



CHAPTER II

HOW AMYAS CAME HOME THE FIRST TIME

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

Old Epigram on Drake.

FIVE years are past and gone. It is nine of the clock on a still, bright November morning; but the bells of Bideford church are still ringing for the daily service two hours after the usual time; and instead of going soberly according to wont, cannot help breaking forth every five minutes into a jocund peal, and tumbling head over heels in ecstasies of joy. Bideford streets are a very flower-garden of all the colours, swarming with seamen and burghers, and burghers' wives and daughters, all in their holiday attire. Garlands are hung across the streets, and tapestries from every window. The ships in the pool are dressed in all their flags, and give tumultuous vent to their feelings by peals of ordnance of every size. Every stable is crammed with horses; and Sir Richard Grenville's house is like a very tavern, with eating and drinking, and unsaddling, and running to and fro of grooms and serving-men. Along the little churchyard, packed full with women, streams all the gentle blood of North Devon,—tall and stately men, and

fair ladies, worthy of the days when the gentry of England were by due right the leaders of the people, by personal prowess and beauty, as well as by intellect and education. And first, there is my lady Countess of Bath, whom Sir Richard Grenville is escorting, cap in hand (for her good Earl Bouchier is in London with the queen); and there are Bassets from beautiful Umberleigh, and Carys from more beautiful Clovelly, and Fortescues of Wear, and Fortescues of Buckland, and Fortescues from all quarters, and Coles from Slade, and Stukelys from Anton, and St. Legers from Annery, and Coffins from Portiedge, and even Coplestones from Eggesford, thirty miles away; and last, but not least (for almost all stop to give them place), Sir John Chichester of Ralegh, followed in single file, after the good old patriarchal fashion, by his eight daughters, and three of his five famous sons (one, to avenge his murdered brother, is fighting valiantly in Ireland, hereafter to rule there wisely also, as Lord-Deputy and Baron of Belfast); and he meets at the gate his cousin of Arlington, and behind him a train of four daughters and nineteen sons, the last of whom has not yet passed the Town-hall, while the first is at the Lychgate, who, laughing, make way for the elder though shorter branch of that most fruitful tree; and so on into the church, where all are placed according to their degrees, or at least as near as may be, not without a few sour looks, and shovings, and whisperings, from one high-born matron and another; till the churchwardens and sidesmen, who never had before so goodly a company to arrange, have hustled themselves hot, and red, and frantic, and end by imploring abjectly the help of the great Sir Richard himself to tell them who everybody is, and which is the elder branch, and which is the younger, and who carries eight quarterings in their arms, and who only four, and so prevent their setting at deadly feud half the fine ladies of North Devon; for the old men are all safe packed away in the corporation pews, and the young ones care only to get a place whence they may eye the ladies. And at last there is a silence, and a looking toward the door, and then distant music, flutes and hautboys, drums and

trumpets, which come braying, and screaming, and thundering merrily up to the very church doors, and then cease; and the churchwardens and sidesmen bustle down to the entrance, rods in hand, and there is a general whisper and rustle, not without glad tears and blessings from many a woman, and from some men also, as the wonder of the day enters, and the rector begins, not the morning service, but the good old thanksgiving after a victory at sea.

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

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

For somewhat more than a twelvemonth after Mr. Oxenham's departure, young Anyas had gone on quietly enough, according to promise, with the exception of certain occasional outbursts of fierceness common to all young male animals, and especially to boys of any strength of character. His scholarship, indeed, progressed no better than before;

but his home education went on healthily enough; and he was fast becoming, young as he was, a right good archer, and rider, and swordsman (after the old school of buckler practice), when his father, having gone down on business to the Exeter Assizes, caught (as was too common in those days) the gaol-fever from the prisoners; sickened in the very court; and died within a week.

And now Mrs. Leigh was left to God and her own soul, with this young lion-cub in leash, to tame and train for this life and the life to come. She had loved her husband fervently and holily. He had been often peevish, often melancholy; for he was a disappointed man, with an estate impoverished by his father's folly, and his own youthful ambition, which had led him up to Court, and made him waste his heart and his purse in following a vain shadow. He was one of those men, moreover, who possess almost every gift except the gift of the power to use them; and though a scholar, a courtier, and a soldier, he had found himself, when he was past forty, without settled employment or aim in life, by reason of a certain shyness, pride, or delicate honour (call it which you will), which had always kept him from playing a winning game in that very world after whose prizes he hankered to the last, and on which he revenged himself by continual grumbling. At last, by his good luck, he met with a fair young Miss Foljambe, of Derbyshire, then about Queen Elizabeth's Court, who was as tired as he of the sins of the world, though she had seen less of them; and the two contrived to please each other so well, that though the Queen grumbled a little, as usual, at the lady for marrying, and at the gentleman for adoring any one but her royal self, they got leave to vanish from the little Babylon at Whitehall, and settle in peace at Burrough. In her he found a treasure, and he knew what he had found.

Mrs. Leigh was, and had been from her youth, one of those noble old English churchwomen, without superstition, and without severity, who are among the fairest features of that heroic time. There was a certain melancholy about her,

nevertheless ; for the recollections of her childhood carried her back to times when it was an awful thing to be a Protestant. She could remember among them, five-and-twenty years ago, the burning of poor blind Joan Waste at Derby, and of Mistress Joyce Lewis, too, like herself, a lady born ; and sometimes even now, in her nightly dreams, rang in her ears her mother's bitter cries to God, either to spare her that fiery torment, or to give her strength to bear it, as she whom she loved had borne it before her. For her mother, who was of a good family in Yorkshire, had been one of Queen Catherine's bedchamber women, and the bosom friend and disciple of Anne Askew. And she had sat in Smithfield, with blood curdled by horror, to see the hapless Court beauty, a month before the paragon of Henry's Court, carried in a chair (so crippled was she by the rack) to her fiery doom at the stake, beside her fellow-courtier, Mr. Lascelles, while the very heavens seemed to the shuddering mob around to speak their wrath and grief in solemn thunder peals, and heavy drops which hissed upon the crackling pile.

