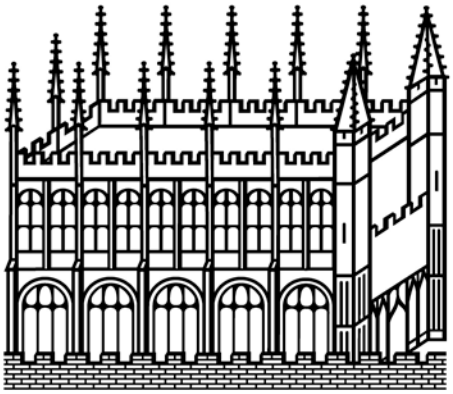
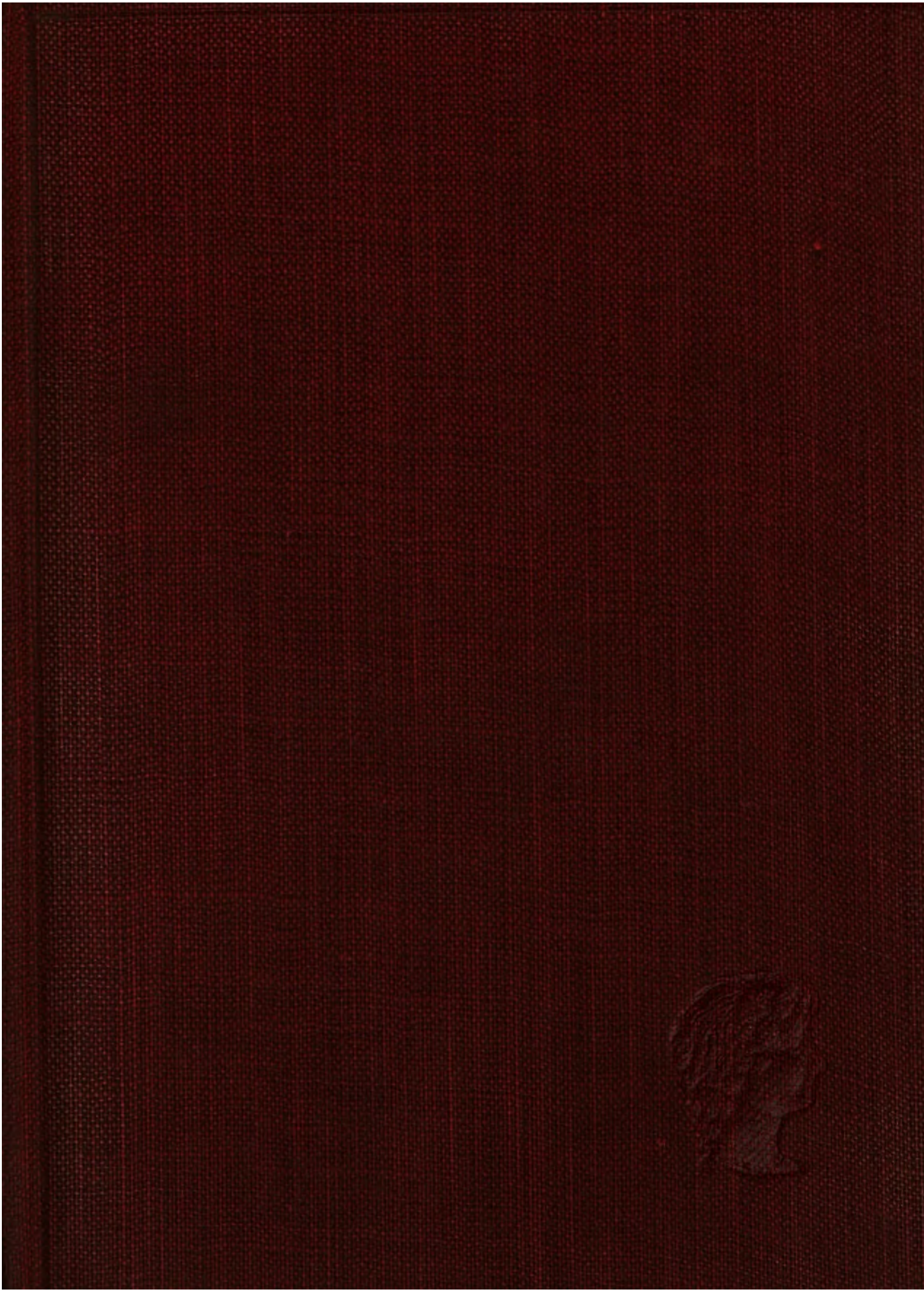
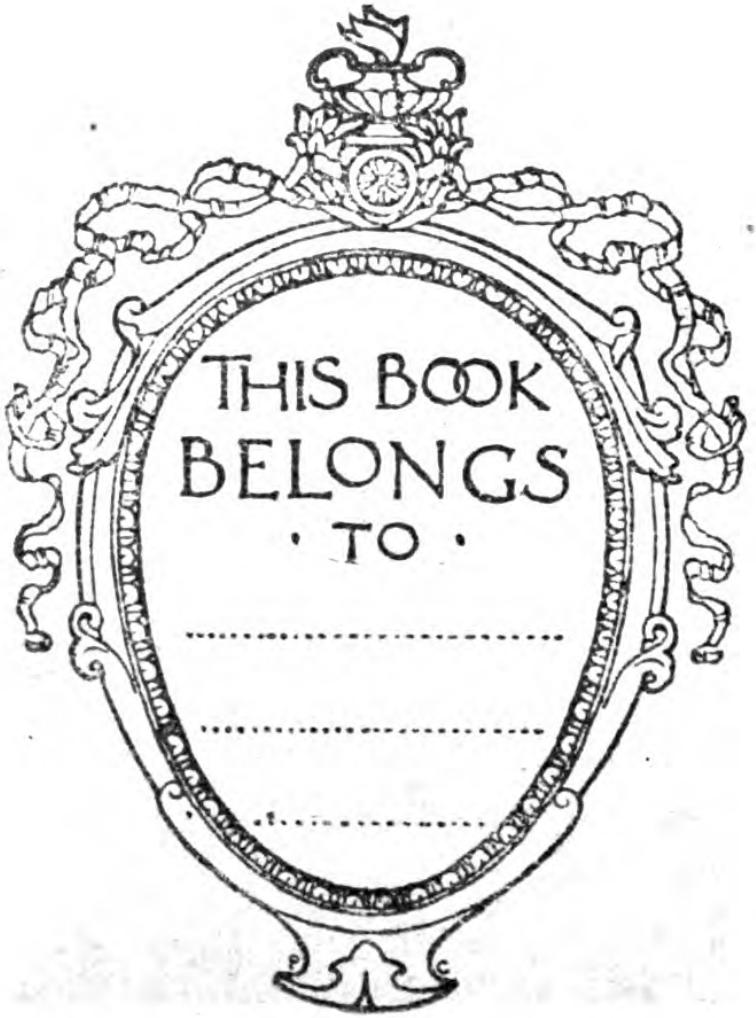


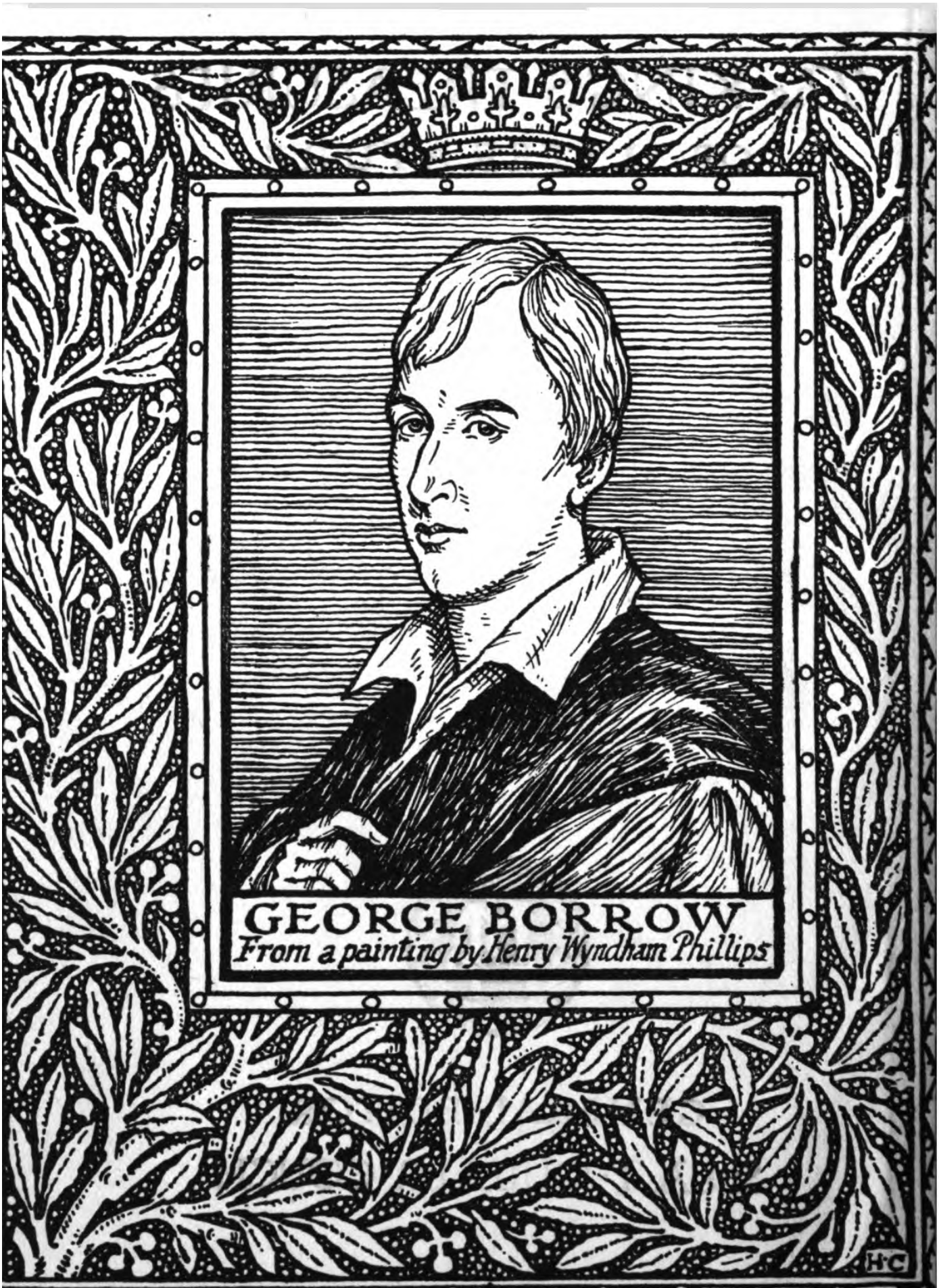





A
GOOD BOOK
IS THE
PRECIOUS
LIFE-BLOOD
OF A
MASTER
SPIRIT
Milton

The KINGS TREASURIES
OF LITERATURE

GENERAL EDITOR
SIR A·T· QUILLER COUCH



GEORGE BORROW
From a painting by Henry Wyndham Phillips

H·C

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READINGS FROM GEORGE BORROW

SELECTED & EDITED BY S·A·RICHARDS M·A

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GLASGOW

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EDITOR'S NOTE.—The life of the author is placed at the head of this volume because it is necessary to know the man before reading his work. In other volumes of this series biography and commentary are placed at the end.

LIFE OF GEORGE BORROW

GEORGE BORROW was born at Dumpling Green near East Dereham, in Norfolk, on 5th July, 1803. In his book *Lavengro,* which is largely an autobiography, he has left us a picturesque description of " pretty Dereham " and a touching eulogy of the poet Cowper, who died in that town. His father, Thomas Borrow, had enlisted in 1783 in the Coldstream Guards, and in 1792 he was transferred to the West Norfolk Militia. His duties as a sergeant took him to East Dereham, where he was engaged in recruiting and drilling, and it was here that he met the future mother of the famous George. She was, it seems, engaged in a minor part in a travelling theatrical company, and it is not surprising that the son should have inherited a love for a wandering life when we consider that both his parents spent many years in travelling from town to town. The West Norfolk Militia was stationed in some eight or nine different places during the ten years between Thomas Borrow's marriage and his second son's birth. The first child, John Thomas Borrow, was born in 1801. His younger brother, George Henry, was born two years later in the house of his maternal grandfather at Dumpling Green, where his mother was staying while her husband was busy recruiting in Norfolk. After moving from place to place, the family found itself

back again in East Dereham in 1809. From the son's two books, *Lavengro* and *Wild Wales*, we can follow the father's wanderings until he finally retired to Norwich on a pension. Among his memories of childhood are his visit to Hythe church with its wonderful collection of skulls, and the gift of a copy of *Robinson Crusoe* which he eagerly devoured and which inspired him with that admiration for Defoe which he retained throughout his life. In 1810 the family were at Norman Cross in Huntingdonshire, where Captain Borrow (as he then was) had to assist in guarding the French prisoners of war. George tells us that within the prison "six thousand French and other foreigners, followers of the Grand Corsican, were now immured."

What a strange appearance had those mighty casernes, with their blank blind walls, without windows or grating, and their slanting roofs, out of which, through orifices where the tiles had been removed, would be protruded dozens of grim heads, feasting their prison-sick eyes on the wide expanse of country unfolded from that airy height. Ah! there was much misery in those casernes; and from those roofs, doubtless, many a wistful look was turned in the direction of lovely France. Much had the poor inmates to endure, and much to complain of, to the disgrace of England be it said—of England, in general so kind and bountiful. Rations of carrion meat, and bread from which I have seen the very hounds occasionally turn away, were unworthy entertainment even for the most ruffian enemy, when helpless and a captive; and such, alas! was the fare in those casernes.

The veracity of this account of the treatment

meted out to the French prisoners has been called in question. Borrow, like his favourite author Defoe, was a highly imaginative writer, and his descriptions are by no means to be relied on for their accuracy. Even in that part of his work which is professedly autobiographical, he does not hesitate to colour incidents in order to render them more striking or to interfere with the actual chronology of events. His books are to be read as literature but not as history.

It was at Norman Cross that an old man made George Borrow a present of a viper with its fangs drawn. It was the possession of this viper that enabled him, then a child of eight, according to his own account, to impress the gipsies, and especially the boy Ambrose Smith who figures in *Lavengro* as Jasper Petulengro.

In 1813 the Borrow family were living in Edinburgh, where George attended the High School, but, on Napoleon's escape from Elba, the West Norfolk Militia was sent to Ireland, and in 1815 we find George with his parents at Clonmel. Here he made friends with a wild Irish lad, Murtagh, who, in return for a pack of cards, taught him some Irish. It was this that first aroused that interest in languages which led him to devote so much of his life to the study of different tongues. Although he never acquired an accurate knowledge of them or attained to any degree of scholarship, the number of different languages which he studied, and the degree of

facility which he reached in their use, constitute a remarkable achievement.

In 1816 Borrow, now aged thirteen, was back in Norwich again. The French master at the Grammar School which he attended was an exiled priest. In addition to French, he taught Borrow a little Spanish and Italian, and, according to the latter, prophesied great things of his pupil: "Vous serez un jour un grand philologue, mon cher." Borrow's philology, however, was more ingenious than scientific.

It was here that he induced three of his schoolfellows to run away with him in search of adventure. Their immediate object was to turn pirates, but, unfortunately for their ambitions, they had proceeded only eleven miles, as far as Acle, when they were caught, brought back and birched. "He was an odd, wild boy," says one of Borrow's contemporaries at the school, "always wanting to turn Robinson Crusoe or Buccaneer."

In 1819 he was articled to a firm of solicitors "for a term of five years." The poor lawyer's clerk cared little for his work; what interested him principally were gipsies, prize-fighters and languages. In *Lavengro* he has given us most striking descriptions of the wandering people, "children of the open air," whose encampments he visited and with whom he became quite friendly. His knowledge of the gipsy language and of gipsy lore was far from accurate, but no one ever penetrated more thoroughly into the gipsy spirit or better conveyed to his readers the

charm of a free, wandering, open-air life, the sweet companionship of Nature, the joy and consolation of "the wind on the heath."

In July, 1820, there was a wonderful gathering of prize-fighters at North Walsham, near Norwich, where more than 25,000 men, it is estimated, came together to see Edward Painter of Norwich fight Tom Oliver of London for a purse of a hundred guineas. In a memorable passage in *Lavengro*, a passage on which Mr. Augustine Birrell remarks, "It is as good as Homer," Borrow, doubtless having this gathering in mind, sings the praises of "the bruisers of England." He was never tired of relating how his father stood up to and beat Big Ben Brain of Bristol in Hyde Park. "Honour to Brain, who for four months after the event which I have now narrated was champion of England, having conquered the heroic Johnson. Honour to Brain, who, at the end of other four months, worn out by the dreadful blows which he had received in his manly combats, expired in the arms of my father, who read the Bible to him in his latter moments—Big Ben Brain." "Let no one sneer," he says, "at the bruisers of England—what were the gladiators of Rome, or the bull-fighters of Spain, in its palmiest days, compared to England's bruisers?" It is typical of the strange character of Borrow that, as he remarked on one occasion in later life, his favourite books were the Bible and the Newgate Calendar. During his stay in London he prepared an edition of the latter,

from the careful study of which he was wont to say that he first learnt to write genuine English. He may be said to have specialised on the Bible and Prize-Fighting, and it was somewhat in the spirit of a pugilist that he distributed bibles in Spain.

At this time Borrow was studying Welsh and Danish, all his pocket-money being spent in purchasing foreign dictionaries and grammars. From a memorandum in his step-daughter's handwriting we learn that "he formed an acquaintance with an old woman who kept a bookstall in the market-place of Norwich, whose son went voyages to Holland with cattle, and brought home Dutch books, which were eagerly bought by little George. One day the old woman was crying, and told him that her son was in prison. 'For doing what?' asked the child. 'For taking a silk handkerchief out of a gentleman's pocket.' 'Then,' said the boy, 'your son stole the pocket-handkerchief?' 'No dear, no, my son did not steal—he only glyfaked.'"

This is evidently the episode which Borrow related as taking place on London Bridge. The old woman in this case supported her view of pocket-picking by reference to Defoe's *Moll Flanders*, and, as we have seen, Borrow not only admired the author of *Robinson Crusoe*, but imitated him in his imaginative treatment of facts.

Meanwhile he was also receiving lessons in German from a certain William Taylor, a man of considerable independence of thought, who exerted a great

influence upon him. On the death of his father in 1824 Borrow set out for London, bent on earning his living with his pen, and furnished with letters of introduction from Taylor and certain specimens of his own work in the form of translations of Welsh and Danish poetry. He obtained some hack work for a magazine and was also entrusted with the task of translating certain essays into German. His knowledge of this language, however, was (like his knowledge of most languages) imperfect and chiefly colloquial, with the result that the translation proved unsatisfactory. His lack of success led to a recurrence of those fits of depression accompanied by suicidal desires from which he had already suffered and which he was wont to speak of as "the horrors." The timely sale of a manuscript to a publisher just warded off starvation and Borrow, yielding to the wander-lure which ever beset him, took to the road. Then ensued those incidents and adventures which are so vividly described in *Lavengro*.

For the next eight years Borrow led a life of vagabondage, tasting every kind of experience, including that of imprisonment as a tramp. From time to time during this life of roving adventure he returned home to visit his mother at Norwich. He lived from hand to mouth and was generally on the brink of starvation, but continued, nevertheless, to pursue his study of foreign languages.

In 1833 he received, through recommendation, an offer of employment abroad by the British and

Foreign Bible Society. In 1824, when under the influence of Taylor, an agnostic, he had declared his intention to live in London, "write plays, poetry, etc., abuse religion, and get myself prosecuted," but his experiences in the intervening years had apparently modified his opinions. Moreover, he felt the need of earning a respectable living while the prospect offered to him appealed to his love of adventure. Some of his letters to the secretary of the Bible Society, however, were considered by that gentleman to be expressed in terms insufficiently pious and evangelical, but Borrow succeeded in convincing his employers of his fitness for the task, set to work learning Manchu, and arrived in St. Petersburgh in August, 1833. His work then consisted in superintending the printing of the New Testament in the Manchu language, but his proposal to go to China was not agreed to by the society. Instead of this, he was sent to Spain to distribute copies of the Bible in Spanish, and reached Lisbon in November, 1835. Within the next five years he paid three visits to the Peninsula, visits which gave us his most successful book, *The Bible in Spain*.

In his new surroundings Borrow could still see traces of the Peninsular War; bridges that had been destroyed had not yet been replaced, a fact which often rendered travelling difficult. Portugal had just experienced a revolution: for eight years a struggle had been going on between the supporters of the infant queen Maria II. and her uncle Dom

Miguel, and the former had only lately been established on the throne. Spain was in the throes of a six years' war. On the one side was another infant queen, Isabel II., with her mother Doña Christina acting as regent; on the other, again a rival uncle, Don Carlos, supported by the absolutist and clerical parties.

In spite of much not unnatural opposition from the clergy, Borrow opened a shop for the sale of testaments, in the principal street of Madrid. He continued his study of gipsies and published an edition of the Gospel of St. Luke in the gipsy language. On his journeys through the wilder parts of the country, accompanied by his servant Antonio, he met with many interesting adventures which are recorded in his *Bible in Spain*. He was imprisoned at Madrid at the instigation of the clerical party, but released through the intervention of the British representative.

His future wife, Mrs. Clarke, a widow living at Oulton, with whom Borrow had corresponded regularly, now came out to Spain with her daughter Henrietta, and she and Borrow were formally betrothed. As Protestant marriages were not permitted in Spain, they returned to England and were married there in 1840.

Borrow now took up his abode, with his wife and step-daughter, at Oulton Broad. In the summer-house by the water side he sat and wrote. It was here that he prepared for publication the *Gipsies in Spain*, written mostly in Seville. *The Bible in*

Spain was published in December, 1842, and by its popularity made its author famous for a time.

In 1844 Borrow set out alone on a distant holiday, visiting Paris, Vienna, Buda-Pesth, Constantinople, Venice and Rome. His wife once playfully remarked that he was the sort of man who would go out for a walk one afternoon and not return home for three months. Though this was intended to be an exaggeration, Borrow's restless spirit and love of wandering seem to have compelled him, from time to time, to set out on his travels.

Lavengro was written mostly at Oulton in 1843. At the outset Borrow certainly intended it to be regarded as an autobiography. " A kind of biography in the *Robinson Crusoe* style," he called it, later, in a letter to a friend. When critics hinted that it was difficult to distinguish fact from fiction in this book, Borrow indignantly repudiated any intention to regard it as an autobiography. The publishers had great difficulty in getting him to complete the work, and it was not till 1850 that it was published. " There are passages in the book," said Murray the publisher, " equal to Defoe." It did not sell, however, and its author was soured by the disappointment. The reading public of that day had not yet learned to appreciate books which dealt with Nature and open-air life. The joys of " the open road " and " the wind on the heath " made little appeal to early Victorian readers.

From 1853 to 1860 the Borrow family lived at

Yarmouth, Mrs. Borrow's health having rendered a change desirable. It was here that Borrow performed what was described in the *Bury Post* as "an heroic act," wading out in a rough sea to the help of some men whose boat had capsized. Borrow himself has described this incident in his usual graphic manner, but there was a decided difference of opinion at the time as to the amount of heroism displayed. In any case, the fact that the account was copied by the *Plymouth Mail* brought Borrow into touch with some Cornish relatives of his and led to his visiting them at Liskeard in December, 1853. He walked to Land's End, Tintagel and Pentire, pursuing investigations into the Cornish language and filling note-books with his impressions. He returned early in 1854 and in the following July set off for Wales, accompanied by his wife and step-daughter. *Wild Wales*, the result of this tour, was not published, however, till 1862.

In 1855 Borrow visited the Isle of Man where, needless to say, he investigated the old Irish language known as Manx. His study of the language was by no means accurate, but it led the way to a revived interest in the subject. At Kirk Braddan he was greatly interested by a large stone, bearing a runic inscription, which was hidden away in the church tower. He translated the inscription and left money to pay for the removal of the stone to a more suitable position. It may now be seen, together with others, inside the church.

Borrow returned to Oulton and worked away in

his summer-house, where he completed the *Gipsies in Spain*, arranged his notes for the *Bible in Spain*, and wrote *Lavengro*, its sequel *Romany Rye*, and *Wild Wales*. He had brought with him from the East an Arabian horse, Sidi Habismilk, which followed him about, and a Jewish servant named Ben Attar. He was a great swimmer and diver and enjoyed bathing in the Broad even in the coldest of weather. On one occasion, having dived in and swum under water for a considerable distance, he remarked, "There, if that had been written in one of my books they would have said it was a lie, wouldn't they?" He was fond of going for long walks accompanied by his dogs and his cat. The cat, however, would invariably turn back at the end of a mile. On these occasions he would chat with everyone he met, taking pleasure in noting peculiarities of dialect and expression. He was still subject to occasional fits of depression, and is described by his contemporaries as irritable and self-centred. The failure of *Lavengro* weighed upon his spirits. His interest in gipsies remained with him to the end. They were allowed to encamp in his grounds.

Romany Rye was published in 1857. The incidents related in it are supposed to have occurred during the months of July and August, 1825, *Lavengro* having dealt with the period May to July of the same year. "Mumpers' Dingle," which figures so largely in these books, was probably situated near Willenhall in Shropshire.

Wild Wales was published in 1862 from a daily journal which, his wife tells us, he kept and from which, she remarked in a letter, "he will be able to make an amusing book in a month." It was eight years, however, before it was published. This delay was probably due to the failure of *Romany Rye* which still further depressed and disappointed Borrow. *Wild Wales* met with no better success. After ascending Snowdon in company with Henrietta, Mrs. Borrow remaining behind, Borrow tramped on alone while his wife and daughter returned home. When nearing the end of his tour he informs his wife in a letter that he has worn his boots out and will have to purchase a new pair.

In 1843 Borrow came to London at his publisher's request to sit for his portrait. From 1860 till 1874 he lived there, having taken a house in Brompton—22, Hereford Street—which now bears a commemorative tablet. Here his wife died in 1869. Borrow stayed on in London for five years after his wife's death, a broken man, and then returned to Oulton where he was joined by his step-daughter and her husband. Here he continued to live for the remaining seven years of his life, an obscure recluse. The success which attended the publication of the *Bible in Spain* was not repeated. No contemporary of his uttered a word of praise for *Lavengro*, now his most famous book. His works were all but forgotten when, in 1881, he died, in his seventy-eighth year, and was buried by the side of his wife in Brompton Cemetery.

Borrow was a tall, athletic man of distinguished appearance, with a somewhat overbearing manner. Indeed, in his later years, contemporary accounts reveal him as in many respects resembling the famous Doctor Johnson in his conversation. He took many of his accomplishments too seriously: his knowledge of languages, though marvellously wide, was inaccurate; his philological researches were valueless. It is not for these that his memory will live, nor for any contribution to the sum of human knowledge made by his books; we do not turn to his writings for facts, but in order to be interested and amused. His books have been called good bed-side books. Whenever we take one up, and wherever we dip into it, we are interested. We are transported into the open air in company with this remarkable man; we catch his love of wandering, of adventure, his keen interest in all that he sees and hears, the joy that life and activity bring him. His strong personality shines out from every page he wrote and imbues it with an individuality, an imaginative power, which stamp it with their seal as literature. "The author of *Lavengro, The Romany Rye, The Bible in Spain,* and *Wild Wales,*" says Mr. Birrell, "is one of those kings of literature who never need to number their tribe. His personality will always secure him an attendant company, who, when he pipes, must dance."

I.—EARLY CHILDHOOD

The following extract is taken from *Lavengro*, which was published in 1851 under the title of "Lavengro: the Scholar, the Gipsy, the Priest." It is largely autobiographical, though here, as in his other books, Borrow does not hesitate to embellish or alter facts and to draw freely on his imagination. He was an admirer of Defoe and, in this respect, he was but following in the footsteps of his master. "Hail to thee, spirit of De Foe! What does not my poor self owe to thee?"

ON an evening of July, in the year 18—, at East D——, a beautiful little town in a certain district of East Anglia, I first saw the light.

My father was a Cornish man, the youngest, as I have heard him say, of seven brothers. He sprang from a family of gentlemen, or, as some people would call them, gentillâtres, for they were not very wealthy; they had a coat of arms, however, and lived on their own property at a place called Tre-

East D——. East Dereham, in Norfolk. Borrow was in reality born at Dumpling Green, at some distance from the town. It is, perhaps, his anxiety to assure the reader that he is "not altogether of low and plebeian origin" which leads him to suppress this detail.

dinnock, which being interpreted means *the house on the hill*, which house and the neighbouring acres had been from time immemorial in their possession. I mention these particulars that the reader may see at once that I am not altogether of low and plebeian origin; the present age is highly aristocratic, and I am convinced that the public will read my pages with more zest from being told that I am a gentillâtre by birth with Cornish blood in my veins, of a family who lived on their own property at a place bearing a Celtic name signifying the house on the hill, or more strictly the house on the *hillock*.

My mother was descended from a family of French Protestants, natives of Caen, who were obliged to leave their native country when old Louis, at the instigation of the Pope, thought fit to revoke the Edict of Nantes: their name was Petrement, and I have reason for believing that they were people of some consideration; that they were noble hearts and good Christians they gave sufficient proof in scorning to bow the knee to the tyranny of Rome. So they left beautiful Normandy for their faith's sake, and with a few louis d'or in their purse, a Bible in the vulgar tongue, and a couple of old swords, which, if report be true, had done service in the Huguenot wars, they crossed the sea to the isle

Edict of Nantes. The Edict of Nantes, 1598, granted toleration to the Huguenots or French Protestants. It was revoked in 1685 by Louis XIV., and French Protestant exiles poured into England, enriching the country by their industrial skill.

of civil peace and religious liberty, and established themselves in East Anglia.

And many other Huguenot families bent their steps thither, and devoted themselves to agriculture or the mechanical arts; and in the venerable old city, the capital of the province, in the northern shadow of the Castle of De Burgh, the exiles built for themselves a church where they praised God in the French tongue, and to which, at particular seasons of the year, they were in the habit of flocking from country and from town to sing—

"Thou hast provided for us a goodly earth; Thou waterest her furrows, Thou sendest rain into the little valleys thereof, Thou makest it soft with the drops of rain, and blessest the increase of it."

I have been told that in her younger days my mother was strikingly handsome; this I can easily believe: I never knew her in her youth, for though she was very young when she married my father (who was her senior by many years), she had attained the middle age before I was born, no children having been vouchsafed to my parents in the early stages of their union. Yet even at the present day, now that years threescore and ten have passed over her head, attended with sorrow and troubles manifold, poorly chequered with scanty joys, can I look on that countenance and doubt that at one time beauty decked it as with a glorious garment? Hail to thee, my parent! as thou sittest there, in thy widow's weeds, in the dusky parlour in the house overgrown

with the lustrous ivy of the sister isle, the solitary house at the end of the retired court shaded by lofty poplars. Hail to thee, dame of the oval face, olive complexion, and Grecian forehead; by thy table seated with the mighty volume of the good Bishop Hopkins spread out before thee; there is peace in thy countenance, my mother; it is not worldly peace, however, not the deceitful peace which lulls to bewitching slumbers, and from which, let us pray, humbly pray, that every sinner may be roused in time to implore mercy not in vain! Thine is the peace of the righteous, my mother, of those to whom no sin can be imputed, the score of whose misdeeds has been long since washed away by the blood of atonement, which imputeth righteousness to those who trust in it. It was not always thus, my mother; a time was, when the cares, pomps, and vanities of this world agitated thee too much; but that time is gone by, another and a better has succeeded; there is peace now on thy countenance, the true peace; peace around thee, too, in thy solitary dwelling, sounds of peace, the cheerful hum of the kettle and the purring of the immense Angola, which stares up at thee from its settle with its almost human eyes.

No more earthly cares and affections now, my mother! Yes, one. Why dost thou suddenly raise

It was not always . . . agitated thee too much. Borrow's mother, before her marriage, had been a member of a theatrical touring company.

thy dark and still brilliant eye from the volume with a somewhat startled glance? What noise is that in the distant street? Merely the noise of a hoof; a sound common enough; it draws nearer, nearer, and now it stops before thy gate. Singular! And now there is a pause, a long pause. Ha! thou hearest something—a footstep; a swift but heavy footstep! thou risest, thou tremblest, there is a hand on the pin of the outer door, there is some one in the vestibule, and now the door of thy apartment opens, there is a reflection on the mirror behind thee, a travelling hat, a grey head and sunburnt face. My dearest Son! My darling Mother!

Yes, mother, thou didst recognise in the distant street the hoof-tramp of the wanderer's horse.

I was not the only child of my parents; I had a brother some three years older than myself. He was a beautiful child; one of those occasionally seen in England, and in England alone; a rosy angelic face, blue eyes, and light chestnut hair; it was not exactly an Anglo-Saxon countenance, in which, by the by, there is generally a cast of loutishness and stupidity; it partook, to a certain extent, of the Celtic character, particularly in the fire and vivacity which illumined it; his face was the mirror of his mind; perhaps no disposition more amiable was ever found amongst the children of Adam, united, however, with no inconsiderable portion of high and dauntless spirit. So great was his beauty in infancy that people, especially those of the poorer classes, would follow

the nurse who carried him about in order to look at and bless his lovely face. At the age of three months an attempt was made to snatch him from his mother's arms in the streets of London, at the moment she was about to enter a coach; indeed, his appearance seemed to operate so powerfully upon every person who beheld him that my parents were under continual apprehension of losing him; his beauty, however, was perhaps surpassed by the quickness of his parts. He mastered his letters in a few hours, and in a day or two could decipher the names of people on the doors of houses and over the shop-windows.

As he grew up his personal appearance became less prepossessing, his quickness and cleverness, however, rather increased; and I may say of him, that with respect to everything which he took in hand he did it better and more speedily than any other person. Perhaps it will be asked here, what became of him? Alas! alas! his was an early and a foreign grave. The race is not always for the swift, nor the battle for the strong.

