

once to Lord Gwennap's steward and tried to get the lease ; but unfortunately for me, or perhaps fortunately, I do not know, I found it was in Wheal Anthony 'sett,' and so I could not touch it. Then I went to Captain Perkins and asked him what he would give me if I would show him a lode which would make the fortune of the mine. But he was scarcely civil to me. He said he knew every lode in the sett and did not want anybody to tell him. I felt very angry, but I said nothing. I thought the mine could not possibly go on much longer, and I resolved when she knocked I would take up the sett myself. Well, I came here, and the mine has kept working on. The shareholders must have a lot of faith to keep advancing money so long."

"It's nearly ruined some of them," said Paul.

"Well, my son," John continued, "when you get home, go direct to Sir George Penrith,—don't bother with Captain Perkins,—and ask him the most he will offer if you show him the lode, and it should prove to be a good one."

"But I don't know where it is," said Paul. .

"That I will tell you. You know the crooked oak which grows on the side of Trenance Lane?"

"Very well," said Paul.

"It is there still, is it?"

"It was when I left home."

"Well, from that oak you can see the top of St. Hildred steeple. Three or four fields from the oak is a 'gland' where the ground has slipped away into the valley. It was all covered over with brambles when I was there."

"It is still," said Paul.

"Well, the lode is exposed in that gland. Draw a line from the oak to the top of the steeple, and it will touch the exact spot. It runs due east and west as far as I can make out, and that being so it will intersect the Wheal Anthony main lode about 200 fathoms north of Cooper's shaft."

"The mine has never been worked in that direction," said Paul, "the lode is so poor."

"And yet that is where all the wealth of the mine lies," John answered. "Where the two lodes meet there is sure to be a heap of tin."

"That looks reasonable," said Paul, and then silence fell between them. John seemed exhausted with the effort he had made, and lay with his eyes closed, quite still.

After awhile he looked up and said, "You will carry out my instructions, Paul?"

"Yes, father," Paul answered, "I will do my best."

"And now," John said, with a smile, "I think I have done. Bury me quickly when I am dead, and let the earth lie close about me. Don't fret about me, Paul, I shall be better off. And tell mother she was in my thoughts to the last. Befriend poor David all you can, though he has no claim upon you."

"He will always be to me as a brother," Paul said, and was silent.

"You are a good boy, Paul, but that is because you have learnt of Christ. Oh, my son, never loose your hold upon Him. He is the world's hope and Saviour. I have not known Him till lately. Now He is all. He fills my being and gives me peace. Make Him known, Paul, speak of His love to men, and let His Spirit rule your life."

The next day was John's last on earth. Soon after nine o'clock a number of his mates came up to see him, and at his request they held a prayer-meeting together. They began by singing the hymn commencing:—

"A few more years shall roll,  
A few more seasons come,  
And we shall be with those that rest  
Asleep within the tomb:  
A few more suns shall set  
O'er these dark hills of time,  
And we shall be where suns are not,  
A far serenest clime."

Then John gave a little exhortation. His voice was very feeble, and his sentences came in gasps. Around him stood and sat the miners, silent and tearful; but it was very clear

that the words of their dying comrade were not lost upon them. Very tenderly he urged them all to trust in the Saviour, and to read His teachings in the light of His unchanging love. He told them something of his own struggles, and how he had got into the light at last.

"I am going on a little ahead of you, comrades," he said; "but I shall be on the look-out for you. I am glad to go, for I am very tired, and am getting to be a burden. Don't fear the dying, mates; it will be all right when you come to it. Give your life into God's keeping, and He will make all things right. By next Sunday I shall be sleeping out yonder there in the shadow of the wood; that is, this poor body will. I, comrades, shall be at home with God."

Then they all knelt down, and Israel Truscott and Luke Abbott led them in prayer. Luke's prayer especially was very quaint, but it was full of a deep and tender pathos, and revealed a simple trust in God which some of his companions had never suspected before.

After they had gone John lay back quite exhausted and closed his eyes. Paul thought he slept, but it was not so. He felt every movement in the room, and heard every whisper. As the day began to decline he opened his eyes again, and asked to be lifted up.

"God bless you, my Paul," he said, as Paul gently raised him so that he might look out of the window once more. All the valley lay steeped in the soft evening light, while the holy calm of the Sabbath brooded over the scene. As the sun sank lower behind the forest, the tops of the opposite hills caught the reflection, and burned like molten gold.

"Is it not beautiful?" he whispered, while a sweet, patient smile stole over his wan and wasted face. "I shall soon be at home now."

"God's will be done, my father," Paul sobbed, while the tears rolled down his cheeks.

"Don't cry, Paul," and the dying man laid his thin hand on Paul's bowed head. "I have no pain and I have no fear."

"But it is hard to lose you, since I have learned to love you so much," Paul said, crushing back his sobs. "And, oh, I need your counsel and sympathy more than ever."

"That may be," John answered, in slow, feeble gasps; "but God will supply all you lack."

Paul bowed his head for answer, and then silence fell between them for several minutes, broken only by the ticking of the watch, and the low, soft moan of the wind in the pines.

"Kiss me, Paul," John whispered at length, "and kiss mother for me. And tell her—yes, tell her my last prayer on earth was for her."

Then there was silence again for several minutes, while Paul bent over the bed and kissed the pale brow of the dying man again and again, his tears falling like rain all the while.

"And David." The voice was now so feeble that Paul could only catch the faintest whisper. "If you find him, tell—him—to—be—good—for—his—father's—sake." The words came slowly, with a long pause between each one, and were followed by a long-drawn sigh.

After that he never spoke again. The nurse came and sat by Paul's side. After a few minutes Israel Truscott came in, and stood motionless at the foot of the bed. But no one spoke. The watch ticked on. The evening breeze moaned more sadly in the forest depths. The light died away on the eastern hill-tops, the shadows deepened in the valley. The angel of death came in, and touched the feeble heart. The doors of life swung open, and John Vivian went forth clad in immortality to look upon the face of his Lord.

And still the mourners watched and waited till the room grew quite dark. Then the nurse went out and brought the lamp, and when its light fell on the patient face they knew the battle had been fought and the victory won.

"Come away, Paul," Israel said. "He's better off now," and they left the room together.

On the following Tuesday evening they laid him to rest

on the edge of the forest, where the ground sloped gently down toward the river, and where the earliest wild flowers bloomed in the sweet springtime.

Paul waited till the grave had been filled to the brim, then turned away, feeling that his work in Cedar Creek was done. The little cabin was no more home now his patient foster-father had gone. Its loneliness and silence oppressed him. He kept starting at every sound, fancying he heard the voice he knew and loved so well calling him from the little room in which he died.

On the following week he began to make arrangements for his own departure. Whether he would ever return again he did not know. But it seemed very improbable that he would. He had been in Cedar Creek well on to two years, and had made many friends, and not a single enemy. At one time he thought he could be content to live there always. But that was changed now. It could never be again what it once was. The light had gone from the hills and the music from the woods; at least, it seemed so to him. •

Moreover, if he desired to stay he could not do so. His father's dying wish was a sacred duty he could not shirk. His foster-mother and David must now be his chief care.

What the future had in store for him he did not try to guess. He was content to leave it in the hands of One who made no mistakes. To go back to Penwharf was a prospect which had in it far more pain than pleasure; he had come away to forget it; had been glad to escape from its associations; had hailed the prospect of new scenes and companionships with delight, and now in the order of an inscrutable Providence he had to go back again, to take up perhaps the old burden of toil, and be tortured with memories of a painful past.

Yet he did not shrink. He knew that Christian discipleship meant cross-bearing and self-denial. And if he was accounted worthy to suffer, he would esteem it an honour, not a reproach. His coming to Cedar Creek had been a blessing

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to him in many ways. He had caught something of the spirit of the brave, patient soul he called his father. Perhaps his going away would be attended by a yet greater blessing. He did not know. One thing only was clear—to do his duty, and leave the issues in the hands of God.



## CHAPTER XXXV.

### HOME AGAIN.

"Dear lovely bowers of innocence and ease,  
Seats of my youth, when every sport could please,  
How often have I loitered o'er thy green,  
Where humble happiness endeared each scene !  
How often have I paused on every charm,  
The sheltered cot, the cultivated farm,  
The never-failing brook, the busy mill,  
The decent church that topt the neighbouring hill !"

—GOLDSMITH.

IT was a beautiful evening in June when Paul reached Penwharf ; not unlike the evening which preceded his departure nearly two years before. He had made the journey home with as few delays as possible, his longest halt being in New York, where he had spent two days, and had been shown the sights of the city by Chris Macpherson. Chris had found what seemed likely to be a permanent situation in a dry store, and was doing well. Paul did not recognise him when first they met. Two years had wrought wonders in him. The lean, sad-eyed, pale-faced lad had become a handsome young man. He had grown at least six inches—Paul declared he was a foot taller—while he had added four stone to his weight, and having begun to cultivate a moustache—though as yet of very feeble growth—it was not at all surprising Paul did not recognise his friend and *protégé*.

As no one in Penwharf knew when Paul would arrive, there was no one to meet him at the station. He looked curiously around when he alighted on the platform at St. Hilddred, but with the exception of the officials there was no one he recognised, and, leaving his heavy luggage to be sent on the following day, he started out to walk to Penwharf.

How familiar the road was ! He might have been away

only two days instead of two years. Nothing was changed. He knew every bend in it, every bush and every tree. By the roadside the little stream rippled on as it had done ever since he could remember. Even the tones of its voice were unchanged, and the song the same as it had always sung.

On reaching the brow of the hill overlooking Penwharf, he dropped his bag and climbed a gate and sat himself on the rail. It seemed a strange home-coming. Nothing had happened as he had once hoped and anticipated; none of his dreams had come true. He was back again, not to claim the hand of Abigail, having made a fortune. Alas, he had made no fortune, and worse still, had learnt he had no name. He was only a waif whom no one owned, and none would claim. Still that did not matter. Abigail was married and gone, and no other face could ever beguile his heart again.

The evening was wonderfully still; now and then a soft breeze stole in from the sea, and sighed in the tree-tops and died away across the meadows in the faintest whisper. Penwharf lay asleep in a twilight haze. He could just distinguish the outline of some of the houses, while here and there he caught the gleam of the Wharf, which glided smoothly on to the weir, whose faint and dreamy splash rose fitfully on the quiet air. Now and then a faint rattle of the stamps at Wheal Anthony could be heard, which touched his heart with a strange thrill of pain, and awoke memories which he would gladly let die. Rosevallon was completely hidden in the deep shadow of the trees, but the bluff beyond shone white and strange in the light of the summer moon, while the sea rolled solemnly away into infinite space.

He could not repress a deep sigh as he descended from the gate. Life was very perplexing, on the whole, and full of a nameless pain. He could not help wishing that he had never been troubled with great hopes and ambitions, for he felt it would be very hard to settle down in Penwharf again, and toil on through the uncounted years of a hopeless life.

Shouldering his carpet-bag, he trudged away again and did

not halt until he stood before the garden gate of his early home. The lamp was lighted within, and he saw the shadow of his foster-mother on the white window-blind. Leaning on the gate he sighed again. He had been able to divine something of the trouble which had existed so long between husband and wife. He knew how her cruel, stubborn pride had kept them apart and saddened both their lives. Now she was paying the penalty, and a bitter penalty it was. John, too, had paid the penalty, though his was not the sin, in long years of lonely exile.

He could not help feeling sorry for the forsaken woman, bereft in her widowhood of the son who had been her hope and pride. Ay, pride again. It was at the root of all their misery and sorrow. She had filled her son with pride, pandered to his vanity, and encouraged him in all his upstart ways.

Of course he knew now the secret of her treatment of him, and why David had always come in for the largest share of consideration. He was in no complaining mood. Nay, he felt he owed her a debt of gratitude he could never repay. He wondered at her long forbearance, and was astonished that in moments of anger she had never taunted him with being a nameless waif.

"She has been as good to me as a woman could be under the circumstances," he said to himself. "Now I must try to be good to her, and, God helping me, I will be."

With this reflection he opened the gate and went up to the door and knocked, and a moment later Mary Vivian was sobbing on his neck as though her heart would break. He unclasped her hands after awhile and led her to a seat, while he sat down opposite her. "You had better have your cry out, mother, before we begin to talk," he said, gently; and she took his advice, and for awhile only her sobs broke the silence of the room.

The conversation which followed need not be repeated, for the reader is acquainted with all Paul had to tell her.



For a while only her sobs broke the silence of the room.—p. 290



Very vividly he described the mining camp at Cedar Creek—the boarding-house, the log cabin in which he spent two sadly pleasant years, the little garden John had reclaimed with his own hand, the solemn forest beyond. Vividly, too, he painted the picture of their uneventful life—the long evenings they spent together, the books he read, the serious conversations in which they indulged. Then, with lowered voice, he spoke of John's growing weakness, his cheerful patience, his brightening hope; told how his doubts and fears gradually faded as he read again the old story of God's love for man, till at the last he reached the sunny heights of perfect peace.

"And, oh, mother, he was so happy," Paul said, as he drew near the end of his story. "No murmur ever escaped his lips; no fear troubled his heart. It was like being within sight of heaven to be with him. He told me to tell you that his last prayer on earth was for you, and after telling me to be a friend to David if I ever found him, he closed his eyes, and never spoke again. He died with the dying of the day, and with no more struggle."

When Paul ceased speaking, there was silence for a long time, broken only by Mary's sobs. At length she spoke. "Oh, Paul," she said, "my punishment is almost greater than I can bear. But for my wicked, stubborn pride he would have come home years and years ago. Then poor David would have had a firm hand to guide him, and I should not have been left desolate. Oh, Paul, never be proud and unforgiving as I have been," and she began to cry again.

A little later she rose quickly from her chair, with an exclamation of self-reproach.

"I have never thought you must be hungry and tired," she said, and she rushed off into the little kitchen to get supper ready.

Paul got up from his chair and walked about the room. How familiar everything was, and yet how strange he felt! He almost fancied he must be dreaming. Perhaps the past two years was all a dream! • Had he ever been away at all?

He went and opened the door, and looked out. From over the hill came the faint rattle of stamps at Wheal Anthony, but no other sound broke the stillness. Then he put on his hat and went down into the garden at the end of the house. The moon was high over Rosevallion now, and he could see white patches of the old manor gleaming among the trees. For a moment only he looked at it, then turned away with a sigh. He felt he would never be able to look at it again without a stab of pain. Perhaps Abigail was there with her husband; for he supposed they would visit Rosevallion sometimes. Perhaps he would meet them in the village on the morrow.

And with a hurried step he returned to the house. Supper was on the table, but he had little appetite for it. He was very tired, but he had no desire for bed. He wanted to ask a hundred questions, and yet somehow he could not shape them into words.

"You must be sleepy, Paul," his mother said, at length. "Don't stay up on my account."

"No, mother, I'm not at all sleepy," he said; "besides, I want to know a little of the Penwharf news before I go to bed. I suppose you have not heard anything of David?"

"Not a word," she said, "though he was seen in London a little more than a month ago by Mr. Trebisca's son, but only for a moment."

"Did young Trebisca speak to him?"

"No; he only just caught a glimpse of him in the crowd."

"We must find him if we can," said Paul; "so don't lose heart, mother."

Mary sighed, but did not reply.

"And Toby?" Paul said, at length. "I have heard nothing of him for a long time; is he well?"

"No; Toby has been laid up a long time with rheumatism—so I'm told," with an emphasis on the last words.

"And the people at Rosevallion? I suppose Abigail had a grand wedding?" he brought out the words with a jerk. He

had been aching to ask the question all the evening, and now he almost dreaded the answer.

Mary started, and looked at him curiously.

"Did I not tell you all about that?" she asked.

"Not in any letter that I have seen," he answered.

"Oh, then, the trouble about David must have driven it clean out of my head," she replied, "and since then I've had too many cares of my own to think about other people's."

"Why, has there been trouble there?" he asked quickly.

"Trouble enough, I should think," she answered; "why, it's nearly six months now since he left the country."