Therefore a sadness hung upon her all her life, and deepened in the days of Queen Mary, when, as a notorious Protestant and heretic, she had had to hide for her life among the hills and caverns of the Peak, and was only saved by the love which her husband's tenants bore her, and by his bold declaration that, good Catholic as he was, he would run through the body any constable, justice, or priest, yea, bishop or cardinal, who dared to serve the Queen's warrant upon his wife.

So she escaped : but, as I said, a sadness hung upon her all her life ; and the skin of that dark mantle fell upon the young girl who had been the partner of her wanderings and hidings among the lonely hills ; and who, after she was married, gave herself utterly up to God.

And yet in giving herself to God, Mrs. Leigh gave herself to her husband, her children, and the poor of Northam town, and was none the less welcome to the Grenvilles, and Fortescues, and Chichesters, and all the gentle families round,

who honoured her husband's talents, and enjoyed his wit. She accustomed herself to austerities, which often called forth the kindly rebukes of her husband; and yet she did so without one superstitious thought of appeasing the fancied wrath of God, or of giving Him pleasure (base thought) by any pain of hers; for her spirit had been trained in the freest and loftiest doctrines of Luther's school; and that little mystic *Alt-Deutsch Theologie* (to which the great Reformer said that he owed more than to any book, save the Bible and St. Augustine) was her counsellor and comforter by day and night.

And now, at little past forty, she was left a widow: lovely still in face and figure; and still more lovely from the divine calm which brooded, like the dove of peace and the Holy Spirit of God (which indeed it was), over every look, and word, and gesture; a sweetness which had been ripened by storm, as well as by sunshine; which this world had not given, and could not take away. No wonder that Sir Richard and Lady Grenville loved her; no wonder that her children worshipped her; no wonder that the young Amyas, when the first burst of grief was over, and he knew again where he stood, felt that a new life had begun for him; that his mother was no more to think and act for him only, but that he must think and act for his mother. And so it was, that on the very day after his father's funeral, when school-hours were over, instead of coming straight home, he walked boldly into Sir Richard Grenville's house, and asked to see his godfather.

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

And Sir Richard looked at the boy's broad strong face, and swore a great and holy oath, like Glasgerion's, 'by oak, and ash, and thorn,' that he would be a father to him, and a brother to his mother, for Christ's sake. And Lady Grenville took the boy by the hand, and walked home with him to Burrough; and there the two fair women fell on each other's necks, and wept together; the one for the loss which had been, the other, as by a prophetic instinct, for the like loss which was to come to her also. For the sweet St.

Leger knew well that her husband's fiery spirit would never leave his body on a peaceful bed; but that death (as he prayed almost nightly that it might) would find him sword in hand, upon the field of duty and of fame. And there those two vowed everlasting sisterhood, and kept their vow; and after that all things went on at Burrough as before; and Amyas rode, and shot, and boxed, and wandered on the quay at Sir Richard's side; for Mrs. Leigh was too wise a woman to alter one tittle of the training which her husband had thought best for his younger boy. It was enough that her elder son had of his own accord taken to that form of life in which she in her secret heart would fain have moulded both her children. For Frank, God's wedding gift to that pure love of hers, had won himself honour at home and abroad; first at the school at Bideford; then at Exeter College, where he had become a friend of Sir Philip Sidney's, and many another young man of rank and promise; and next, in the summer of 1572, on his way to the University of Heidelberg, he had gone to Paris, with (luckily for him) letters of recommendation to Walsingham, at the English Embassy: by which letters he not only fell in a second time with Philip Sidney, but saved his own life (as Sidney did his) in the Massacre of Saint Bartholomew's Day. At Heidelberg he had stayed two years, winning fresh honour from all who knew him, and resisting all Sidney's entreaties to follow him into Italy. For, scorning to be a burden to his parents, he had become at Heidelberg tutor to two young German princes, whom, after living with them at their father's house for a year or more, he at last, to his own great delight, took with him down to Padua, 'to perfect them,' as he wrote home, 'according to his insufficiency, in all princely studies.' Sidney was now returned to England; but Frank found friends enough without him, such letters of recommendation and diplomas did he carry from I know not how many princes, magnificoes, and learned doctors, who had fallen in love with the learning, modesty, and virtue of the fair young Englishman. And ere Frank returned to Germany, he had satiated his soul with all the wonders of

that wondrous land. He had talked over the art of sonnetteering with Tasso, the art of history with Sarpi; he had listened, between awe and incredulity, to the daring theories of Galileo; he had taken his pupils to Venice, that their portraits might be painted by Paul Veronese; he had seen the palaces of Palladio, and the Merchant Princes on the Rialto, and the Argosies of Ragusa, and all the wonders of that meeting-point of east and west; he had watched Tintoretto's mighty hand 'hurling tempestuous glories o'er the scene'; and even, by dint of private intercession in high places, had been admitted to that sacred room where, with long silver beard and undimmed eye, amid a pantheon of his own creations, the ancient Titian, patriarch of art, still lingered upon earth, and told old tales of the Bellinis, and Raffaele, and Michael Angelo, and the building of St. Peter's, and the fire at Venice, and the Sack of Rome, and of kings and warriors, statesmen and poets, long since gone to their account, and showed the sacred brush which Francis the First had stooped to pick up for him. And (licence forbidden to Sidney by his friend Languet) he had been to Rome, and seen (much to the scandal of good Protestants at home) that 'right good fellow,' as Sidney calls him, who had not yet eaten himself to death, the Pope for the time being. And he had seen the frescoes of the Vatican, and heard Palestrina preside as chapel-master over the performance of his own music beneath the dome of St. Peter's, and fallen half in love with those luscious strains, till he was awakened from his dream by the recollection that beneath that same dome had gone up thanksgivings to the God of heaven for those blood-stained streets, and shrieking women, and heaps of insulted corpses, which he had beheld in Paris on the night of St. Bartholomew. At last, a few months before his father died, he had taken back his pupils to their home in Germany, from whence he was dismissed; as he wrote, with rich gifts; and then Mrs. Leigh's heart beat high, at the thought that the wanderer would return: but, alas! within a month after his father's death, came a long letter from Frank, describing the Alps, and the valleys