And now, doubtless, after the above portrait of my brother, painted in the very best style of Rubens, the reader will conceive himself justified in expecting a full-length one of myself, as a child, for as to my

Rubens. The celebrated Flemish painter (1577–1640). His famous picture, the *Descent from the Cross*, hangs in Antwerp Cathedral. Charles I. commissioned him to decorate the ceiling of the Banqueting Hall at Whitehall, now the United Services Museum, where his work may still be viewed.

present appearance, I suppose he will be tolerably content with that flitting glimpse in the mirror. But he must excuse me; I have no intention of drawing a portrait of myself in childhood; indeed it would be difficult, for at that time I never looked into mirrors. No attempts, however, were ever made to steal me in my infancy, and I never heard that my parents entertained the slightest apprehension of losing me by the hands of kidnappers, though I remember perfectly well that people were in the habit of standing still to look at me, ay, more than at my brother; from which premises the reader may form any conclusion with respect to my appearance which seemeth good unto him and reasonable. Should he, being a good-natured person, and always inclined to adopt the charitable side in any doubtful point, be willing to suppose that I, too, was eminently endowed by nature with personal graces, I tell him frankly that I have no objection whatever to his entertaining that idea; moreover, that I heartily thank him, and shall at all times be disposed, under similar circumstances, to exercise the same species of charity towards himself.

With respect to my mind and its qualities I shall be more explicit; for were I to maintain much reserve on this point, many things which appear in these memoirs would be highly mysterious to the reader, indeed incomprehensible. Perhaps no two individuals were ever more unlike in mind and disposition than my brother and myself: as light

is opposed to darkness, so was that happy, brilliant, cheerful child to the sad and melancholy being who sprang from the same stock as himself, and was nurtured by the same milk.

Once, when travelling in an Alpine country, I arrived at a considerable elevation; I saw in the distance, far below, a beautiful stream hastening to the ocean, its rapid waters here sparkling in the sunshine, and there tumbling merrily in cascades. On its banks were vineyards and cheerful villages; close to where I stood, in a granite basin, with steep and precipitous sides, slumbered a deep, dark lagoon, shaded by black pines, cypresses, and yews. It was a wild, savage spot, strange and singular; ravens hovered above the pines, filling the air with their uncouth notes, pies chattered, and I heard the cry of an eagle from a neighbouring peak; there lay the lake, the dark, solitary, and almost inaccessible lake; gloomy shadows were upon it, which, strangely modified as gusts of wind agitated the surface, occasionally assumed the shape of monsters. So I stood on the Alpine elevation, and looked now on the gay distant river, and now at the dark granite-encircled lake close beside me in the lone solitude, and I thought of my brother and myself. I am no moraliser; but the gay and rapid river and the dark and silent lake were, of a verity, no bad emblems of us two.

So far from being quick and clever like my brother, and able to rival the literary feat which I have

recorded of him, many years elapsed before I was able to understand the nature of letters, or to connect them. A lover of nooks and retired corners, I was a child in the habit of fleeing from society, and of sitting for hours together with my head on my breast. What I was thinking about it would be difficult to say at this distance of time; I remember perfectly well, however, being ever conscious of a peculiar heaviness within me, and at times of a strange sensation of fear, which occasionally amounted to horror, and for which I could assign no real cause whatever.

By nature slow of speech, I took no pleasure in conversation, nor in hearing the voices of my fellow-creatures. When people addressed me I not unfrequently, especially if they were strangers, turned away my head from them, and if they persisted in their notice burst into tears, which singularity of behaviour by no means tended to dispose people in my favour. I was as much disliked as my brother was deservedly beloved and admired. My parents, it is true, were always kind to me; and my brother, who was good nature itself, was continually lavishing upon me every mark of affection.

There was, however, one individual who, in the days of my childhood, was disposed to form a favourable opinion of me. One day a Jew—I have quite

No real cause. Borrow frequently mentions these strange attacks to which he was subject and which he speaks of as " the horrors."

forgotten the circumstance, but I was long subsequently informed of it—one day a travelling Jew knocked at the door of a farmhouse in which we had taken apartments; I was near at hand, sitting in the bright sunshine, drawing strange lines on the dust with my fingers; an ape and dog were my companions; the Jew looked at me and asked me some questions, to which, though I was quite able to speak, I returned no answer. On the door being opened, the Jew, after a few words, probably relating to pedlary, demanded who the child was, sitting in the sun; the maid replied that I was her mistress's youngest son, a child weak *here*, pointing to her forehead. The Jew looked at me again, and then said, "'Pon my conscience, my dear, I believe that you must be troubled there yourself to tell me any such thing. It is not my habit to speak to children, inasmuch as I hate them, because they often follow me and fling stones after me; but I no sooner looked at that child than I was forced to speak to it—his not answering me shows his sense, for it has never been the custom of the wise to fling away their words in indifferent talk and conversation; the child is a sweet child, and has all the look of one of our people's children. Fool, indeed! did I not see his eyes sparkle just now when the monkey seized the dog by the ear? they shone like my own diamonds—does your good lady want any, real and fine? Were it not for what you tell me, I should say it was a prophet's child. Fool, indeed! he can write already, or I'll

forfeit the box which I carry on my back, and for which I should be loth to take two hundred pounds!" He then leaned forward to inspect the lines which I had traced. All of a sudden he started back, and grew white as a sheet; then, taking off his hat, he made some strange gestures to me, cringing, chattering, and showing his teeth, and shortly departed, muttering something about "holy letters," and talking to himself in a strange tongue. The words of the Jew were in due course of time reported to my mother, who treasured them in her heart, and from that moment began to entertain brighter hopes of her youngest-born than she had ever before ventured to foster.

I have been a wanderer the greater part of my life; indeed I remember only two periods, and these by no means lengthy, when I was, strictly speaking, stationary. I was a soldier's son, and as the means of my father were by no means sufficient to support two establishments, his family invariably attended him wherever he went, so that from my infancy I was accustomed to travelling and wandering, and looked upon a monthly change of scene and residence as a matter of course. Sometimes we lived in barracks, sometimes in lodgings, but generally in

A soldier's son. George Borrow's father had enlisted in the Coldstream Guards and, in 1792, was transferred to the West Norfolk Militia. He was engaged chiefly in recruiting and his duties took him from town to town. He eventually rose to the rank of captain.

the former, always eschewing the latter from motives of economy, save when the barracks were inconvenient and uncomfortable; and they must have been highly so indeed to have discouraged us from entering them; for though we were gentry (pray bear that in mind, gentle reader), gentry by birth, and incontestably so by my father's bearing the commission of good old George the Third, we were not *fine gentry*, but people who could put up with as much as any genteel Scotch family who find it convenient to live on a third floor in London, or on a sixth at Edinburgh or Glasgow. It was not a little that could discourage us: we once lived within the canvas walls of a camp, at a place called Pett, in Sussex; and I believe it was at this place that occurred the first circumstance, or adventure, call it which you will, that I can remember in connection with myself: it was a strange one, and I will relate it.

It happened that my brother and myself were playing one evening in a sandy lane, in the neighbourhood of this Pett camp; our mother was at a slight distance. All of a sudden a bright yellow and, to my infantine eye, beautiful and glorious object made its appearance at the top of the bank from between the thick quickset, and, gliding down, began to move across the lane to the other side, like a line of golden light. Uttering a cry of pleasure, I sprang forward, and seized it nearly by the middle. A strange sensation of numbing coldness seemed to

pervade my whole arm, which surprised me the more as the object to the eye appeared so warm and sunlike. I did not drop it, however, but, holding it up, looked at it intently, as its head dangled about a foot from my hand. It made no resistance; I felt not even the slightest struggle; but now my brother began to scream and shriek like one possessed. "O mother, mother!" said he, "the viper! my brother has a viper in his hand!" He then, like one frantic, made an effort to snatch the creature away from me. The viper now hissed amain, and raised its head, in which were eyes like hot coals, menacing, not myself, but my brother. I dropped my captive, for I saw my mother running towards me; and the reptile, after standing for a moment nearly erect, and still hissing furiously, made off, and disappeared. The whole scene is now before me, as vividly as if it occurred yesterday—the gorgeous viper, my poor dear frantic brother, my agitated parent, and a frightened hen clucking under the bushes: and yet I was not three years old.

It is my firm belief that certain individuals possess an inherent power, or fascination, over certain creatures, otherwise I should be unable to account for many feats which I have witnessed, and, indeed, borne a share in, connected with the taming of brutes and reptiles. I have known a savage and vicious mare, whose stall it was dangerous to approach, even when bearing provender, welcome, nevertheless,

with every appearance of pleasure, an uncouth, wiry-headed man, with a frightfully seamed face, and an iron hook supplying the place of his right arm, one whom the animal had never seen before, playfully bite his hair and cover his face with gentle and endearing kisses; and I have already stated how a viper would permit, without resentment, one child to take it up in his hand, whilst it showed its dislike to the approach of another by the fiercest hissings. Philosophy can explain many strange things, but there are some which are a far pitch above her, and this is one.

I should scarcely relate another circumstance which occurred about this time but for a singular effect which it produced upon my constitution. Up to this period I had been rather a delicate child; whereas almost immediately after the occurrence to which I allude I became both hale and vigorous, to the great astonishment of my parents, who naturally enough expected that it would produce quite a contrary effect.

It happened that my brother and myself were disporting ourselves in certain fields near the good town of Canterbury. A female servant had attended us, in order to take care that we came to no mischief: she, however, it seems, had matters of her own to attend to, and, allowing us to go where we listed, remained in one corner of a field, in earnest conversation with a red-coated dragoon. Now it chanced to be blackberry time, and the two children

wandered under the hedges, peering anxiously among them in quest of that trash so grateful to urchins of their degree. We did not find much of it however, and were soon separated in the pursuit. All at once I stood still, and could scarcely believe my eyes. I had come to a spot where, almost covering the hedge, hung clusters of what seemed fruit — deliciously-tempting fruit—something resembling grapes of various colours, green, red, and purple. Dear me, thought I, how fortunate! yet have I a right to gather it? is it mine? for the observance of the law of *meum* and *tuum* had early been impressed upon my mind, and I entertained, even at that tender age, the utmost horror for theft; so I stood staring at the variegated clusters, in doubt as to what I should do. I know not how I argued the matter in my mind; the temptation, however, was at last too strong for me, so I stretched forth my hand and ate. I remember, perfectly well, that the taste of this strange fruit was by no means so pleasant as the appearance; but the idea of eating fruit was sufficient for a child, and, after all, the flavour was much superior to that of sour apples, so I ate voraciously. How long I continued eating I scarcely know. One thing is certain, that I never left the field as I entered it, being carried home in the arms of the dragoon in strong convulsions, in which I continued for several hours. About midnight I awoke, as if from a troubled sleep, and beheld my parents bending over my couch, whilst the regimental surgeon,

with a candle in his hand, stood nigh, the light feebly reflected on the whitewashed walls of the barrack-room.

Another circumstance connected with my infancy, and I have done. I need offer no apology for relating it, as it subsequently exercised considerable influence over my pursuits. We were, if I remember right, in the vicinity of a place called Hythe, in Kent. One sweet evening, in the latter part of summer, our mother took her two little boys by the hand, for a wander about the fields. In the course of our stroll we came to the village church; an old grey-headed sexton stood in the porch, who, perceiving that we were strangers, invited us to enter. We were presently in the interior, wandering about the aisles, looking on the walls, and inspecting the monuments of the notable dead. I can scarcely state what we saw; how should I? I was a child not yet four years old, and yet I think I remember the evening sun streaming in through a stained window upon the dingy mahogany pulpit, and flinging a rich lustre upon the faded tints of an ancient banner. And now once more we were outside the building, where, against the wall, stood a low-eaved pent-house, into which we looked. It was half filled with substances of some kind, which at first looked like large gray stones. The greater part were lying in layers; some, however, were seen in confused and mouldering heaps, and two or three, which had perhaps rolled down from the rest, lay separately on the floor.

"Skulls, madam," said the sexton; "skulls of the old Danes! Long ago they came pirating into these parts: and then there chanced a mighty shipwreck, for God was angry with them, and He sunk them; and their skulls, as they came ashore, were placed here as a memorial. There were many more when I was young, but now they are fast disappearing. Some of them must have belonged to strange fellows, madam. Only see that one; why, the two young gentry can scarcely lift it!" And, indeed, my brother and myself had entered the Golgotha, and commenced handling these grim relics of mortality. One enormous skull, lying in a corner, had fixed our attention, and we had drawn it forth. Spirit of eld, what a skull was yon!

I still seem to see it, the huge grim thing; many of the others were large, strikingly so, and appeared fully to justify the old man's conclusion that their owners must have been strange fellows; but compared with this mighty mass of bone they looked small and diminutive, like those of pigmies; it must have belonged to a giant, one of those red-haired warriors of whose strength and stature such wondrous tales are told in the ancient chronicles of the north, and whose grave-hills, when ransacked, occasionally reveal secrets which fill the minds of puny moderns with astonishment and awe. Reader, have you ever

Skulls of the old Danes. These skulls are still to be seen. It is not known whether the sexton's explanation of their origin is the correct one.

pored days and nights over the pages of Snorro? Probably not, for he wrote in a language which few of the present day understand, and few would be tempted to read him tamed down by Latin dragomans. A brave old book is that of Snorro, containing the histories and adventures of old northern kings and champions, who seemed to have been quite different men, if we may judge from the feats which they performed, from those of these days. One of the best of his histories is that which describes the life of Harald Haardraade, who, after manifold adventures by land and sea, now a pirate, now a mercenary of the Greek emperor, became King of Norway, and eventually perished at the battle of Stamford Bridge, whilst engaged in a gallant onslaught upon England. Now, I have often thought that the old Kemp, whose mouldering skull in the Golgotha at Hythe my brother and myself could scarcely lift, must have resembled in one respect at least this Harald, whom Snorro describes as a great and wise ruler and a determined leader, dangerous

Snorro. Snorri Sturluson (1179–1241), Icelandic historian. In 1215 he was made supreme magistrate of Iceland. About 1222 he compiled his *Edda*, a less historical work than his *Heimskringla*. He was assassinated by order of King Haakon of Norway.

Harald Haardraade. Harold III., *Hardraade* ("Hard in Counsel"), King of Norway. He attempted unsuccessfully to subdue Denmark, and fell fighting against Harold of England at Stamford Bridge (1066).

Kemp. (Icelandic *kempa*, Anglo-Saxon *cempa*.) A warrior, champion.

in battle, of fair presence, and measuring in height just *five ells*, neither more nor less.

I never forgot the Daneman's skull; like the apparition of the viper in the sandy lane, it dwelt in the mind of the boy, affording copious food for the exercise of imagination. From that moment with the name of Dane were associated strange ideas of strength, daring, and superhuman stature; and an indefinable curiosity for all that is connected with the Danish race began to pervade me; and if, long after, when I became a student, I devoted myself with peculiar zest to Danish lore and the acquirement of the old Norse tongue and its dialects, I can only explain the matter by the early impression received at Hythe from the tale of the old sexton, beneath the pent-house, and the sight of the Danish skull.

When I was between six and seven years of age we were once more at D——, the place of my birth, whither my father had been despatched on the recruiting service. I have already said that it was a beautiful little town—at least it was at the time of which I am speaking; what it is at present I know not, for thirty years and more have elapsed since I last trod its streets. It will scarcely have improved, for how could it be better than it then was? I love to think on thee, pretty, quiet D——, thou pattern of an English country town, with thy clean but narrow streets branching out from

thy modest market-place, with thine old-fashioned houses, with here and there a roof of venerable thatch, with thy one half-aristocratic mansion, where resided thy Lady Bountiful—she, the generous and kind, who loved to visit the sick, leaning on her gold-headed cane, whilst the sleek old footman walked at a respectful distance behind. Pretty quiet D——, with thy venerable church, in which moulder the mortal remains of England's sweetest and most pious bard.

Yes, pretty D——, I could always love thee, were it but for the sake of him who sleeps beneath the marble slab in yonder quiet chancel. It was within thee that the long-oppressed bosom heaved its last sigh, and the crushed and gentle spirit escaped from a world in which it had known nought but sorrow. Sorrow! do I say? How faint a word to express the misery of that bruised reed; misery so dark that a blind worm like myself is occasionally tempted to exclaim, Better had the world never been created than that one so kind, so harmless, and so mild, should have undergone such intolerable woe! But it is over now, for as there is an end of joy, so has

Most pious bard. William Cowper (1731–1800), author of *The Task*, *Table Talk*, *John Gilpin*, etc., and of many hymns. In 1795 he went to live with his kinsman, the Rev. John Johnson, at Dereham, where he died in 1800. He was buried in Dereham Church. He suffered much from religious melancholy which at times developed into fits of madness. His chief solace was found in gardening, in the care of his pets—tame hares, etc.—and in his literary pursuits.

affliction its termination. Doubtless the All-wise did not afflict him without a cause: who knows but within that unhappy frame lurked vicious seeds which the sunbeams of joy and prosperity might have called into life and vigour? Perhaps the withering blasts of misery nipped that which otherwise might have terminated in fruit noxious and lamentable. But peace to the unhappy one, he is gone to his rest; the deathlike face is no longer occasionally seen timidly and mournfully looking for a moment through the window-pane upon thy market-place, quiet and pretty D——; the hind in thy neighbourhood no longer at evening-fall views, and starts as he views, the dark lathy figure moving beneath the hazels and alders of shadowy lanes, or by the side of murmuring trout streams; and no longer at early dawn does the sexton of the old church reverently doff his hat as, supported by some kind friend, the death-stricken creature totters along the church path to that mouldering edifice with the low roof, inclosing a spring of sanatory waters, built and devoted to some saint—if the legend over the door be true, by the daughter of an East Anglian king.

But to return to my own history. I had now attained the age of six: shall I state what intellectual progress I had been making up to this period? Alas! upon this point I have little to say calculated to afford either pleasure or edification. I had increased rapidly in size and in strength: the growth of the mind, however, had by no means

corresponded with that of the body. It is true, I had acquired my letters, and was by this time able to read imperfectly; but this was all: and even this poor triumph over absolute ignorance would never have been effected but for the unremitting attention of my parents, who, sometimes by threats, sometimes by entreaties, endeavoured to rouse the dormant energies of my nature, and to bend my wishes to the acquisition of the rudiments of knowledge; but in influencing the wish lay the difficulty. Let but the will of a human being be turned to any particular object, and it is ten to one that sooner or later he achieves it. At this time I may safely say that I harboured neither wishes nor hopes; I had as yet seen no object calculated to call them forth, and yet I took pleasure in many things which perhaps unfortunately were all within my sphere of enjoyment. I loved to look upon the heavens, and to bask in the rays of the sun, or to sit beneath hedgerows and listen to the chirping of the birds, indulging the while in musing and meditation as far as my very limited circle of ideas would permit; but, unlike my brother, who was at this time at school, and whose rapid progress in every branch of instruction astonished and delighted his preceptors, I took no pleasure in books, whose use, indeed, I could scarcely comprehend, and bade fair to be as arrant a dunce as ever brought the blush of shame into the cheeks of anxious and affectionate parents.

But the time was now at hand when the ice which

had hitherto bound the mind of the child with its benumbing power was to be thawed, and a world of sensations and ideas awakened to which it had hitherto been an entire stranger. One day a young lady, an intimate acquaintance of our family, and godmother to my brother, drove up to the house in which we dwelt; she staid some time conversing with my mother, and on rising to depart she put down on the table a small packet, exclaiming, "I have brought a little present for each of the boys: the one is a History of England, which I intend for my godson when he returns from school, the other is——" and here she said something which escaped my ear, as I sat at some distance, moping in a corner: "I intend it for the youngest yonder," pointing to myself; she then departed, and, my mother going out shortly after, I was left alone.

I remember for some time sitting motionless in my corner, with my eyes bent upon the ground; at last I lifted my head and looked upon the packet as it lay on the table. All at once a strange sensation came over me, such as I had never experienced before—a singular blending of curiosity, awe, and pleasure, the remembrance of which, even at this distance of time, produces a remarkable effect upon my nervous system. What strange things are the nerves—I mean those more secret and mysterious ones in which I have some notion that the mind or soul, call it which you will, has its habitation: how they occasionally tingle and vibrate before any

coming event closely connected with the future weal or woe of the human being. Such a feeling was now within me, certainly independent of what the eye had seen or the ear had heard. A book of some description had been brought for me, a present by no means calculated to interest me; what cared I for books? I had already many into which I never looked but from compulsion; friends, moreover, had presented me with similar things before, which I had entirely disregarded, and what was there in this particular book, whose very title I did not know, calculated to attract me more than the rest? yet something within told me that my fate was connected with the book which had been last brought; so, after looking on the packet from my corner for a considerable time, I got up and went to the table.

The packet was lying where it had been left—I took it up; had the envelope, which consisted of whitish brown paper, been secured by a string or a seal I should not have opened it, as I should have considered such an act almost in the light of a crime; the books, however, had been merely folded up; and I therefore considered that there could be no possible harm in inspecting them, more especially as I had received no injunction to the contrary. Perhaps there was something unsound in this reasoning, something sophistical; but a child is sometimes as ready as a grown-up person in finding excuses for doing that which he is inclined to do. But whether the action was right or wrong, and I am afraid it

was not altogether right, I undid the packet: it contained three books; two from their similarity seemed to be separate parts of one and the same work; they were handsomely bound, and to them I first turned my attention. I opened them successively, and endeavoured to make out their meaning; their contents, however, as far as I was able to understand them, were by no means interesting; whoever pleases may read these books for me, and keep them too, into the bargain, said I to myself.

I now took up the third book: it did not resemble the others, being longer and considerably thicker; the binding was of dingy calf-skin. I opened it, and as I did so another strange thrill of pleasure shot through my frame. The first object on which my eyes rested was a picture; it was exceedingly well executed, at least the scene which it represented made a vivid impression upon me, which would hardly have been the case had the artist not been faithful to nature. A wild scene it was—a heavy sea and rocky shore, with mountains in the background, above which the moon was peering. Not far from the shore, upon the water, was a boat with two figures in it, one of which stood at the bow, pointing with what I knew to be a gun at a dreadful shape in the water; fire was flashing from the muzzle of the gun, and the monster appeared to be transfixed. I almost thought I heard its cry. I remained motionless, gazing upon the picture, scarcely

daring to draw my breath, lest the new and wondrous world should vanish of which I had now obtained a glimpse: "Who are those people, and what could have brought them into that strange situation?" I asked myself; and now the seed of curiosity, which had so long lain dormant, began to expand, and I vowed to myself to become speedily acquainted with the whole history of the people in the boat. After looking on the picture till every mark and line in it were familiar to me, I turned over various leaves till I came to another engraving; a new source of wonder—a low sandy beach on which the furious sea was breaking in mountain-like billows; cloud and rack deformed the firmament, which wore a dull and leaden-like hue; gulls and other aquatic fowls were toppling upon the blast, or skimming over the tops of the maddening waves—"Mercy upon him! he must be drowned!" I exclaimed, as my eyes fell upon a poor wretch who appeared to be striving to reach the shore; he was upon his legs, but was evidently half smothered with the brine; high above his head curled a horrible billow, as if to engulf him for ever. "He must be drowned! he must be drowned!" I almost shrieked, and dropped the book. I soon snatched it up again, and now my eye lighted on a third picture; again a shore, but what a sweet and lovely one, and how I wished to be treading it; there were beautiful shells lying on the smooth white sand, some were empty like those I had occasionally seen on marble mantel-pieces, but

out of others peered the heads and bodies of wondrous crayfish; a wood of thick green trees skirted the beach and partly shaded it from the rays of the sun, which shone hot above, while blue waves slightly crested with foam were gently curling against it; there was a human figure upon the beach, wild and uncouth, clad in the skins of animals, with a huge cap on his head, a hatchet at his girdle, and in his hand a gun; his feet and legs were bare; he stood in an attitude of horror and surprise; his body was bent far back, and his eyes, which seemed starting out of his head, were fixed upon a mark on the sand —a large distinct mark—a human footprint!

Reader, is it necessary to name the book which now stood open in my hand, and whose very prints, feeble expounders of its wondrous lines, had produced within me emotions strange and novel? Scarcely, for it was a book which has exerted over the minds of Englishmen an influence certainly greater than any other of modern times, which has been in most people's hands, and with the contents of which even those who cannot read are to a certain extent acquainted; a book from which the most luxuriant and fertile of our modern prose writers have drunk inspiration; a book, moreover, to which, from the hardy deeds which it narrates, and the spirit of strange and romantic enterprise which it tends to awaken, England owes many of her astonishing discoveries both by sea and land, and no inconsiderable part of her naval glory.

Hail to thee, spirit of De Foe! What does not my own poor self owe to thee? England has better bards than either Greece or Rome, yet I could spare them easier far than De Foe, "unabashed De Foe," as the hunchbacked rhymer styled him.

The true chord had now been touched; a raging curiosity with respect to the contents of the volume, whose engravings had fascinated my eye, burned within me, and I never rested until I had fully satisfied it; weeks succeeded weeks, months followed months, and the wondrous volume was my only study and principal source of amusement. For hours together I would sit poring over a page till I had become acquainted with the import of every line. My progress, slow enough at first, became by degrees more rapid, till at last, under "a shoulder of mutton sail," I found myself cantering before a steady breeze over an ocean of enchantment, so well pleased with my voyage that I cared not how long it might be ere it reached its termination.

And it was in this manner that I first took to the paths of knowledge.

Lavengro.

De Foe. Daniel Defoe (1661-1731), author and journalist; author of Robinson Crusoe.

The hunchbacked rhymer. Alexander Pope (1688–1744), author of the *Essay on Man*, *Essay on Criticism*, satires, etc.

II.—THE TAME VIPER

In the following passage Borrow describes his first meeting with the gipsies, in whose life, customs and language he was subsequently to take so keen an interest. His study of gipsy lore, begun in England, was carried still further, later on, in Spain, his experiences with Spanish gipsies being described in his book *The Bible in Spain*.

ONE day it happened that, being on my rambles, I entered a green lane which I had never seen before; at first it was rather narrow, but as I advanced it became considerably wider; in the middle was a drift-way with deep ruts, but right and left was a space carpeted with a sward of trefoil and clover; there was no lack of trees, chiefly ancient oaks, which, flinging out their arms from either side, nearly formed a canopy, and afforded a pleasing shelter from the rays of the sun, which was burning fiercely above. Suddenly a group of objects attracted my attention. Beneath one of the largest of the trees upon the grass, was a kind of low tent or booth, from the top of which a thin smoke was curling; beside it stood a couple of light carts, whilst two or three lean horses or ponies were cropping the herbage which was growing nigh. Wondering to whom this odd tent could belong, I advanced till I was close before it, when I found that it consisted of two

Drift-way. Driving-way; a cart track.

tilts, like those of wagons, placed upon the ground and fronting each other, connected behind by a sail or large piece of canvas which was but partially drawn across the top; upon the ground, in the intervening space, was a fire, over which, supported by a kind of iron crowbar, hung a caldron; my advance had been so noiseless as not to alarm the inmates, who consisted of a man and woman, who sat apart, one on each side of the fire; they were both busily employed—the man was carding plaited straw, whilst the woman seemed to be rubbing something with a white powder, some of which lay on a plate beside her; suddenly the man looked up, and, perceiving me, uttered a strange kind of cry, and the next moment both the woman and himself were on their feet and rushing out upon me.

I retreated a few steps, yet without turning to flee. I was not, however, without apprehension, which, indeed, the appearance of these two people was well calculated to inspire; the woman was a stout figure, seemingly between thirty and forty; she wore no cap, and her long hair fell on either side of her head like horse-tails half way down her waist; her skin was dark and swarthy, like that of a toad, and the expression of her countenance was particularly evil; her arms were bare, and her bosom was but half concealed by a slight bodice, below which she wore a coarse petticoat, her only other article of dress. The man was somewhat younger, but of a figure equally wild; his frame was long and lathy, but

his arms were remarkably short, his neck was rather bent, he squinted slightly, and his mouth was much awry; his complexion was dark, but, unlike that of the woman, it was more ruddy than livid; there was a deep scar on his cheek, something like the impression of a halfpenny. The dress was quite in keeping with the figure; in his hat, which was slightly peaked, was stuck a peacock's feather; over a waistcoat of hide, untanned and with the hair upon it, he wore a rough jerkin of russet hue; small-clothes of leather, which had probably once belonged to a soldier, but with which pipeclay did not seem to have come in contact for many a year, protected his lower man as far as the knee; his legs were cased in long stockings of blue worsted, and on his shoes he wore immense old-fashioned buckles.

Such were the two beings who now came rushing upon me; the man was rather in advance, brandishing a ladle in his hand.

"So I have caught you at last," said he; "I'll teach ye, you young highwayman, to come skulking about my properties!"

Young as I was, I remarked that his manner of speaking was different from that of any people with whom I had been in the habit of associating. It was quite as strange as his appearance, and yet it nothing resembled the foreign English which I had been in the habit of hearing through the palisades of the prison; he could scarcely be a foreigner.

Smallclothes. Breeches.

"Your properties!" said I; "I am in the King's Lane. Why did you put them there, if you did not wish them to be seen?"

"On the spy," said the woman, "hey? I'll drown him in the sludge in the toad-pond over the hedge."

"So we will," said the man, "drown him anon in the mud!"

"Drown me, will you?" said I; "I should like to see you! What's all this about? Was it because I saw you with your hands full of straw plait, and my mother there——"

"Yes," said the woman; "what was I about?"

Myself. How should I know? Making bad money, perhaps!

And it will be as well here to observe, that at this time there was much bad money in circulation in the neighbourhood, generally supposed to be fabricated by the prisoners, so that this false coin and straw plait formed the standard subjects of conversation at Norman Cross.

"I'll strangle thee," said the beldame, dashing at me. "Bad money, is it?"

"Leave him to me, wifelkin," said the man, interposing; "you shall now see how I'll baste him down the lane."

Myself. I tell you what, my chap, you had better put down that thing of yours; my father lies con-

Beldame. (Fr. *belle dame*, beautiful lady.) Respectfully, fine lady, beautiful lady; disrespectfully (the common usage), old woman, wrinkled and destitute of beauty.

cealed within my tepid breast, and if to me you offer any harm or wrong, I'll call him forth to help me with his forked tongue.

Man. What do you mean, ye Bengui's bantling? I never heard such discourse in all my life; play-man's speech or Frenchman's talk—which, I wonder? Your father! tell the mumping villain that if he comes near my fire I'll serve him out as I will you. Take that——Tiny Jesus! what have we got here! Oh, delicate Jesus! what is the matter with the child?

I had made a motion which the viper understood; and now, partly disengaging itself from my bosom, where it had lain perdu, it raised its head to a level with my face, and stared upon my enemy with its glittering eyes.

The man stood like one transfixed, and the ladle with which he had aimed a blow at me, now hung in the air like the hand which held it: his mouth was extended, and his cheeks became of a pale yellow, save alone that place which bore the mark which I have already described, and this shone now portentously, like fire. He stood in this manner for some time; at last the ladle fell from his hand, and its falling appeared to rouse him from his stupor.

" I say, wifelkin," said he in a faltering tone, " did you ever see the like of this here? "

But the woman had retreated to the tent, from the entrance of which her loathly face was now

Bengui's bantling. Bengui, non-gipsy; *bantling,* brat.

thrust, with an expression partly of terror and partly of curiosity. After gazing some time longer at the viper and myself, the man stooped down and took up the ladle; then, as if somewhat more assured, he moved to the tent, where he entered into conversation with the beldame in a low voice. Of their discourse, though I could hear the greater part of it, I understood not a single word; and I wondered what it could be, for I knew by the sound that it was not French. At last the man, in a somewhat louder tone, appeared to put a question to the woman, who nodded her head affirmatively, and in a moment or two produced a small stool, which she delivered to him. He placed it on the ground, close by the door of the tent, first rubbing it with his sleeve, as if for the purpose of polishing its surface.

Man. Now, my precious little gentleman, do sit down here by the poor people's tent; we wish to be civil in our slight way. Don't be angry, and say no; but look kindly upon us, and satisfied, my precious little God Almighty.

Woman. Yes, my gorgeous angel, sit down by the poor bodies' fire, and eat a sweetmeat. We want to ask you a question or two; only first put that serpent away.

Myself. I can sit down, and bid the serpent go to sleep, that's easy enough; but as for eating a sweetmeat, how can I do that? I have not got one, and where am I to get it?

Woman. Never fear, my tiny tawny, we can give

you one, such as you never ate, I dare say, however far you may have come from.

The serpent sunk into his usual resting-place, and I sat down on the stool. The woman opened a box, and took out a strange little basket or hamper, not much larger than a man's fist, and formed of a delicate kind of matting. It was sewed at the top; but ripping it open with a knife, she held it to me, and I saw, to my surprise, that it contained candied fruits of a dark green hue, tempting enough to one of my age. "There, my tiny," said she; "taste, and tell me how you like them."

"Very much," said I; "where did you get them?"

The beldame leered upon me for a moment, then, nodding her head thrice, with a knowing look, said, "Who knows better than yourself, my tawny?"

Now, I knew nothing about the matter; but I saw that these strange people had conceived a very high opinion of the abilities of their visitor, which I was nothing loath to encourage. I therefore answered boldly, "Ah! who indeed!"

"Certainly," said the man; "who should know better than yourself, or so well? And now, my tiny one, let me ask you one thing—you didn't come to do us any harm?"

"No," said I, "I had no dislike to you; though, if you were to meddle with me——"

Man. Of course, my gorgeous, of course you would; and quite right too. Meddle with you!—what right have we? I should say, it would not be

quite safe. I see how it is: you are one of them there; —and he bent his head towards his left shoulder.

Myself. Yes, I am one of them—for I thought he was alluding to the soldiers,—you had best mind what you are about, I can tell you.

Man. Don't doubt we will for our own sake; Lord bless you, wifelkin, only think that we should see one of them there when we least thought about it. Well, I have heard of such things, though I have never thought to see one; however, seeing is believing. Well! now you are come, and are not going to do us any mischief, I hope you will stay; you can do us plenty of good if you will.

Myself. What good can I do you?

Man. What good? plenty! Would you not bring us luck? I have heard say, that one of them there always does, if it will but settle down. Stay with us, you shall have a tilted cart all to yourself if you like. We'll make you our little God Almighty, and say our prayers to you every morning!

Myself. That would be nice; and if you were to give me plenty of these things, I should have no objection. But what would my father say? I think he would hardly let me.

Man. Why not? he would be with you; and kindly would we treat him. Indeed, without your father you would be nothing at all.

Myself. That's true; but I do not think he could be spared from his regiment. I have heard him say that they could do nothing without him.

Man. His regiment! What are you talking about? —what does the child mean?

Myself. What do I mean—why, that my father is an officer-man at the barracks yonder, keeping guard over the French prisoners.

Man. Oh! then that sap is not your father?

Myself. What, the snake? Why, no! Did you think he was?

Man. To be sure we did. Didn't you tell me so?

