

discovering Wenna alone ; he was quite as well content to find Mabyn with her, though that young lady, as he came up, looked particularly fierce, and did not smile at all when she shook hands with him. Was it the red glow in the west that gave an extra tinge of colour to Mr. Roscorla's face ? Wenna felt that she was better satisfied with her engagement when her lover was not present ; but she put that down to a natural shyness and modesty which she considered was probably common to all girls in these strange circumstances.

Mr. Roscorla wished to convoy the two young ladies back to the inn, and evidently meant to spend the evening there. But Miss Wenna ill-requited his gallantry by informing him that she had intended to make one or two calls in the evening, which would occupy some time : in particular, she had undertaken to do something for Mrs. Luke's eldest girl ; and she had also promised to go in and read for half an hour to Nicholas Keam, the brother of the wife of the owner of the Napoleon Hotel, who was very ill indeed, and far too languid to read for himself.

"But you know, Mr. Roscorla," said Mabyn, with a bitter malice, "if you would go into the Napoleon and read to Mr. Keam, Wenna and I could go up to Mother Luke's, and so we should save all that time, and I am sure Wenna is very tired to-day. Then you would be so much better able to pick out the things in the papers that Mr. Keam wants ; for Wenna never knows what is old and what is new ; and Mr. Keam is anxious to learn what is going on in politics, and the Irish Church, and that kind of thing."

Could he refuse ? Surely a man who has just got a girl to say she will marry him, ought not to think twice about sacrificing half an hour to helping her in her occupations, especially if she be tired. Wenna could not have made the request herself ; but she was anxious that he should say yes, now it had been made, for it was in a manner a test of his devotion to her ; and she was overjoyed and most grateful to him when he consented. What Mabyn thought of the matter was not visible on her face.

CHAPTER VIII.

WENNA'S FIRST TRIUMPH.

THE two girls, as they went up the main street of Eglosilyan (it was sweet with the scent of flowers on this beautiful evening), left Mr. Roscorla in front of the obscure little public-house he had undertaken to visit ; and it is probable that in the whole of England at that moment there was not a more miserable man. He knew this Nicholas Keam, and his sister, and his brother-in-law, so far as their names went ; and also they knew him by sight ; but he had never said more than good-morning to any one of them ; and he had certainly never entered this pot-house, where a sort of debating society was nightly held by the *habitués*. But, all the same, he would do what he had undertaken to do, for Wenna Rosewarne's sake ; and it was with some sensation of a despairing heroism that he went up the steps of slate and crossed the threshold.

He looked into the place from the passage. He found before him what was really a large kitchen, with a spacious hearth, and with heavy rafters across the roof ; but all round the walls there was a sort of bench with a high wooden back to it ; and on this bench sat a number of men—one or two labourers, the rest slate-workers—who, in the dusk, were idly smoking and looking at the beer on the narrow tables before them. Was this the sort of place that his future wife had been in the habit of visiting ? There was a sort of gloomy picturesqueness about the chamber, to be sure ; for, warm as the evening was, a fire burned flickeringly in the grate ; there was enough light to show the tin and copper vessels shining over the high mantel-piece ; and a couple of fair-haired children were playing about the middle of the floor, little heeding the row of dusky figures around the tables, whose heads were half hidden by tobacco-smoke.

A tall, thin, fresh-coloured woman came along the passage ; and Mr. Roscorla was glad that he had not to go in among these labourers to make his business known. It

was bad enough to have to speak to Mrs. Haigh, the landlady of the Napoleon.

"Good evenin', Mrs. Haigh," said he, with an appearance of cheerfulness.

"Good evenin', zor," said she, staring at him with those cruelly shrewd and clear eyes that the Cornish peasantry have.

"I called in to see Mr. Keam," said he. "Is he much better?"

