TROY TOWN REVISITED.

By "Q.,"

AUTHOR OF "THE DELECTABLE DUCHY," &c.

I.

AFTER sunset, a Cheap Jack upon the Town Quay at Troy kindled the naphtha lamps before his caravan, and began to address the few idlers there. He had a silvery voice, which travelled easily across the still harbour towards our boat; and a crowd gathered quickly and began to point his exhortations with laughter. It made a pretty picture altogether: moonlight above and around, the looming shadow of the caravan, the lights flaring on the faces of the bystanders and reflected in the water between us and the Quay's edge, the Cheap Jack's assistants running to and fro with glittering tin dish-covers and American or Brummagem timepieces, twirling these fascinating objects beneath the naphtha jets in a way to coax money from all but the entirely impecunious. The local tradesman mourns. He is accustomed to give credit, and must now stand by and see the ready money, that should have discharged his long-standing account, swept into the pockets of this winning visitor. But nothing will cure Cornishmen of their passion for buying of the Cheap Jack. The other day a fisherman of my acquaintance, who has much ado to live and feed his family during the winter, invested a large portion of his summer earnings in the following trifles—three silver Geneva watches, one silver watch-chain, a cuckoo-clock, a black-and-gold overmantel and a pair of asparagus-tongs. And my skipper Cornelius has a story of a friend who bought a gross of elastic garters, "though he'd not so much as a wife of his own, and his old mother hated the sight of 'm. She said they hindered the circulation. When her stockings wore out at the heel, she'd pull 'em a bit further down so as to get the hole under the flat of her foot; and so on till they was holes all the way. Then she'd go and trust Draper —— for a new pair." With what mingled amiability and deftness inhabitants of the Duchy will transfer a responsibility! Thus you may hear a child announce that he is going to "trust" Aunt So-and-so for a ha'porth of sweets—meaning that he will coax her to give him credit to that amount.

A caravan will often stay for a week or more at some village or small town, and then depart, leaving the neighbourhood wofully short of money for months to come. At the same time it should be understood that the proprietor is usually an honest tradesman and that his wares stand the test of use. Otherwise his periodical visits would be less cordially welcomed. The house beside the caravan on the Town Quay was once occupied by Dr. Wolcott—"Peter Pindar"—who no doubt in his time was deafened by many of these nightly auctions as he sat in his study and

wooed the Muse. Possibly nervous irritation sharpened the Doctor's pen when he wrote his famous story of the razors "made to sell"; possibly the whole race of Cheap Jacks has improved since that time. At any rate, those who ply their interesting trade in the Duchy to-day can be accused of little worse than finding unlikely purchasers for asparagus-tongs; and in such cases the principle *caveat emptor* undoubtedly holds.

THE TOWN QUAY.

But we were yet to learn something of the secret of the Cheap Jack's charm. At half past ten or thereabouts his exhortations ceased; the mass of his hearers went off to bed; and I was about to follow their example, when the tinkling of a piano sounded from the caravan, and one of the remaining idlers stepped out into the glare of the naphtha lights, and began to dance a hornpipe. "I was thinking," said a voice at my elbow—and turning, I recognised the boatman, Tobias—"I was thinking this would happen;" and he sighed heavily. "Do you mean," I asked, "that you wish to go ashore and take part in this caper?" "There's one 'pon the Quay there . . ." The end of Tobias's sentence was an awed whisper. I unloosed the dinghy's painter, and drew her softly in. It was certain that Cornelius would disapprove, but Cornelius slept heavily in the forecastle. We clambered overboard without another word, and Tobias sculled me noiselessly to the Quay steps.

The hornpipers welcomed us with grave nods, but were too deeply occupied for speech. One of the Cheap Jack's assistants sat before a small cottage piano on the platform of the caravan, and strummed for his life. The Cheap Jack himself rested an elbow on the cover of the instrument, and benignly but critically eyed a young man who, with bared head and arms crossed, swayed and bobbed to the music, and shook his heels on a little patch of sand just below. His was a florid, energetic performance; but not, as I gathered from the faces of the spectators, altogether satisfactory. One has to learn before setting up to judge hornpiping. In that, as in most other arts, excellence goes with self-restraint. Tobias followed. Nobody pressed him, or even asked him, to dance; but obviously he was recognised upon Troy Quay as a creditable artist, if not an expert. He just stepped forward, flung down his cap, set his arms akimbo, and began, with a face as solemn as a judge's. To me his execution appeared a trifle tame, but that was my ignorance again. Well-weighed applause rewarded him at the close. He withdrew with unembarrassed mien, perspiring brow, and the expression of one who knows exactly his own worth and allows his estimate to be shaken neither by flattery nor censure. The piano still tinkled on, and now a Whitby fisherman stepped into the lists—a giant of a man in high sea-boots, loose ochre-coloured smock, and blue tasselled cap. The