Myself. Why, yes; but who would have thought you would have believed it? It is a tame one. I hunt vipers, and tame them.

Man. O—h!

" O—h! " grunted the woman, " that's it, is it? "

The man and woman, who during this conversation had resumed their former positions within the tent, looked at each other with a queer look of surprise, as if somewhat disconcerted at what they now heard. They then entered into discourse with each other in the same strange tongue which had already puzzled me. At length the man looked me in the face, and said, somewhat hesitatingly, " So you are not one of them there, after all? "

Myself. One of them there? I don't know what you mean.

Man. Why, we have been thinking you were a goblin—a devilkin! However, I see how it is; you are a sap-engro, a chap who catches snakes, and plays tricks with them! Well, it comes very nearly

Sap. Snake.

to the same thing; and if you please to list with us, and bear us pleasant company, we shall be glad of you. I'd take my oath upon it that we might make a mort of money by you and that sap, and the tricks it could do? and, as you seem fly to everything, I shouldn't wonder if you would make a prime hand at telling fortunes.

"I shouldn't wonder," said I.

Man. Of course. And you might still be our God Almighty, or at any rate our clergyman, so you should live in a tilted cart by yourself, and say prayers to us night and morning—to wifelkin here, and all our family; there's plenty of us when we are all together: as I said before, you seem fly, I shouldn't wonder if you could read?

"Oh, yes!" said I, "I can read"; and, eager to display my accomplishments, I took my book out of my pocket, and, opening it at random, proceeded to read how a certain man, whilst wandering about a certain solitary island, entered a cave, the mouth of which was overgrown with brushwood, and how he was nearly frightened to death in that cave by something which he saw.

"That will do," said the man; "that's the kind of prayers for me and my family, ar'n't they, wifelkin? I never heard more delicate prayers in all my life! Why, they beat the rubricals hollow!—and here comes my son Jasper. I say, Jasper, here's

Rubricals. Rubrics; directions for the conduct of a religious service, originally printed in red. (Lat. *ruber*, red.)

a young sap-engro that can read, and is more fly than yourself. Shake hands with him; I wish ye to be two brothers."

With a swift but stealthy pace Jasper came towards us from the farther part of the lane; on reaching the tent he stood still, and looked fixedly upon me as I sat upon the stool; I looked fixedly upon him. A queer look had Jasper; he was a lad of some twelve or thirteen years, with long arms, unlike the singular being who called himself his father; his complexion was ruddy, but his face was seamed, though it did not bear the peculiar scar which disfigured the countenance of the other; nor, though roguish enough, a certain evil expression which that of the other bore, and which the face of the woman possessed in a yet more remarkable degree. For the rest, he wore drab breeches, with certain strings at the knee, a rather gay waistcoat, and tolerably white shirt; under his arm he bore a mighty whip of whalebone with a brass knob, and upon his head was a hat without either top or brim.

"There, Jasper! shake hands with the sap-engro."

"Can he box, father?" said Jasper, surveying me rather contemptuously. "I should think not, he looks so puny and small."

"Hold your peace, fool!" said the man; "he can do more than that—I tell you he's fly: he carries a sap about, which would sting a ninny like you to death."

"What, a sap-engro!" said the boy, with a

singular whine, and stooping down, he leered curiously in my face, kindly, however, and then patted me on the head. "A sap-engro," he ejaculated; "lor!"

"Yes, and one of the right sort," said the man; "I am glad we have met with him, he is going to list with us, and be our clergyman and God Almighty, a'n't you, my tawny?"

"I don't know," said I; "I must see what my father will say."

"Your father; bah!"——but here he stopped, for a sound was heard like the rapid galloping of a horse, not loud and distinct as on a road, but dull and heavy as if upon a grass sward; nearer and nearer it came, and the man, starting up, rushed out of the tent, and looked around anxiously. I arose from the stool upon which I had been seated, and just at that moment, amidst a crashing of boughs and sticks, a man on horseback bounded over the hedge into the lane at a few yards' distance from where we were: from the impetus of the leap the horse was nearly down on his knees; the rider, however, by dint of vigorous handling of the reins, prevented him from falling, and then rode up to the tent. "'Tis Nat," said the man; "what brings him here?" The new comer was a stout burly fellow, about the middle age: he had a savage determined look, and his face was nearly covered over with carbuncles; he wore a broad slouching hat, and was dressed in a grey coat cut in a fashion which I afterwards learnt

to be the genuine Newmarket cut, the skirts being exceedingly short; his waistcoat was of red plush, and he wore broad corduroy breeches and white top-boots. The steed which carried him was of iron grey, spirited and powerful, but covered with sweat and foam. The fellow glanced fiercely and suspiciously around, and said something to the man of the tent in a harsh and rapid voice. A short and hurried conversation ensued in the strange tongue. I could not take my eyes off this new comer. Oh, that half jockey half bruiser countenance, I never forgot it! More than fifteen years afterwards I found myself amidst a crowd before Newgate; a gallows was erected, and beneath it stood a criminal, a notorious malefactor. I recognised him at once; the horseman of the lane is now beneath the fatal tree, but nothing altered; still the same man; jerking his head to the right and left with the same fierce and under glance, just as if the affairs of this world had the same kind of interest to the last; grey coat of Newmarket cut, plush waistcoat, corduroys, and boots, nothing altered; but the head, alas! is bare, and so is the neck. Oh, crime and virtue, virtue and crime!—it was old John Newton, I think, who, when he saw a man going to be hanged, said, " There goes John Newton, but for the grace of God! "

But the lane, the lane, all was now in confusion in the lane; the man and woman were employed

John Newton. 1725–1807, English divine and friend of William Cowper.

in striking the tents and in making hurried preparations for departure; the boy Jasper was putting the harness upon the ponies and attaching them to the carts; and, to increase the singularity of the scene, two or three wild-looking women and girls, in red cloaks and immense black beaver bonnets, came from I know not what direction, and, after exchanging a few words with the others, commenced with fierce and agitated gestures to assist them in their occupation. The rider meanwhile sat upon his horse, but evidently in a state of great impatience; he muttered curses between his teeth, spurred the animal furiously, and then reined it in, causing it to rear itself up nearly perpendicular. At last he said, "Curse ye, for Romans, how slow ye are! well, it is no business of mine, stay here all day if you like; I have given ye warning, I am off to the big north road. However, before I go, you had better give me all you have of that."

"Truly spoken, Nat, my pal," said the man; "give it him, mother. There it is; now be off as soon as you please, and rid us of evil company."

The woman had handed him two bags formed of stocking, half full of something heavy, which looked through them for all the world like money of some kind. The fellow, on receiving them, thrust them without ceremony into the pockets of his coat, and then, without a word of farewell salutation, departed at a tremendous rate, the hoofs of his horse thundering for a long time on the hard

soil of the neighbouring road, till the sound finally died away in the distance. The strange people were not slow in completing their preparations, and then, flogging their animals terrifically, hurried away seemingly in the same direction.

The boy Jasper was last of the band. As he was following the rest, he stopped suddenly, and looked on the ground appearing to muse; then, turning round, he came up to me where I was standing, leered in my face, and then, thrusting out his hand, he said, "Good-bye, Sap, I dare say we shall meet again, remember we are brothers; two gentle brothers."

Then whining forth, "What a sap-engro, lor!" he gave me a parting leer, and hastened away.

I remained standing in the lane gazing after the retreating company. "A strange set of people," said I at last; "I wonder who they can be."

Lavengro.

III.—THE WIND ON THE HEATH

Borrow, in a fit of despondency which blinds him to any meaning or purpose in life, once more meets Jasper Petulengro, who reminds him that Nature bestows on us gifts which compensate us for the ills of existence. "The wind on the heath" makes life worth living.

THERE was one question which I was continually asking myself at this period: "What is truth?" I had involved myself imperceptibly in a dreary labyrinth of doubt, and, whichever way I turned, no reasonable prospect of extricating myself appeared. The means by which I had brought myself into this situation may be very briefly told; I had inquired into many matters, in order that I might become wise, and I had read and pondered over the words of the wise, so called, till I had made myself master of the sum of human wisdom; namely, that everything is enigmatical and that man is an enigma to himself; thence the cry of "What is truth?" I had ceased to believe in the truth of that in which I had hitherto trusted, and yet could find nothing in which I could put any fixed or deliberate belief. I was, indeed, in a labyrinth! In what did I not doubt? With respect to crime and virtue I was in doubt; I doubted that the one was blameable and the other praiseworthy. Are not all things subjected

to the law of necessity? Assuredly; time and chance govern all things: yet how can this be? alas!

Then there was myself; for what was I born? Are not all things born to be forgotten? That's incomprehensible: yet is it not so? Those butterflies fall and are forgotten. In what is man better than a butterfly? All then is born to be forgotten. Ah! that was a pang indeed; 'tis at such a moment that a man wishes to die. The wise king of Jerusalem, who sat in his shady arbours beside his sunny fishpools, saying so many fine things, wished to die, when he saw that not only all was vanity, but that he himself was vanity. Will a time come when all will be forgotten that now is beneath the sun? If so, of what profit is life?

In truth, it was a sore vexation of spirit to me when I saw, as the wise men saw of old, that whatever I could hope to perform must necessarily be of very temporary duration; and if so, why do it? I said to myself, whatever name I can acquire, will it endure for eternity? scarcely so. A thousand years? Let me see! What have I done already? I have learnt Welsh, and have translated the songs of Ab Gwilym, some ten thousand lines, into English rhyme; I have also learnt Danish, and have rendered the old book of ballads cast by the tempest upon the beach into corresponding English metre. Good! have I done enough already to secure myself a reputation of a thousand years? No, no! certainly not; I have not the slightest ground for hoping that my transla-

tions from the Welsh and Danish will be read at the end of a thousand years. Well, but I am only eighteen, and I have not stated all that I have done; I have learnt many other tongues, and have acquired some knowledge of even Hebrew and Arabic. Should I go on in this way till I am forty, I must then be very learned; and perhaps, among other things, may have translated the Talmud; and some of the great works of the Arabians. Pooh! all this is mere learning and translation, and such will never secure immortality. Translation is at best an echo, and it must be a wonderful echo to be heard after the lapse of a thousand years. No! all I have already done, and all I may yet do in the same way, I may reckon as nothing—mere pastime; something else must be done. I must either write some grand original work, or conquer an empire; the one just as easy as the other. But am I competent to do either? Yes, I think I am, under favourable circumstances. Yes, I think I may promise myself a reputation of a thousand years, if I do but give myself the necessary trouble. Well! but what's a thousand years after all, or twice a thousand years? Woe is me! I may just as well sit still.

"Would I had never been born!" I said to myself; and a thought would occasionally intrude. But was I ever born? Is not all that I see a lie—a deceitful phantom? Is there a world, and earth,

Talmud. A collection of works comprising the oral, as distinguished from the written, law of the Jews.

and sky? Berkeley's doctrine—Spinosa's doctrine! Dear reader, I had at that time never read either Berkeley or Spinosa. I have still never read them; who are they, men of yesterday? "All is a lie—all a deceitful phantom," are old cries; they come naturally from the mouths of those who, casting aside that choicest shield against madness, simplicity, would fain be wise as God, and can only know that they are naked. This doubting in the "universal all" is most coeval with the human race: wisdom, so called, was early sought after. All is a lie—a deceitful phantom—was said when the world was yet young; its surface, save a scanty portion, yet untrodden by human foot, and when the great tortoise yet crawled about. All is a lie, was the doctrine of Buddh; and Buddh lived thirty centuries before the wise king of Jerusalem, who sat in his arbours, beside his sunny fishpools, saying many fine things, and, amongst others, "There is nothing new under the sun!"

* * * * * *

One day, whilst I bent my way to the heath, at the foot of the hills which formed it I came to a

Berkeley. 1685–1753. Irish metaphysician and philanthropist. *Spinosa.* Baruch or Benedictus de Spinoza (1632–77), Cartesian philosopher, born at Amsterdam. He belonged to a Jewish family but was later excommunicated on account of his heretical views. Berkeley and Spinoza represent opposite schools of philosophy, *monist* and *dualist.*

Buddh. Buddha (the Wise), the founder of Buddhism. (Fifth century B.C.)

place where a wagon was standing, but without horses, the shafts resting on the ground; there was a crowd about it, which extended half-way up the side of the neighbouring hill. The wagon was occupied by some half-a-dozen men; some sitting, others standing—they were dressed in sober-coloured habiliments of black or brown, cut in a plain and rather uncouth fashion, and partially white with dust; their hair was short, and seemed to have been smoothed down by the application of the hand; all were bare-headed—sitting or standing, all were bare-headed. One of them, a tall man, was speaking as I arrived; ere, however, I could distinguish what he was saying, he left off, and then there was a cry for a hymn "to the glory of God"—that was the word. It was a strange sounding hymn, as well it might be, for everybody joined in it: there were voices of all kinds, of men, of women, and of children—of those who could sing, and of those who could not—a thousand voices all joined, and all joined heartily; no voice of all the multitude was silent save mine. The crowd consisted entirely of the lower classes, labourers and mechanics, and their wives and children—dusty people, unwashed people, people of no account whatever, and yet they did not look a mob. And when that hymn was over—and here let me observe that, strange as it sounded, I have recalled that hymn to mind, and it has seemed to tingle in my ears on occasions when all that pomp and art could do to enhance religious solemnity

was being done—in the Sistine Chapel, what time the papal band was in full play, and the choicest choristers of Italy poured forth their melodious tones in presence of Batuschca and his cardinals—on the ice of the Neva, what time the long train of stately priests, with their noble beards and their flowing robes of crimson and gold, with their ebony and ivory staves, stalked along, chanting their Sclavonian litanies in advance of the mighty Emperor of the North and his Priberjensky guard of giants, towards the orifice through which the river, running below in its swiftness, is to receive the baptismal lymph—when the hymn was over, another man in the wagon proceeded to address the people; he was a much younger man than the last speaker; somewhat square built and about the middle height; his face was rather broad, but expressive of much intelligence, and with a peculiar calm and serious look; the accent in which he spoke indicated that he was not of these parts, but from some distant district. The subject of his address was faith, and how it could remove mountains. It was a plain address, without any attempt at ornament, and delivered in a tone which was neither loud nor vehement. The

Sistine Chapel. A celebrated chapel in the Vatican at Rome, built by order of Pope Sixtus IV., and decorated with frescoes the most remarkable of which are due to Michael Angelo.

Batuschca. The pope.

Ice of the Neva . . . baptismal lymph. The ceremony of blessing the Neva.

speaker was evidently not a practised one—once or twice he hesitated as if for words to express his meaning, but still he held on, talking of faith, and how it could remove mountains: "It is the only thing we want, brethren, in this world; if we have that, we are indeed rich, as it will enable us to do our duty under all circumstances, and to bear our lot, however hard it may be—and the lot of all mankind is hard—the lot of the poor is hard, brethren—and who knows more of the poor than I?—a poor man myself, and the son of a poor man: but are the rich better off? not so, brethren, for God is just. The rich have their trials too: I am not rich myself, but I have seen the rich with careworn countenances; I have also seen them in mad-houses; from which you may learn, brethren, that the lot of all mankind is hard: that is, till we lay hold of faith, which makes us comfortable under all circumstances; whether we ride in gilded chariots or walk bare-footed in quest of bread; whether we be ignorant, whether we be wise—for riches and poverty, ignorance and wisdom, brethren, each brings with it its peculiar temptations. Well, under all these troubles, the thing which I would recommend you to seek is one and the same—faith; faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, who made us, and allotted to each his station. Each has something to do, brethren. Do it, therefore, but always in faith; without faith we shall find ourselves sometimes at fault; but with faith never—for faith can remove the difficulty. It

will teach us to love life, brethren, when life is becoming bitter, and to prize the blessings around us; for as every man has his cares, brethren, so has each man his blessings. It will likewise teach us not to love life over much, seeing that we must one day part with it. It will teach us to face death with resignation, and will preserve us from sinking amidst the swelling of the river Jordan."

And when he had concluded his address, he said, "Let us sing a hymn, one composed by Master Charles Wesley—he was my countryman, brethren.

Jesus, I cast my soul on thee,
Mighty and merciful to save;
Thou shalt to death go down with me,
And lay me gently in the grave.
This body then shall rest in hope,
This body which the worms destroy;
For thou shalt surely raise me up,
To glorious life and endless joy."

Farewell, preacher with the plain coat, and the calm serious look! I saw thee once again, and that was lately—only the other day. It was near a fishing hamlet, by the seaside, that I saw the preacher again. He stood on the top of a steep monticle, used by pilots as a look-out for vessels approaching that coast, a dangerous one, abounding in rocks and quicksands. There he stood on the monticle, preaching to weather-worn fishermen and mariners gathered below upon the sand. "Who is he?" said I to

Charles Wesley. 1707–88. Divine and hymn-writer; brother of John Wesley, the founder of Methodism.

an old fisherman who stood beside me with a book of hymns in his hand; but the old man put his hand to his lips, and that was the only answer I received. Not a sound was heard but the voice of the preacher and the roaring of the waves; but the voice was heard loud above the roaring of the sea, for the preacher now spoke with power, and his voice was not that of one who hesitates. There he stood—no longer a young man, for his black locks were become grey, even like my own; but there was the intelligent face, and the calm serious look which had struck me of yore. There stood the preacher, one of those men—and, thank God, their number is not few—who, animated by the spirit of Christ, amidst much poverty, and, alas! much contempt, persist in carrying the light of the Gospel amidst the dark parishes of what, but for their instrumentality, would scarcely be Christian England. I should have waited till he had concluded, in order that I might speak to him and endeavour to bring back the ancient scene to his recollection, but suddenly a man came hurrying towards the monticle, mounted on a speedy horse, and holding by the bridle one yet more speedy, and he whispered to me, "Why loiterest thou here?—knowest thou not all that is to be done before midnight?" and he flung me the bridle; and I mounted on the horse of great speed, and I followed the other, who had already galloped off. And as I departed, I waved my hand to him on the monticle, and I shouted,

" Farewell, brother! the seed came up at last, after a long period! " and then I gave the speedy horse his way, and leaning over the shoulder of the galloping horse, I said, " Would that my life had been like his—even like that man's."

I now wandered along the heath, until I came to a place where, beside a thick furze, sat a man, his eyes fixed intently on the red ball of the setting sun.

" That's not you, Jasper? "

" Indeed, brother! "

" I've not seen you for years."

" How should you, brother? "

" What brings you here? "

" The fight, brother."

" Where are the tents? "

" On the old spot, brother."

" Any news since we parted? "

" Two deaths, brother."

" Who are dead, Jasper? "

" Father and mother, brother."

" Where did they die? "

" Where they were sent, brother."

" And Mrs. Herne? "

" She's alive, brother."

" Where is she now? "

" In Yorkshire, brother."

" What is your opinion of death, Mr. Petulengro? " said I, as I sat down beside him.

" My opinion of death, brother, is much the same

as that in the old song of Pharaoh, which I have heard my grandam sing:

> Canna marel o manus chivios andé puv,
> Ta rovel pa leste o chavo ta romi.

When a man dies, he is cast into the earth, and his wife and child sorrow over him. If he has neither wife nor child, then his father and mother, I suppose; and if he is quite alone in the world, why, then, he is cast into the earth, and there is an end of the matter."

"And do you think that is the end of man?"

"There's an end of him, brother, more's the pity."

"Why do you say so?"

"Life is sweet, brother."

"Do you think so?"

"Think so!—There's night and day, brother, both sweet things; sun, moon, and stars, brother, all sweet things; there's likewise a wind on the heath. Life is very sweet, brother; who would wish to die?"

"I would wish to die——"

"You talk like a gorgio—which is the same as talking like a fool—were you a Rommany Chal you would talk wiser. Wish to die, indeed!—A Rommany Chal would wish to live for ever!"

"In sickness, Jasper?"

"There's the sun and the stars, brother."

Gorgio. One who is not a gipsy.
Rommany Chal. A gipsy.

"In blindness, Jasper?"

"There's the wind on the heath, brother; if I could only feel that, I would gladly live for ever. Dosta, we'll now go to the tents and put on the gloves: and I'll try to make you feel what a sweet thing it is to be alive, brother!"

Lavengro.

IV.—THE FIGHT WITH THE FLAMING TINMAN

Borrow had purchased a pony and cart from a travelling tinker. By this means he hoped to earn his living and at the same time indulge his taste for wandering over the country. He had fixed upon his headquarters in a dingle when he was disturbed by the arrival of the Flaming Tinman, accompanied by the girl Isopel Berners, who remained with Borrow for some time.

Two mornings after the period to which I have brought the reader, I sat by my fire at the bottom of the dingle; I had just breakfasted, and had finished the last morsel of food which I had brought with me to that solitude.

"What shall I now do?" said I, to myself; "shall I continue here, or decamp—this is a sad lonely spot—perhaps I had better quit it; but whither should I go? the wide world is before me, but what can I do therein? I have been in the world already without much success. No, I had better remain here; the place is lonely, it is true, but here I am free and independent, and can do what I please; but I can't remain here without food. Well, I will find my way to the nearest town, lay in a fresh supply of provision, and come back, turning my back upon the world, which has turned its back upon me. I don't see why I should not write a little

sometimes; I have pens and an ink-horn, and for a writing-desk I can place the Bible on my knee. I shouldn't wonder if I could write a capital satire on the world on the back of that Bible: but first of all I must think of supplying myself with food."

I rose up from the stone on which I was seated, determining to go to the nearest town, with my little horse and cart, and procure what I wanted—the nearest town, according to my best calculation, lay about five miles distant; I had no doubt, however, that by using ordinary diligence, I should be back before evening. In order to go lighter, I determined to leave my tent standing as it was, and all the things which I had purchased of the tinker, just as they were. "I need not be apprehensive on their account," said I, to myself; "nobody will come here to meddle with them—the great recommendation of this place is its perfect solitude—I dare say that I could live here six months without seeing a single human visage. I will now harness my little gry and be off to the town."

At a whistle which I gave, the little gry, which was feeding on the bank near the uppermost part of the dingle, came running to me, for by this time he had become so accustomed to me, that he would obey my call for all the world as if he had been one of the canine species. "Now," said I to him, "we are going to the town to buy bread for myself, and oats for you—I am in a hurry to be back; therefore, I pray you to do your best, and to draw me and the

cart to the town with all possible speed, and to bring us back; if you do your best, I promise you oats on your return. You know the meaning of oats, Ambrol?"

Ambrol whinnied as if to let me know that he understood me perfectly well, as indeed he well might, as I had never once fed him during the time he had been in my possession without saying the word in question to him. Now, Ambrol, in the Gipsy tongue, signifieth a pear.

So I caparisoned Ambrol, and then, going to the cart, I removed two or three things from out it into the tent; I then lifted up the shafts, and was just going to call to the pony to come and be fastened to them, when I thought I heard a noise.

I stood stock still supporting the shafts of the little cart in my hand, and bending the right side of my face slightly towards the ground; but I could hear nothing; the noise which I thought I had heard was not one of those sounds which I was accustomed to hear in that solitude, the note of a bird, or the rustling of a bough; it was—there I heard it again, a sound very much resembling the grating of a wheel amongst gravel. Could it proceed from the road? Oh no, the road was too far distant for me to hear the noise of anything moving along it. Again I listened, and now I distinctly heard the sound of wheels, which seemed to be approaching the dingle; nearer and nearer they drew, and presently the sound of wheels was blended with the murmur of

voices. Anon I heard a boisterous shout, which seemed to proceed from the entrance of the dingle. "Here are folks at hand," said I, letting the shaft of the cart fall to the ground, "is it possible that they can be coming here?"

My doubts on that point, if I entertained any, were soon dispelled; the wheels, which had ceased moving for a moment or two, were once again in motion, and were now evidently moving down the winding path which led to my retreat. Leaving my cart, I came forward and placed myself near the entrance of the open space, with my eyes fixed on the path down which my unexpected and I may say unwelcome visitors were coming. Presently I heard a stamping or sliding, as if of a horse in some difficulty; and then a loud curse, and the next moment appeared a man and a horse and cart; the former holding the head of the horse up to prevent him from falling, of which he was in danger, owing to the precipitous nature of the path. Whilst thus occupied, the head of the man was averted from me. When, however, he had reached the bottom of the descent, he turned his head, and perceiving me, as I stood bareheaded, without either coat or waistcoat, about two yards from him, he gave a sudden start, so violent, that the backward motion of his hand had nearly flung the horse upon his haunches.

"Why don't you move forward?" said a voice from behind, apparently that of a female, "you are stopping up the way, and we shall be all down upon

one another"; and I saw the head of another horse overtopping the back of the cart.

"Why don't you move forward, Jack?" said another voice, also of a female, yet higher up the path.

The man stirred not, but remained staring at me in the posture which he had assumed on first perceiving me, his body very much drawn back, his left foot far in advance of his right, and with his right hand still grasping the halter of the horse, which gave way more and more, till it was clean down on its haunches.

"What is the matter?" said the voice which I had last heard.

"Get back with you, Belle, Moll," said the man, still staring at me, "here's something not over-canny or comfortable."

"What is it?" said the same voice; "let me pass, Moll, and I'll soon clear the way," and I heard a kind of rushing down the path.

"You need not be afraid," said I; addressing myself to the man, "I mean you no harm; I am a wanderer like yourself—come here to seek for shelter—you need not be afraid; I am a Rome chabo by matriculation—one of the right sort, and no mistake—Good-day to ye, brother; I bids ye welcome."

The man eyed me suspiciously for a moment—then, turning to his horse with a loud curse, he pulled him up from his haunches, and led him and the cart farther down to one side of the dingle, muttering as he passed me, "Afraid. Hm!"

I do not remember ever to have seen a more ruffianly-looking fellow; he was about six feet high, with an immensely athletic frame; his face was black and bluff, and sported an immense pair of whiskers, but with here and there a grey hair, for his age could not be much under fifty. He wore a faded blue frock coat, corduroys, and high-lows—on his black head was a kind of red nightcap, round his bull neck a Barcelona handkerchief—I did not like the look of the man at all.

"Afraid," growled the fellow, proceeding to unharness his horse; "that was the word, I think."

But other figures were now already upon the scene. Dashing past the other horse and cart, which by this time had reached the bottom of the pass, appeared an exceedingly tall woman, or rather girl, for she could scarcely have been above eighteen; she was dressed in a tight bodice and a blue stuff gown; hat, bonnet, or cap she had none, and her hair, which was flaxen, hung down on her shoulders unconfined; her complexion was fair, and her features handsome, with a determined but open expression—she was followed by another female, about forty, stout and vulgar-looking, at whom I scarcely glanced, my whole attention being absorbed by the tall girl.

"What's the matter, Jack?" said the latter, looking at the man.

"Only afraid, that's all," said the man, still proceeding with his work.

"Afraid at what—at that lad? why, he looks like

a ghost—I would engage to thrash him with one hand."

"You might beat me with no hands at all," said I, "fair damsel, only by looking at me—I never saw such a face and figure, both regal—why, you look like Ingeborg, Queen of Norway; she had twelve brothers, you know, and could lick them all, though they were heroes:

On Dovrefeld in Norway,
Were once together seen,
The twelve heroic brothers
Of Ingeborg the queen."

"None of your chaffing, young fellow," said the tall girl, "or I will give you what shall make you wipe your face; be civil, or you will rue it."

"Well, perhaps I was a peg too high," said I, "I ask your pardon—here's something a bit lower:

As I was jawing to the gav yeck divvus
I met on the drom miro Rommany chi——"

"None of your Rommany chies, young fellow," said the tall girl, looking more menacingly than before, and clenching her fist, "you had better be civil, I am none of your chies; and, though I keep company with gipsies, or, to speak more proper, half and halfs, I would have you to know that I come of Christian blood and parents, and was born in the great house of Long Melford."

"I have no doubt," said I, "that it was a great house; judging from your size, I shouldn't wonder if you were born in a church."

"Stay, Belle," said the man, putting himself before the young virago, who was about to rush upon me, "my turn is first"—then, advancing to me in a menacing attitude, he said, with a look of deep malignity, "'Afraid' was the word, wasn't it?"

"It was," said I, "but I think I wronged you; I should have said, aghast, you exhibited every symptom of one labouring under uncontrollable fear."

The fellow stared at me with a look of stupid ferocity, and appeared to be hesitating whether to strike or not: ere he could make up his mind, the tall girl stepped forward, crying, "He's chaffing; let me at him"; and, before I could put myself on my guard, she struck me a blow on the face which had nearly brought me to the ground.

"Enough," said I, putting my hand to my cheek; "you have now performed your promise, and made me wipe my face; now be pacified, and tell me fairly the ground of this quarrel."

"Grounds!" said the fellow; "didn't you say I was afraid; and if you hadn't, who gave you leave to camp on my ground?"

"Is it your ground?" said I.

"A pretty question," said the fellow; "as if all the world didn't know that. Do you know who I am?"

"I guess I do," said I; "unless I am much mistaken, you are he whom folks call the 'Flaming Tinman.' To tell you the truth, I'm glad we have

met, for I wished to see you. These are your two wives, I suppose; I greet them. There's no harm done—there's room enough here for all of us—we shall soon be good friends, I dare say; and when we are a little better acquainted, I'll tell you my history."

"Well, if that doesn't beat all," said the fellow.

"I don't think he's chaffing now," said the girl, whose anger seemed to have subsided on a sudden; "the young man speaks civil enough."

The fellow looked at the girl furiously, but his glance soon quailed before hers; he withdrew his eyes, and cast them on my little horse, which was feeding amongst the trees. "What's this?" said he, rushing forward and seizing the animal. "Why, as I am alive, this is the horse of that mumping villain Slingsby."

"It's his no longer; I bought it and paid for it."

"It's mine now," said the fellow; "I swore I would seize it the next time I found it on my beat; ay, and beat the master too."

"I am not Slingsby."

"All's one for that."

"You don't say you will beat me?"

"Afraid was the word."

"I'm sick and feeble."

"Hold up your fists."

"Won't the horse satisfy you?"

"Horse nor bellows either."

"No mercy, then."

"Here's at you."

"Mind your eyes, Jack. There, you've got it. I thought so," shouted the girl, as the fellow staggered back from a sharp blow in the eye. "I thought he was chaffing at you all along."

"Never mind, Anselo. You know what to do—go in," said the vulgar woman, who had hitherto not spoken a word, but who now came forward with all the look of a fury; "go in apopli; you'll smash ten like he."

The Flaming Tinman took her advice, and came in bent on smashing, but stopped short on receiving a left-handed blow on the nose.

"You'll never beat the Flaming Tinman in that way," said the girl, looking at me doubtfully.

And so I began to think myself, when, in the twinkling of an eye, the Flaming Tinman, disengaging himself of his frock-coat, and dashing off his red night-cap, came rushing in more desperately than ever. To a flush hit which he received in the mouth he paid as little attention as a wild bull would have done; in a moment his arms were around me, and in another, he had hurled me down, falling heavily upon me. The fellow's strength appeared to be tremendous.

"Pay him off now," said the vulgar woman. The Flaming Tinman made no reply, but planting his knee on my breast, seized my throat with two huge horny hands. I gave myself up for dead, and probably should have been so in another minute but for the tall

girl, who caught hold of the handkerchief which the fellow wore round his neck with a grasp nearly as powerful as that with which he pressed my throat.

" Do you call that fair play? " said she.

" Hands off, Belle," said the other woman; " do you call it fair play to interfere? hands off, or I'll be down upon you myself."

But Belle paid no heed to the injunction, and tugged so hard at the handkerchief, that the Flaming Tinman was nearly throttled; suddenly relinquishing his hold of me, he started on his feet, and aimed a blow at my fair preserver, who avoided it, but said coolly:

" Finish t'other business first, and then I'm your woman whenever you like; but finish it fairly—no foul play when I'm by—I'll be the boy's second, and Moll can pick you up when he happens to knock you down."

The battle during the next ten minutes raged with considerable fury, but it so happened that during this time I was never able to knock the Flaming Tinman down, but on the contrary received six knock-down blows myself. " I can never stand this," said I, as I sat on the knee of Belle, " I am afraid I must give in; the Flaming Tinman hits very hard," and I spat out a mouthful of blood.

" Sure enough you'll never beat the Flaming Tinman in the way you fight—it's of no use flipping at the Flaming Tinman with your left hand; why don't you use your right? "

"Because I'm not handy with it," said I; and then getting up, I once more confronted the Flaming Tinman, and struck him six blows for his one, but they were all left-handed blows, and the blow which the Flaming Tinman gave me knocked me off my legs.

"Now, will you use Long Melford?" said Belle, picking me up.

"I don't know what you mean by Long Melford," said I, gasping for breath.

"Why, this long right of yours," said Belle, feeling my right arm—"if you do, I shouldn't wonder if you yet stand a chance."

And now the Flaming Tinman was once more ready, much more ready than myself. I, however, rose from my second's knee as well as my weakness would permit me; on he came; striking left and right, appearing almost as fresh as to wind and spirit as when he first commenced the combat, though his eyes were considerably swelled, and his nether lip was cut in two; on he came, striking left and right, and I did not like his blows at all, or even the wind of them, which was anything but agreeable, and I gave way before him. At last he aimed a blow, which, had it taken full effect, would doubtless have ended the battle, but owing to his slipping, the fist only grazed my left shoulder, and came with terrific force against a tree, close to which I had been driven; before the tinman could recover himself, I collected all my strength, and struck him beneath the ear,

and then fell to the ground completely exhausted, and it so happened that the blow which I struck the Tinker beneath the ear was a right-handed blow.

"Hurrah for Long Melford!" I heard Belle exclaim; "there is nothing like Long Melford for shortness all the world over."

At these words, I turned round my head as I lay, and perceived the Flaming Tinman stretched upon the ground apparently senseless. "He is dead," said the vulgar woman, as she vainly endeavoured to raise him up; "he is dead; the best man in all the north country, killed in this fashion, by a boy." Alarmed at these words, I made shift to get on my feet; and, with the assistance of the woman, placed my fallen adversary in a sitting posture. I put my hand to his heart, and felt a slight pulsation—"He's not dead," said I, "only stunned; if he were let blood, he would recover presently." I produced a penknife which I had in my pocket, and, baring the arm of the Tinman, was about to make the necessary incision, when the woman gave me a violent blow, and, pushing me aside, exclaimed, "I'll tear the eyes out of your head, if you offer to touch him. Do you want to complete your work, and murder him outright, now he's asleep? you have had enough of his blood already." "You are mad," said I, "I only seek to do him service. Well, if you won't let him be blooded, fetch some water and fling it into his face, you know where the pit is."

