



CHAPTER IV

THE TWO WAYS OF BEING CROST IN LOVE

I could not love thee, dear, so much,
Loved I not honour more.'

LOVELACE.

AND what all this while has become of the fair breaker of so many hearts, to whom I have not yet even introduced my readers?

She was sitting in the little farmhouse beside the mill, buried in the green depths of the Valley of Combe, half-way between Stow and Chapel, sulking as much as her sweet nature would let her, at being thus shut out from all the grand doings at Bideford, and forced to keep a Martinmas Lent in that far western glen. So lonely was she, in fact, that though she regarded Eustace Leigh with somewhat of aversion, and (being a good Protestant) with a great deal of suspicion, she could not find it in her heart to avoid a chat with him whenever he came down to the farm and to its mill, which he contrived to do, on I know not what would-be errand, almost every day. Her uncle and aunt at first looked stiff enough at these visits, and the latter took care always to make a third in every conversation; but still Mr. Leigh was a gentleman's son, and it would not do to be rude to a neighbouring squire and a good customer; and

Rose was the rich man's daughter, and they poor cousins, so it would not do either to quarrel with her; and besides, the pretty maid, half by wilfulness, and half by her sweet winning tricks, generally contrived to get her own way wheresoever she went; and she herself had been wise enough to beg her aunt never to leave them alone,—for she 'could not a-bear the sight of Mr. Eustace, only she must have some one to talk with down here.' On which her aunt considered, that she herself was but a simple country-woman; and that townfolks' ways of course must be very different from hers; and that people knew their own business best; and so forth, and let things go on their own way. Eustace, in the meanwhile, who knew well that the difference in creed between him and Rose was likely to be the very hardest obstacle in the way of his love, took care to keep his private opinions well in the background; and instead of trying to convert the folk at the mill, daily bought milk or flour from them, and gave it away to the old women in Moorwinstow (who agreed that after all, for a Papist, he was a godly young man enough); and at last, having taken counsel with Campian and Parsons on certain political plots then on foot, came with them to the conclusion that they would all three go to church the next Sunday. Where Messrs. Evan Morgans and Morgan Evans, having cramm'd up the rubrics beforehand, behaved themselves in a most orthodox and unexceptionable manner; as did also poor Eustace, to the great wonder of all good folks, and then went home flattering himself that he had taken in parson, clerk, and people; not knowing in his simple unsimplicity, and cunning foolishness, that each good wife in the parish was saying to the other, 'He turned Protestant? The devil turned monk! He's only after Mistress Salterne, the young hypocrite.'

But if the two Jesuits found it expedient, for the holy cause in which they were embarked, to reconcile themselves outwardly to the powers that were, they were none the less busy in private in plotting their overthrow.

Ever since April last they had been playing at hide-and-

seek through the length and breadth of England, and now they were only lying quiet till expected news from Ireland should give them their cue, and a great 'rising of the West' should sweep from her throne that stiff-necked, persecuting, excommunicate, reprobate, illegitimate, and profligate usurper, who falsely called herself the Queen of England.

For they had as stoutly persuaded themselves in those days, as they have in these (with a real Baconian contempt of the results of sensible experience), that the heart of England was really with them, and that the British nation was on the point of returning to the bosom of the Catholic Church, and giving up Elizabeth to be led in chains to the feet of the rightful Lord of Creation, the Old Man of the Seven Hills. And this fair hope, which has been skipping just in front of them for centuries, always a step farther off, like the place where the rainbow touches the ground, they used to announce at times, in language which terrified old Mr. Leigh. One day, indeed, as Eustace entered his father's private room, after his usual visit to the mill, he could hear voices high in dispute; Parsons, as usual, blustering; Mr. Leigh peevishly deprecating, and Campian, who was really the sweetest-natured of men, trying to pour oil on the troubled waters. Whereat Eustace (for the good of the cause, of course) stopped outside and listened.

'My excellent sir,' said Mr. Leigh, 'does not your very presence here show how I am affected toward the holy cause of the Catholic faith? But I cannot in the meanwhile forget that I am an Englishman.'

'And what is England?' said Parsons: 'A heretic and schismatic Babylon, whereof it is written, "Come out of her, my people, lest you be partaker of her plagues." Yea, what is a country? An arbitrary division of territory by the princes of this world, who are nought, and come to nought. They are created by the people's will; their existence depends on the sanction of him to whom all power is given in heaven and earth—our Holy Father the Pope. Take away the latter, and what is a king?—the people who have made him may unmake him.'

‘My dear sir, recollect that I have sworn allegiance to Queen Elizabeth!’

‘Yes, sir, you have, sir; and, as I have shown at large in my writings, you were absolved from that allegiance from the moment that the bull of Pius the Fifth declared her a heretic and excommunicate, and thereby to have forfeited all dominion whatsoever. I tell you, sir, what I thought you should have known already, that since the year 1569, England has had no queen, no magistrates, no laws, no lawful authority whatsoever; and that to own allegiance to any English magistrate, sir, or to plead in an English court of law, is to disobey the apostolic precept, “How dare you go to law before the unbelievers?” I tell you, sir, rebellion is now not merely permitted, it is a duty.’

‘Take care, sir; for God’s sake, take care!’ said Mr. Leigh. ‘Right or wrong, I cannot have such language used in my house. For the sake of my wife and children, I cannot!’

‘My dear brother Parsons, deal more gently with the flock,’ interposed Campian. ‘Your opinion, though probable, as I well know, in the eyes of most of our order, is hardly safe enough here; the opposite is at least so safe that Mr. Leigh may well excuse his conscience for accepting it. After all, are we not sent hither to proclaim this very thing, and to relieve the souls of good Catholics from a burden which has seemed to them too heavy?’

‘Yes,’ said Parsons half sulkily, ‘to allow all Balaams who will to sacrifice to Baal, while they call themselves by the name of the Lord.’