"Who left the country?" Paul asked, with an eager light burning in his eye.

"Why, Mr. Tresillian. You see, things had gone against him so long that he could hold up no longer. I don't know the rights of it, for so many stories have been in circulation, but directly after the death of Nick Trebarwith the crash came——"

"Is Nick Trebarwith dead?" Paul asked, interrupting her.

"Yes, poor fellow; he was thrown from his horse. People say he was drunk; I don't know. Among so many stories it's hard to know which to believe."

"Then Abigail is a widow?" Paul said, with a sigh.

"Oh, dear, no! The accident was two days before the wedding was to come off. At first it was thought he was only stunned; but he never recovered consciousness. He laid for more than a week, and then died."

Paul sighed again; a sigh of pity and of relief. Abigail was free again, and—poor! Yes, poor. So much the better chance for him. He would go to her at once. She would be in a situation somewhere, ground down, perhaps, by some tyrant, and he would be her liberator. He forgot in a few seconds all about Nick Trebarwith's untimely fate. Abigail filled all his heart.

"Where is she?" he asked at length.

"Who? Abigail?"



"Yes."

"With her father, I suppose. A few friends helped them to go away, and I've heard that Mrs. Tresillian had a little of her own which could not be touched. Anyway they've all gone to America."

"To America?"

"Yes. They went away very quietly. Mr. Tresillian seemed completely broken, for he was a very proud man, and it came very hard. But Mrs. Tresillian and Abigail, they say, were wonderfully cheerful considering all things, and were quite hopeful they would do well in the New World."

"And do you know to what part they have gone?" Paul asked, eagerly.

"No, I don't," she answered. "I did hear they meant to go to Nebraska or Alaska or some such place. Anyhow, they meant to go where land is cheap, and start farming again."

"It seems very strange," said Paul. "I thought Trebarwith was the mortgagee, and that he had secured Mr. Tresillian."

"It was said so at first," she answered, "but afterward it was contradicted. I don't know if anybody knows the rights of it, for Enoch Tresillian was a close man, and never took anyone into his confidence. Anyhow, he was sold up last Christmas, stick and stool, and that's the end of it."

Paul was silent. Here was news he certainly had never expected to hear—news which saddened him, rejoiced him, perplexed him, encouraged him, all at one and the same time.

"Now, Paul, I think you ought to go to bed," his mother said, at length. "I am sure you must be tired."

"Yes, mother, I am tired," he said, getting up from his chair and kissing her. "We shall be able to resume our talk to-morrow."

When he got into the little bedroom it seemed to him as if he had never been away. Nothing had been disturbed during the last two years. The same old patchwork quilt

was on the bed. He could remember it since he could remember anything. How often he had made pictures of horses, and houses, and mountains, and trees, and ships out of its quaint designs! On the little dressing-table were the two china dogs which had been given him when he was quite a child, and between the dogs an oval looking-glass, cracked across the top. At the foot of the bed was a long green box, in which he kept his clothes. It did not seem quite as capacious as it used to do, but he supposed that was because he had grown used to bigger things.

He tried to sleep after he got into bed. But sleep would not come. His thoughts were too full of what he had heard. All his old desire to win Abigail came surging back again into his heart.

He would see Sir George Penrith respecting the new lode, get the best terms he could for his foster-mother, and then he would be off again to find Abigail. There was nothing to keep him at home that he knew of.

Within a voice whispered "David."

But he put the thought aside. David was not his brother. David had no claim upon him. David had forfeited every right to his consideration. Should he forego his heart's desire for the sake of David? No, he would not, and with this resolve he fell asleep, and did not awake again until the morning was far advanced.

## CHAPTER XXXVI.

### THE GOLDEN RULE.

"The nobleness of life depends on its consistency, clearness of purpose, quiet and ceaseless energy. All doubt, and repenting, and mending, and re-touching, and wondering what it will be best to do next, are vice, as well as misery."—RUSKIN.

"GOOD morning, Mr. Tobias, and how are you to-day?" Toby started to his feet as though he had been shot, gave his trousers a hitch of unusual energy, shut his left eye, and then hobbled toward the gate, on which Paul was leaning, muttering in a loud voice, "God bless my soul an' body ef it ain't 'im. Ay, 'im at last. Oh, goodness gracious, who would ha' thought it? Oh, mercy me, if the buttons ain't tight on, I shall bust up."

By this time Toby had reached the gate, and had grasped Paul's hand with a vigour that made him wince.

"Oh, Paul, my boy," he said, in a choking voice, while the tears ran down his face, "thy coming is like light to the eyes, and water to the thirsty soul."

"Then you are glad to see me, Mr. Tobias?"

"Glad? Oh, Paul, glad ain't in it. I've a-been 'ere a sitt'n' under the happle-tree dreamin' of old days gone by, and thinking they'd never come back no more, and 'ere you be all of a sudden, like a ghost rose from the dead, as it were. Oh, lor', I never knowed but one thing equal it, and that were in the Caribbean Sea, when we'd a-been boarded by pirates——"

"Ah, Mr. Tobias," interrupted Paul, anxious to cut short one of Toby's interminable stories, "the days of pirates are over, and here we are in Bracken Hollow once more safe and sound."

"The Lord be praised," said Toby, grasping Paul's hand

again. "But come and take a seat. I ain't as lively on my pins as I used to be, but if I ken keep toddling for another year I shall git my pension, and then, Paul, I'm a-goin to startle 'em."

"Startle who?" Paul questioned.

"The British public. Don't you know what I'm in for?"

"Are you going to write that book you've talked about so long?" Paul asked, with a smile.

"That's just it. There will be a sensation, an' no mistake. You know my style, Paul?"

"Yes; you were very good to write as often as you did."

"Those letters cost a lot of labour an' thought," said Toby, closing his left eye again. "But style in literachewer, Paul, is everything."

"It goes a long way, no doubt," Paul said.

"I ain't a vain man, as you know, Paul," said Toby, seriously; "an' I ain't a boastin' man; but I know what's what, and when I get my pension I'm in for't. And though I says it as shouldn't, there'll be a sensation."

So Toby ran on while Paul listened, and the morning sped away like a dream.

In the afternoon he went in search of the lode his foster-father had spoken of, and which was to make the fortune of Wheal Anthony. He found the twisted tree, and sighted the spot in line with St. Hildred spire. The place was completely overgrown with furze and brambles, so that he had considerable difficulty in prosecuting his search. He was not to be deterred, however. He had brought a small spade with him, and with this he set to work. The furze and brambles had grown so tall that no one could see him, even if anyone had been in the neighbourhood. But the place was so utterly secluded that he apprehended no danger in that direction. Here in the face of the old landslip he worked on through all the quiet afternoon, his excitement growing all the while. And when in the evening he returned to Penwharf through the soft twilight, he was not only satisfied as to the existence of the lode, but satisfied also that his foster-father had much

under-estimated its value. And then came to him a great temptation. He knew a good many people who had shares in Wheal Anthony, shares which up till now were practically worthless. Ten-pound shares could be had for ten shillings and less, and the holders would be only too glad to get rid of them; for not being fully paid up, they found the occasional calls very difficult to meet. What would be easier, therefore, than to go round and buy up these shares? Joel Quirk had several, Bill Nancarrow had three or four, so had Ned Newlyn and James Polskiddy. Captain Perkins owned fifty, and would no doubt be glad to sell them all, and to buy them would be a nice way of paying him out for the manner in which he treated his foster-father years ago. He had brought home nearly two hundred pounds which he had saved; with this he might purchase most of the shares owned in the neighbourhood. In a few months these shares would be worth perhaps twenty or thirty pounds each. The thought almost staggered him. With his two hundred pounds he could purchase at least three hundred shares. Three hundred shares at thirty pounds each meant nine thousand pounds. Here was riches almost beyond the dreams of avarice. With a fortune so large he would be no longer unacceptable to Mr. Tresillian. Indeed, he would be able to buy back for him Rosevallion Manor, and restore to him the home he had lost.

So intoxicated was he by this vision of wealth that for the moment his moral sense was completely blinded, nor did he heed the still small voice within which kept whispering, "Do unto others as ye would that they should do unto you." Home through the twilight he wended his way as though he trod on air. At last Abigail seemed within his reach. She might be on the other side of the world, but what of that? a voyage across the Atlantic was nothing. And at the State Offices, or at the headquarters of the Agricultural Bureau, he would be able easily to ascertain where land had been taken up and in what name. So that to find Abigail presented to his excited imagination no obstacles whatever.

He could not help wondering how this happy thought had never occurred to him before. To get the best possible terms out of Sir George Penrith for his foster-mother had always been his resolve, but to make money out of the affair himself, by buying up the local shares, had never occurred to him until he saw that afternoon the tin shining in the lode. How could he have been so stupid! so blind to his own interests!

And yet a few hours later a strange revulsion of feeling had come over him, and, kneeling by the bedside in his little room, he prayed for forgiveness for the evil he had cherished in his heart.

"I did not think I could have been so mean," he said to himself, as he lay in bed listening to the faint rattle of the stamps borne by the night wind over the hills. "Poor James Polskiddy and the rest of them have invested their little savings in the mine. And I have actually proposed to myself to take advantage of their ignorance and my knowledge, and put in my own pocket what belongs to them. Oh, dear! I did not think the touch of gold could corrupt me so quickly."

Then the tempter came and whispered in his ear:—

"Don't be quixotic. It is a perfectly legitimate transaction. It is done by honourable men of business every day. In this world it's every man for himself, and the devil take the hindmost. If you know of the existence of that lode you are perfectly justified in making as much as you can out of your knowledge."

And then his better self spoke out in reply.

"I don't care what other men do; I'll never be so mean. If other men rob their neighbours, and call it legitimate trade, I need not let gold corrupt me in the same way."

"But if you do not make money out of the affair," suggested the tempter, "somebody else will. Whoever first gets the news of the lode will begin buying up the shares of the others."

"Not if I know it," he said to himself, clenching his fists.

"To-morrow is Saturday, and so I'll visit my neighbours, and give them the cue."

"And spoil your chance with Abigail," whispered the tempter. "You'll never have such another opportunity."

"I'd sooner lose Abigail," was his reply, "than wrong my neighbours, and never be able to look an honest man in the face again for the rest of my life."

So Paul fought the tempter and conquered, and on the following day he made a round of visits to his neighbours. Everybody had heard of his arrival, and so none were surprised when his handsome face and well-knit form were seen in the doorway.

Paul was delighted with the welcome he received, and in every house the kettle was hoisted on the fire to get tea ready for him. But Paul resisted all the charms of saffron cake and gooseberry tart with clotted cream. He had many calls to make, he said, and so could not stay long at one place. When, however, he explained to the good man of the house the object of his visit something more than astonishment was expressed.

"You ask me if I have shares in Wheal Anthony," said James Polskiddy, who received his first visit. "Worse luck, I have."

"How many have you?"

"Ten."

"Would you like to sell them?"

"Ay; but nobody'll buy them. If I could get a five-pound note for them I'd think myself well off, though they've cost me fifty, and I expect another call soon."

"Well, my advice is don't sell if you have the chance."

"Why?"

"Because a new lode has been discovered which will make the fortune of the mine; and in six months your shares will very likely be worth twenty or thirty pounds each."

James opened his eyes wide. "You know of this lode," he said.

"Yes, I've seen it. My father told me where it was."

"You've brought back some money with you?"

"Yes, a hundred or two."

"Then why in the name of common-sense don't you buy up all the shares you can before you let the secret out?"

"Well, James, would you do it if you were in my place?"

"I fear I should," James said, slowly. "But I don't know. It would be a terrible temptation."

"It would not be doing to others as you would they should do unto you; would it?"

"Well, no, that's so. But such a chance only comes once in a lifetime."

"I felt that," said Paul, "and had nearly yielded. But I am thankful I've been able to put the temptation aside."

"Paul," said James, grasping his hand, "you're a true friend. And I'll not forget it."

His conversation with the others was much briefer. For it occurred to none of them till after he was gone that he had done a noble and a neighbourly deed.

Joel Quirk, who prided himself on being a "cute man of business," supposing that Paul had come to him first, or had entrusted the secret to him only, saw in a moment how he might be able to turn an honest (?) penny, and directly Paul had taken his departure he put on his hat, and started out to pay a few neighbourly visits, notwithstanding it was Saturday evening, and his busiest time.

James Polskiddy was standing in his doorway thinking of Paul, of the nobleness of his nature, when Mr. Quirk came up hurriedly.

"Good evening, James," he said, taking off his hat, and wiping his forehead.

"Good evenin', Mr. Quirk."

"Your garden is looking very nice, James. You miners get plenty of leisure for gardening. It's well to be a miner."

"You'd tell a different tale if you tried it," said James.

"Well, I don't know. How is Wheal Anthony looking?"



"Poor," James replied, "—very poor."

"Not much chance of a dividend, eh, James? And yet, perhaps, in time she may pay. Let me see, you have a few shares in her, I think?"

"Yes, I've got ten."

"Yes, yes! I've heard you say before now you'd like to get rid of them."

"Very likely I have said so," James replied.

"Well, look here, James," and Mr. Quirk took off his hat and wiped his forehead again. "It's a risky thing to do, perhaps, but I'll do it, seeing it's you. I'll give you a five-pound note for your shares, an' take my chance. Most people have lost faith in the old mine; but I haven't quite, or I shouldn't make this offer. The chances are, of course, I shall lose it, and some more on top of it: but seein' it's you, James, I'll risk it. What do you say, now?"

But James said nothing. He was too astonished, too hurt to speak. Mr. Quirk's meanness appalled him; he was a good man himself, honest to the core, and Joel's words struck him like blows, and nearly took his breath away. Before his imagination came up a picture of the two men. The one making a great parade of religion, and yet attempting a meanness of this kind: the other without parade or pretence, yet proving by his conduct that he was trying to live the "Christ life" upon the earth.

"Come, James," said Mr. Quirk, wiping his forehead again; "what do you say, now?"

"Well, no, not to-day," James said, bringing out the words with difficulty.

"Oh, well, as you will," said Joel, shortly. "I thought I might be doing you a kindness. If you think better of it, call at the shop this evening."

But James made no reply, and Joel, after waiting several seconds, took his departure. On passing Ned Newlyn's smithy he turned, and leaning his arms on the lower door—*or* "hatch," to use the Cornish vernacular—looked in.

Newlyn was sitting on the anvil, quietly smoking his pipe. Evidently trade was not very brisk with him at present.

"Takin' it easy, neighbour?" Joel said with a very benevolent smile.

"Ay," Newlyn answered, shortly, "we're compelled to take it easy sometimes."

"Hem! just so," Joel answered, clearing his throat. "By-the-bye, could you settle that little account of mine this evening?"

"Settle your account? No!" Newlyn answered in a tone of annoyance. "It ain't due for another fortnight yet."

"Oh, yes," said Joel, blandly, "I generally allow a month's grace, it's true; but it's due when sent in."

"Well, you'll have to wait the usual time, anyhow," said Newlyn.

"Well, look here," said Joel, insinuatingly; "as you are not over-flush of money, I'll take your Wheal Anthony shares at ten shillings a share in lieu of the money. I know it's a risky thing to do, but, seein' it's you, I'll do it. I like to be neighbourly."

During the delivery of this speech Newlyn had risen to his feet; his face was white and drawn, his eyes flaming with anger and indignation.

"Look here, Joel," he said, "I always thought you were no better than you ought to be; but now I know you're an infernal hypocrite. Don't talk about being neighbourly when you're trying to cheat me in broad daylight."

"What, what!" exclaimed Joel, excitedly. "You'd better mind what you're saying."

"I am minding," said Newlyn; "and I'll tell you, to your face, you're a—humbug."

"A what! Do you know you're swearing?" said Joel, his face white with rage and disappointment.

"It's no worse than lying and cheating, at any rate," said Newlyn. "And you a professor! Good Lord! it's enough to make a parson swear. And you the man that went a few

years ago to talk to Paul Vivian about the error of his ways. You, Joel Quirk! Place your conduct alongside o' his, an' look at it. I'm not a religious man myself; but, good heavens! I wonder you're not ashamed of yourself. Go home, man, and pray." And Newlyn turned his back upon his visitor, and began to stir his fire with a vigour that threatened its extinction.