"A pretty manœuvre," said the woman; "leave

my husband in the hands of you and that limmer, who has never been true to us: I should find him strangled or his throat cut when I came back." "Do you go," said I, to the tall girl, "take the can and fetch some water from the pit." "You had better go yourself," said the girl, wiping a tear as she looked on the yet senseless form of the tinker; "you had better go yourself, if you think water will do him good." I had by this time somewhat recovered my exhausted powers, and, taking the can, I bent my steps as fast as I could to the pit; arriving there, I lay down on the brink, took a long draught, and then plunged my head into the water; after which I filled the can, and bent my way back to the dingle. Before I could reach the path which led down into its depths, I had to pass some way along its side: I had arrived at a part immediately over the scene of the last encounter, where the bank, overgrown with trees, sloped precipitously down. Here I heard a loud sound of voices in the dingle; I stopped, and laying hold of a tree, leaned over the bank and listened. The two women appeared to be in hot dispute in the dingle. "It was all owing to you, you limmer," said the vulgar woman to the other; "had you not interfered, the old man would soon have settled the boy."

"I'm for fair play and Long Melford," said the other. "If your old man, as you call him, could have settled the boy fairly, he might, for all I should have cared, but no foul work for me; and as for

sticking the boy with our gulleys when he comes back, as you proposed, I am not so fond of your old man or you that I should oblige you in it, to my soul's destruction." "Hold your tongue, or I'll——"; I listened no farther, but hastened as fast as I could to the dingle. My adversary had just begun to show signs of animation; the vulgar woman was still supporting him, and occasionally cast glances of anger at the tall girl who was walking slowly up and down. I lost no time in dashing the greater part of the water into the Tinman's face, whereupon he sneezed, moved his hands, and presently looked round him. At first his looks were dull and heavy, and without any intelligence at all; he soon, however, began to recollect himself, and to be conscious of his situation; he cast a scowling glance at me, then one of the deepest malignity at the tall girl, who was still walking about without taking much notice of what was going forward. At last he looked at his right hand, which had evidently suffered from the blow against the tree, and a half-stifled curse escaped his lips. The vulgar woman now said something to him in a low tone, whereupon he looked at her for a moment, and then got upon his legs. Again the vulgar woman said something to him; her looks were furious, and she appeared to be urging him on to attempt something. I observed that she had a clasped knife in her hand. The fellow remained standing for some time as if hesitating what to do,

Gulley or *gully*. A knife with a wooden handle.

at last he looked at his hand, and, shaking his head, said something to the woman which I did not understand. The tall girl, however, appeared to overhear him, and, probably repeating his words, said, "No, it won't do; you are right there, and now hear what I have to say,—let bygones be bygones, and let us all shake hands, and camp here, as the young man was saying just now." The man looked at her, and then, without any reply, went to his horse, which was lying down among the trees, and kicking it up, led it to the cart, to which he forthwith began to harness it. The other cart and horse had remained standing motionless during the whole affair which I have been recounting, at the bottom of the pass. The woman now took the horse by the head, and leading it with the cart into the open part of the dingle turned both round, and then led them back, till the horse and cart had mounted a little way up the ascent; she then stood still and appeared to be expecting the man. During this proceeding Belle had stood looking on without saying anything; at last, perceiving that the man had harnessed his horse to the other cart, and that both he and the woman were about to take their departure, she said, "You are not going, are you?" Receiving no answer, she continued: "I tell you what, both of you, Black John, and you Moll, this is not treating me over civilly,—however, I am ready to put up with it, and go with you if you like, for I bear no malice. I'm sorry for what has happened, but you

have only yourselves to thank for it. Now, shall I go with you, only tell me?" The man made no manner of reply, but flogged his horse. The woman, however, whose passions were probably under less control, replied, with a screeching tone, "Stay where you are, you jade, and may the curse of Judas cling to you,—stay with the bit of a mullo whom you helped, and my only hope is that he may gulley you before he comes to be—— Have you with us, indeed! after what's past, no, nor nothing belonging to you. Fetch down your mailla go-cart and live here with your chabo." She then whipped on the horse, and ascended the pass, followed by the man. The carts were light, and they were not long in ascending the winding path. I followed to see that they took their departure. Arriving at the top, I found near the entrance a small donkey-cart, which I concluded belonged to the girl. The tinker and his mort were already at some distance; I stood looking after them for some little time, then taking the donkey by the reins I led it with the cart to the bottom of the dingle. Arrived there, I found Belle seated on the stone by the fireplace. Her hair was all dishevelled, and she was in tears.

"They were bad people," she said, "and I did not like them, but they were my only acquaintance in the wide world."

* * * * * *

In the evening of that same day the tall girl and

I sat at tea by the fire, at the bottom of the dingle; the girl on a small stool, and myself, as usual, upon my stone.

The water which served for the tea had been taken from a spring of pellucid water in the neighbourhood, which I had not had the good fortune to discover, though it was well known to my companion, and to the wandering people who frequented the dingle.

"The tea is very good," said I, "but I cannot enjoy it as much as if I were well: I feel very sadly."

"How else should you feel," said the girl, "after fighting with the Flaming Tinman? All I wonder is that you can feel at all! As for the tea, it ought to be good, seeing that it cost me ten shillings a pound."

"That's a great deal for a person in your station to pay."

"In my station! I'd have you to know, young man—however, I haven't the heart to quarrel with you, you look so ill; and after all, it is a good sum to pay for one who travels the roads; but if I must have tea, I like to have the best: and tea I must have, for I am used to it, though I can't help thinking that it sometimes fills my head with strange fancies—what some folk call vapours, making me weep and cry."

"Dear me," said I, "I should never have thought that one of your size and fierceness would weep and cry!"

"My size and fierceness! I tell you what, young

man, you are not over civil, this evening; but you are ill, as I said before, and I shan't take much notice of your language, at least for the present; as for my size, I am not so much bigger than yourself; and as for being fierce, you should be the last one to fling that at me. It is well for you that I can be fierce sometimes. If I hadn't taken your part against blazing Bosville, you wouldn't be now taking tea with me."

"It is true that you struck me in the face first; but we'll let that pass. So that man's name is Bosville; what's your own?"

"Isopel Berners."

"How did you get that name?"

"I say, young man, you seem fond of asking questions! will you have another cup of tea?"

"I was just going to ask for another."

"Well, then, here it is, and much good may it do you; as for my name, I got it from my mother."

"Your mother's name, then, was Isopel?"

"Isopel Berners."

"But had you never a father?"

"Yes, I had a father," said the girl, sighing, "but I don't bear his name."

"It is the fashion, then, in your country for children to bear their mother's name?"

"If you ask such questions, young man, I shall be angry with you. I have told you my name, and whether my father's or mother's, I am not ashamed of it."

"It is a noble name."

"There you are right, young man. The chaplain in the great house, where I was born, told me it was a noble name; it was odd enough, he said, that the only three noble names in the county were to be found in the great house; mine was one; the other two were Devereux and Bohun."

"What do you mean by the great house?"

"The workhouse."

"Is it possible that you were born there?"

"Yes, young man; and as you now speak softly and kindly, I will tell you my whole tale. My father was an officer of the sea, and was killed at sea. Well, young man, the very day before they reached port they met the enemy, and there was a fight, and my father was killed, after he had struck down six of the enemy's crew on their own deck; for my father was a big man, as I have heard, and knew tolerably well how to use his hands. And when my mother heard the news, she became half distracted, and ran away into the fields and forests, totally neglecting her business, for she was a small milliner; and so she ran demented about the meads and forests for a long time, now sitting under a tree, and now by the side of a river—at last she flung herself into some water, and would have been drowned, had not some one been at hand and rescued her, whereupon she was conveyed to the great house, lest she should attempt to do herself further mischief, for she had neither friends nor parents—and

there she died three months after, having first brought me into the world. She was a sweet pretty creature, I'm told, but hardly fit for this world, being neither large, nor fierce, nor able to take her own part. So I was born and bred in the great house, where I learnt to read and sew, to fear God, and to take my own part. When I was fourteen I was put out to service to a small farmer and his wife, with whom, however, I did not stay long, for I was half starved, and otherwise ill-treated, especially by my mistress, who one day attempting to knock me down with a besom, I knocked her down with my fist, and went back to the great house."

"And how did they receive you in the great house?"

"Not very kindly, young man—on the contrary, I was put into a dark room, where I was kept a fortnight on bread and water; I did not much care, however, being glad to have got back to the great house at any rate, the place where I was born, and where my poor mother died, and in the great house I continued two years longer, reading and sewing, fearing God, and taking my own part when necessary. At the end of the two years I was again put out to service, but this time to a rich farmer and his wife, with whom, however, I did not live long, less time, I believe, than with the poor ones, being obliged to leave for——"

"Knocking your mistress down?"

"No, young man, knocking my master down.

This time I did not go back to the great house, having a misgiving that they would not receive me, so I turned my back to the great house where I was born, and where my poor mother died, and wandered for several days, I know not whither, supporting myself on a few halfpence which I chanced to have in my pocket. It happened one day, as I sat under a hedge crying, having spent my last farthing, that a comfortable-looking elderly woman came up in a cart, and seeing the state in which I was, she stopped and asked what was the matter with me; I told her some part of my story, whereupon she said, 'Cheer up, my dear, if you like you shall go with me, and wait upon me.' Of course I wanted little persuasion, so I got into the cart and went with her. She took me to London and various other places, and I soon found that she was a travelling woman, who went about the country with silks and linen. I was of great use to her, more especially in those places where we met evil company. Once, as we were coming from Dover, we were met by two sailors, who stopped our cart, and would have robbed and stripped us. 'Let me get down,' said I; so I got down, and fought with them both, till they turned round and ran away. Two years I lived with the old gentlewoman, who was very kind to me, almost as kind as a mother; at last she fell sick at a place in Lincolnshire, and after a few days died, leaving me her cart and stock in trade, praying me only to see her decently buried, which I did, giving her a funeral

fit for a gentlewoman. After which I travelled the country melancholy enough for want of company, but so far fortunate, that I could take my part when any body was uncivil to me. At last, passing through the valley of Todmorden, I formed the acquaintance of Blazing Bosville and his wife, with whom I occasionally took journeys for company's sake, for it is melancholy to travel about alone, even when one can take one's own part. I soon found they were evil people; but, upon the whole, they treated me civilly, and I sometimes lent them a little money, so that we got on tolerably well together. He and I, it is true, had once a dispute, and nearly came to blows, for once, when we were alone, he wanted me to marry him, promising, if I would, to turn off Grey Moll, or if I liked it better, to make her wait upon me as a maid servant; I never liked him much, but from that hour less than ever. Of the two, I believe Grey Moll to be the best, for she is at any rate true and faithful to him, and I like truth and constancy, don't you, young man? "

" Yes," said I, " they are very nice things. I feel very strangely."

" How do you feel, young man? "

" Very much afraid."

" Afraid, at what? At the Flaming Tinman? Don't be afraid of him. He won't come back, and if he did, he shouldn't touch you in this state. I'd fight him for you, but he won't come back, so you needn't be afraid of him."

" I'm not afraid of the Flaming Tinman."
" What, then, are you afraid of? "
" The evil one."
" The evil one," said the girl, " where is he? "
" Coming upon me."
" Never heed," said the girl, " I'll stand by you."

Lavengro.

V.—ISOPEL BERNERS

TIME passed on, and Belle and I lived in the dingle; when I say lived, the reader must not imagine that we were always there. She went out upon her pursuits, and I went out where inclination led me; but my excursions were very short ones, and hers occasionally occupied whole days and nights. If I am asked how we passed the time when we were together in the dingle, I would answer that we passed the time very tolerably, all things considered; we conversed together, and when tired of conversing I would sometimes give Belle a lesson in Armenian; her progress was not particularly brilliant, but upon the whole satisfactory; in about a fortnight she had hung up one hundred Haikan numerals upon the hake of her memory. I found her conversation highly entertaining; she had seen much of England and Wales, and had been acquainted with some of the most remarkable characters who travelled the roads at that period; and let me be permitted to say that many remarkable characters have travelled the roads of England, of whom fame has never said a word. I loved to hear her anecdotes of these people; some of whom I found had occasionally attempted to lay violent hands either upon her person or effects,

and had invariably been humbled by her without the assistance of either justice or constable. I could clearly see, however, that she was rather tired of England, and wished for a change of scene; she was particularly fond of talking of America, to which country her aspirations chiefly tended. She had heard much of America, which had excited her imagination; for at that time America was much talked of, on roads and in homesteads, at least so said Belle, who had good opportunities of knowing, and most people allowed that it was a good country for adventurous English. The people who chiefly spoke against it, as she informed me, were soldiers disbanded upon pensions, the sextons of village churches, and excisemen. Belle had a craving desire to visit that country, and to wander with cart and little animal amongst its forests; when I would occasionally object, that she would be exposed to danger from strange and perverse customers, she said that she had not wandered the roads of England so long and alone, to be afraid of anything which might befall in America; and that she hoped, with God's favour, to be able to take her own part, and to give to perverse customers as good as they might bring. She had a dauntless heart, that same Belle: such was the staple of Belle's conversation. As for mine, I would endeavour to entertain her with strange dreams of adventure, in which I figured in opaque forests, strangling wild beasts, or discovering and plundering the hordes of dragons;

and sometimes I would narrate to her other things far more genuine—how I had tamed savage mares, wrestled with Satan, and had dealings with ferocious publishers. Belle had a kind heart, and would weep at the accounts I gave her of my early wrestlings with the dark Monarch. She would sigh, too, as I recounted the many slights and degradations I had received at the hands of ferocious publishers; but she had the curiosity of a woman; and once, when I talked to her of the triumphs which I had achieved over unbroken mares, she lifted up her head and questioned me as to the secret of the virtue which I possessed over the aforesaid animals; whereupon I sternly reprimanded, and forthwith commanded her to repeat the Armenian numerals; and, on her demurring, I made use of words, to escape which she was glad to comply, saying the Armenian numerals from one to a hundred, which numerals, as a punishment for her curiosity, I made her repeat three times, loading her with the bitterest reproaches whenever she committed the slightest error, either in accent or pronunciation, which reproaches she appeared to bear with the greatest patience. And now I have given a very fair account of the manner in which Isopel Berners and myself passed our time in the dingle.

Lavengro.

VI.—LIFE IN THE DINGLE

BELLE drove the little cart containing her merchandise about the neighbourhood, returning to the dingle towards evening. As for myself, I kept within my wooded retreat, working during the periods of her absence leisurely at my forge. Having observed that the quadruped which my companion drove was as much in need of shoes as my own had been some time previously, I had determined to provide it with a set, and during the aforesaid periods occupied myself in preparing them. As I was employed three mornings and afternoons about them, I am sure that the reader will agree that I worked leisurely or rather lazily. On the third day Belle arrived, somewhat later than usual; I was lying on my back at the bottom of the dingle, employed in tossing up the shoes, which I had produced, and catching them as they fell, some being always in the air mounting or descending, somewhat after the fashion of the waters of a fountain.

"Why have you been absent so long?" said I to Belle, "it must be long past four by the day."

"I have been almost killed by the heat," said Belle; "I was never out on a more sultry day—the poor donkey, too, could scarcely move along."

"He shall have fresh shoes," said I, continuing my exercise; "here they are, quite ready; to-morrow I will tack them on."

"And why are you playing with them in that manner?" said Belle.

"Partly in triumph at having made them, and partly to show that I can do something besides making them; it is not every one who, after having made a set of horse-shoes, can keep them going up and down in the air, without letting one fall."

"One has now fallen on your chin," said Belle.

"And another on my cheek," said I, getting up, "it is time to discontinue the game, for the last shoe drew blood."

Belle went to her own little encampment; and as for myself, after having flung the donkey's shoes into my tent, I put some fresh wood on the fire, which was nearly out, and hung the kettle over it, I then issued forth from the dingle, and strolled round the wood that surrounded it; for a long time I was busied in meditation, looking at the ground, striking with my foot, half unconsciously, the tufts of grass and thistles that I met in my way. After some time, I lifted up my eyes to the sky, at first vacantly, and then with more attention, turning my head in all directions for a minute or two; after which I returned to the dingle. Isopel was seated near the fire, over which the kettle was now hung; she had changed her dress—no signs of the dust and fatigue of her late excursion remained; she had just added to the fire

a small billet of wood, two or three of which I had left beside it; the fire cracked, and a sweet odour filled the dingle.

"I am fond of sitting near a wood fire," said Belle, "when abroad, whether it be hot or cold; I love to see the flames dart out of the wood; but what kind is this, and where did you get it?"

"It is ash," said I, "green ash. Somewhat less than a week ago, whilst I was wandering along the road by the side of a wood, I came to a place where some peasants were engaged in cutting up and clearing away a confused mass of fallen timber: a mighty aged oak had given way the night before, and in its fall had shivered some smaller trees; the upper part of the oak, and the fragments of the rest, lay across the road. I purchased, for a trifle, a bundle or two, and the wood on the fire is part of it—ash, green ash."

"That makes good the old rhyme," said Belle, "which I have heard sung by the old women in the great house:

Ash, when green,
Is fire for a queen."

"And on fairer form of queen, ash fire never shone," said I, "than on thine, O beauteous queen of the dingle."

"I am half disposed to be angry with you, young man," said Belle.

"And why not entirely?" said I.

Belle made no reply.

"Shall I tell you?" I demanded. "You had no objection to the first part of the speech, but you did not like being called queen of the dingle. Well, if I had the power, I would make you queen of something better than the dingle—Queen of China. Come, let us have tea."

"Something less would content me," said Belle, sighing, as she rose to prepare our evening meal.

So we took tea together, Belle and I. "How delicious tea is after a hot summer's day, and a long walk," said she.

"I dare say it is most refreshing then," said I; "but I have heard people say that they most enjoy it on a cold winter's night, when the kettle is hissing on the fire, and their children playing on the hearth."

Belle sighed. "Where does tea come from?" she presently demanded.

"From China," said I; "I just now mentioned it, and the mention of it put me in mind of tea."

"What kind of country is China?"

"I know very little about it; all I know is, that it is a very large country far to the East, but scarcely large enough to contain its inhabitants, who are so numerous, that though China does not cover one-ninth part of the world, its inhabitants amount to one-third of the population of the world."

"And do they talk as we do?"

"O no! I know nothing of their language; but I have heard that it is quite different from all others, and so difficult that none but the cleverest people

amongst foreigners can master it, on which account, perhaps, only the French pretend to know anything about it."

"Are the French so very clever, then?" said Belle.

"They say there are no people like them, at least in Europe. But talking of Chinese reminds me that I have not for some time past given you a lesson in Armenian. The word for tea in Armenian is—by the bye, what is the Armenian word for tea?"

"That's your affair, not mine," said Belle; "it seems hard that the master should ask the scholar."

"Well," said I, "whatever the word may be in Armenian, it is a noun; and as we have never yet declined an Armenian noun together, we may as well take this opportunity of declining one. Belle, there are ten declensions in Armenian!"

"What's a declension?"

"The way of declining a noun."

"Then, in the civilest way imaginable, I decline the noun. Is that a declension?"

"You should never play on words; to do so is low, vulgar, smelling of the pothouse, the workhouse. Belle, I insist on your declining an Armenian noun."

"I have done so already," said Belle.

"If you go on in this way," said I, "I shall decline taking any more tea with you. Will you decline an Armenian noun?"

"I don't like the language," said Belle. "If you must teach me languages, why not teach me French or Chinese?"

"I know nothing of Chinese; and as for French, none but a Frenchman is clever enough to speak it —to say nothing of teaching; no, we will stick to Armenian, unless, indeed, you would prefer Welsh!"

"Welsh, I have heard, is vulgar," said Belle; "so, if I must learn one of the two, I will prefer Armenian, which I never heard of till you mentioned it to me; though of the two, I really think Welsh sounds best."

"The Armenian noun," said I, "which I propose for your declension this night is —— which signifieth Master."

"I neither like the word nor the sound," said Belle.

"I can't help that," said I; "it is the word I choose: Master, with all its variations, being the first noun, the sound of which I would have you learn from my lips. Come, let us begin—

"A master. Of a master, etc. Repeat—"

"I am not much used to say the word," said Belle, "but to oblige you I will decline it as you wish"; and thereupon Belle declined Master in Armenian.

"You have declined the noun very well," said I; "that is in the singular number; we will now go to the plural."

"What is the plural?" said Belle.

"That which implies more than one, for example, Masters; you shall now go through Masters in Armenian."

"Never," said Belle, "never; it is bad to have

one master, but more I would never bear, whether in Armenian or English."

"You do not understand," said I; "I merely want you to decline Masters in Armenian."

"I do decline them; I will have nothing to do with them, nor with master either; I was wrong to—— What sound is that?"

"I did not hear it, but I dare say it is thunder; in Armenian——"

"Never mind what it is in Armenian; but why do you think it is thunder?"

"Ere I returned from my stroll, I looked up into the heavens, and by their appearance I judged that a storm was nigh at hand."

"And why did you not tell me so?"

"You never asked me about the state of the atmosphere, and I am not in the habit of giving my opinion to people on any subject, unless questioned. But, setting that aside, can you blame me for not troubling you with forebodings about storm and tempest, which might have prevented the pleasure you promised yourself in drinking tea, or perhaps a lesson in Armenian, though you pretend to dislike the latter."

"My dislike is not pretended," said Belle; "I hate the sound of it, but I love my tea, and it was kind of you not to wish to cast a cloud over my little pleasures; the thunder came quite time enough to interrupt it without being anticipated—there is another peal—I will clear away, and see that my

tent is in a condition to resist the storm, and I think you had better bestir yourself."

Isopel departed, and I remained seated on my stone, as nothing belonging to myself required any particular attention; in about a quarter of an hour she returned, and seated herself upon her stool.

"How dark the place is become since I left you," said she; "just as if night were just at hand."

"Look up at the sky," said I; "and you will not wonder; it is all of a deep olive. The wind is beginning to rise; hark how it moans among the branches; and see now their tops are bending—it brings dust on its wings—I felt some fall on my face; and what is this, a drop of rain?"

"We shall have plenty anon," said Belle; "do you hear? it already begins to hiss upon the embers; that fire of ours will soon be extinguished."

"It is not probable that we shall want it," said I, "but we had better seek shelter: let us go into my tent. You may come, if you please; I do assure you I am not afraid of you."

"Nor I of you," said Belle; "so I will come. Why should I be afraid? I can take my own part; that is——"

We went into the tent and sat down, and now the rain began to pour with vehemence. "I hope we shall not be flooded in this hollow," said I to Belle. "There is no fear of that," said Belle; "the wandering people, amongst other names, call it the dry hollow. I believe there is a passage somewhere

or other by which the wet is carried off. There must be a cloud right above us, it is so dark. Oh! what a flash!"

"And what a peal," said I; "that is what the Hebrews call Koul Adonai—the voice of the Lord. Are you afraid?"

"No," said Belle, "I rather like to hear it."

"You are right," said I, "I am fond of the sound of thunder myself. There is nothing like it; Koul Adonai behadar; the voice of the Lord is a glorious voice, as the prayer-book version hath it."

"There is something awful in it," said Belle; "and then the lightning, the whole dingle is now in a blaze."

"'The voice of the Lord breaketh the cedar trees,'" said I, "but what you hear is caused by a convulsion of the air; during a thunderstorm there are occasionally all kinds of aërial noises. Ab Gwilym, who, next to King David, has best described a thunder-storm, speaks of these aërial noises in the following manner:

> Astonied now I stand at strains,
> As of ten thousand clanking chains;
> And once, methought, that overthrown,
> The welkin's oaks came whelming down;
> Upon my head up starts my hair:
> Why hunt abroad the hounds of air?
> What cursed hag is screeching high,
> Whilst crash goes all her crockery?

You would hardly believe, Belle, that though I offered at least ten thousand lines nearly as good

as those to the booksellers in London, the simpletons were so blind to their interest as to refuse purchasing them."

"I don't wonder at it," said Belle, "especially if such dreadful expressions frequently occur as that towards the end; surely that was the crash of a tree?"

"Ah!" said I, "there falls the cedar tree—I mean the sallow; one of the tall trees on the outside of the dingle has been snapped short."

"What a pity," said Belle, "that the fine old oak, which you saw the peasants cutting up, gave way the other night, when scarcely a breath of air was stirring; how much better to have fallen in a storm like this, the fiercest I remember."

"I don't think so," said I; "after braving a thousand tempests, it was meeter for it to fall of itself than to be vanquished at last. But to return to Ab Gwilym's poetry, he was above culling dainty words, and spoke boldly his mind on all subjects. Enraged with the thunder for parting him and Morfydd, he says, at the conclusion of his ode,

> My curse, O Thunder, cling to thee,
> For parting my dear pearl and me!"

"You and I shall part; that is, I shall go to my tent if you persist in repeating from him. The man must have been a savage. A poor wood-pigeon has fallen dead."

"Yes," said I, "there he lies just outside the

tent; often have I listened to his note when alone in this wilderness. So you do not like Ab Gwilym; what say you to old Goethe:

> Mist shrouds the night, and rack;
> Hear, in the woods, what an awful crack!
> Wildly the owls are flitting,
> Hark to the pillars splitting
> Of palaces verdant ever,
> The branches quiver and sever,
> The mighty stems are creaking,
> The poor roots breaking and shrieking,
> In wild mixt ruin down dashing,
> O'er one another they're crashing;
> Whilst 'midst the rocks so hoary,
> Whirlwinds hurry and worry.
> Hear'st not, sister—"

"Hark!" said Belle, "hark!"

> "Hear'st not, sister, a chorus
> Of voices——?"

"No," said Belle, "but I hear a voice."

Lavengro.

VII.—THE FAIR

It might be about five in the evening, when I reached the gipsy encampment. Here I found Mr. Petulengro, Tawno Chikno, Sylvester, and others in a great bustle, clipping and trimming certain ponies and old horses which they had brought with them. On inquiring of Jasper the reason of their being so engaged, he informed me that they were getting the horses ready for a fair, which was to be held on the morrow, at a place some miles distant, at which they should endeavour to dispose of them, adding—"Perhaps, brother, you will go with us, provided you have nothing better to do?" Not having any particular engagement, I assured him that I should have great pleasure in being of the party. It was agreed that we should start early on the following morning. Thereupon I descended into the dingle. Belle was sitting before the fire, at which the kettle was boiling. "Were you waiting for me?" I inquired. "Yes," said Belle, "I thought that you would come, and I waited for you." "That was very kind," said I. "Not half so kind," said she, "as it was of you to get everything ready for me in the dead of last night, when there was scarcely a chance of my coming." The tea-things were brought forward, and we sat down. "Have you been far?"

said Belle. "Merely to that public-house," said I, "to which you directed me on the second day of our acquaintance." "Young men should not make a habit of visiting public-houses," said Belle, "they are bad places." "They may be so to some people," said I, "but I do not think the worst public-house in England could do me any harm." "Perhaps you are so bad already," said Belle, with a smile, "that it would be impossible to spoil you." "How dare you catch at my words?" said I; "come, I will make you pay for doing so—you shall have this evening the longest lesson in Armenian which I have yet inflicted upon you." "You may well say inflicted," said Belle, "but pray spare me. I do not wish to hear anything about Armenian, especially this evening." "Why this evening?" said I. Belle made no answer. "I will not spare you," said I; "this evening I intend to make you conjugate an Armenian verb." "Well, be it so," said Belle; "for this evening you shall command." "To command is hramahyel, a verb of the second conjugation. We will begin with the first." "First of all tell me," said Belle, "what a verb is." "A part of speech," said I, "which, according to the dictionary, signifies some action or passion; for example, I command you, or I hate you." "I have given you no cause to hate me," said Belle, looking me sorrowfully in the face.

"I was merely giving two examples," said I, "and neither was directed at you. In those examples, to

command and hate are verbs. Belle, in Armenian there are four conjugations of verbs; the first ends in al, the second in yel, the third in oul, and the fourth in il. Now, have you understood me?"

"I am afraid, indeed, it will all end ill," said Belle. "Hold your tongue," said I, "or you will make me lose my patience." "You have already made me nearly lose mine," said Belle. "Let us have no unprofitable interruptions," said I; "the conjugations of the Armenian verbs are neither so numerous nor so difficult as the declensions of the nouns; hear that, and rejoice. Come, we will begin with the verb hntal, a verb of the first conjugation, which signifies to rejoice. Come along; hntam, I rejoice; hntas, thou rejoicest; why don't you follow, Belle?"

"I am sure I don't rejoice, whatever you may do," said Belle.

"The chief difficulty, Belle," said I, "that I find in teaching you the Armenian grammar, proceeds from your applying to yourself and me every example I give. Rejoice, in this instance, is merely an example of an Armenian verb of the first conjugation, and has no more to do with your rejoicing than lal, which is also a verb of the first conjugation, and which signifies to weep, would have to do with your weeping, provided I made you conjugate it. Come along; hntam, I rejoice; hntas, thou rejoicest; hnta, he rejoices; hntamk, we rejoice: now, repeat those words."

"I can't," said Belle, "they sound more like the

language of horses than human beings. Do you take me for——?" "For what?" said I. Belle was silent. "Were you going to say mare?" said I. "Mare! mare! by the by, do you know, Belle, that mare in Old English stands for woman; and that when we call a female an evil mare, the strict meaning of the term is merely a bad woman. So if I were to call you a mare without prefixing bad, you must not be offended." "But I should though," said Belle. "I was merely attempting to make you acquainted with a philological fact," said I. "If mare, which in old English, and likewise in vulgar English, signifies a woman, sounds the same as mare, which in modern and polite English signifies a female horse, I can't help it. There is no such confusion of sounds in Armenian, not, at least, in the same instance. Belle, in Armenian, woman is ghin, the same word, by the by, as our queen, whereas mare is madagh tzi, which signifies a female horse; and perhaps you will permit me to add, that a hard-mouthed jade is, in Armenian, madagh tzi hsdierah."

"I can't bear this much longer," said Belle. "Keep yourself quiet," said I; "I wish to be gentle with you; and to convince you, we will skip hntal, and also for the present verbs of the first conjugation and proceed to the second. Belle, I will now select for you to conjugate the prettiest verb in Armenian; not only of the second, but also of all the four conjugations; that verb is siriel. Here is the present tense: siriem, siries, sirè, siriemk,

sirèk, sirien. You observe that it runs on just in the same manner as hntal, save and except that the e is substituted for a; and it will be as well to tell you that almost the only difference between the second, third, and fourth conjugation, and the first, is the substituting in the present, preterite and other tenses e, or ou, or i for a; so you see that the Armenian verbs are by no means difficult. Come on, Belle, and say siriem." Belle hesitated. "Pray oblige me, Belle, by saying siriem!" Belle still appeared to hesitate. "You must admit, Belle, that it is much softer than hntam." "It is so," said Belle; "and to oblige you I will say siriem." "Very well indeed, Belle," said I. "No vartabied, or doctor, could have pronounced it better; and now, to show you how verbs act upon pronouns in Armenian, I will say siriem zkiez. Please to repeat siriem zkiez!" "Siriem zkiez!" said Belle; "that last word is very hard to say." "Sorry that you think so, Belle," said I. "Now please to say sirià zis." Belle did so. "Exceedingly well," said I. "Now say, yerani thè sirèir zis." "Yerani thè sirèir zis," said Belle. "Capital!" said I; "you have now said, I love you—love me—ah! would that you would love me!"

"And I have said all these things?" said Belle. "Yes," said I; "you have said them in Armenian." "I would have said them in no language that I understood," said Belle; "and it was very wrong of you to take advantage of my ignorance, and make me say such things." "Why so?" said I; "if you

said them, I said them too." "You did so," said Belle; "but I believe you were merely bantering and jeering." "As I told you before, Belle," said I, "the chief difficulty which I find in teaching you Armenian proceeds from your persisting in applying to yourself and me every example I give." "Then you meant nothing after all," said Belle, raising her voice. "Let us proceed," said I; "sirietsi, I loved." "You never loved any one but yourself," said Belle; "and what's more——" "Sirietsits, I will love," said I; "sirietsies, thou wilt love." "Never one so thoroughly heartless," said Belle. "I tell you what, Belle, you are becoming intolerable, but we will change the verb; or rather I will now proceed to tell you here, that some of the Armenian conjugations have their anomalies; one species of these I wish to bring before your notice. As old Villotte says—from whose work I first contrived to pick up the rudiments of Armenian—'Est verborum transitivorum, quorum infinitivus——' but I forgot, you don't understand Latin. He says there are certain transitive verbs, whose infinitive is in outsaniel; the preterite in outsi; the imperative in oue; for example—parghats-outsaniem, I irritate——"

"You do, you do," said Belle; "and it will be better for both of us, if you leave off doing so."

"You would hardly believe, Belle," said I, "that the Armenian is in some respects closely connected with the Irish, but so it is: for example, that word parghatsoutsaniem is evidently derived from the

same root as feargaim, which, in Irish, is as much as to say I vex."

"You do, indeed," said Belle, sobbing.

"But how do you account for it?"

"O man, man!" said Belle, bursting into tears, "for what purpose do you ask a poor ignorant girl such a question, unless it be to vex and irritate her? If you wish to display your learning, do so to the wise and instructed, and not to me, who can scarcely read or write. Oh, leave off your nonsense; yet I know you will not do so, for it is the breath of your nostrils! I could have wished we should have parted in kindness, but you will not permit it. I have deserved better at your hands than such treatment. The whole time we have kept company together in this place, I have scarcely had one kind word from you, but the strangest——" and here the voice of Belle was drowned in her sobs.

"I am sorry to see you take on so, dear Belle," said I. "I really have given you no cause to be so unhappy; surely teaching you a little Armenian was a very innocent kind of diversion."

"Yes, but you went on so long, and in such a strange way, and made me repeat such strange examples, as you call them, that I could not bear it."

"Why, to tell you the truth, Belle, it's just my way; and I have dealt with you just as I would with——"

"A hard-mouthed jade," said Belle, "and you practising your horse-witchery upon her. I have

been of an unsubdued spirit, I acknowledge, but I was always kind to you; and if you have made me cry, it's a poor thing to boast of."

"Boast of!" said I; "a pretty thing indeed to boast of; I had no idea of making you cry. Come, I beg your pardon; what more can I do? Come, cheer up, Belle. You were talking of parting; don't let us part, but depart, and that together."

"Our ways lie different," said Belle.

"I don't see why they should," said I. "Come, let us be off to America together."

"To America together?" said Belle, looking full at me.

"Yes," said I; "where we will settle down in some forest, and conjugate the verb siriel conjugally."

"Conjugally?" said Belle.