crowd stared curiously as this "foreigner" seated himself on the steps leading to the platform, and began to pull off his boots in a manner that meant business. It is not often that an East-coast smack finds her way into Troy harbour. Such craft are better known—and heartily disliked—in St. Ives Bay; the reason being that the men of St. Ives do not fish on a Sunday, whereas the Whitby men have no such scruples. Now it is hard enough to sit ashore and watch the sea during a fine "Sabbath," but it is quite intolerable to sit and watch a graceless Yorkshire boat taking your fish all the while, and landing it on your own foreshore and under your very nose. Therefore St. Ives cannot away with these East-coast men. But Troy is a trading-port, and welcomes everybody, — Frenchman, Hollander, Norwegian, Swede, Russian, Italian —though its warmest affection is kept for the crews of the big Nova Scotia barques that lie off the jetties often for six weeks at a time, refitting and victualling while they wait for their cargoes.

The Whitby man perhaps remembered St. Ives. It was clear, at any rate, that he asked no sympathy from his audience, but danced for the honour of his native county — his dark handsome face absolutely impassive, his broad shoulders scarcely swaying to the measure—a bronze statue to the waist, and below a dignified harlequin. To dance a hornpipe with stockinged feet is not easy, but he danced it in a way that made the bystanders hold their breath. I am bound to say they gave their admiration generously. From Troy to Whitby is a far cry: but the highest art has no nationality, and while the son of Whitby shook his feet for the honour of Whitby, the men of Troy applauded for the honour of hornpiping. At least, I thought so at the moment. On reflection, the consciousness of holding a trump card in reserve may have inclined them to this generosity, for when the applause ceased the crowd turned their faces with one accord to a corner of the caravan where a middle-aged man in black stood looking

A GARDEN IN TROY.

on in silence from the penumbra of the naphtha's flare.

He stepped forward promptly, but with an almost deprecating modesty of demeanour; a well-built, fresh-looking man of middle age and height; clean-shaven; with black trousers, open waistcoat, and lounging coat, white tie, and an expanse of white shirt-front; a soft hat of black felt on his head and neat pumps on his feet. Decorum sat upon his features: he was a butler.

He was also an ex-champion of his art. It appears that somewhere or other, and at regular intervals, hornpiping is rewarded with a belt; and such a belt he possessed. That he deserved it I have no doubt at all. Since I have not the pen of Mr. George Meredith, I shall not attempt to depict the butler turned corybant. But it was an impressive spectacle, and I am bound to add it left Whitby gasping. For myself, at the close of the performance, I could find no words but "Oh, Cithaeron!" And in truth the scene had about it something of the true Bacchic—the moonlight, the caravan, the warm sea wind, the torches, and the solemn dancing:-

> But I, Ulysses,
> Sitting on the warm steps,
> Looking over the valley,
> All day long, have seen,
> Without pain, without labour,
> Sometimes a wild-hair'd Maenad—
> Sometimes a Faun with torches—
> And sometimes, for a moment,
> Passing through the dark stems
> Flowing-robed, the beloved,
> The desired, the divine
> Beloved Iacchus.

II.

They are fond of dancing in the Duchy. This might be guessed by any visitor who happened to be staying in Helston on Flora-day (May 10th), and there at high noon to behold all manner of black-coated, tall-hatted burgesses take arms and, as if pursued by gadflies, caper up and down the public street—in at the front doors and out at the back, ringing every bell, knocking at every knocker, sometimes making the circuit of a garden or plunging into a cellar. But this Flora, or Furry, dance is about the only survival among purely Cornish dances. The "Letterpooch" is gone, and in country barns they now walk through a set of Quadrilles or Lancers in the pauses of the round dancing. One of these days, I suppose, our eyes will be opened, and we shall revive in England—if they be not clean perished by that time, and forgotten—some of the stately and beautiful old country-dances, such as the *Triumph*. As well as I remember, a certain family likeness pervaded all these antiques. But it was the likeness of a well-bred family. Among them all you will find nothing to compare with the tortuous foolishness of the Quadrilles as commonly practised.

Tobias has a story of a Wendron man who attended Helston Flora, and staying until the big ball was in full swing at the Angel Hotel, happened to see, for the first time in his life, a number of ladies and gentlemen dancing the Lancers. "It took his fancy so, that when he got home, pretty well after midnight, nothing would do for 'n till he'd got the missis an' all the family—seventeen orn, counting the babby—out 'pon the planchin' in their night-clothes, practising the Grand Chain. He couldn' mind how the music went; so he set 'em all to sing

> Out of my stony griefs
> Bethel I'll raise

to mark time. The babby couldn' dance o' course, so they stuck 'en down in the middle o' the floor, like a ninepin; and the poor cheeld worked his eyes round and round so quick, trying to follow his mammy, that he grew up cross-sighted from that night forr'ad."

