out of them again. You are, however, in the shade of beeches the whole time; and who shall describe, as you climb higher and higher, the lovely sparkle and colour of the sea as it curls, far below you, in and out among the folds of the cliffs?

Mrs. Harvey-Browne was sufficiently spare to enjoy the walk. Ambrose was perfectly content telling us about Nieberlein's new work. I was perfectly content too, because only one ear was wanted for Nieberlein, and I still had one over for the larks and the lapping of the water, besides both my happy eyes. We did not hurry, but lingered over each beauty, resting on little sunny plateaus high up on the very edge of the cliffs, where, sitting on the hot sweet grass, we saw the colour of the sea shine through the colour of the fringing scabious — a divine meeting of colours often to be seen along the Rügen coast in July; or, in the deep shade at the bottom of a ravine, we rested on the moss by water trickling down over slimy green stones to the sea which looked, from those dark places, like a great wall of light.

Mrs. Harvey-Browne listened with a placid pride to her son's explanations of the scope and nature of Nieberlein's book. His enthusiasm made him talk so much that she, perforce, was silent; and her love for him written so plainly on her face showed what she must have been like in her best days, the younger days before her husband got his gaiters and began to grieve. Besides, during the last and steepest part of the walk we were beyond the range of other tourists,

for they had all dropped off at the Waldhalle, a place half-way where you drink, so that there was nothing at all to offend her. We arrived, therefore, at Stubbenkammer about six o'clock in a state of perfect concord, pleasantly tired, and hot enough to be glad we had got there. On the plateau in front of the restaurant — there is, of course, a restaurant at the climax of the walk — there were tables under the trees and people eating and drinking. One table, at a little distance from the others, with the best view over the cliff, had a white cloth on it, and was spread for what looked like tea. There were nice thin cups, and strawberries, and a teapot, and a jug in the middle with roses in it; and while I was wondering who were the privileged persons for whom it had been laid Gertrud came out of the restaurant, followed by a waiter carrying thin bread and butter, and then I knew that the privileged persons were ourselves.

'I had tea with you yesterday,' I said to Mrs. Harvey-Browne. 'Now it is your turn to have tea with me.'

'How charming,' said Mrs. Harvey-Browne with a sigh of satisfaction, sinking into a chair and smelling the roses. 'Your maid seems to be one of those rare treasures who like doing extra things for their mistresses.'

Well, Gertrud is a rare treasure, and it did look clean and dainty next to the beer-stained tables at which coffee was being drunk and spilt by tourists who had left their Gertruds at home.

Then the place was so wonderful, the white cliffs cutting out sheer and sharp into the sea, their huge folds filled with every sort of greenery — masses of shrubby trees, masses of ferns, masses of wild-flowers. Down at the bottom there was a steamer anchored, the one by which the Harvey-Brownes were going back later to Binz, quite a big, two-funnelled steamer, and it looked from where we were like a tiny white toy.

'I fear the gracious one will not enjoy sleeping here,' whispered Gertrud as she put a pot of milk on the table. 'I made inquiries on arrival, and the hotel is entirely full, and only one small bedroom in a pavilion, detached, among trees, can be placed at the gracious one's disposal.'

'And my cousin?'

'The room has two beds, and the cousin of the gracious one is sitting on one of them. We have been here already an hour. August is installed. The horses are well accommodated here. I have an attic of sufficient comfort. Only the ladies will suffer.'

'I will go to my cousin. Show me, I pray thee, the way.'

Excusing myself to Mrs. Harvey-Browne I followed Gertrud. At the back of the restaurant there is an open space where a great many feather-beds in red covers were being aired on the grass, while fowls and the waiting drivers of the Sassnitz waggonettes wandered about among them. In the middle of this space is a big, bare, yellow house, the only hotel in Stubbenkammer, the only house

in fact that I saw at all, and some distance to the left of this in the shade of the forest, one-storied, dank, dark, and mosquito-y, the pavilion.

'Gertrud,' I said, scanning it with a sinking heart, 'never yet did I sleep in a pavilion.'

'I know it, gracious one.'

'With shutterless windows on a level with the elbows of the passers-by.'

'What the gracious one says is but too true.'

'I will enter and speak with my cousin Charlotte.'

Charlotte was, as Gertrud had said, sitting on one of the two beds that nearly filled the room. She was feverishly writing something in pencil on the margin of *The Beast of Prey*, and looked up with an eager, worried expression when I opened the door. 'Is it not terrible,' she said, 'that one should not be able to do more than one's best, and that one's best is never enough?'

'Why, what's the matter?'