"If yü'd like vor to see 'n, zor," said she, rather slowly, as if waiting for further explanation, "yü'll vind 'n in the rüm"—and with that she opened the door of a room on the other side of the passage. It was obviously the private parlour of the household—an odd little chamber with plenty of coloured lithographs on the walls, and china and photographs on the mantelpiece; the floor of large blocks of slate ornamented with various devices in chalk; in the corner a cupboard filled with old cut crystal, brass candlesticks, and other articles of luxury. The room had one occupant—a tall man who sate in a big wooden chair by the window, his head hanging forward between his high shoulders, and his thin white hands on the arms of the chair. The sunken cheeks, the sallow-white complexion, the listless air, and an occasional sigh of resignation told a sufficiently plain story; although Mrs. Haigh, in regarding her brother, and speaking to him in a loud voice, as if to arouse his attention, wore an air of brisk cheerfulness strangely in contrast with the worn look of his face.

"Don't yü knaw Mr. Roscorla, brother Nicholas?" said she. "Don't yü look mazed, when he's come vor to zee if yü're better. And yü be much better to-day, brother Nicholas?"

"Yes, I think," said the sick man, agreeing with his sister out of mere listlessness.

"Oh yes, I think you look much better," said Mr. Roscorla, hastily and nervously, for he feared that both these people would see in his face what he thought of this unhappy man's chances of living. But Nicholas Keam mostly kept his eyes turned towards the floor, except when the brisk, loud voice of his sister roused him and caused him to look up.

A most awkward pause ensued. Mr. Roscorla felt convinced they would think he was mad if he offered to sit down in this parlour and read the newspapers to the invalid; he forgot that they did not know him as well as he did himself. On the other hand, would they not consider him a silly person if he admitted that he only made the offer in order to please a girl? Besides, he could see no newspapers in the room. Fortunately, at this moment, Mr. Keam himself came to the rescue by saying, in a slow and languid way—

"I did expect vor to zee Miss Rosewarne this evenin'—yaäs, I did; and she were to read me the news; but I suppose now——"

"Oh!" said Mr. Roscorla, quickly, "I have just seen Miss Rosewarne—she told me she expected to see you, but was a little tired. Now, if you like, I will read the newspapers to you as long as the light lasts."

"Why don't yü thank the gentleman, brother Nicholas?" said Mrs. Haigh, who was apparently most anxious to get away to her duties. "That be very kind of yü, zor. 'Tis a great comfort to 'n to hear the news; and I'll send yü in the papers to once. Yü come away with me, Rosana, and yü can come agwain and bring the gentleman the newspapers."

She dragged off with her a small girl who had wandered in; and Mr. Roscorla was left alone with the sick man. The feelings in his heart were not those which Wenna would have expected to find there as the result of the exercise of charity.

The small girl came back, and gave him the newspapers. He began to read; she sate down before him, and stared up into his face. Then a brother of hers came in, and he, too, sate down, and proceeded to stare. Mr. Roscorla inwardly began to draw pictures of the astonishment of certain of his old acquaintances if they had suddenly opened that small door, and found him, in the parlour of an ale-house, reading stale political articles to an apparently uninterested invalid and a couple of cottage children.

He was thankful that the light was rapidly declining; and long before he had reached the half-hour he made that his excuse for giving up.

"The next time I come, Mr. Keam," said he, cheerfully, as he rose and took his hat, "I shall come earlier."

"I did expect vor to zee Miss Rosewarne this evenin'," said Nicholas Keam, ungratefully paying no heed to the hypocritical offer; "vor she were here yesterday marnin', and she told me that Mr. Trelyon had zeen my brother in London streets, and I want vor to know mower about 'n, I dü."

"She told you?" Mr. Roscorla said, with a sudden and wild suspicion filling his mind. "How did she know that Mr. Trelyon was in London?"

"How did she knaw?" repeated the sick man, indolently. "Why, he zaid zo in the letter."

So Harry Trelyon, whose whereabouts were not even known to his own family, was in correspondence with Wenna Rosewarne, and she had carefully concealed the fact from the man she was going to marry? Mr. Roscorla rather absently took his leave. When he went outside a clear twilight was shining over Eglosilyan, and the first of the yellow stars were palely visible in the grey. He walked slowly down towards the inn.