A year or two back, at a barn-dance held not very far from Troy, the parents of a certain young farmer were very anxious that he should make a formal offer of his hand and heart to a girl who had been spending the Christmas holidays in the neighbourhood. She had a little money of her own, good looks, and plenty of stature; indeed, she was "rather an out size," as they say in the Duchy, and weighed something over eleven stone, no doubt. The suitor was not backward to ask her for the first three dances. Then he returned, perspiring profusely, and dropped on to the bench beside his father, declaring:—

"I bain't a-goin' to marry that gel!"

"Don't-ee tell me that, or I shall die!"

"I bain't a-goin' to marry her, and what's more, I won't dance another turn with her."

"Dear me, and hev it come to that so sudden? And what's your trumpery (temporary) unaisiness?"

"You just go for yerself and ax her to dance."

So the father went off, and returned after a while, perspiring no less copiously than his son.

"Well, my boy," he said, as he mopped his brow, "matterimony 's a thing I never will interfere with. Take the gel, or lave her—you must plaze yerself; but if you ax me, I'm fain of confess that she do hang a bit back in the breechin'."

III.

Est in secessu longo locus: insula portum
Efficit objectu laterum, quibus omnis ab alto

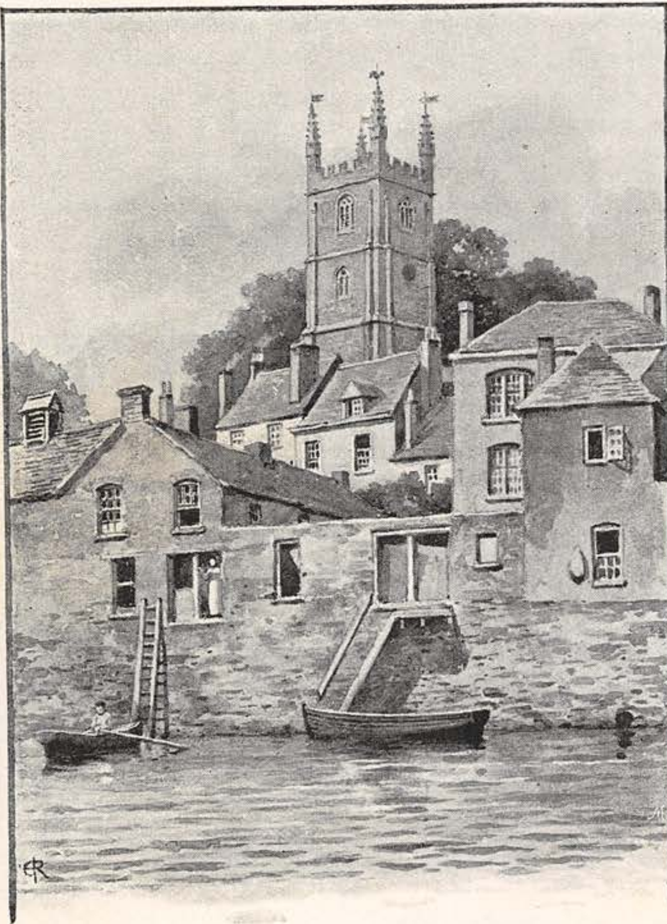
A BIT OF OLD TROY.

Frangitur inque sinus scindit sese unda reductos.
Hinc atque hinc vastae rupes geminique minantur
In coelum scopuli: quorum sub vertice late
Aequora tuta silent: tum silvis scena coruscis
Desuper, horrentique atrum nemus imminet umbra.
Fronte sub adversa scopulis pendentibus antrum
Intus aquae dulces, vivoque sedilia saxo;
Nympharum domus. Hic fessas non vincula naves
Ulla tenent; unco non alligat ancora morsu.

I suppose that in all the world there is no such harbour as this of Virgil's fancy. It is the harbour, not of men's experience but of their aspiration—"the haven where they would be"—and the pattern of it (in Plato's phrase) is laid up somewhere in heaven. One hears of delicate anchorages in the South Pacific; but, as far as I can make out, there is always a barrier-reef to handle before exploring their tranquil waters; and an experience of the European coast-line degrades your notion of a harbour to a trickle of water meandering among shoals, bars, mud-banks, minatory buoys and raucous pilots, and ending up with a town and an offensive smell.

Now what I claim for Troy Harbour is simply this: that for its size it approaches more closely than any other in England to the ideal harbour. Dartmouth is the only possible exception: its scenery, we may grant at once, is more theatrical, its coast higher and more abrupt, its vegetation richer. But as a yacht's captain once put it (and certainly any one who has much experience of small boat-sailing will bear him out), "it's a humbugging place to get into, and a humbugging place to get out of." In making the entrance to Troy, on the other hand, you have neither shoal nor confusing current.

