THE OLD MOAT FARM

LARD

LTD



THE OLD MOAT FARM

A TALE OF QUEEN ELIZABETH'S DAYS

BY ELIZA · F · POLLARD

The Old Moat Farm

By ELIZA F. POLLARD

The Doctor's Niece

With 6 Illustrations by SYDNEY COWELL. 3*s.* 6*d.*

"Full of mystery, adventure, and a winning simplicity."—*Bookman.*

The White Standard

A Story of the Maid of Orleans

Illustrated by J. JELLICOE. 2*s.* 6*d.*

"She has woven fact and fiction together with her usual deftness, and produced a story which old and young may equally enjoy."
—*Glasgow Herald.*

For the Red Rose

Illustrated by JAMES DURDEN. 2*s.* 6*d.*

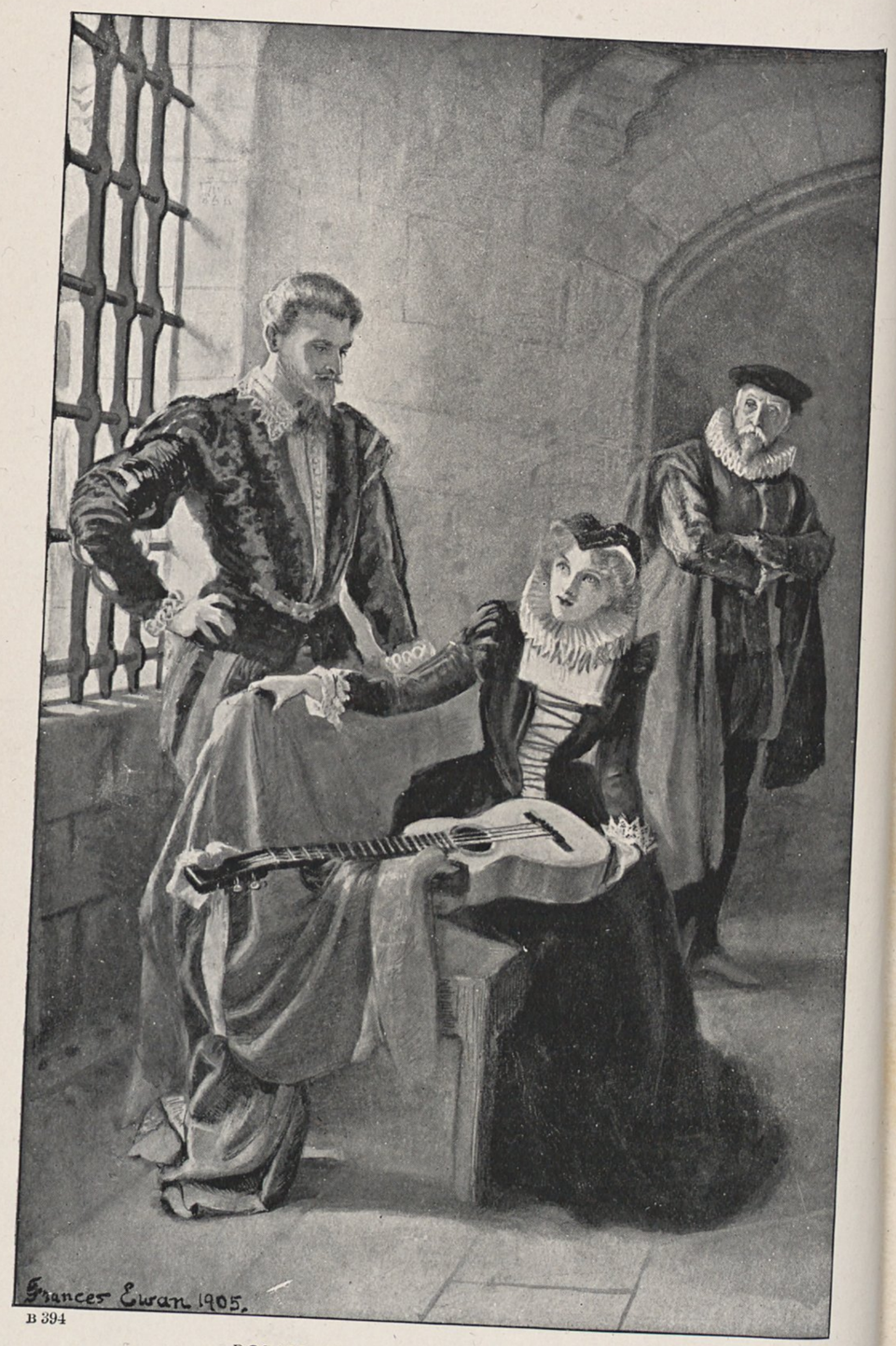
"Miss Pollard's writing has a distinction and a grace which are most welcome."—*World.*

The Lady Isobel

Illustrated by W. FULTON BROWN. 2*s.* 6*d.*

"Miss Pollard has done justice to one of the most charming heroines of the seventeenth century, and young people will follow Isobel's adventures with interest."—*Guardian.*

LONDON: BLACKIE & SON, LIMITED



B 394

ROSAMUND VISITS HER FATHER

The Old Moat Farm

A Story of Queen Elizabeth's Days

BY

ELIZA F. POLLARD
Author of "The Doctor's Niece" "For the Red Rose
"The King's Signet" &c.

ILLUSTRATED BY FRANCES EWAN

BLACKIE AND SON LIMITED
LONDON GLASGOW DUBLIN BOMBAY

CONTENTS

Chap.		Page
I.	"Cast Forth"	9
II.	The Old Moat Farm	17
III.	The Stranger	27
IV.	New Desires	36
V.	May-Day	44
VI.	Revelations	54
VII.	Westward Ho!	61
VIII.	A New Friend	70
IX.	Among the Indians	81
X.	Pocahontas	92
XI.	A Messenger of Ill Omen	102
XII.	The Prisoner	112
XIII.	A Journey to London	120
XIV.	A Visit to the Tower	129
XV.	Betwixt Life and Death	139
XVI.	The Queen's Verdict	149

Chap.		Page
XVII.	Letty's Sorrow	161
XVIII.	Home Again	171
XIX.	An Old Friend	184
XX.	A Forsaken Land	198
XXI.	Old and New Things	209
XXII.	Sir Walter Raleigh	216
XXIII.	The Heir	227

ILLUSTRATIONS

		Page
Rosamund visits her Father	*Frontispiece*	134
"What be you two whispering about?"		25
Princess Pocahontas		98
"At last, Derward!"		211

THE OLD MOAT FARM

CHAPTER I

"CAST FORTH"

A WOMAN'S wail rang forth plaintively through the darkness of night, as two men came forth from a room in the White Tower, in that dreariest of prison-houses, the Tower of London. They both wore masks, and were wrapped in large cloaks, evidently to conceal as far as was possible the burdens they carried.

The first man went rapidly down the dark, narrow stone passage, but the second man paused, and, turning back at the dreary sound, said pitifully:

"Hush, my dearest, hush! you will rouse the warders; it must be, you know, if they are to live. I will come back to you soon!"

He could say no more, closed the door softly, and hastened after his companion, who was waiting for him at the top of a narrow winding staircase.

"Have a care, my lord!" he said, turning the light of a lantern, which till then he had kept concealed, on to the stairs.

"Thank you, Sir Edward!" was the courteous acknowledgment.

It seemed an endless descent, but they reached the lowest step at last, and found themselves on a sort of platform, at the farther end of which was a heavy iron

gateway, from behind which was running water splashing against the walls of that prison-house.

Before this gate the two men stopped, and Sir Edward, putting his mouth to the grating, asked: "Are you there, Weston?"

"We have been waiting over an hour, sir. It's mighty cold, and the storm is rising," was the answer.

The man spoke truly; the wind whistled round the ramparts, and through the water-gate the cold blast penetrated to where the two men stood.

Suddenly a child's voice piped up: "Mother! Mother!"

"Quiet, my darling!" whispered the man who carried her, adding quickly: "For Heaven's sake, unlock the gate, Sir Edward."

Even as he spoke the key grated in the lock, and the gate swung slowly and heavily back on its hinges, as if it were loath to do so.

Turning the light of his lantern towards the entrance, the man addressed as Sir Edward passed through, the other following. On the stone platform were two muffled figures, a man and a woman. They sprang forward.

"Here are your charges," said Sir Edward; and throwing back his cloak he showed a well-grown boy of from four to five years old, in a deep sleep.

"He will not wake for two hours at the least," he said, "and by that time you will be well on your way. His name is Derward. He is your brother's son, you will remember—Derward Weston. And the little girl is Rosamund."

As he spoke he placed the boy in the man's arms, and the woman, advancing, asked: "Where is my charge?"

"Here," was the quiet answer, given in a voice so full of pain that the woman involuntarily said:

"Have no fear, sir. I will be good to her."

"May God Almighty deal with you and yours as you deal by these unhappy children!" was the answer; and he placed the girl in her arms.

She was not sleeping, like her brother, and now,

uttering a weary plaint, she held up her baby hands as if to plead for mercy. Her father took them in both his and kissed them passionately. Then, going to the boy, he kissed him also.

"There is no time to lose, my lord," said Sir Edward impatiently. "Let them go!"

"You are right, friend," was the quiet answer; "it is useless dallying. May God watch over them!" And, turning away, he passed through the gate.

Sir Edward Warner, lieutenant of the Tower of London, spoke a few words to the man, to whom he had given the boy, handing him a well-filled coarse linen bag, saying: "Do your duty and you will be rewarded. Farewell!"

Then he too turned away, the key grated once more in the lock, and he and his companion went back the way they had come.

Whatever they had attempted was, as far as they were concerned, accomplished. One of them, at least, had "cast his bread upon the waters". How would it return to him?

"Quick, we have no time to waste! The steps are slippery, take heed to your footing, Elizabeth." And Weston, with the boy in his arms, hurried down the steps to where, at the bottom, a small barge was moored. A man was standing in it, and as he heard the approaching steps he steadied the boat, saying in a low voice: "You are late, the tide will be ebbing, we shall have a job to get into Greenwich."

"It cannot be helped, we must row hard. Take the child, I must go back for the dame; the steps are slippery, she is fearsome."

The boatman obeyed. Except for a faint streak of light which passed through the open water-gate, and a lantern at the stern of the boat, it was pitch dark. Dame Weston had not dared take a step forward.

"Give me your hand," said her husband sharply; she did so, and, taking good hold of her, he almost carried her down to the boat.

"Take care where you tread," said the bargeman, "the boy lies at your feet."

"Lord have mercy on us!" said Dame Weston. "If I'd known what lay before me, I'd never have come!"

"You'll feel different to-morrow," said her husband. And having seated her safely, he began loosening the rope which held the boat.

"Push out!" he said to the boatman; and in a few minutes they glided out into the river.

It were wearisome to follow the travellers on their journey; it was longer than they had expected, because of the children.

Three days had elapsed since they had left the Tower, when John Weston stopped before a cottage standing somewhat back from the road. It was surrounded by a moat, and was reached by a wooden bridge.

He was mounted on a strong horse, and a little lad sat in front of him. Riding beside him on another horse was Dame Weston. She was seated in a sort of side-saddle, her feet resting on a plank of wood; a child, wrapt in a shawl fastened round her, nestled in her lap. Its little fair head rested on her bosom. It looked very white and weary, and there was something pathetic in its posture of utter helplessness; very different from the boy, who held himself upright, and looked about him with a bold air.

When they had crossed the bridge, "Bide a bit, I'll lift thee down, wife," said the farmer, and, swinging himself to the ground, he first took the boy off the horse and stood him on his legs. The little fellow staggered for a moment; evidently he had been riding for many hours.

"Steady there, my man!" said the farmer, holding him. "Hallo, Granny! Here we are at last!" he continued. "Lend a helping hand, will you?"

A tall woman, with white hair smoothed under a close linen cap, wearing a coarse home-spun woollen gown covered by a large bibbed apron, stood at the cottage door. She came out at once to the front

"I'm glad to see you, John," she said quietly. "Be these your brother's children?" and she looked curiously at the boy, who, having recovered his equilibrium, had planted himself straight in front of her, and was looking at her with evident curiosity.