'Oh everything's the matter! You are all dull, indifferent, deadened to everything that is vital. You don't care — you let things slide — and if any one tries to wake you up and tell you the truth you never, never listen.'

'Who — me?' I asked, confused into this sad grammar by her outburst.

She threw the pamphlet down and jumped up, 'Oh, I am sick of all your sins and stupidities!' she cried, pulling her hat straight and sticking violent pins into it.

'Whose — mine?' I asked in great perplexity.

'It would almost seem,' said Charlotte, fixing

me with angry eyes, — 'it would really almost seem that there is no use whatever in devoting one's life to one's fellow-creatures.'

'Well, one naturally likes to be left alone,' I murmured.

'What I try to do is to pull them out of the mud when they are in it, to warn them when they are going in it, and to help them when they have been in it.'

'Well, that sounds very noble. Being full of noble intentions, why on earth, my dear Charlotte, can't you be placid? You are never placid. Come and have some tea.'

'Tea! What, with those wretched people? Those leathern souls? Those Harvey-Brownes?'

'Come along — it isn't only tea — it's strawberries and roses, and looks lovely.'

'Oh, those people half kill me! They are so pleased with themselves, so satisfied with life, such prigs, such toadies. What have I in common with them?'

'Nonsense. Ambrose is not a toady at all — he's nothing but a dear. And his mother has her points. Why not try to do them good? You'd be interested in them at once if you'd look upon them as patients.'

I put my arm through hers and drew her out of the room. 'This stuffy room is enough to depress anybody,' I said. 'And I know what's worrying you — it's that widow.'

'I know what's an irritating trick of yours,' exclaimed Charlotte, turning on me, 'it's always

explaining the reason why I say or feel what I do say or feel.'

'What, and isn't there any reason?'

'That widow has no power to worry me. Her hypocrisy will bear its own fruit, and she will have to eat it. Then, when the catastrophe comes, the sure consequence of folly and weakness, she'll do what you all do in face of the inevitable — sit and lament and say it was somebody else's fault. And of course every single thing that happens to you is never anybody's fault but your own miserable self's.'

'I wish you would teach me to dodge what you call the inevitable,' I said.

'As though it wanted any teaching,' said Charlotte stopping short in the middle of the open space before our table to look into my eyes. 'You've only not got to be silly.'

'But what am I to do if I *am* silly — naturally silly — born it?'

'The tea is getting very cold,' called out Mrs. Harvey-Browne plaintively. She had been watching us with impatience, and seemed perturbed. The moment we got near enough she informed us that the tourists were such that no decent woman could stand it. 'Ambrose has gone off with one of them,' she said, — 'a most terrible old man — to look at some view over there. Would you believe it, while we were quietly sitting here not harming anybody, this person came up the hill and immediately began to talk to us as if we knew each other? He actually had the audacity to ask

if he might sit with us at this table, as there was no room elsewhere. He was *most* objectionable. Of course I refused. The most pushing person I have met at all.'

'But there is ample room,' said Charlotte, to whom everything the bishop's wife said and did appeared bad.

'But, my dear Frau Nieberlein, a complete stranger! And such an unpleasantly jocular old man. And I think it so very ill-bred to be jocular in the wrong places.'

'I always think it a pity to cold-shoulder people,' said Charlotte sternly. She was not, it seemed, going to stand any nonsense from the bishop's wife.

'You must be dying for some tea,' I interposed, pouring it out as one who should pour oil on troubled waters.

'And you should consider,' continued Charlotte, 'that in fifty years we shall all be dead, and our opportunities for being kind will be over.'

'My dear Frau Nieberlein!' ejaculated the astonished bishop's wife.

'Why, it isn't certain,' I said. 'You'll only be eighty then, Charlotte, and what is eighty? When I am eighty I hope to be a gay granddame skilled in gestic lore, frisking beneath the burthen of fourscore.'

But the bishop's wife did not like being told she would be dead in fifty years, and no artless quotations of mine could make her like it; so she drank her tea with an offended face. 'Perhaps,

then,' she remarked, 'you will tell me I ought to have accepted the proposal one of the other tourists, a woman, made me a moment ago. She suggested that I should drive back to Sassnitz with her and her party, and halve the expense of the fly.'

'Well, and why should you not?' said Charlotte.

'Why should I not? There were two excellent reasons why I should not. First, because it was an impertinence; and secondly, because I am going back in the boat.'

'The second reason is good, but you must pardon my seeing no excellence whatever in the first.'