"Yes," said I; "as man and wife in America, air yew ghin."

"You are jesting, as usual," said Belle.

"Not I, indeed. Come, Belle, make up your mind, and let us be off to America; and leave priests, humbug, learning, and languages behind us."

"I don't think you are jesting," said Belle; "but I can hardly entertain your offers; however, young man, I thank you."

"You had better make up your mind at once," said I, "and let us be off. I shan't make a bad husband, I assure you. Perhaps you think I am not worthy of you? To convince you, Belle, that I am, I am ready to try a fall with you this moment upon

the grass. Brynhilda, the valkyrie, swore that no one should ever marry her who could not fling her down. Perhaps you have done the same. The man who eventually married her, got a friend of his, who was called Sygurd, the serpent-killer, to wrestle with her, disguising him in his own armour. Sygurd flung her down, and won her for his friend, though he loved her himself. I shall not use a similar deceit, nor employ Jasper Petulengro to personate me—so get up, Belle, and I will do my best to fling you down."

"I require no such thing of you, or anybody," said Belle; "you are beginning to look rather wild."

"I every now and then do," said I; "come, Belle, what do you say?"

"I will say nothing at present on the subject," said Belle, "I must have time to consider."

"Just as you please," said I, "to-morrow I go to a fair with Mr. Petulengro, perhaps you will consider whilst I am away. Come, Belle, let us have some more tea. I wonder whether we shall be able to procure tea as good as this in the American forest."

* * * * * *

It was about the dawn of day when I was awakened by the voice of Mr. Petulengro shouting from the top of the dingle, and bidding me get up. I arose instantly, and dressed myself for the expedition to the fair. On leaving my tent, I was surprised to observe Belle, entirely dressed, standing close to her

own little encampment. "Dear me," said I, "I little expected to find you up so early. I suppose Jasper's call awakened you, as it did me." "I merely lay down in my things," said Belle, "and have not slept during the night." "And why did you not take off your things and go to sleep?" said I. "I did not undress," said Belle, "because I wished to be in readiness to bid you farewell when you departed; and as for sleeping, I could not." "Well, God bless you!" said I, taking Belle by the hand. Belle made no answer, and I observed that her hand was very cold. "What is the matter with you?" said I, looking her in the face. Belle looked at me for a moment in the eyes—and then cast down her own—her features were very pale. "You are really unwell," said I, "I had better not go to the fair, but stay here, and take care of you." "No," said Belle, "pray go, I am not unwell." "Then go to your tent," said I, "and do not endanger your health by standing abroad in the raw morning air. God bless you, Belle. I shall be home to-night, by which time I expect you will have made up your mind; if not, another lesson in Armenian, however late the hour be." I then wrung Belle's hand, and ascended to the plain above.

I found the Rommany party waiting for me, and everything in readiness for departing. Mr. Petulengro and Tawno Chikno were mounted on two old horses. The rest, who intended to go to the fair, amongst whom were two or three women, were on

foot. On arriving at the extremity of the plain, I looked towards the dingle. Isopel Berners stood at the mouth, the beams of the early morning sun shone full on her noble face and figure. I waved my hand towards her. She slowly lifted up her right arm. I turned away, and never saw Isopel Berners again.

My companions and myself proceeded on our way. In about two hours we reached the place where the fair was to be held. After breakfasting on bread and cheese and ale behind a broken stone wall, we drove our animals to the fair. The fair was a common cattle and horse fair: there was little merriment going on, but there was no lack of business. By about two o'clock in the afternoon, Mr. Petulengro and his people had disposed of their animals at what they conceived very fair prices—they were all in high spirits, and Jasper proposed to adjourn to a public-house. As we were proceeding to one, a very fine horse, led by a jockey, made its appearance on the ground. Mr. Petulengro stopped short, and looked at it stedfastly: "Fino covar dove odoy sas miro—a fine thing were that if it were but mine!" he exclaimed. "If you covet it," said I, "why do you not purchase it?" "We low 'Gyptians never buy animals of that description; if we did we could never sell them, and most likely should be had up as horse-stealers." "Then why did you say just now, 'It were a fine thing if it were but yours?'" said I. "We 'Gyptians always say

so when we see anything that we admire. An animal like that is not intended for a little hare like me, but for some grand gentleman like yourself. I say, brother, do you buy that horse!" "How should I buy the horse, you foolish person?" said I. "Buy the horse, brother," said Mr. Petulengro, "if you have not the money I can lend it you, though I be of lower Egypt." "You talk nonsense," said I; "however, I wish you would ask the man the price of it." Mr. Petulengro, going up to the jockey, inquired the price of the horse—the man, looking at him scornfully, made no reply. "Young man," said I, going up to the jockey, "do me the favour to tell me the price of that horse, as I suppose it is to sell." The jockey, who was a surly-looking man, of about fifty, looked at me for a moment, then, after some hesitation, said, laconically, "Seventy." "Thank you," said I, and turned away. "Buy that horse," said Mr. Petulengro, coming after me; "the dook tells me that in less than three months he will be sold for twice seventy." "I will have nothing to do with him," said I; "besides, Jasper, I don't like his tail. Did you observe what a mean scrubby tail he has?" "What a fool you are, brother," said Mr. Petulengro; "that very tail of his shows his breeding. No good bred horse ever yet carried a fine tail—'tis your scrubby-tailed horses that are your out-and-outers. Did you ever hear of Syntax, brother? That tail of his puts me in mind of Syntax. Well, I say nothing more, have

your own way—all I wonder at is, that a horse like him was ever brought to such a fair of dog cattle as this."

We then made the best of our way to a public-house, where we had some refreshment. I then proposed returning to the encampment, but Mr. Petulengro declined, and remained drinking with his companions, till about six o'clock in the evening when various jockeys from the fair came in. After some conversation a jockey proposed a game of cards; and in a little time, Mr. Petulengro and another gipsy sat down to play a game of cards with two of the jockeys.

Though not much acquainted with cards, I soon conceived a suspicion that the jockeys were cheating Mr. Petulengro and his companion, I therefore called Mr. Petulengro aside, and gave him a hint to that effect. Mr. Petulengro, however, instead of thanking me, told me to mind my own bread and butter, and forthwith returned to his game. I continued watching the players for some hours. The gipsies lost considerably, and I saw clearly that the jockeys were cheating them most confoundedly. I therefore once more called Mr. Petulengro aside, and told him that the jockeys were cheating him, conjuring him to return to the encampment. Mr. Petulengro, who was by this time somewhat the worse for liquor, now fell into a passion, swore several oaths, and asking me who had made me a Moses over him and his brethren, told me to return to the encampment by myself.

Incensed at the unworthy return which my well-meant words had received, I forthwith left the house, and having purchased a few articles of provision, I set out for the dingle alone. It was a dark night when I reached it, and descending I saw the glimmer of a fire from the depths of the dingle; my heart beat with fond anticipation of a welcome. "Isopel Berners is waiting for me," said I, "and the first words that I shall hear from her lips is that she has made up her mind. We shall go to America, and be so happy together." On reaching the bottom of the dingle, however, I saw seated near the fire, beside which stood the kettle simmering, not Isopel Berners, but a gipsy girl, who told me that Miss Berners, when she went away had charged her to keep up the fire, and have the kettle boiling against my arrival. Startled at these words, I inquired at what hour Isopel had left, and whither she was gone, and was told that she had left the dingle, with her cart, about two hours after I departed; but where she was gone, she, the girl, did not know. I then asked whether she had left no message, and the girl replied that she had left none, but had merely given directions about the kettle and fire, putting, at the same time, sixpence into her hand. "Very strange," thought I; then dismissing the gipsy girl I sat down by the fire. I had no wish for tea, but sat looking on the embers, wondering what could be the motive of the sudden departure of Isopel. "Does she mean to return?" thought I to myself. "Surely she means to

return," Hope replied, " or she would not have gone away without leaving any message "—" and yet she could scarcely mean to return," muttered Foreboding, " or she assuredly would have left some message with the girl." I then thought to myself what a hard thing it would be, if, after having made up my mind to assume the yoke of matrimony, I should be disappointed of the woman of my choice. " Well, after all," thought I, " I can scarcely be disappointed; if such an ugly scoundrel as Sylvester had no difficulty in getting such a nice wife as Ursula, surely I, who am not a tenth part so ugly, cannot fail to obtain the hand of Isopel Berners, uncommonly fine damsel though she be. Husbands do not grow upon hedgerows; she is merely gone after a little business and will return to-morrow."

Comforted in some degree by these hopeful imaginings, I retired to my tent, and went to sleep.

Lavengro.

VIII.—ISOPEL'S LETTER

It was on the morning after this affair, and the fourth, if I forget not, from the time of Isopel's departure, that, as I was seated on my stone at the bottom of the dingle, getting my breakfast, I heard an unknown voice from the path above—apparently that of a person descending—exclaim, "Here's a strange place to bring a letter to"; and presently an old woman, with a belt round her middle, to which was attached a leathern bag, made her appearance, and stood before me.

"Well, if I ever!" said she, as she looked about her. "My good gentlewoman," said I, "pray what may you please to want?" "Gentlewoman!" said the old dame, "please to want—well, I call that speaking civilly, at any rate. It is true, civil words cost nothing; nevertheless, we do not always get them. What I please to want is to deliver a letter to a young man in this place; perhaps you be he?" "What's the name on the letter?" said I, getting up, and going to her. "There's no name upon it," said she, taking a letter out of her scrip, and looking at it. "It is directed to the young man in Mumper's Dingle." "Then it is for me, I make no doubt," said I, stretching out my hand to take it. "Please to pay me ninepence first," said the old woman.

"However," said she, after a moment's thought, "civility is civility, and, being rather a scarce article, should meet with some return. Here's the letter, young man, and I hope you will pay for it; for if you do not I must pay the postage myself." "You are the postwoman, I suppose," said I, as I took the letter. "I am the postman's mother," said the old woman; "but as he has a wide beat, I help him as much as I can, and I generally carry letters to places like this, to which he is afraid to come himself." "You say the postage is ninepence," said I, "here's a shilling." "Well, I call that honourable," said the old woman, taking the shilling, and putting it into her pocket—"here's your change, young man," said she, offering me threepence. "Pray keep that for yourself," said I; "you deserve it for your trouble." "Well, I call that genteel," said the old woman; "and as one good turn deserves another, since you look as if you couldn't read, I will read your letter for you. Let's see it; it's from some young woman or other, I dare say." "Thank you," said I, "but I can read." "All the better for you," said the old woman; "your being able to read will frequently save you a penny, for that's the charge I generally make for reading letters; though, as you behaved so genteelly to me, I should have charged you nothing. Well, if you can read, why don't you open the letter, instead of keeping it hanging between your finger and thumb?" "I am in no hurry to open it," said I, with a sigh. The old woman looked

at me for a moment—" Well, young man," said she, " there are some—especially those who can read—who don't like to open their letters when anybody is by, more especially when they come from young women. Well, I won't intrude upon you, but leave you alone with your letter. I wish it may contain something pleasant. God bless you," and with these words she departed.

I sat down on my stone, with my letter in my hand. I knew perfectly well that it could have come from no other person than Isopel Berners; but what did the letter contain? I guessed tolerably well what its purport was—an eternal farewell! yet I was afraid to open the letter, lest my expectation should be confirmed. There I sat with the letter, putting off the evil moment as long as possible. At length I glanced at the direction, which was written in a fine bold hand, and was directed, as the old woman had said, to the young man in " Mumpers' Dingle," with the addition, near ——, in the county of ——. Suddenly the idea occurred to me, that, after all, the letter might not contain an eternal farewell; and that Isopel might have written, requesting me to join her. Could it be so? " Alas! no," presently said Foreboding. At last I became ashamed of my weakness. The letter must be opened sooner or later. Why not at once? So as the bather who, for a considerable time, has stood shivering on the bank, afraid to take the decisive plunge, suddenly takes it, I tore open the letter almost before I was aware. I had no sooner done so than a paper fell out. I examined it; it

contained a lock of bright flaxen hair. "This is no good sign," said I, as I thrust the lock and paper into my bosom, and proceeded to read the letter, which ran as follows:

TO THE YOUNG MAN IN MUMPERS' DINGLE

SIR,—I send these lines, with the hope and trust that they will find you well, even as I am myself at this moment, and in much better spirits, for my own are not such as I could wish they were, being sometimes rather hysterical and vapourish, and at other times, and most often, very low. I am at a sea-port, and am just going on shipboard; and when you get these I shall be on the salt waters, on my way to a distant country, and leaving my own behind me, which I do not expect ever to see again.

And now, young man, I will, in the first place, say something about the manner in which I quitted you. It must have seemed somewhat singular to you that I went away without taking any leave, or giving you the slightest hint that I was going; but I did not do so without considerable reflection. I was afraid that I should not be able to support a leave-taking; and as you had said that you were determined to go wherever I did, I thought it best not to tell you at all; for I did not think it advisable that you should go with me, and I wished to have no dispute.

In the second place, I wish to say something about an offer of wedlock which you made me; perhaps, young man, had you made it at the first period of our acquaintance, I should have accepted it, but you did not, and kept putting off and putting off, and behaving in a very strange manner, till I could stand your conduct no longer, but determined upon leaving you and Old England, which last step I had been long thinking about; so when you made your offer at last, everything was arranged—my cart and donkey engaged to be sold—and the greater part of my things disposed of.

However, young man, when you did make it, I frankly tell you that I had half a mind to accept it; at last, however, after very much consideration, I thought it best to leave you for ever, because, for some time past, I had become almost convinced, that though with a wonderful deal of learning, and exceedingly shrewd in some things, you were—pray don't be offended—at the root mad! and though mad people, I have been told, sometimes make very good husbands, I was unwilling that your friends, if you had any, should say that Belle Berners, the workhouse girl, took advantage of your infirmity; for there is no concealing that I was born and bred up in a workhouse; notwithstanding that, my blood is better than your own, and as good as the best; you having yourself told me that my name is a noble name, and once, if I mistake not, that it was the same word as baron, which is the same thing as bear; and that to be called in old times a bear was considered a great compliment—the bear being a mighty strong animal, on which account our forefathers called all their great fighting-men barons, which is the same as bears.

However, setting matters of blood and family entirely aside, many thanks to you, young man, from poor Belle, for the honour you did her in making that same offer; for, after all, it is an honour to receive an honourable offer, which she could see clearly yours was, with no floriness nor chaff in it; but, on the contrary, entire sincerity. She assures you that she shall always bear it and yourself in mind, whether on land or water; and as a proof of the goodwill she bears to you, she sends you a lock of the hair which she wears on her head, which you were often looking at, and were pleased to call flax, which word she supposes you meant as a compliment, even as the old people meant to pass a compliment to their great folks, when they called them bears; though she cannot help thinking that they might have found an animal as strong as a bear, and somewhat less uncouth, to call their great folks after: even as she thinks

yourself, amongst your great store of words, might have found something a little more genteel to call her hair after than flax, which, though strong and useful, is rather a coarse and common kind of article.

And as another proof of the goodwill she bears to you, she sends you, along with the lock, a piece of advice, which is worth all the hair in the world, to say nothing of the flax.

Fear God, and take your own part. There's Bible in that, young man: see how Moses feared God, and how he took his own part against everybody who meddled with him. And see how David feared God, and took his own part against all the bloody enemies which surrounded him—so fear God, young man, and never give in! The world can bully, and is fond, provided it sees a man in a kind of difficulty, of getting about him, calling him coarse names, and even going so far as to hustle him: but the world, like all bullies, carries a white feather in its tail, and no sooner sees the man taking off his coat, and offering to fight its best, than it scatters here and there, and is always civil to him afterwards. So when folks are disposed to ill-treat you, young man, say, "Lord have mercy upon me!" and then tip them Long Melford, to which, as the saying goes, there is nothing comparable for shortness all the world over; and these last words, young man, are the last you will ever have from her who is nevertheless,

Your affectionate female servant,

ISOPEL BERNERS.

After reading the letter I sat for some time motionless, holding it in my hand. The daydream in which I had been a little time before indulging, of marrying Isopel Berners, of going with her to America and having by her a large progeny, who were to assist me in felling trees, cultivating the soil, and who would take care of me when I was old, was now thoroughly

dispelled. Isopel had deserted me, and was gone to America by herself, where, perhaps, she would marry some other person, and would bear him a progeny, who would do for him what in my dream I had hoped my progeny by her would do for me. Then the thought came into my head that though she was gone, I might follow her to America, but then I thought that if I did I might not find her; America was a very large place, and I did not know the port to which she was bound; but I could follow her to the port from which she had sailed, and there possibly discover the port to which she was bound; but I did not even know the port from which she had set out, for Isopel had not dated her letter from any place. Suddenly it occurred to me that the post-mark on the letter would tell me from whence it came, so I forthwith looked at the back of the letter, and in the post-mark read the name of a well-known and not very distant sea-port. I then knew with tolerable certainty the port where she had embarked, and I almost determined to follow her, but I almost instantly determined to do no such thing. Isopel Berners had abandoned me, and I would not follow her; "Perhaps," whispered Pride, "if I overtook her, she would only despise me for running after her"; and it also told me pretty roundly, provided I ran after her, whether I overtook her or not, I should heartily despise myself. So I determined not to follow Isopel Berners; I took her lock of hair, and looked at it, then put it in her letter, which I folded

up and carefully stowed away, resolved to keep both for ever, but I determined not to follow her. Two or three times, however, during the day, I wavered in my determination, and was again and again almost tempted to follow her, but every succeeding time the temptation was fainter. In the evening I left the dingle, and sat down with Mr. Petulengro and his family by the door of his tent; Mr. Petulengro soon began talking of the letter which I had received in the morning. "Is it not from Miss Berners, brother?" said he. I told him it was. "Is she coming back, brother?" "Never," said I; "she is gone to America, and has deserted me." "I always knew that you two were never destined for each other," said he. "How did you know that?" I inquired. "The dook told me so, brother; you are born to be a great traveller." "Well," said I, "if I had gone with her to America, as I was thinking of doing, I should have been a great traveller." "You are to travel in another direction, brother," said he. "I wish you would tell me all about my future wanderings," said I. "I can't, brother," said Mr. Petulengro, "there's a power of clouds before my eye." "You are a poor seer, after all," said I; and getting up, I retired to my dingle and my tent, where I betook myself to my bed, and there, knowing the worst, and being no longer agitated by apprehension, nor agonised by expectation, I was soon buried in a deep slumber, the first which I had fallen into for several nights.

Lavengro.

IX.—IN LONDON

On the death of his father, Borrow, now thrown upon his own resources, quitted Norwich, when he had not yet completed his apprenticeship with a firm of solicitors, and set out for London. Here, for a year, he tried to earn a living by means of translation, but met with little success, being on several occasions reduced almost to the point of starvation. Early in the summer of 1825 he set out on his wanderings through England, of which he has given us an account in *Lavengro*.

So I set out on my walk to see the wonders of the big city, and, as chance would have it, I directed my course to the east. The day had become very fine, so that I saw the great city to advantage, and the wonders thereof: and much I admired all I saw; and, amongst other things, the huge cathedral, standing so proudly on the most commanding ground in the big city; and I looked up to the mighty dome, surmounted by a golden cross, and I said within myself, "That dome must needs be the finest in the world"; and I gazed upon it till my eyes reeled, and my brain became dizzy, and I thought that the dome would fall and crush me; and I shrank within myself, and struck yet deeper into the heart of the big city.

"O Cheapside! Cheapside!" said I, as I advanced up that mighty thoroughfare, "truly thou art a wonderful place for hurry, noise, and riches! Men

talk of the bazaars of the East—I have never seen them—but I dare say that, compared with thee, they are poor places, silent places, abounding with empty boxes, O thou pride of London's east!—mighty mart of old renown!—for thou art not a place of yesterday:—long before the Roses red and white battled in fair England thou didst exist—a place of throng and bustle—a place of gold and silver, perfumes and fine linen. Centuries ago thou couldst extort the praises even of the fiercest foes of England. Fierce bards of Wales, sworn foes of England, sang thy praises centuries ago; and even the fiercest of them all, Red Julius himself, wild Glendower's bard, had a word of praise for London's 'Cheape,' for so the bards of Wales styled thee in their flowing odes. Then, if those who were not English, and hated England and all connected therewith, had yet much to say in thy praise, when thou wast far inferior to what thou art now, why should true-born Englishmen, or those who call themselves so, turn up their noses at thee, and scoff thee at the present day, as I believe they do? But, let others do as they will, I, at least, who am not only an Englishman, but an East Englishman, will not turn up my nose at thee, but will praise and extol thee, calling thee mart of the world—a place of wonder and astonishment!—and, were it right and fitting to wish that anything should endure for ever, I would say prosperity to Cheapside throughout all ages!—may it be the world's resort for merchandise, world without end."

And when I had passed through the Cheape I entered another street, which led up a kind of ascent, and which proved to be the street of the Lombards, called so from the name of its founders; and I walked rapidly up the street of the Lombards, neither looking to the right nor left, for it had no interest for me, though I had a kind of consciousness that mighty things were being transacted behind its walls; but it wanted the throng, bustle, and outward magnificence of the Cheape, and it had never been spoken of by "ruddy bards!" And when I had got to the end of the street of the Lombards I stood still for some time, deliberating within myself whether I should turn to the right or the left, or go straight forward, and at last I turned to the right, down a street of rapid descent, and presently found myself upon a bridge which traversed the river which runs by the big city.

A strange kind of bridge it was; huge and massive, and seemingly of great antiquity. It had an arched back like that of a hog, a high balustrade, and at either side, at intervals, were stone bowers bulking over the river, but open on the other side, and furnished with a semicircular bench. Though the bridge was wide—very wide—it was all too narrow for the concourse upon it. Thousands of human beings were pouring over the bridge. But what chiefly struck my

The Cheape. Cheapside. The word cheap means market.
Street of the Lombards. Lombard Street, so called from the bankers from Lombardy who settled there.

attention was a double row of carts and wagons, the generality drawn by horses as large as elephants, each row striving hard in a different direction, and not unfrequently brought to a standstill.

Oh the cracking of whips, the shouts and oaths of the carters, and the grating of wheels upon the enormous stones that formed the pavement! In fact, there was a wild hurly-burly upon the bridge, which nearly deafened me. But if upon the bridge there was a confusion, below it there was a confusion ten times confounded. The tide, which was fast ebbing, obstructed by the immense piers of the old bridge, poured beneath the arches with a fall of several feet, forming in the river below as many whirlpools as there were arches. Truly tremendous was the roar of the descending waters, and the bellow of the tremendous gulfs, which swallowed them for a time, and then cast them forth, foaming and frothing from their horrid jaws.

Slowly advancing along the bridge, I came to the highest point, and there I stood still close beside one of the stone bowers, in which, beside a fruitstall, sat an old woman, with a pan of charcoal at her feet and a book in her hand, in which she appeared to be reading intently. There I stood, just above the principal arch, looking through the balustrade at the scene that presented itself—and such a scene! Towards the left

The old bridge. Old London Bridge was not demolished till 1832. " Shooting the bridge " was an exciting adventure in the old days.

bank of the river, a forest of masts, thick and close, as far as the eye could reach; spacious wharfs, surmounted with gigantic edifices; and, far away, Cæsar's Castle, with its White Tower. To the right, another forest of masts and a maze of buildings, from which, here and there, shot up to the sky chimneys taller than Cleopatra's Needle, vomiting forth huge wreaths of that black smoke which forms the canopy —occasionally a gorgeous one—of the more than Babel city. Stretching before me, the troubled breast of the mighty river, and, immediately below, the main whirlpool of the Thames—the Maëlstrom of the bulwarks of the middle arch—a grisly pool, which, with its superabundance of horror, fascinated me. Who knows but I should have leapt into its depths?—I have heard of such things—but for a rather startling occurrence which broke the spell.

As I stood upon the bridge, gazing into the jaws of the pool, a small boat shot suddenly through the arch beneath my feet. There were three persons in it; an oarsman in the middle, whilst a man and woman sat

Cæsar's Castle. The Tower of London. The White Tower was built by William the Conqueror, but the commencement of the fortress is traditionally assigned to Julius Cæsar.

Cleopatra's Needle. The inaccurate designation of two stone obelisks brought from Heliopolis (B.C. 14) to Alexandria. They were presented by Ismail Pasha — one to Great Britain, and one to the United States. The British Government did not think the obelisk worth removing, but Sir Erasmus Wilson brought it to England at his own expense in 1878, and it was erected where it now stands, on the Thames Embankment.

at the stern. I shall never forget the thrill of horror which went through me at this sudden apparition. What!—a boat—a small boat—passing beneath that arch into yonder roaring gulf! Yes, yes, down through that awful water-way, with more than the swiftness of an arrow, shot the boat, or skiff, right into the jaws of the pool. A monstrous breaker curls over the prow—there is no hope; the boat is swamped, and all drowned in that strangling vortex. No! the boat, which appeared to have the buoyancy of a feather, skipped over the threatening horror, and the next moment was out of danger, the boatman —a true boatman of Cockaigne, that—elevating one of his sculls in sign of triumph, the man hallooing, and the woman—a true Englishwoman, that—waving her shawl. Whether anyone observed them save myself, or whether the feat was a common one, I know not; but nobody appeared to take any notice of them. As for myself, I was so excited that I strove to clamber up the balustrade of the bridge in order to obtain a better view of the daring adventurers. Before I could accomplish my design, however, I felt myself seized by the body, and, turning my head, perceived the old fruit-woman, who was clinging to me.

"Nay, dear! don't—don't!" said she. "Don't

Cockaigne. London. The Land of Cockaigne (Fr. *Cocagne*) was an imaginary land of luxury which figured in mediæval romances. The name is also applied to London whose streets, in the opinion of the rustic, were proverbially "paved with gold."

fling yourself over—perhaps you may have better luck next time!"

"I was not going to fling myself over," said I, dropping from the balustrade; "how came you to think of such a thing?"

"Why, seeing you clamber up so fiercely, I thought you might have had ill luck, and that you wished to make away with yourself."

"Ill luck," said I, going into the stone bower and sitting down. "What do you mean? ill luck in what?"

"Why, no great harm, dear! cly-faking, perhaps."

"Are you coming over me with dialects," said I, "speaking unto me in fashions I wot nothing of?"

"Nay, dear! don't look so strange with those eyes of your'n, nor talk so strangely; I don't understand you."

"Nor I you; what do you mean by cly-faking?"

"Lor, dear! no harm; only taking a handkerchief now and then."

"Do you take me for a thief?"

"Nay, dear! don't make use of bad language; we never calls them thieves here, but prigs and fakers; to tell you the truth, dear, seeing you spring at that railing put me in mind of my own dear son, who is now at Bot'ny: when he had bad luck, he always used to talk of flinging himself over the bridge; and,

Bot'ny. Botany Bay, New South Wales, was in 1787 made a penal settlement. The transportation of criminals was stopped in 1840.

sure enough, when the traps were after him, he did fling himself into the river, but that was off the bank; nevertheless, the traps pulled him out, and he is now suffering his sentence; so you see you may speak out, if you have done anything in the harmless line, for I am my son's own mother, I assure you."

"So you think there's no harm in stealing?"

"No harm in the world, dear! do you think my own child would have been transported for it if there had been any harm in it? and, what's more, would the blessed woman in the book here have written her life as she has done, and given it to the world, if there had been any harm in faking?"

"What was her name?"

"Her name, blessed Mary Flanders."

"Will you let me look at the book?"

"Yes, dear, that I will, if you promise me not to run away with it."

I took the book from her hand; a short, thick volume, at least a century old, bound with greasy black leather. I turned the yellow and dog's-eared pages, reading here and there a sentence. Yes, and no mistake! *His* pen, his style, his spirit might be observed in every line of the uncouth-looking

Mary Flanders. Moll Flanders, a tale of low life by Daniel Defoe. Borrow's boyish mind had been deeply impressed by *Robinson Crusoe*, and he ever retained the greatest admiration for its author whom, indeed, he resembles in his flights of imagination, and the air of verisimilitude which he gives to his description of imaginary events.

His pen. Daniel Defoe's.

old volume—the air, the style, the spirit of the writer of the book which first taught me to read. I covered my face with my hand, and thought of my childhood——

"This is a singular book," said I at last; "but it does not appear to have been written to prove that thieving is no harm, but rather to show the terrible consequences of crime: it contains a deep moral."

"A deep what, dear?"

"A—— But no matter, I will give you a crown for this volume."

"No, dear, I will not sell the volume for a crown."

"I am poor," said I; "but I will give you two silver crowns for your volume."

"No, dear, I will not sell my volume for two silver crowns; no, nor for the golden one in the King's Tower down there; without my book I should mope and pine, and perhaps fling myself into the river; but I am glad you like it, which shows that I was right about you, after all; you are one of our party, and you have a flash about that eye of yours which puts me just in mind of my dear son. No, dear, I won't sell you my book; but, if you like, you may have a peep into it whenever you come this way. I shall be glad to see you; you are one of the right sort, for if you had been a common one you would have run away with the thing; but you scorn such behaviour, and, as you are so flash of your money, though you say you are poor, you may give me a tanner to buy a little baccy with; I love baccy, dear,

more by token that it comes from the plantations to which the blessed woman was sent."

"What's a tanner?" said I.

"Lor! don't you know, dear? Why, a tanner is sixpence; and, as you were talking just now about crowns, it will be as well to tell you that those of our trade never calls them crowns, but bulls; but I am talking nonsense, just as if you did not know all that already as well as myself; you are only shamming—I'm no trap, dear, nor more was the blessed woman in the book. Thank you, dear—thank you for the tanner; if I don't spend it, I'll keep it in remembrance of your sweet face. What, are you going?—well, first let me whisper a word to you. If you have any clies to sell at any time, I'll buy them of you; all safe with me; I never peach, and scorns a trap. So now, dear, God bless you! and give you good luck. Thank you for your pleasant company, and thank you for the tanner."

Lavengro.

Trap. Informer.

X.—FROM LONDON TO STONEHENGE

In about two hours I had cleared the great city, and got beyond the suburban villages, or rather towns, in the direction in which I was travelling; I was in a broad and excellent road, leading I knew not whither. I now slackened my pace, which had hitherto been great. Presently, coming to a milestone on which was graven nine miles, I rested against it, and looking round towards the vast city, which had long ceased to be visible, I fell into a train of meditation.

I thought of all my ways and doings since the day of my first arrival in that vast city—I had worked and toiled, and, though I had accomplished nothing at all commensurate with the hopes which I had entertained previous to my arrival, I had achieved my own living, preserved my independence, and become indebted to no one. I was now quitting it, poor in purse, it is true, but not wholly empty; rather ailing, it may be, but not broken in health; and, with hope within my bosom, had I not cause upon the whole to be thankful? Perhaps there were some who, arriving at the same time under not more favourable circumstances, had accomplished much more, and whose future was far more hopeful—

Good! But there might be others who, in spite of all their efforts, had been either trodden down in the press, never more to be heard of, or were quitting that mighty town broken in purse, broken in health, and, oh! with not one dear hope to cheer them. Had I not, upon the whole, abundant cause to be grateful? Truly, yes!

My meditation over, I left the milestone and proceeded on my way in the same direction as before until the night began to close in. I had always been a good pedestrian; but now, whether owing to indisposition or to not having for some time past been much in the habit of taking such lengthy walks, I began to feel not a little weary.

Just as I was thinking of putting up for the night at the next inn or public-house I should arrive at, I heard what sounded like a coach coming up rapidly behind me. Induced, perhaps, by the weariness which I felt, I stopped and looked wistfully in the direction of the sound; presently up came a coach, seemingly a mail, drawn by four bounding horses—there was no one upon it but the coachman and the guard; when nearly parallel with me it stopped.

"Want to get up?" sounded a voice, in the true coachman-like tone—half querulous, half authoritative. I hesitated; I was tired, it is true, but I had left London bound on a pedestrian excursion, and I did not much like the idea of having recourse to a coach after accomplishing so very inconsiderable a distance. "Come, we can't be staying here all night,"

said the voice, more sharply than before. "I can ride a little way, and get down whenever I like," thought I; and springing forward I clambered up the coach, and was going to sit down upon the box, next the coachman.

"No, no," said the coachman, who was a man about thirty, with a hooked nose and red face, dressed in a fashionably cut great-coat, with a fashionable black castor on his head. "No, no, keep behind—the box a'n't for the like of you," said he, as he drove off; "the box is for lords, or gentlemen at least."

I made no answer. "Hang that off-hand leader," said the coachman, as the right-hand front horse made a desperate start at something he saw in the road; and, half rising, he with great dexterity hit with his long whip the off-hand leader a cut on the off cheek. "These seem to be fine horses," said I. The coachman made no answer. "Nearly thoroughbred," I continued; the coachman drew his breath, with a kind of hissing sound, through his teeth. "Come, young fellow, none of your chaff. Don't you think, because you ride on my mail, I'm going to talk to you about 'orses. I talk to nobody about 'orses except lords." "Well," said I, "I have been called a lord in my time." "It must have been by a thimble-rigger, then," said the coachman, bending back, and half turning his face round with a broad leer. "You

A fashionable black castor. A hat made of the fur of the beaver.

have hit the mark wonderfully," said I. "You coachmen, whatever else you may be, are certainly no fools." "We a'n't, a'n't we?" said the coachman. "There you are right; and, to show you that you are, I'll now trouble you for your fare. If you have been amongst the thimble-riggers you must be tolerably well cleared out. Where are you going?—to ——? I think I have seen you there. The fare is sixteen shillings. Come, tip us the blunt; them that has no money can't ride on my mail."

Sixteen shillings was a large sum, and to pay it would make a considerable inroad on my slender finances; I thought, at first, that I would say I did not want to go so far; but then the fellow would ask at once where I wanted to go, and I was ashamed to acknowledge my utter ignorance of the road. I determined, therefore, to pay the fare, with a tacit determination not to mount a coach in future without knowing whither I was going. So I paid the man the money, who, turning round, shouted to the guard—"All right, Jem; got fare to —— "; and forthwith whipped on his horses, especially the off-hand leader, for whom he seemed to entertain a particular spite, to greater speed than before—the horses flew.

A young moon gave a feeble light, partially illuminating a line of road which, appearing by no means interesting, I the less regretted having paid my money for the privilege of being hurried along it in the flying vehicle. We frequently changed horses;

and at last my friend the coachman was replaced by another, the very image of himself—hawk nose, red face, with narrow-rimmed hat and fashionable benjamin. After he had driven about fifty yards, the new coachman fell to whipping one of the horses. "Hang this near-hand wheeler," said he, "the brute has got a corn." "Whipping him won't cure him of his corn," said I. "Who told you to speak?" said the driver, with an oath; "mind your own business; 'tisn't from the like of you I am to learn to drive 'orses."