Now if Mr. Roscorla had any conviction on any subject whatever, it was this—that no human being ever thoroughly and without reserve revealed himself or herself to any other human being. Of course he did not bring that as a charge against the human race, or against that member of it from whose individual experience he had derived his theory—himself; he merely accepted this thing as one of the facts of life. People, he considered, might be fairly honest, well-intentioned, and moral; but inside the circle of their actions and sentiments that were openly declared there was another circle only known to themselves; and to this region the foul bird of suspicion, as soon as it was born, immediately fled on silent wings. Not that, after a minute's consideration, he suspected anything very terrible in the present case. He was more vexed than alarmed. And yet at times, as he slowly walked down the steep street, he grew a little angry, and wondered how this apparently ingenuous creature should have concealed from him her correspondence with Harry Trelyon; and he resolved that he would have a speedy explanation of the whole matter. He was too shrewd

a man of the world to be tricked by a girl, or trifled with by an impertinent lad.

He was overtaken by the two girls, and they walked together the rest of the way. Wenna was in excellent spirits, and was very kind and grateful to him. Somehow, when he heard her low and sweet laughter, and saw the frank kindness of her dark eyes, he abandoned the gloomy suspicions that had crossed his mind; but he still considered that he had been injured; and that the injury was all the greater in that he had just been persuaded into making a fool of himself for Wenna Rosewarne's sake.

He said nothing to her then, of course; and, as the evening passed cheerfully enough in Mrs. Rosewarne's parlour, he resolved he would postpone inquiry into this matter. He had never seen Wenna so pleased herself, and so obviously bent on pleasing others. She petted her mother, and said slyly sarcastic things of her father, until George Rosewarne roared with laughter; she listened with respectful eyes and attentive ears when Mr. Roscorla pronounced an opinion on the affairs of the day; and she dexterously cut rolls of paper and dressed up her sister Mabyn to represent a lady of the time of Elizabeth, to the admiration of everybody. Mr. Roscorla had inwardly to confess that he had secured for himself a most charming and delightful wife, who would make a wonderful difference in those dull evenings up at Basset Cottage.

He only half guessed the origin of Miss Wenna's great and obvious satisfaction. It was really this—that she had that evening reaped the first welcome fruits of her new relations in finding Mr. Roscorla ready to go and perform acts of charity. But for her engagement, that would certainly not have happened; and this, she believed, was only the auspicious beginning. Of course Mr. Roscorla would have laughed if she had informed him of her belief that the regeneration of the whole little world of Eglosilyan—something like the Millennium, indeed—was to come about merely because an innkeeper's daughter was about to be made a married woman. Wenna Rosewarne, however, did not formulate any such belief; but she was none the less proud of the great results that had already been secured by

—by what? By her sacrifice of herself? She did not pursue the subject so far.

Her delight was infectious. Mr. Roscorla, as he walked home that night—under the throbbing starlight, with the sound of the Atlantic murmuring through the darkness—was, on the whole, rather pleased that he had been vexed on hearing of that letter from Harry Trelyon. He would continue to be vexed. He would endeavour to be jealous without measure; for how can jealousy exist if an anxious love is not also present? And, in fact, should not a man who is really fond of a woman be quick to resent the approach of any one who seems to interfere with his right of property in her affections? By the time he reached Basset Cottage, Mr. Roscorla had very nearly persuaded himself into the belief that he was really in love with Wenna Rosewarne.

CHAPTER IX.

THE RING OF EVIL OMEN.

ONE of Wenna's many friends outside the village in which she lived was a strange mis-shapen creature who earned his living by carrying sand from one of the bays on the coast to the farmers on the uplands above. This he did by means of a troop of donkeys—small, rough, light-haired, and large-eyed animals—that struggled up the rude and steep path on the face of the cliff, bearing on their backs the bags that he had laboriously filled below. It was a sufficiently cheerless occupation for this unfortunate hunchback, and not a very profitable one. The money he got from the farmers did not much more than cover the keep of the donkeys. He seldom spoke to any human being; for who was going to descend that rough and narrow path down to the shore—where he and his donkeys appeared to be no bigger than mice—with the knowledge that there was no path round the precipitous coast, and that nothing would remain but the long climb up again?