You may have a pilot if you wish, but as there is no danger beyond what is visible a pilot is not required. The rocks are bold, and there is deep water close along-



THE GREY WALLS OF THE TOWN.

side them ; and a vessel may run in at low ebb in the spring tides and anchor in three fathoms of water. Nay, suppose her embayed between the Rame and Dodman with a stiff gale blowing from the South, she may run in here with perfect safety, though she have neither cable nor anchor ; either beaching herself on the soft mud abreast of the town, to float again when the tide rises, or holding on until she gains the deep smooth water of the river, and the shelter of its tall banks.

The grey walls of the town rise straight from this lake, which sucks their crevices continually as it rises and falls—eighteen feet at the spring-tides, eight only in the slackest of the neaps. And the inhabitant has only to open his quay-door, and climb down a ladder, to be in his boat and afloat. A novelist—for the moment I forget his name—once expressed his wonder at the number of folk about the world who seem to get their subsistence entirely by watching tidal-water. Certainly it has a spell, especially if it runs by your very door ; and this spell is heavy upon the people of Troy. The women break off their housework a dozen times a day to ean over their garden-walls and watch it ; the children tumble about in boats almost before they can walk, yet never come to harm ; at close of day the tradesmen put up their shutters, and the mechanics drop their tools and take to the water like ducks, some bathing, others skimming about the harbour in sailing-boats, others racing small model yachts, others rowing their families leisurely to and fro in the twilight. To them the world breathes in the rise and fall of the tide, and they cannot keep away from it. Now and then a young man sets off to seek his luck at an office desk or behind a shop counter in some inland town ; but either he will be back again very soon —the more usual case—or he must fight his way through much unhappiness. Suppose him to hold out, and in time marry and settle in the town of his adoption. You will find him, when his annual holiday comes round, still constant to Troy, still for one fortnight in the year harking back to the old charm ; haunting the streets and quays with wistful eyes, trying pathetically to communicate his enthusiasm to his wife and family. *They* can feel no magic in tidal water. They probably find the place more than a little dull. I have known Troy for many years now ;

but have never heard a native, man or woman, complain that Troy is dull.

Two ferry-boats ply between Troy and the opposite shore, and the talk and laughter in each is almost continuous. All the gossip of the town is exchanged there, and every vessel recognised and discussed, with her history and prospects, as she moves up and down the river. Staid matrons will sometimes take their seats, lay down a sixpence, and demand to be rowed across and back, across and back, until that sum is exhausted. They have no business on the far side, nor do they wish to land; but simply to sit and feel the water beneath them, and listen to the chatter. An epidemic of whooping-cough is a great opportunity. Nothing is better for a child in the early stages of recovery than an hour or two spent upon the salt water: and upon this excuse you will find the ferry-boat packed at times with convalescent babes, and mothers in the full tide of social enjoyment.

Conversation at the ferry is always marked by extreme frankness. The morning after our arrival, I crossed with a party of Naval Reserve men, bound for artillery practice. One of these was obviously a stranger to the port of Troy. Said a young mason in the stern-sheets, after regarding him for half a minute—

"You'm new to this place."

The stranger nodded, and began to cut up tobacco.

"I thought I hadn' seen yer face before. Tidn' a face, either, to forgit in a hurry. And where may you come from?"

"Port Isaac."

"Aw. So they've been catchin' fish there lately."

"How did 'ee knaw that?"

"Why, most times you ax a man o' your parish where he comes from, an' he says 'Portissick,' or 'P'tissick'—short as that. But let 'em get a brave haul of pilchards once in a way, and 'tis 'Port *I*-saac' at once."

THE FERRY, LOOKING TOWARDS TROY.

