

testimony that such was their opinion; and that their conception of the relation of the sexes was really not a whit higher than that of the profligate laity who confessed to them. He longed to marry Rose Salterne, with a wild selfish fury; but only that he might be able to claim her as his own property, and keep all others from her. Of her as a coequal and ennobling helpmate; as one in whose honor, glory, growth of heart and soul his own were inextricably wrapt up, he had never dreamed. Marriage would prevent God from being angry with that, with which otherwise He might be angry; and therefore the sanction of the Church was the more "probable and safe" course. But as yet his suit was in very embryo. He could not even tell whether Rose knew of his love; and he wasted miserable hours in maddening thoughts, and tost all night upon his sleepless bed, and rose next morning fierce and pale, to invent fresh excuses for going over to her uncle's house, and lingering about the fruit which he dared not snatch.

CHAPTER IV.

THE TWO WAYS OF BEING CROST IN LOVE.

"I could not love thee, dear, so much,
Loved I not honor more."—LOVELACE.

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

She was sitting in the little farm-house beside the mill, buried in the green depths of the Valley of Combe, half-way between Stow and Chapel, sulking as much as her sweet nature would let her, at being thus shut out from all the grand doings at Bideford, and forced to keep a Martinmas Lent in that far western glen. So lonely was she, in fact, that though she regarded Eustace Leigh with somewhat of aversion, and (being a good Protestant) with a great deal of suspicion, she could not find it in her heart to avoid a chat with him whenever he came down to the farm and to its mill, which he contrived to do, on I know not what would-be errand, almost every day. Her uncle and aunt at first looked stiff enough at these visits, and the latter took care always to make a third in every conversation; but still Mr. Leigh was a gentleman's son, and it would not do to be rude to a neighboring squire and a good customer; and Rose was the rich man's daughter and they poor cousins, so it would not do either to quarrel with her; and besides, the pretty maid, half by wilfulness, and half by her sweet winning tricks, generally contrived to get her own way wheresoever she went; and she herself had been wise enough to beg her aunt never to leave them alone,—for she "could not a-bear the sight of Mr. Eustace, only she must have some one to talk with down here." On which her aunt considered, that she herself was but a simple country-woman; and the townfolks' ways of course must be very different from hers; and that people knew their own business best; and so forth, and let things go on their own way. Eustace, in the meanwhile, who knew well that the difference in creed between him and Rose was likely to be the very hardest obstacle in

the way of his love, took care to keep his private opinions well in the background; and instead of trying to convert the folk at the mill, daily bought milk or flour from them, and gave it away to the old women in Moorwinstow (who agreed that after all, for a Papist, he was a godly young man enough); and at last, having taken counsel with Campian and Parsons on certain political plots then on foot, came with them to the conclusion that they would all three go to church the next Sunday. Where Messrs. Evan Morgans and Morgan Evans, having crammed up the rubrics beforehand, behaved themselves in a most orthodox and unexceptionable manner; as did also poor Eustace, to the great wonder of all good folks, and then went home flattering himself that he had taken in parson, clerk, and people; not knowing in his simple unsimplicity, and cunning foolishness, that each good wife in the parish was saying to the other, "He turned Protestant? The devil turned monk! He's only after Mistress Salterne, the young hypocrite."

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

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

For they had as stoutly persuaded themselves in those days, as they have in these (with a real Baconian contempt of the results of sensible experience), that the heart of England was really with them, and that the British nation was on the point of returning to the bosom of the Catholic Church, and giving up Elizabeth to be led in chains to the feet of the rightful Lord of Creation, the Old Man of the Seven Hills. And this fair hope, which has been skipping just in front of them for centuries, always a step farther off, like the place where the rainbow touches the ground, they used to announce at times, in language which terrified old Mr. Leigh. One day, indeed, as Eustace entered his father's private room, after his usual visit to the mill, he

could hear voices high in dispute; Parsons as usual, blustering; Mr. Leigh peevishly deprecating, and Campian, who was really the sweetest-natured of men, trying to pour oil on the troubled waters. Whereat Eustace (for the good of the cause, of course) stopped outside and listened.

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

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

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

"Yes, sir, you have, sir; and, as I have shown at large in my writings, you were absolved from that allegiance from the moment that the bull of Pius the Fifth declared her a heretic and excommunicate, and thereby to have forfeited all dominion whatsoever. I tell you, sir, what I thought you should have known already: that since the year 1569, England has had no queen, no magistrates, no laws, no lawful authority whatsoever; and that to own allegiance to any English magistrate, sir, or to plead in an English court of law, is to disobey the apostolic precept,

"How dare you go to law before the unbelievers?" I tell you, sir, rebellion is now not merely permitted, it is a duty."