"I've made an ass of myself," was Joel's reflection as he made his way slowly toward his house. "I ought to have asked if Paul had been before me. Blame the fellow, I never thought he would have told the others."

On the following morning, Mr. Quirk was too crestfallen and ashamed to put in an appearance at the chapel; but Paul, who had battled with temptation and conquered, found the simple service a source of real inspiration and delight.

## CHAPTER XXXVII.

### LIFE'S BATTLE.

"The heart must bleed before it feels,  
The pool be troubled before it heals ;  
Even by losses the right must gain,  
Every good have its birth in pain."—ANON.

ON Monday morning Paul started by the first train for Ferndale. He was anxious to get the matter settled as soon as possible, for he was impatient to cross the Atlantic again in search of Abigail. Sir George received him with every mark of respect, and took him into the library instead of into his own den. Here Paul, without ceremony, plunged into his recital, and finished by asking the best terms Sir George could offer his mother. For a few moments the baronet seemed almost speechless. He had listened to Paul's narrative with an incredulous look upon his face. The news was so good that he was afraid to believe it.

"As to terms," he said at length, "that must be a matter of arrangement with the directors. But if what you say is true, you need not fear but they will be satisfactory."

"I have seen the lode myself," Paul replied ; "and as to its being rich in tin you can judge for yourself from these samples," and Paul opened a small brown paper parcel, and exposed a number of pieces of ore.

"Good heavens !" exclaimed Sir George, with sparkling eyes, "where did you get this ?".

"Out of the new lode," Paul answered, quietly.

"You are not hoaxing me ?" said Sir George, whose hands were trembling with excitement.

"Sir !" and Paul sprang to his feet and looked the baronet straight in the eyes.

"I beg your pardon, I do, most humbly," said Sir George,

"really you must excuse me. I am so excited I hardly know what I am saying."

Paul sat down again, looking a shade paler than before.

"It's wonderful," said Sir George, examining the pieces of ore through a powerful glass. "Won't the directors open their eyes to-morrow when they see this!"

"I have no doubt they will be pleased," said Paul.

"Pleased! I hope none of them will get drunk on the strength of it."

"I hope not," Paul said.

"And now, Vivian, what do you expect as your share of the business?" Sir George asked, laying down the glass.

"Nothing, sir," was the reply.

"Nothing?"

"If mother is well provided for, I care for nothing else," Paul answered, slowly.

For a second or two Sir George looked at him without speaking.

"Of course you will not object to a good berth at the mine?" he said at length.

"I am going abroad again when this matter is settled," Paul answered, with a slight blush.

"I am sorry to hear that," was the reply. "I fear the pick of the young men are leaving Cornwall."

To this Paul made no answer, and a moment later he rose to take his departure.

"You are not going yet," said Sir George. "You must stay and have lunch with us."

Paul attempted some excuse, but Sir George would not hear of it, and then led the way into the drawing-room, where Lady Penrith was busy at some fancy work. Her reception of Paul was most cordial, almost affectionate, while Paul felt that he could almost worship this sweet-faced woman with the snow-white hair. After the first few moments all his nervousness passed away. In her presence it was impossible for him to be ill at ease. For a full hour he sat and talked

about himself and his experiences abroad as he had never done before, and when he left he could not help wondering at the strange spell that held him whenever he entered the doors of this stately home.

By the end of the following week the agreement between the shareholders of Wheal Anthony and Mary Vivian had been drawn up, signed and sealed, and Paul felt he was once more free to start on his search. It was just two years since he said good-bye to Abigail in Plymouth Station. Looking back, they seemed the longest two years of his life, and now his heart was hungering for another glimpse of the sweet, pure face of his love. Two years ago he feared they would never meet again. He was going away that he might forget her. Now, however, finding that she was free and poor, all his old hope and love and longing had sprung into life again, and he was impatient to be off on his quest. He began counting the days, almost the hours. Within a fortnight he might be in Nebraska, and if they had not changed their names, he thought, big as the state was, within a week after his arrival he might drop in upon them.

And he would close his eyes and try to picture the meeting. How astonished Abigail would be to see him! how her eyes would sparkle and her face glow! He felt sure his love was reciprocated. There was something in her look and tone when last they met which assured him of her regard. She might not love him as he loved her, but in time she might give him all her heart. At any rate, he was resolved to know his fate, and that as quickly as possible.

As yet he had said nothing to his foster-mother of his intentions, but the evening following that on which the agreement was signed he unfolded his plans to her. At first she looked incredulous, then her countenance fell, and when he had finished she burst into tears.

Paul looked at her in astonishment. She had never shown him any great affection. During the few weeks he had been at home she had clung to him more than she had,

ever done before. But that was only natural seeing he had been away so long, and David was no longer at home to receive her caresses; but that she would care much whether he went or stayed he did not for a moment imagine.

"I did not think, mother, you would trouble about the matter," he said at length.

"It was not of myself I was thinking," she answered, between her sobs. "I deserve all that has come to me for my wicked, stubborn pride. But poor David! It is hard that he should be forsaken."

"David is not forsaken, mother," he answered, gently. "Whenever he likes to return, I am sure you will give him a welcome and a home."

"That I will," she answered, with energy. "But how can he return? Perhaps he has no money. Perhaps he's in want. Perhaps he's dead. Oh, my poor boy."

"He is reaping as he has sown," Paul said; "and that may be the best thing for him. As father used to say, 'there's a lot of mercy in punishment.'"

"It's easy enough for you to talk in that way when you've every comfort," she said, with a flash of anger in her eyes; "but it's clear you care more for old Tresillian's girl than you do for your own brother."

Paul bit his lips and grew hot all over. "I shall not attempt to deny what you have said," he replied at length, with forced calmness. "Abigail is more to me than David. And then, you know, David is not my brother."

"Not your brother?" she exclaimed. "Who told you that?"

"He whom I have always called, and shall still call, my father," he answered.

"He told you you were a foundling?" she asked, with an eager look in her eyes.

"Yes! just before he died he told me," he answered. "I wish he had not done so. But he thought it best."

"And so now, after being cared for all these years, you are going to forsake us," she said, bitterly.

"You misjudge me, mother," he said, gently. "I do not forget, and never shall forget, how you housed me, fed me, clothed me, educated me, when I had no claim upon you; treated me as a son when I was only a foundling. Had I known I would have tried to have given you less trouble."

"It's easy enough to talk," she said, shortly, "but actions speak louder than words."

"I know that," he said, sorrowfully; "and if my actions have been unsatisfactory to you I am very sorry. I have done my best for you, and while I live you will have a friend and a son."

"There's not much comfort in a son when you don't know where he is, and never see him nor hear from him," she said, beginning to cry again. "Oh! if poor David only had a friend who would search him out and lend him a helping hand he might yet get on. He is not wicked. Oh! I am sure he is not wicked. But he is weak and yielding, and while he is surrounded by evil companions there is no chance for him. I feel like going in search of him myself sometimes. But I'm only a woman, and have never been in a big city, and should be frightened to death."

"It's better to let him find his way back of his own accord," Paul answered.

"Oh, no!" she said. "The longer he remains away the deeper he'll sink, and the weaker he'll get. If he's to be saved, the sooner the better."

"I don't know," Paul said, walking toward the door; "painful experience is often the very best schoolmaster," and he took his hat and went out into the soft gloaming that was then brooding over valley and hill. He was greatly agitated. He felt as though he had reached another crisis in his life. Once more he was standing at the parting of the ways, and knew not which path to take. Was it his duty, he wondered to go in search of David—the foster-brother who had robbed him and wronged him again and again? Must he spend his time and money in a heart-breaking search for one who did •



not wish to be found, and who had no love for the right? Must he give up, for an indefinite period, the hope that had been as new life to him, and perhaps miss for ever this golden opportunity of winning Abigail's hand? Was life always to be a sacrifice for others? Was David to be his lifelong cross?

While these thoughts were passing through his mind he had been striding up Rosevallion lane, and was now out on the bluffs with the salt sea breeze blowing in his face. He had passed the old manor, standing silent and forsaken, with scarcely a passing glance. He did not heed that the darkness was coming on apace. On, on he went, until he reached the cliffs and saw the darkling sea lying still and shadowy at his feet.

Then he threw himself on the turf and tried to think. Out yonder was Crab Rock, where he and Abigail were once caught by the tide. What a long age ago it seemed! How much he had passed through since then! Life's battle was then only beginning; now he was in the thick of it, and it seemed to grow fiercer all the while. What should he do? Then up from the moaning sea a voice seemed to come, repeating words which had impressed him years ago.

" And all through life I see a cross,  
Where sons of God yield up their breath;  
There is no gain except by loss;  
There is no life except by death."

He started, wondering what had brought those words to his recollection just then. Was he to yield up his breath for the sake of others? Was that to be the proof that he was a son of God? Must he give up hope and life—ay, and what was dearer to him than life, for the sake of one whom in his heart he despised?

• The cross seemed too heavy; the burden greater than he could bear. Only a few hours ago his heart had seemed light as a feather, and life was opening out before him beautiful as a dream. After years of waiting and longing, hoping and despairing, the dream of his life seemed in a fair way of

being realized. Now everything was blurred and confused again. The conversation with his foster-mother had upset everything. •

After awhile he started to his feet, and went and stood on the very brink of the cliff. Far away below him the gloomy waters rose and fell, and moaned sadly among the rocks. And still that same voice seemed to come out of the solemn sea—

“And all through life I see a cross,  
Where sons of God yield up their breath.”

“No,” he said, clenching his fists, “I cannot do it. I would do much for David, but not this.” And he turned on his heel and strode homeward; but the struggle was not yet ended. When he got into his own room he fell on his knees by his bedside and prayed—prayed for wisdom to see the right, and strength that he might do it. At first everything was dark, and the heavens seemed brass; but the darkness passed away at length, and the light began to dawn.

It was long after midnight when he crept into bed; but there was a beautiful smile upon his face, and a great peace in his heart. He had fought his battle again, and, by the help of God, had won the victory.

“Mother,” he said next morning, as he kissed her, “I will do as you wish. I will go in search of David.”

## CHAPTER XXXVIII.

### SEEKING THE LOST.

"Better to stem with heart and hand  
The roaring tide of life, than lie  
Unmindful, on its flowery strand,  
Of God's occasions drifting by!  
Better with naked nerve to bear  
The needles of this goading air;  
Than in the lap of sensual ease, forego  
The god-like power to do, the god-like aim to know."  
—WHITTIER.

TO tell the story of Paul's life during the next nine months would require a volume instead of a chapter. He knew nothing of London, nothing of its hurrying crowds; its bewildering net-work of streets; its vicious and squalid haunts; its gilded vice; its hidden snares; its unsuspected dangers. But he had strong common sense, and an inexhaustible fund of patience and courage, and so he had no fears respecting himself. Now that he had taken the step, nothing could daunt him or turn him back. With resolute will he crushed back his own desires; steeled his heart against its own longings, and went forth, resolved if David was to be found he would find him. His foster-mother listened to his resolution with surprise and gladness, not unmixed with self-reproach. She had only to think for a moment, to realize, in some measure, how great the sacrifice he was making. How readily he gave himself for another, and that other, one who had wronged him again and again. And as she thought of this and contrasted with it her own life-long conduct, her face burned with shame and reproach.

"He belongs to a nobler type than I," she said to herself, as she watched him march away that bright July morning, on his quest. And when he was out of sight she returned to

her lonely cottage and began to cry. She had not loved him over well. He was not her own. She had screened David at his expense more than once; had blamed him often when he should have been praised. She had been proud of David while Paul she had despised; but she saw her mistake now. Had she ruled David with a firmer hand, how much better he might have been! But she had petted him until he had grown selfish; had done for him until he had neither the ability nor disposition to do anything for himself; had screened him from every unpleasant experience until he had no moral stamina left; had made a selfish, cowardly milk-sop of him, instead of a generous, brave-hearted man.

"Ah, me! ah, me!" she sobbed, swaying herself to and fro; "my stubborn pride has been my curse. It has killed my husband and left me desolate."

Meanwhile Paul was speeding on his way to London. Arrived there, he secured lodgings in a fairly respectable neighbourhood, not far from the Strand, and then made his way to Scotland Yard, where he secured the services of a detective. The result of this was a number of carefully worded advertisements in most of the morning papers, continued at intervals during several weeks. But nothing came of them. If any of them caught David's eye, he made no response.

Paul's own opinion was, knowing David's propensity, that he had sunk down to the career of a professional gambler, and that the most likely place to find him would be in one of the low gambling dens with which the City abounded. In this view the detective concurred, and during several weeks nearly every place likely and unlikely was visited, but with no result.

At the end of two months Paul felt he would have to take the matter entirely into his own hands. He had got now a good idea of the City, knew all its principal thoroughfares, and many of its lowest streets and slums. Moreover, to employ a detective was an expensive business, and he

found his money melting at an alarming rate. So it became a matter of necessity with him to conduct the search himself, and on the most economical principles. He was sometimes half disposed to give up in despair. He had heard of searching for a pin in a hay-stack, but that was nothing to searching for a solitary wanderer amongst five millions of constantly shifting human beings.

It was a heart-breaking search in more senses than one. The sights he continually witnessed saddened him to a degree he had never imagined. Living in the quiet country all his life, where vice in its worst form was never seen, the fearful demoralisation and open shame of the London slums appalled him. The search was heart-breaking, too, because he found it impossible to stifle the longing that was daily consuming him for a sight of Abigail. Every day seemed as long as ten, and every month seemed a year. He had written to Harry Mack and George Ripley, asking them to make inquiries in their county if any people of the name of Tresillian had taken land, and had received a reply that no one of that name had come to reside within twenty miles of Yewdale—the name they had given to their farm. So Paul had to battle with his heart-hunger as best he could, and still go on with his hopeless search.

At the end of September, just as he was seriously debating whether he should not abandon the search altogether, he caught just a passing glimpse of David as he was riding on the top of an omnibus along Whitechapel. David was in the midst of a great crowd of people, and, before he could descend from the omnibus and rush to the spot, he had disappeared. He was quite certain he had not been mistaken. Haggard, dishevelled, meanly clad David might be, but that it was he there could be no doubt. Through the crowd Paul rushed in all directions, and for two hours after he scoured the entire neighbourhood, but without avail—not a glimpse could he get of David anywhere.

One thing, however, was now clear, the Prodigal was still

in London. But how to lay hands on him was a problem as difficult to solve as before. It might be another three months before he saw him again, and, be as economical as he would, his little hoard of money was gradually sinking.

"I must kill two birds with one stone, that's clear," he said to himself. "I must look for David, and earn my own living at the same time."

Having arrived at this decision, he began looking for work, and after a fortnight's search succeeded in getting employment as a joiner in a builder's yard. He felt very much more at ease after this. His days and evenings were now so completely filled up, that time did not drag as it did at first. Moreover, his life was far less lonely. He took a number of his shopmates into his confidence, who showed their sympathy by accompanying him sometimes during the evenings on his search. So the days and weeks sped on, and still the search proved unavailing.

When Christmas came, Paul returned to Penwharf for a few days, where, amongst other things, he discovered that his foster-mother had communicated to several people the fact that he was not her son. Since the secret was out, since Paul knew he was only a foundling, she thought she might as well have the pleasure of retailing this startling bit of news as anybody else. And so she had entrusted it as a profound secret—never to be divulged—to several of her neighbours, while they had communicated the same profound secret, with the same injunction, to several others. And so the secret had spread till everybody in the village knew of it. As a consequence, Paul found himself treated with rather less respect than formerly.

To be nameless, perhaps base-born, was a serious offence against society—even such society as that of Penwharf. That he was a brave and noble young fellow nobody could deny, and the way he sacrificed himself for David, who was not his brother, was doubtless most praiseworthy. But, then, Mrs. Captain Perkins affirmed "that," however good and noble such

persons might be"—with an emphasis on the "persons"—"it was not good form to associate with them." And as Mrs. Perkins, since the Tresillians had left, was the leader of Penwharf fashion, there was of course no appeal.