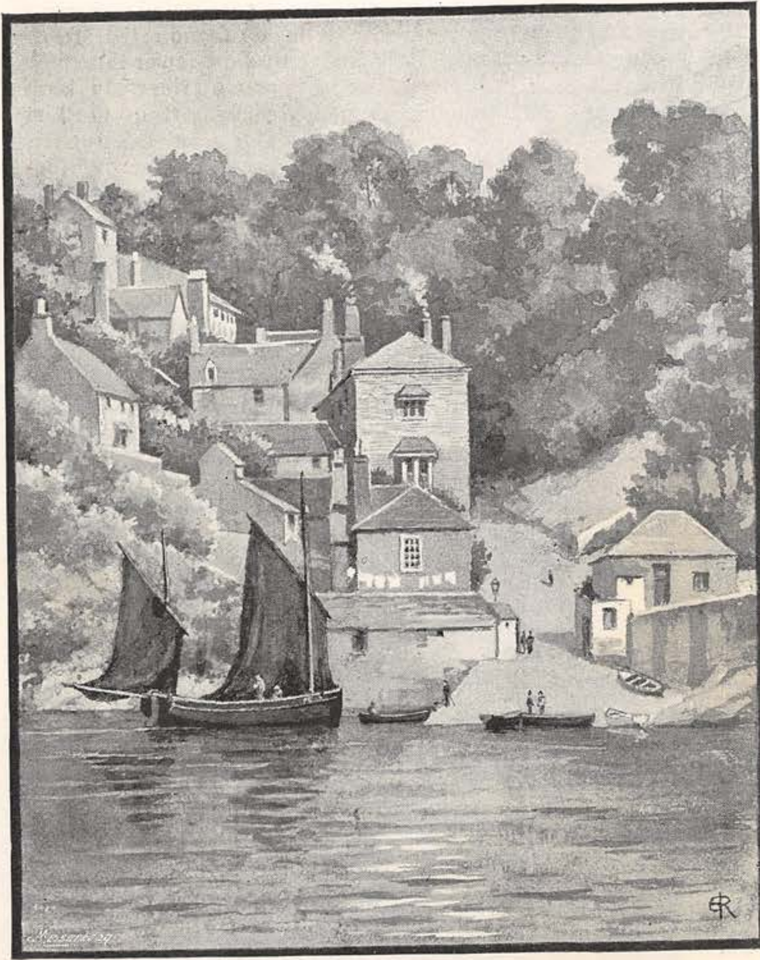
I may mention that, though courteous as a rule, inhabitants of the Duchy are unusually quick to detect and resent, or at least ridicule, any unwarrantable social pretensions.

"Have 'ee seen the new Johnny Fortnight's watch-guard? It flashes every way he turns."

"Iss, my son. I reckon he's like a snail—carries all his belongin's about with 'en."

IV.

Troy has a past of some dignity. Soon after the Conquest the monks of Tywardreath opened a trade here with Normandy, exporting the produce of their priory as



ACROSS THE FERRY.

the Crown (in 1154) gave Troy a charter, and made it a municipal corporation, governed by burghers. The foreigners had now to conform to the borough rules or fight for their existence. The town won; the vessels that refused to conform were added by capture; and at the beginning of the next century Troy had forty large ships running under her flag.

The Crown profited unexpectedly by its concession of this charter. When Simon de Montfort rebelled, he took with him all the Cinque Ports except Portsmouth; and the men of Winchelsea destroyed Portsmouth by his orders. It was a pretty triumph for the men of Troy, when the king's son Edward sought their help, to put their fleet of forty sail at his disposal (the whole Cinque Ports fleet numbered but fifty sail), and then, single-handed, to beat the enemy at Winchelsea. For this action, which undoubtedly saved the Crown, they were allowed to take away the Winchelsea Chain, and become a Cinque Port in its stead. In due time Winchelsea was given a new Cinque-Port charter; but the Troy "gallants" would never acknowledge it. On one occasion, as the Trojan fleet came sailing by on its way home from a descent upon the French coast, the Winchelsea men sallied out to enforce a proper recognition of their recovered dignity, and a pretty set-to took place. In the end the assailants had to retire, sore-headed, to their harbour, while the Trojans pursued their way smiling.

well as the ore raised in the mining country behind it, and employing for this purpose the ships that belonged to and traded for the Abbey of St. Bergieux and Bacchus. This trade had a two-edged profit, so to speak; for the ships returned with Norman goods in demand upon this side. Pretty soon the market attracted a number of foreigners, who settled here, built ships, and formed themselves into trading guilds. Their vessels were at the service of the king whenever he needed them, and in return, instead of paying them, the king allowed them to keep whatever vessels and plunder they captured.

The result might have been foreseen. In a very short time these foreigners developed into thoroughgoing pirates, with a small fleet at their command, as dangerous to the king's own ships as to his enemy's. To protect the native trade,

We are now in the heyday of Troy's good fortune, and she seems to have made money wherever her fleet went. It was one Nicholas, "sonne to a widow neere Troy," who defeated and killed the great Genoese pirate, as the ballad tells :—

As it fell on a holy day
  And upon a holy tide a,
John Dory brought him an ambling nag,
  To Paris for to ride a.

And when John Dory to Paris was come,
  A little before the gate a,
John Dory was fitted, the porter was witted,
  To let him in thereat a.

The first man that John Dory did meet,
  Was good King John of France a;
John Dory could well of his courtesie,
  But fell down in a trance a.

A pardon, a pardon, my liege and king,
  For my merry men and for me a!
And all the churls in merry England
  I'll bring them bound to thee a.

Now Nichol was then a Cornishman,
  A little beside Bohyde a;
He manned him forth a goodly bark,
  With fifty good oars of a side a.