Presently I fell into a broken kind of slumber. In an hour or two I was aroused by a rough voice—"Got to ——, young man; get down if you please." I opened my eyes—there was a dim and indistinct light, like that which precedes dawn; the coach was standing still in something like a street; just below me stood the guard. "Do you mean to get down," said he, "or will you keep us here till morning? other fares want to get up." Scarcely knowing what I did, I took my bundle and stick and descended, whilst two people mounted. "All right, John," said the guard to the coachman, springing up behind; whereupon off whisked the coach, one or two individuals who were standing by disappeared, and I was left alone.

* * * * * *

After standing still a minute or two, considering

Fashionable benjamin. A kind of overcoat.

what I should do, I moved down what appeared to be the street of a small straggling town; presently I passed by a church, which rose indistinctly on my right hand; anon there was the rustling of foliage and the rushing of waters. I reached a bridge, beneath which a small stream was running in the direction of the south. I stopped and leaned over the parapet, for I have always loved to look upon streams, especially at the still hours. "What stream is this, I wonder?" said I, as I looked down from the parapet into the water, which whirled and gurgled below.

Leaving the bridge, I ascended a gentle acclivity, and presently reached what appeared to be a tract of moory undulating ground. It was now tolerably light, but there was a mist or haze abroad which prevented my seeing objects with much precision. I felt chill in the damp air of the early morn, and walked rapidly forward. In about half an hour I arrived where the road divided into two, at an angle or tongue of dark green sward. "To the right or the left?" said I, and forthwith took, without knowing why, the left-hand road, along which I proceeded about a hundred yards, when, in the midst of the tongue of sward formed by the two roads, collaterally with myself, I perceived what I at first conceived to be a small grove of blighted trunks of oaks, barked and grey. I stood still for a moment, and then, turning off the road, advanced slowly towards it over the sward; as I drew nearer,

I perceived that the objects which attracted my curiosity, and which formed a kind of circle, were not trees, but immense upright stones. A thrill pervaded my system; just before me were two, the mightiest of the whole, tall as the stems of proud oaks, supporting on their tops a huge transverse stone, and forming a wonderful doorway. I knew now where I was, and, laying down my stick and bundle, and taking off my hat, I advanced slowly, and cast myself—it was folly, perhaps, but I could not help what I did—cast myself, with my face on the dewy earth, in the middle of the portal of giants, beneath the transverse stone.

The spirit of Stonehenge was strong upon me!

And after I had remained with my face on the ground for some time, I arose, placed my hat on my head, and, taking up my stick and bundle, wandered around the wondrous circle, examining each individual stone, from the greatest to the least; and then, entering by the great door, seated myself upon an immense broad stone, one side of which was supported by several small ones, and the other slanted upon the earth; and there in deep meditation, I sat for an hour or two, till the sun shone in my face above the tall stones of the eastern side.

And as I still sat there, I heard the noise of bells, and presently a large number of sheep came browsing past the circle of stones; two or three entered, and grazed upon what they could find, and soon a man also entered the circle at the northern side.

"Early here, sir," said the man, who was tall, and dressed in a dark green slop, and had all the appearance of a shepherd; "a traveller, I suppose?"

"Yes," said I, "I am a traveller; are these sheep yours?"

"They are, sir; that is, they are my master's. A strange place this, sir," said he, looking at the stones; "ever here before?"

"Never in body, frequently in mind."

"Heard of the stones, I suppose; no wonder—all the people of the plain talk of them."

"What do the people of the plain say of them?"

"Why, they say—How did they ever come here?"

"Do they not suppose them to have been brought?"

"Who should have brought them?"

"I have read that they were brought by many thousand men."

"Where from?"

"Ireland."

"How did they bring them?"

"I don't know."

"And what did they bring them for?"

"To form a temple, perhaps."

"What is that?"

"A place to worship God in."

"A strange place to worship God in."

"Why?"

"It has no roof."

"Yes, it has."

"Where?" said the man, looking up.

"What do you see above you?"

"The sky."

"Well?"

"Well!"

"Have you anything to say?"

"How did these stones come here?"

"Are there other stones like these on the plains?" said I.

"None; and yet there are plenty of strange things on these downs."

"What are they?"

"Strange heaps, and barrows, and great walls of earth built on the tops of hills."

"Do the people of the plain wonder how they came there?"

"They do not."

"Why?"

"They were raised by hands."

"And these stones?"

"How did they ever come here?"

"I wonder whether they are here?" said I.

"These stones?"

"Yes."

"So sure as the world," said the man; "and, as the world, they will stand as long."

"I wonder whether there is a world."

"What do you mean?"

"An earth and sea, moon and stars, sheep and men."

"Do you doubt it?"

"Sometimes."

"I never heard it doubted before."

"It is impossible there should be a world."

"It a'n't possible there shouldn't be a world."

"Just so." At this moment a fine ewe, attended by a lamb, rushed into the circle and fondled the knees of the shepherd. "I suppose you would not care to have some milk," said the man.

"Why do you suppose so?"

"Because, so be, there be no sheep, no milk, you know; and what there ben't is not worth having."

"You could not have argued better," said I; "that is, supposing you have argued; with respect to the milk you may do as you please."

"Be still, Nanny," said the man; and producing a tin vessel from his scrip, he milked the ewe into it. "Here is milk of the plains, master," said the man, as he handed the vessel to me.

"Where are those barrows and great walls of earth you were speaking of," said I, after I had drunk some of the milk; "are there any near where we are?"

"Not within many miles; the nearest is yonder away," said the shepherd, pointing to the south-east. "It's a grand place, that, but not like this; quite different, and from it you have a sight of the finest spire in the world."

"I must go to it," said I, and I drank the remainder of the milk; "yonder, you say."

"Yes, yonder; but you cannot get to it in that direction, the river lies between."

"What river?"

"The Avon."

"Avon is British," said I.

"Yes," said the man, "we are all British here."

"No, we are not," said I.

"What are we then?"

"English."

"A'n't they one?"

"No."

"Who were the British?"

"The men who are supposed to have worshipped God in this place, and who raised these stones."

"Where are they now?"

"Our forefathers slaughtered them, spilled their blood all about, especially in this neighbourhood, destroyed their pleasant places, and left not, to use their own words, one stone upon another."

"Yes, they did," said the shepherd, looking aloft at the transverse stone.

"And it is well for them they did; whenever that stone, which English hands never raised, is by English hands thrown down, woe, woe, woe to the English race; spare it, English! Hengist spared it! —Here is sixpence."

"I won't have it," said the man.

"Why not?"

Hengist. Died 488. Joint founder, with his brother Horsa, of the Kingdom of Kent.

"You talk so prettily about these stones; you seem to know all about them."

"I never receive presents; with respect to the stones, I say with yourself, How did they ever come here?"

"How did they ever come here?" said the shepherd.

Lavengro.

XI.—WITH THE GIPSIES AT CHURCH

This extract is taken from *The Romany Rye* which is a sequel to *Lavengro*.

WHEN two days had passed, Sunday came; I breakfasted by myself in the solitary dingle; and then, having set things a little to rights, I ascended to Mr. Petulengro's encampment. I could hear church-bells ringing around in the distance, appearing to say, "Come to church, come to church," as clearly as it was possible for church-bells to say. I found Mr. Petulengro seated by the door of his tent, smoking his pipe, in rather an ungenteel undress. "Well, Jasper," said I, "are you ready to go to church? for if you are, I am ready to accompany you." "I am not ready, brother," said Mr. Petulengro, "nor is my wife; the church, too, to which we shall go is three miles off; so it is of no use to think of going there this morning, as the service would be three-quarters over before we got there; if, however, you are disposed to go in the afternoon, we are your people." Thereupon I returned to my dingle, where I passed several hours in conning the Welsh Bible, which the preacher, Peter Williams, had given me.

At last I gave over reading, took a slight refreshment, and was about to emerge from the dingle, when

I heard the voice of Mr. Petulengro calling me. I went up again to the encampment, where I found Mr. Petulengro, his wife, and Tawno Chikno, ready to proceed to church. Mr. and Mrs. Petulengro were dressed in Roman fashion, though not in the full-blown manner in which they had paid their visit to me in the dingle. Tawno had on a clean white slop, with a nearly new black beaver, with very broad rims, and the nap exceedingly long. As for myself, I was dressed in much the same manner as that in which I departed from London, having on, in honour of the day, a shirt perfectly clean, having washed one on purpose for the occasion, with my own hands, the day before, in the pond of tepid water in which the newts and efts were in the habit of taking their pleasure. We proceeded for upwards of a mile, by footpaths through meadows and corn-fields; we crossed various stiles; at last, passing over one, we found ourselves in a road, wending along which for a considerable distance, we at last came in sight of a church, the bells of which had been tolling distinctly in our ears for some time; before, however, we reached the churchyard the bells had ceased their melody. It was surrounded by lofty beech-trees of brilliant green foliage. We entered the gate, Mrs. Petulengro leading the way, and proceeded to a

Clean white slop. Slop or smock-frock, a kind of overall formerly much worn by country people.

Newt and eft. A kind of water lizard. *Newt* and *eft* are different forms of the same word. *A newt* is a corruption of *an ewt.*

small door near the east end of the church. As we advanced, the sound of singing within the church rose upon our ears. Arrived at the small door, Mrs. Petulengro opened it and entered, followed by Tawno Chikno. I myself went last of all, following Mr. Petulengro, who, before I entered, turned round, and, with a significant nod, advised me to take care how I behaved. The part of the church which we had entered was the chancel; on one side stood a number of venerable old men—probably the neighbouring poor—and on the other a number of poor girls belonging to the village school, dressed in white gowns and straw bonnets, whom two elegant but simply dressed young women were superintending. Every voice seemed to be united in singing a certain anthem, which, notwithstanding it was written neither by Tate nor Brady, contains some of the sublimest words which were ever put together, not the worst of which are those which burst on our ears as we entered:

> Every eye shall now behold Him,
> Robed in dreadful majesty;
> Those who set at nought and sold Him,
> Pierced and nailed Him to the tree,
> Deeply wailing,
> Shall the true Messiah see.

Tate nor Brady. Tate and Brady, joint authors of an unpoetical metrical version of the psalms. Nahum Tate, who had been Dryden's assistant, was Poet Laureate in 1692.

Every eye, etc. The well-known hymn, beginning "Lo He comes, with clouds descending," by Charles Wesley and John Cennick.

Still following Mrs. Petulengro, we proceeded down the chancel and along the aisle; notwithstanding the singing, I could distinctly hear as we passed many a voice whispering, "Here come the gipsies! here come the gipsies!" I felt rather embarrassed, with a somewhat awkward doubt as to where we were to sit; none of the occupiers of the pews, who appeared to consist almost entirely of farmers, with their wives, sons, and daughters, opened a door to admit us. Mrs. Petulengro, however, appeared to feel not the least embarrassment, but tripped along the aisle with the greatest nonchalance. We passed under the pulpit, in which stood the clergyman in his white surplice, and reached the middle of the church, where we were confronted by the sexton dressed in a long blue coat, and holding in his hand a wand. This functionary motioned towards the lower end of the church, where were certain benches, partly occupied by poor people and boys. Mrs. Petulengro, however, with a toss of her head, directed her course to a magnificent pew, which was unoccupied, which she opened and entered, followed closely by Tawno Chikno, Mr. Petulengro, and myself. The sexton did not appear by any means to approve of the arrangement, and as I stood next the door, laid his finger on my arm, as if to intimate that myself and companions must quit our aristocratical location. I said nothing, but directed my eyes to the clergyman, who uttered a short and expressive cough; the sexton looked at him for a

moment, and then, bowing his head, closed the door —in a moment more the music ceased. I took up a prayer-book, on which was engraved an earl's coronet. The clergyman uttered, "I will arise, and go to my father." England's sublime liturgy had commenced.

Oh, what feelings came over me on finding myself again in an edifice devoted to the religion of my country! I had not been in such a place I cannot tell for how long—certainly not for years; and now I had found my way there again, it appeared as if I had fallen asleep in the pew of the old church of pretty D——. I had occasionally done so when a child, and had suddenly woke up. Yes, surely I had been asleep and had woke up; but no! alas, no! I had not been asleep—at least not in the old church—if I had been asleep I had been walking in my sleep, struggling, striving, learning, and unlearning in my sleep. Years had rolled away whilst I had been asleep—ripe fruit had fallen, green fruit had come on whilst I had been asleep—how circumstances had altered, and above all myself, whilst I had been asleep. No, I had not been asleep in the old church! I was in a pew, it is true, but not the pew of black leather, in which I sometimes fell asleep in days of yore, but in a strange pew; and then my companions, they were no longer those of days of yore. I was no longer with my respectable father and mother, and my dear brother, but with the gipsy cral and his wife, and the gigantic Tawno, the

Antinous of the dusky people. And what was I myself? No longer an innocent child, but a moody man, bearing in my face, as I knew well, the marks of my strivings and strugglings, of what I had learnt and unlearnt; nevertheless, the general aspect of things brought to my mind what I had felt and seen of yore. There was difference enough, it is true, but still there was a similarity—at least I thought so—the church, the clergyman, and the clerk, differing in many respects from those of pretty D——, put me strangely in mind of them; and then the words!—by the by, was it not the magic of the words which brought the dear enchanting past so powerfully before the mind of Lavengro? for the words were the same sonorous words of high import which had first made an impression on his childish ear in the old church of pretty D——.

The Romany Rye.

Antinous. A young Bithynian of great beauty, slave of the Emperor Hadrian, who made him his favourite.

XII
AN OLD-WORLD INN

THE inn, of which I had become an inhabitant, was a place of infinite life and bustle. Travellers of all descriptions, from all the cardinal points, were continually stopping at it; and to attend to their wants, and minister to their convenience, an army of servants, of one description or other, was kept; waiters, chambermaids, grooms, postillions, shoeblacks, cooks, scullions, and what not, for there was a barber and hair-dresser, who had been at Paris, and talked French with a cockney accent; the French sounding all the better, as no accent is so melodious as the cockney. Jacks creaked in the kitchens turning round spits, on which large joints of meat piped and smoked before great big fires. There was running up and down stairs, and along galleries, slamming of doors, cries of "Coming, sir," and "Please to step this way, ma'am," during eighteen hours of the four-and-twenty. Truly a very great place for life and bustle was this inn. And often in after life, when lonely and melancholy, I

An inhabitant. In the course of his wanderings, Borrow had accepted service under the landlord. He was to keep an account of the hay and corn.

have called up the time I spent there, and never failed to become cheerful from the recollection.

I found the master of the house a very kind and civil person. Before being an inn-keeper he had been in some other line of business; but on the death of the former proprietor of the inn had married his widow, who was still alive, but, being somewhat infirm, lived in a retired part of the house. I have said that he was kind and civil; he was, however, not one of those people who suffer themselves to be made fools of by anybody; he knew his customers, and had a calm clear eye, which would look through a man without seeming to do so. The accommodation of his house was of the very best description; his wines were good, his viands equally so, and his charges not immoderate; though he very properly took care of himself. He was no vulgar inn-keeper, had a host of friends, and deserved them all.

I found my duties of distributing hay and corn, and keeping an account thereof, anything but disagreeable, particularly after I had acquired the goodwill of the old ostler, who at first looked upon me with rather an evil eye, considering me somewhat in the light of one who had usurped an office which belonged to himself by the right of succession: but there was little gall in the old fellow, and, by speaking kindly to him, never giving myself any airs of assumption, but, above all, by frequently reading the newspapers to him—for though passionately fond of news and politics, he was unable to read—I soon

succeeded in placing myself on excellent terms with him. A regular character was that old ostler; he was a Yorkshireman by birth, but had seen a great deal of life in the vicinity of London, to which, on the death of his parents, who were very poor people, he went at a very early age. Amongst other places where he had served as ostler was a small inn at Hounslow, much frequented by highwaymen, whose exploits he was fond of narrating.

Finding the old man so well acquainted with the history of highwaymen, and taking considerable interest in the subject, having myself edited a book containing the lives of many remarkable people who had figured on the highway, I forthwith asked him how it was that the trade of highwaymen had become extinct in England, as at present we never heard of anyone following it. Whereupon he told me that many causes had contributed to bring about that result; the principal of which were the following: the refusal to license houses which were known to afford shelter to highwaymen, which, amongst many others, had caused the inn at Hounslow to be closed; the inclosure of many a wild heath in the country, on which they were in the habit of lurking, and particularly the establishing in the neighbourhood of London of a well-armed mounted patrol, who rode the highwaymen down, and delivered them up to justice, which hanged them without ceremony.

"And that would be the way to deal with Mumbo

Jumbo and his gang," said the postillion, "should they show their visages in these realms; and I hear by the newspapers that they are becoming every day more desperate. Take away the licence from their public-houses, cut down the rookeries and shadowy old avenues in which they are fond of lying in wait, in order to sally out upon people as they pass in the roads; but, above all, establish a good mounted police to ride after the ruffians and drag them by the scruff of the neck to the next clink, where they might lie till they could be properly dealt with by law; instead of which, the Government are repealing the wise old laws enacted against such characters, giving fresh licences every day to their public-houses, and saying that it would be a pity to cut down their rookeries and thickets because they look so very picturesque; and, in fact, giving them all kind of encouragement; why, if such behaviour is not enough to drive an honest man mad, I know not what is. It is of no use talking, I only wish the power were in my hands, and if I did not make short work of them, might I be a mere jackass postillion all the remainder of my life."

Besides acquiring from the ancient ostler a great deal of curious information respecting the ways and habits of the heroes of the road, with whom he had come in contact in the early portion of his life, I

Mumbo Jumbo. Name of a West African bogey with which the natives frighten unmanageable wives and children.
Clink. Prison, lock-up.

picked up from him many excellent hints relating to the art of grooming horses. Whilst at the inn, I frequently groomed the stage- and post-horses, and those driven up by travellers in their gigs: I was not compelled, nor indeed expected, to do so; but I took pleasure in the occupation; and I remember at that period one of the principal objects of my ambition was to be a first-rate groom, and to make the skins of the creatures I took in hand look sleek and glossy like those of moles.

I have said that I derived valuable hints from the old man, and, indeed, became a very tolerable groom, but there was a certain finishing touch which I could never learn from him, though he possessed it himself, and which I could never attain to by my own endeavours; though my want of success certainly did not proceed from want of application, for I have rubbed the horses down, purring and buzzing all the time, after the genuine ostler fashion, until the perspiration fell in heavy drops upon my shoes; and when I had done my best and asked the old fellow what he thought of my work, I could never extract from him more than a kind of grunt, which might be translated, " Not so very bad, but I have seen a horse groomed much better," which leads me to suppose that a person, in order to be a first-rate groom, must have something in him when he is born which I had not, and, indeed, which many other people have not who pretend to be grooms. What does the reader think?

The Romany Rye.

XIII.—IMPRISONED

Borrow had become an agent for the British and Foreign Bible Society, and in this capacity visited Spain. His exciting experiences in this country are described in his book *The Bible in Spain*, published in 1843. His attempts to circulate copies of the Scriptures in the vernacular met with considerable opposition from the Spanish clergy, especially after he had opened a shop for the sale of his translations in Madrid. It culminated in his being put in prison, his liberation being subsequently effected through the intervention of the British representative.

At length the Gospel of St. Luke in the Gipsy language was in a state of readiness. I therefore deposited a certain number of copies in the despacho, and announced them for sale. The Basque, which was by this time also printed, was likewise advertised. For this last work there was little demand. Not so, however, for the Gipsy Luke, of which I could have easily disposed of the whole edition in less than a fortnight. Long, however, before this period had expired the clergy were up in arms. "Sorcery!" said one bishop. "There is more in this than we can dive into," exclaimed a second. "He will convert all Spain by means of the Gipsy language," cried a third. And then came

Despacho. Office.

Basque. A language of unknown origin spoken by a people living on the French and Spanish slopes of the Pyrenees.

the usual chorus on such occasions, of *Que infamia! Que picardia!* At last, having consulted together, away they hurried to their tool the corregidor, or, according to the modern term, the gefe politico of Madrid. I have forgotten the name of this worthy, of whom I had myself no personal knowledge whatever. Judging from his actions, however, and from common report, I should say that he was a stupid wrong-headed creature, savage withal—a melange of borrico, mule, and wolf. Having an inveterate antipathy to all foreigners, he lent a willing ear to the complaint of my accusers, and forthwith gave orders to make a seizure of all the copies of the Gipsy Gospel which could be found in the despacho. The consequence was, that a numerous body of alguazils directed their steps to the Calle del Principe; some thirty copies of the book were pounced upon, and about the same number of St. Luke in Basque. With this spoil these satellites returned in triumph to the gefatura politica, where they divided the copies of the Gipsy volume amongst themselves, selling subsequently the greater number at a large price, the book being in the greatest demand, and

Que infamia! Que picardia! What infamy! What roguery!
Corregidor. Censor.
Gefe politico. Chief political officer.
Melange. Mixture.
Borrico. Donkey.
Alguazil. Constable.
Calle del Principe. Prince's Street.
Gefatura politica. Office of the *gefe politico* (above).

thus becoming unintentionally agents of an heretical society. But every one must live by his trade, say these people, and they lose no opportunity of making their words good, by disposing to the best advantage of any booty which falls into their hands. As no person cared about the Basque Gospel, it was safely stowed away, with other unmarketable captures, in the warehouses of the office.

The Gipsy Gospels had now been seized, at least as many as were exposed for sale in the despacho. The corregidor and his friends, however, were of opinion that many more might be obtained by means of a little management. Fellows, therefore, hangers-on of the police office, were daily despatched to the shop in all kinds of disguises, inquiring, with great seeming anxiety, for "Gipsy books," and offering high prices for copies. They, however, returned to their employers empty-handed. My Gallegan was on his guard, informing all who made inquiries, that books of no description would be sold at the establishment for the present. Which was in truth the case, as I had given him particular orders to sell no more under any pretence whatever.

I got no credit, however, for my frank dealing. The corregidor and his confederates could not persuade themselves but that by some means mysterious and unknown to them, I was daily selling hundreds of these Gipsy books, which were to revolutionise the country, and annihilate the power of

Gallegan. Galician.

the Father of Rome. A plan was therefore resolved upon, by means of which they hoped to have an opportunity of placing me in a position which would incapacitate me for some time from taking any active measures to circulate the Scriptures, either in Gipsy or in any other language.

It was on the morning of the first of May, if I forget not, that an unknown individual made his appearance in my apartment as I was seated at breakfast; he was a mean-looking fellow, about the middle stature, with a countenance on which knave was written in legible characters. The hostess ushered him in, and then withdrew. I did not like the appearance of my visitor, but assuming some degree of courtesy, I requested him to sit down, and demanded his business. "I come from his excellency the political chief of Madrid," he replied, "and my business is to inform you that his excellency is perfectly aware of your proceedings, and is at any time able to prove that you are still disposing of in secret those evil books which you have been forbidden to sell." "Is he so?" I replied; "pray let him do so forthwith, but what need of giving me information?" "Perhaps," continued the fellow, "you think his worship has no witnesses; know, however, that he has many, and respectable ones too." "Doubtless," I replied, "and from the respectability of your own appearance, you are perhaps one of them. But you are occupying my time unprofitably; begone, therefore, and tell whoever sent

you that I have by no means a high opinion of his wisdom." "I shall go when I please," retorted the fellow; "do you know to whom you are speaking? Are you aware that if I think fit I can search your apartment, yes, even below your bed? What have we here?" he continued, and commenced with his stick poking a heap of papers which lay upon a chair; "what have we here; are these also papers of the Gipsies?" I instantly determined upon submitting no longer to this behaviour, and taking the fellow by the arm, led him out of the apartment, and then still holding him, conducted him downstairs from the third floor in which I lived, into the street, looking him steadfastly in the face the whole while.

The fellow had left his sombrero on the table, which I despatched to him by the landlady, who delivered it into his hand as he stood in the street staring with distended eyes at the balcony of my apartment.

"A trampa has been laid for you, Don Jorge," said Maria Diaz, when she had re-ascended from the street; "that corchete came here with no other intention than to have a dispute with you; out of every word you have said he will make a long history, as is the custom with these people; indeed he said, as I handed him his hat, that ere twenty-

Sombrero. A broad-brimmed hat.
Trampa. Trap.
Corchete. Catch-poll, bailiff.

four hours were over, you should see the inside of the prison of Madrid."

In effect, during the course of the morning, I was told that a warrant had been issued for my apprehension. The prospect of incarceration, however, did not fill me with much dismay; an adventurous life and inveterate habits of wandering having long familiarised me to situations of every kind, so much so as to feel myself quite as comfortable in a prison as in the gilded chambers of palaces; indeed more so, as in the former place I can always add to my store of useful information, whereas in the latter, ennui frequently assails me. I had, moreover, been thinking for some time past of paying a visit to the prison, partly in the hope of being able to say a few words of Christian instruction to the criminals, and partly with the view of making certain investigations in the robber language of Spain, a subject about which I had long felt much curiosity; indeed, I had already made application for admittance into the Carcel de la Corte, but had found the matter surrounded with difficulties, as my friend Ofalia would have said. I rather rejoiced then in the opportunity which was now about to present itself of entering the prison, not in the character of a visitor for an hour, but as a martyr, and as one suffering in the holy cause of religion. I was determined, however, to disappoint my enemies for that day at least, and to render null the threat of the alguazil,

Carcel de la Corte. Court Prison.

that I should be imprisoned within twenty-four hours. I therefore took up my abode for the rest of the day in a celebrated French tavern in the Calle del Caballero de Gracia, which, as it was one of the most fashionable and public places in Madrid, I naturally concluded was one of the last where the corregidor would think of seeking me.

About ten at night, Maria Diaz, to whom I had communicated the place of my retreat, arrived with her son, Juan Lopez. "O señor," said she on seeing me, "they are already in quest of you; the alcade of the barrio, with a large comitiva of alguazils and such-like people, have just been at our house with a warrant for your imprisonment from the corregidor. They searched the whole house, and were much disappointed at not finding you. Woe is me, what will they do when they catch you?" "Be under no apprehension, good Maria," said I; "you forget that I am an Englishman, and so it seems does the corregidor. Whenever he catches me, depend upon it, he will be glad enough to let me go. For the present, however, we will permit him to follow his own course, for the spirit of folly seems to have seized him."

I slept at the tavern, and in the forenoon of the following day repaired to the embassy, where I had

Calle del Caballero de Gracia. Street of the Cavalier of Grace.

Alcade of the barrio. Justice of peace of the ward.

Comitiva. Suite.

an interview with Sir George, to whom I related every circumstance of the affair. He said that he could scarcely believe that the corregidor entertained any serious intentions of imprisoning me: in the first place, because I had committed no offence; and in the second, because I was not under the jurisdiction of that functionary, but under that of the captain-general, who was alone empowered to decide upon matters which relate to foreigners, and before whom I must be brought in the presence of the consul of my nation. "However," said he, "there is no knowing to what length these jacks-in-office may go. I therefore advise you, if you are under any apprehension, to remain as my guest at the embassy for a few days, for here you will be quite safe." I assured him that I was under no apprehension whatever, having long been accustomed to adventures of this kind. From the apartment of Sir George I proceeded to that of the first secretary of embassy, Mr. Southern, with whom I entered into conversation. I had scarcely been there a minute when my servant Francisco rushed in much out of breath, and in violent agitation, exclaiming in Basque, "Niri jauna (*master mine*), the alguaziloac and the corchetoac, and all the other lapurrac (*thieves*) are again at the house. They seem half mad, and not being able to find you, are searching your papers, thinking, I suppose, that you are hid among them." Mr. Southern here interrupting him, inquired of me what all this meant. Whereupon I

told him, saying at the same time, that it was my intention to proceed at once to my lodgings. "But perhaps these fellows will arrest you," said Mr. S., "before we can interfere." "I must take my chance as to that," I replied, and presently afterwards departed.

Ere, however, I had reached the middle of the street of Alcala, two fellows came up to me, and telling me that I was their prisoner, commanded me to follow them to the office of the corregidor. They were, in fact, alguazils, who, suspecting that I might enter or come out of the embassy, had stationed themselves in the neighbourhood. I instantly turned round to Francisco, and told him in Basque to return to the embassy and to relate there to the secretary what had just occurred. The poor fellow set off like lightning, turning half round, however, to shake his fist, and to vent a Basque execration at the two lapurrac, as he called the alguazils.

They conducted me to the gefatura or office of the corregidor, where they ushered me into a large room, and motioned me to sit down on a wooden bench. They then stationed themselves on each side of me: there were at least twenty people in the apartment besides ourselves, evidently from their appearance officials of the establishment. They were all well dressed, for the most part in the French fashion, in round hats, coats, and pantaloons, and yet they looked what in reality they were, Spanish

alguazils, spies, and informers, and Gil Blas, could he have waked from his sleep of two centuries, would, notwithstanding the change of fashion, have had no difficulty in recognising them. They glanced at me as they stood lounging about the room; then gathered themselves together in a circle and began conversing in whispers. I heard one of them say, "He understands the seven gipsy jargons." Then presently another, evidently from his language an Andalusian, said, "*Es muy diestro* (he is very skilful), and can ride a horse and dart a knife full as well as if he came from my own country." Thereupon they all turned round and regarded me with a species of interest, evidently mingled with respect, which most assuredly they would not have exhibited had they conceived that I was merely an honest man bearing witness in a righteous cause.

I waited patiently on the bench at least one hour, expecting every moment to be summoned before my lord the corregidor. I suppose, however, that I was not deemed worthy of being permitted to see so exalted a personage, for at the end of that time an elderly man, one however evidently of the alguazil genus, came into the room and advanced directly towards me. "Stand up," said he. I obeyed. "What is your name?" he demanded. I told him.

Gil Blas. The hero of a novel of adventure by Le Sage, *Histoire de Gil Blas de Santillane* (1715). Gil Blas has become the proverbial type for a witty, educated young man, living by his wits and continually engaged in fresh adventures.

"Then," he replied, exhibiting a paper which he held in his hand, "Señor, it is the will of his excellency the corregidor that you be forthwith sent to prison."

He looked at me steadfastly as he spoke, perhaps expecting that I should sink into the earth at the formidable name of prison. I, however, only smiled. He then delivered the paper, which I suppose was the warrant for my committal, into the hand of one of my two captors, and obeying a sign which they made, I followed them.

I subsequently learned that the secretary of legation, Mr. Southern, had been despatched by Sir George, as soon as the latter had obtained information of my arrest, and had been waiting at the office, during the greater part of the time that I was there. He had demanded an audience of the corregidor, in which he had intended to have remonstrated with him, and pointed out to him the danger to which he was subjecting himself by the rash step which he was taking. The sullen functionary, however, had refused to see him, thinking, perhaps, that to listen to reason would be a dereliction of dignity: by this conduct, however, he most effectually served me, as no person, after such a specimen of uncalled-for insolence, felt disposed to question the violence and injustice which had been practised towards me.

The alguazils conducted me across the Plaza Mayor

Plaza Mayor. Name of a public square (plaza) in Madrid.

to the Carcel de la Corte, or prison of the court, as it is called. Whilst going across the court, I remembered that this was the place where, in "the good old times," the Inquisition of Spain was in the habit of holding *Autos da fé*, and I cast my eye to the balcony of the city hall, where, at the most solemn of them all, the last of the Austrian line in Spain sat, and after some thirty heretics, of both sexes, had been burnt by fours and by fives, wiped his face, perspiring with heat, and black with smoke, and calmly inquired, "No hay mas?" for which exemplary proof of patience he was much applauded by his priests and confessors, who subsequently poisoned him. "And here am I," thought I, "who have done more to wound Popery than all the poor Christian martyrs that ever suffered in this accursed square, merely sent to prison, from which I am sure to be liberated in a few days, with credit and applause. Pope of Rome! I believe you to be as malicious as ever, but you are sadly deficient in power. You are become paralytic, Batuschca, and your club has degenerated to a crutch."

Autos da fé. An *auto da fé* (lit. act of faith) was (1) the sentence passed by the Inquisition, and (2) the carrying out of that sentence, by which the heretics were burned alive. The first *auto da fé* took place in 1481, the last in 1813.

Last of the Austrian line in Spain. Charles II. (1665–1700), son of Philip IV. He was succeeded by Philip V., the first of the Bourbon line.

No hay mas? Are there no more?

We arrived at the prison, which stands in a narrow street not far from the great square. We entered a dusky passage, at the end of which was a wicket door. My conductors knocked, a fierce visage peered through the wicket; there was an exchange of words, and in a few moments I found myself within the prison of Madrid, in a kind of corridor which overlooked at a considerable altitude what appeared to be a court, from which arose a hubbub of voices, and occasionally wild shouts and cries. Within the corridor, which served as a kind of office, were several people; one of them sat behind a desk, and to him the alguazils went up, and after discoursing with him some time in low tones, delivered the warrant into his hands. He perused it with attention, then rising he advanced to me. What a figure! He was about forty years of age, and his height might have amounted to some six feet two inches, had he not been curved much after the fashion of the letter S. No weasel ever appeared lanker, and he looked as if a breath of air would have been sufficient to blow him away; his face might certainly have been called handsome, had it not been for its extraordinary and portentous meagreness; his nose was like an eagle's bill, his teeth white as ivory, his eyes black (oh, how black!), and fraught with a strange expression, his skin was dark, and the hair of his head was like the plumage of the raven. A deep quiet smile dwelt continually on his features; but with all the quiet it was a cruel smile, such a one as would have graced

the countenance of a Nero. "*Mais en revanche personne n'étoit plus honnête.*" "Caballero," said he, "allow me to introduce myself to you as the alcayde of this prison. I perceive by this paper that I am to have the honour of your company for a time, a short time doubtless, beneath this roof; I hope you will banish every apprehension from your mind. I am charged to treat you with all the respect which is due to the illustrious nation to which you belong, and which a cavalier of such exalted category as yourself is entitled to expect. A needless charge, it is true, as I should only have been too happy of my own accord to have afforded you every comfort and attention. Caballero, you will rather consider yourself here as a guest than a prisoner; you will be permitted to roam over every part of this house whenever you think proper. You will find matters here not altogether below the attention of a philosophic mind. Pray issue whatever commands you may think fit to the turnkeys and officials, even as if they were your own servants. I will now have the honour of conducting you to your apartment—the only one at present unoccupied. We invariably reserve it for cavaliers of distinction. I am happy to say that my orders are again in consonance with my inclination. No charge whatever will be made for it to you, though the daily hire of it is not un-

Mais en . . . plus honnête. But, on the other hand, no one could have been more polite.