But Paul's stay was too short for him to trouble about the matter, or even to take particular notice of it. He was not sensitive on such matters. His own life was so far above such petty considerations that he was utterly unable to enter into the feelings of those who were influenced thereby. Besides, his chief concern while at Penwharf was the new lode, which was being explored at Wheal Anthony, and highly gratified he was to find that his own predictions were being abundantly realized.

True it had not been pierced to any great depth yet, and several months would have to elapse before it could be fully tested; but every indication so far was big with promise, and the shares which could be bought six months ago for ten shillings were now being sold for fifteen pounds, and their tendency was still upward. As a consequence the villagers of Trenance and Penwharf were quite excited. Miners, hearing of the discovery, were arriving from different parts of the country, and builders were unusually busy in erecting cottages, which were in enormous demand. At Wheal Anthony new plant was being erected with all possible haste, and every preparation was being made for the rapid development of the lode.

On New Year's Day Paul returned again to London. It was a bitterly cold journey, for the snow lay thick on all the land, and the wind whistled keen from the East. And in England our railway companies—with the exception of a small company in the west of Lancashire—have not yet learned the secret of making a railway journey tolerable in the dead of winter. Paul was only a third-class passenger. And in those days the third-class passenger received far less consideration than he receives now. The seats were uncushioned, the carriages open from end to end, and not a

single door or window fitted tightly. He bore the cold and discomfort, however, without complaining. He knew no good would come of grumbling, and so he held his peace.

When he reached Paddington he was so stiff with the cold that it was a pain to move. "Keb, sir; keb, keb," saluted his ears on every hand, but cabs were a luxury he could not afford. Shouldering his carpet bag he trudged away through the sloppy streets only too glad of the opportunity of exercising his limbs after his long confinement.

On the following day he was at his work again, and when night came on he commenced anew his search. He paid little heed to the danger he ran, and made light of the warnings of friendly policemen. He had a mission to fulfil, and never considered himself in its prosecution.

And still the days sped on and lengthened into weeks. And no tidings of the wanderer could be gained in any direction. January passed away, and February came and went, and March came in like a lion, and growled and blustered with increasing fury as the days went on. Paul's heart was growing sick with hope deferred. A hundred times over he had thought he had got a clue to David's whereabouts, but every clue so far had ended in disappointment. So that one morning when one of his shopmates told him of a young Cornish man—a billiard marker—who was dying in a garret, in Pincher Alley, Gibbet Lane, he was disposed to pay no heed to the report. He had hunted down so many rumours of the kind, and had found nothing at the end of them, that he was half-disposed to take no further notice of mere hear-say reports.

On second thoughts, however, he resolved to go to Pincher Alley and make enquiries. So, after his frugal tea, he started off, and after tramping the streets for the best part of an hour, he began to fear he should never find the place. At length a friendly urchin volunteered to conduct him, and after another quarter of an hour he found himself in a dirty, dark *cul de sac*, containing something less than a score of tenements. .



"Is there a young man ill in this alley?" he asked of a villainous looking man who stood in an open doorway smoking a short pipe.

"Ay; No. 7," was the surly answer.

In a few moments he was at No. 7, mounting a flight of rickety stairs, led by a filthy old woman, who lighted the way with a spluttering farthing dip. He had been in many similar places before, so that its squalor and wretchedness did not impress him as at first. He had no expectation of finding his foster-brother, and, indeed, sincerely hoped that if ever he did find him it would not be in a place like this.

The rickety stairs ended in a garret, low, damp, and bitterly cold. Big patches of plaster had fallen from the ceiling, revealing the laths and slates. The floor was rotting, the walls black with damp and dirt. There was no furniture in the room. A dirty mattress lay on the floor in one corner of the room, and outlined under the thin covering the motionless figure of a human being.

Holding the sputtering dip above her head as she stooped, the old woman hobbled across the creaking floor to the side of the bed, followed closely by Paul.

"Hi, Flukes, be you asleep?" she said, lowering the dip and bending over the motionless figure; "here's a gentleman come to see you."

With a low moan the sick man raised his hand which had lain upon his cheek, and turned his face slowly toward the light.

At sight of the haggard, wasted face, Paul started back with an exclamation of surprise; the next moment he was kneeling upon the floor by the side of the mattress.

"Oh, David," he said, "I did not expect to find you like this."

"You did not expect to find me?" the sick man gasped slowly. "Who are you?"

"Why, don't you know me?" Paul answered. "I am your brother."

Slowly David turned his eyes from Paul to the old woman, and then back to Paul again, while a wistful, pathetic smile lighted up his pallid face.

"Dreaming again," he muttered, "I'm always dreaming of mother and Paul; I wish I might never awake."

"But you are not dreaming now," Paul said; "you are wide awake, and I am here in the flesh."

"Paul is in California," David answered, closing his eyes, "and I—let me see, where am I?"

Without waiting to reply, Paul turned to the old woman.

"Could you get a fire in this room?" he asked.

"Ay, if I'm paid for it," was the answer.

"Then do it at once," he said. "And if you can send for a doctor also, I shall be obliged."

"The parish doctor was here a week ago," she said, "and he says he can't do no more for him."

"I don't want the parish doctor," said Paul. "If there's a clever doctor near, send for him, and I'll see that he and you are paid."

Within the next hour a cheerful fire was burning in the room, and a doctor was standing by David's bedside. He looked very grave while examining the sick man, but said little. He ordered nourishment to be administered every hour, wrote out a prescription, said he would call again in the morning, and took his departure.

For several days David's life trembled in the balance, then he began to rally; and as soon as he was strong enough Paul had him removed to his own lodgings, and sent for his foster-mother to come without delay.

During all this while Paul had scarcely left his side. Night and day he watched by him, anticipating his every want, as only one of large and generous heart could do.

To David, Paul's presence was a constant surprise; he could not understand why he had come in search of him, nor how he had succeeded in finding him.

"I can't understand it, Paul," he said, when he found

himself in the clean, comfortable bed of the latter; "I've been no friend of yours."

"Very likely," said Paul. "But we'll not talk of that now. Your business is to get better as fast as you can."

"Get better," he said, the tears coming into his eyes. "Get better for what? Oh, Paul, I'm not fit to live, and I'm less fit to die. You don't know what I've suffered since — since — well, since I came here. I got lower and lower, trying to resist, but always sinking down. If I could get away somewhere—oh, I don't know where!—out of the reach of the temptations which have always beset me, I think, perhaps—I don't know—but I might live a better life."

"Well, perhaps that can be managed," Paul said, cheerfully. "But keep your heart up, mother will be here to-morrow, you know."

"Oh, I don't know how I can meet her," he moaned, "I almost wish I had died."

"Oh, nonsense! You may have a bright future yet, if you do your best and trust in God."

"I don't know," he said, slowly, "oh, I don't know!" Then after a pause he looked up and said, "Paul, how long have you been in London searching for me?"

"Oh, don't you bother about that!" Paul answered, "Mother will tell you all you want to know when you get stronger."

"I wish I were good, like you," he moaned, then closed his eyes and relapsed into silence.

We shall not attempt to describe the meeting between mother and son on the following day. Suffice it that from Mary's lips there fell no word of reproach.

Paul rejoiced in the change which sickness and suffering had wrought in his foster-brother, and when, after a long talk together, David said he would like to get out of England altogether, Paul caught at the idea in a moment; and even Mary thought it would be the best thing he could do.

And so, within a week of Mary's arrival, it was settled

that when David was strong enough, Paul should take him out to Nebraska, and get his friends George Ripley and Harry Mack to initiate him into the mysteries of farming. David got quite enthusiastic over the idea. To go back again to Cornwall he felt would be too great a humiliation ; to stay in London would be to run into the very teeth of temptation. But to be far away out into the country, beyond the reach of gin palaces, and gambling dens, and all the seductions of city life and evil companions, was, of all the things he could desire, the most desirable.

He seemed so truly in earnest, that Paul felt abundantly compensated for all he had endured during the last nine months. Suffering and want, and the gaunt shadow of death had done for David what all his mother's petting had failed to accomplish.

During the first week Mary scarcely noticed Paul ; there seemed no room in her thoughts for anyone but David. Then she suddenly recollected herself.

"Oh, Paul," she said, "I have a letter for you from Sir George Penrith. I promised to give it to you the first thing. I am so sorry. But other things put it completely out of my mind."

"Oh, never mind," he said, taking the letter and breaking open the seal. It's something about the new lode, I expect. Ah, he does not say ! 'Come to Ferndale at once on very important business,' is the burden of his communication. What can it be, I wonder ! Anyhow, I'll go down to-morrow."

## CHAPTER XXXIX.

### GETTING AT THE TRUTH.

"But thou art fair, and at thy birth, dear boy,  
Nature and fortune joined to make thee great ;  
Of nature's gifts thou may'st with lilies boast,  
And with the half-blown rose."—SHAKESPEARE.

THE summons to Ferndale was the result of a conversation which passed, a week or two before, between Sir George Penrith and Captain Perkins. "It's a most wonderful thing," Sir George had been saying, "that this lode should be in our 'sett' and we have remained ignorant of it all these years."

"Not so wonderful, after all," Captain Perkins replied. "Indeed, I think it is wonderful we discover as many lodes as we do."

"I don't agree with you," said Sir George. "This lode ought to have been found years ago. However, we can't help that now. But I do think we ought to do something for the young man who let us into the secret."

"Well, I don't know," said the captain. "According to present appearances a pretty handsome income will be secured to his mother, that is, to Mrs. Vivian, for it turns out she is not his mother."

"Not his mother?" Sir George interposed, quickly.

"No! Have you not heard?" Captain Perkins asked.

"I have heard nothing," said the baronet.

"Well, it's quite a little romance," said the captain, with deliberation; and he proceeded to tell the story which had been for a long time the talk of Penwharf.

Sir George listened like a man in a dream; for at the first mention of the finding of Paul, the thought flashed through

his mind, "Could this be his own long-lost son?" He remembered how strangely his wife had been affected when she first saw Paul at Ferndale. How she had insisted on the likeness between him (Sir George) and the young carpenter, and how he had been for some unaccountable reason constantly in her thoughts ever since.

Sir George had hardly patience to hear the story out. But he controlled his feelings by a strong effort, and when the captain had finished quietly remarked, "As you say, Perkins, it is quite a little romance."

His first impulse was to rush off to Mary Vivian's cottage, and get all particulars from her lips, but thought better of it, and took the earliest train to Plymouth instead, where he waited upon his solicitor, and instructed him to act in the matter.

"It may turn out to be nothing," he said, "in which case I do not want my name to be mixed up in the affair."

The next day Mary Vivian was greatly surprised, and not a little "flustered," to use her own word, at receiving a visit from a tall, elderly gentleman, who announced that he was a solicitor, from Plymouth, acting in the interest of a client, who had lost a child many years before; and having heard the story which had been current for some time in Penwharf, had come to make inquiries.

Mary, very nervous, and not a little overawed by the grave tones of the lawyer, made haste to tell all she knew, and ended by fetching the clothes in which the child had been dressed.

Mr. Rashleigh Smith examined the different articles of infant attire with great care, paid particular attention to the monogram, and then asked permission to take the clothes with him to show to his client.

Mary did not much relish the idea of letting the clothes go out of her possession, but was too overawed to object. She had a very wholesome dread of lawyers, and did not know what terrible things might happen to her if she once got into their clutches.

Mr. Rashleigh Smith was very profuse in his thanks, complimented her on her clear and straightforward narrative, assured her that the clothes would be perfectly safe, and would be returned to her in case he was on the wrong scent; and then, with a polite "good afternoon" walked away, feeling considerably elated with the result of his mission.

The day following the lawyer visited Sir George, at Ferndale, and was closeted a long time with him in his den.

Sir George examined the clothes with even more attention than did the lawyer, discussed in detail every point of Mary Vivian's narrative, and came to the conclusion that Paul Vivian was his own son, though he did not admit so much to Mr. Smith.

"The evidence, I think, is fairly conclusive, Sir George," said the lawyer, in his gravest tones.

"Yes, there are one or two points which seem pretty clear," said the baronet, slowly, "though of course there is a good deal to be cleared up yet."

"Of course, of course," assented Mr. Smith; "but once get on the right track, and the rest is easy. I have no doubt whatever, Sir George, we shall find your son—that is, if he is living."

"I hope so," was the reply. "At any rate, as you say, we are on the right track. These are doubtless the clothes in which our child was attired, anything further than that we cannot say at present."

"Quite true," assented the lawyer; "though we must bear in mind that the woman is prepared to swear on oath that the young man known as Paul Vivian was the child found attired in these articles."

"I do not dispute that for a moment," said the baronet, "and what is more, I do very sincerely hope that that young fellow may prove to be my son, for a nobler young man, in every way, I have never met. I tell you, Mr. Smith, I should be proud of him."

"That is satisfactory," said the lawyer, complacently

rubbing his chin, "and now having got thus far, we must go on to establish the identity of the child, as well as of the clothes."

"That, I fear, will be a work of some difficulty," said Sir George; "however, we must persevere."

"We shall have to get Lady Penrith to help us," said the lawyer.

The baronet shook his head. "I think we had better say nothing to her until the whole affair is settled," he said. "The excitement would be too much for her."

"Oh, not at all; not at all," said Mr. Smith, briskly; "she would enter into the affair with zest, and would be all the better for it, in my opinion. Moreover, we must have her verdict respecting these clothes."

"Not necessarily," said the baronet.

"But it would be more satisfactory," persisted the lawyer.

"That may be so, but——"

"Oh, come, now, Sir George, let us have no 'buts;' Lady Penrith is as competent as you or I to investigate this matter, and indeed I do not think we can get on without her."

"That's scarcely like you, Mr. Smith," laughed Sir George.

The lawyer coloured slightly, and after a pause went on again. "The thought I have in my mind, Sir George, is this, there may be some birth-mark or other peculiarity that only the mother could swear to."

Sir George sprang to his feet as though he had been shot. "I never thought of that," he said, looking very white; "I believe the baby had a mark on its left arm just above the wrist."

"Are you quite sure?" questioned the lawyer.

"Well, I think I am," said the baronet, reflectingly; "though, to tell the truth, it is a matter I never felt particularly interested in. But of course Lady Penrith will know."

"So you are coming round to my view, after all," said the lawyer, a little bit maliciously.



"In a matter like this of course her evidence is essential," Sir George replied.

The lawyer smiled, then rose to his feet and took two or three turns round the room.

"We must send for the young man," he said, at length, pausing abruptly before Sir George.

The baronet inclined his head in token of assent.

"But before we do that we will have your wife's verdict respecting these clothes."

"As you will."

"May I ring and ask her to be sent here?"

"No, we will go to her; she is in the library."

In a moment the lawyer had folded up the little parcel of clothes, and was following Sir George across the hall.

Lady Penrith was deep in an easy chair, intent on a new book when they entered. But she rose at once, and came toward them with a smile of genuine pleasure lighting up her sweet gentle face.

"You are quite a stranger, Mr. Smith," she said, grasping the lawyer's hand. "I was beginning to think you had forsaken us."

"No fear of lawyers forsaking their clients," said Mr. Smith, with a smile. "All the fear is in the other direction. But I hope I see you well, Lady Penrith."

"Quite well, thank you; and you?"

"Never better. Don't I look it?"

"Yes, for a bachelor you look very well," she said, with a laugh, "and as you have no family ties you will, of course, stay to dinner."

"Thank you, I will, as we have a few business matters to discuss."

"Oh, I thought you and Sir George had settled all that before you came here."

"Not so, madam, we want you to help us."

"Me?"

"Yes, you! Don't look surprised, and I will come to the point as quickly as possible."

But Lady Penrith did look surprised, and dropped into her chair, much wondering what was in the wind.

The lawyer cleared his throat, and took a chair opposite. The baronet remained standing with his elbow on the mantelpiece. For several seconds there was a very awkward silence. Mr. Smith toyed uneasily with a paper-knife, not knowing exactly how to begin. The baronet was fidgety and ill at ease.