of the Waldenses (with whose Barbes he had had much talk about the late horrible persecutions), and setting forth how at Padua he had made the acquaintance of that illustrious scholar and light of the age, Stephanus Parmenius (commonly called from his native place, Budæus), who had visited Geneva with him, and heard the disputations of their most learned doctors, which both he and Budæus disliked for their hard judgments both of God and man, as much as they admired them for their subtlety, being themselves, as became Italian students, Platonists of the school of Ficinus and Picus Mirandolensis. So wrote Master Frank, in a long sententious letter, full of Latin quotations: but the letter never reached the eyes of him for whose delight it had been penned: and the widow had to weep over it alone, and to weep more bitterly than ever at the conclusion, in which, with many excuses, Frank said that he had, at the special entreaty of the said Budæus, set out with him down the Danube stream to Buda, that he might, before finishing his travels, make experience of that learning for which the Hungarians were famous throughout Europe. And after that, though he wrote again and again to the father whom he fancied living, no letter in return reached him from home for nearly two years; till, fearing some mishap, he hurried back to England, to find his mother a widow, and his brother Amyas gone to the South Seas with Captain Drake of Plymouth. And yet, even then, after years of absence, he was not allowed to remain at home. For Sir Richard, to whom idleness was a thing horrible and unrighteous, would have him up and doing again before six months were over, and sent him off to Court to Lord Hunsdon.

There, being as delicately beautiful as his brother was huge and strong, he had speedily, by Carew's interest and that of Sidney and his Uncle Leicester, found entrance into some office in the Queen's household; and he was now basking in the full sunshine of Court favour, and fair ladies' eyes, and all the chivalries and euphuisms of Gloriana's fairyland, and the fast friendship of that bright meteor

Sidney, who had returned with honour in 1577, from the delicate mission on behalf of the German and Belgian Protestants, on which he had been sent to the Court of Vienna, under colour of condoling with the new Emperor Rodolph on his father's death. Frank found him when he himself came to Court in 1579 as lovely and loving as ever; and, at the early age of twenty-five, acknowledged as one of the most remarkable men of Europe, the patron of all men of letters, the counsellor of warriors and statesmen, and the confidant and advocate of William of Orange, Languet, Plessis du Mornay, and all the Protestant leaders on the Continent; and found, moreover, that the son of the poor Devon squire was as welcome as ever to the friendship of nature's and fortune's most favoured, yet most unspoilt, minion.

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

'Would you have your fair greyhound, dear lady, grow up a tall and true Cotswold dog, that can pull down a stack of ten, or one of those smooth-skinned poppets which the Florence ladies lead about with a ring of bells round its neck, and a flannel farthingale over its loins?'

Mrs. Leigh submitted; and was rewarded after a few months by a letter, sent through Sir Richard, from none other than Gloriana herself, in which she thanked her for 'the loan of that most delicate and flawless crystal, the soul of her excellent son,' with more praises of him than I have room to insert, and finished by exalting the poor mother above the famed Cornelia; 'for those sons, whom she called her jewels, she only showed, yet kept them to herself: but you, madam, having two as precious, I doubt not, as were ever that Roman dame's, have, beyond her courage, lent them both to your country and to your queen, who therein holds herself indebted to you for that which, if God give her grace, she will repay as becomes both her

and you.' Which epistle the sweet mother bedewed with holy tears, and laid by in the cedar-box which held her household gods, by the side of Frank's innumerable diplomas and letters of recommendation, the Latin whereof she was always spelling over (although she understood not a word of it), in hopes of finding; here and there, that precious *excellentissimus Noster Franciscus Leighius Anglus*, which was all in all to the mother's heart.

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

Vindex Brimblecombe, whilom servitor of Exeter College, Oxford (commonly called Sir Vindex, after the fashion of the times), was, in those days, master of the grammar-school of Bideford. He was, at root, a godly and kind-hearted pedant enough; but, like most schoolmasters in the old flogging days, had his heart pretty well hardened by long, baneful licence to inflict pain at will on those weaker than himself; a power healthful enough for the victim (for, doubtless, flogging is the best of all punishments, being not only the shortest, but also a mere bodily and animal, and not, like most of our new-fangled 'humane' punishments, a spiritual and fiendish torture), but for the executioner pretty certain to eradicate, from all but the noblest spirits, every trace of chivalry and tenderness for the weak, as well, often, as all self-control and command of temper. Be that as it may, old Sir Vindex had heart enough to feel that it was now his duty to take especial care of the fatherless boy to whom he tried to teach his *qui, quæ, quod*: but the only outcome of that new sense of responsibility was a rapid increase in the number of floggings, which rose from about two a week to one per diem, not without consequences to the pedagogue himself.

For all this while, Amyas had never for a moment lost sight of his darling desire for a sea-life; and when he could not wander on the quay and stare at the shipping, or go

down to the pebble-ridge at Northam, and there sit, devouring, with hungry eyes, the great expanse of ocean, which seemed to woo him outward into boundless space, he used to console himself, in school-hours, by drawing ships and imaginary charts upon his slate, instead of minding his 'humanities.'

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

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

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

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

'All in good time, sir!' and went on drawing.
'In good time, sir! Insolent, *veni et vapula!*'
But Amyas went on drawing.
'Come hither, sirrah, or I'll flay you alive!
'Wait a bit!' answered Amyas.

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

'*Proh flagitium!* what have we here, villain?' and clutching at his victim, he raised the cane. Whereupon, with a serene and cheerful countenance, up rose the mighty form of Amyas Leigh, a head and shoulders above his tormentor, and that slate descended on the bald coxcomb of Sir Vindex Brimblecombe, with so shrewd a blow, that slate and pate cracked at the same instant, and the poor pedagogue dropped to the floor, and lay for dead.

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

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

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

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

'Killed the devil?' asked Amyas, hopefully but doubtfully.

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

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

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

Amyas rehearsed his story again, with pretty nearly the

same exclamations, to which he gave pretty nearly the same answers ; and then—

‘What was he going to do to you, then, sirrah?’

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

‘What ! art afraid of being flogged?’

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

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

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

‘Yes,’ said Amyas.

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

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

So Amyas went back, and said that he was come to be flogged ; whereon the old schoolmaster, whose pate had been plastered meanwhile, wept tears of joy over the returning prodigal, and then gave him such a switching as he did not forget for eight-and-forty hours.