"You are well-nigh broke, Lisbeth," said Granny, as John lifted his wife to the ground.

"You are right there, Mother," she answered; and without more ado she placed the little girl in her mother's arms and stumbled towards the cottage. The door stood open, revealing a large low-roofed room; the floor was of earth, but hardened to stone; a long table ran down the centre, around which were wooden benches; at the farther end was a large recess with an open chimney; upon the hearth smouldered a peat-fire. The wind whistled down the chimney, driving the smoke into the room.

Lisbeth entered, and stood for a second on the threshold looking round.

"Thank God!" she exclaimed, and letting herself drop on one of the benches she burst into tears. Out of the shadows two or three men came forward.

"It's the missus," said one in a tone of satisfaction. "We be right glad to see you, Lisbeth. Why do you weep?"

"For very gladness, Williams," she answered, smiling through her tears. "I've been seven days away from home, they seem like seven years! God grant I may never go forth again, so long as I live! Letty—where's my Letty?" and she stood up looking round her.

"Here I be, Mother!" A side-door opened, and a little personage rolled in; a rosy-cheeked, fat girlie of perhaps three years old, in red petticoat and black kirtle, bare arms and feet unshod, a mass of shining golden hair curling over her head and tumbling on to her forehead, till nought was to be seen save rosy cheeks, blue eyes, and lips as red as ripe cherries. Her mother caught her in her arms and devoured her with kisses, both of them giving utterance to little cries—inarticulate

exclamations which had no meaning save for mother and child. So engrossed were they with each other, that they were unaware that the room had gradually filled with big men and lads in rough farm clothes, smelling of the fields, and girls in home-spun with bare arms and red hands, fresh and sweet from dairy and bake-house.

The news had spread quickly—the master and the mistress had come home, and one and all flocked to give them welcome. Hands were stretched out, and smiles lightened even the roughest face. Evidently Farmer Weston and his dame were well beloved, for they were surrounded on all sides, besieged with questions by the men, whilst the maids hastened to blow up the embers on the hearth, to place great loaves of rye bread on the table, with cheese and bacon, jugs of perry, and wooden bowls. It was all rough and ready. Forks and knives were unknown in the days of Queen Bess; every man carried his knife by his side, and the men helped the women.

In this glad home-coming a little group stood apart, lookers-on; Granny, holding the white baby in her arms; the boy in front of her, with wide-open blue eyes, staring in wonderment. The first to notice them was Letty. Lifting her face from her mother's neck she caught sight of them, and, pointing at him with her little fat forefinger, said seriously:

"Look, Mother. 'Boy!'"

The spell was broken, others looked also.

"Be they your brother's children, master?" asked a man, who seemed to be of more importance than his fellows.

A second's hesitation and the farmer answered:

"They be, Williams, and seeing they have no one to take charge of them we have brought them home. We could not leave them to starve in London. It was for that my brother sent for me."

"Right, master, right!" exclaimed several voices.

"Have they no mother?"

"She is dead also."

"What be your name, lad?" asked Williams, laying his hand not unkindly on the boy's fair head.

"Derward," was the short answer. "And yours?"

The man laughed. "Williams, at your service." Adding, "The boy looks right enough, but the little lass is a poor thing."

"What would you have?" said the farmer; "a child bred in the city, with not enough air to blow life into her! Wait six months, and see if she beant as rosy as our Letty!"

And he caught his little daughter out of her mother's arms, and kissed and hugged her till she cried out for mercy.

"Put me down! put me down! I will go to 'Boy'!" she called out, struggling; and when her father set her on her feet she ran to Derward, and, taking him by the hand, looked at him with admiration. He was tall for his age. His clothes fitted well his straight, almost elegant little figure. He had a rich lace collar round his throat, and on his feet he wore sandalled shoes, such as Letty had never seen before. Altogether he was very wonderful in her eyes.

What Derward thought of his admirer is not recorded. But though he stood so straight, he was both tired and hungry. The strange place and people scared his poor little senses, and gradually, as Letty stroked his hand, tears filled his eyes and a great sob rose in his throat.

"Go away," he said; "I want my father!" And without more ado he threw himself on the ground and cried out passionately, "Father! Father!"

"Poor laddy!" said the farmer, who during their long ride together had felt his heart warm towards the boy, who more than once had said to him, "Where are we going? Who are you? I want my father!"

The farmer had answered him:

"Your father has given you into my care. I am your uncle, and we are going into the country far away from the city, because your little sister is sick and will die if she stay any longer in the foul air."

"But I am not sick. I will go back to my father and mother," he had answered.

"You cannot," answered the farmer, "they are dead; when you are a man you will understand."

Then he showed him the fair country through which they were riding, and thus distracted his attention, so that, childlike, he forgot for a time his trouble. He had never seen green fields before, nor sheep, nor oxen, nor horses! He had been a prisoner in that grim tower from his birth, and now he marvelled in his innocent way at the new world which broke so suddenly upon him. But men and women and the dark room oppressed him; they were different from the bright sunshine, the fields and flowers. He was afraid, and called aloud: "Father! Father!" It was nature's cry, and young though he was a certain sense of desolation crept over Derward when he remembered that his father could not come to him.

But though he clung to the farmer, he would not be comforted, but wept sorely, until at last the Father of the fatherless laid His hand over the weary child's eyes, and sent sleep, gentle sleep, to comfort the lonely little one.

CHAPTER II

THE OLD MOAT FARM

THE Westons had held the farm of Cranbury Hill, in the county of Kent, from father to son, for nigh two centuries. They were originally tenant farmers, but the father of the present owner had purchased the farm, with some hundred acres of forest land, from Sir Richard Maxwell, he being then lord of the manor. Sir Richard had greatly impoverished himself during the Wars of the Roses, and was glad to let the cottage and land go at an unusually low rate. But even the payment of this price had crippled the farmer, and when old Weston died, and his son inherited the land, he found it was heavily mortgaged, and that it was a difficult matter to make two ends meet.

The sixteenth century was a transition period; old things were gradually but surely passing away, to be superseded by a new order of governance. This state of things did not only apply to the upper classes, it struck root deeper, even into the heart of the people and the nation. Feudal service and vassalage were becoming dead letters; there was gradually growing up a third estate, something between the noble and the peasant. As yet it had no name, but we now call it the middle class, which has gradually but surely grown to be the back-bone of the nation.

Not in towns only was there a marked progress, but in the rural districts. The farmers took more care with the cultivation of their land, and so obtained a finer wool from their sheep, with the result that the trade in woollen produce increased. Much of the arable land was turned into pasture land, and large flocks of sheep

and herds of kine and oxen were raised for the sake of the hides and the wool. So great was this industry, that a law was enacted forbidding any farmer to possess more than two thousand sheep. Looms were also set up in the cottages, and a great mart for woollen goods was created between Brittany and England. To all these improvements John Weston was keenly alive, but he found himself handicapped by the want of ready money. He was an ambitious man, he loved the land and believed in it.

"The more we put into the earth, the more we shall take out of it", he was wont to say. He even went so far as to take a journey to the Netherlands, because that country was agriculturally far in advance of England. He brought back with him the seeds of a plant which served as green fodder for animals during the winter months; he caused land to be ploughed, and he sowed it with a new seed from which the following year there sprang up a plant which was called "clover". It had red flowers, and was so rich in colouring that men saw it from afar. When it was cut down and stored, the oxen and the kine fed on it during the winter months, and it came to pass that John Weston's flocks were the finest in the country.

He would have done many other things, but money was scarce, and he cast about him for a means by which he could accomplish his desire.

One day, when he was examining a piece of land which lay at some distance from the homestead, he was suddenly accosted by a man of tall stature and unusually handsome appearance, but sad of countenance.

"If I mistake not, you are John Weston, the holder of Cranbury Hill Farm," he said.

"I am," answered Weston, looking curiously at the stranger.

"I have heard much concerning you," continued the nobleman, for such he surely was. "I have heard that you are an honest man, enterprising, and desirous of improving your land. I knew your father well; in

fact, the Westons belong to the county, their integrity is unquestioned."

"Thank you, sir!" said John Weston proudly.

"I came here hoping to meet you, for I require the services of such a man," continued the stranger; "one who will ask no questions, but will be content to do what I require of him, in return for a certain sum of money."

John started, an angry expression flashed from his eyes, and he answered haughtily:

"I am afraid you have mistaken your man, sir. I do not sell my services until I know what is required of me. Where would my integrity be if I did?" he added with a sneer.

"True, true! I like you the better for your plain speaking," said the stranger, "and yet for your own sake I cannot tell you everything. I offer you money because you will have to expend a certain sum in doing what I require of you, and it is but right you should have some profit. I have been told that you are desirous of buying sheep and oxen, establishing looms in your village, and doing various other things for which you need money. I have also heard that your wife is a good, tender-hearted woman, and, unbeknown to you, I have seen and judged her myself. Is it not better, therefore, that I should give you such help as you need, which will be laying out my money to a good purpose, and that you should render me a great service in return?"

"I cannot answer you, sir, until I know what is required of me," answered John Weston stubbornly.

"If we do not come to terms, will you swear not to betray me?" said the stranger.

"Unless it be a crime you require of me, I will tell no man that we have met. So far I do not even know your name," answered John Weston.

They were standing on the edge of a forest. The stranger looked round as if fearful of being overheard, then he approached close to the farmer and whispered a name in his ear.

"Pardon me, sir," he said, taking off his woollen cap and standing bareheaded. "It is enough, I will do all you desire."

Then the two men paced up and down the edge of the forest for upwards of an hour. When they parted, the stranger held out his hand to John, saying:

"I will meet you in London the last day of the month, but it is agreed your wife is not to know my name. All else you can confide to her, but a name slips easily off a woman's tongue;" and he smiled.

"It shall be as you desire, sir, my wife will be satisfied with what I shall tell her," said John.

A week later a messenger arrived at the farm from London, saying he came from John Weston's brother, a London merchant, entreating him to come to him, and bring his wife with him, for he was dying, and as his wife had died the previous year, he knew not what would become of his orphan children, a boy and girl, or of his property, which was considerable, if John, as his only relative, did not come to him.

The following day John and his wife left the farm with the messenger, and were absent ten days.

Only Lisbeth knew that the children they brought back with them were no kin of his or hers, but what she did know awakened such pity in her heart that she loved them from the first hour.

"They will need much love," she said, "to make up for what the good Lord has taken from them."

So it came to pass that Derward and Rosamund became members of John Weston's family, and little by little the past faded out of their memories. Rosamund, at least, retained no vestige of the first two years of her life, but Derward, when he thought at all, seemed to see a tall man and a shadowy woman, like ghosts, high walls and great towers, the remembrance of which made him shudder.

He was easily satisfied when assured that it was London which had left such an impression on his mind, and that the figures he saw were his father and mother, who had

died when he was so young that he could not properly remember them.

From the day the children came to Cranbury Moat Farm everything prospered. Little by little John Weston increased his stock; he bought sheep of rare breeds, and his wool became known in the market. His flocks numbered, it was said, over two thousand sheep, and he had, moreover, a good herd of horned cattle, so that he was able to manure his land, to the well-doing of his crops. He also built new outhouses, stables, barns, &c.; and though he would not touch the outside of the farm cottage, he added many comforts within.

We hardly realize the roughness of living which prevailed throughout the agricultural population of England in the sixteenth and in the early part of the seventeenth century. We hear of "merrie England", and no doubt the people made the best of what they could not mend; but straw pallets, a coarse coverlet, and a bolster of chaff were the best couches the masters had; the servants slept upon straw, and had not always a coverlet to throw over them. All ate their pottage out of wooden trenchers, with spoons of the same substance. The Westons had always been rather in advance of their neighbours, and the farmer and his wife ate off pewter plates and slept in a curiously carved four-post bedstead, with a good feather bed and warm coverlets. Letty had a carved oak crib beside her mother in the upper chamber, large enough for her to share with Rosamund; whilst Derward was accommodated with a good flock mattress on the floor of a small closet close by.