Alcayde or *alcaide.* Jailer.

frequently an ounce of gold. I entreat you, therefore, to follow me, cavalier, who am at all times and seasons the most obedient and devoted of your servants." Here he took off his hat and bowed profoundly.

Such was the speech of the alcayde of the prison of Madrid; a speech delivered in pure sonorous Castilian, with calmness, gravity, and almost with dignity; a speech which would have done honour to a gentleman of high birth, to Monsieur Bassompierre of the Old Bastille, receiving an Italian prince, or the high constable of the Tower an English duke attainted of high treason. Now, who in the name of wonder was this alcayde?

One of the greatest rascals in all Spain. A fellow who had more than once by his grasping cupidity, and by his curtailment of the miserable rations of the prisoners, caused an insurrection in the court below only to be repressed by bloodshed, and by summoning military aid; a fellow of low birth, who, only five years previous, had been *drummer* to a band of royalist volunteers!

But Spain is the land of extraordinary characters.

I followed the alcayde to the end of the corridor, where was a massive grated door, on each side of which sat a grim fellow of a turnkey. The door was opened, and turning to the right, we proceeded

Monsieur Bassompierre. Bassompière (François de), Marshal of France and diplomat, was imprisoned twelve years in the Bastille by order of Cardinal Richelieu. His *Mémoires* are of great interest (1579-1646).

down another corridor, in which were many people walking about, whom I subsequently discovered to be prisoners like myself, but for political offences. At the end of this corridor, which extended the whole length of the patio, we turned into another, and the first apartment in this was the one destined for myself. It was large and lofty, but totally destitute of every species of furniture, with the exception of a huge wooden pitcher, intended to hold my daily allowance of water. "Caballero," said the alcayde, "the apartment is without furniture, as you see. It is already the third hour of the tarde, I therefore advise you to lose no time in sending to your lodgings for a bed and whatever you may stand in need of; the llavero here shall do your bidding. Caballero, adieu, till I see you again."

I followed his advice, and writing a note in pencil to Maria Diaz, I despatched it by the llavero, and then sitting down on the wooden pitcher, I fell into a reverie, which continued for a considerable time.

Night arrived, and so did Maria Diaz, attended by two porters and Francisco, all loaded with furniture. A lamp was lighted, charcoal was kindled in the brasero, and the prison gloom was to a certain degree dispelled.

I now left my seat on the pitcher, and sitting down on a chair, proceeded to despatch some wine and viands, which my good hostess had not for-

Patio. Courtyard.
Llavero. Turnkey.
Tarde. Afternoon.
Brasero. Brasier.

gotten to bring with her. Suddenly Mr. Southern entered. He laughed heartily at finding me engaged in the manner I have described. "B——," said he, "you are the man to get through the world, for you appear to take all things coolly, and as matters of course. That, however, which most surprises me with respect to you is, your having so many friends; here you are in prison, surrounded by people ministering to your comforts. Your very servant is your friend, instead of being your worst enemy, as is usually the case. That Basque of yours is a noble fellow. I shall never forget how he spoke for you, when he came running to the embassy to inform us of your arrest. He interested both Sir George and myself in the highest degree: should you ever wish to part with him, I hope you will give me the refusal of his services. But now to other matters." He then informed me that Sir George had already sent in an official note to Ofalia, demanding redress for such a wanton outrage on the person of a British subject. "You must remain in prison," said he, "to-night, but depend upon it that to-morrow, if you are disposed, you may quit in triumph." "I am by no means disposed for any such thing," I replied. "They have put me in prison for their pleasure, and I intend to remain here for my own." "If the confinement is not irksome to you," said Mr. Southern, "I think, indeed, it will be your wisest plan; the government have committed themselves sadly with regard to you; and, to speak plainly, we are by no means

sorry for it. They have on more than one occasion treated ourselves very cavalierly, and we have now, if you continue firm, an excellent opportunity of humbling their insolence. I will instantly acquaint Sir George with your determination, and you shall hear from us early on the morrow." He then bade me farewell; and flinging myself on my bed, I was soon asleep in the prison of Madrid.

The Bible in Spain.

XIV.—INSIDE THE PRISON

THE Carcel de la Corte, where I now was, though the principal prison of Madrid, is one which certainly in no respect does credit to the capital of Spain. Whether it was originally intended for the purpose to which it is at present applied, I have no opportunity of knowing. The chances, however, are that it was not; indeed it was not till of late years that the practice of building edifices expressly intended and suited for the incarceration of culprits came at all into vogue. Castles, convents, and deserted palaces, have in all countries, at different times, been converted into prisons, which practice still holds good upon the greater part of the continent, and more particularly in Spain and Italy, which accounts, to a certain extent, for the insecurity of the prisons, and the misery, want of cleanliness, and unhealthiness which in general pervade them.

I shall not attempt to enter into a particular description of the prison of Madrid, indeed it would be quite impossible to describe so irregular and rambling an edifice. Its principal features consisted of two courts, the one behind the other: intended for the great body of the prisoners to take air and recreation in. Three large vaulted dungeons or

calabozas occupied three sides of this court, immediately below the corridors of which I have already spoken. These dungeons were roomy enough to contain respectively from one hundred to one hundred and fifty prisoners, who were at night secured therein with lock and bar, but during the day were permitted to roam about the courts as they thought fit. The second court was considerably larger than the first, though it contained but two dungeons, horribly filthy and disgusting places; this second court being used for the reception of the lower grades of thieves. Of the two dungeons one was, if possible, yet more horrible than the other; it was called the gallineria, or chicken coop, and within it every night were pent up the young fry of the prison, wretched boys from seven to fifteen years of age, the greater part almost in a state of nudity. The common bed of all the inmates of these dungeons was the ground, between which and their bodies nothing intervened, save occasionally a manta or horse-cloth, or perhaps a small mattress; this latter luxury was, however, of exceedingly rare occurrence.

Besides the calabozas connected with the courts, were other dungeons in various parts of the prison; some of them quite dark, intended for the reception of those whom it might be deemed expedient to treat with peculiar severity. There was likewise a ward set apart for females. Connected with the principal corridor were many small apartments, where resided

Calaboza. A prison cell.

prisoners confined for debt or for political offences. And, lastly, there was a small capilla or chapel, in which prisoners cast for death passed the last three days of their existence in company of their ghostly advisers.

I shall not soon forget my first Sunday in prison. Sunday is the gala day of the prison, at least of that of Madrid, and whatever robber finery is to be found within it, is sure to be exhibited on that day of holiness. There is not a set of people in the world more vain than robbers in general, more fond of cutting a figure whenever they have an opportunity, and of attracting the eyes of their fellow creatures by the gallantry of their appearance. The famous Sheppard of olden times delighted in sporting a suit of Genoese velvet, and when he appeared in public, generally wore a silver-hilted sword at his side; whilst Vaux and Hayward, heroes of a later day, were the best-dressed men on the pavé of London. Many of the Italian bandits go splendidly decorated, and the very gipsy robber has a feeling for the charms of dress; the cap alone of the Haram Pasha, or leader of the cannibal gipsy band which infested Hungary towards the conclusion of the last century, was adorned with gold and jewels to the value of four thousand guilders. Observe, ye vain and frivolous, how vanity and crime harmonise. The Spanish robbers are as fond of this species of display as their brethren of other lands, and, whether in prison or out of it, are never so happy as when,

decked out in a profusion of white linen, they can loll in the sun or walk jauntily up and down.

Snow-white linen, indeed, constitutes the principal feature in the robber foppery of Spain. Neither coat nor jacket is worn over the shirt, the sleeves of which are wide and flowing, only a waistcoat of green or blue silk with an abundance of buttons, which are intended more for show than use, as the vest is seldom buttoned. Then there are wide trousers, something after the Turkish fashion; around the waist is a crimson faja or girdle, and about the head is tied a gaudily-coloured handkerchief from the loom of Barcelona; light pumps and silk stockings complete the robber's array. This dress is picturesque enough, and well adapted to the fine sunshiny weather of the Peninsula; there is a dash of effeminacy about it, however, hardly in keeping with the robber's desperate trade. It must not, however, be supposed that it is every robber who can indulge in all this luxury; there are various grades of thieves, some poor enough, with scarcely a rag to cover them. Perhaps in the crowded prison of Madrid, there were not more than twenty who exhibited the dress which I have attempted to describe above; these were *jente de reputacion*, tip-top thieves, mostly young fellows, who, though they had no money of their own, were supported in prison by their majas and amigas, females of a certain class, who form friendships with robbers, and whose glory and delight it is to administer to

the vanity of these fellows with the wages of their own shame and abasement. These females supplied their cortejos with the snowy linen, washed, perhaps, by their own hands in the waters of the Manzanares, for the display of the Sunday, when they would themselves make their appearance dressed à la maja, and from the corridors would gaze with admiring eyes upon the robbers vapouring about in the court below.

Amongst those of the snowy linen who most particularly attracted my attention, were a father and son; the former was a tall athletic figure of about thirty, by profession a housebreaker, and celebrated throughout Madrid for the peculiar dexterity which he exhibited in his calling. He was now in prison for a rather atrocious murder committed in the dead of night, in a house at Caramanchel, in which his only accomplice was his son, a child under seven years of age. "The apple," as the Danes say, "had not fallen far from the tree!" the imp was in every respect the counterpart of the father, though in miniature. He, too, wore the robber shirt sleeves, the robber waistcoat, with the silver buttons, the robber kerchief round his brow, and, ridiculous enough, a long Manchegan knife in the crimson faja. He was evidently the pride of the ruffianly father, who took all imaginable care of this chick of the gallows, would dandle him on his knee, and would occasionally take the cigar from his own moustached lips and insert it in the urchin's mouth. The boy

was the pet of the court, for the father was one of the valientes of the prison, and those who feared his prowess, and wished to pay their court to him, were always fondling the child. What an enigma is this world of ours! How dark and mysterious are the sources of what is called crime and virtue! If that infant wretch become eventually a murderer like his father, is he to blame? Fondled by robbers, already dressed as a robber, born of a robber, whose own history was perhaps similar. Is it right? . . .

O man, man, seek not to dive into the mystery of moral good and evil; confess thyself a worm, cast thyself on the earth, and murmur with thy lips in the dust, Jesus, Jesus!

What most surprised me with respect to the prisoners was their good behaviour. I call it good when all things are taken into consideration, and when I compare it with that of the general class of prisoners in foreign lands. They had their occasional bursts of wild gaiety, their occasional quarrels, which they were in the habit of settling in a corner of the interior court with their long knives—the result not unfrequently being death, or a dreadful gash in the face or the abdomen; but, upon the whole, their conduct was infinitely superior to what might have been expected from the inmates of such a place. Yet this was not the result of coercion, or any particular care which was exercised over them; for perhaps in no part of the world are prisoners so left

to themselves and so utterly neglected as in Spain—the authorities having no farther anxiety about them than to prevent their escape; not the slightest attention being paid to their moral conduct, and not a thought bestowed upon their health, comfort, or mental improvement, whilst within the walls. Yet in this prison of Madrid, and I may say in Spanish prisons in general—for I have been an inmate of more than one—the ears of the visitor are never shocked with horrid blasphemy and obscenity, as in those of some other countries, and more particularly in civilised France; nor are his eyes outraged and himself insulted, as he would assuredly be were he to look down upon the courts from the galleries of the Bicêtre! And yet in this prison of Madrid were some of the most desperate characters in Spain—ruffians who had committed acts of cruelty and atrocity sufficient to make the flesh shudder. But gravity and sedateness are the leading characteristics of the Spaniards, and the very robber, except in those moments when he is engaged in his occupation—and then no one is more sanguinary, pitiless, and wolfishly eager for booty—is a being who can be courteous and affable, and who takes pleasure in conducting himself with sobriety and decorum.

Happily, perhaps, for me that my acquaintance with the ruffians of Spain commenced and ended in

Bicêtre. A village of France (Seine) where there is a large asylum for old men and imbeciles; about 5000 men.

the towns about which I wandered, and in the prisons into which I was cast for the gospel's sake, and that, notwithstanding my long and frequent journeys, I never came in contact with them on the road or in the despoblado.

The most ill-conditioned being in the prison was a Frenchman, though probably the most remarkable. He was about sixty years of age, of the middle stature, but thin and meagre, like most of his countrymen; he had a villainously-formed head, according to all the rules of craniology, and his features were full of evil expression. He wore no hat, and his clothes, though in appearance nearly new, were of the coarsest description. He generally kept aloof from the rest, and would stand for hours together leaning against the walls with his arms folded, glaring sullenly on what was passing before him. He was not one of the professed valientes, for his age prevented his assuming so distinguished a character, and yet all the rest appeared to hold him in a certain awe: perhaps they feared his tongue, which he occasionally exerted in pouring forth withering curses on those who incurred his displeasure. He spoke perfectly good Spanish, and to my great surprise excellent Basque, in which he was in the habit of conversing with Francisco, who, lolling from the window of my apartment, would exchange jests and witticisms with the prisoners in the court below, with whom he was a great favourite.

Valientes. Bravoes, banditti.

One day when I was in the patio, to which I had free admission whenever I pleased, by permission of the alcayde, I went up to the Frenchman, who stood in his usual posture, leaning against the wall, and offered him a cigar. I do not smoke myself, but it will never do to mix among the lower classes of Spain unless you have a cigar to present occasionally. The man glared at me ferociously for a moment, and appeared to be on the point of refusing my offer with perhaps a hideous execration. I repeated it, however, pressing my hand against my heart, whereupon suddenly the grim features relaxed, and with a genuine French grimace, and a low bow, he accepted the cigar, exclaiming, "*Ah, Monsieur, pardon, mais c'est faire trop d'honneur à un pauvre diable comme moi.*"

"Not at all," said I; "we are both fellow prisoners in a foreign land, and being so we ought to countenance each other. I hope that whenever I have need of your co-operation in this prison you will afford it me."

"*Ah, Monsieur,*" exclaimed the Frenchman in rapture, "*vous avez bien raison; il faut que les étrangers se donnent la main dans ce —— pays de barbares. Tenez,*" he added in a whisper: "if you have any plan for escaping, and require my assistance, I have an arm and a knife at your service; you may trust

Ah, Monsieur, . . . comme moi. Excuse me, sir, but it is too much honour for a poor wretch like me.

Vous avez . . . Tenez. You are right; strangers should shake hands in this barbarous country. Listen, . . .

me, and that is more than you could any of these *sacrés gens ici,*" glancing fiercely round at his fellow prisoners.

"You appear to be no friend to Spain and the Spaniards," said I. "I conclude that you have experienced injustice at their hands. For what have they immured you in this place?"

"*Pour rien du tout—c'est à dire pour une bagatelle.* But what can you expect from such animals? For what are you imprisoned? Did I not hear say for gipsyism and sorcery?"

"Perhaps you are here for your opinions?"

"*Ah, mon Dieu, non; je ne suis pas homme à semblable bêtise.* I have no opinions. *Je faisois—mais ce n'importe; je me trouve ici, où je crève de faim.*"

"I am sorry to see a brave man in such a distressed condition," said I; "have you nothing to subsist upon beyond the prison allowance? Have you no friends?"

"Friends in this country! you mock me; here one has no friends, unless one buy them. I am bursting with hunger. Since I have been here I have sold the clothes off my back, that I might eat, for the prison allowance will not support nature, and of half of that we are robbed by the Batu, as they

Sacrés gens ici. Cursed people here.

Pour rien . . . bagatelle. For nothing at all—that is to say, for a mere trifle.

Ah, mon Dieu, . . . de faim. Good heavens! no; I am not such a fool. . . . I was—but no matter; I am here and I am half starved.

called the barbarian of a governor. *Les haillons* which now cover me were given by two or three devotees who sometimes visit here. I would sell them if they would fetch aught. I have not a sou, and for want of a few crowns I shall be garrotted within a month unless I can escape, though, as I told you before, I have done nothing—a mere bagatelle. But the worst crimes in Spain are poverty and misery."

"I have heard you speak Basque; are you from French Biscay?"

"I am from Bordeaux, monsieur; but I have lived much on the Landes and in Biscay, *travaillant à mon métier*. I see by your look that you wish to know my history. I shall not tell it you; it contains nothing that is remarkable. See, I have smoked out your cigar; you may give me another, and add a dollar if you please, *nous sommes crevés ici de faim*. I would not say as much to a Spaniard, but I have a respect for your countrymen; I know much of them; I have met them at Maida and the other place."

"Nothing remarkable in his history!" Why, or I greatly err, one chapter of his life, had it been written, would have unfolded more of the wild and wonderful than fifty volumes of what are in general called adventures and hair-breadth escapes by land

Les haillons. The rags.
Landes. A sandy region in the south-west of France.
Travaillant à mon métier. Working at my trade.
Nous sommes . . . faim. We are half dead with hunger here.
The other place. Perhaps at Waterloo.

and sea. A soldier! what a tale could that man have told of marches and retreats, of battles lost and won, towns sacked, convents plundered; perhaps he had seen the flames of Moscow ascending to the clouds, and had "tried his strength with nature in the wintry desert," pelted by the snow-storm, and bitten by the tremendous cold of Russia; and what could he mean by plying his trade in Biscay and the Landes, but that he had been a robber in those wild regions, of which the latter is more infamous for brigandage and crime than any other part of the French territory. Nothing remarkable in his history! then what history in the world contains aught that is remarkable?

I gave him the cigar and dollar: he received them, and then once more folding his arms, leaned back against the wall and appeared to sink gradually into one of his reveries. I looked him in the face and spoke to him, but he did not seem either to hear or see me. His mind was perhaps wandering in that dreadful valley of the shadow, into which the children of earth, whilst living, occasionally find their way; that dreadful region where there is no water, where hope dwelleth not, where nothing lives but the undying worm. This valley is the fac-simile of hell, and he who has entered it, has experienced here on earth for a time what the spirits of the condemned are doomed to suffer through ages without end.

Moscow. On the occasion of Napoleon's disastrous retreat in 1812.

He was executed about a month from this time. The bagatelle for which he was confined was robbery and murder by the following strange device. In concert with two others, he hired a large house in an unfrequented part of the town, to which place he would order tradesmen to convey valuable articles, which were to be paid for on delivery; those who attended paid for their credulity with the loss of their lives and property. Two or three had fallen into the snare. I wished much to have had some private conversation with this desperate man, and in consequence begged of the alcayde to allow him to dine with me in my own apartment; whereupon Monsieur Bassompierre, for so I will take the liberty of calling the governor, his real name having escaped my memory, took off his hat, and with his usual smile and bow, replied in purest Castilian, " English cavalier, and I hope I may add friend, pardon me, that it is quite out of my power to gratify your request, founded, I have no doubt, on the most admirable sentiments of philosophy. Any of the other gentlemen beneath my care shall, at any time you desire it, be permitted to wait upon you in your apartment. I will even go so far as to cause their irons, if irons they wear, to be knocked off, in order that they may partake of your refection with that comfort which is seemly and convenient; but to the gentleman in question I must object. He is the most evil-disposed of the whole of this family, and would most assuredly breed a funcion either in your

apartment or in the corridor by an attempt to escape. Cavalier, *me pesa*, but I cannot accede to your request. But with respect to any other gentleman, I shall be most happy; even Balseiro, who, though strange things are told of him, still knows how to comport himself, and in whose behaviour there is something both of formality and politeness, shall this day share your hospitality if you desire it, cavalier."

Of Balseiro I have already had occasion to speak in the former part of this narrative. He was now confined in an upper story of the prison, in a strong room, with several other malefactors. He had been found guilty of aiding and assisting one Pepe Candelas, a thief of no inconsiderable renown, in a desperate robbery perpetrated in open daylight upon no less a personage than the queen's milliner, a Frenchwoman, whom they bound in her own shop, from which they took goods and money to the amount of five or six thousand dollars. Candelas had already expiated his crime on the scaffold; but Balseiro, who was said to be by far the worse ruffian of the two, had by dint of money, an ally which his comrade did not possess, contrived to save his own life; the punishment of death, to which he was originally sentenced, having been commuted to twenty years' hard labour in the presidio of Malaga. I visited this worthy, and conversed with him for some time through the wicket of the dungeon. He

Me pesa. I am sorry.
Malaga. Mediterranean port in Andalusia.

recognised me, and reminded me of the victory which I had once obtained over him in the trial of our respective skill in the crabbed Gitáno, at which Sevilla the bull-fighter was umpire.

Upon my telling him that I was sorry to see him in such a situation, he replied that it was an affair of no matter of consequence, as within six weeks he should be conducted to the presidio, from which, with the assistance of a few ounces distributed amongst the guards, he could at any time escape. "But whither would you flee?" I demanded. "Can I not flee to the land of the Moors," replied Balseiro, "or to the English in the camp of Gibraltar? or, if I prefer it, cannot I return to this foro (*city*), and live as I have hitherto done, choring the gachos (*robbing the natives*); what is to hinder me? Madrid is large, and Balseiro has plenty of friends, especially among the lumias (*women*)," he added, with a smile. I spoke to him of his ill-fated accomplice Candelas; whereupon his face assumed a horrible expression. "I hope he is in torment!" exclaimed the robber. The friendship of the unrighteous is never of long duration; the two worthies had, it seems, quarrelled in prison; Candelas having accused the other of bad faith and an undue appropriation to his own use of the *corpus delicti* in various robberies which they had committed in company.

Gitáno. Gipsy language.
Presidio. Prison.
Corpus delicti. Object which proves the perpetration of a crime. Here, booty.

I cannot refrain from relating the subsequent history of this Balseiro. Shortly after my own liberation, too impatient to wait until the presidio should afford him a chance of regaining his liberty, he in company with some other convicts broke through the roof of the prison and escaped. He instantly resumed his former habits, committing several daring robberies, both within and without the walls of Madrid. I now come to his last, I may call it his master crime, a singular piece of atrocious villainy. Dissatisfied with the proceeds of street robbery and house-breaking, he determined upon a bold stroke, by which he hoped to acquire money sufficient to support him in some foreign land in luxury and splendour.

There was a certain comptroller of the queen's household, by name Gabiria, a Basque by birth, and a man of immense possessions: this individual had two sons, handsome boys, between twelve and fourteen years of age, whom I had frequently seen, and indeed conversed with, in my walks on the bank of the Manzanares, which was their favourite promenade. These children, at the time of which I am speaking, were receiving their education at a certain seminary in Madrid. Balseiro, being well acquainted with the father's affection for his children, determined to make it subservient to his own rapacity. He formed a plan which was neither more nor less than to steal the children, and not to restore them to their parent until he had received an

enormous ransom. This plan was partly carried into execution: two associates of Balseiro, well dressed, drove up to the door of the seminary, where the children were, and, by means of a forged letter, purporting to be written by the father, induced the schoolmaster to permit the boys to accompany them for a country jaunt, as they pretended. About five leagues from Madrid, Balseiro had a cave in a wild unfrequented spot between the Escurial and a village called Torre Lodones; to this cave the children were conducted, where they remained in durance under the custody of the two accomplices—Balseiro in the meantime remaining in Madrid for the purpose of conducting negotiations with the father. The father, however, was a man of considerable energy, and instead of acceding to the terms of the ruffian, communicated in a letter, instantly took the most vigorous measures for the recovery of his children. Horse and foot were sent out to scour the country, and in less than a week the children were found near the cave, having been abandoned by their keepers, who had taken fright on hearing of the decided measures which had been resorted to. They were, however, speedily arrested and identified by the boys as their ravishers. Balseiro, perceiving that Madrid was becoming too hot to hold him, attempted to escape, but whether to the camp of Gibraltar or to the land of the Moor I know not. He was

Escurial. Six miles from Madrid. The palace and monastery were built by Philip II.

recognised, however at a village in the neighbourhood of Madrid, and being apprehended, was forthwith conducted to the capital, where he shortly after terminated his existence on the scaffold, with his two associates; Gabiria and his children being present at the ghastly scene, which they surveyed from a chariot at their ease.

Such was the end of Balseiro, of whom I should certainly not have said so much, but for the affair of the crabbed Gitáno. Poor wretch! he acquired that species of immortality which is the object of the aspirations of many a Spanish thief, whilst vapouring about in the patio, dressed in the snowy linen. The rape of the children of Gabiria made him at once the pet of the fraternity. A celebrated robber, with whom I was subsequently imprisoned at Seville, spoke his eulogy in the following manner:

"Balseiro was a very good subject and an honest man. He was the head of our family, Don Jorge; we shall never see his like again. Pity that he did not sack the parné (*money*), and escape to the camp of the Moor, Don Jorge."

The Bible in Spain.

XV.—A REVOLUTION

The following incidents occurred during the rising under Don Carlos, son of Charles IV. of Spain, who attempted to wrest the crown from Isabella (1833).

THE Granja, or Grange, is a royal country seat, situated amongst pine forests, on the other side of the Guadarama hills, about twelve leagues distant from Madrid. To this place the queen regent Christina had retired, in order to be aloof from the discontent of the capital, and to enjoy rural air and amusements in this celebrated retreat, a monument of the taste and magnificence of the first Bourbon who ascended the throne of Spain. She was not, however, permitted to remain long in tranquillity; her own guards were disaffected, and more inclined to the principles of the constitution of 1823 than to those of absolute monarchy, which the moderados were attempting to revive again in the government of Spain. Early one morning, a party of soldiers, headed by a certain Sergeant Garcia, entered her apartment, and proposed that she should subscribe her hand to this constitution, and swear solemnly to abide by it. Christina, however, who was a woman of considerable spirit, refused to comply with this

Moderados. Moderates.

proposal, and ordered them to withdraw. A scene of violence and tumult ensued, but the regent still continuing firm, the soldiers at length led her down to one of the courts of the palace, where stood her well-known paramour, Muños, bound and blindfolded. "Swear to the constitution, you she-rogue!" vociferated the swarthy sergeant. "Never!" said the spirited daughter of the Neapolitan Bourbons. "Then your cortejo shall die!" replied the sergeant. "Ho! ho! my lads; get ready your arms, and send four bullets through the fellow's brain." Muños was forthwith led to the wall, and compelled to kneel down, the soldiers levelled their muskets, and another moment would have consigned the unfortunate wight to eternity, when Christina, forgetting everything but the feelings of her woman's heart, suddenly started forward with a shriek, exclaiming: "Hold, hold! I sign, I sign!"

The day after this event I entered the Puerta del Sol at about noon. There is always a crowd there about this hour, but it is generally a very quiet, motionless crowd, consisting of listless idlers calmly smoking their cigars, or listening to or retailing the —in general—very dull news of the capital; but on the day of which I am speaking the mass was no longer inert. There was much gesticulation and vociferation, and several people were running about

Cortejo. Lover.

Puerta del Sol. Gate of the Sun; a well-known gate at Madrid.

shouting, "*Viva la constitucion!*"—a cry which, a few days previously, would have been visited on the utterer with death, the city having for some weeks past been subjected to the rigour of martial law. I occasionally heard the words, "*La Granja! La Granja!*" which words were sure to be succeeded by the shout of "*Viva la constitucion!*" Opposite the Casa de Postas were drawn up in a line about a dozen mounted dragoons, some of whom were continually waving their caps in the air and joining the common cry, in which they were encouraged by their commander, a handsome young officer, who flourished his sword, and more than once cried out with great glee, "Long live the constitutional queen! Long live the constitution!"

The crowd was rapidly increasing, and several nationals made their appearance in their uniforms, but without their arms, of which they had been deprived, as I have already stated. "What has become of the moderado government?" said I to Baltasar, whom I suddenly observed amongst the crowd, dressed as when I had first seen him, in his old regimental greatcoat and foraging-cap. "Have the ministers been deposed, and others put in their place?"

"Not yet, Don Jorge," said the little soldier-tailor, "not yet. The scoundrels still hold out, relying on the brute bull Quesada and a few infantry, who still continue true to them. But there is no fear, Don

Casa de Postas. Post-office.

Jorge. The queen is ours, thanks to the courage of my friend Garcia; and if the brute bull should make his appearance—ho, ho! Don Jorge, you shall see something. I am prepared for him. Ho, ho!" and thereupon he half-opened his greatcoat, and showed me a small gun which he bore beneath it in a sling. and then moving away with a wink and a nod, disappeared amongst the crowd.

Presently I perceived a small body of soldiers advancing up the Calle Mayor, or principal street, which runs from the Puerta del Sol in the direction of the palace; they might be about twenty in number, and an officer marched at their head with a drawn sword. The men appeared to have been collected in a hurry, many of them being in fatigue dress, with foraging-caps on their heads. On they came, slowly marching, neither their officer nor themselves paying the slightest attention to the cries of the crowd which thronged about them, shouting, "Long live the constitution!" save and except by an occasional surly side glance. On they marched with contracted brows and set teeth, till they came in front of the cavalry, where they halted and drew up in a rank.

"Those men mean mischief," said I to my friend D——, of the *Morning Chronicle*, who at this moment joined me; "and depend upon it, that if they are ordered they will commence firing, caring nothing whom they hit. But what can those cavalry fellows behind them mean, who are evidently of the other opinion by their shouting? Why don't they charge

at once this handful of foot-people and overturn them? Once down, the crowd would wrest from them their muskets in a moment. You are a liberal, which I am not; why do you not go to that silly young man who commands the horse, and give him a word of counsel in time?"

D—— turned upon me his broad, red good-humoured English countenance, with a peculiarly arch look, as much as to say . . . (whatever you think most applicable, gentle reader); then taking me by the arm, "Let us get," said he, "out of this crowd and mount to some window, where I can write down what is about to take place, for I agree with you that mischief is meant." Just opposite the post office was a large house, in the topmost story of which we beheld a paper displayed, importing that apartments were to let; whereupon we instantly ascended the common stair, and having agreed with the mistress of the *étage* for the use of the front room for the day, we bolted the door, and the reporter, producing his pocket-book and pencil, prepared to take notes of the coming events, which were already casting their shadow before.

What most extraordinary men are these reporters of newspapers in general—I mean English newspapers; surely if there be any class of individuals who are entitled to the appellation of cosmopolites, it is these; who pursue their avocation in all countries indifferently, and accommodate themselves at will to the manners of all classes of society: their fluency

of style as writers is only surpassed by their facility of language in conversation, and their attainments in classical and polite literature only by their profound knowledge of the world, acquired by an early introduction into its bustling scenes. The activity, energy, and courage which they occasionally display in the pursuit of information are truly remarkable. I saw them during the three days at Paris, mingled with canaille and gamins behind the barriers, whilst the mitraille was flying in all directions, and the desperate cuirassiers were dashing their fierce horses against the seemingly feeble bulwarks. There stood they, dotting down their observations in their pocket-books as unconcernedly as if reporting the proceedings of a reform meeting in Covent Garden or Finsbury Square; whilst in Spain, several of them accompanied the Carlist and Christino guerillas in some of their most desperate raids and expeditions, exposing themselves to the danger of hostile bullets, the inclemency of winter, and the fierce heat of the summer sun.

We had scarcely been five minutes at the window, when we suddenly heard the clattering of horses' feet hastening down the street called the Calle de Carretas. The house in which we had stationed ourselves was, as I have already observed, just opposite to the post office, at the left of which this street debouches from the north into the Puerta del Sol: as the sounds became louder and louder, the cries of the crowd below diminished, and a species of

panic seemed to have fallen upon all; once or twice, however, I could distinguish the words, Quesada! Quesada! The foot soldiers stood calm and motionless, but I observed that the cavalry, with the young officer who commanded them, displayed both confusion and fear, exchanging with each other some hurried words; all of a sudden that part of the crowd which stood near the mouth of the Calle de Carretas fell back in great disorder, leaving a considerable space unoccupied, and the next moment Quesada, in complete general's uniform, and mounted on a bright bay thoroughbred English horse, with a drawn sword in his hand, dashed at full gallop into the area, in much the same manner as I have seen a Manchegan bull rush into the amphitheatre when the gates of his pen are suddenly flung open.

He was closely followed by two mounted officers, and at a short distance by as many dragoons. In almost less time than is sufficient to relate it, several individuals in the crowd were knocked down and lay sprawling upon the ground beneath the horses of Quesada and his two friends, for as to the dragoons, they halted as soon as they had entered the Puerta del Sol. It was a fine sight to see three men, by dint of valour and good horsemanship, strike terror into at least as many thousands: I saw Quesada spur his horse repeatedly into the dense masses of the crowd, and then extricate himself in the most masterly manner. The rabble were completely awed and gave way, retiring by the Calle del Comercio

and the street of Alcala. All at once, Quesada singled out two nationals, who were attempting to escape, and setting spurs to his horse, turned them in a moment, and drove them in another direction, striking them in a contemptuous manner with the flat of his sabre. He was crying out, "Long live the absolute queen!" when, just beneath me, amidst a portion of the crowd which had still maintained its ground, perhaps from not having the means of escaping, I saw a small gun glitter for a moment; then there was a sharp report, and a bullet had nearly sent Quesada to his long account, passing so near to the countenance of the general as to graze his hat. I had an indistinct view for a moment of a well-known foraging-cap just about the spot from whence the gun had been discharged; then there was a rush of the crowd, and the shooter, whoever he was, escaped discovery amidst the confusion which arose.

As for Quesada, he seemed to treat the danger from which he had escaped with the utmost contempt. He glared about him fiercely for a moment, then leaving the two nationals, who sneaked away like whipped hounds, he went up to the young officer who commanded the cavalry, and who had been active in raising the cry of the constitution, and to him he addressed a few words with an air of stern menace. The youth evidently quailed before him, and, probably in obedience to his orders, resigned the command of the party and rode slowly away

with a discomfited air; whereupon Quesada dismounted and walked slowly backwards and forwards before the Casa de Postas with a mien which seemed to bid defiance to mankind.