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

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

‘O Sir Richard, *gratias tibi et Domino !* but the boy hits shrewdly hard. Nevertheless I have repaid him in in-

verse kind, and set him an imposition, to learn me one of Phædrus his fables, Sir Richard, if you do not think it too much.'

'Which, then? The one about the man who brought up a lion's cub, and was eaten by him in play at last?'

'Ah, Sir Richard! you have always a merry wit. But, indeed, the boy is a brave boy, and a quick boy, Sir Richard, but more forgetful than Lethe; and—*sapienti loquor*—it were well if he were away, for I shall never see him again without my head aching. Moreover, he put my son Jack upon the fire last Wednesday, as you would put a football, though he is a year older, your worship, because, he said, he looked so like a roasting pig; Sir Richard.'

'Alas, poor Jack!'

'And what's more, your worship, he is *pugnax, bellicosus, gladiator*, a fire-eater and swashbuckler, beyond all Christian measure; a very sucking Entellus, Sir Richard, and will do to death some of her Majesty's lieges ere long, if he be not wisely curbed. It was but a month ago that he bemoaned himself, I hear, as Alexander did, because there were no more worlds to conquer, saying that it was a pity he was so strong; for, now he had thrashed all the Bideford lads, he had no sport left; and so, as my Jack tells me, last Tuesday week he fell upon a young man of Barnstaple, Sir Richard, a hosier's man, sir, and *plebeius* (which I consider unfit for one of his blood), and, moreover, a man full-grown, and as big as either of us (Vindex stood five feet four in his high-heeled shoes), and smote him clean over the quay into the mud, because he said that there was a prettier maid in Barnstaple (your Worship will forgive my speaking of such toys, to which my fidelity compels me) than ever Bideford could show; and t'en offered to do the same to any man who dare say that Mistress Rose Salterne, his Worship the Mayor's daughter, was not the fairest lass in all Devon.'

'Eh? Say that over again, my good sir,' quoth Sir Richard, who had thus arrived, as we have seen, at the second count of the indictment. 'I say, good sir, whence dost thou hear all these pretty stories?'

‘My son Jack, Sir Richard, my son Jack, *ingenui vultus puer.*’

‘But not, it seems, *ingenui pudoris.* Tell thee what, Mr. Schoolmaster, no wonder if thy son gets put on the fire, if thou employ him as a tale-bearer. But that is the way of all pedagogues and their sons, by which they train the lads up eavesdroppers and favour-carriers, and prepare them—sirrah, do you hear?—for a much more lasting and hotter fire than that which has scorched thy son Jack’s nether-tackle. Do you mark me, sir?’

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

‘Therefore, mind you, Sir Schoolmaster, unless you shall promise me never to hint word of what has passed between us two, and that neither you nor yours shall henceforth carry tales of my godson, or speak his name within a day’s march of Mistress Salterne’s, look to it, if I do not——’

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

‘O Sir Richard! *Excellentissime, immò præcelsissime Domine et Senator,* I promise! O sir, *Miles et Eques* of the Garter, Bath, and Golden Fleece, consider your dignities, and my old age—and my great family—nine children—O Sir Richard, and eight of them girls!—Do eagles war with mice? says the ancient!’

‘Thy large family, eh? How ld is that fat-witted son of thine?’

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

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

‘Heaven forbid!’ murrured poor Vindex, with deep humility.

‘Why is not the rogue at Oxford, with a murrain on

him, instead of lurching about here carrying tales, and ogling the maidens?’

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

And now the prayers being ended, the Rector ascends the pulpit, and begins his sermon on the text:—

‘The heaven and the heaven of heavens are the Lord’s; the whole earth hath he given to the children of men’; deducting therefrom craftily, to the exceeding pleasure of his hearers, the iniquity of the Spaniards in dispossessing the Indians, and in arrogating to themselves the sovereignty of the tropic seas; the vanity of the Pope of Rome in pretending to bestow on them the new countries of America; and the justice, valour, and glory of Mr. Drake and his

expedition, as testified by God's miraculous protection of him and his, both in the Straits of Magellan, and in his battle with the Galleon; and last, but not least, upon the rock by Celebes, when the *Pelican* lay for hours firmly fixed, and was floated off unhurt, as it were by miracle, by a sudden shift of wind.

Ay, smile, reader, if you will; and, perhaps, there was matter for a smile in that honest sermon, interlarded, as it was, with scraps of Greek and Hebrew, which no one understood, but every one expected as their right (for a preacher was nothing then who could not prove himself 'a good Latiner'); and graced, moreover, by a somewhat pedantic and lengthy refutation from Scripture of Dan Horace's cockney horror of the sea—

Illi robur et æs triplex, etc.,

and his infidel and ungodly slander against the 'impious rates,' and their crews.

Smile, if you will: but those were days (and there were never less superstitious ones) in which Englishmen believed in the living God, and were not ashamed to acknowledge, as a matter of course, His help and providence, and calling, in the matters of daily life, which we now in our covert Atheism term 'secular and carnal'; and when, the sermon ended, the Communion Service had begun, and the bread and the wine were given to those five mariners, every gallant gentleman who stood near them (for the press would not allow of more) knelt and received the elements with them as a thing of course, and then rose to join with heart and voice not merely in the *Gloria in Excelsis*, but in the *Te Deum*, which was the closing act of all. And no sooner had the clerk given out the first verse of that great hymn, than it was taken up by five hundred voices within the church, in bass and tenor, treble and alto (for every one could sing in those days, and the west country folk, as now, were fuller than any of music), the chaunt was caught up by the crowd outside, and rang away over roof and river, up to the woods of Annery, and down to the marshes of the Taw, in

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

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

'Kind sir! dear sir! For Christ His sake answer a poor old widow woman!'

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

'Amyas, Mr. Oxenham has not come home; and from

the day he sailed, no word has been heard of him and all his crew.'

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

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

'And no news of him whatsoever?'

'None; but that the year after he sailed, a ship belonging to Andrew Barker, of Bristol, took out of a Spanish caravel, somewhere off the Honduras, his two brass guns; but whence they came the Spaniard knew not, having bought them at *Nombre de Dios*.'