"You see (ahem!)," began the lawyer, "we have made a little discovery of late."

"Yes, I know," said Lady Penrith, quickly, "but I did not know you were interested in mining."

"It is not the discovery at Wheal Anthony," said the lawyer, "but a discovery of quite another character. Indeed, to be quite explicit, and to come to the point at once, it is in relation to the child you lost so many years ago."

Lady Penrith turned pale to the very lips, while her breath came and went in short gasps. "Have you found him?" she asked, at length, with a little gasp between each word.

"Well, no, we cannot say that exactly," said the lawyer, "but we have found what we think were the clothes your child wore, and we know the child who was found attired in those clothes, and found about the time your child was lost. But whether he is your child or somebody else's child, that of course remains to be proved."

"Let me see the clothes," she said, excitedly, "for I should know them among all the baby-linen in the world; did not my own hands help to make them, and was not every stitch sewn in love and hope?"

"Do not excite yourself, madam," said the lawyer, as he hastily undid the parcel. But before he could complete the operation she had snatched it from his hands; and rushing to the window she held up to the light the little frock and pinafore. One glance was sufficient, and dropping on to the

sofa, she pressed them to her lips, kissing them passionately.

"Oh, my darling! my darling!" she cried, while her tears fell like rain. "At last! oh, at last!"

"And you know the child who was attired in these?" she said, at length, springing to her feet and holding out the clothes in her hand.

"We do, madam," said the lawyer. "But still, that is not positive evidence that——"

"Yes, it is," she interrupted quickly; "I have seen him. I know him. And oh, he is brave, and handsome, and good. My heart leaped up when first I saw him. Send for him at once, George, and bring him home."

"My dear, you are exciting yourself," said the baronet, who now spoke for the first time. "This is a case in which we must not act rashly. We must move cautiously. The child may have been changed, you know."

"No, he has not," she said. "Why, he is the very image of what you were at his age. I cannot be mistaken."

"But had your child any mark by which you could identify him?" asked the lawyer. "To have discovered a child dressed in your child's clothes is no proof that he is yours."

"Oh, you lawyers!" she said, with a smile; "ever slow to believe, if not hard of heart. But you shall be satisfied. My child had a mark on his left arm, just above the wrist," and she went on to describe its exact position and appearance.

"That will do," said the lawyer, when she had done speaking; "we shall get at the truth now."

"But tell me, was I not right in my surmise?" she asked, eagerly.

"Quite right, my love," Sir George answered; "and I hope the young man we call Paul Vivian will prove to be our son."

"I have not a doubt," she answered. "But send for him at once, George, and let us get the matter settled."

"That is not so easily done," said the lawyer. "At present we do not know his address."

"But that can be easily obtained," she answered, quickly.  
"Mrs. Vivian will, of course, know where he is."

"Yes, you are quite right, my dear," said Sir George. "I will see her myself to-morrow, and we will have the mystery cleared up without further delay."

So it came about that Mary Vivian was entrusted with a letter to Paul, but which, in her excitement and anxiety about David, she had forgotten to deliver to him till more than a week had passed.

## CHAPTER XL.

### RE-UNITED.

"Human society is now hard enough, and needs more sympathy in it than one always sees; but what it would become if the hearts of men were not kept in some degree of softness and tenderness by the affections which are raised and developed by family life, it is difficult fully to conceive. What a sudden and blessed transformation comes into the soul of father and mother when there appears in the home that gift of God, a child!"

—MELLOR.

IT was evening, and nearly dark, when Paul paused for a moment before the gates of Ferndale Park. The soft twilight of an April day was dying gently over the hills. The silence was unbroken save for an occasional bleat from a sheep-fold somewhere in the distance, or the sullen growl of a watch-dog at some neighbouring farm. After the noise and roar of London streets, this quiet was intensely restful to Paul, and brought back to him memories of the past, when he used to loiter in the quiet lanes round Penwharf, or, more recently still, when he sat and talked with his foster-father outside their little log cabin in Cedar Creek.

He could hardly repress a sigh as he rang for the lodge-keeper to open the gate, and when at length he found himself inside, he began to wonder again, as he had done a thousand times before, what Sir George could possibly want with him.

This was his third visit to this lordly home. The first time he had been sent by Captain Perkins, the second time he had come of his own accord, but now he was here at the bidding of Sir George himself. Was there anything significant in this? He had thought more than once of the old saying, "The third time lucky," and had chided himself for entertaining the thought. He knew that luck was but the

hope of fools. And even if he were fool enough to believe in it, his hopes did not lie at all in this direction. He was eager again to begin another search, and that for Abigail. In a week or two David would be well enough to travel, and when he had seen him comfortably settled somewhere, out of the reach of temptation, he would start on his search for Abigail.

As he neared the house he saw that the lamps were lighted in one or two of the rooms, and now a new question startled him, and made him pause. "Where would he spend the night?" He had never thought of that before. "Had he not better turn back and catch a train to Plymouth, and return to Ferndale on the following morning?"

But a few moments' reflection decided him. He had come here at the express bidding of Sir George. If he had come on his own account it would have been different. Perhaps a bed could be found for him in the house of the coachman or gardener. At any rate, he would take his chance. He would know what this "important business" was before he slept, if possible.

In response to his timid ring, one of the maid-servants opened the door. To be strictly correct, she did not *open* it, she held it ajar, and stared at Paul as though he had been a burglar.

"Well?" she said, at length, in an interrogative tone; for Paul seemed too nervous to speak.

"I beg your pardon," he said, "but might I ask if Sir George is at home?"

"Not to you, I think," she snapped. "At least not to-night. If you want to see him you should come in the morning."

"I could not get here sooner," Paul stammered; "I am sorry to have come so late."

The maid relented a little at this, and opened the door a little wider. Her eyes were getting used to the dim light outside, and she made the discovery that the visitor was young, and very handsome.

"Will you send up your card?" she said, after a pause, "though I don't think it's any use, for Sir George is dressing for dinner."

"I have no card," said Paul, with a blush.

"Of course not," the maid replied, with a toss of her head. "But you have a name, perhaps?"

Paul blushed more deeply than ever. It was but a chance word, but it touched him to the quick. Almost for the first time he felt the humiliation of having no name. Did this maid know? No, that was impossible; and yet, because he was nameless, he had no right to resent her impertinence.

His hesitation and apparent confusion made her suspicious. Of course he was nobody, or he would not have come to the side door. And equally, of course, he meant no good, or he would not hesitate respecting his name.

"You had better come again in the morning," she said, and stepped back as though about to shut the door.

"But Sir George wants to see me," he stammered out quickly. "Tell him, please, Paul Vivian is here."

"Paul who?"

"Paul Vivian!"

"Very well," and she retreated into the well-lighted hall.

"I say, Mr. Spinks," she said to the butler, who was crossing the hall to the dining-room, "there's a young man at the door as wants to see Sir George; do you think he'll see him?"

"Not till after dinner, that's certain. What's his name?"

"Paul Vivid, or something like that."

"Oh, yes; quite right. He can sit in the hall till Sir George is ready for him."

"The butler says as how you can come in an' wait," said the maid, coming to the door again and throwing it wide open.

"Thanks," said Paul, and he took off his hat and entered.

"You can sit there," she said, pointing to a carved oaken bench, and tossing up her head, she marched quickly away.

Paul sat himself down wearily on the hard seat, wondering very much why he was received so much less respectfully than on previous visits. He did not consider that the unseasonable hour had something to do with it, and that the old butler, who heretofore had treated him with such marked civility, was almost too busy to heed what the maid had said. Certain it is that had Spinks seen him, he would have been accommodated with a seat in Sir George's den.

At the end of the bench on which he sat was a hat and coat rack. Close up to this he got, so that he might be in its shadow as much as possible. Servants were constantly rushing to and fro, and he did not want to be stared at any more than he could help.

But, in truth, he was scarcely noticed. Sitting with his chin on his chest, he could scarcely be distinguished from the heap of coats and rugs which hung near him.

At length the gong sounded, and a moment or two later Sir George, in evening dress, marched across the hall, with Lady Penrith leaning on his arm. Paul drew back in the shadow of the coats as far as possible, and they passed on without noticing him, and the dining-room door was closed behind them.

Then for an hour he sat and listened to the faint rattle of knives and forks and spoons, getting more hungry and impatient all the while. He wondered what kind of dinner it could be to take them so long to get through with; wondered whether these rich people enjoyed their food more than the poor, seeing they had so many dishes to tempt their appetite; wondered whether he would be offered a morsel to eat, when at length they condescended to see him.

He was getting desperately hungry, and thoroughly tired out. He had got a penny bun and a cup of coffee at Swindon. That was all that had passed his lips since morning. And still the minutes dragged on while he waited with growing impatience.

It seemed a strange freak of fate or fortune that he, the



only son, should sit in the hall of his father's house tired and hungry, and unnoticed even by the servants.

Sir George and Lady Penrith lingered over the meal as much to wile the time away as anything. Neither had much appetite for food. Both were getting anxious respecting Paul. More than a week had passed since Mary Vivian had been intrusted with a letter to him, and he had neither come nor sent a reply.

"Was he really their son?" That was the question which agitated them both. Was a cruel fate fooling them with delusive hopes, or was this young man their long-lost child? Lady Penrith was almost ill with hope deferred. The long suspense was getting unbearable, and so they sat almost in silence over the meal, while he, their heart's desire, sat hungry and unnoticed in the draughty hall.

At length, when Spinks was laying the dessert plates, he whispered to Sir George, "There's a young man as has been waiting in the hall a goodish time to see you, sir. Would you see him to-night, sir, or——"

"Who is he? what's his name?" Sir George asked quickly.

"Well, now, sir, I did not notice particular, I think it was Paul Villiers, or——"

"That will do, you should have let me know before; bring him in here at once."

"Yes, sir. By all means, sir." And Spinks marched away to execute his errand.

"Has he come?" Lady Penrith gasped, looking very white and agitated.

"Yes, he is here. But do control yourself, my love," Sir George replied.

"I will do my best," she said. And the next moment the door flew open, and Spinks entered, followed by Paul. He was looking pale and tired, and was, moreover, evidently nervous.

Sir George rose at once, and went to meet him with extended hand, while Lady Penrith could hardly repress a

little cry. "He is my own," was her reflection, "and handsomer than ever." But she sat quite still, determined to control herself till hope gave place to certainty.

Her greeting was formal, almost cold, so anxious was she not to betray herself. Paul felt it, and blushed almost crimson. "She knows I am nameless," was his thought, "and so will scarcely touch my fingers."

Sir George recalled him to himself. Spinks had left the room, and Lady Penrith had resumed her seat.

"Will you take this easy chair?"

Paul mechanically obeyed.

"I sent for you," Sir George went on, "on a matter of importance, and I am sorry you have been kept waiting."

"Don't mention it," Paul said, not knowing what else to say.

"Well, it can't be helped now, but I regret it all the same. The 'business of importance' I mentioned in my note relates to yourself."

"Which note," Paul interrupted, "mother forgot to give me till yesterday."

"I feared it had been delayed in some way," Sir George said. "Still, it does not so much matter now you have come. So we will come to business at once. You are aware you are not the son of the late John Vivian?"

Paul bowed his head and blushed crimson.

"Some people whom we know lost a child over twenty-two years ago," Sir George continued, "and it now transpires on inquiry that when John Vivian found you you were attired in this child's clothes."

"Oh, then perhaps I have parents, after all," Paul said, with a look of relief.

"It does not follow, of course, that you are the missing child of which we speak," said Sir George. "However, that can be easily proved. It transpires that the child which was lost had a birth-mark on its left arm just above the wrist."

"Could you describe it?" Paul asked, eagerly.

"Yes, I can do that," and Sir George proceeded to give a description of its appearance and position.

Before he had finished Paul's face was as white as the face of the dead, but he spoke no word. With trembling fingers he unfastened the wristband of his shirt and stripped up the sleeve, exposing his white and shapely arm. Lady Penrith rushed forward, gazed at it for a moment, and then fell on his neck, crying, "Oh, my child! my child!"

What followed during the next few hours we shall not attempt to describe. Paul had an uncomfortable feeling that he was either dreaming or had become insane. He received Lady Penrith's caresses and Sir George's boisterous expressions of affection in the most stolid and mechanical fashion. He sat down to a sumptuously spread table and tasted nothing of what he ate. He saw a long retinue of servants called into the room, to whom he was introduced as their young master, and finally he marched up a broad and handsome flight of stairs behind a liveried servant, and was shown into a magnificent room, which he was informed was his.

Here he sat down and tried to think, but at length in desperation undressed himself and tumbled into bed, where he lay for hours with wide open eyes staring into the darkness. But dreamless sleep and sweet forgetfulness stole over him at last, and when he awoke it was broad day.

With a start he sat up in bed and stared round him, wondering for the moment whether he was awake or dreaming. Then like a flash the events of the previous evening rushed across his brain, and he lay back in the sumptuous bed again and tried to realize his position.

He, Paul Vivian, then, was no longer Paul Vivian, but Philip Penrith. He was not the son of a miner, but the son of a baronet. No longer poor, but heir of large estates.

But, somehow, he did not derive very much comfort from his reflections. The greatness of his position oppressed him. It was a satisfaction to him to know that he was no longer a 'nameless stray.' But that seemed the only satisfactory

feature of the case. He was not fit for the position he would be called upon to occupy, he had had no training. Even the servants would notice his stupidity, and laugh at him behind his back. He would be far happier living in a log hut in some western wilderness than in this lordly mansion. And then, what of Abigail? Would finding his parents mean the loss of his love? Was the hope of his life to go out in darkness?

And he heaved a great sigh and turned over in bed.

"Of course they will claim me now," he said to himself. "And I ought to be happy. But oh! Abigail is more to me than all the world beside."

At this point his reflections were interrupted by a knock at the door, followed by the entrance of Jakes, the servant who had attended him the night before, who brought with him a can of hot water, and who began, as soon as he had laid the can down, to draw the blinds.

His offers of assistance, however, Paul declined. He had been trained to help himself, and would continue to do so.

The day which followed was very trying to Paul, but the strangeness of his position gradually wore away, and by the following day he began to feel a little at home. He wrote a brief note to David, saying he would be detained at least a week, but made no allusion to the change in his position.

On the second day Sir George took him to Plymouth and gave him into the hands of a fashionable tailor, while his mother made endless purchases for him, and seemed almost afraid of letting him go out of her sight.

So the days sped on, and if Paul was not happy it was not for want of affectionate attention. The servants were obliging now to obsequiousness. The maid who had treated him with such scant courtesy on the evening of his arrival came and begged his pardon with tears. "I did not know, sir," she sobbed.

"Of course you did not," said Paul, with a laugh, "neither did I. But all the same, you should treat everyone with respect and courtesy, the poorest as well as the richest."

In the servants' hall the matter was discussed in all its bearings, and in three days Paul had established himself a universal favourite.

"He's a real gentleman," said Mr. Spinks. "A diamond, I say, of the first water, an', bless you, he takes to society ways like a duck takes to water."

"Ay, and ain't he handsome!" said Mrs. Carver, the housekeeper. "I don't wonder that my lady is so proud of him."

Every day some pleasant excursion was planned, some visit paid or received. The neighbouring gentry were eager to pay their respects and have a look at the long-lost son and heir, and, on the whole, Paul bore the scrutiny well. He saw with pleasure that neither his father nor mother was ashamed of him; on the contrary, both were very clearly proud of him.

Sir George's face fairly beamed when he introduced Paul as "My son," while Lady Penrith walked around the house and gardens leaning upon his arm, looking ten years younger, the servants said, and certainly looking infinitely happier than she had ever done before.

At the end of a week Paul went up to London and fetched David and his mother down to Bath, where he had secured apartments for them. David was still weak, but was gradually improving in health.

"You'll soon be all right, Davie," Paul said to him, with a smile. "In about a month you'll be ready for the start."

"I hope so," David replied. "I'm anxious to begin a new life."