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

"My dear Brother Parsons, deal more gently with the flock," interposed Campian. "Your opinion, though probable, as I well know, in the eyes of most of our order, is hardly safe enough here; the opposite is at least so safe that Mr. Leigh may well excuse his conscience for accept-

ing it. After all, are we not sent hither to proclaim this very thing, and to relieve the souls of good Catholics from a burden which has seemed to them too heavy?"

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

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

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

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

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

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

"What, young malapert?" cried poor Leigh, facing round upon his son, glad to find any one on whom he might vent his ill-humor; "are you too against me, with a murrain on you? And pray, what the devil brought

Cuthbert Mayne to the gallows, and turned Mr. Trudgeon (he was always a foolish hot-head) out of house and home, but just such treasonable talk as Mr. Parsons must needs hold in my house, to make a beggar of me and my children, as he will before he has done."

"The blessed Virgin forbid!" said Campian.

"The blessed Virgin forbid? But you must help her to forbid it, Mr. Campian. We should never have had the law of 1571, against bulls, and Agnus Deis, and blessed grains, if the Pope's bull of 1569 had not made them matter of treason, by preventing a poor creature's saving his soul in the true Church without putting his neck into a halter by denying the queen's authority!"

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

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

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

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

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

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

"Your son, sir, if not openly vowed to God, has, I hope, a true sense of that inward vocation which we have

seen in him, and reverences his spiritual fathers too well to listen to the temptations of his earthly father."

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

"Your son is ours also, sir. This is strange language in one who owes a debt to the Church, which it was charitably fancied he meant to pay in the person of his child."

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

"All I read is, Father Parsons, that such are not fit for the kingdom of God; of which high honor I have for some

time past felt myself unworthy. I have much doubt just now as to my vocation; and in the meanwhile have not forgotten that I am a citizen of a free country." And so saying, he took his father's arm, and walked out.

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

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

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

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

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

Poor Father Francis dared not refuse so great a man.

and assented with an inward groan, knowing well that the intent was to worm out some family secrets, whereby his power would be diminished, and the Jesuits increased. For the regular priesthood and the Jesuits throughout England were toward each other in a state of armed neutrality, which wanted but little at any moment to become open war, as it did in James the First's time, when those meek missionaries, by their gentle moral tortures, literally hunted to death the poor Popish bishop of Hippopotamus (that is to say, London) for the time being.

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

If he had frankly said to Eustace, "I feel for you; and if your desires are reasonable, or lawful, or possible, I will help you with all my heart and soul," he might have had the young man's secret heart, and saved himself an hour's trouble; but, of course, he took instinctively the crooked and suspicious method, expected to find the case the worst possible,—as a man was bound to do who had been trained to take the lowest possible view of human nature, and to consider the basest motives as the mainspring of all human action,—and began his moral torture accordingly by a series of delicate questions, which poor Eustace dodged in every possible way, though he knew that the good father was too cunning for him, and that he must give in at last. Nevertheless, like a rabbit who runs squealing round and round before the weasel, into whose jaws it knows that it must jump at last by force of fascination, he parried and parried, and pretended to be stupid, and surprised, and honorably scrupulous, and even angry; while every question as to her being married or single, Catholic or heretic, English or foreign, brought his tormentor a step nearer the goal. At last, when Campian, finding the business not such a very bad one, had asked something about her worldly wealth, Eustace saw a door of escape and sprang at it.

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

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

"Only eighteen."

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

"I shall die first."

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

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

And so Eustace was absolved; after which Campian added,—

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

"Prove me!" cried Eustace impatiently.

"Here is a letter which was brought me last night; no matter from whence; you can understand it better than I, and I longed to have shown it you, but that I feared my son had become—"

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

So Campian translated to him the cipher of the letter.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

She started, and gave a pretty little shriek.

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

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

"To me?"

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

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

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

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

"Ay!" he said, seizing now both her hands, "rougher, perhaps, than the gay gallants of Bideford, who serenade you, and write sonnets to you, and send you posies. Rougher, but more loving, Rose! Do not turn away! I shall die if you take your eyes off me! Tell me,—tell me, now here—this moment—before we part—if I may love you!"

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

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

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

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

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

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