This was the glorious day of Quesada's existence, his glorious and last day. I call it the day of his glory, for he certainly never before appeared under such brilliant circumstances, and he never lived to see another sun set. No action of any conqueror or hero on record is to be compared with this closing scene of the life of Quesada; for who, by his single desperate courage and impetuosity, ever before stopped a revolution in full course? Quesada did: he stopped the revolution at Madrid for one entire day, and brought back the uproarious and hostile mob of a huge city to perfect order and quiet. His burst into the Puerta del Sol was the most tremendous and successful piece of daring ever witnessed. I admired so much the spirit of the "brute bull" that I frequently, during his wild onset, shouted, "Viva Quesada!" for I wished him well. Not that I am of *any* political party or system. No, no! I have lived too long with Rommany Chals and Petulengres [1] to be of any politics save gipsy politics; and it is well known that during elections the children of Roma side with both parties so long as the event is doubtful, promising success to each, and then when

[1] A compound of the modern Greek πέταλον, and the Sanskrit *kara*, the literal meaning being *Lord* of the horse-shoe (that is, *maker*). It is one of the private cognominations of "The Smiths," an English gipsy clan.

the fight is done and the battle won, invariably range themselves in the ranks of the victorious. But I repeat that I wished well to Quesada, witnessing, as I did, his stout heart and good horsemanship. Tranquillity was restored to Madrid throughout the remainder of the day. The handful of infantry bivouacked in the Puerta del Sol. No more cries of "Long live the constitution" were heard; and the revolution in the capital seemed to have been effectually put down. It is probable, indeed, that had the chiefs of the moderado party but continued true to themselves for forty-eight hours longer, their cause would have triumphed, and the revolutionary soldiers at the Granja would have been glad to restore the queen-regent to liberty and to have come to terms, as it was well known that several regiments, who still continued loyal, were marching upon Madrid. The moderados, however, were *not* true to themselves; that very night their hearts failed them, and they fled in various directions—Isturitz and Galiano to France, and the Duke of Rivas to Gibraltar. The panic of his colleagues even infected Quesada, who, disguised as a civilian, took to flight. He was not, however, so successful as the rest, but was recognised at a village about three leagues from Madrid, and cast into the prison by some friends of the constitution. Intelligence of his capture was instantly transmitted to the capital, and a vast mob of the nationals, some on foot, some on horseback, and others in cabriolets, instantly set

out. "The nationals are coming," said a paisano to Quesada. "Then," said he, "I am lost," and forthwith prepared himself for death.

There is a celebrated coffee-house in the Calle d'Alcala at Madrid capable of holding several hundred individuals. On the evening of the day in question I was seated there, sipping a cup of the brown beverage, when I heard a prodigious noise and clamour in the street; it proceeded from the nationals, who were returning from their expedition. In a few minutes I saw a body of them enter the coffee-house marching arm-in-arm, two by two, stamping on the ground with their feet in a kind of measure, and repeating in loud chorus as they walked round the spacious apartment, the following grisly stanza:

Que es lo que abaja
Por aquel cerro?
Ta ra ra ra ra.
Son los huesos de Quesada,
Que los trae un perro—
Ta ra ra ra ra.[1]

A huge bowl of coffee was then called for, which was placed upon the table, around which gathered the national soldiers; there was silence for a moment,

[1] Of these lines the following translation, in the style of the old English ballad, will, perhaps, not be unacceptable:

What down the hill comes hurrying there?—
With a hey, with a ho, a sword and a gun!
Quesada's bones, which a hound doth bear.—
Hurrah, brave brothers!—the work is done.

Paisano. Peasant.

which was interrupted by a voice roaring out, "*El panuelo!*" A blue kerchief was forthwith produced, which appeared to contain a substance of some kind; it was untied, and a gory hand and three or four dissevered fingers made their appearance, and with these the contents of the bowl were stirred up. "Cups, cups!" cried the nationals. . . .

"Ho, ho, Don Jorge," cried Baltasarito, coming up to me with a cup of coffee, "pray do me the favour to drink upon this glorious occasion. This is a pleasant day for Spain, and for the gallant nationals of Madrid. I have seen many a bull funcion, but none which has given me so much pleasure as this. Yesterday the brute had it all his own way, but to-day the toreros have prevailed, as you see, Don Jorge. Pray drink; for I must now run home to fetch my pajandi to play my brethren a tune, and sing a copla. What shall it be? Something in Gitáno?

Una noche sinava en tucue.

You shake your head, Don Jorge. Ha, ha! I am young, and youth is the time for pleasure: well, well, out of compliment to you, who are an Englishman and a monro, it shall not be that, but something liberal, something patriotic, the Hymn of Riego—Hasta despues, Don Jorge!"

The Bible in Spain.

El panuelo. The handkerchief.
Pajandi. A musical instrument.
Copla. Stanza, verse.
Hasta despues. Goodbye, *au revoir.*

XVI
AN EXCITING JOURNEY

I HAD ordered two hundred Testaments to be sent to Santander from Madrid: I found, however, to my great sorrow, that they had not arrived, and I supposed that they had either been seized on the way by the Carlists, or that my letter had miscarried. I then thought of applying to England for a supply, but I abandoned the idea for two reasons. In the first place, I should have to remain idly loitering, at least a month, before I could receive them, at a place where every article was excessively dear; and, secondly, I was very unwell, and unable to procure medical advice at Santander. Ever since I left Coruña I had been afflicted with a terrible dysentery, and latterly with an ophthalmia, the result of the other malady. I therefore determined on returning to Madrid. To effect this, however, seemed no very easy task. Parties of the army of Don Carlos, which, in a partial degree, had been routed in Castile, were hovering about the country through which I should have to pass, more especially in that part called "The Mountains," so that all communication had ceased between Santander and the southern districts. Nevertheless, I determined

to trust as usual in the Almighty, and to risk the danger. I purchased, therefore, a small horse, and sallied forth with Antonio.

Before departing, however, I entered into conference with the booksellers as to what they should do in the event of my finding an opportunity of sending them a stock of Testaments from Madrid; and, having arranged matters to my satisfaction, I committed myself to Providence. I will not dwell long on this journey of three hundred miles. We were in the midst of the fire, yet, strange to say, escaped without a hair of our heads being singed. Robberies, murders, and all kinds of atrocities were perpetrated before, behind, and on both sides of us, but not so much as a dog barked at us, though in one instance a plan had been laid to intercept us. About four leagues from Santander, whilst we were baiting our horses at a village hostelry, I saw a fellow run off after having held a whispering conversation with a boy who was dealing out barley to us. I instantly inquired of the latter what the man said to him, but only obtained an evasive answer. It appeared afterwards that the conversation was about ourselves. Two or three leagues farther there was an inn and village where we had proposed staying, and indeed had expressed our intention of doing so; but on arriving there, finding that the sun was still far from its bourne, I determined to proceed farther, expecting to meet with a resting place at the distance of a league; though I was

mistaken, as we found none until we reached Montaneda, nine leagues and a half from Santander, where was stationed a small detachment of soldiers. At the dead of night we were aroused from our sleep by a cry that the factious were not far off. A messenger had arrived from the alcalde of the village where we had previously intended staying, who stated that a party of Carlists had just surprised that place, and were searching for an English spy, whom they supposed to be at the inn. The officer commanding the soldiers, upon hearing this, not deeming his own situation a safe one, instantly drew off his men, falling back on a stronger party stationed in a fortified village near at hand. As for ourselves, we saddled our horses and continued our way in the dark. Had the Carlists succeeded in apprehending me, I should instantly have been shot, and my body cast on the rocks to feed the vultures and wolves. But "it was not so written," said Antonio, who, like many of his countrymen, was a fatalist. The next night we had another singular escape. We had arrived near the entrance of a horrible pass called "El puerto de la puente de las tablas," or the pass of the bridge of planks, which wound through a black and frightful mountain, on the farther side of which was the town of Oñas, where we meant to tarry for the night. The sun had set about a quarter of an hour. Suddenly a man, with his face covered with blood, rushed out of the pass. "Turn back, sir," he said, "in the name of God! There are

murderers in that pass; they have just robbed me of my mule and all I possess, and I have hardly escaped with life from their hands." I scarcely know why, but I made him no answer and proceeded; indeed I was so weary and unwell that I cared not what became of me. We entered. The rocks rose perpendicularly, right and left, entirely intercepting the scanty twilight, so that the darkness of the grave, or rather the blackness of the valley of the shadow of death, reigned around us, and we knew not where we went, but trusted to the instinct of the horses, who moved on with heads close to the ground. The only sound which we heard was the splash of a stream, which tumbled down the pass. I expected every moment to feel a knife at my throat, but "*it was not so written.*" We threaded the pass without meeting a human being, and within three-quarters of an hour after the time we entered it, we found ourselves within the posada of the town of Oñas, which was filled with troops and armed peasants expecting an attack from the grand Carlist army, which was near at hand.

Well, we reached Burgos in safety; we reached Valladolid in safety; we passed the Guadarama in safety; and were at length safely housed in Madrid. People said we had been very lucky; Antonio said, "It was so written"; but I say, "Glory be to the Lord for his mercies vouchsafed to us."

The Bible in Spain.

XVII.—ON THE WAY TO VILLAFRANCA

We at last cleared the woodlands, and after proceeding a short distance, the horse gave a joyous neigh and broke into a smart trot. A barking of dogs speedily reached my ears, and we seemed to be approaching some town or village. In effect, we were close to Cacabelos, a town about five miles distant from Villafranca.

It was near eleven at night, and I reflected that it would be far more expedient to tarry in this place till the morning than to attempt at present to reach Villafranca, exposing ourselves to all the horrors of darkness in a lonely and unknown road. My mind was soon made up on this point. But I reckoned without my host, for at the posada which I attempted to enter, I was told that we could not be accommodated, and still less our horses, as the stable was full of water. At the second—and there were but two—I was answered from the window by a gruff voice, nearly in the words of the scripture: "Trouble me not: the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot arise to let you in." Indeed, we had no particular desire to enter, as it appeared a wretched hovel, though the poor horses pawed

piteously against the door, and seemd to crave admittance.

We had now no choice but to resume our doleful way to Villafranca, which, we were told, was a short league distant, though it proved a league and a half. We found it no easy matter to quit the town, for we were bewildered amongst its labyrinths, and could not find the outlet. A lad about eighteen was, however, persuaded by the promise of a pesta to guide us; whereupon he led us by many turnings to a bridge, which he told us to cross, and to follow the road, which was that of Villafranca; he then, having received his fee, hastened from us.

We followed his directions, not, however, without a suspicion that he might be deceiving us. The night had settled darker down upon us, so that it was impossible to distinguish any object, however nigh. The lightning had become more faint and rare. We heard the rustling of trees, and occasionally the barking of dogs, which last sound, however, soon ceased, and we were in the midst of night and silence. My horse, either from weariness or the badness of the road, frequently stumbled; whereupon I dismounted, and leading him by the bridle, soon left Antonio far in the rear.

I had proceeded in this manner a considerable way, when a circumstance occurred of a character well suited to the time and place.

Pesta or *peseta*. A Spanish coin of the nominal value of ten pence.

I was again amidst trees and bushes, when the horse stopping short, nearly pulled me back. I know not how it was, but fear suddenly came over me, which, though in darkness and in solitude, I had not felt before. I was about to urge the animal forward, when I heard a noise at my right hand, and listened attentively. It seemed to be that of a person or persons forcing their way through branches and brushwood. It soon ceased, and I heard feet on the road. It was the short staggering kind of tread of people carrying a very heavy substance, nearly too much for their strength, and I thought I heard the hurried breathing of men overfatigued. There was a short pause, during which I conceived they were resting in the middle of the road; then the stamping recommenced, until it reached the other side, when I again heard a similar rustling amidst branches; it continued for some time and died gradually away.

I continued my road, musing on what had just occurred, and forming conjectures as to the cause. The lightning resumed its flashing, and I saw that I was approaching tall black mountains.

This nocturnal journey endured so long that I almost lost all hope of reaching the town, and had closed my eyes in a doze, though I still trudged on mechanically, leading the horse. Suddenly a voice at a slight distance before me roared out, "*Quien vive?*" for I had at last found my way to Villafranca. It proceeded from the sentry in the suburb, one of

those singular half soldiers half guerillas, called Miguelets, who are in general employed by the Spanish government to clear the roads of robbers. I gave the usual answer, "*España,*" and went up to the place where he stood. After a little conversation, I sat down on a stone, awaiting the arrival of Antonio, who was long in making his appearance. On his arrival, I asked if any one had passed him on the road, but he replied that he had seen nothing. The night, or rather the morning, was still very dark, though a small corner of the moon was occasionally visible. On our inquiring the way to the gate, the Miguelot directed us down a street to the left, which we followed. The street was steep, we could see no gate, and our progress was soon stopped by houses and wall. We knocked at the gates of two or three of these houses (in the upper stories of which lights were burning), for the purpose of being set right, but we were either disregarded or not heard. A horrid squalling of cats, from the tops of the houses and dark corners, saluted our ears, and I thought of the night arrival of Don Quixote and his squire at Toboso, and their vain search amongst the deserted streets for the palace of Dulcinea. At length, we saw light and heard voices in a cottage at the other side of a kind of ditch. Leading the horses over, we called at the door, which was opened by an aged man, who appeared by his dress to be a baker, as indeed he proved, which accounted for his being up at so late an hour. On begging him to show

us the way into the town, he led us up a very narrow alley at the end of his cottage, saying that he would likewise conduct us to the posada.

The alley led directly to what appeared to be the market-place, at a corner house of which our guide stopped and knocked. After a long pause an upper window was opened, and a female voice demanded who we were. The old man replied, that two travellers had arrived who were in need of lodging. "I cannot be disturbed at this time of night," said the woman; "they will be wanting supper, and there is nothing in the house; they must go elsewhere." She was going to shut the window, but I cried that we wanted no supper, but merely a resting place for ourselves and horses; that we had come that day from Astorga, and were dying with fatigue. "Who is that speaking?" cried the woman. "Surely that is the voice of Gil, the German clockmaker from Pontevedra. Welcome, old companion; you are come at the right time, for my own is out of order. I am sorry I have kept you waiting, but I will admit you in a moment."

The window was slammed to; presently a light shone through the crevices of the door, a key turned in the lock, and we were admitted.

The Bible in Spain.

XVIII
ASCENT OF SNOWDON

In 1840, on his return to England, Borrow had married Mary Clarke, a widow rather older than himself, who had lived at Oulton, but at Borrow's suggestion had come out to Spain. In July, 1854, with his wife and her daughter, Henrietta Clarke, he set out on a journey to North Wales. "We are in a lovely quiet spot," wrote Mrs. Borrow, "Dear George goes out exploring the mountains." In a second letter she records that her husband "keeps a daily journal of all that goes on, so that he can make a most amusing book in a month." It was not till 1862, however, that this book appeared under the title of *Wild Wales*. After an ascent of Snowdon, arm in arm with Henrietta, Mrs. Borrow remaining behind, Borrow left his wife and step-daughter to return home to Yarmouth, while he continued his journey. It is picturesquely described in *Wild Wales*, from which the following extracts are taken.

On the third morning after our arrival at Bangor, we set out for Snowdon. Snowdon, or Craig Eryri[1] is no single hill, but a mountainous region, the loftiest part of which, called Yr Wyddfa,[2] nearly four thousand feet above the level of the sea, is generally considered to be the highest point of Southern Britain. The name Snowdon was bestowed upon this region by the early English, on account of its snowy appearance in winter; Eryri by the Britons, because in the old time it abounded with eagles, eryri

[1] Pron. *ere-urr-ee.*

[2] Pron. *ur with-va* (*a* as in *far*).

in the ancient British language signifying an eyrie or breeding-place of eagles.

Snowdon is interesting on various accounts. It is interesting for its picturesque beauty. Perhaps in the whole world there is no region more picturesquely beautiful than Snowdon, a region of mountains, lakes, cataracts, and groves, in which Nature shows herself in her most grand and beautiful forms.

It is interesting from its connection with history: it was to Snowdon that Vortigern retired from the fury of his own subjects, caused by the favour which he showed to the detested Saxons. It was there that he called to his councils Merlin. It was on Snowdon that he built the castle, which he fondly deemed would prove impregnable, but which his enemies destroyed by flinging wild fire over its walls; and it was in a wind-beaten valley of Snowdon, near the sea, that his dead body, decked in green armour, had a mound of earth and stones raised over it. It was on the heights of Snowdon that the brave but unfortunate Llewellyn ap Griffith made his last stand for Cambrian independence; and it was to Snowdon that that very remarkable man, Owen Glendower,

Vortigern. Traditional prince of south-east Britain. Flourished about 450.

Merlin. Legendary enchanter and bard. See Tennyson's *Idylls of the King.*

Llewellyn ap Griffith. Son of Griffith, 1246–82, a Welsh prince who took up arms against Edward I., but fell in a skirmish on the Wye.

Owen Glendower. A Welsh gentleman who, in 1400, raised a revolt in North Wales which did not die out till the end of Henry IV.'s reign.

retired with his irregular bands before Henry the Fourth and his numerous and disciplined armies, soon, however, to emerge from its defiles and follow the foe, retreating less from the Welsh arrows from the crags than from the cold, rain, and starvation of the Welsh hills.

But it is from its connection with romance that Snowdon derives its chief interest. Who, when he thinks of Snowdon, does not associate it with the heroes of romance, Arthur and his knights? Their fictitious adventures, the splendid dreams of Welsh and Breton minstrels, many of the scenes of which are the valleys and passes of Snowdon, are the origin of romance, before which what is classic has for more than half a century been waning, and is perhaps eventually destined to disappear.

To the Welsh, besides being the hill of the "Awen" or Muse, it has always been the hill of hills, the loftiest of all mountains, the one whose snow is the coldest, to climb to whose peak is the most difficult of all feats; and the one whose fall will be the most astounding catastrophe of the last day.

After staying about an hour at Carnarvon we started for Llanberis, a few miles to the east.

Arthur. The legendary British prince who, with his Knights of the Round Table, was the subject of many French romances dating from the twelfth century. In English he is celebrated in Malory's *Morte d'Arthur* (fifteenth century), and Tennyson's *Idylls of the King.*

To climb . . . all feats. The gross exaggeration of this is manifest.

Llanberis is a village situated in a valley, and takes its name from Peris, a British saint of the sixth century, son of Heleg ap Glanog. The valley extends from west to east, having the great mountain of Snowdon on its south and a range of immense hills on its northern side.

Having engaged a lad to serve as guide, I set out with Henrietta to ascend the hill, my wife remaining behind, not deeming herself sufficiently strong to encounter the fatigue of the expedition. We were far from being the only visitors to the hill this day; groups of people, or single individuals, might be seen going up or descending the path as far as the eye could reach. On our left was the Vale of Llanberis, and on our other side a broad hollow, or Valley of Snowdon, beyond which were two huge hills forming part of the body of the grand mountain, the lowermost of which our guide told me was called Moel Elia, and the uppermost Moel y Cynghorion.[1] On we went until we had passed both these hills, and came to the neighbourhood of a great wall of rocks constituting the upper region of Snowdon, and where the real difficulty of the ascent begins. Here we sat for some time, resting and surveying the scene which presented itself to us. Getting up, we set about surmounting what remained of the ascent. The path was now winding and much more steep than it had hitherto been. I was at one time apprehensive that my gentle companion would be obliged

[1] "Hill of Councils"; pron. *moil y* (*u* as in *fur*) ***kung-orion.***

to give over the attempt; the gallant girl, however, persevered, and in little more than twenty minutes from the time when we arose from our resting place, we stood, safe and sound, though panting, upon the very top of Snowdon, the far-famed Wyddfa.

There we stood on the Wyddfa, in a cold, bracing atmosphere, though the day was almost stiflingly hot in the regions from which we had ascended. There we stood, enjoying a scene inexpressibly grand, comprehending a considerable part of the mainland of Wales, the whole of Anglesea, a faint glimpse of part of Cumberland, the Irish Channel, and what might be either a misty creation or the shadowy outline of the hills of Ireland. Manifold were the objects which we saw from the brow of Snowdon, but of all the objects which we saw, those which filled us with most delight and admiration, were numerous lakes and lagoons, which, like sheets of ice or polished silver, lay reflecting the rays of the sun in the deep valleys at its feet.

Nothing worth noting occurred in our descent to Llanberis, where my wife was anxiously awaiting us. The ascent and descent occupied four hours. About ten o'clock at night we again found ourselves at Bangor.

Wild Wales.

XIX.—THE DEVIL'S BRIDGE

A RAINY and boisterous night was succeeded by a bright and beautiful morning. I arose, and having ordered breakfast, went forth to see what kind of country I had got into. I found myself amongst wild, strange-looking hills, not, however, of any particular height. The house, which seemed to front the east, stood on the side of a hill on a wide platform abutting on a deep and awful chasm, at the bottom of which chafed and foamed the Rheidol.[1]

After breakfasting I paid my bill, and set out for the Devil's Bridge. I arrived at about eleven o'clock of a fine but cold day, and took up my quarters at the inn or rather hospice, for the sounding name of hospice is more applicable to it than the common one of inn.

Far to the west is a tall, strange-looking hill, the top of which bears no slight resemblance to that of a battlemented castle. This hill, which is believed to have been in ancient times a stronghold of the Britons, bears the name of Bryn y Castell, or the hill of the castle. To the north and just below the hospice is a profound hollow with all the appearance of the crater of an extinct volcano; at the bottom of the hollow the waters of two rivers unite; those

[1] *Rheidol.* Pron. *rhi-doll.*

of the Rheidol from the north, and those of the Afon y Mynach, or the Monk's river, from the south-east. The Rheidol, falling over a rocky precipice at the northern side of the hollow, forms a cataract very pleasant to look upon. Those of the Mynach which pass under the celebrated Devil's Bridge are not visible, though they generally make themselves heard.

Penetrate now into the hollow above which the hospice stands. You descend by successive flights of steps, some of which are very slippery and insecure. On your right is the Monk's river, running down its dingle in five successive falls to join its brother the Rheidol.

On the side of the basin of the last but one is the cave, or the site of the cave, said to have been occupied in old times by the "Wicked Children," the mysterious Plant de Bat, two brothers and a sister, robbers and murderers. At present it is nearly open on every side, having, it is said, been destroyed to prevent its being the haunt of other evil people. But where is the bridge, the celebrated bridge of the Evil Man?

From the bottom of the first flight of steps leading down into the hollow, you see a narrow-looking bridge bestriding a deep chasm or cleft to the south-east near the top of the dingle of the Monk's river, over which lies the road to Pont Erwyd. That, however, is not the Devil's Bridge—but about twenty feet below that bridge, and completely overhung by

Afon y Mynach. Pron. *avon ú mun-ach.*

it, don't you see a shadowy, spectral object, something like a bow, which likewise bestrides the chasm? You do! well! that shadowy, spectral object is the celebrated Devil's Bridge, or, as the timorous peasants of the locality call it, Pont y Gwr Drwg.

It is now merely preserved as an object of curiosity, the bridge above being alone used for transit, and is quite inaccessible except to birds and the climbing wicked boys of the neighbourhood.

To view the Devil's Bridge properly, and the wonders connected with it, you must pass over the bridge above it and descend a precipitous dingle on the eastern side till you come to a small platform in a crag. Nearly above you is the far-famed bridge, the Bridge of the Evil Man, a work which, though crumbling and darkly grey, does much honour to the hand that built it, whether it was the hand of Satan or of a monkish architect, for the arch is chaste and beautiful, far superior in every respect, except in safety and utility, to the one above it, which from this place you have not the mortification of seeing.

If pleasant recollections do not haunt you through life of the noble falls and the beautiful wooded dingles to the west of the bridge of the Evil One, and awful and mysterious ones of the monk's boiling cauldron, the long, savage, shadowy cleft, and the grey, crumbling, spectral bridge, I say boldly that you must be a very unpoetical person indeed.

Wild Wales.

XX.—BEDDGELERT

BEDDGELERT is situated in a valley surrounded by huge hills, the most remarkable of which are Moel Hebog and Cerrig Llan; the former fences it in on the south, and the latter, which is quite black and nearly perpendicular, on the east. A small stream rushes through the valley, and sallies forth by a pass at its south-eastern end.

The valley is said by some to derive its name of Beddgelert, which signifies the Grave of Celert, from being the burial place of Celert, a British saint of the sixth century, to whom Llangeler in Carmarthenshire is believed to have been consecrated.

The popular and most universally received tradition is that it has its name from being the resting place of a faithful dog called Celert, or Gelert, killed by his master, the warlike and celebrated Llewelyn ap Iorwerth, from an unlucky misapprehension.

Though the legend is known to most people, I shall take the liberty of relating it.

Llewelyn, during his contests with the English, had encamped with a few followers in the valley, and one day departed with his men on an expedition,

Beddgelert. "Gelert's grave"; pron. *bathe-gelert.*
Moel Hebog. "Hill of the Hawk."

leaving his infant son in a cradle in his tent, under the care of his hound Gelert, after giving the child its fill of goats' milk. Whilst he was absent, a wolf from the neighbouring mountains, in quest of prey, found its way into the tent, and was about to devour the child, when the watchful dog interfered, and after a desperate struggle, in which the tent was torn down, succeeded in destroying the monster. Llewelyn, returning at evening, found the tent on the ground, and the dog, covered with blood, sitting beside it.

Imagining the blood with which Gelert was besmeared was that of his own son devoured by the animal to whose care he had confided him, Llewelyn in a paroxysm of natural indignation, forthwith transfixed the faithful creature with his spear. Scarcely, however, had he done so, when his ears were startled by the cry of a child from beneath the fallen tent, and hastily removing the canvas, he found the child in its cradle quite uninjured, and found also the body of an enormous wolf frightfully torn and mangled lying near. The noble dog was not quite dead, but presently expired, in the act of licking his master's hand.

Llewelyn mourned over him as over a brother, buried him with funeral honours in the valley, and erected a tomb over him as over a hero. From that time the valley was called Beddgelert.

Wild Wales.

XXI.—ASCENT OF PLINLIMMON

I STARTED about ten o'clock on my expedition, after making, of course, a very hearty breakfast. At Castell Dyffryn I engaged a man to show me the sources of the rivers and the other wonders of the mountain. Leaving Castell Dyffryn my guide and I began to ascend a steep hill. When we were about halfway up, I asked my companion, who spoke very fair English, why the place was called castle.

"Because, sir," said he, "there was a castle here in the old time."

After ascending the hill and passing over its top, we went down its western side and soon came to a black frightful bog between two hills. Beyond the bog, and at some distance to the west of the two hills, rose a brown mountain, not abruptly but gradually, and looking more like what the Welsh call a rhiw or slope than a mynydd or mountain.

"That, sir," said my guide, "is the grand Plinlimmon."

"It does not look much of a hill," said I.

"We are on very high ground, sir, or it would look

Castell Dyffryn. "The castle in the valley."
Rhiw. Pron. *rew.* Cf. *new.*

much higher. I question, upon the whole, whether there is a higher hill in the world. God bless Plinlimmon Mawr!" said he, looking with reverence towards the hill. "I am sure I have a right to say so, for many is the good crown I have got by showing gentlemen, like yourself, to the top of him."

"You talk of Plinlimmon Mawr, or the great Plinlimmon," said I; "where are the small ones?"

"Yonder they are," said the guide, pointing to two hills towards the north—"one is Plinlimmon Canol, and the other Plinlimmon Bach. The middle and the small Plinlimmon."

"Plinlimmon," said I, "means five summits. You have pointed out only three—now, where are the other two?"

"Those two hills which we have just passed make up the five. However, I will tell your worship that there is a sixth summit. Don't you see that small hill connected with the big Plinlimmon, on the right?"

"I see it very clearly," said I.

"Well, your worship, that's called Bryn y Llo—the hill of the Calf, or the Calf Plinlimmon, which makes the sixth summit."

"Very good," said I, "and perfectly satisfactory. Now, let us ascend the big Plinlimmon."

In about a quarter of an hour we reached the summit of the hill, where stood a large cairn or heap of stones. I got upon the top and looked around me.

A mountainous wilderness extended on every side,

Canol. Pron. *kannol.*

a waste of russet-coloured hills, with here and there a black craggy summit. No sign of life or cultivation was to be discovered, and the eye might search in vain for a grove or even a single tree.

"Now," said I, descending from the cairn, "we will proceed to the sources of the rivers."

"The ffynnon of the Rheidol is not far off," said the guide; "it is just below the hill."

We descended the western side of the hill for some way; at length, coming to a very craggy and precipitous place, my guide stopped, and pointing with his finger into the valley below, said: "There, sir, if you look down you can see the source of the Rheidol." I looked down, and saw far below what appeared to be part of a small sheet of water.

"And that is the source of the Rheidol?" said I.

"Yes, sir," said my guide; "that is the ffynnon of the Rheidol."

"Well," said I, "is there no getting to it?"

"Oh, yes! but the path, sir, as you see, is rather steep and dangerous."

"Never mind," said I. "Let us try it."

And a truly bad path I found it; so bad indeed that before I had descended twenty yards I almost repented having ventured. There was one particularly bad part, being little better than a sheer precipice; but even here I got down in safety with the assistance of my guide, and a minute afterwards found myself at the source of the Rheidol.

The source of the Rheidol is a small beautiful

lake, about a quarter of a mile in length. If few rivers have a more wide and wondrous channel than the Rheidol, fewer still have a more beautiful and romantic source.

After kneeling down and drinking freely of the lake, I said:

"Now, where are we to go to next?"

"The nearest ffynnon to that of the Rheidol, sir, is the ffynnon of the Severn."

I followed my guide over a hill to the north-west into a valley, at the farther end of which I saw a brook streaming apparently to the south, where there was an outlet.

"That brook," said the guide, "is the young Severn." The brook came from round the side of a very lofty rock presenting something of the appearance of the head of a horse. Passing round this crag, we came to a fountain, surrounded with rushes, out of which the brook, now exceedingly small, came murmuring.

"The crag above," said my guide, "is called Craig y Ceffyl, of the Rock of the Horse, and this spring at its foot is generally called the ffynnon of the Hafren (Welsh name for Severn). However, follow me, and I will presently show you the real ffynnon of the Hafren."

I followed him up a narrow and very steep dingle. Just at the top he halted and said:

Ceffyl. Pron. *keffil.*
Hafren. In Welsh *f* has the sound of *v*—*have-ren.*

"Now, master, I have conducted you to the source of the Severn."

After taking possession of the Severn by drinking at its source, rather a shabby source for so noble a stream, I said, "Now, let us go to the fountain of the Wye."

"A quarter of an hour will take us to it, your honour," said the guide, leading the way.

The source of the Wye, which is a little pool, not much larger than that which constitutes the fountain of the Severn, stands near the top of a grassy hill which forms part of the great Plinlimmon.

The fountains of the Severn and Wye are in close proximity to each other. That of the Rheidol stands apart from both, as if, proud of its own beauty, it disdained the other two for their homeliness.

"And now, I suppose, sir, that our work is done, and we may go back," said my guide, as I stood on the grassy hill after drinking copiously of the fountain of the Wye.

Then taking off my hat, I lifted up my voice and sang:

> From high Plinlimmon's shaggy side
> Three streams in three directions glide;
> To thousands at their mouths who tarry
> Honey, gold and mead they carry.
>
> *Lewis Glyn Cothi* (translated).

I reached the hospice at about six o'clock, a bright moon shining upon me, and found a capital supper awaiting me, which I enjoyed exceedingly.

Wild Wales.

I

1. Write a brief account of Borrow's early childhood.

2. Is there anything in Borrow's antecedents or early life to account for his passion for travelling?

3. Write (in the third person) an account of the visit to Hythe Church.

4. What has Borrow to say about Dereham?

5. What influence had Borrow's early reading of *Robinson Crusoe* upon his life and writings?

II

1. Describe the gipsy encampment as seen by Borrow.

2. Reproduce briefly the substance of the conversation between Borrow and the gipsies. How does it illustrate their peculiar superstitions?

3. Write a description of Jasper.

III

1. With what doubts was Borrow troubled? What were his ambitions at this time?

2. What was the subject of the preacher's discourse?

3. What was the substance of Jasper Petulengro's philosophy. Explain its relation to the doubts described by the author at the beginning of this extract.

IV, V AND VI

1. Give in your own words an account of the author's fight with the Flaming Tinman.

2. Show by reference to his writings that Borrow took a keen interest in boxing and prize-fighting.

3. Write a description of Isopel Berners.

4. Describe the life led by Borrow and Isopel Berners in the Dingle.

VII

1. What do you know of Jasper Petulengro? When did the author first meet him and on what subsequent occasions is he mentioned?

2. What arguments did Belle make use of in opposition to Borrow's lessons in Armenian?

VIII

Give the substance of Isopel's letter.

IX

1. Describe Borrow's walk through London.

2. Compare old London Bridge with the present structure.

3. Relate the incident of the old woman on London Bridge. What evidence have we that it occurred elsewhere? What do you know of the book which the old woman was reading?

4. What evidence have we of Borrow's admiration for Defoe?

X

1. Relate the incident of Borrow and the coachman.

2. What do you know of Stonehenge? What was the shepherd's theory with reference to the stones?

XI

1. Describe Borrow's entry into the village church in company with the gipsies.

2. Write an account of an imaginary visit to a country church.

XII

1. Describe an inn in the old coaching days.

2. What, according to the ostler, led to the disappearance of the highwayman?

XIII

1. How did Borrow arouse the hostility of the Spanish clerical party?

2. What steps were taken to suppress the sale of his testaments?

3. Describe the interview between Borrow and the "unknown individuai" who called on him.

4. What do you know of Maria Diaz?

5. How does Borrow convey an idea of the Spaniard's traditional gravity and politeness?

XIV

1. Give some account of Borrow's fellow prisoners in the Carcel de la Corte.

2. Describe Borrow's conversation with the Frenchman in the prison.

XV

1. Give some account of the political situation in Spain at the time of George Borrow's residence in that country.

2. Briefly describe the way in which Quesada "stopped the revolution at Madrid for one entire day."

3. Describe the scene in the coffee-house in the Calle d'Alcala.

XVI

1. Give some account of the different people mentioned by Borrow as having been employed in his service in Spain.

2. Describe the incident of the "puerto de la puente de las tablas" (pass of the bridge of planks).

XVII

1. Show, by reference to the author's account of the journey to Villafranca, how Borrow succeeds in giving us an interesting account of comparatively trivial incidents.

2. How did Borrow succeed in obtaining a night's lodging at Villafranca?

XVIII

1. Mention some of the historical associations of Snowdon.

2. What connection has Snowdon with romance?

XIX

Give an account of the Devil's Bridge.

XX

1. What are the different explanations of the name Beddgelert?

2. Relate briefly the story of the faithful dog Celert.

XXI

1. What do you know about Plinlimmon?

2. Write an imaginary conversation—in the style of Borrow—between yourself and a guide who is conducting you through country which is strange to you.

GENERAL

1. What do you consider to be Borrow's good qualities, also his chief defects: (*a*) as a writer, (*b*) as a scholar, (*c*) as an historian?

2. Give some account of George Borrow's personal character and peculiarities, illustrating your statements by reference to his life and works.

3. What do you consider the most interesting features of Borrow's writings so far as you have read them? Give your reasons.

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