Wenna Rosewarne had some pity for this solitary wretch, who toiled at his task with the melancholy Atlantic before

him, and behind him a great and lonely wall of crumbling slate; and, whenever she had time, she used to walk with her sister across from Eglosilyan by the high-lying downs until they reached the indentation in the coast where a curve of yellow sand was visible far below. If this poor fellow and his donkeys were to be seen from the summit, the two girls had little fear of the fatigue of descending the path down the side of the steep cliff; and the object of their visit used to be highly pleased and flattered by their coming to chat with him for a few minutes. He would hasten the filling of his bags so as to ascend again with them; and, in a strange tongue that even the two Cornish girls could not always understand, he would talk to them of the merits of his favourite donkeys, of their willingness, and strength, and docility. They never took him any tracts; they never uttered a word of condolence or sympathy. Their visit was merely of the nature of a friendly call; but it was a mark of attention and kindness that gave the man something pleasant to think of for days thereafter.

Now, on one of these occasions, Mr. Roscorla went with Wenna and her sister; and although he did not at all see the use of going down this precipitous cliff for the mere purpose of toiling up again, he was not going to confess that he dreaded the fatigue of it. Moreover, this was another mission of charity; and, although he had not called again on Mr. Keam—although, in fact, he had inwardly vowed that the prayers of a thousand angels would not induce him again to visit Mr. Keam—he was anxious that Wenna should believe that he still remained her pupil. So, with a good grace, he went down the tortuous pathway to the desolate little bay where the sand-carrier was at work. He stood and looked at the sea while Wenna chatted with her acquaintance; he studied the rigging of the distant ships; he watched the choughs and daws flying about the face of the rocks; he drew figures on the sand with the point of his cane; and wondered whether he would be back in time for luncheon if this garrulous hunchback jabbered in his guttural way for another hour. Then he had the pleasure of climbing up the cliff again, with a whole troop of donkeys going before him in Indian

file up the narrow and zigzag path, and at last he reached the summit. His second effort in the way of charity had been accomplished.

He proposed that the young ladies should sit down to rest for a few minutes, after the donkeys and their driver had departed; and accordingly the three strangers chose a block of slate for a seat, with the warm grass for a footstool, and all around them the beauty of an August morning. The sea was ruffled into a dark blue where it neared the horizon; but closer at hand it was pale and still. The sun was hot on the bleak pasture-land. There was a scent of fern and wild thyme in the air.

"By the way, Wenna," said Mr. Roscorla, "I wonder you have never asked me why I have not yet got you an engagement-ring."

"Wenna does not want an engagement-ring," said Miss Mabyn, sharply. "They are not worn now."

This audacious perversion of fact on the part of the self-willed young beauty was in reality a sort of cry of despair. If Mr. Roscorla had not yet spoken of a ring to Wenna, Mabyn had; and Mabyn had besought of her sister not to accept this symbol of hopeless captivity.

"Oh, Wenna," she had said, "if you take a ring from him, I shall look on you as carried away from us for ever!"

"Nonsense, Mabyn," the elder sister had said. "The ring is of no importance; it is the word you have spoken that is."

"Oh no, it isn't," Mabyn said earnestly. "As long as you don't wear a ring, Wenna, I still fancy I shall get you back from him; and you may say what you like, but you are far too good for him."

"Mabyn, you are a disobedient child," the elder sister said, stopping the argument with a kiss, and not caring to raise a quarrel.

Well, when Mr. Roscorla was suddenly confronted by this statement, he was startled; but he inwardly resolved that, as soon as he and Wenna were married, he would soon bring Miss Mabyn's interference in their affairs to an end. At present he merely said, mildly—

"I was not aware that engagement-rings were no longer

worn. However, if that be so, it is no reason why we should discontinue a good old custom; and I have put off getting you one, Wenna, because I knew I had to go to London soon. I find now I must go on Monday next; and so I want you to tell me what sort of stones you like best in a ring."