The men slept in the outhouses, and the wenches in a lean-to at the back of the house.

There was but one large public living-room, over which were the two sleeping-rooms, with dormer-windows shaded by low overhanging eaves.

The whole building was of massive timber; across the ceiling of the living-room were great rafters. It had both outside and inside an air of great comfort.

We have already said that it was a moated farm, and the cottage, the barns, and the outhouses covered a considerable area. Narrow stone steps led up to the front-door, and on either side grew bushes and flowering shrubs.

Such was the house which fate had provided for two homeless little ones, and where they grew from childhood to youth, sheltered, loved, and cared-for.

No difference was ever made between those two and Letty; they were all three children of the house, calling the farmer, father, and the dame, mother.

No other children were born, so that they had no rivals. John grew to look upon Derward as a son. Only one thing troubled him, the boy did not take kindly to farming; his one idea was to be a soldier or to travel.

There was much talk at this time of adventures by land and sea, the discovery of new countries, which fired the boy's imagination. News would come even to this quiet village, telling of the adventures of such men as Sir Walter Raleigh, Drake, Frobisher, &c.; and John Weston was as eager as the boy himself for news of those far countries beyond the seas, which Christopher Columbus had lately discovered. Farmer Weston was the first to grow a patch of potatoes, having gone up to London to see Sir Walter Raleigh and to get a mother-root.

His success was the talk of the country, and many people came from distances to see the new produce.

It was but natural that Derward should attract some notice, for when he reached the age of fifteen years he was well grown and handsome of face, as he had promised to be when a child.

There were no sports in the village of which Derward was not the leader. He was marvellously clever with the cross-bow, seldom if ever missing his mark, and in the village contests he was sure to gain the prize.

He ran with such fleetness that the more heavily-built peasants could not compete with him; and yet, strange to say, he excited no jealousy.

There was about him a great inexplicable fascination. His hair was brown and as soft as silk, curling with great loose rings at the ends; his teeth were white as ivory. No marvel if the girls looked after him and women mothered him! And yet there was nothing effeminate about him. He did not hesitate to say he would like to be a soldier, or to travel to foreign parts; yet he was always ready to take his share of farm work, even to the driving of the plough.

His adopted father was devoted to him, they were fast friends.

Derward was the first to know of any improvement which might occupy the farmer's mind, and as he grew older and more experienced he would be left virtually in charge when the master was called away on business. The men on the farm acknowledged his authority, he was the young master! They liked his fresh commanding voice, with its clear tones of youth, shrill, because they were not yet mellowed by manhood.

"He might be a young lord," they would say, one to another, "instead of a plain yeoman's son."

"Anyhow, he is not that," answered Williams; "he and his sister come from London town. I mind me when master's brother sent for him, because he was a-dying, and he and the missis brought them back. Derward was a sturdy little chap even then, but Rosamund was drooping and white, as the roses the master brought himself from the Netherlands and planted on the sunny side of the garden."

"Well, she be bonny now!" answered the first speaker.

Williams shook his head. "I'm thinking," he said, "she's not well fitted for a rough life. Dame Lisbeth is of the same mind, for she has ever watched over her more carefully than over Letty. She has had many sicknesses, maybe that is the reason. I doubt whether she will live to be a woman. Look, yonder the two come. They are going a-milking, but Letty carries the pails."

It was even so, two girls were entering the field where the cows pastured. One carried two three-legged wooden stools, the other swung the milk-pails to and fro, the bright sunshine making light all around them as they walked.

Both were tall for their age, but one was so slight that she looked taller than her companion, who was plump and rosy. They both wore short woollen skirts, with black bodices made low with white kerchiefs; the sleeves short to the elbow.

Letty had bright golden hair curling over her forehead, and escaping in vagrant locks from beneath the white cambric cap, the strings of which were fastened on the top like two wings.

There was certainly nothing fascinating in this head-dress, but the bright, happy face it o'ershadowed lent it a charm. It was the same with Rosamund; her brown hair was soft and smooth, and her straight regular features and hazel eyes were set off by the snowy whiteness of the butterfly head-dress. They were both very merry, talking and chatting with little bursts of laughter, which told of young hearts free of care. The cows knew the hour, and were mooing impatiently; when the maidens entered the meadow, they moved towards them in a stately fashion.

The girls settled to their business without delay, ceasing to talk, so that the regular dropping of the milk into the pails, and the chewing of the cud, alone broke the silence of that warm spring evening. One cow succeeded another till the pails were full, and the perfume of fresh milk pervaded the atmosphere. Then the girls rose, stretched their cramped limbs, and looked around to see if there were any chance labourer about to help them carry their pails.

At that same moment Derward entered the field, and strode quickly in their direction.

Thereupon they both clapped their hands, and he answered them by a long shrill whistle.

"Ready?" he asked, and without more ado he took a



B 394

"WHAT BE YOU TWO WHISPERING ABOUT?"

pail in each hand and turned his face towards the farm, the two girls running beside him.

"Have a care," said Rosamund, "they are over-full to-night!"

He laughed lightly, and pursued his way, holding his head high, the girls following him.

"How proud he looks!" said Letty. "Surely something has happened. Ask him, Rosa."

"He'll tell us without the asking," answered Rosamund, smiling. "D'st not see he's bursting to speak? Only he would have us ask him, and that we will not do, it would feed his pride overmuch."

Derward stopped short, and, twisting his head round, asked:

"What be you two whispering about? It's not polite in company."

"We were but saying you seem right glad this evening, as if some good news had reached you."

"You're right and you're wrong," said Derward. "I've had no news, but I've seen someone."

"Seen someone!" repeated the girls together. "A stranger?"

"Yes, I suppose he's a stranger, but he seemed to know a mighty lot about us all the same. He asked me if I liked being a farmer, or if I would not rather go abroad, and be a knight's page, then an esquire, and at last, maybe, a knight myself. Naturally, I answered that I dared not entertain such wild ambitions. My father had only been a London merchant, my adopted father was a farmer, how then could I aspire to any other state? My greatest desire was to see the world. I had heard how the Devon lads sailed westward ho, and saw wondrous things, and I would gladly do likewise."

"Oh, Derward, that is unkind!" exclaimed Rosamund. "Why can you not be content to bide at home? You are sorely needed!"

Without answering, the boy strode on alone. His handsome face had clouded over, and he muttered to

himself, "Why? why? just because I can't! The longing's on me, just like a sickness!"

He made for the dairy, put down the pails, and was off again.

He did not return till supper was over, but by that time he had recovered his good-humour, and explained that he had met the shepherd of Brinsley near one of their outlying farms, and that he had asked him to go and see what a fine lot of young lambs he was rearing.

"We went through Brinsley wood, Father, and up the Chalk Hill; the country is very fair in those parts, I had not been there before, but the forest wants clearing. The trees would fetch a good price now, for ships are being built on the Medway for these new voyages across the Atlantic."

"So I hear," said the farmer. "I will think on't, and we'll go together, lad, and mark the straightest and tallest. Money is scarce, we may as well get what we can off the land. Did you see the lambs?"

"I did indeed," answered Derward; "they be a goodly flock. The wool is the softest I've seen for a long time, there will be a fine shearing!"

"I am glad on't," said the farmer. "You are a great help to me, Derward; though you say you do not love farming, you have the eye of a farmer. Is it not so, Williams?" he asked, turning to his head man with a smile.

"We are minded he has a master's eye," answered Williams.

They all laughed, and then the family dispersed, for "early to bed and early to rise" was the habit at Cranbury Moat Farm.

CHAPTER III

THE STRANGER

IN the field known as the house meadow, because it lay within the moat, a score of boys and girls were gathered round a great pole, already half-covered with evergreens.

In the grass, a little apart from their companions, sat a merry group. Flowers were piled up around them—cowslips and primroses, wild hyacinths, daffodils, and many other harbingers of spring and summer. Between them they held aloft a rope of gorgeous blossom, whilst busy fingers kept adding to its length, and young voices chattered just like the birds in the trees, hardly hidden by the tender green foliage of awakening nature.

The most prominent figures in the group, and the deftest fingers, were Rosamund and Letty Weston's; somehow they stood out from amongst their fellows; and Letty's voice rang forth in a merry solo, followed by a chorus so full and clear, the labourers in the distant fields stopped in their work to listen, and their hearts were cheered as if they had heard the angels singing.

Suddenly there was a pause, and Rosamund, her hands still full of flowers, asked:

"Who is to be Queen of the May this year?"

Her question was greeted with a burst of laughter.

"Do you take us for rebels? Fie, fie, Rosamund!" cried several voices.

She coloured and answered quickly:

"It is Letty's turn. I was queen last year and for ever so many years, it is not fair I should be crowned again."

"It is quite fair if we will it," said Betty Morgan. "We are all agreed that as long as you are a maiden you shall be our queen—is it not so?" and she turned to her companions.

A unanimous "It is, it is!" rang out.

A smile broke over Rosamund's face, which was, forsooth, somewhat over-serious for one so young. She was about to answer, when suddenly there came riding across the field a noble gentleman: there was no mistaking his position; though his dress was of the plainest he carried himself right nobly. He wore a leather jerkin and hose to match, with high boots and a cloth cap with a flat crown, and a broad brim which screened his eyes. He was by no means a young man; his beard, which was black, was besprinkled with white, and there was a tired look in the dark eyes. He drew his rein and stopped his horse as he came up to the group of merry-makers, then he lifted his cap, and, smiling down upon them, said:

"I have travelled far by land and sea, but I must needs come to England to witness a scene like this. I had forgotten to-morrow is the first of May, and you will make merry. Where is your queen?"

"Here, here she is!" cried several voices, whilst with no over-gentle hands they pushed Rosamund to the fore, until she stood beside the horse, looking up at the stranger. A sweet image of maidenhood, as we have said. Her face was somewhat serious, her features were so regular; and there was a strange questioning look in her eyes and about her mouth such as we see in the countenance of the Blessed Virgin gazing on the Divine Infant in her arms—a certain wonderment, a questioning as to what is yet to come in the far future; the brow was smooth, the eyes clear and unclouded. Even so was Rosamund's expression as she looked up into the stranger's face, and spoke in a clear musical voice, which in no way, strange to tell, resembled the rough tones of her companions.

"I am to be Queen of the May, sir," she said. "I was

telling them it is not fair, for I have been queen one, two, three years running;" and she counted them on her fingers. "So now I say it is Letty's turn;" and she laid her hand on her cousin's and drew her forward. "What do you think, sir?" and she looked up at him.

When first she began to speak the stranger had started, and his face had changed visibly. He bent forward and listened attentively to what she said. At her last words he shook his head, saying seriously:

"Nay, ask of me what you will, but not to make you or any other maiden a queen, even in sport. I would not lay so great a burden on thy youth."

Rosamund seemed surprised.

"Is it so sad a thing, then, to be a queen?" she asked. "We say right often, 'happy as a queen'."

"Ay, say on, my child, in happy ignorance," he answered; "but thank God it has not fallen to your lot to be a queen."

"Have you known many queens, sir?" asked Letty.

"Alas! such has been my fate," he answered.

"But Queen Bess, our Queen Bess, is surely happy. All men obey her, there is no one greater than she is in all the world, she hath all her heart can desire, she has but to speak to be obeyed," said Letty.

"Truly you are right, my child," was the gentle answer; "but have you ever thought of her loneliness? No one can approach her familiarly, no one dares love her, and she dares love no one."

"Truly if such be the case it is not good to be a queen," said Rosamund thoughtfully.

"But we love you, and because we love you we will crown you queen!" answered Letty; and, throwing her arms round Rosamund, she fell to kissing her, and at the same time tears poured from her eyes, and she whispered, "Fear not, no one shall harm you. The May Queen is the queen of Love."

Seeing he had vexed them the stranger hastened to excuse himself. "Pardon me, my children," he said, "I must seem to you a surly old man, but indeed such is

not the case, it only grieves me to think that in your ignorance the bauble of a crown should have attractions for you. Play your game out, Queen of May; let them crown you with flowers, and God grant you may find no thorn hidden amongst the blossoms! Now, will you tell me if yonder cottage belongs to Farmer Weston, and if I shall find him at home?"