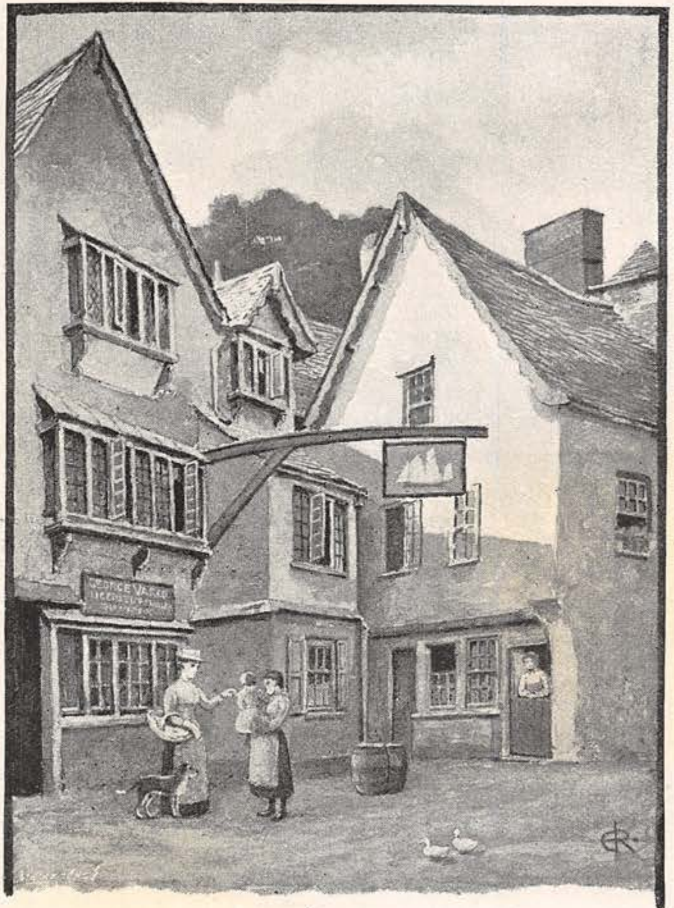
Run up, my boy, into the main top,
  And look what thou cans't spy a;
Who ho! who ho! a good ship do I see,
  I trow it be John Dorỳ a.

They hoist their sails both top and top,
  The mizen and all was tried a,
And every man stood to his lot
  Whatever should betide a.

The roaring cannons then were plied,
  And dub-a-dub went the drum a,
The braying trumpets loud they cried
  To courage both all and some a.

The grappling hooks were brought at length,
  The brown bill and the sword a;
John Dory at length, for all his strength,
  Was clapt fast under board a.

Another Nicholas—Nicholas Kirriel—was the Troy Commander in 1347, when Edward III. besieged Calais and blockaded it with a fleet of 700 sail. To this fleet Troy contributed no fewer than forty-seven ships and 770 mariners, a larger number than any other port in the kingdom. The list is given by Hakluyt from a roll in the king's wardrobe, and Charnock has corrected it from another MS. roll in the library of the Dean and Chapter of Canterbury. The proportionate contributions of some of the ports read oddly nowadays. London sent twenty-five ships, Portsmouth five, Margate twenty, Bristol twenty-two, Cardiff and Swansea one apiece, Yarmouth forty-three (thus running Troy close). The Mersey could provide no more than one. Some considerable fortunes were made



THE LUGGER INN.

in Troy by this expedition; and as long as the French wars continued, the town waxed rich. Her men were in the fun at

Creçy, and combined business with pleasure in the Five Weeks' Expedition, in which five hundred French villages were burnt and plundered. But when the

THE SPELL OF TIDAL WATER.

peace came, what were these enterprising seamen to do? Clearly to return to the milder paths of commerce were not only to starve (comparatively), but to go back on the habits of a lifetime. They, therefore, continued to plunder the French coast, quite as if nothing had happened; and committed other piracies even less excusable. To check them, the French fitted out an expedition, descended on Troy by night, and sacked it. This was the first reproof, and it was not taken. Very soon we find the "gallants" as active as ever, being particularly encouraged in their wickedness by Warwick, the king-maker and Lord High Admiral, whose badge—"the ragged staff"—yet adorns the traceries on Troy Church tower. Upon Edward IV.'s accession pursuivants were sent down to forbid further piracies. The gallants, humorous after the somewhat crude fashion of those times, slit their ears, and sent them back to London. Edward lost his temper at this; and the consequence was that Troy lost her Cinque Port rights, and had quite a large number of her most prominent citizens hung for pirates. From that time the naval exploits of her sons have been conceived and performed with more regard to the general interests of the nation.

V.