‘My dear brother, have I not often reminded you that Naaman was allowed to bow himself in the house of Rimmon? And can we therefore complain of the office to which the Holy Father has appointed us, to declare to such as Mr. Leigh his especial grace, by which the bull of Pius the Fifth (on whose soul God have mercy!) shall henceforth bind the Queen and the heretics only; but in no ways the Catholics, at least as long as the present tyranny prevents the pious purposes of the bull?’

‘Be it so, sir; be it so. Only observe this, Mr. Leigh, that our brother Campian confesses this to be a tyranny. Observe, sir, that the bull does still bind the so-called Queen, and that she and her magistrates are still none the less usurpers, nonentities, and shadows of a shade. And observe this, sir, that when that which is lawful is excused to the weak, it remains no less lawful to the strong. The seven thousand who had not bowed the knee to Baal did not slay his priests; but Elijah did, and won to himself a good reward. And if the rest of the children of Israel sinned not in not slaying Eglon, yet Ehud’s deed was none the less justified by all laws human and divine.’

‘For Heaven’s sake, do not talk so, sir! or I must leave the room. What have I to do with Ehud and Eglon, and slaughters, and tyrannies? Our queen is a very good queen, if Heaven would but grant her repentance, and turn her to the true faith. I have never been troubled about religion, nor any one else that I know of in the West country.’

‘You forget Mr. Trudgeon of Launceston, father, and poor Father Mayne,’ interposed Eustace, who had by this time slipped in; and Campian added softly—

‘Yes, your West of England also has been honoured by its martyrs, as well as my London by the precious blood of Story.’

‘What, young malapert?’ cried poor Leigh, facing round upon his son, glad to find any one on whom he might vent his ill-humour; ‘are you too against me, with a murrain on you? And pray, what the devil brought Cuthbert Mayne to the gallows, and turned Mr. Trudgeon (he was always a foolish hot-head) out of house and home, but just such treasonable talk as Mr. Parsons must needs hold in my house, to make a beggar of me and my children, as he will before he has done.’

‘The blessed Virgin forbid!’ said Campian.

‘The blessed Virgin forbid? But you must help her to forbid it, Mr. Campian. We should never have had the law of 1571, against bulls, and Agnus Deis, and blessed grains, if the Pope’s bull of 1569 had not made them matter

of treason, by preventing a poor creature's saving his soul in the true Church without putting his neck into a halter by denying the Queen's authority.'

'What, sir?' almost roared Parsons, 'do you dare to speak evil of the edicts of the Vicar of Christ?'

'I? No. I didn't. Who says I did? All I meant was, I am sure—Mr. Campian, you are a reasonable man, speak for me.'

'Mr. Leigh only meant, I am sure, that the Holy Father's prudent intentions have been so far defeated by the perverseness and invincible misunderstanding of the heretics, that that which was in itself meant for the good of the oppressed English Catholics has been perverted to their harm.'

'And thus, reverend sir,' said Eustace, glad to get into his father's good graces again, 'my father attaches blame, not to the Pope—Heaven forbid!—but to the pravity of his enemies.'

'And it is for this very reason,' said Campian, 'that we have brought with us the present merciful explanation of the bull.'

'I'll tell you what, gentlemen,' said Mr. Leigh, who, like other weak men, grew in valour as his opponent seemed inclined to make peace, 'I don't think the declaration was needed. After the new law of 1571 was made, it was never put in force till Mayne and Trudgeon made fools of themselves, and that was full six years. There were a few offenders, they say, who were brought up and admonished, and let go; but even that did not happen down here, and need not happen now, unless you put my son here (for you shall never put me, I warrant you) upon some deed which had better be left alone, and so bring us all to shame.'

'Your son, sir, if not openly vowed to God, has, I hope, a due sense of that inward vocation which we have seen in him, and reverences his spiritual fathers too well to listen to the temptations of his earthly father.'

'What, sir, will you teach my son to disobey me?'

'Your son is ours also, sir. This is strange language in

one who owes a debt to the Church, which it was charitably fancied he meant to pay in the person of his child.'

These last words touched poor Mr. Leigh in a sore point, and breaking all bounds, he swore roundly at Parsons, who stood foaming with rage.

'A plague upon you, sir, and a black assizes for you, for you will come to the gallows yet! Do you mean to taunt me in my own house with that Hartland land? You had better go back and ask those who sent you where the dispensation to hold the land is, which they promised to get me years ago, and have gone on putting me off, till they have got my money, and my son, and my conscience, and I vow before all the saints, seem now to want my head over and above. God help me!'—and the poor man's eyes fairly filled with tears.

Now was Eustace's turn to be roused; for, after all, he was an Englishman and a gentleman; and he said, kindly enough, but firmly—

'Courage, my dearest father. Remember that I am still your son, and not a Jesuit yet; and whether I ever become one, I promise you, will depend mainly on the treatment which you meet with at the hands of these reverend gentlemen, for whom I, as having brought them hither, must consider myself as surety to you.'

If a powder-barrel had exploded in the Jesuits' faces, they could not have been more amazed. Campian looked blank at Parsons, and Parsons at Campian; till the stouter-hearted of the two, recovering his breath at last—

'Sir! do you know, sir, the curse pronounced on those who, after putting their hand to the plough, look back?'

Eustace was one of those impulsive men, with a lack of moral courage, who dare raise the devil, but never dare fight him after he has been raised; and he now tried to pass off his speech by winking and making signs in the direction of his father, as much as to say that he was only trying to quiet the old man's fears. But Campian was too frightened, Parsons too angry, to take his hints: and he had to carry his part through.

‘All I read is, Father Parsons, that such are not fit for the kingdom of God ; of which high honour I have for some time past felt myself unworthy. I have much doubt just now as to my vocation ; and in the meanwhile have not forgotten that I am a citizen of a free country.’ And so saying, he took his father’s arm, and walked out.