"I am sure I don't know," Wenna said, humbly and dutifully. "I am sure to like whatever you choose."

"But what do you prefer yourself?" he again said.

Wenna hesitated, but Miss Mabyn did not. She was prepared for the crisis. She had foreseen it.

"Oh, Mr. Roscorla," she said (and you would not have fancied there was any guile or malice in that young and pretty face, with its tender blue eyes and its proud and sweet mouth), "don't you know that Wenna likes emeralds?"

Mr. Roscorla was very near telling the younger sister to mind her own business; but he was afraid. He only said, in a stiff way, to his betrothed—

"Do you like emeralds?"

"I think they are very pretty," Wenna replied, meekly. "I am sure I shall like any ring you choose."

"Oh, very well," said he, rather discontented that she would show no preference. "I shall get you an emerald ring."

When she heard this decision, the heart of Mabyn Rosewarne was filled with an unholy joy. This was the rhyme that was running through her head:

"Oh, green's forsaken,
And yellow's forsworn,
And blue's the sweetest
Colour that's worn!"

Wenna was saved to her now. How could any two people marry who had engaged themselves with an emerald ring? There was a great deal of what might be called natural religion in this young lady, to distinguish it from that which she had been taught on Sunday mornings and at her mother's knee: a belief in occult influences ruling the earth, unnameable, undefinable, but ever present and ever active. If fairly challenged, she might have scrupled to say that she believed in Brownies, or the Small People, or in any

one of the thousand superstitions of the Cornish peasantry. But she faithfully observed these superstitions. If her less heedful sister put a cut loaf upside down on the plate, Mabyn would instantly right it, and say "Oh, Wenna!" as if her sister had forgotten that the simple act meant that some ship was in sore distress. If Wenna laughed at any of these fancies, Mabyn said nothing; but all the same she was convinced in her own mind that things happened to people in a strange fashion, and in accordance with omens that might have been remarked. She knew that if Mr. Roscorla gave Wenna a ring of emeralds, Wenna would never be Mr. Roscorla's wife.

One thing puzzled her, however. Which of the two was to be the forsaken? Was it Wenna or Mr. Roscorla who would break this engagement that the younger sister had set her heart against? Well, she would not have been sorry if Mr. Roscorla were the guilty party, except in so far as some humiliation might thereby fall on Wenna. But the more she thought of the matter, the more she was convinced that Mr. Roscorla was aware he had the best of the bargain, and was not at all likely to seek to escape from it. It was he who must be forsaken; and she had no pity for him. What right had an old man to come and try to carry off her sister—her sister whose lover ought to be "young and beautiful like a prince"? Mabyn kept repeating the lines to herself all the time they walked homewards; and if Wenna had asked her a question just then, the chances are she would have answered—

"Oh, green's forsaken,
And yellow's forsworn,
And blue's the sweetest
Colour that's worn!"

But Wenna was otherwise engaged during this homeward walk. Mr. Roscorla, having resolved to go to London, thought he might as well have that little matter about Harry Trelyon cleared up before he went. He had got all the good out of it possible, by nursing whatever unquiet suspicions it provoked, and trying to persuade himself that as he was in some measure jealous he must in some measure be in love. But he had not the courage to take these

suspicions with him to London: they were not pleasant travelling companions.

"I wonder," he said, in rather a nervous way, "whether I shall see young Trelyon in London."

Wenna did not appear to be disturbed by the mention of the name. She only said, with a smile—

"It is a big place to seek any one in."

"You know he is there?"

"Oh yes," she answered directly.

"It is odd that you should know; for he has not told any one up at Trelyon Hall; in fact, no one appears to have heard anything about him but yourself."

"How very silly of him," Wenna said, "to be so thoughtless! Doesn't his mother know? Do you think she would like to know?"