"'Tis hard, too," said Cornelius, "for a man to reach middle-life with cheerfulness and content, and then to find out he's been doin' wrong all the time. Even if it's been robbin' your naybours, 'tis hard to turn an' take up wi' something else at the age o' fifty. There was an old chap down to Gorran—Cap'n Billy Benny—that owned a ketch and did a little trade on his own account between Plymouth and one o' the French ports—Havre, I think 'twas. Honest trade, you understand; cargo paid for, and customs cleared at Plymouth; all above board and innocent as you plaze. The only thing the old chap smuggled regular was tea—the very best tea money could buy, and

all concealed about his pusson. He'd a cotton bag in the crown of his hat—always wore a gaff-tops'l ashore, rain or shine; cotton stays, piped so as to make a ring of tubes or pockets all round his body—say eighteen pockets, each holdin' a ha'af-pound; then a sort of dress-improver, that would take about eight pound; and a pair o' drawers holdin' sixteen pound at the very least. The old man would step ashore with from thirty to forty pound o' tea upon him. Well, when he was risin' sixty, he got converted an' gave up smugglin'; but the funny part was that he had to go on wearin' all these contraptions—never had a moment's comfort if he left 'em off. He used 'em for carryin' his prayer- and hemn-books to and from Meetin', and 'twas as good as a play sometimes to see the leader waitin' to pitch the note, while Cap'n Billy fumbled about—he got very shaky towards the end—to fish out Wesley's hemns from the back of his trowsers."

An equally striking story of human frailty is given by Miss Courtney, of Penzance, in one of her contributions to the Folk Lore Society's Journals: "Jimmy Treglown, a noted poacher in the western end of the Duchy, became converted at a revival-meeting. One Sunday morning, soon after, he was tempted by the devil in the form of a beautiful hare. Jimmy said, 'There thee art, my dear; but I waan't tooch thee on a Sunday—nor yet on a weeky day, for that matter.' He walked forward briskly for a few paces, and then, like Lot's wife, he was tempted to look behind him. Alas! 'There she was in her seat, looking lovely. I tooked up a stone and dabbed at her. Away she runned, and fare-ee well, religion. Mine runned away with her. I went home, and never went to class no more. You see it was the devil, and seemin' to me I heard 'un laugh and say, "Ah, ah! Jimmy boy, I had thee on the hip then. Thee must confess thee's had a fair fall." So I gave in, and never went nigh the "people" (Wesleyans) no more. Nobody should fire at hares of this sort except with a silver bullet: they often appear as white, but the devil knawed I couldn't be fooled with a white 'un.'"

"Nothing," Miss Courtney continues, "is too ridiculous to be told of hares. Another old man from St. Just once recited this anecdote in our kitchen, and from his grave manner evidently expected it to be believed: 'I was out walking,' he said, 'one Sunday morning, when I saw a hare in a field which I longed to have; so I shied a bit of codgy wax (cobbler's wax), the only thing I had in my pocket, at 'un, when he ran away. What was my surprise on getting over the stile to see two hares in the next field face to face. The codgy wax had stuck to the nose of the first, and he in his fright had runned against the other, and was holden 'un fast, too. So I quietly broke the necks of both, and carr'd 'em home.'"

"That puts me in mind," said Tobias, "of a dialect (dialogue) I was put up to speak one time when I was a tiny tacker,

THE DOCTOR'S DOOR.

at the Sunday-school Anniversary. Me and another boy took shares in it—'twas about the wickedness of Sabbath-breakin'—and they gave me all the blackguardism to speak; I suppose because they thoft it suited me. Reuby Andrews—that was the name of t'other nipper—had all the good talk. He began like this: '*Where hast-a been this Sabbath mornin', wi' thy raiment torn an' thy hair all shed into thy eyes?*' Says I, '*A-coursin' of the squirrel.*' Says

he, '*I do account thee unhallowed. Thou rioter, art-a not ashamed?*' '*No*,' says I, '*for I do not altogether believe in religious observances*,'—likely talk, that, to put into a cheeld's mouth. '*I do perceive*,' said Reuby, '*thou art in the way of perdition. Come, sit thee down upon yonder moss-grown trunk, an' lev us rayson it out*.' I forgit how it went on, but I know I got the worst of it."

This reminiscence spurred on Cornelius to the story of a local preacher who gave out the text "Man heapeth up riches, and cannot tell who shall gather them." He said, "Man heapeth up riches, and cannot tell who shall gather 'em. He heapeth them up, brethren—you may almost say he pileth them—but when you come to ax 'n who shall gather 'em, he cannot tell. It may be a zeccond cousin for all he knows. But still he goes on a-heapin' 'em up and a-heapin' 'em up and a-heapin' 'em up. Peradventure he maketh his will, leavin' all he hath to you an' me. And that there zeccond cousin sitteth at a distance, grizzlin' in his beard an' flickerin' with his tongue; and in the end thereof he taketh the case up, even to Bodmin; and the jedge saith consarnin' it, 'Why, the chap must ha' been a born fool, to go a-heapin' it up like this for a passel o' strangers! 'Tis a plain case o' compliment-us (*non compos mentis*): better give the lot to the zeccond cousin.' Verdick accordin'."