His last words had hit the Jesuits hard. They had put the poor cobweb-spinners in mind of the humiliating fact, which they have had thrust on them daily from that time till now, and yet have never learnt the lesson, that all their scholastic cunning, plotting, intriguing, bulls, pardons, indulgences, and the rest of it, are, on this side the Channel, a mere enchanter’s cloud-castle and Fata Morgana, which vanishes into empty air by one touch of that magic wand, the constable’s staff. ‘A citizen of a free country!’—there was the rub ; and they looked at each other in more utter perplexity than ever. At last Parsons spoke.

‘There’s a woman in the wind. I’ll lay my life on it. I saw him blush up crimson yesterday when his mother asked him whether some Rose Salterne or other was still in the neighbourhood.’

‘A woman ! Well the spirit may be willing, though the flesh be weak. We will inquire into this. The youth may do us good service as a layman ; and if anything should happen to his elder brother (whom the saints protect !) he is heir to some wealth. In the meanwhile, our dear brother Parsons will perhaps see the expediency of altering our tactics somewhat while we are here.’

And thereupon a long conversation began between the two, who had been sent together, after the wise method of their order, in obedience to the precept, ‘Two are better than one,’ in order that Campian might restrain Parsons’ vehemence, and Parsons spur on Campian’s gentleness, and so each act as the supplement of the other, and each also, it must be confessed, gave advice pretty nearly contradictory to his fellow’s if occasion should require, ‘without the danger,’ as their writers have it, ‘of seeming changeable and inconsistent.’

The upshot of this conversation was, that in a day or two (during which time Mr. Leigh and Eustace also had made the *amende honorable*, and matters went smoothly enough) Father Campian asked Father Francis the household chaplain to allow him, as an especial favour, to hear Eustace's usual confession on the ensuing Friday..

Poor Father Francis dared not refuse so great a man; and assented with an inward groan, knowing well that the intent was to worm out some family secrets, whereby his power would be diminished, and the Jesuits' increased. For the regular priesthood and the Jesuits throughout England were toward each other in a state of armed neutrality, which wanted but little at any moment to become open war, as it did in James the First's time, when those meek missionaries, by their gentle moral tortures, literally hunted to death the poor Popish bishop of Hippopotamus (that is to say, London) for the time being.

However, Campian heard Eustace's confession; and by putting to him such questions as may be easily conceived by those who know anything about the confessional, discovered satisfactorily enough that he was what Campian would have called 'in love': though I should question much the propriety of the term as applied to any facts which poor prurient Campian discovered, or indeed knew how to discover, seeing that a swine has no eye for pearls. But he had found out enough: he smiled, and set to work next vigorously to discover who the lady might be.

If he had frankly said to Eustace, 'I feel for you; and if your desires are reasonable, or lawful, or possible, I will help you with all my heart and soul,' he might have had the young man's secret heart, and saved himself an hour's trouble; but, of course, he took instinctively the crooked and suspicious method, expected to find the case the worst possible,—as a man was bound to do who had been trained to take the lowest possible view of human nature, and to consider the basest motives as the mainspring of all human action,—and began his moral torture accordingly by a series of delicate questions, which poor Eustace dodged in every

possible way, though he knew that the good father was too cunning for him, and that he must give in at last. Nevertheless, like a rabbit who runs squealing round and round before the weasel, into whose jaws it knows that it must jump at last by force of fascination, he parried and parried, and pretended to be stupid, and surprised, and honourably scrupulous, and even angry; while every question as to her being married or single, Catholic or heretic, English or foreign, brought his tormentor a step nearer the goal. At last, when Campian, finding the business not such a very bad one, had asked something about her worldly wealth, Eustace saw a door of escape and sprang at it.

‘Even if she be a heretic, she is heiress to one of the wealthiest merchants in Devon.’

‘Ah!’ said Campian thoughtfully. ‘And she is but eighteen, you say?’

‘Only eighteen.’

‘Ah! well, my son, there is time. She may be reconciled to the Church; or you may change.’

‘I shall die first.’

‘Ah, poor lad! Well; she may be reconciled, and her wealth may be of use to the cause of Heaven.’

‘And it shall be of use. Only absolve me, and let me be at peace. Let me have but her,’ he cried piteously. ‘I do not want her wealth,—not I! Let me have but her, and that but for one year, one month, one day!—and all the rest,—money, fame, talents, yea, my life itself, hers if it be needed,—are at the service of Holy Church. Ay, I shall glory in showing my devotion by some special sacrifice,—some desperate deed. Prove me now, and see what there is I will not do!’

And so Eustace was absolved; after which Campian added—

‘This is indeed well, my son: for there is a thing to be done now, but it may be at the risk of life.’

‘Prove me!’ cried Eustace impatiently.

‘Here is a letter which was brought me last night; no matter from whence; you can understand it better than I,

and I longed to have shown it you, but that I feared my son had become——'

'You feared wrongly, then, my dear Father Campian.'

So Campian translated to him the cipher of the letter.

'This to EYAN Morgans, gentleman, at Mr. Leigh's house in Moorwinstow, Devonshire. News may be had by one who will go to the shore of Clovelly, any evening after the 25th of November, at dead low tide, and there watch for a boat, rowed by one with a red beard, and a Portugal by his speech. If he be asked, "How many?" he will answer, "Eight hundred and one." Take his letters and read them. If the shore be watched, let him who comes show a light three times in a safe place under the cliff above the town; below is dangerous landing. Farewell, and expect great things!'

'I will go,' said Eustace; 'to-morrow is the 25th, and I know a sure and easy place. Your friend seems to know these shores well.'

'Ah! what is it we do not know?' said Campian, with a mysterious smile. 'And now?'

'And now, to prove to you how I trust to you, you shall come with me, and see this—the lady of whom I spoke, and judge for yourself whether my fault is not a venial one.'