"It is my father's house, sir," said Letty curtsying. "My mother is always at home, but my father is gone with Derward into Cranbury woods to mark the trees for felling, he will not be home till supper-time."

"Then I will see Dame Weston," he answered, "and to get to the house I must go back on to the highroad and cross the bridge which spans the moat—is it not so?"

"It is, sir," answered Letty. "If you will ride slowly we will go round and tell Mother you are coming; she does not like to be taken by surprise, especially by strangers."

He doffed his hat with a smile. "I will do as you bid me," he said; and, turning his horse's head, he rode back the way he had come, leapt a low fence, and, finding himself once more on the highroad, cantered gently toward the bridge. As soon as he had left them the girls and boys were uproarious, and began in their indignation to abuse him roundly.

"No queen, indeed!" exclaimed Bessie Morrison. "I guess he is one of those rebel gentlemen who would set Mary Stuart over our good Queen Bess."

"Nonsense, Betty, he would have no queen at all!" said Letty; "at least so it seemed to me. But come, Rosamund, we must be quick or he will be there before us." And, taking each other's hands, the two girls ran to the back entrance of the farmhouse, where a rough wooden bridge had been thrown over the moat for the convenience of the serving men and women.

"Mother, Mother!" they shouted.

"Well, lasses, what do you want?" and Lisbeth in her snowy cap and apron came forth to meet them.

"Oh, Mother," said Letty, slipping her arm in hers, "there be a great lord come to see Father!"

"Alack, alack!" answered Lisbeth. "And the bread is in the oven and the living-room is all awry!" At that moment there came a thundering at the front-door.

"There he be!" said Rosamund, and her gentle face flushed. "Shall I open?" She had hardly uttered the words when they heard the latch lifted and a voice asked:

"Dame Weston, may I tie my horse up to the post?"

The dame instantly went forward, dropped a curtsy, and said: "If you will bide a moment, Letty will call one of the farm hands and he will take your horse to the stable and fodder him. But I must tell you that if you be come on business I am alone, my man is gone to the top of Cranbury Hill, into the forest which lies on the other side, and I scarce expect him back before nightfall."

"That is bad luck for me," said the stranger. "But if you will allow me to enter and to speak with you, it may be almost as well."

"You are welcome to enter, sir. Letty, tell Joe to come and fetch the horse."

Letty obeyed, and Rosamund stood alone beside Lisbeth.

"You have two fair lasses, Dame," said the visitor.

"Rosamund is not my daughter, though she be as dear to me," said Lisbeth. "She be my husband's niece."

At that moment Joe came running round the corner, and, pulling his forelock, laid his hand on the horse's rein and led it away. Whereupon the stranger entered the house, and stepped into the living-room, with which my readers are already acquainted, but which during the past few years had assumed a somewhat different aspect. There was still the long table and the benches where the master and the servants ate together. But there was an ingle corner by the broad hearth in which were chairs and stools and the girls' spinning-wheels. For in those days all the linen for the household was woven at

home, and Dame Weston and her two girls were famous for their linen woof and web. The whole place was spotlessly clean, and the smell of fresh-baked bread from the outer kitchen was by no means disagreeable.

"It is baking-day," said Lisbeth apologetically.

"There is no need to tell a hungry man that," said the stranger. "I shall be a beggar and entreat for a crust," he added, throwing himself into the one arm-chair which stood in the corner.

"You do me too much honour, sir," answered Lisbeth, curtsying. "Quick, Rosamund, fetch a tankard of sweet ale and a munchet of white bread."

The girl disappeared. Then the stranger rose, and, laying his hand on Dame Weston's arm, said in a low voice:

"Is it true she be your husband's niece?"

The dame lifted her eyes and looked into his.

"She is known as such, sir, and no one questions it."

"Except yourself and your husband," answered the stranger.

"We have well-nigh forgotton that it is otherwise," she answered. "Who be you, sir?"

He did not answer her, but asked in his turn:

"What about the lad?"

"He be as fine a lad as any man could wish for as a son," she answered; "and my husband loves him as such."

"And the boy—is he content?" he queried.

"He is a good lad, and helps his father more than a man could do, because he is quick, and seems to understand things better than others. He is gone with him to-day for the marking of wood in the forest, because it is a good time to sell, seeing so many ships are being built for the new journeyings across the sea. He be good and he be clever," she added.

"I asked you if he were content with his lot."

"Well, lads have ideas of their own; I will not say that Derward is unfeignedly glad to be farmer. All these buildings of ships and journeyings across the seas

have turned the heads of lads and men, and ofttimes he says that he would gladly make a voyage. Not long ago a sailor came into the village and upset men and boys alike with his stories of a country that has no name, where fruits and flowers and all manner of herbs grow in profusion. He brought my husband a root of a thing they call 'potatoes', which he bade him plant. But my husband had been before him; Sir Walter Raleigh had given him a root; and now we have a field full of potatoes. They are mighty good when boiled, and we feast upon them. They are as good as bread, but still not worth the risking one's life for."

"Ah, but, Mother, they be very good!" said Letty, dancing into the room. "And Father is as well pleased to grow them as we are to eat them."

She held a pewter tankard in her hand, and Rosamund stood beside her with the bread and fresh-churned butter.

"Will it please you to eat and drink, sir?" said Dame Weston. "We can talk afterwards."

The girls placed a stool beside him, and upon it the food they had brought, which he hastened to partake of. He looked at them from time to time earnestly, but more especially his eyes rested upon Rosamund. And the dame heard him mutter, "She is like her, her very image. Poor thing! poor thing!" The girls did not hear him, for they had modestly carried their wheels to the window.

When he had eaten and drunken he signed to Lisbeth to come and sit close beside him, which she did.

"I am come to ask your husband to let the lad go for a time," he said; "it is thought well that he should leave England, and I know of someone going upon a voyage who will take charge of him and see to his well-doing. It is a grand chance; he may come back, as others have done, with gold and precious stones, and he may win favour at court, and certain things which are against him may be forgotten, and so he may be restored to his own."

"I do not understand what you mean, sir," answered Lisbeth. "But this I do know, that to uproot a lad and send him into strange countries among a strange people is dangerous sport; he may be discontented now ever and anon, but he is happy. Let well alone."

"I would it were possible," answered the stranger; "but, as I have told you, it is thought by those who have his welfare and the maiden's at heart, that he will be better out of England. You know full well from where you took him, a sad prison-house, leading more often to death than to life. He was rescued from it, but," and the man lowered his voice, "there still lies one within its walls upon whom the executioner's axe may at any time fall, and if the boy learnt his real estate and chose to claim his birthright, who can tell what might be his fate. Let him go; times may change, and things may right themselves."

Tears were pouring down Dame Lisbeth's face. "And the maid?" she asked.

"She is safe," answered the man. "They think her dead, but some inkling has got about that the boy is still alive, so he must be got rid of."

"I will speak to my husband," said Dame Lisbeth. "As for Derward, he has no idea that he is other than he seems."

"There is no need that he should know," answered the stranger. "Speak to your husband, and send Derward on some commission—shall we say to Maidstone?—in about a week. I will meet him, and so talk to him that the desire which is now shadowy shall take substance. In three weeks the vessel I speak of will set sail from Plymouth, and he must go aboard. You understand?" As he spoke he rose, and there was a tone of command in his voice.

"Alack-a-day, I understand but too well!" answered the dame.

The stranger took a pouch from his pocket and placed it in her hand. "That will provide for all necessary outlay and recompense you. He will not require much,

but you will lose his labour, and it is right that you should have some profit."

He shook her by the hand, and without waiting for her to answer him again strode to the window.

"Farewell, young maidens!" he said; "may you have a joyous May-day! Suffer me to kiss your hand, fair queen." He lifted Rosamund's hands to his lips, and was gone.

They heard him calling Joe to bring his horse, but somehow they were so startled they did not move. Then suddenly they ran to the door, and saw that he had mounted his horse and was already half across the bridge.

"Farewell, good sir!" they called after him; "may good luck go with you!"

CHAPTER IV

NEW DESIRES

WHEN John Weston and Derward returned that evening, the former was not long in perceiving that Lisbeth had something on her mind. Life ran so smoothly in these far-away country villages, undisturbed by the daily pouring in of the maddening crowd; week in, week out, the days went by in calm monotony. There was no excitement, no rushing hither and thither; the same work repeated itself, everyone knew his place and quietly performed his daily tasks. Thus the advent of a stranger was a matter of great importance, and the first thing Derward heard when he entered the homestead was, "We have had a guest; he came for you and Father, but we saw him."

"And did seeing you satisfy him?" asked Derward.

"We know not, you had best ask Mother that question; she talked with him. Have you had good sport?"

"Never better," answered Derward; "I will take you one day to Cranbury Hill."

"But we are in Cranbury," said Letty impatiently.

"Ah! but not on the top of it," said Derward. "You have not seen the great table-land and the forest which lies beyond. It is a splendid sight. I'll run you up the steep, and then you'll see a sight such as you never dreamt of. Father has a good stretch of forest-land of his own there, and we have marked a score of trees of such size and height they must be two or three centuries old."

"It is a pity to cut them down," said Rosamund.

"They'll not be missed," answered Derward. "They'll give us wood for the winter, at least the branches will;

as for the trunks, they will make fine ships, which will stand fast against many a hurricane. They are of good old English oak."

They chattered on whilst the maids placed the supper on the table. It was coarse but plentiful; there was never any grumbling in Farmer Weston's home. The husband and wife had gone together into their own chamber, and there John had learnt what had happened that day.

"It does not take me by surprise," he said. "For some time I have been expecting this."

"Wherefore," asked his wife, "cannot they let the lad in peace? If, as you have often said, he is one born of high degree and hidden away, there is no change he can well abide as he is and be happy."

"I cannot answer your query, for I know not who the lad and maiden are," answered John Weston. "Not even if they be akin one to the other. But that they are noble and of high descent, of that I am persuaded. We took them from the Tower of London, and those who gave them to us were themselves noble."

At that moment the gong rang out for supper. Husband and wife went into the great room where all were assembled, and took their places at the head of the table above the salt, with the young people on either side of them. They were right merry. Letty and Derward bandied words one with the other. They were great friends, but they quarrelled ofttimes because both of them had wills of their own and would not yield one to the other.

Rosamund never quarrelled with anyone. As soon as supper was over she went and sat on the bench within the porch, and drew a book from her pocket, which she read diligently. It was a rare copy of the Gospels, which the farmer had procured for her at a great cost to himself, and which she highly prized. She had a marked taste for learning, and had early entreated to be allowed to go to Minister Croft to be taught to read and write. So rapid had been her progress that he had

taught her Latin and many other things. He was an old man, and had suffered much for his faith in the reign of Queen Mary. For many years he had hidden away, and had only come forth from his retreat when Elizabeth ascended the throne, and had bestowed upon him the cure of the little village of Cranbury Hill. He was devoted to Rosamund, and she to him, and scarcely an evening passed but he came to the farm and sat with the family by the hearth, telling gruesome stories of the days of Bloody Mary, how the martyrs went to the stake so bravely, and of all the many tortures which were inflicted on them. The story he loved best of all to tell was the story of Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury, and there would gather round him quite a little crowd of men and girls to hear that great scene of recantation. "He sinned and he suffered, and surely God pardoned him, for he died bravely. In some men the flesh is weaker than in others, and harder to overcome, but the flames purged him, and though his sins were as crimson, surely they shall be as white as wool."