VI.

The next morning (Sunday) I rowed ashore early, and breakfasted at the hotel. A family from Birmingham sat round the next table, and discussed plans for Sunday observance. They learnt from the waiter that the town contained a parish church and three Nonconformist chapels. At length the *bonus paterfamilias* came to a resolution. "Well," he said, "as a rule I'm all for the Bible Christians; but since we *have* found our way to these parts I don't think we ought to miss our chance of attending the parish church and hearing the service read in the fine old Cornish language."

Had the reformers of our national religion, in Edward VI.'s time, provided for Cornwall a liturgy in "the fine old Cornish language," the history of our Duchy during the next two hundred years might have been a far happier one. It was all very well for the rest of England to have their prayers put into English; but the majority of Cornishmen did not understand English. With the Latin mass they were fairly familiar; but the English liturgy, imposed in 1549, thrust them rudely back upon the unintelligible. Arundell's rebellion in the summer of that year, when 10,000 Cornishmen crossed the Tamar and besieged Exeter, was but a wild protest against this real injustice. It was stamped out in much blood, and the Duchy sank into a religious chaos of which no sufficient description has ever yet been given. The darkness lasted till Wesley came. "It would be impossible," writes Mr. Matthews in his *History of St. Ives*, "to overrate the results of Wesley's preaching in Cornwall, the inhabitants of which, from a careless people whose only religion was a curious mixture of the remains of Catholicism with the yet more ancient vestiges of Celtic paganism, became a sober, Bible-reading folk. . . . The rise of Methodism was the signal for the final disappearance of the old Celtic beliefs in witchcraft, fairies, and other relics of Druidism, and will be admitted, by both the friends and foes of Puritanism, to have been the crowning of the movement commenced by the Reformers in the sixteenth century. To Methodism, undoubtedly, we owe it that, along with the poetic and lovable forms of old-world misbeliefs and practices, Cornwall has thrown off those formerly universal evils —smuggling, wrecking, and drunkenness."

If you follow up the sound of six silver-tongued bells that floats down the waters of Pont Pyll, you will come in a hollow of the hills upon a small, dilapidated church still bearing the stigmata of that dark interval, and haunted by memories of it. In its furniture, faded splendour jostles with almost inconceivable shabbiness. The eastern window is just a sashful of square panes fitted into the perpendicular mouldings. Close by, in the south aisle, is the seat—wonderfully carved and emblazoned—that once belonged to Charles, Lord Mohun—the "bloody Mohun" of Thackeray's *Esmond*. Probably he used it but little; and when he perished, in 1712, in his duel with the Duke of Hamilton, his widow sold the right to sit here, together with some fine properties in the neighbourhood, to Governor Pitt, of Madras, who owned the big Pitt diamond. The pew still preserves (to use Carlyle's phrase) a "blackguard quality air" in fine contrast with its neighbours. The rule seems to

have been that, when a parishioner wanted a seat, he took any wood he chose, cut and joined it into any shape he pleased, daubed it with the paint that took his fancy, and stuck it down in the spot he found most convenient. Behind these variegated hutches come rows of humbler benches with seats as wide as a tight-rope, and carved ends worth a day's journey only to see. A rough gallery, painted with blue of the shade known as "ultra-marine," climbs from the floor to the middle of the western window, and under it is a sort of henhouse, unpaved, where the sexton keeps his tools, and where the parish stocks lie rotting. The whole edifice is canted down-hill at an alarming angle, and I am happy to say that restoration has been pronounced impossible. Until it subsides in ruins, nothing will mar this compendium of the past of the Established Church in Cornwall.

MOHUN'S CHURCH.

It was at Hall, the Mohuns' house hard by—a farm now occupies its site, and its pretty chapel serves for a cow-byre—that Charles I. received the surrender of Lord Essex's army, here in Troy—almost the last royalist success of the war. The old wooden board, with the king's letter of thanks to the County of Cornwall for its unselfish devotion, still hangs in Troy church. "Home of lost causes, and forsaken beliefs and unpopular names, and impossible loyalties!" We may almost apply Matthew Arnold's immortal invocation of Oxford to the Cornwall of those two inarticulate centuries. Mr. Stevenson, in the story of his famous but doleful journey "across the plains" in 1879, tells us: "There were no emigrants direct from Europe—save one German family and a knot of Cornish miners, who kept grimly by themselves, one reading the New Testament all day long through steel spectacles, the rest discussing privately the secrets of their old-world mysterious race. Lady Hester Stanhope believed she could make something great of the Cornish; for my part, I can make nothing of them at all. A division of races, older and more original than that of Babel, keeps this close esoteric family apart from neighbouring Englishmen. Not even a Red Indian seems more foreign in my eyes." Well, we have our peculiarities. It remains to be seen how long they will survive the incursion of the tourist.