"Well," said he, with marked coldness, "doubtless she would be surprised at his having communicated with you in preference to any one else."

Wenna's soft dark eyes were turned up to his face with a sudden look of astonishment. He had never spoken to her in this way before. She could not understand. And then she said, very quickly, and with a sudden flush of colour in her face—

"Oh! but this letter is only about the dog. I will show it to you. I have it in my pocket."

She took out the letter and handed it to him; and he might have seen that her hand trembled. She was very much perturbed—she scarcely knew why. But there was something in his manner that had almost frightened her—something distant, and harsh, and suspicious; and surely she had done no wrong?

He smoothed out the crumpled sheet of paper, and a contemptuous smile passed over his face.

"He writes with more care to you than to other people; but I can't say much for his handwriting at the best."

Wenna said nothing; but Mabyn remarked, rather warmly—

"I don't think a man need try to write like a dancing-master, if he means what he says, and can tell you that frankly."

Mr. Roscorla did not heed this remarkably incoherent

speech, for he was reading the letter, which ran as follows:—

“NOLAN’S HOTEL, LONDON, July 30, 18—.

“DEAR MISS ROSEWARNE—I know you would like to have Rock, and he’s no good at all as a retriever, and I’ve written to Luke to take him down to you at the Inn, and I shall be very pleased if you will accept him as a present from me. Either Luke or your father will tell you how to feed him; and I am sure you will be kind to him, and not chain him up, and give him plenty of exercise. I hope you are all well at the Inn, and that Mabyn’s pigeons have not flowne away. Tell her not to forget the piece of looking-glass.

“Yours faithfully,
“HARRY TRELYON.

“P.S.—I met Joshua Keam quite by accident yesterday. He asked for you most kindly. His leg has been amputated at last.”

Here was nothing at which a jealous lover might grumble. Mr. Roscorla handed back the letter with scarcely a word, leaving Wenna to puzzle over what had happened to make him look at her in that strange way. As for Miss Mabyn, that young lady would say nothing to hurt her sister’s feelings; but she said many a bitter thing to herself about the character of a gentleman who would read another gentleman’s letter, particularly when the former was an elderly gentleman and the latter a young one, and most of all when the young gentleman had been writing to a girl, and that girl her sister Wenna. “But green’s forsaken,” Mabyn said to herself, as if there was great comfort in that reflection—“green’s forsaken, and yellow’s forsworn!”

And so Mr. Roscorla was going away from Eglosilyan for a time, and Wenna would be left alone.

Certainly, if this brief separation promised to afflict her grievously, it had not that effect in the meantime; for once she had gone over the matter in her mind, and sketched out, as was her wont, all that she ought to do, she quickly recovered her cheerfulness, and was in very good spirits indeed when the small party reached Eglosilyan. And here

was a small and sunburnt boy—Master Pentecost Luke, in fact—waiting for her right in the middle of the road in front of the inn, whom she caught up, and kissed, and scolded all at once.

“Whatever are you doing down here, sir, all by yourself?”

“I have tum to see you,” the small boy said, in no way frightened or abashed by her rough usage of him.

“And so you want Mr. Trelyon to ride over you again, do you? Haven’t I told you never to come here without some of your brothers and sisters? Well, say ‘How do you do?’ to the gentleman. Don’t you know Penny Luke, Mr. Roscorla?”

“I believe I have that honour,” said Mr. Roscorla, with a smile, but not at all pleased to be kept in the middle of the road chattering to a cottager’s child.

Miss Wenna presently showed that she was a well-built and active young woman, by swinging Master Penny up, and perching him on her shoulder, in which fashion she carried him into the inn.

“Penny is a great friend of mine,” she said to Mr. Roscorla, who would not himself have attempted that feat of skill and dexterity, “and you must make his acquaintance. He is a very good boy on the whole, but sometimes he goes near to breaking my heart. I shall have to give him up, and take another sweetheart, if he doesn’t mind. He *will* eat with his fingers, and he will run out and get among horses’ feet; and as for the way he conducts himself when his face is being washed, and he is being made like a gentleman, I never saw the like of it.”