'Ah, my son, have I not absolved you already? What have I to do with fair faces? Nevertheless, I will come, both to show you that I trust you, and it may be to help towards reclaiming a heretic, and saving a lost soul: who knows?'

So the two set out together; and, as it was appointed, they had just got to the top of the hill between Chapel and Stow mill, when up the lane came none other than Mistress Rose Salterne herself, in all the glories of a new scarlet hood, from under which her large dark languid eyes gleamed soft lightnings through poor Eustace's heart and marrow. Up to them she tripped on delicate ankles and tiny feet, tall, lithe, and graceful, a true West-country lass; and as she passed them with a pretty blush and courtesy, even Campian looked back at the fair innocent creature, whose long dark

curls, after the then country fashion, rolled down from beneath the hood below her waist, entangling the soul of Eustace Leigh within their glossy nets.

'There!' whispered he, trembling from head to foot. 'Can you excuse me now?'

'I had excused you long ago,' said the kind-hearted father. 'Alas, that so much fair red and white should have been created only as a feast for worms!'

'A feast for gods you mean!' cried Eus'ace, on whose common sense the naïve absurdity of the last speech struck keenly; and then, as if to escape the scolding which he deserved for his heathenry—

'Will you let me return for a moment? I will follow you: let me go!'

Campian saw that it was of no use to say no, and nodded. Eustace darted from his side, and running across a field, met Rose full at the next turn of the road.

She started, and gave a pretty little shriek.

'Mr. Leigh! I thought you had gone forward.'

'I came back to speak to you, Rose—*Mistress Salterne*, I mean.'

'To me?'

'To you I must speak, tell you all, or die!' And he pressed up close to her. She shrank back somewhat frightened.

'Do not stir; do not go, I implore you! Rose, only hear me!' And fiercely and passionately seizing her by the hand, he poured out the whole story of his love, heaping her with every fantastic epithet of admiration which he could devise.

There was little, perhaps, of all his words which Rose had not heard many a time before; but there was a quiver in his voice, and a fire in his eye, from which she shrank by instinct.

'Let me go!' she said; 'you are too rough, sir!'

'Ay!' he said, seizing now both her hands, 'rougher, perhaps, than the gay gallants of Bideford, who serenade you, and write sonnets to you, and send you posies.

Rougher, but more loving, Rose! Do not turn away! I shall die if you take your eyes off me! Tell me,—tell me, now here—this moment—before we part—if I may love you!

‘Go away!’ she answered, struggling and bursting into tears. ‘This is too rude. If I am but a merchant’s daughter, I am God’s child. Remember that I am alone. Leave me; go! or I will call for help!’

Eustace had heard or read somewhere that such expressions in a woman’s mouth were mere *façons de parler*, and on the whole signs that she had no objection to be alone, and did not intend to call for help; and he only grasped her hands the more fiercely, and looked into her face with keen and hungry eyes; but she was in earnest, nevertheless, and a loud shriek made him aware that, if he wished to save his own good name, he must go: but there was one question, for an answer to which he would risk his very life.

‘Yes, proud woman! I thought so! Some one of those gay gallants has been beforehand with me. Tell me who—’

But she broke from him, and passed him, and fled down the lane.

‘Mark it!’ cried he after her. ‘You shall rue the day when you despised Eustace Leigh! Mark it, proud beauty!’ And he turned back to join Campian, who stood in some trepidation.

‘You have not hurt the maiden, my son? I thought I heard a scream.’

‘Hurt her! No. Would God that she were dead, nevertheless, and I by her! Say no more to me, father. We will home.’ Even Campian knew enough of the world to guess what had happened, and they both hurried home in silence.

And so Eustace Leigh played his move, and lost it.

Poor little Rose, having run nearly to Chapel, stopped for very shame, and walked quietly by the cottages which stood opposite the gate, and then turned up the lane towards Moorwinstow village, whither she was bound. But on

second thoughts, she felt herself so 'red and flustered,' that she was afraid of going into the village, for fear (as she said to herself) of making people talk, and so, turning into a by-path, struck away toward the cliffs, to cool her blushes in the sea-breeze. And there finding a quiet grassy nook beneath the crest of the rocks, she sat down on the turf, and fell into a great meditation.

Rose Salterne was a thorough specimen of a West-coast maiden, full of passionate impulsive affections, and wild dreamy imaginations, a fit subject, as the North-Devon women are still, for all romantic and gentle superstitions. Left early without a mother's care, she had fed her fancy upon the legends and ballads of her native land, till she believed—what did she not believe?—of mermaids and pixies, charms and witches, dreams and omens, and all that world of magic in which most of the countrywomen, and countrymen too, believed firmly enough but twenty years ago. Then her father's house was seldom without some merchant, or sea-captain from foreign parts, who, like Othello, had his tales of—

Antres vast, and deserts idle,
Of rough quarries, rocks, and hills whose heads reach heaven.

And—

And of the cannibals that each other eat,
The anthropophagi, and men whose heads
Do grow beneath their shoulders.

All which tales she, like Desdemona, devoured with greedy ears, whenever she could 'the house affairs with haste despatch.' And when these failed, there was still boundless store of wonders open to her in old romances which were then to be found in every English house of the better class. *The Legend of King Arthur, Florice and Blancheflour, Sir Ysumbras, Sir Guy of Warwick, Palamon and Arcite*, and the *Romaunt of the Rose*, were with her text-books and canonical authorities. And lucky it was, perhaps, for her that Sidney's *Arcadia* was still in petto, or Mr.

Frank (who had already seen the first book or two in manuscript, and extolled it above all books past, present, or to come) would have surely brought a copy down for Rose, and thereby have turned her poor flighty little brains upside down for ever. And with her head full of these, it was no wonder if she had likened herself of late more than once to some of those peerless princesses of old, for whose fair hand paladins and kaisers thundered against each other in tilted field; and perhaps she would not have been sorry (provided, of course, no one was killed) if duels and passages of arms in honour of her, as her father reasonably dreaded, had actually taken place.