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

town-house, to the head of the long bridge, across which the pageant, having arranged 'east-the-water,' was to defile, and then turn to the right along the quay.

However, he was bound in all courtesy to turn his attention now to the show which had been prepared in his honour; and which was really well enough worth seeing and hearing. The English were, in those days, an altogether dramatic people; ready and able, as in Bideford that day, to extemporise a pageant, a masque, or any effort of the Thespian art short of the regular drama. For they were, in the first place, even down to the very poorest, a well-fed people, with fewer luxuries than we, but more abundant necessaries; and while beef, ale, and good woollen clothes could be obtained in plenty, without overworking either body or soul, men had time to amuse themselves in something more intellectual than mere toping in pot-houses. Moreover, the half-century after the Reformation in England was one not merely of new intellectual freedom, but of immense animal good spirits. After years of dumb confusion and cruel persecution, a breathing-time had come: Mary and the fires of Smithfield had vanished together like a hideous dream, and the mighty shout of joy which greeted Elizabeth's entry into London, was the keynote of fifty glorious years; the expression of a new-found strength and freedom, which vented itself at home in drama and in song; abroad in mighty conquests, achieved with the laughing recklessness of boys at play.

So first, preceded by the waits, came along the bridge toward the town-hall, a device prepared by the good rector, who, standing by, acted as showman, and explained anxiously to the bystanders the import of a certain 'allegory,' wherein on a great banner was depicted Queen Elizabeth herself, who, in ample ruff and farthingale, a Bible in one hand and a sword in the other, stood triumphant upon the necks of two sufficiently abject personages whose triple tiara and imperial crown, proclaimed them the Pope and the King of Spain; while a label, issuing from her royal mouth, informed the world that—

' By land and sea a virgin queen I reign,
And spurn to dust both Antichrist and Spain.

Which having been received with due applause, a well-bedizened lad, having in his cap as a posy 'Loyalty,' stepped forward, and delivered himself of the following verses :—

' O great Eliza ! O world-famous crew !
Which shall I hail more blest, your queen or you ?
While without other either falls to wrack,
And light must eyes, or eyes their light must lack.
She without you, a diamond sunk in mine,
Its worth unprized, to self alone must shine ;
You without her, like hands bereft of head,
Like Ajax rage, by blindfold lust misled.
She light, you eyes ; she head, and you the hands,
In fair proportion knit by heavenly bands ;
Servants in queen, and queen in servants blest ;
Your only glory, how to serve her best ;
And hers how best the adventurous might to guide,
Which knows no check of foemen, wind, or tide,
So fair Eliza's spotless fame may fly

Triumphant round the globe, and shake th' astounded sky !

With which sufficiently bad verses Loyalty passed on, while my Lady Bath hinted to Sir Richard, not without reason, that the poet, in trying to exalt both parties, had very sufficiently snubbed both, and intimated, that it was 'hardly safe for country wits to attempt that euphuistic, antithetical, and delicately conceited vein, whose proper fountain was in Whitehall.' However, on went Loyalty, very well pleased with himself, and next, amid much cheering, two great tinsel fish, a salmon, and a trout, symbolical of the wealth of Torridge, waddled along, by means of two human legs and a staff apiece, which protruded from the fishes' stomachs. They drew (or seemed to draw, for half the 'prentices in the town were shoving it behind, and cheering on the panting monarchs of the flood) a car wherein sate, amid reeds and river-flags, three or four pretty girls in robes of grey-blue

spangled with gold, their heads wreathed one with a crown of the sweet bog-myrtle, another with hops and white convolvulus, the third with pale heather and golden fern. They stopped opposite Amyas; and she of the myrtle wreath, rising and bowing to him and the company, began with a pretty blush to say her say:—

Hither from my moorland home,
 Nymph of Torridge, proud I come;
 Leaving fen and furry brake,
 Haunt of eft and spotted snake,
 Where to fill mine urns I use,
 Daily with Atlantic dews;
 While beside the reedy flood
 Wild duck leads her paddling brood.
 For this morn, as Phœbus gay
 Chased through heaven the night mist grey,
 Close beside me, pranked in pride,
 Sister Tamar rose, and cried,
 "Sluggard, up! 'Tis holiday,
 In the lowlands far away.
 Hark! how jocund Plymouth bells,
 Wandering up through mazy dells,
 Call me down, with smiles to hail,
 My daring Drake's returning sail."
 "Thine alone?" I answer'd. "Nay;
 Mine as well the joy to-day.
 Heroes train'd on Northern wave,
 To that Argo new I gave;
 Lent to thee, they roam'd the main;
 Give me, nymph, my sons again."
 "Go, they wait Thee." Tamar cried,
 Southward bounding from my side.
 Glad I rose, and at my call,
 Came my Naiads, one and all.
 Nursling of the mountain sky,
 Leaving Dian's choir on high,
 Down her cataracts laughing loud,
 Ockrent leapt from crag and cloud,
 Leading many a nymph, who dwells
 Where wild deer drink in ferny dells;

While the Oreads as they past
Peep'd from Druid Tors aghast.
By alder copses sliding slow,
Knee-deep in flowers came gentler Yeo,
And paused awhile her locks to twine
With musky hops and white woodbine,
Then joined the silver-footed band,
Which circled down my golden sand,
By dappled park, and harbour shady,
Haunt of love-lorn knight and lady,
My thrice-renown'd sons to greet,
With rustic song and pageant meet.
For joy ! the girdled robe around
Eliza's name henceforth shall sound,
Whose venturous fleets to conquest start,
Where ended once the seaman's chart,
While circling Sol his steps shall count
Henceforth from Thule's western mount,
And lead new rulers round the seas
From farthest Cassiterides.
For found is now the golden tree,
Solv'd th' Atlantic mystery,
Pluck'd the dragon-guarded fruit ;
While around the charmed root,
Wailing loud, the Hesperids
Watch their warder's drooping lids.
Low he lies with grisly wound,
While the sorceress triple-crown'd
In her scarlet robe doth shield him,
Till her cunning spells have heal'd him.
Ye, meanwhile, around the earth
Bear the prize of manful worth.
Yet a nobler meed than gold
Waits for Albion's children bold ;
Great Eliza's virgin hand
Welcomes you to Fairyland,
While your native Naiads bring
Native wreaths as offering.
Simple though their show may be,
Britain's worship in them see.
'Tis not pri:e, nor outward fairness,

Gives the victor's palm its rareness
Simplest tokens can impart
Noble throb to noble heart :
Græcia, prize thy parsley crown,
Boast thy laurel, Cæsar's town ;
Moorland myrtle still shall be
Badge of Devon's Chivalry !'