Rosamund and Letty feared greatly as they listened to the old man. They would sit holding each other's hands, Letty hiding her face upon Rosamund's shoulder; and sometimes even she would weep bitterly, especially when he solemnly assured them all, that those dark days might come back. "If that Mary Stuart ever reigns as Queen of England, she will give England back to Rome," he declared, "and then the burning will begin again." He forgot to tell them that the fires were not put out, that Elizabeth was burning men at Smithfield and persecuting the Catholics with as great cruelty as ever Mary had shown to the reformers. Martyrs there were on either side, dying for what they believed to be truth; because men arrogated to themselves the right of laying down the law as to what truth is, whereas that subtle question which Pontius Pilate asked, "What is truth?" can be answered by God alone, and each individual soul according to its power. Happily out of evil sometimes good arises, and it has come to pass that out of all this

blood and flames and torture, little by little there has sprung up that blessed thing which we call "tolerance" —the growth of individual thought, which makes the Christ of history the sole judge of what truth is.

This evening Minister Croft made his appearance just as the men and maid-servants were filing out, and was greeted with great joy by Derward and the girls. They were much annoyed when John Weston, after whispering something to his wife, said aloud:

"Now, boys and girls, go out to play, for your mother and I have something of importance to talk over with Master Croft."

"I know what it is about!" exclaimed Letty. "We have had—" but she got no farther.

Her father caught her by her arm and almost carried her across the room.

"When you are bidden to speak, Letty, time enough for us to hear your voice. Go!"

And she shamefacedly sat down by Rosamund on the bench within the porch, where Derward joined them.

"It is all about you, Derward, I know it is," said Letty passionately. "I heard him say something to Mother about voyages and the sea. You will be going from us."

The boy flushed up. "If I get a chance I surely will," he answered. "Not that I do not love you both, and Father and Mother, but I must see the world. I could not abide here for ever. I told Father so to-day, when we stood together on the top of Cranbury Hill and overlooked a great space of country; at least it seemed so to me, and yet it is but a little spot on the face of the earth, and I want to see beyond. I walked to Maidstone a week ago, and there I heard that Master Drake had come back, that he had been round the world, and that now they were going to fit out new ships and to take men and women across the ocean to a country where gold is to be picked up as pebbles are here; a lovely country, full of flowers, wheat, and maize, and

things we wot not of. Do you think I can be content to remain here and see naught of all this?"

"If you loved us you could," said Rosamund gently.

He looked at her tenderly. "Dearest, I do love you," he said; "how should it well be otherwise? You are my sister, the nearest and dearest to my heart, but still I would go abroad. We men are not fashioned like you women, you can sit at home and spin and be happy."

"We needs must," said Letty sharply. "Maybe in our hearts we would like to wander as well as you do."

Derward laughed.

"Poor Letty!" he said, laying his hand kindly on her shoulder; but she moved away from him.

"I am not poor Letty. You have just said that you had no one to love but Rosamund. Have you not always told me that I too was your sister?"

Evidently Letty's feelings had been sorely hurt. She put her apron to her eyes.

"Now, Letty, I will not have you greet," said Derward. "You know that I love you well, but Rosamund is—well, she is my sister."

"And I am nothing," said Letty jealously.

"Oh yes, you are," answered Derward, "but—you are not my sister, and I thank God for it!" Saying which he took her by the shoulder, turned her round, and kissed her. "You are a silly wench!" he said. Their eyes met, and there was laughter in them both.

Taking the girls by the hand he strolled between them along the pathway by the moat, all grievances forgotten. Within the house, by the fireside, the three elders were holding counsel. They told Master Croft of the stranger who had come that day, and for the first time they also told him how they had come by the children.

"And now evidently," said John Weston, "the man who came to-day was sent for some purpose. I know not whether it be for the lad's good or evil. I know not whether I have any right to part from him. He was given into our care, and we were told to keep him and rear him as our son. We have done so, and now they

come to take him away; and he will be but too ready to go if he hears of it, for as we stood on Cranbury Hill this evening he said, 'Father, the world must be very big and beautiful, I would that I could see it, or at least some portion of it'; by this I know I shall not be able to restrain him. Therefore, sir, I ask you, is it wise of me to let him go to the meeting? This boy may be of noble, nay, perchance of royal birth, for aught I know, and there are those who might do away with him. And then if he who gave him to me should ask me to render up my account I shall have naught to show. I shall have broken faith with him."

"You speak truly," answered Master Croft, "but maybe the very man who gave him to you is now seeking to find him again. It is a pity you were not at home this afternoon."

"It is a pity," answered John Weston. "But I'll tell you what I'll do, I will go to the meeting myself alone. Then if I am satisfied that no harm is intended to the lad, I will let the two meet, and he himself shall decide what he will do. I can take him with me to Maidstone on some business, leave him with a good friend of mine, and go down by the river to meet this stranger. What say you, Lisbeth, to my plan?"

"What must be, must be," answered the dame, "but we shall lose our boy."

"In any case he would have gone from us sooner or later," said John Weston; "it is in his blood. I saw it as we stood together on the top of Cranbury Hill, and he exclaimed, 'It is a beautiful world, Father, I would feign travel over it!' and his eyes gleamed, and he drew himself up until he was well-nigh as tall as I am, though as far as I know he can boast of but sixteen summers; but he carries himself like a prince."

"Maybe he is a prince or something akin thereto," said the minister. "But it is growing late, and to-morrow is May-day and we shall have to be up betimes." As he spoke they all three went out into the porch, thinking to find the children there, but they, as we know, had flitted.

It was a lovely moonlight night, and the air was balmy with the soft moisture rising from the river and the valley beneath. It was a night for dreams and lovers; the stars shone with a steady brilliancy. Perfect stillness reigned; everything had gone to rest, the cows in the field, the birds in the trees, even the buzzing insects had hidden themselves away; but the flowers in the gardens seemed to have awakened, for there was an indefinable scent of many kinds and sorts, which can only be found in the old-fashioned gardens and in country lanes and meadows.

"Where be the children?" asked Dame Lisbeth, anxiously stepping out on to the pathway.

"Ah! let be, they are not gone far," said John. "It is a night to wander, and when they have breathed their fill and their eyes grow heavy with sleep, they will come back like birds to their nest. See, there they be, Lisbeth."

And he pointed to where three figures stood, their arms entwined in each other's, as if they were but one. Derward's voice could just be distinguished, but not the words he uttered. They were reserved for Letty's and Rosamund's ears.

"Do you not understand," he was saying, "that men must go forth, otherwise how could we learn wisdom? Why has Father succeeded so well in planting and sowing and the gathering together of sheep and cows, so that he is well-nigh the richest farmer in the country? I heard at market the other day men saying that his wool was worth twice as much as any other man's, and that his cloths were highly esteemed at home and abroad. The reason is plain to me: he has not stayed at home, he has been to Holland and to France, where he has learnt much, and made good use of his knowledge. I will do as he has done, only in a larger way. If the opportunity be offered me of visiting this new world, which great men have discovered, I will go. And you, my dear ones, will not surely wish to hinder me with tears and plaints."

"We will try not to," said Rosamund. "But, Derward,

you must remember I have only you. We have neither father nor mother; if any misadventure befall you I shall be alone in the world."

"Nay, nay. Is not my father your father? Do not we love you with all our hearts?" said Letty.

"As we love you," answered Rosamund. "But it is not the same thing, Letty."

"Come," said Derward, "we will plight our troth to each other, we three, that from henceforth we shall be for ever and for ever true friends, to stand fast by each other, let what will befall us. Shall we do this?" and he looked at the two girls.

"Yes we will," they answered.

Then they held out their right hands and clasped each other's, the girls saying solemnly after Derward, "We three swear to be good friends for ever, protecting and helping one another as best we may; never believing evil one of the other, but ready at any moment to do each other loyal service. Thus we plight our troth, Amen."

At that moment a voice reached them, calling Derward, Rosamund, Letty.

"Coming, Father!" they answered. "We must e'en seal our troth with a kiss," said Derward, quickly. So it came to pass that the three kissed each other; and then with light hearts they ran quickly along the narrow path up to the house.

"It is late, you must to bed," said Dame Lisbeth, "for you must be up with the lark. The pole is not finished."

"It lacks but the ribbons," said Letty, "and they would have been placed but for the stranger's coming. I do not like the man, he seems to have broken into our life, I wish he had not come. Good-night, Father! good-night, Mother!" But somehow her voice was full of tears, and she ran into the house and up the stairs, to the little chamber with the dormer-window where she and Rosamund now slept.

The others followed, and soon the lights were put out and the cottage lay in darkness, or rather in God's light.

CHAPTER V

MAY-DAY

THERE was no lying abed that May morning, every village was alive with merriment and flowers. Girls in white petticoats and gay kirtles ran in and out of the cottage doors, most of them with branches of hawthorn in their hands and breast-knots of daffodils and primroses. Every year it was the same routine. They were to meet in the great meadow belonging to John Weston, and then march in order to the village church, where the Minister Croft awaited them, and after a short service they carried the May-pole round to the nearest hamlets; or if there were great houses in the neighbourhood, they would seek an entrance from the lodge-keeper, stand merrily before the windows of the mansion and sing their May-song, with young glad voices which could but pleasure the most surly. Lightly Letty and Rosamund ran across the grass to where the May-pole stood. It was decked with many a yard of ribbon, and was fresh with all the freshness of spring. They were greeted with a shout from the boys and girls already assembled.

"The queen, the queen! All hail to the Queen of May!"

Very fair looked Rosamund in her white linen gown fashioned according to the mode of the day, leaving bare the snowy neck and the soft round arms. Her long brown hair was braided with ribbons, whilst a crown of flowers, indicative of her queendom, encircled her brows. She had been Queen of the May for Cranbury for many a year, and the girls and boys, true to their allegiance, crowded round her. As Betsy had said, there was not

one rebel heart amongst them! She took her place in the centre, Derward carrying the May-pole in front of her, and all her subjects followed her, chattering and merry, not one without a posy. Right merrily they sang of the gladness and the sweetness of the month of May, of the joy of living, for few of them had so much as looked on death; and surely with the sunshine gleaming, the waving banners, and the scent of flowers, death seemed far away. So they reached the little village church. Their fathers and mothers had gathered along the road, to rejoice their own hearts with the children's joy. Not long did the minister detain them—a few words of greeting, a short prayer, and he bade them go with God's blessing and make merry on this day which was given them to make merry, bidding them thank God in their hearts for His many gifts. As they came forth, Derward raised the May-pole high aloft, and they tramped through the lanes and the village, where, in days of old, pilgrims wound their way towards St. Thomas's shrine at Canterbury. They passed once more John Weston's moated farm, and when they reached it, they stopped and were bidden to enter and refresh themselves, with bowls of milk and wheaten bread and dough-cakes, which no one knew so well to knead as Dame Weston. When they had finished they hurrahed again and again in honour of their host and hostess. The dame had known them all since their birth, and they crowded round her, the younger ones loving her with their little hands. Then they went forward, the elders carrying the youngsters up the steep hill-side, some two hundred feet above John Weston's own dwelling-house. On the summit of the hill there was a great space of table-land, known by the name of the "Common Land", covered with grass and gorse and box and yews, a wild place leading into the woods, which stretched beyond as far as the eye could see. In the midst of this they planted their May-pole, and then began their sports—races, leaping, all manner of games —and those below could hear, faintly maybe, but still

like an echo of joy, the shouts and merriment of Young England. They had each of them brought their store of rosy apples, munchets, and many another delicacy; at least so it seemed to them, though it was but common food; and when, tired, heated, and hungry, they sat down in groups and ate, no food they had ever taken seemed of better kind. Suddenly, while the sun was still high in the heavens, there came riding a troop of gentlemen and ladies. They had been hawking, and were returning down the hill-side towards what they called the "Canterbury Road", by which they would make their way to the old manor-house of Penshurst.

The children were startled at the sight, and rose to their feet in awesome reverence of the great folk. "Was there ever anything so lovely?" said a lady, reining in her horse, and pointing to the group of boys and girls, who had instinctively crowded round their beloved May-pole.

"It is indeed a fair sight," said a gentleman rider. "These Mayers have a good time of it methinks. To what village do you belong?" he asked, addressing himself to Derward, who was by far the tallest of the group.

"Cranbury, so please your honour," answered the lad.

The gentleman looked at him, and as he did so there came into his face an expression of wonderment.

He bent towards the lady at his side and whispered something in her ear; then she too looked at Derward and said quickly, "Will you tell us your name, young man?"