Master Penny did not seem much ashamed; he was, in fact, too proud of his position. They marched him into the inn, where, doubtless, he received all the petting and other good things he had been shrewdly expecting.

Mabyn said her prayers that night in the ordinary and formal fashion. She prayed for her father and mother and for her sister Wenna, as she had been taught; and she added in the Princess of Wales on her own account, because she liked her pretty face. She also prayed that she herself should be made humble and good, desirous of serving her fellow-creatures, and charitable to every one. All this was done in due order.

But in point of fact her heart was at that moment far from being meek and charitable; it was, on the contrary, filled with bitterness and indignation. And the real cry of her soul, unknown to herself, went out to all the vague, imaginative powers of magic and witchcraft—to the mysterious influences of the stars and the strange controllers of chance; and it was to these that she looked for the rescue of her sister from the doom that threatened her; and it was to them that she appealed, with a yearning far too great for words or even for tears. When she was but a child playing among the rocks, she had stumbled on the dead body of a sailor that had been washed ashore; and she had run, white and trembling, into the village with the news. Afterwards she was told that on the hand of the corpse a ring with a green stone in it was found; and then she heard for the first time the rhyme that had never since left her memory. She certainly did not wish that Mr. Roscorla should die; but she as certainly wished that her sister Wenna should be saved from becoming his wife; and she reflected with a fierce satisfaction that it was she who had driven him to promise that Wenna's engagement-ring should be composed of those fatal stones.

CHAPTER X.

THE SNARES OF LONDON.

IF Mr. Harry Trelyon was bent on going to the devil, to use his own phrase, he went a quiet way about it. On the warm and close evening of a summer day he arrived in London. A red smoke hung about the western sky, over the tops of the houses; the thoroughfares that were in shadow were filled with a pale blue mist; the air was still and stifling—very different from that which came in at night from the sea to the gardens and cottages of Eglosilyan. He drove down through these hot and crowded streets to an hotel near Charing Cross—an old-fashioned little place much frequented by west-country people, who sometimes took rooms there, and brought their daughters up for a month or so of the season, at which time no other guests could obtain admission. At ordinary times, however,

the place was chiefly tenanted by a few country gentlemen and a clergyman or two, who had small sitting-rooms, in which they dined with their families, and in which they drank a glass of something hot before going to bed at night after coming home from the theatre.

Harry Trelyon was familiar with the place, and its ways, and the traditions of his father and grandfather having invariably come to it; and, following in their footsteps, he, too, obtained a private sitting-room as well as a bedroom, and then he ordered dinner. It was not much in the way of a banquet for a young gentleman who was determined to go to the devil. It consisted of a beefsteak and a pint of claret; and it was served in a fairly-sized, old-fashioned, dimly-lit room, the furniture of which was of that very substantial sort that is warranted to look dingy for a couple of generations. He was attended by a very old and shrunken waiter, whose white whiskers were more respectable than his shabby clothes. On his first entrance into the room he had looked at the young man who, in a rough shooting-suit, was stretched out at full length in an easy-chair; and, in answering a question, he had addressed him by his name.

"How do you know my name?" the lad said.

"Ah, sir, there's no mistaking one o' your family. I can remember your grandfather, and your uncle, and your father—did you never hear, sir, that I was a witness for your father at the police-court?"

"What row was that?" the young gentleman asked, showing his familiarity with the fact that the annals of the Trelyons were of a rather stormy character.

"Why, sir," the old man said, warming up into a little excitement, and unconsciously falling into something like the provincial accent of his youth, "I believe you was in the hotel at the time—yes, as well as I can recollect, you was a little chap then, and had gone to bed. Well, maybe I'm wrong—'tis a good few years ago. But, anyhow, your father and that good lady your mother, they were a-coming home from a theatre; and there was two or three young fellers on the pavement—I was the porter then, sir—and I think that one of 'em called out to the other, 'Well, here's a country beauty,' or some such cheek. But, anyhow,