'Your son's tea will be undrinkable,' I said, feebly interrupting. I can never see two people contradicting each other without feeling wretched. Why contradict? Why argue at all? Only one's Best-Beloved, one's Closest and Most Understanding should be contradicted and argued with. How simple to keep quiet with all the rest and agree to everything they say. Charlotte up to this had kept very quiet in the presence of Mrs. Harvey-Browne, had said yes in the right places, and had only been listless and bored. Now, after reading her own explosive pamphlet for an hour, stirred besides by the widow's base behaviour and by the failure of her effort to induce penitence in Hedwig by means of punishment, she was in the strenuous mood again, and inclined to see all manner of horrid truths and fates hovering round the harmless tea-table, where denser eyes like mine, and no

doubt Mrs. Harvey-Browne's, only saw a pleasant flicker of beech leaves over cups and saucers, and bland strawberries in a nest of green.

'If women did not regard each other's advances with so much suspicion,' Charlotte proceeded emphatically, 'if they did not look upon every one of a slightly different class as an impossible person to be avoided, they would make a much better show in the fight for independent existence. The value of co-operation is so gigantic——'

'Ah yes, I fancy I remember your saying something like this at that lecture in Oxford last winter,' interrupted Mrs. Harvey-Browne with an immense plaintiveness.

'It cannot be said too often.'

'Oh yes dear Frau Nieberlein, believe me it can. What, for instance, has it to do with my being asked to drive back to Sassnitz with a strange family in a fly?'

'Why, with that it has very much to do,' I interposed, smiling pleasantly on them both. 'You would have paid half. And what is co-operation if it is not paying half? Indeed, I've been told by people who have done it that it sometimes even means paying all. In which case you don't see its point.'

'What I mean, of course,' said Charlotte, 'is moral co-operation. A ceaseless working together of its members for the welfare of the sex. No opportunity should ever be lost. One should always be ready to talk to, to get to know, to encourage. One must cultivate a large love for

humanity to whatever class it belongs, and however individually objectionable it is. You, no doubt,' she continued, waving her teaspoon at the staring bishop's wife, 'curtly refused the very innocent invitation of your fellow-creature because she was badly dressed and had manners of a type with which you are not acquainted. You considered it an impertinence — nay, more than an impertinence, an insult, to be approached in such a manner. Now, how can you tell'— (here she leaned across the table, and in her earnestness pointed the teaspoon straight at Mrs. Harvey-Browne, who stared harder than ever)—'how will you ever know that the woman did not happen to be full, full to the brim, of that good soil in which the seed of a few encouraging words dropped during your drive would have produced a splendid harvest of energy and freedom?'

'But my dear Frau Nieberlein,' said the bishop's wife, much taken aback by this striking image, 'I do not think she was full of anything of the kind. She did not look so, anyhow. And I myself, to pursue your metaphor, am hardly fitted for the office of an agricultural implement. I believe all these things are done nowadays by machinery, are they not?' she asked, turning to me in a well-meant effort to get away from the subject. 'The old-fashioned and picturesque sower has been quite superseded, has he not?'

'Why are you talking about farming?' asked Ambrose, who came up at this moment.

'We are talking of the farming of souls,' replied Charlotte.

'Oh,' said Ambrose, in his turn taken aback. He pretended to be so busy sitting down that he couldn't say more than just Oh. We watched him in silence fussing into his chair. 'How pleasant it is here,' he went on when he was settled. 'No, I don't mind cold tea a bit, really. Mother, why wouldn't you let the old man sit with us? He's a frightfully good sort.'

'Because there are certain limits beyond which I decline to go,' replied his mother, visibly annoyed that he should thus unconsciously side with Charlotte.

'Oh but it was rough on him — don't you think so, Frau Nieberlein? We have the biggest table and only half-fill it, and there isn't another place to be had. It is so characteristically British for us to sit here and keep other people out. He'll have to wait heaven knows how long for his coffee, and he has walked miles.'

'I think,' said Charlotte slowly, loudly, and weightily, 'that he might very well have joined us.'

'But you did not see him,' protested Mrs. Harvey-Browne. 'I assure you he really was impossible. *Much* worse than the woman we were talking about.'

'I can only say,' said Charlotte, even slower, louder, and more weightily, 'that one should, before all things, be human, and that one has no right whatever to turn one's back on the smallest request of a fellow-creature.'

Hardly had she said it, hardly had the bishop's wife had time to open her mouth and stare in stoniest astonishment, hardly had I had time to follow her petrified gaze, than an old man in a long waterproof garment with a green felt hat set askew on his venerable head, came nimbly up behind Charlotte, and bending down to her unsuspecting ear shouted into it the amazing monosyllable 'Bo!'