For Rose was not only well aware that she was wooed, but found the said wooing (and little shame to her) a very pleasant process. Not that she had any wish to break hearts: she did not break her heart for any of her admirers, and why should they break theirs for her? They were all very charming, each in his way (the gentlemen, at least; for she had long since learnt to turn up her nose at merchants and burghers); but one of them was not so very much better than the other.

Of course, Mr. Frank Leigh was the most charming; but then, as a courtier and squire of dames, he had never given her a sign of real love, nothing but sonnets and compliments, and there was no trusting such things from a gallant who was said (though, by the bye, most scandalously) to have a lady love at Milan, and another at Vienna, and half a dozen in the Court, and half a dozen more in the city.

And very charming was Mr. William Cary, with his quips and his jests, and his galliards and lavoltas; over and above his rich inheritance; but then, charming also Mr. Coffin of Portledge, though he were a little proud and stately; but which of the two should she choose? It would be very pleasant to be mistress of Clovelly Court; but just as pleasant to find herself lady of Portledge, where the Coffins had lived ever since Noah's flood (if, indeed, they had not merely returned thither after that temporary displacement),

and to bring her wealth into a family which was as proud of its antiquity as any nobleman in Devon, and might have made a fourth to that famous trio of Devonshire C's, of which it is written,—

Crocker, Cruwys, and Copplesone,
When the Conqueror came were all at home.

And Mr. Hugh Fortescue, too—people said that he was certain to become a great soldier—perhaps as great as his brother Arthur—and that would be pleasant enough, too, though he was but the younger son of an innumerable family: but then, so was Amyas Leigh. Ah, poor Amyas! Her girl's fancy for him had vanished, or rather, perhaps, it was very much what it always had been, only that four or five more girl's fancies beside it had entered in, and kept it in due subjection. But still, she could not help thinking a good deal about him, and his voyage, and the reports of his great strength, and beauty, and valour, which had already reached her in that out-of-the-way corner; and though she was not in the least in love with him, she could not help hoping that he had at least (to put her pretty little thought in the mildest shape) not altogether forgotten her; and was hungering, too, with all her fancy, to give him no peace till he had told her all the wonderful things which he had seen and done in this ever-memorable voyage. So that altogether it was no wonder if in her last night's dream the figure of Amyas had been even more forward and troublesome than that of Frank or the rest.

But, moreover, another figure had been forward and troublesome enough in last night's sleep-world; and forward and troublesome enough, too, now in to-day's waking-world, namely, Eustace, the rejected. How strange that she should have dreamt of him the night before! and dreamt, too, of his fighting with Mr. Frank and Mr. Amyas! It must be a warning—see, she had met him the very next day in this strange way; so the first half of her dream had come true; and after what had past, she only had to breathe a whisper, and the second part of the dream would come true

also. If she wished for a passage of arms in her own honour, she could easily enough compass one : not that she would do it for worlds ! And after all, though Mr. Eustace had been very rude and naughty, yet still it was not his own fault ; he could not help being in love with her. And— and, in short, the poor little maid felt herself one of the most important personages on earth, with all the cares (or hearts) of the country in her keeping, and as much perplexed with matters of weight as ever was any Cleopatra, or Dianeme, Fiordispina or Flourdelace, in verse run rime, or prose run mad.

Poor little Rose ! Had she but had a mother ! But she was to learn her lesson, such as it was, in another school. She was too shy (too proud perhaps) to tell her aunt her mighty troubles ; but a counsellor she must have ; and after sitting with her head in her hands, for half an hour or more, she arose suddenly, and started off along the cliffs towards Marsland. She would go and see Lucy Passmore, the white witch ; Lucy knew everything ; Lucy would tell her what to do ; perhaps even whom to marry.

Lucy was a fat, jolly woman of fifty, with little pig-eyes, which twinkled like sparks of fire, and eyebrows which sloped upwards and outwards, like those of a satyr, as if she had been (as indeed she had) all her life looking out of the corners of her eyes. Her qualifications as white witch were boundless cunning, equally boundless good nature, considerable knowledge of human weaknesses, some mesmeric power, some skill in 'yarbs,' as she called her simples, a firm faith in the virtue of her own incantations, and the faculty of holding her tongue. By dint of these she contrived to gain a fair share of money, and also (which she liked even better) of power, among the simple folk for many miles round. If a child was sca'ed, a tooth ached, a piece of silver was stolen, a heifer shrew-struck, a pig bewitched, a young damsel crost in love, Lucy was called in, and Lucy found a remedy, especially for the latter complaint. Now and then she found herself on ticklish ground, for the kind-heartedness which compelled her to help all distressed damsels out of a

scrape, sometimes compelled her also to help them into one; whereon enraged fathers called Lucy ugly names, and threatened to send her into Exeter gaol for a witch, and she smiled quietly, and hinted that if she were 'like some that were ready to return evil for evil, such talk as that would bring no blessing on them that spoke it'; which being translated into plain English, meant, 'If you trouble me, I will overlook (*i.e.* fascinate) you, and then your pigs will die, your horses stray, your cream turn sour, your barns be fired, your son have St. Vitus's dance, your daughter fits, and so on, woe on woe, till you are very probably starved to death in a ditch, by virtue of this terrible little eye of mine, at which, in spite of all your swearing and bullying, you know you are now shaking in your shoes for fear. So you had much better hold your tongue, give me a drink of cider, and leave ill alone, lest you make it worse.'