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

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

'Her song was not so bad, said Sir Richard to Lady Bath—'but how came she to hear Plymouth bells at Tamar-head, full fifty miles away? That's too much of a poet's licence, is it not?'

'The river-nymphs, as daughters of Oceanus, and thus of immortal parentage, are bound to possess organs of more than mortal keenness ; but, as you say, the song was not so bad—erudite, as well as prettily conceived—and, saving for a certain rustical simplicity and monosyllabic baldness, smacks rather of the forests of Castaly than those of Torridge.'

So spake my Lady Bath ; whom Sir Richard wisely answered not ; for she was a terribly learned member of the college of critics, and disputed even with Sidney's sister the chieftaincy of the Euphuists ; so Sir Richard answered not, but answer was made for him.

'Since the whole choir of Muses, madam, have migrated to the Court of Whitehall, no wonder if some dewes of Parnassus should fertilise at times even our Devon moors.'

The speaker was a tall and slim young man, some five-and-twenty years old, of so rare and delicate a beauty, that it seemed that some Greek statue, or rather one of those pensive and pious knights whom the old German artists took delight to paint, had condescended to tread awhile this work-day earth in living flesh and blood. The forehead was very

lofty and smooth, the eyebrows thin and greatly arched (the envious gallants whispered that something at least of their curve was due to art, as was also the exceeding smoothness of those delicate cheeks). The face was somewhat long and thin; the nose aquiline; and the languid mouth showed, perhaps, too much of the ivory upper teeth; but the most striking point of the speaker's appearance was the extraordinary brilliancy of his complexion, which shamed with its whiteness that of all fair ladies round, save where open on each cheek a bright red spot gave warning, as did the long thin neck and the taper hands, of sad possibilities, perhaps not far off; possibilities which all saw with an inward sigh, except she whose doting glances, as well as her resemblance to the fair youth, proclaimed her at once his mother, Mrs. Leigh herself.

Master Frank, for he it was, was dressed in the very extravagance of the fashion,—not so much from vanity, as from that delicate instinct of self-respect which would keep some men spruce and spotless from one year's end to another upon a desert island; 'for,' as Frank used to say in his sententious way, 'Mr. Frank Leigh at least beholds me, though none else be by; and why should I be more discourteous to him than I permit others to be? Be sure that he who is a Grobian in his own company will, sooner or later, become a Grobian in that of his friends.'

So Mr. Frank was arrayed spotlessly; but after the latest fashion of Milan, not in trunk hose and slashed sleeves, nor in 'French standing collar, treble quadruple dædalian ruff, or stiff-necked rabato, that had more arches for pride, propped up with wire and timber, than five London Bridges,' but in a close-fitting and perfectly plain suit of dove-colour, which set off cunningly the delicate proportions of his figure, and the delicate hue of his complexion, which was shaded from the sun by a broad dove-coloured Spanish hat, with feather to match, looped up over the right ear with a pearl brooch, and therein a crowned E, supposed by the damsels of Bideford to stand for Elizabeth, which was whispered to be the gift of some most illustrious hand. This same looping

up was not without good reason and purpose prepenſe ; thereby all the world had full view of a beautiful little ear, which looked as if it had been cut of cameo, and made, as my Lady Rich once told him, 'to l.earken only to the music of the ſpheres, or to the chants of cheru'bin.' Behind the ſaid ear was ſtuck a freſh roſe ; and the golden hair was all drawn ſmoothly back and round to the left temple, whence, tied with a pink ribbon in a great true lover's knot, a mighty love-lock, 'curled as it had been laid in preſs,' rolled down low upon his boſom. Oh, Frank ! Frank ! have you come out on purpoſe to break the hearts of all Bideford burghers' daughters ? And if ſo, did you expect to further that triumph by dyeing that pretty little pointed beard (with ſhame I report it) of a bright vermilion ? But we know you better, Frank, and ſo does your mother ; and you are but a maſquerading angel after all, in ſpite of your knots and your perfumes, and the gold chain round your neck which a German princeſs gave you ; and the emerald ring on your right fore-finger which Hatton gave you ; and the pair of perfumed gloves in your left which Sidney's ſiſter gave you ; and the ſilver-hilted Toledo which an Italian marquis gave you on a certain occaſion of which you never chooſe to talk, like a prudent and mo-deſt gentleman as you are : but of which the goſſips talk, of courſe, all the more, and whiſper that you ſaved his life from bravoes—a dozen, at the leaſt ; and had that ſword for your reward, and might have had his beautiful ſiſter's hand beſide, and I know not what elſe : but that you had ſo many lady-loves already that you were loth to burden yourſelf with a freſh one. That, at leaſt, we know to be a lie, fair Frank ; for your heart is as pure this day as when you knelt in your little crib at Burrough, and ſaid—

'Four corners to my bed ;
Four angels round my head ;
Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John,
Bleſs the bed that I lie on.'

And who could doubt it (if, being pure themſelves, they have inſtinctive ſympathy with what is pure), who ever looked

into those great deep blue eyes of yours, 'the black fringed curtains of whose azure lids,' usually down-dropt as if in deepest thought, you raise slowly, almost wonderingly each time you speak, as if awakening from some fair dream whose home is rather in your Platonical 'eternal world of supra-sensible forms,' than on that work-day earth wherein you nevertheless acquit yourself so well? There—I must stop describing you, or I shall catch the infection of your own Euphuism, and talk of you as you would have talked of Sidney or of Spenser, or of that Swan of Avon, whose song had just begun when yours—— but I will not anticipate; my Lady Bath is waiting to give you her rejoinder.

'Ah, my silver-tongued scholar! and are you, then, the poet? or have you been drawing on the inexhaustible bank of your friend Raleigh, or my cousin Sidney? or has our new Cygnet Immerito lent you a few unpublished leaves from some fresh Shepherd's Calendar?'