"I am Derward Weston," he answered proudly, "nephew of John Weston of Cranbury Hill Farm."

"Do you know the name?" asked the lady, turning to her companion.

"No," he answered; "it is not likely I should. But there are those who do, and I know the boy's face."

Derward caught the last words. "Excuse me, sir," he said, "to my knowledge we have not met before."

"But we may meet, indeed I am sure we shall meet hereafter," was the quiet answer. "Mark my words and remember my name—'Walter Raleigh'."

"Oh sir," exclaimed Derward, springing forward to his horse's head, "you have sailed all round the world! Yours is no hidden name, it is on every man's lips. Rosamund, come hither. See, this is Mr. Walter Raleigh, the greatest gentleman in all the world!"

"You may well be proud, Walter," said the lady, "even these little folk know you."

"I am proud," answered Master Walter (for he was not yet knighted), taking off his cap to the youngsters, who crowded round his horse. Then, holding out his hand to Derward, he said:

"You are a fine lad, well built and strong; if ever you want to sail across the seas let me know. Write to me under cover of Philip Sidney, Lord of Penshurst, and if I have a vacant place in my ship, it shall be yours."

"It has been my desire this long time, sir," answered Derward, his voice trembling with excitement. "Surely God has brought you here to-day. If your honour will but give me leave I shall be at Penshurst not later than to-morrow."

"So be it," answered Walter, smiling, "I like enthusiasts. Do you not, my Lady Mary?" and he turned to his companion.

"Indeed I do," she answered.

Then, speaking to Derward, she added: "I will tell my brother Philip of your coming to-morrow. But first be a good lad and speak to your father."

"I have no father," answered Derward, "only my sister Rosamund;" and he pointed to where the girl stood, her quiet face flushed and her brown eyes full of tears.

The Lady Mary looked at her. "The Queen of the May," she said, "and a fair one too."

Rosamund approached.

"You will let your brother go," said the Lady Mary Sidney, bending towards her.

"I must needs do so," she answered; "he is set on it, and all things seem to tend that way. It is not well to fight against God."

"You are right," answered Lady Mary. "I thought not to find such simple wisdom in a peasant child."

"My sister Rosamund is very wise," said Derward; "she can read and write like a clerk, and she knows Latin too."

"A strange couple!" said Lady Mary, turning to Walter. "I think you must be right."

"I am sure I am," he answered.

And taking a handful of silver out of his pouch, "For the Mayers!" he cried, and forthwith threw it amongst the children, who scrambled for the coins.

"We must ride on or we shall lose our party," said Master Walter. "Farewell, children! To-morrow, Master Derward, we shall meet again, if you be still so minded."

"I never change," answered Derward stolidly, and, taking off his cap, he bowed low, with such natural grace and courtliness that the two riders once more exchanged glances, and as they rode away Master Walter said:

"That lad is no peasant's son; he comes of better stock."

When joy and merriment are broken in upon they seldom come again. It was in vain that the children coaxed Derward to play. He had no heart left for childish games. The sense of manhood and the possibilities of a new life had suddenly ceased to be a myth, and had become a reality. Long before the sun set he gathered his troup together, and, carrying the May-pole, they descended the hill-side; reaching the village common, according to custom he planted the pole in the centre of the place. The villagers were waiting for them, and quickly the news flew round that a fine gentleman and a great lady had greeted them on Cranbury Common. A gentleman who had sailed all round the world, and he had asked Derward to go with him.

"Be this true?" asked Farmer Weston, coming up to where the lad stood ready to join the dance with the village maidens.

"Yes, Father, it is true; I will tell you more anon. The gentleman's name was Walter Raleigh, and he has bidden me go and see him to-morrow at Penshurst."

"Go and dance, lad," said the farmer; "you will never again be as single-hearted as you are this night."

And Derward obeyed him.

It was still early when he and Rosamund and Letty escaped from amidst the dancers and ran swiftly up the steep ascent to the homestead. As they crossed the threshold Dame Lisbeth met them, and, laying her hands on the lad's shoulders, she said solemnly:

"Be of good cheer, Derward, surely the Lord calls you."

They all gathered round the hearth, and John told them how he had intended going with Derward to Maidstone to meet the stranger, but that now it would be no longer necessary. They would rather go together on the morrow to Penshurst Place, and he would deliver him over to that great good man, Sir Philip Sidney, feeling persuaded he could not do better by him. He was sure to rise to honour and to renown, even as Francis Drake had; he was but a poor man's son, his father being minister of a little village, where he had taken refuge in the Marian Persecution and just escaped with his life. "Every man," said John, "must lead his own life; we cannot fashion it one for another—only the Lord Almighty can do that, and we must abide by His will."

"Amen!" said Dame Lisbeth. Then they all knelt down and prayed, rose up again and embraced each other without tears, because they had such perfect faith that all would be well for them. Derward had had his call and he must go. So they parted for the night. And on the following morning John Weston and Derward went forth together on the road to Penshurst Place.

. . . . . .

To step forth into the fresh morning air, to look around and see and hear the first light and sounds of early dawn, is surely, for a young soul who has never known sorrow, an intense joy. Derward hardly felt the ground beneath

his feet, and John Weston could not restrain a smile as he with long strides kept pace with him. "Gently, lad!" he said; "if we run starting, we shall crawl at last. It is a good step from here to Penshurst."

Instantly Derward relaxed his speed.

"Pardon, Father," he said. "But I feel almost as if my wings had grown in the night." And he too laughed.

Through the hawthorn hedges, up hill and down dale they went, through a country which in this month of May was most beautiful. The orchards were white with the pale pink tinge of the apple-blossom. It was like one bridal bouquet, and at this early hour there was a great chattering of birds in the trees and hedges. The flying in and out of parent birds, telling only too plainly where their nestlings lodged. It was a resurrection, revealing the problem of life after death. The long winter and the darkness had fled away, and from the black earth the green wheat arose and the whole land was carpeted with buttercups and daisies. There was naught but apparent barrenness, and suddenly there is everything; where the darkness of death had reigned, the light of joy had sprung up. In the human heart, especially in the hearts of the young, it is ever thus. As the lark sings, soaring upwards, so the young arise and rejoice, at least those who have ears to hear and eyes to see, and their song is, "Glory to God in the Highest, and on earth peace and good-will towards men".

Thus it was that Derward's whole being expanded, as he walked forth for the first time into the world to seek his fortune. There came over him a marvellous sense of power. To him nothing seemed impossible. He thought of other lands, of the great ocean which lay between him and them, and he longed with intense desire to see, to know, and to feel.

"Father," he said, as a flight of swallows swept across the sky over their heads, "the swallows have come back, and whither they have been there would I go."

"Whither they go, no one knows," answered John. "But there are men who feel like you, Derward, and

have set their faces towards the South, the East, and the West. Some have come back and told marvellous tales of lands where it is for ever summer, where birds have such marvellous a plumage like rainbows. I mind me of a sailor, who put to sea with Master Drake, and he brought back with him a green-feathered bird with crimson breast and wings half-blue, half-green; its eyes were like beads, and it had a top-knot on its head; and you will scarce believe it, I heard it with my own ears speak like a Christian—'Master Drake!' he said. 'Master Drake, take us home!' I am sorry to tell that the sailors taught it to swear right roundly, which greatly disturbed the mind of Ben's old mother, so that he had to get rid of it. I did hear that the bird died of vexation at being parted from him."

"I have heard of those birds," said Derward; "men call them parrots. Well, if ever I go that way, I will bring you one back, Father; but he sha'n't swear, to shock the ears of Lisbeth and the girls."

Kent is even at the present day a well-wooded country. The woods of Surrey and Sussex, Kent and Essex, seem never-ending. Out of one forest into another, across country, these two travelled, the cuckoo calling to them a thousand times, herds of wild deer staring at them through the copses, hares and rabbits starting up from amidst the brushwood and darting across their feet. Nature teemed with life, there could be no dulness, the earth was radiant. The sun glinted through the foliage of the trees, which grew so close together that the shadows were deep even in spring-time. Many were the hamlets they passed through, and at mid-day they stopped on their way to refresh themselves. It was not till evening that they reached the village of Penshurst, and, asking their way, were shown the road which led to Penshurst Place.

Through lanes with high hedges and great trees, which had stood many a century of storm and tempest, they walked, till they reached at last the gate with the thatched lodge leading into the private grounds known

as the ancestral home of the Sidneys, and at the present time in possession of Mr. Philip Sidney, a man in the very prime of life, a court favourite, a poet, full of noble ambition, and yet destined to do no great work in life, save to leave behind him the renown of a true English Christian gentleman. He was much thought of and esteemed by all men, especially by those who, with less dreamy natures than his, went forth into the world to conquer or to die. There were hidden strings in Philip Sidney's life which held him back from what is generally termed the "life militant" here on earth. But his fascination was such that he gathered round him warriors and statesmen, philosophers and theologians—all manner of men and women, who sought his company because of his vast power of sympathy and his knowledge of the human heart. Sympathy is a gift not granted to all men, it is inborn, a secret power of feeling with and for others. It is a marvellous power, which to the individual himself is a mingling of joy and sorrow.

Penshurst Place was a rendezvous for young and old alike, and at the present time there were assembled within its precincts men whose names have come down to us as the pioneers of the New World. From the time when Christopher Columbus in his cockle-shell of a boat crossed from one continent to another, a continuous stream of adventurers had striven to follow in his footsteps. Their success had been very fluctuating, and so far never complete. If they had not come back from their voyages empty-handed, few, if any, had gained wealth. Nevertheless, they believed the New World to be flowing with milk and honey. Streams whose waters were yellow with gold, mountains glittering with golden ore, pastures of herbs said to cure every earthly malady; flowers, fruits, vegetables in such abundance that the poor mariners cast upon their shores died of surfeit; such was the land towards which every eye was turned, and towards which every heart went out. Many set sail on the waters which divided the Old from the New World,

but few returned. Either they met with watery graves, or were slain by savages or died from want. And still others arose ready to pick up the threads and the knowledge of those who had gone before, and cast their nets into the ocean of discovery. In the early years of Queen Elizabeth's reign these adventurers were legion, and the prime leader of them all was Walter Raleigh; he had served under the great Protestant, Admiral Coligny, and was full of ardour for the Reformed religion. His stepbrother Humphrey Gilbert had gone down in the mighty deep only the previous year, and the loss of him had wounded him sorely. The story of Humphrey Gilbert's death had sent a thrill through every heart in England. He had set sail on his homeward journey in weather so rough that the oldest mariner declared he had never seen more outrageous seas, and the little frigate was scarcely larger than a merchantman's long-boat. It was called the *Squirrel*, and was accompanied by one other boat, the *Hind*. Through the waters of the Atlantic, tossing mountains high, these little vessels strove to make their way homeward. It is a grand picture which is given us of Sir Humphrey's last hour, sitting in the stern of his boat, with a book in his hand, his sailors hopeless, struggling as best they could to guide the little ship. The second ship, the *Hind*, was close behind. Above the wind and storm and the dashing and roaring seas, the general's voice rose like a trumpet-sound: "Courage, my men!" he cried. "We are as near Heaven by sea as by land!"

Night fell upon them, the men hung out their lamps. Suddenly, without cry or sound of any kind, those in the *Hind* ceased to see the lights of the *Squirrel*—they were alone on the mighty ocean, their brave comrades had gone down into the great deep! Marvellous to tell, they reached the haven where they would be, and told their wonderful story, which we tell to-day after a lapse of five hundred years. It was to meet such men as these that John Weston, and Derward Weston, his adopted son, crossed the threshold of Penshurst Place.