Not that Lucy ever proceeded to any such fearful extremities. On the contrary, her boast, and her belief too, was, that she was sent into the world to make poor souls as happy as she could, by lawful means, of course, if possible, but if not—why unlawful ones were better than none; for she 'couldn't a-bear to see the poor creatures taking on; she was too, too tender-hearted.' And so she was, to every one but her husband, a tall, simple-hearted, rabbit-faced man, a good deal older than herself. Fully agreeing with Sir Richard Grenville's great axiom, that he who cannot obey cannot rule, Lucy had been for the last five-and-twenty years training him pretty smartly to obey her, with the intention, it is to be charitably hoped, of letting him rule her in turn when his lesson was perfected. He bore his honours, however, meekly enough, having a boundless respect for his wife's wisdom, and a firm belief in her supernatural powers, and let her go her own way and earn her coven money, while he got a little more in a truly pastoral method (not extinct yet along those lonely cliffs), by feeding a herd of some dozen donkeys and twenty goats. The donkeys fetched, at each low-tide, white shell-sand which was to be sold for manure to the labouring farmers; the goats furnished milk

and 'kiddy-pies'; and when there was neither milking nor sand-carrying to be done, old Will Passmore just sat under a sunny rock and watched the buck-goats rattle their horns together, thinking about nothing at all, and taking very good care all the while neither to inquire nor, to see who came in and out of his little cottage in the glen.

The Prophetess, when Rose approached her oracular cave, was seated on a tripod in front of the fire, distilling strong waters out of pennyroyal. But no sooner did her distinguished visitor appear at the hatch, than the still was left to take care of itself, and a clean apron and mutch having been slipt on, Lucy welcomed Rose with endless courtesies, and—' Bless my dear soul alive, who ever would have thought to see the Rose of Torridge to my poor little place !'

Rose sat down : and then ? How to begin was more than she knew, and she stayed silent a full five minutes, looking earnestly at the point of her shoe, till Lucy, who was an adept in such cases, thought it best to proceed to business at once, and save Rose the delicate operation of opening the ball herself ; and so, in her own way, half fawning, half familiar—

' Well, my dear young lady, and what is it I can do for ye ? For I guess you want a bit of old Lucy's help, eh ? Though I'm most mazed to see ye here, surely. I should have supposed that pretty face could manage they sort of matters for itself. Eh ?'

Rose, thus bluntly charged, confessed at once, and with many blushes and hesitations, made her soon understand that what she wanted was ' To have her fortune told.'

' Eh ? Oh ! I see. The pretty face has managed it a bit too well already, en ? Tu many o'mun, pure fellows ? Well, tain't ev'ry mayden has her pick and choose, like some I know of, as be blest in love by stars above. So you h'aint made up your mind, then ?'

Rose shook her head.

' Ah—well,' she went on, in a half bantering tone. ' Not so asy, is it, then ? One's gude fo: one thing, and one

for another, eh? One has the blood, and another the money.'

And so the 'cunning woman' (as she truly was), talking half to herself, ran over all the names which she thought likely, peering at Rose all the while out of the corners of her foxy bright eyes, while Rose stirred the peat ashes steadfastly with the point of her little shoe, half angry, half ashamed, half frightened, to find that 'the cunning woman' had guessed so well both her suitors and her thoughts about them, and tried to look unconcerned at each name as it came out.

'Well, well,' said Lucy, who took nothing by her move, simply because there was nothing to take; 'think over it—think over it, my dear life; and if you did set your mind on any one—why, then—then maybe I might help you to a sight of him.'

'A sight of him?'

'His sperrit, dear life, his sperrit only, I mane. I 'udn't have no keeping company in my house, no, not for gowld untowld, I 'udn't; but the sperrit of mun—to see whether mun would be true or not, you'd like to know that, now, 'udn't you, my darling?'

Rose sighed, and stirred the ashes about vehemently.

'I must first know who it is to be. If you could show me that—now——'

'Oh, I can show ye that, tu, I can. Ben there's a way to 't, a sure way; but 'tis mortal cold for the time o' year, you zee.'

'But what is it, then?' said Rose, who had in her heart been longing for something of that very kind, and had half made up her mind to ask for a charm.

'Why, you'm not afraid to goo i. to the way by night for a minute, are you? And to-morrow night would serve, too; 'twill be just low tide to midnight.'

'If you would come with me perhaps——'

'I'll come, I'll come, and stand within ca'll, to be sure. Only do ye mind this, dear soul alive, not to goo telling a crumb about mun, noo, not for the world, or yu'll see nought

at all, indeed, now. And beside, there's a noxious business grow'd up against me up to Chapel there; and I hear tell how Mr. Leigh saith I shall to Exeter gaol for a witch—did ye ever hear the likes?—because his groom Jan saith I over-looked mun—the Papist dog! And now never he nor th' owld Father Francis goo by me without a spetting, and saying of their Aves and Malificas—I do know what their Rooman Latin do mane, zo well as ever they, I du!—and a making o' their charms and incantations to their saints and idols! They be mortal feared of witches, they Papists, and mortal hard on 'em, even on a pure body like me, that doth a bit in the white way; 'case why you see, dear life,' said she, with one of her humorous twinkles, 'tu to a trade do never agree. Do ye try my bit of a charm, now; do ye!'

Rose could not resist the temptation; and between them both the charm was agreed on, and the next night was fixed for its trial, on the payment of certain current coins of the realm (for Lucy, of course, must live by her trade); and slipping a tester into the dame's hand as earnest, Rose went away home, and got there in safety.

But in the meanwhile, at the very hour that Eustace had been prosecuting his suit in the lane at Moorwinstow, a very different scene was being enacted in Mrs. Leigh's room at Burrough.

For the night before, Amyas, as he was going to bed, heard his brother Frank in the next room tune his lute, and then begin to sing. And both their windows being open, and only a thin partition between the chambers, Amyas' admiring ears came in for every word of the following canonet, sung in that delicate and mellow tenor voice for which Frank was famed among all fair ladies:—

'Ah, trait Love, Megæra's serpents bearing,
 Why thus requite my sighs with venom'd smart?
 Ah, ruthless dove, the vulture's talons wearing,
 Why flesh them, traitress, in this faithful heart?
 Is this my meed? Must dragons' teeth alone
 In Venus' lawns by lovers' hands be sown?