"That's right," said Paul; "we can do almost anything, if we try hard."

Mary Vivian seemed quite happy again now she was with David, and, as usual, she paid very little attention to Paul.

Paul was very thankful for this, for he wanted the secret of his parentage to be kept from her as long as possible.

"That new lads seems to be keeping you very busy," she

said to him, on their way to Bath. "How much longer will you be over it?"

"Oh, another month, at least," he answered, with an indifferent air.

"Well, I hope Sir George will pay you well," she said.

"I think he will," Paul answered.

"I didn't tell you," she went on, "that I had a lawyer making inquiries about you, did I?"

"No," he answered, growing hot all over; "but I've seen the gentleman you refer to. But he's given up the inquiry now."

"I knew nothing would come of it," she said; and then the subject dropped, much to Paul's relief.

After seeing them comfortably settled in their new quarters, Paul returned again to Ferndale Park. But in spite of all that was done for him, he was restless and ill at ease. This his mother's watchful eye was quick to notice.

"Come, Paul, my son, tell me what troubles you," she said, as they sat together one evening in the library.

And here it may be well to state that Paul had insisted on being called by his old name. "I don't like 'Philip,'" he said; and Sir George instructed Mr. Rashleigh Smith to take at once the necessary legal steps for adding "Paul" to his other names.

Paul looked up into her sweet, gentle face, and then his eyes fell.

"Don't be afraid to tell me, my son," she said, with a world of tenderness in her voice. "What affects your happiness affects ours."

"You will think me ungrateful," he said, coming near and taking her hand in his.

"I can trust my son," she said, with a fond smile lighting up her face.

"And I," he said, with a rush of tears to his eyes, "can trust my mother."

And there and then, as the twilight deepened round them, he told her all the story of his love for Abigail.

## CHAPTER XLI.

### SURPRISES.

“And sweet homes nestle in these dales,  
And perch along these wooded swells;  
And, blest beyond Arcadian vales,  
They hear the sound of Sabbath bells!  
Here dwells no perfect man sublime,  
Nor woman winged before her time,  
But with the faults and follies of the race,  
Old home-bred virtues hold their not unhonoured place.”  
—WHITTIER.

TWO months later Paul might have been seen sitting in the shadow of a large maple-tree, engaged in a very animated conversation with Harry Mack and George Ripley. He had reached Yewdale along with his foster-brother David about a fortnight previously, and was now anxious to take his departure, that he might commence his search for Abigail. He did not anticipate any further trouble with David. The way in which he settled down to work directly on his arrival was not only a surprise to Paul, but also to George and Harry. It was evident David was anxious to redeem the past as far as possible, and as here he was out of the reach of the temptations which had proved too much for him in the old days, there seemed no earthly reason why he might not have a prosperous future.

Harry and George knew practically nothing about his past life. Paul left it to David to tell them as much or as little as he thought fit in the days that should follow. Paul was equally silent respecting himself and the change that had come over his own circumstances.

When he was saying good-bye to his foster-mother at Liverpool—for she had insisted on coming that far “to see them off,” as she expressed it—he took her aside for a few

moments and said to her, "When you reach Penwharf, mother, you will hear one or two things about me that may surprise you; and what I want you to promise is that you will say nothing about them in your letters to David, until I give you permission."

"But what is it I shall hear?" she asked, quickly.

"Never mind that now," he said. "Will you promise me?"

"I'd rather know what it is first," she said.

"It is nothing bad," he replied; "and I think it is best for David, as well as for myself, that he should know nothing about the matter at present."

"Oh, very good!" she said, a little bit shortly. "I must say you have been very good to both David and me, and so perhaps I ought to promise."

"I think you ought," he said, with a smile.

And then the bell rang, and Mary had to leave the big ship and get back on the tender.

The voyage across the Atlantic was very uneventful. The greatest excitement outside the smoke-room was when each day, a little after noon, the number of miles the ship had run during the previous twenty-four hours was posted up.

Paul had many long conversations with David, for they occupied the same state-room, and kept well together during the entire voyage. Poor David was in no boastful mood, but he was evidently sincere in his determination to win his way in the world if possible.

"I shall never make a man like you, Paul," David said to him one day; "it isn't in me."

"Oh, nonsense, David," Paul said, with a smile.

"No, it isn't nonsense," was the reply. "You are a mystery to me. You know I am not your brother; that I have no claim upon you; that, on the contrary, I have wronged you, and robbed you, and lied about you. And yet see what you have done for me, and are still doing! Oh, Paul, it nearly breaks my heart sometimes when I think what I have been."



"I am glad you loathe the old life," Paul answered.

"Loathe it! Oh, Paul——" and David walked away to hide his emotion, unable to speak another word.

George and Harry both drove over to the nearest dépôt, which was five miles from Yewdale, to meet them, and gave them a boisterous welcome.

"You see," said Harry, "we have kept together ever since, and, what is more, we have never quarrelled."

"What a forbearing couple you must be!" laughed Paul. "I hope our coming will not disturb the harmony."

"Amen!" exclaimed George, "but I have no fears on that score."

"At anyrate, I shan't trouble you very long," said Paul. "As soon as David gets comfortably settled, I must be off on my own account."

"Now, listen to him," said Harry, cracking his whip at the same time. "We have not reached Yewdale yet, and he talks about leaving it already."

"It's simply outrageous!" exclaimed George.

"I beg pardon," said Paul, laughing. "It was very inconsiderate of me. I promise you not to allude to the matter again till——"

"Yes, till when?" Harry asked.

"Well, till next time," said Paul.

"Well, that is kind of you," they exclaimed in chorus.

"Oh, don't mention it!" said Paul, with mock gravity; "I can assure you it is nothing—nothing at all."

So the journey to Yewdale wore away in pleasant converse, and though David took little part in the conversation, he soon began to feel perfectly at home with the two gentlemanly young farmers, who had given him such a cordial greeting.

Paul expected to find a log cabin at Yewdale, and was therefore the more agreeably surprised to find a "frame house" of two stories, nicely situated on the slope of a hill, and surrounded by a garden in which flowers and vegetables were growing in abundance.

But there was even a greater surprise in store for him. On getting into the house, two very pretty young ladies came forward to greet him, whom George introduced as his sisters, Kate and Conny Ripley.

"I did not know," stammered Paul, quite taken aback. "I thought you and Harry lived alone, with perhaps a Chinaman to do the cooking."

"My dear fellow, we are not in California here," laughed George. "I can assure you, we are quite in the heart of civilization."

"So I perceive," said Paul, "and I must say I congratulate you. I should have known ladies were about, if I had not seen them—only ladies' fingers could trim up a house like this."

"Oh! Mr. Vivian, we did not think you were a flatterer," said Kate, the elder of the two sisters.

"I can assure you, Miss Ripley," said Paul, with a blush, "I was never more sincere in my life."

At this point, Harry came into the room accompanied by David, the latter of whom seemed much more taken aback than Paul had been. But the welcome he received was so kindly, and so evidently sincere, that he felt at home almost directly.

"Why, this is just splendid!" David said to Paul, a few minutes later, when alone in the bedroom that had been assigned to them. "I never expected anything like this."

"Nor I either," said Paul. "Those young fellows must have done well and worked hard. Done well, perhaps, because they have worked hard. I think you will be comfortable here, Davie."

"I'm sure I shall," he answered impulsively.

"And, if you work hard, you also will do well," he continued.

"I'll do my best, Paul."

"That's right, Davie." And then they went down to supper.

After supper, Paul experienced another surprise. They were just about to rise from the table, when there was a knock at the door, and in walked Chris Macpherson. Paul started to his feet, as though he had been shot.

"Why, Chris!" he exclaimed, "where on earth have you sprung from?"

"Oh! I just rode across to have a look at you," he said, with a broad smile. "I knew you were expected."

"Rode across!" exclaimed Paul. "I thought you were in New York."

"And these boys told you nothing to the contrary?" questioned Chris, glancing round at Harry and George.

"Nothing," said Harry; "we wanted to give him a surprise."

"And you have succeeded," said Paul. "But what's the meaning of it, Chris?"

"Oh! that's easily explained," was the answer. "You remember seeing me in New York a little more than a year ago?"

"As if I could forget it!" said Paul.

"Well, the very day after you sailed, I got a letter from father, saying that his wife—that is, my stepmother—was dead, that he was out of health, and almost helpless. Would I do something for him? He would like to come to me, if that were possible. Well, as you may imagine, I was in a fix. I knew father was not a bad sort if he could be kept from the drink. But in New York that would be impossible; so I resolved to come west if he would do so, and sent him a letter to that effect, and money to bring him out. To tell you the truth, I half expected he would spend the money in drink, and that I should hear no more from him till it was all spent. However I was mistaken; as soon as he got the money he started off, and by August last we were comfortably settled at Beaver Rancho, about a mile from here, where we have been ever since."

"And how has your father gone on?" Paul asked.

"Better than expectations," said Chris. "You see, he has had no drink for a year now, and he says the craving for it has entirely left him. Of course he will never be anything but a broken-down man. But in every other respect I never saw so great a change in anyone. We get along capitally together. I have an old negress who keeps house for us, and her husband works on the farm; indeed I trust everything to him. Sambo is my salvation in a worldly sense. You must run across and see my crops. I'm going to make money this year."

"Well, I am delighted," said Paul, and he turned to have a look at David, but it had grown so dark he could not see his face. David was thankful it had grown dark, for while Chris had been telling his story, he had felt his face burning like a coal. He, too, had come here to be out of the reach of the drink and bad companions. The place seemed a veritable haven for outcasts.

. During the next week it was settled that David should remain a year at Yewdale, and learn farming in all its branches. At the end of that time he might be able to start on his own account, especially if his mother came to keep house for him, as she had expressed her determination to do before they left home. Paul sincerely hoped she would stick to her resolve. She was not short of money now, and would be able to give David a good start; and, being a careful housekeeper, there was no reason in the world why they should not get on well together.

Paul spent a very pleasant fortnight at Yewdale; but it was only natural that, when he had seen David comfortably settled, he should begin to pine for Abigail. At last he was free to commence the search. For twelve long months he had tried to curb his impatience, and had resolutely crushed back the longing which threatened sometimes to consume his life. Now, however, his way was clear. He had done his duty by David. His foster-mother no longer needed his care. His own parents had cheerfully given their consent for him to go

in search of Abigail, and had added their blessing thereto. Hence to stay a day longer in Yewdale than was absolutely necessary was positive penance. And yet he endured that penance for several days. George Ripley and his sisters were so kind. Harry Mack was so pressing. While Chris pleaded so hard for a visit to his little homestead at Beaver Ranche, that he shrank from giving them pain by a too hasty departure, and so he remained a fortnight instead of a week.

As it proved, the extra week at Yewdale was not time wasted. It was on the thirteenth day after Paul's arrival that Harry Mack rode away to a horse fair, which was being held at a so-called "city" some ten miles distant. They had been in want of an extra cart-horse for some time, but had been unable to meet with one that just suited them. Before Harry had been in the fair ten minutes, he sighted just the animal he wanted, and after some considerable haggling with the dealer he purchased it.

"You've got a bargain," said the seller, while Harry was counting out the money; "that horse is dirt cheap. I've sold it dirt cheap because I bought it dirt cheap. The man I got it from was hard up, I guess, or he wouldn't 'ave parted with it at the figure. He's fresh to this country, and ain't too flush of dollars. He lives down in Caracas county: maybe you know him, as you're from the old country. His name's Tresillian."

"No," said Harry, who was busy counting the money, and had paid little heed to what the man had been saying, "I know no one of that name, and it's a matter of indifference to me who you got the horse from, so long as it's a good one."

Yet, as he rode homeward that afternoon, the name Tresillian kept constantly recurring to him, as of something once familiar, but long forgotten. He was certain he did not know anyone of that name, and yet he was sure he had heard it somewhere; but when, or under what circumstances, he had no recollection.

Then suddenly it flashed across his memory : it was the name Paul had mentioned in his letter months ago, of some friends of his who had come to live in the state of Nebraska, and whose whereabouts he was anxious to discover.

During the rest of the way home his pace was much more rapid, and seeing on his arrival George and Paul sitting under a maple-tree, he rode up to them and began to display his purchase. At length, dismounting, and giving the horses into the hands of a groom, he said, with a broad grin and a wave of the hand,

"Thereby hangs a tale."

"Thereby hang two," said Paul.

"A horse without a tail——" began George.

"Be silent," said Harry, throwing himself on the grass, "and let the tale be told."

"Let it wag, you mean," said George.

"It would be useful here to keep the flies off," said Paul.

"Be serious," said Harry, "and listen," and he proceeded to tell the horse-dealer's story.

Before he had finished, however, Paul had leaped to his feet. "I must be off," he said ; "I must, really. Mr. Tresillian is the very man I am anxious to find."

"I am so sorry," said Harry, "that the name did not strike me sooner, or I could have got to know your friend's exact location."

"It can't be helped now," said Paul. "But, knowing the county, I will soon find out the farm."

"Don't be too sanguine," said George. "Counties here are not such little plots as they are in England."

"Nor are they so crowded," said Paul. "Never fear; I shall find the 'location,' as you call it."

"Well, don't rush away without first considering how," said Harry. "Wait here a few moments and I will fetch a railway map."

"Yes, do," said Paul, sinking down again.

"Of course you can't possibly start till morning," said

Harry, when he returned with the map, "unless you prefer tramping it, and select the cool night instead of the hot day."

"You are right in that," said Paul; "I will wait till morning. And now for your advice and instructions."

For an hour longer they remained in the shadow of the maple-tree, and then Paul went into the house to pack his portmanteau.

## CHAPTER XLII.

“REQUIRES NO LEARNING.”

“ Words cannot paint thee, gentlest cynosure  
Of all things lovely, in that loveliest form  
Souls wear the youth of woman ! brows as pure  
As Memphian skies that never knew a storm ;  
Lips with such sweetness in their buried deeps  
As fills the rose in which a fairy sleeps.”—BULWER.

A BIGAIL was on her way to the spring to fetch some water for tea when Paul appeared in sight from behind a thick belt of trees. He recognised her in a moment, notwithstanding her shining hair was hidden by a large Panama straw hat, and her face all in shadow. She was dressed in white, for the weather was very hot, and she had no difficulty in dropping into the American fashion in this respect. She had been accustomed to dress in the same way at home; moreover, it was a style of attire that suited her present circumstances. Her simple dresses would easily wash, besides which they were very inexpensive, and money was a scarce article with them at present. Her father had taken the farm, stock, implements, and crops, off the hands of the original proprietor, who had got tired of it, and wanted to try his fortunes elsewhere. Enoch imagined at the first that he had got a wonderfully good bargain, but when the first year had passed away he was not quite so sure. And now, as June again drew toward a close, and the thermometer stood at ninety in the shade, and there was no prospect of a drop of rain for many a long week to come, he began to fear that his last investment was no better than his previous ones had been.

His friends had helped him hither, had found the money, indeed, for him to take the farm, but he began to fear he



would never make a living out of it, and was depressed accordingly. He had never been a cheerful man, and when disaster overtook him he was only too glad to get away from England, and hide from all who had known him in the days of his prosperity. But the experience was a very bitter one. The contrast between Rosevallion Manor and Maple Ridge was so great that it seemed as if he would never reconcile himself to his changed circumstances. A log-house, with two or three small and inconvenient rooms, was not what he had been used to. Moreover, if the farm was to pay, he must do a good deal of the work himself, and this came hard at his time of life. His wife and Abigail, however, were always cheerful. Mrs. Tresillian was one of those brave, patient women, whose characters always shine the brightest in trying circumstances; while Abigail, freed from the hateful prospect of marrying Nick Trebarwith, was ready to sing all day long. Hard work and poverty were nothing in comparison with her freedom. She would have lived in a cave and been content.

Paul had no difficulty in finding where Mr. Tresillian lived, and, leaving his portmanteau at the nearest depôt, he started on a six miles' walk through the blazing sun. It was about four in the afternoon, when, emerging from a mile of thickly-wooded country he came upon the clearing known as Maple Ridge.