'Had either, madam, of that cynosural triad been within call of my most humble importunities, your ears had been delectate with far nobler melody.'

'But not our eyes with fairer faces, eh? Well, you have chosen your nymphs, and had good store from whence to pick, I doubt not. Few young Dulcinas round but must have been glad to take service under so renowned a captain?'

'The only difficulty, gracious Countess, has been to know where to fix the wandering choice of my bewildered eyes, where all alike are fair, and all alike facund.'

'We understand,' said she, smiling—

'Dan Cupid, choosing 'midst his mother's graces,
Himself more fair, made scorn of fairest faces.'

The young scholar capped her distich forthwith, and bowing to her with a meaning look,

'Then, Goddess, turn," he cried, "and veil thy light;
Blinded by thine, what eyes can choose aright?'"

'Go, saucy sir,' said my lady, in high glee; 'the pageant stays your supreme pleasure.'

And away went Mr. Frank as master of the revels, to bring up the 'prentices' pageant; while, for his sake, the nymph of Torridge was forgotten for awhile by all young dames, and most young gentlemen: and his mother heaved a deep sigh, which Lady Bath overheard—

'What? in the dumps, good madam, while all are rejoicing in your joy? Are you afraid that we court-dames shall turn your young Adonis' brain for him?'

'I do, indeed, fear lest your condescension should make him forget that he is only a poor squire's orphan.'

'I will warrant him never to forget aught that he should recollect,' said my Lady Bath.

And she spoke truly. But soon Frank's silver voice was heard calling out—

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

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

Young Mr. William Cary, of Clovelly, who was the wit of those parts, opened the fire by asking him whether he were Goliath, Gogmagog, or Grantorto in the romance; for giants' names always began with a G. To which the giant's stomach answered pretty surlily—

'Mine don't; I begin with an O.'

'Then thou criest out before thou art hurt, O cowardly giant!'

'Let me out, lads,' quoth the irascible visage, struggling in his buckram prison, 'and I soon show him whether I be a coward.'

'Nay, if thou gettest out of thyself, thou wouldst be beside thyself, and so wert but a mad giant.'

'And that were pity,' said Lady Bath; 'for by the romances, giants have never overmuch wit to spare.'

'Mercy, dear lady!' said Frank, 'and let the giant begin with an O.'

‘A——’

‘A false start, giant ! you were to begin with an O.’

‘I’ll make you end with an O, Mr. William Cary !’ roared the testy tower of backram.

‘And so I do, fo: I end with “Fico !”’

‘Be mollified, sweet giant,’ said Frank, ‘and spare the rash youth of yon foolish Knight. Shall elephants catch flies, or Hurlo-Thrumbo stain his club with brains of Dagonet the jester? Be mollified; leave thy caverned grumblings, like Etna when its windy wrath is past, and discourse eloquence from thy central omphalos, like Pythoness ventriloquising.’

‘If you do begin laughing at me too, Mr. Leigh——’ said the giant’s clock-face, in a piteous tone.

‘I laugh not. Art thou not Ordulf the earl, and I thy humblest squire? Speak up, my lord; your cousin, my Lady Bath, commands you.’

And at last the giant began:—

‘A giant I, Earl Ordulf men me call,—
 ‘Gainst Paynim foes Devon’s champion tall;
 In single fight six thousand Turks I slew;
 Pull’d off a lion’s head, and ate it too:
 With one shrewd blow, to let Saint Edward in,
 I smote the gates of Exeter in twain;
 Till aged grown, by angels warn’d in dream,
 I built an abbey fair by Tavy stream.
 But treacherous time hath tripped my glories up,
 The staunch old hound must yield to stancher pup;
 Here’s one so tall as I, and twice so bold,
 Where I took only cuffs, takes good red gold.
 From pole to pole resound his wondrous works,
 Who slew more Spaniards than I ere slew Turks;
 I strode across the Tavy stream: but he
 Strode round the world and back; and here ‘a be!’

‘Oh, bathos!’ said Lady Bath, while the ‘prentices shouted applause. ‘Is this he’ge-bantling to be fathered on you, Mr. Frank?’

‘It is necessary, by all laws of the drama, madam,’ said

Frank, with a sly smile, 'that the speech and the speaker shall fit each other. Pass on, Earl Ordulf; a more learned worthy waits.'

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

'That the world should have been circumnavigated, ladies and gentles, were matter enough of jubilation to the student of Herodotus and Plato, Plinius and——ahem! much more when the circumnavigators are Britons; more, again, when Damnonians.'

'Don't swear, master,' said young Will Cary.

'Gulielme Cary, Gulielme Cary, hast thou forgotten thy——'

'Whippings? Never, old lad! Go on; but let not the licence of the scholar overtop the modesty of the Christian.'

'More again, as I said, when, *incole*, inhabitants of Devon; but, most of all, men of Bideford School. O renowned school! O schoolboys ennobled by fellowship with him! O most happy pedagogue, to whom it has befallen to have chastised a circumnavigator, and, like another Chiron, trained another Hercules: yet more than Hercules, for he placed his pillars on the ocean shore, and then returned; but my scholar's voyage——'

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

'Mr. William, Mr. William, peace;—*silentium*, my graceless pupil. Urge the foaming steed, and strike terror into the rapid stag, but meddle not with matters too high for thee.'

'He has given you the dor now, sir,' said Lady Bath; 'let the old man say his say.'

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

'Latin? Let us hear it forthwith,' cried my lady.

And the old pedant mouthed out,—

Torriguiam Tamaris ne spernat ; Leighius addet
Mox terras terris, inclyte Drake, tuis.'

'Neat, i' faith, la !' Whercon all the rest, as in duty bound, approved also.

'This for the crudite : for vulgar ears the vernacular is more consonant, sympathetic, instructive ; as thus :—

Famed Argo ship, that noble chip, by doughty Jason's steering,
Brought back to Greece the golden fleece, from Colchis home careering ;
But now her fame is put to shame, while new Devonian Argo,
Round earth doth run in wake of sun, and brings a wealthier cargo.'

'Runs with a right fa-lal-la,' observed Cary ; 'and would go nobly to a fiddle and a big drum.'