Nay, gentlest Cupid ; 'twas my pride undid me ;
 Nay, guiltless dove ; by mine own wound I fell.
 To worship, not to wed, Celestials bid me :
 I dreamt to mate in heaven, and wake in hell ;
 For ever doom'd Ixion-like, to reel
 On mine own passions' ever-burning wheel.'

At which the simple sailor sighed, and longed that he could write such neat verses, and sing them so sweetly. How he would besiege the ear of Rose Salterne with amorous ditties ! But still, he could not be everything ; and if he had the bone and muscle of the family, it was but fair that Frank should have the brains and voice ; and, after all, he was bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh, and it was just the same as if he himself could do all the fine things which Frank could do ; for as long as one of the family won honour, what matter which of them it was ? Whereon he shouted through the wall, ' Good night, old song-thrush ; I suppose I need not pay the musicians.'

' What, awake ?' answered Frank. ' Come in here, and lull me to sleep with a sea-song.'

So Anyas went in, and found Frank laid on the outside of his bed not yet undrest.

' I am a bad sleeper,' said he ; ' I spend more time, I fear, in burning the midnight oil than prudent men should. Come and be my jongleur, my minne-singer, and tell me about Andes, and cannibals, and the ice-regions, and the fire-regions, and the paradises of the West.'

So Anyas sat down, and told : but somehow, every story which he tried to tell came round, by crooked paths, yet sure, to none other point than Rose Salterne, and how he thought of her here and thought of her there, and how he wondered what she would say if she had seen him in this adventure, and how he longed to have had her with him to show her that glorious sight, till Frank let him have his own way, and then out came the whole story of the simple fellow's daily and hourly devotion to her, through those three long years of world-wide wanderings.

' And oh, Frank, I could hardly think of anything but

her in the church the other day, God forgive me! and it did seem so hard for her to be the only face which I did not see—and have not seen her yet, either.'

'So I thought, dear lad,' said Frank, with one of his sweetest smiles; 'and tried to get her father to let her impersonate the nymph of Torrige.'

'Did you, you dear kind fellow? That would have been too delicious.'

'Just so, 'too delicious; wherefore, I suppose, it was ordained not to be, that which was being delicious enough.'

'And is she as pretty as ever?'

'Ten times as pretty, dear lad, as half the young fellows round have discovered. If you mean to win her and wear her (and God grant you may fare no worse!) you will have rivals enough to get rid off.'

'Humph!' said Amyas, 'I hope I shall not have to make short work with some of them.'

'I hope not,' said Frank, laughing. 'Now go to bed, and to-morrow morning give your sword to mother to keep, lest you should be tempted to draw it on any of her Majesty's lieges.'

'No fear of that, Frank; I am no swashbuckler, thank God; but if any one gets in my way, I'll serve him as the mastiff did the terrier, and just drop him over the quay into the river, to cool himself, or my name's not Amyas.'

And the giant swung himself laughing out of the room, and slept all night like a seal, not without dreams, of course, of Rose Salterne.

The next morning, according to his wont, he went into his mother's room, whom he was sure to find up and at her prayers; for he liked to say his prayers, too, by her side, as he used to do when he was a little boy. It seemed so home-like, he said, after three years' knocking up and down in no-man's-land. But coming gently to the door, for fear of disturbing her, and entering unperceived, beheld a sight which stopped him short.

Mrs. Leigh was sitting in her chair, with her face bowed fondly down upon the head of his brother Frank, who knelt

before her, his face buried in her lap. Amyas could see that his whole form was quivering with stifled emotion. Their mother was just finishing the last words of a well-known text—‘for my sake, and the Gospel’s, shall receive a hundredfold in this present life, fathers, and mothers, and brothers, and sisters.’

‘But not a wife!’ interrupted Frank, with a voice stifled with sobs; ‘that was too precious a gift for even Him to promise to those who gave up a first love for His sake!’

‘And yet,’ said he, after a moment’s silence, ‘has He not heaped me with blessings enough already, that I must repine and rage at His refusing me one more, even though that one be—No, mother! I am your son, and God’s; and you shall know it, even though Amyas never does!’ And he looked up with his clear blue eyes and white forehead; and his face was as the face of an angel.

Both of them saw that Amyas was present, and started and blushed. His mother motioned him away with her eyes, and he went quietly out, as one stunned. Why had his name been mentioned?

Love, cunning love, told him all at once. This was the meaning of last night’s canzonet! This was why its words had seemed to fit his own heart so well! His brother was his rival. And he had been telling him all his love last night. What a stupid brute he was! How it must have made poor Frank wince! And then Frank had listened so kindly; even bid him God speed in his suit. What a gentleman old Frank was, to be sure! No wonder the Queen was so fond of him, and all the Court ladies!—Why, if it came to that, what wonder if Rose Salterne should be fond of him too? Heyday! ‘That would be a pretty fish to find in my net when I come to haul it!’ quoth Amyas to himself, as he paced the garden; and clutching desperately hold of his locks with both hands, as if to hold his poor confused head on its shoulders, he strode and tramped up and down the shell-paved garden walks for a full half-hour, till Frank’s voice (as cheerful as ever, though he more than suspected all) called him.

‘Come in to breakfast, lad; and stop grinding and creaking upon those miserable limpets, before thou hast set every tooth in my head on edge!’

Amyas, whether by dint of holding his head straight, or by higher means, had got the thoughts of the said head straight enough by this time; and in he came, and fell to upon the broiled fish and strong ale, with a sort of fury, as determined to do his duty to the utmost in all matters that day; and therefore, of course, in that most important matter of bodily sustenance; while his mother and Frank looked at him, not without anxiety and even terror, doubting what turn his fancy might have taken in so new a case; at last—

‘My dear Amyas, you will really heat your blood with all that strong ale! Remember, those who drink beer, think beer.’