Abigail lifted her face shyly as the stranger appeared in sight, but he was not near enough for her to recognise his features. Moreover, he had his wideawake hat pulled low over his eyes. And yet there was something in his poise and build that reminded her of Paul, and set her thinking. A second time she glanced at him, then went on her way to the spring, wondering who he was and what he wanted.

Placing her bucket under the tiny shoot of water which gushed out of the hillside, she sat down on the stump of a tree and waited for it to fill. But when it was full she did not appear to heed it. Over the rim of the bucket the water

gushed, and went rippling down its stony bed into the valley below, making soft, dreamy music, which recalled to her again the happy days of her childhood in the old home at Rosevallon. How like it sounded to the little stream which flowed through the garden at home! Home? alas! it was home no longer. This was her home now; here she would live—perhaps here she would die. Well, it did not matter: better live here in this great solitude, than be the wife of Trebarwith. Then she began to think of Paul, and to wonder what had become of him. Nearly three years had passed away since she said "Good-bye" to him at Plymouth Station. He said then he did not think he would ever return again, and if he returned it would be all the same to her now. No one in Penwharf knew where they were. Her father did not wish that any of them should know, and so she supposed she would never see Paul again till they met in the better country.

This was the bitterest drop in her cup at present. Her love for Paul had grown and strengthened as the years had passed away. In her case, at least, it was true that "Absence makes the heart grow fonder." No other could ever take his place in her heart. She thought no other could ever be so brave and noble as he. So she cherished his memory from day to day, and fed her love upon recollections of the past.

At times a gleam of hope would flash across her heart that in some strangely mysterious way they might meet again. It was some little comfort to her to think that they were on the same continent. Was it altogether foolish of her to dream of meeting him again? Ah! if he loved her as she loved him, he would search the world over until he found her. But she thought, with a sigh of regret, "Men do not love as women do: they have other things to fill their hearts, but we have only them."

She did not heed that a pair of eager eyes were looking at her from behind a tree, not a hundred yards away. She had

taken off her hat and thrown it on the ground, for the sun was getting down behind the forest, and she was out of the reach of its fierce rays now. Her right foot was raised upon a stone, revealing a shapely ankle; her right elbow rested on her knee, her chin was in her hand.

Paul could hardly restrain himself as he stood watching her. In his eyes she never looked so beautiful before. He saw, too, that the girl had become a woman. While years had rounded and perfected her figure, suffering and sorrow had beautified the expression of her face. There was a look of patient resignation and strength in her eyes, which he had never seen before, and which illumined her whole countenance.

Paul felt that the supreme moment of his life had come; the moment for which he had waited through long years of toil and suffering. At last she was free, and he was free to speak his love and learn his fate. Oh, how often he had longed for a moment like this! How often his hope had gone out in darkness, and he had abandoned himself almost to despair! Now the time had come which he had pictured so often in his dreams, and yet he hesitated.

What was she thinking of, he wondered, as she sat there so still, with that far-away look in her eyes! Could it be possible that she was thinking of him—or had he dropped out of her thoughts altogether? He would know his fate at once. He could wait no longer.

The next moment Abigail looked up with a start; then quickly rose to her feet, for she saw the stranger advancing toward her with rapid strides. She did not recognise him yet, for his hat was low over his eyes. But when he was within two or three yards of her, he took off his hat and paused.

For a moment her heart seemed to stop, and she became deadly pale; then with a low cry, "Oh, Paul!" she rushed toward him with both her hands extended.

"Abigail!" he said, taking both her hands in his.

But she did not reply. She only bowed her head to hide the tears which had rushed swiftly to her eyes.

"You did not expect to see me?" he questioned, at length.

"No, Paul," she said, raising her beautiful eyes to his. "I never expected to see you again."

"And you are pleased to see me?"

"Oh, yes; more pleased than I can tell." Then, her maidenly reserve coming to her rescue, she added, "I couldn't help being pleased seeing anyone from home."

"You must find it very lonely here," he said, with just a shade of disappointment in his tone.

"No, not lonely, exactly," she said, looking down again. "We find it quiet, but we have too much to do to feel lonely."

"And you are happy?" he questioned.

"Yes," she said, slowly; "indeed I am happier than I once expected to be. But come into the house and rest—you must be tired, and mother will be so delighted to see you."

"Thank you, Abigail, but not just yet. I want to speak with you alone first. I came here on purpose to find you, to tell you that I love you, that I have loved you always, that you have been my star of hope in all my wanderings. Sometimes I have despaired, and then hope has revived again. And now, after years of waiting and hoping, I can keep back the truth no longer. Oh, Abigail! can you learn to love me just a little?"

She had drooped her head while he had been speaking, to hide the blushes that swept, like the glow of dawn, across her face. Now, without raising her eyes, she answered, in a low voice, "No, Paul, I cannot *learn* to love you."

Instantly he dropped her hands, as though something had stung him; and, with a low moan, "Oh, Abigail!" he was about to turn away.

Then she raised her beautiful face, with the light of

love shining in her eyes, and placing her hands upon his shoulders she said, while the crimson blushes gave an added charm to her countenance, "I cannot *learn* to love you, Paul, for I have loved you always, and it requires no learning."

"My darling!" he exclaimed; and the next moment he had caught her in his arms and was raining passionate kisses on her lips and brow.

She drew herself away at length, and said, with a sweet smile, "Now, Paul, will you go in and see mother?"

"Not yet," he answered, gaily, "I have so much to say to you. Let us sit here together for awhile by the brook," and he caught her face between his hands and kissed her again.

"Oh, Paul!" she said, in a deprecating tone, and blushed again.

"I cannot help it, my darling," he said, with a laugh, and then he led her to the seat she had just occupied, and sat down by her side.

Here we will leave them for a few moments to talk over the past and the present, while we take a peep inside the house.

Mrs. Tresillian was busy in the little kitchen cutting bread and butter for tea. She had altered very little during the last ten years. Save for a sad, dreamy look in her eyes, and the faintest suggestion of grey in her hair, but which could not be seen a few yards distant, there was scarcely any change in her appearance. She was a beautiful woman still, in every sense of the word.

In the adjoining parlour the tea-table was set, and everything appeared to be in readiness for the home-coming of her husband. He came in a few moments later, looking worn and haggard, and with an ominous stoop in his shoulders; and, throwing himself into a rocking-chair, he asked in a fretful tone if tea was ready.

"Not quite Enocn," she answered; "Abigail has not yet

returned from the spring. I can't imagine what is detaining her."

"Perhaps it's dried up," he said, bitterly. "There never was such a God-forsaken country as this."

"Oh, don't say that, Enoch," she said; "things may turn out better than we imagine."

"If they do it will be a miracle," he answered. "Hitherto the worst has always happened."

"No, no," she said, "not the worst. We have had great trouble, it is true, but we might have had greater."

"Just like you, Ruth," he said, peevishly. "But go and call Abigail, I want my tea."

"In a minute," she said, and she took a plate of bread and butter into the parlour and laid it upon the table; then throwing a sun bonnet over her head she left the house and made her way toward the spring.

A walk of two or three hundred yards, then a sudden bend, and she came upon the lovers, who, sitting holding each other's hands, were quite oblivious of the flight of time, and quite unconscious of her approach. For two or three seconds Mrs. Tresillian stood still in utter astonishment, then, raising her voice, she said, "Abigail, what do you mean?"

Instantly the lovers started to their feet, Abigail blushing crimson, and Paul looking not a little confused. But he rushed forward eagerly, and she held out her hand to him, and he knew by the smile she gave him that he was welcome.

"This is an unexpected pleasure," she said, a mist coming before her eyes, for the sight of a familiar face touched her deeply.

"I am glad you look upon my coming as a pleasure," he said.

For a moment she looked at him curiously; then she said, "We had better talk indoors; father is getting impatient."

"Is it so late?" said Abigail; and she ran to seize the bucket, but Paul forestalled her.

"I will carry that," he said; and for answer she gave him a smile which set his heart wildly beating again.

A few minutes later he was standing before Mr. Tresillian, who received him with frigid politeness, and then asked, in his most icy tones, to what he was indebted for the honour of his visit.

"Please, father, let us have tea first," Mrs. Tresillian interposed. "I am sure Paul must be both tired and hungry."

"That I am hungry I will not deny," Paul said, "and shall be very thankful if you will let me have tea with you."

"Of course you will have tea with us," Mrs. Tresillian replied, "and afterward you and father can talk as much as you like."

The meal, on the whole, proved a very dull one. Mr. Tresillian seemed almost sulky in his silence. It was clear he regarded Paul with no more favour than in the old days, and was not a little displeased that he had succeeded in finding out their place of residence.

"Now, then," he said, as soon as the cloth was removed, "let's to business. No, don't go, Abigail; I want both you and mother to stay here. Now, Mr. Paul Vivian, may I ask what has brought you here?"

"A very proper question," Paul answered, pushing back his chair, "and I will answer it fully and candidly. I came seeking Abigail. I am a man now. I have loved her ever since I can remember. I came to tell her of my love, and ask her to be my wife."

"Indeed!" in the most icy tones. "And what right had you to love my daughter? Do you know who I am, and who you are?"

"I am afraid I have not considered either of these questions," Paul answered, mildly. "They do not weigh with me

now. I exercise the right of every honest man; the accident of my birth I cannot help.”

“You talk large for one in your station,” said Mr. Tresillian, pompously, “but a common vice of people of your degree.”

“My degree?” said Paul, flushing slightly. “I do not understand such a remark. What know you against my character?”

“That is not the point. You see me poor, but I am a Tresillian, in spite of my poverty. Abigail is a Tresillian.”

“And I——,” said Paul, then checked himself suddenly, for it was on the tip of his tongue to say that he was a Penrith, the son of a baronet.

“Yes, you are the son of a miner,” said Mr. Tresillian, scornfully.

“John Vivian,” said Paul, hotly, “was one of God’s nobility. I lived with him nearly two years. I saw him die. To call such a man Father would be an honour to anyone.”

“Is he dead?” questioned Mrs. Tresillian, with a little sigh.

“Yes, he is dead,” said Paul, “and the world is so much the poorer in consequence. But let us not talk of that now. Abigail has confessed her love for me. She has consented to be my wife. Will you not give us your blessing?”

“Is that true, Abigail?” he said, a grey, ashen look coming over his face.

“Yes, father,” she answered, timidly coming and standing by his chair, and laying her hand on his. “I have always loved him.”

“And so, in my old age and poverty, when all else has gone, you, too, will leave me, and send me broken-hearted to the grave? Oh! Abigail, I did not think this of you!”

For a moment she stood irresolute, looking into her father’s



haggard, sunken face. Then her whole countenance underwent a change, and, lifting her swimming eyes to Paul, she said, in a voice broken with emotion,

“Good-bye, Paul. Go away and forget me. I cannot leave father.”

## CHAPTER XLIII.

MR. TRESILLIAN RELENTS.

"Thus it is our daughters leave us,  
Those we love and those who love us !  
Just when they have learned to help us,  
When we are old and lean upon them,  
Comes a youth with flaunting feathers,  
With his flute of reeds, a stranger  
Wanders piping through the village,  
Beckons to the fairest maiden,  
And she follows where he leads her,  
Leaving all things for the stranger !"

—SONG OF HIAWATHA.

ABIGAIL'S words had something of the effect a thunder-bolt is usually supposed to have. For the moment everyone seemed stricken dumb, and for awhile the most painful silence reigned in the little room. Paul, however, was not wholly unprepared for it. He had seen all along the possibility of such a contingency, and though he hoped it might not arise, he was nevertheless ready for it should it do so. He would much rather have won Mr. Tresillian's consent without any provisos or promises, but as that appeared impossible, he waited now for an opportunity to speak.

Mr. Tresillian broke the painful silence by turning to Abigail and saying, "That's spoken like a Tresillian ; I honour you, Abigail," and he drew down her face and kissed her affectionately.

"Now," thought Paul, "is my opportunity ;" and, rising from his chair, he said, "Excuse me, Mr. Tresillian, if I do not take my dismissal as quickly as you desire. But if I am to go, as Abigail bids me, let me first assure her and you, that I came here with no desire of separating you from each other."

"Indeed!" said Mr. Tresillian, coldly. "But excuse me if I cannot see how you could have had any other intention."

"My desire was that you might live with us," Paul answered.

"Live with you!" said Mr. Tresillian, in astonishment.

"That is if you would so condescend, sir."

"Never," was the reply.

"I am sorry for that," Paul answered, "for I had hoped it might have been a pleasure to you to take up your abode in the old home once more. But as you prefer Maple Ridge to Rosevallion Manor, I hardly know what to say further."

"You surely talk in riddles," said Mr. Tresillian. "Prefer this stony ridge to Rosevallion meadows! This log hut to that comfortable home! You do not know what you are saying."

"Then let me try to make my meaning clear," Paul answered. "I was not altogether unsuccessful in California, that is, I made a little money; but much more than that, I made a discovery, and through that discovery Rosevallion by this time is mine, purchased with the idea that you might like to spend the rest of your days in the old house."

"And who has made the purchase for you?" Enoch asked, now trembling with excitement.

"My father," said Paul, quietly.

"Your father! Why, young man, you rave. You said only a few minutes ago that he was dead."

"I said John Vivian was dead," Paul answered, calmly, "but as it turns out, he was not my father. That is the discovery I referred to just now."

"And your father, who is he?"

"His name is Penrith; he lives in Devonshire," Paul answered.

"And what is he?"

"He owns a farm there," Paul replied, with a smile.

"Owns a farm, you say!"

"Yes," Paul answered.

"That is better; besides, Penrith is a good name. Sir George Penrith is a Devonshire man. Perhaps you belong to the same family."

"I have no desire to trade on a name," Paul said, pointedly, "and whether I am Paul Vivian or Paul Penrith, I do not see why it should make any difference to anyone."

"I am sorry to hear you make such a remark," said Mr. Tresillian, gravely. "And I am more sorry you did not inform me of this at the first. I am afraid I have not treated you too civilly."

"You have not treated me too civilly," Paul answered, with spirit, "and if I have not resented it, it is because I love Abigail so truly, and you are her father."

"Well, let us let by-gones be by-gones," he answered, humbly; "I know I am hasty at times. Moreover, all this has come upon me so suddenly, that I feel bewildered. Will you let me think about the matter for awhile?"

"Most certainly; and in the meanwhile you will not object, I hope, to my speaking with Abigail?"

"Well, no, of course not, if you particularly wish it."

In another moment, he and Abigail were out in the slanting sunlight together, both possessed of the same feeling, that at length the last difficulty had been surmounted.

Away, across the quiet fields, they strayed arm-in-arm. For awhile, their hearts were too full for speech; but their silence was perhaps more eloquent than words would have been.

Abigail was the first to speak.

"How strange it seems that you are not Paul Vivian!" she said.

"But I am Paul," he answered.

"Oh, yes, you are Paul!" she said, with a happy smile; "and, after all, the surname makes no difference."

"Except that you will have to sign your name Abigail Penrith instead of Abigail Vivian," he answered, with a roguish smile.

"Now, don't be too sure," she said, playfully, and with a soft blush overspreading her face. "Perhaps pa will not give his consent, after all."

"Oh! yes, he will," he said, gaily. "He thinks Penrith is a good name."

"That is because there is a Sir George Penrith," she said. "Perhaps, after all, he is a distant relative of yours."

"Perhaps so. But what if he is?"

"Oh! nothing. You are Paul, and that is enough for me," and she blushed again.

"My darling," he whispered, bending down and kissing her, "and yet you told me to go away and forget you!"

"Oh! Paul," she said, and the tears came into her eyes as she spoke, "it was a terrible moment. But when I looked into father's worn, haggard face, and thought of his losses and sorrows, there was no other course open to me. In the first moments of my joy I was selfish, and did not think of him, but when he appealed to me, then I saw my duty in a moment."

"And did you think I could forget you?" he asked, with grave, earnest face. "And I have waited for you all these years, and dreamed of you in my loneliness and toil, and cared to live only for you."