'Ye Spaniards, quake ! our doughty Drake a royal swan is tested,
On wing and oar, from shore to shore, the raging main who breasted :—
But never needs to chant his deeds, like swan that lies a-dying,
So far his name by trump of fame, around the sphere is flying.'

'Hillo ho ! schoolmaster !' shouted a voice from behind ; 'move on, and make way for Father Neptune !' Whercon a whole storm of raillery fell upon the hapless pedagogue.

'We waited for the parson's alligator, but we wain't for your'n.'

'Allegory ! my children, allegory !' shrieked the man of letters.

'What do you call he an alligator for ? I'e is but a poor little starved evat !'

'Out of the road, Old Custis ! March on, Don Palmado !'

These allusions to the usual instrument of torture in west

country schools made the old gentleman wince; especially when they were followed home by—

‘Who stole Admiral Grenville’s brooms, because birch rods were dear?’

But proudly he shook his bald head, as a bull shakes off the flies, and returned to the charge once more.

‘Great Alexander, famed commander, wept and made a pother,
At conquering only half the world, but Drake had conquer’d
t’other;
And Hercules to brink of seas!——’

‘Oh!——’

And clapping both hands to the back of his neck, the schoolmaster began dancing frantically about, while his boys broke out tittering, ‘Oh! the ochidore! look to the blue ochidore! Who’ve put ochidore to maister’s poll!’

It was too true: neatly inserted, as he stooped forward, between his neck and his collar, was a large live shore-crab, holding on tight with both hands.

‘Gentles! good Christians! save me! I am mare-rodé! *Incubo vel ab incubo, opprimor!* Satan has me by the poll! Help! he tears my jugular; he wrings my neck, as he does to Dr. Faustus in the play. *Confiteor!*—I confess! Satan, I defy thee! Good people, I confess! *Βασανίζουμαι!* The truth will out. Mr. Francis Leigh wrote the epigram!’ And diving through the crowd, the pedagogue vanished howling, while Father Neptune, crowned with seaweeds, a trident in one hand and a live dog-fish in the other, swaggered up the street surrounded by a tall bodyguard of mariners, and followed by a great banner, on which was depicted a globe, with Drake’s ship sailing thereon upside down, and overwritten—

See every man the *Pelican*,
Which round the world did go,
While her stern-post was uppermost,
And topmasts down belo *r*.

And by the way she lost a day
 Out of her log was stole :
 But Neptune kind with favouring wind,
 Hath brough' her safe and whole.

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

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

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

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

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

'Twas the devil and the Pope gave them
 My kingdom for their own :
 But my nephew Francis Drake, he caused them to quake,
 And he pick'd them to the bone.

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

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

Triton, roaring t'rough a conch, brought forward a

cockle-shell full of salt water, and delivered it solemnly to Amyas, who, of course, put a noble into it, and returned it after Grenville had done the same.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The moment Amyas had an opportunity, he asked his brother Frank, somewhat peevishly, where Rose Salterne was.

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

Now cunning Master Frank, whose daily wish was to 'seek peace and ensue it,' told Amyas this, because he must needs speak the truth: but he was purposed at the same time to speak as little truth as he could, for fear of accidents; and, therefore, omitted to tell his brother how that he, two days before, had entreated Rose Salterne herself to appear as the nymph of Torridge; which honour she, who had no objection either to exhibit her pretty face, to recite pretty poetry, or to be trained thereto by the cynosure of North Devon, would have assented willingly, but that her father stopped the

pretty project by a peremptory countermove, and packed her off, in spite of her tears, to the said uncle on the Atlantic cliffs; after which he went up to Burrough, and laughed over the whole matter with Mrs. Leigh.

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

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

Which was very true; for during the three years of Amyas’s absence, Rose Salterne had grown into so beautiful a girl of eighteen, that half North Devon was mad about the ‘Rose of Torridge,’ as she was called; and there was not a young gallant for ten miles round (not to speak of her father’s clerks and ‘prentices, who moped about after her like so many Malvolios, and treasured up the very parings of her nails) who would not have gone to Jerusalem to win her. So that all along the vales of Torridge and of Taw, and even away to Clovelly (for young Mr. Cary was one of the sick), not a gay bachelor but was frowning on his fellows, and vieing with them in the fashion of his clothes, the set of his ruffs, the harness of his horse, the carriage of his hawks, the pattern of his sword-hilt; and those were golden days for all tailors and armourers, from Exmoor to Okehampton town. But of all those foolish young lads not one would speak to the other, either out hunting, or at the archery butts, or in the tilt-yard; and my Lady Bath (who confessed that there was no use in bringing out her daughters where Rose Salterne was in the way) prophesied in her classical fashion that Rose’s wedding bid fair to be a very bridal of Atalanta, and feast of the Lapithæ; and poor Mr. Will Cary (who always blurted out the truth), when old Salterne once asked him angrily in Bideford Market, ‘What a plague business had he making sheep’s eyes at his daughter?’ broke out before all bystanders, ‘And what a plague business had

you, old boy, to throw such an apple of discord into our merry meetings hereabouts? If you choose to have such a daughter, you must take the consequences, and be hanged to you.' To which Mr. Salterne answered with some truth, 'That she was none of his choosing, nor of Mr. Cary's neither.' And so the dor being given, the belligerents parted laughing, but the war remained *in statu quo*; and not a week passed but, by mysterious hands, some nosegay, or languishing sonnet, was conveyed into The Rose's chamber, all which she stowed away, with the simplicity of a country girl, finding it mighty pleasant; and took all compliments quietly enough, probably because, on the authority of her mirror, she considered them no more than her due.

And now, to add to the general confusion, home was come young Amyas Leigh, more desperately in love with her than ever. For, as is the way with sailors (who after all are the truest lovers, as they are the finest fellows, God bless them, upon earth), his lonely ship-watches had been spent in imprinting on his imagination, month after month, year after year, every feature and gesture and tone of the fair lass whom he had left behind him; and that all the more intensely, because, beside his mother, he had no one else to think of, and was as pure as the day he was born, having been trained as many a brave young man was then, to look upon profligacy not as a proof of manhood, but as what the old Germans, and those Gortyneans who crowned the offender with wool, knew it to be, a cowardly and effeminate sin.