‘Then they think right good thoughts, mother. And in the meanwhile, those who drink water, think water. Eh, old Frank! and here’s your health.’

‘And clouds are water,’ said his mother, somewhat reassured by his genuine good-humour; ‘and so are rainbows; and clouds are angels’ thrones, and rainbows the sign of God’s peace on earth.’

Amyas understood the hint, and laughed. ‘Then I’ll pledge Frank out of the next ditch, if it please you and him. But first—I say—he must hearken to a parable; a manner mystery, miracle play, I have got in my head, like what they have at Easter, to the town-hall. Now then, hearken, madam, and I and Frank will act.’ And up rose Amyas, and shoved back his chair, and put on a solemn face.

Mrs. Leigh looked up, trembling; and Frank, he scarce knew why, rose.

‘No; you pitch again. You are King David, and sit still upon your throne. David was a great singer, you know, and a player on the viols; and ruddy, too, and of a fair countenance; so that will fit. Now, then, mother, don’t look so frightened. I am not going to play Goliath, for all my cubits; I am to present Nathan the prophet. Now, David, hearken, for I have a message unto thee, O king!’

‘There were two men in one city, one rich, and the other poor; and the rich man had many flocks and herds, and all the fine ladies in Whitehall to court if he liked; and the poor man had nothing but——’

And in spite of his broad honest smile, Amyas’s deep voice began to tremble and choke.

Frank sprang up and burst into tears:—‘Oh, Amyas, my brother, my brother! stop! I cannot endure this. Oh, God! was it not enough to have entangled myself in this fatal fancy, but over and above, I must meet the shame of my brother’s discovering it?’

‘What shame, then, I’d like to know?’ said Amyas, recovering himself. ‘Look here, brother Frank! I’ve thought it all over in the garden; and I was an ass and a braggart for talking to you as I did last night. Of course you love her! Everybody must; and I was a fool for not recollecting that; and if you love her, your taste and mine agree, and what can be better? I think you are a sensible fellow for loving her, and you think me one. And as for who has her, why, you’re the eldest; and first come first served is the rule, and best to keep to it. Besides, brother Frank, though I’m no scholar, yet I’m not so blind but that I tell the difference between you and me; and of course your chance against mine, for a hundred to one; and I am not going to be fool enough to row against wind and tide too. I’m good enough for her, I hope; but if I am, you are better, and the good dog may run, but it’s the best that takes the hare; and so I have nothing more to do with the matter at all; and if you marry her, why, it will set the old house on its legs again, and that’s the first thing to be thought of, and you may just as well do it as I, and better too. Not but that it’s a plague, a horrible plague!’ went on Amyas, with a ludicrous doleful visage; ‘but so are other things too, by the dozen; it’s all in the day’s work, as the huntsman said when the lion ate him. One would never get through the furze-croft if one stopped to pull out the prickles. The pig didn’t scramble out of the ditch by squeaking; and the less said the sooner mended; nobody was sent

into the world only to suck honey-pots. What must be must, man is but dust; if you can't get crumb, you must fain eat crust. So I'll go and join the army in Ireland, and get it out of my head, for cannon balls fright away love as well as poverty does; and that's all I've got to say.' Where-with Amyas sat down, and returned to the beer; while Mrs. Leigh wept tears of joy.

'Amyas! Amyas!' said Frank; 'you must not throw away the hopes of years, and for me, too! Oh, how just was your parable! Ah! mother mine! to what use is all my scholarship and my philosophy, when this dear simple sailor-lad outdoes me at the first trial of courtesy!'

'My children, my children, which of you shall I love best? Which of you is the more noble? I thanked God this morning for having given me one such son; but to have found that I possess two!' And Mrs. Leigh laid her head on the table, and buried her face in her hands, while the generous battle went on.

'But, dearest Amyas!—'

'But, Frank! if you don't hold your tongue, I must go forth. It was quite trouble enough to make up one's mind, without having you afterwards trying to unmake it again.'

'Amyas! if you give her up to me, God do so to me, and more also, if I do not hereby give her up to you!'

'He had done it already—this morning!' said Mrs. Leigh, looking up through her tears. 'He renounced her for ever on his knees before me! only he is too noble to tell you so.'

'The more reason I should copy him,' said Amyas, setting his lips, and trying to look desperately determined, and then suddenly jumping up, he leaped upon Frank, and throwing his arms round his neck, sobbed out, 'There, there, now! For God's sake, let us forget all, and think about our mother, and the old house, and how we may win her honour before we die! and that will be enough to keep our hands full, without fretting about this woman and that.—What an ass I have been for years! instead of learning my calling, dreaming about her, and don't know at this

minute whether she cares more for me than she does for her father's 'prentices !'

'Oh, Amyas ! every word of yours puts me to fresh shame ! Will you believe that I know as little of her likings as you do ?'

'Don't tell me that, and play the devil's game by putting fresh hopes into me, when I am trying to kick them out. I won't believe it. If she is not a fool, she must love you ; and if she don't, why, bechanged if she is worth loving !'

'My dearest Amyas ! I must ask you too to make no more such speeches to me. All those thoughts I have forsworn.'

'Only this morning ; so there is time to catch them again before they are gone too far.'

'Only this morning,' said Frank, with a quiet smile : 'but centuries have passed since then.'

'Centuries ? I don't see many grey hairs yet.'

'I should not have been surprised if you had, though,' answered Frank, in so sad and meaning a tone that Amyas could only answer—

'Well, you are an angel !'

'You, at least, are something even more to the purpose, for you are a man !'

And both spoke truth, and so the battle ended ; and Frank went to his books, while Amyas, who must needs be doing, if he was not to dream, started off to the dockyard to potter about a new ship of Sir Richard's, and forget his woes, in the capacity of Sir Oracle among the sailors. And so he had played his move for Rose, even as Eustace had, and lost her ; but not as Eustace had.