CHAPTER VI

REVELATIONS

THREE men were pacing up the broad walk of the far-famed gardens of Penshurst Place; everything was still and calm around them. The scent of flowers filled the whole air—violets, sweet-lavender, marjoram, and many others sent forth their perfumes with the closing day, sweeter than when at mid-day the sun shone upon them, drying them up with its fierce rays. The three men were typical of the times; two evidently, from their dress and carriage, were courtiers, the other was of a rougher type. He had in his walk a certain roll, which betokened the sailor, accustomed to steady himself against the motion of a ship at sea, but his eyes were keen, and there was power in the rough-hewn face, which contrasted not a little with the handsome features, the pointed beards, and elegant attire of his two companions. This man was Francis Drake, the great traveller, and beside him was Walter Raleigh. He also was a man of action, after a different fashion—endowed with finer perceptions than Drake, but with less power, because he had not the same concentration. Raleigh undertook so much, was always ready to enter upon something new; but he employed others to accomplish his designs, which Drake never did. When he had work to do, he did it himself; he had no hopes, no ambition, beyond the discovery of new lands. Raleigh attempted everything with a certain genius essentially his own. He was a poet, a lover, a courtier, a true gentleman, and a man of action; added to all this he was possessed of a strange fascination which drew all men to him. His great friend Philip Sidney was like him in idyllic concep-

tions, but far less a man of action; he dreamt dreams, he wandered in fair gardens, amongst the flowers he loved. His very love was mythical, she was a star, his Stella! And yet notwithstanding their different natures these three men were fast friends, and remained friends all their lives, because they were all good men, honest men, Christian soldiers who walked straight before God, and, living and dying, gave Him the glory.

On the present occasion Philip Sidney was speaking rapidly and earnestly to his companions:

"What you say is impossible, it is a mere likeness. In any case, I should avoid noticing it."

"My Lord Grey came to me a week ago," said Raleigh, "and asked me if I had a place on my new ship for a youth whom he knew, and who was wild for adventure. I answered, if it would oblige him I would make room for such a lad. I am only sending two ships out this time, but they are under good men, Philip Amidas and Arthur Barlow. They are starting in summer, now, and will be back before the autumn. It will be the right season for them to see the country, and, sailing south, they will not have to face either storms or tempest, and will be able to bring back specimens of fruits, vegetables, grain, and wonderful birds. Next year I will send out a larger expedition with emigrants, who will settle in the land and remain there."

"What about the savages?" said Drake, laughing.

"Oh, they are of no account!" answered Raleigh. "If we but treat them well, they are as gentle as children, perfectly harmless; but if by chance we injured them, I am not sure but what they would turn upon us like devils." As he uttered the last words they saw coming towards them a man and a boy.

"There they be," he said. "Now judge for yourselves."

Philip Sidney stopped in his walk.

"I think," he said, "that it would be wise not to look too closely into this matter. If there be anything to hide there must be a reason for it, or Grey

would not sanction it; and if it be possible for you to take the lad, Raleigh, I should advise you to do so. Maybe they want to get him out of the country; you know our gracious queen is not over-tolerant on certain points."

"I know that only too well," answered Raleigh. "She hates well, if she does not love well."

"Even as her father did before her," said Drake.

By this time John Weston and Derward had advanced to within a few yards of the three men, and stood uncovered before them.

"You have lost no time in coming," said Raleigh, advancing a little in front of his companions. "I am glad of it, because it shows that your heart is set upon joining us," he continued, addressing himself to Derward.

"I can assure you, sir, it is," answered Derward. "I have long dreamt of becoming a seaman, and seeking out new countries."

"Have you thought of the dangers by sea and by land?" asked Raleigh. "Many have gone and have never come back again. I would not have you deceive yourself, young man. You will experience hunger and thirst, indeed you will know well-nigh all the ills which may befall a man. The sea is a deceitful mistress; the greatest and the bravest are her victims. She has no respect for persons."

His voice was very sad as he uttered these last words, for he saw before his eyes the image of his brother Humphrey, who was lying deep in the hidden places of the sea.

"I know it all, and am prepared for all things," said Derward. "Pardon me, sir, was it not your brother who said, 'Courage, my men, we are as near Heaven on sea as on land'?"

Impetuously Raleigh stepped up to the lad and took both his hands in his.

"Thank you!" he said. "There is no further question of whether I will accept your service; from this hour you

are my man, and I will be answerable for you. It is with your consent, sir?" he added, turning to John Weston.

"I have no choice, Master," answered John. "It is possible that Derward will be safer on sea with you than on land with me, for I misdoubt me there are those who wish him no good."

"Father," said Derward, "I have not an enemy in the world."

John opened his mouth to answer, but Raleigh laid his hand on his shoulder and said kindly:

"Let be. Why open his eyes to what is evil?"

"True," answered John Weston, and he fell back.

"You have had a long tramp from Cranbury here," said Philip Sidney coming forward. "I will not have you go to a hostel for the night; you must remain in my house as my guests. Supper will be served in an hour; I shall expect to see you at my board. I will give orders that you are to lodge here."

"And to-morrow morning I will have speech with you again," said Raleigh, addressing himself to Derward. "Probably I shall take you up to London with me in the forenoon, and from thence we shall go to Plymouth, where my two good ships are being victualled and prepared for their voyage."

This rapidity of action startled both John and Derward. He would not go home again, then? It was the first great wrench in his young life. But he answered unhesitatingly:

"I shall be ready, sir."

John Weston started, the boy had escaped him. It was Derward's first act of independence. And something like a pang shot through his heart, for he loved the boy. But he recognized that the time had come.

Linking his arm in Derward's John said, "I thank you, sir, for your hospitality; we will be at your house at supper-time," and they went their way.

"Well," said Raleigh to Sidney, "what do you think of the lad?"

"I repeat, the less said the better. Take the lad with you, let him win glory and renown, and a name which will be his own."

"You are right, always right, Sidney," said Drake. "And mark my words, there is something in that lad; he is no yokel, there is good blood running in his veins."

"No doubt of it," answered Sidney. "But it is as well he should not know it, nor others either, for, as we have already said, Elizabeth, our gracious queen," (as he uttered these words the three men doffed their caps) "is not over-tolerant towards those she does not love."

They all three laughed.

"You are her favourite at present, Raleigh," said Sidney.

"For how long?" answered Raleigh, shrugging his shoulders.

At that moment the great bell summoning them to supper rang out, and they turned to the house, talking right merrily.

That evening, for the first time in his life, Derward supped in the great hall of Penshurst, sitting below the salt. And somehow, he did not know why, his soul rebelled within him as he looked at the master's table at the upper end, where noble gentlemen and fair ladies sat, and within his inmost heart he swore that he too would one day sit in their midst.

. . . . . .

"I will walk part of the way with you, Father, for I have an hour to spare," said Derward the following morning, as the two left Walter Raleigh's presence, Derward having taken full service with him for the coming venture. John nodded his head in answer; strong man as he was he could not have spoken; his heart was full. He was leaving the lad behind him; and he wondered in his heart how he should meet the women-folk at home. Raleigh had said bluntly:

"You must come with me to-day, whatever your needs may be I will supply them," and so the matter had been settled.

To the end of the village those two walked, at first silently, for men are not given to much speech when their hearts are full.

"You will give my dear love to Mother," Derward said, "I shall remember her night and morning. And tell the girls I shall not forget them, and to have a care of my pigeons."

"All right, lad!" said Weston. "As long as we men—" and he paused and looked at Derward; it was the first time he had thus addressed him, and the lad coloured—"think of our womenkind, we cannot go far wrong. Keep a brave heart, and a pure one, Derward, and so the Lord strengthen you."

"As you have done, Father," answered the lad.

"Yes, thank God, as I have done; but I have never been tempted and thrown upon the world as you will be, therefore pray the harder."

"I will remember. I wish I had known my own father. Was he all you tell me to be?" And there was a strange yearning in the lad's voice, his soul was awakening.

"I do not know," answered John shortly. Your father and I were strangers to each other, do not question me."

Derward started, and for a second his brow darkened.

"I will not," he answered manfully. "But I have always known there was some mystery about myself and Rosamund."

"Which it would be as well for you to strive not to fathom," answered John. "Make your own name, lad."

And, standing still, he faced round upon him.

Derward was almost as tall as John, well-nigh six feet. John placed his hands on the youth's shoulders and they looked straight into each other's eyes.

"You are more blessed than others," said John, "for there is a Father for the fatherless, therefore you are twice fathered. Good-bye, lad!" There was a cloud in his voice as he uttered the last words.

"Good-bye, Father!" said Derward. But he was young,

and the tears ran down his face as he and John Weston embraced.

"Go!" said Weston sharply, loosening his hold on him; "remember you are a man!" And, turning, he strode quickly away.

Derward walked more slowly in the opposite direction.

Before he judged him to be quite out of sight, John Weston turned round and looked after him.

"They know who he is; they know it, but they dare not speak," muttered Weston to himself. "I will be even with them, and, God helping me, if ever my boy and the little maid should need a strong hand to give them their rights, John Weston's will not fail them."

Then he set his face homewards.

CHAPTER VII

WESTWARD HO!

THROUGH the narrow streets of what we now call Old Plymouth, some thirty or forty men were wending their way towards the church of St. Andrew. On either side women with children in their arms, old men and young men who all their lives long had worked as fishermen along the coasts of Devonshire and Cornwall, stood now with heads uncovered, watching the procession.

It was headed by the very pick of Devon men, faces familiar to them all. And as they passed, they were greeted with, "There goes Raleigh, God bless you, sir!" And the answer came cheerily, "Thank you, Jim! thank you, Jack!" Then a hand would be stretched forth, "Sir Richard Grenville, you here? Be you going out too, sir?" "Not this time, Dick, but I sha'n't be far behind them." And so on, and so on, until the foremost had reached the church. "There be two beauties!" exclaimed an old dame. "They be nothing but lads, how can their mothers let them go?" And she pointed to two youths, of some seventeen and eighteen years, who were walking side by side. One with bright sunny hair and great blue eyes, the other with bronzed face and black hair, which curled crisply to his head. He turned his dark eyes on the dame, and said shortly:

"Maybe we have no mothers; what say you, friend?"

"You are about right there," answered Derward, "I have no mother."

"Ah! so much the better," answered the woman, "she will not have the heartache. But God bless you, my boys! Ye be too young to have lasses, but when ye come back I'm thinking they will not turn their backs upon ye."

"I hope not," said the dark youth. And he and Derward hurried on to enter the church, for going to sea in those days was not like going to sea in these, they knew well what they risked, these brave English lads, for love of adventure. The ships were but cockle-shells, few, of those which put out to sea on these expeditions of discovery, were larger than a hundred tons burden. Columbus set sail in a vessel which had no deck, being little more than a great tub. The two now floating in Plymouth Sound were of a better kind. They had been built and fitted out at considerable expense by Walter Raleigh. But still the knowledge of their danger was so ever present with these early seamen that they never failed to follow an old custom, before putting out to sea, namely, of marching in procession to St. Andrew's Church, and performing certain acts of devotion, so many had gone down into the deep sea and never come back again! Every man and woman remembered on this day that it was but a little while ago that Sir Humphrey Gilbert had sailed from this port. Yet, nothing daunted, his half-brother Master Walter was despatching two ships with a brave crew to follow up those discoveries, for which he had sacrificed his life. It was a solemn sight, and tears rained down the women's faces as they saw their men disappear beneath the church porch. Many of them, the younger ones especially, whispered one to the other, "To what purpose do they go? Surely they were better at home!"

The service was not long, a sort of consecration. And then they came forth and were marshalled straight down to the harbour, where a great crowd had assembled to see them take their departure. And as they went, hands were stretched out, farewells were uttered. "Good-bye, Ben!" "Good-bye, Susie!" A kiss, a light laugh, and he was gone! And Susie stood alone, her bosom heaving, and her apron to her eyes.

Ay, though no poet had yet given utterance to the words, these women knew and felt:

"Men must work, and women must weep,
Though storms be sudden and waters deep
And the harbour bar be moaning".

The sun shone brilliantly on that scene; the boats danced on the waters, every heart was full of hope, they had the whole summer before them. "It will be as nothing," said Raleigh, as he watched the men go aboard. "It will be as a summer's trip, they will be back before winter."

As Derward passed him, he laid his hand on his shoulder and detained him. "Fare you well, lad," he said, "and good luck go with you! And with you also, John Rolfe; methinks this is your second expedition?"

"It is," answered the young man, "but this time I shall not come back."