"I do not know," she answered, with downcast eyes, "but my first duty is to my father. He is getting old now, and he thinks so much of me."

"I do not know about that," he said. "He was ready enough to sacrifice you to Nick Trebarwith to save himself."

"Oh! don't, Paul," she said, lifting her large, appealing

eyes to his. "He was in great straits. He sincerely believed he was consulting my happiness as well as his own interests. He did not know I had given all my love to you."

"And you loved me then?" he asked, a fond light shining in his eyes.

"Oh! Paul, I do not know when I did not love you," she answered, "and you can never know how I have longed for your coming."

"And if I had gone away, as you bade me," he asked, "what then?"

"I cannot tell," she answered. "Perhaps God would have sustained me, as He has done hitherto, or perhaps He would have let me die."

"Ah! my darling," he said, "you do not know my love if you think anything could have driven me away."

"Why, what would you have done had you not been able to offer father his old home again?"

"I would have made my home here. I would have worked on his farm, if he would have let me, or I would have started a little farm of my own. Anything I would have done to earn a living, but, knowing you loved me, I would never have gone away."

"Ah! Paul," she said, "you would have grown weary of that."

"Never," he replied, earnestly. "If I have waited and toiled for you, not knowing even that you loved me, do you think I would fail when you were near, and I had the assurance of your affection?"

And for answer she gave him one of her sunny smiles, with which he was quite content.

When they got back to the house Mr. Tresillian was in a greater state of excitement even than when they left. The prospect of going back to Rosevallion again had been almost too much for him, and he began to fear that it was altogether too good to be true. So far he had only Paul's word for it.

How was he to know he was not being deceived, that it was not all a concocted story? Paul might not be a Penrith, after all. The tale he had told might be a pure fabrication, invented for the purpose of securing his consent in regard to Abigail. He ought to have demanded proofs at once. How blind he had been!

Proud as Enoch Tresillian was, he did not seem to think of the humiliation of accepting charity from his would-be son-in-law. If Paul were really a Penrith, the son of a man who owned a farm—actually *owned* a farm, not merely rented it—that would be sufficient for him; he would be able to hold up his head again.

"I have been much too hasty," Mr. Tresillian began, as soon as Paul and Abigail got into the house; "your story is so astounding, that naturally I fear I may have misunderstood you. You see, I—I——"

"You are naturally suspicious," put in Paul, "and will want proofs. Quite right, sir, and if you will give me half an hour alone with you, I will endeavour to satisfy you."

In less than half an hour, however, Mr. Tresillian emerged from the little parlour, his face radiant.

"I am quite satisfied," he said, turning first to his wife and then to Abigail, "and we have arranged everything. The young people are to be married as soon as things can be got ready, and start for England without any unnecessary delay, and mother and I are to follow as soon as we can dispose of the farm, etc. By the blessing of God, we'll spend Christmas in Rosevallon, and try to forget the troubles and—and——"

. But here Enoch broke down, and began to blow his nose in a very violent manner. But he recovered himself after a few moments, and then followed quite a little ceremony.

He took Abigail's hand and placed it in Paul's, then stepping back a pace, he made a little speech, in a voice much broken with emotion, and ended by saying, "God bless you,

my children, and may the Almighty bless you and make you a blessing."

Three weeks later a minister came over from the nearest settlement and married them, and when the simple wedding-breakfast was over they started for Saratoga, and spent a week in one of the mammoth hotels with which that place abounds. From thence they went on to the "Falls," and spent another week at Clifton House. This was an experience neither of them ever forgot. Hour after hour they would sit over against the Canadian 'falls, listening to the mighty undertone that pulsed and throbbed and entered into their very souls. Then one bright morning they sailed away across Lake Ontario, and landed at that queen of Canadian cities, Toronto. Here another pleasant week was spent, and then they started to sail down the great St. Lawrence River. On the morning after they left Toronto, they found themselves threading their way amongst the Thousand Isles; then came the excitement of shooting the rapids of the Long Sault, and later in the day an Indian pilot was taken on board, to steer the boat while shooting the dangerous rapids of Lachine. Then the great tubular bridge across the river loomed into sight, and a few minutes later they landed at Montreal. Here another halt was made of two or three days, then they went on to Lake Memphramagog, and from thence to Albany, where they embarked on another of America's palatial river steamers, and floated down the magnificent Hudson to New York.

"Oh! Paul," Abigail said, with just a touch of anxiety in her voice, "I never expected such a wedding tour as we have had. It has been one long dream of delight. But are you sure, darling, we can afford it?" and she looked around the splendid suite of rooms he had secured in the Fifth Avenue Hotel with almost a glance of apprehension.

"It is quite right, my darling," he said, kissing her fondly; "and then one doesn't get married every week, you know."



"And you are sure we are not too extravagant?"

"Quite sure," he said, kissing her again.

"Then I won't worry any more," she said, with one of her winsome smiles, "but you must be better off than I thought you were."

A week later they sailed for England, where yet greater surprises were in store for Abigail, and a loving welcome for both.

## CHAPTER XLIV.

### ABIGAIL'S DIARY.

"The book is completed,  
And closed like the day ;  
And the hand that has written it  
Lays it away."—LONGFELLOW.

**B**EFORE closing these memorials, we will give another extract from Abigail's diary, written rather more than a year after the events chronicled in the last chapter, believing that it will form a more fitting close to these simple records than any words of our own would do.

JULY 24th.—Baby Philip is just a month old to-day, and dear, beautiful mother says she never saw a bonnier boy, and Paul says the same. We are all so proud of him, for he is as good as he is beautiful. The day being so warm and bright, nurse has taken him out, and I am left here all alone for a little while in the dear old room that I love so well. How musically the brook ripples down by the garden hedge! and in the old pear-tree the wind makes such soft, dreamy music.

I have been reading again what I wrote now more than three years ago. I could not keep back the tears while I read. I thought then I should never be happy again, but God has been very good to me. How I lived through all these terrible months I do not know. Mother tells me that I walked about like one in a dream, with never a smile upon my face and rarely a tear. Ah, me! my misery then was too deep for tears.

Then came the news that Nick had been thrown from his horse and hurt: we did not know fatally. But the know-

ledge that the wedding must be postponed was like a great weight lifted from my heart; and though I was sorry for his sake, for my own I was glad. I could not help it. Then in a few days came news of his death. To poor father it was like the knell of doom; and yet to me—I must say it—it was like the shout of liberty.

Of what followed, my recollection seems very confused. The financial crash came directly after, and then everything seemed jumbled together. Father was anxious to get away out of the country as soon as possible, and mother and I raised no objection. Why should we? Yet our hearts sank when we reached Maple Ridge. We waited in Chicago while father went West, and when he had completed the purchase of the farm we followed. We thought he might have done better, but we never complained. For his sake we resolved to make the best use of it. The first was a hard winter, and we suffered not a few privations, and yet I was able to sing agair. In comparison with what I had been I was positively happy.

By the time spring broke upon us we were getting used to the place; and though sometimes a great longing for something better would steal into my breast, I dared not complain. The feeling of release was still strong upon me. It was a comfort, too, to think I was on the same continent with Paul, and sometimes I found myself wondering whether we should ever meet again. It was pleasant to dream of him in those days, and I sometimes wondered whether he could possibly love me as I loved him, and I felt sure that if he did he would not give me up.

So the weeks and months sped on, and one hot June afternoon of last year, as I sat dreaming by the spring, the music of whose waters stole in upon my brain like a voice from the past, I was startled by the sound of a footstep, and looking up I saw a stranger approaching; on getting nearer he stopped and raised his hat, and then I knew. And with a great joy in my heart I ran to him, and in a moment both my hands

were in his. Oh, what a joy that was! my heart bounds even now as I write about it. How handsome he looked, handsomer even than ever. There was a graver look in his eyes than in the old days, but his mouth was so sweet and yet so firm, and his voice was like heaven's own music in my ears. But why should I try to write what cannot be put into words?

On the 30th of August we sailed for England, and on the 10th of September we reached Paul's home. I knew he was taking me to see his parents, but he had not told me Sir George Penrith was his father, that was a surprise he kept in store for me. I could not understand it at all when we got out at the station and found a splendid carriage and pair waiting for us, and two liveried servants on the box.

"Oh, Paul," I said, "there surely must be some mistake."

And he smiled in his own grave way as he answered, "It is all right, my darling."

I felt ready to sink through the floor when I saw those stately servants touching their hats to my husband, but was too astonished to ask any more questions just then.

In a few moments we were driving away swiftly along a lovely country road, and then a pair of massive gates swung open before us, and we passed between huge pillars crowned with heraldic shields, and on between long lines of stately trees, and beautiful flowering plants, while right and left the great green park rose and fell in gentle slopes, and the speckled deer opened their great dark eyes and looked coyly at us as we passed. Oh, it was like a vision of Paradise, such as I had seen in pictures sometimes.

Paul felt that I was trembling, and he put his strong arm around me and pressed me close to his side; and that gave me courage to speak again.

"Oh, Paul," I said, "what does it all mean? tell me where you are taking me?"

"My darling," he whispered, "don't be frightened; this is my home."

And, lo, while he spoke, we had turned a corner, and a stately mansion stood before me, all glorified in the light of the sinking sun. And before I could speak again we had drawn up at the door,—and what a noble entrance it was!—and Paul was helping me to alight. And then, in a moment, a beautiful woman, with hair as white as milk, came quickly down the steps and caught me in her arms and kissed me, not once, but many times, and said, “My daughter! welcome! welcome! welcome!”

And for answer I kissed her on the forehead and began to cry. And by her side was a stout and stately gentleman, blowing his nose violently, and his eyes were very red, and he came and took my face between his hands, and looking into my eyes, he said, “And you are Abigail! Bless you, my child, you are welcome a thousand times,” and then he kissed me first on one cheek and then on the other. And then he made me blush by telling me I was lovelier than he had ever dreamed.

And when I turned my head I saw the beautiful lady hugging Paul; and then somehow realized—and not till then—that these were my husband’s parents, and this his home. And yet I had a feeling all the while that I must be dreaming. It seemed too strange to be true.

Paul came at length and took my hand and led me into the house, and side by side we mounted the noble stairway “to our rooms.

“My husband,” I said, sinking into a chair, “your father must be as rich as Sir George himself.”

“My bonny wife,” he said, kissing me, “my father is Sir George.”

And then I began to cry, and he came and sat by my side and took my hand.

“Why, Abigail,” he said, “you do not love me any the less, surely, because I am a rich man’s son?”

“No, not less, Paul,” I answered. “But, oh, I am not fit for such a position.”

"Oh, sweetheart," he said, "you are as fit as I!"

And for answer I put my arms about his neck, and pressed my face to his. After awhile he left me, and retired to his own room to dress for dinner, and a maid came to help me, and brought some flowers for me to put in my hair. It seemed so very strange, but I offered no resistance.

But when my husband came to take me down into the drawing-room, I looked at him in surprise. I never thought those cutaway coats were pretty or picturesque; but my Paul, in a black dress-suit, looked handsomer than ever.

Well, that was a happy evening, though I felt a little strange at first. Paul was quite at his ease, and spoke a kind word to all the servants, and it was quite evident they would do anything for him. And how proud Sir George seemed of him! while his mother fairly idolised him; but no one can wonder at that.

In October we came home to Rosevallion for a week, and found a new wing added to the old house, and new furniture in all the rooms. And then in November we came to welcome father and mother, but we did not spend Christmas with them. Sir George would have us at Ferndale. He wanted dear father and mother to come also, but they preferred to stay in the old home.

In January we came here for good, as Paul says, though really we are not at Rosevallion half our time. But we had only fairly settled down in what is really our own home when the funniest thing happened. I had my old schoolmate, Ethel Gray, staying with me, when she came running upstairs one afternoon, saying there was such an odd gentleman downstairs, who wanted to see my husband, "and when," said she, "I told him he was at the mine, he said he would like to see you."

"See me?" I said, in surprise.

"Yes, do go down; I am sure you will be amused," she answered.

"At any rate, you must come with me," I said, and so we

went down together. On entering the dining-room a very tall gentleman rose to meet us. He was quaintly dressed, too; but with a perfectly easy and unconscious manner, he stretched out his hand to me, and said, with a drawl,—

"I guess you are Mrs. Paul Vivian, I do."

"No," I said, a little bit awkwardly, I fear; "I am Mrs. Paul Penrith."

"That's one to you," he said. "Of course I oughtn't to have forgotten his change of name. But I guess that don't make no difference to him."

"Not in the least," I said.

"I knowed that," he said, speaking more rapidly. "He was always, since I've known him, one of the right sort. There weren't never no nonsense about him, you bet. He was always clean grit, he was—true to the marrow, and straight as a California pine."

"Then you know my husband?" I said.

"Well, rather, I guess," he said. "We know each other some, we do. He knows me, and I know him, and I never wish to know a better."

"It is kind of you to speak of my husband in such a way," I said, feeling a little bit confused, and not a little amused.

"No, not at all," he said. "But here he comes. I guess I know his footstep as well as anyone. Paul, old boy," he exclaimed, as my husband came through the doorway, "how aif you?"

"What, Luke!" my husband exclaimed. "Well, this is an unexpected pleasure." Then, turning to me, he said, "This, my love, is Luke Abbott, a real American, and one of the best comrades alive."

"Now, draw it mild," said Luke, with a drawl, "or I shall blush, I shall."

Well, to make a long story short, he spent a fortnight with us, and we were all delighted with him. I had heard my husband speak of him, but had got the idea that he was quite an elderly man. But he was only about thirty-five,

having gone out to California when he was about eighteen. He told my husband that he had made his pile, and not having a relative alive in the world, he had come across the Atlantic to "do" Europe. But he was so delighted with what he called at one time "our potato patch," that he did not want to go any farther. While he stayed with us, Ethel took him all about the place, and showed him everything there was to be seen; and the funny thing was, she evidently liked to be with him. It was quite laughable to see them strolling about the garden and across the fields together.

Well, as I said, he stayed a fortnight, and then he went away. But in a week he was back again, and said he had taken up his residence, for the time being, at St. Hildred.

"I guess it suits my health," he said, "so I will anchor here for a bit."

Well, strange to say, last month he and Ethel got married, and they have gone off into Switzerland to spend their honeymoon. Paul has laughed immoderately over the affair, and declares he never saw two people so "gone" on each other as they are. But I tell him he has forgotten what he was like when he came to Maple Ridge a little more than a year ago. They are going to settle down in England when they return from their wedding tour. Luke has written to Paul to say "he guesses he's anchored pretty fast, and as his little girl has no desire to cross the ferry, he will locate himself in the old country." I am sure they will be happy, for Paul says Luke is such a good fellow, and I know Ethel will make a treasure of a wife.

Mary Vivian sailed for America in the spring. She seemed anxious to be with her son, and by latest accounts he is doing very well. Of poor Jack we have never heard a word since he went away. It is a great trouble to father and mother, but they bear it bravely, and still hope he will return. It turns out that father had a few shares in Wheel Anthony, and so he is better off than he ever expected to be again.

Penwharf has quadrupled its population during the last



year or two, in consequence of the large developments in Wheal Anthony. My husband is chief now at the mine, and is supremely happy. He is always doing something for the good of the people. He has established already a Mechanics' Institute, with library and reading-rooms. Every week during next winter he has arranged for someone of note to lecture to them, and on Sundays, in the large hall, he talks to them himself about good things.

He doesn't profess to preach, though he generally takes a text, and he talks straight to the hearts of the people. The people at the chapel would not have him as a lay preacher, because he was not a church member, and they would not let him be a member of their church, because he would not attend the class meeting. I do not understand it very well, but I think my brave, noble husband is none the less a member of the family of Christ because they have shut their narrow sectarian door against him.

But there is the click of the garden gate, and now I hear his footstep on the gravel. I turn and catch his smile. How handsome he is! and his face is the index of his soul. In love like his I am more than happy. I have no want uncared for, no wish unsatisfied, and I know he thinks that in all the wide, wide world there is nothing too good

FOR ABIGAIL.

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