"How so?" asked Raleigh.

"It will not be worth while," he said. "Good-bye, sir!"

"Good-bye!" answered Raleigh; and the two young fellows sprang forward, and leapt into a small-boat which conveyed them to the larger vessel; Raleigh watched them clamber up its sides and disappear.

"I would that we had more men such as those two," he said. "Young and enthusiastic, not dreaming only of gold, but having the fear of God before their eyes, discreet and honest men."

The last to take their farewell of their patron were the two captains, Amidas and Barlow.

When the ships hove out to sea, those on board and those on land hurrahed as only Englishmen can.

"A good send off," said Raleigh, turning to Sir Richard Grenville. "I wish it had been a bigger expedition. Only a hundred men, there ought to have been five hundred."

"It is enough for your purpose now," said Grenville. "When these men return, or at least some of them, and bring a good account of their journeyings, it will be time enough to fit out a bigger expedition with women and

children. You do not suppose those fellows go to stay? A hundred men without a woman with them! They will find the way to those sunny lands in the south, but they will neither build houses nor make themselves homes unless they take their lasses with them."

"I believe you are right," said Raleigh. "See how the women look after them!" Little by little the men dropped off to their work, but the women stood patiently watching the ships as they sailed out to sea. There was no noise amongst them, but that patient, solemn gazing which tells of hearts aching; and when at last the ships crossed the bar and were but specks in the horizon, they still stood on, and only when the sun set and the sea grew dark did some of them turn their faces homeward.

"You will come and sup with me," said Sir Richard to his companions.

"Willingly," answered Raleigh, "for my part." And the others gave an equally ready assent.

They re-entered the town, and, going to the inn where their horses were stabled, they rode out to Sir Richard Grenville's ancestral home, and so that day ended.

They had cast their bread upon the waters, rich and poor alike; would they ever find it again?

. . . . . .

It was the evening of the third day when John Weston entered his house. The girls were sitting at the window spinning. Lisbeth was preparing the evening meal with Nancy, the house-wench.

"I expect they will be fine and hungry when they arrive," she was saying.

"And so you made that pile of dough-nuts, Mother, because you know Derward loves them," said Letty; and the words reached John Weston as he stood in the doorway. They hurt him, for he knew full well that for many a long day Derward would not cross that threshold.

"Father!" exclaimed Rosamund, catching sight of him. Straightway he entered the room.

"Alone, John?" said Lisbeth.

"Yea, alone," he answered. And he threw his cap upon the table.

"What have you done with the lad, John?" asked Lisbeth, coming close up to him.

"Done with the lad! What would you have me do with him?" he answered, almost fiercely.

There was a great silence. Then Rosamund crept up to him; her face was very white and her lips trembled:

"Where is Derward, Father?"

"That I cannot tell you, for I do not know," he answered; "but this much I can tell you, he has taken service with Mr. Walter Raleigh, and was to go with him to London, and thence to Plymouth, thence God only knows where! He has chosen for himself, I neither let nor hindered him."

"Oh, John!" cried Lisbeth, "and never to say farewell!"

"There was no time," said John. "It was either go or stay, and he chose to go. Nay, weep not, Rosamund," he said, as tears coursed down the young girl's face. "I would you should think of it as the will of God. He was not made for a life like ours, he would never have settled to it; and, well, if he had not gone of himself, I am minded he would have been fetched away, by—I know not whom. Now he is in the care of true Christian gentlemen. Walter Raleigh is his master, Francis Drake and Mr. Philip Sidney his sponsors. It is better thus. It is of no use grieving, it is of no use weeping. He has his fortune in his own hands, which it is right and just every man should have."

Rosamund wiped her tears away, and, looking straight up into John's face, she said: "Who would have fetched him away?"

"That I cannot tell you, for I do not know," answered John.

He paused, then added quickly: "I think I am justified in telling you something of your own condition. You are still little more than a girl, but you are wise for your age, and if I do not tell you, you will wonder why things are as they are, and it will torment you. It is worse to wonder than to know."

"Certainly it is," said Rosamund, "and little by little Derward and I have been awakening to the knowledge that we are not what we seem. Why do people hover about us? Derward has told me that more than once he has been accosted by men who have questioned him. Why did that gentleman come the other day and desire so urgently to have speech with him?" As she thus spoke, she stood before John, looking at him with her deep hazel eyes, in which there was a vast intelligence. Her figure was unformed and girlish, but there was a certain grace and dignity in it, which at this moment struck him as it had never done before. John did not at once answer, but moved towards the hearth, and, leaning against the wall, turned to his wife:

"You see," he said, "she had better know what is to be known."

"As you think right," answered Lisbeth.

Letty, leaving the window, came and stood by Rosamund, and, throwing her arms round her, she said: "Now, Father, tell us."

"There is not much to tell," said John. "Only that many years ago, though it seems but yesterday, a gentleman came to me and asked me if I would save two children, whose parents were in sore distress. 'You are a good man,' he said, 'and your wife is a good woman, they will be well cared for, of that I am assured. And you will be well paid for your services.' I answered that I would do no work for money unless I were assured it was honest work. 'The saving of two children's lives cannot be otherwise than honest', he answered me. 'Their parents are of noble birth, and

prisoners in the Tower of London. What fate is reserved for the children I cannot tell. But I would save them from the possibility of being murdered, as were the two little princes. It is for this I have come to you. You will be doing a good and a Christian work, and with the money given to you for their upbringing, you can pay the mortgage and stock your land with kine. If you are prudent, you will run no risks. Think of it, and give me your answer to-morrow.' I told your mother, and we both decided that we would accept the charge. A week later we went up to London, your mother and I, nominally to fetch my brother's children, but I had no brother. At a certain hostel near the Tower a man was waiting for me, and that same night we entered a barge and were rowed to the Tower within the water-gate, to the foot of some steps, and presently two men came, each carrying a child, and gave them to us. The boy had evidently been drugged, for he slept heavily, but you, Rosamund, being so much younger, were awake and fretted; and he who carried you must have been your father, for he spoke so tenderly to you, and hung over you so long, that Lisbeth's heart ached for him, and she said: 'Fear not, we will take good care of her'."

"Dear Mother," said Rosamund, "truly you have cared for me!" and she threw her arms round Lisbeth's neck and kissed her. "Go on, Father," she said, turning her head towards John.

"There is not much more to tell," answered John. "The other man put Derward in my arms, and said curtly to his companion, 'Hasten, my lord, or we shall be discovered'. And they ran up the steps and disappeared. That is all. We rowed up the river and brought you home. I had received a bag of gold, and with the help of that and other things I have grown to be a prosperous man; so even if we had not loved you as we do, out of common gratitude we must have cared for you."

"Ah, but I loved you from the first! It was not

bought love, Rosamund!" cried Lisbeth, with tears in her eyes.

"As if I did not know it!" answered Rosamund. There was a softness in her voice and face. "Why, you have been more tender over me than over Letty. The best morsels have ever been mine, the warmest place in the ingle corner."

Having thus delivered himself, John threw himself into a chair. "There, that is all, but because I misdoubt me he has enemies, I am glad that Derward should be with honest men, and for the time being, at least, out of England. Whoever he be, it is evidently known that he lives, and *that* is his danger and *your* safety. If you be the children of some high personage, as I wist you are, as long as Derward is alive you are safe; he is the heir. But, mark me, if he disappears, they will seek to lay hold on you."

"But they shall not touch her," said Letty. "Where she goes, I will go."

"Do you not know the name of the man who first came to you, Father?" said Rosamund, still using the paternal name.

"I do," answered John Weston, "but I cannot tell it you, because I have an oath that I would keep it secret."

He sat up in his chair, and, taking hold of Rosamund's hands, said: "I have told you this to give you rest, so that you should feel that Derward is better and safer abroad than at home. Promise me you will not let the matter trouble your life. If your father and mother be alive, they will know where to find you, and if they do not seek you, it is because they cannot do so with any safety to you or to themselves."

"I am content," said Rosamund, "and I thank you. I have but one desire, to remain in this dear home. No other place in the world would be as sweet, nay not a queen's palace. What can I desire that I have not? I will abide with you always, unless duty calls me hence. Now, Letty, we will lay the supper-table. Nancy, Nancy!"

and the wench came running in and made a great clatter with the pewter plates as she placed them on the table.

From that day forth life in the farmhouse was resumed as if there had been no break. When the village folk asked where Derward was, they were answered that he had been bitten with the passion of the day, to see new lands, to travel across the seas, and so had let himself out to Mr. Walter Raleigh and was by this time well on his way across the ocean. Letty and Rosamund went and came about their daily work, missing him perchance, but rarely showing it. The one who grumbled most was Williams. He had been devoted to Derward, and though he gained by his departure, seeing that he was made bailiff and had a larger wage, he grumbled still. "It was a sin," he said, "to throw away so fair a life."

"How do you know it is thrown away?" said John Weston. "Get about your business and leave the lad to God's good care."

So the matter ended.

CHAPTER VIII

A NEW FRIEND

TWO vessels were slowly sailing along the coast of what we now call North Carolina, but it was then No Man's Land. The decks were crowded with men, who seemed not to have suffered in the least from the long voyage, and their faces betokened gladness at the success of their journey, and their wonderment as they approached the land. The fragrance was as if they had been in the midst of the most delicate garden, abounding with all kinds of odoriferous flowers. It was not an easy coast upon which to land, and so with this paradise before them they sailed on for a distance of 120 miles, in search of a convenient harbour. They were fortunate, because it was the month of July, the seas tranquil, the skies clear; no storms were gathering, only light breezes filled their sails; at other periods of the year these shores could not be approached by large fleets for the hurricanes which swept through the air, and against which the coast offered no secure harbours or roadsteads.

The two English commanders, Amidas and Barlow, congratulated each other; they had not lost a man, they had not had a mishap since they sailed out of Plymouth Sound. They were enraptured with the beauty of the ocean, glistening beneath a clear sky, its waters well-nigh unruffled, gemmed with islands, which lay like jewels on the waters; and as they looked landwards, they beheld a wealth of vegetation such as they had never dreamt of. Trees of portentous size, around which clambered luxuriant vines, tossing themselves from one great cedar-tree to another. Grapes were plentiful on every little shrub, growing down to the very edges of the

ocean, which dashed its summer sprays upon the clusters. The tendrils grew so closely together that no light could penetrate through them, not even the rays of a July sun. Over and above it all there arose a sweet warbling —the forest was filled with birds. No marvel if they said one to the other: "This is Canaan, here we will land!" And so they entered the first haven which was practicable, and took possession of the land in the name of Queen Elizabeth. Then they gave thanks to God for their good journey and their safe arrival.

The place where they thus landed was on the island of Roanoke, and to their surprise they were met by a tribe of savages, who received them with a simple faith, without even so much as questioning their right of landing. How could the inhabitants be otherwise than gentle in such a lovely country? The lives they led were simply ideal, the lust of gold had not as yet entered their souls. As these Englishmen looked at them they marvelled; it seemed to them as if they had entered Eden. The labour of the natives was of the lightest — to tend the flowers and the fruits which sprang up of their own accord. All they had to do was to guard against a short period of cold, and to gather in such food as the earth spontaneously produced. They were governed by a king whose name was Granganimeo, who now spread out, for these unexpected guests, a feast, which in its simplicity and plentifulness was truly Arcadian. Such was the surface, but after a few days, or maybe a longer period, they discovered that in this paradise the serpent lurked; that these gentle savages, these guileless men, were cruel and bloody. They had no sense of honour, no thought for others, loving but themselves; they were crafty and base, would feed their enemies as if they had been their friends, and in the midst of a festival they would slay them. And they had enemies. Pointing to the distant land, they gave the English to understand that other tribes lived in the forest, with whom they were at war perpetually, but their wives and children lived upon the

island of Roanoke in peace. They even besought the English to join them, but they gave the savages to understand that they had come for peace, not war. "For," as Amidas said, "they may be friends to-day and enemies to-morrow; we must be wary."

Raleigh had impressed upon them the necessity of keeping the peace, so they were satisfied to examine the coast, and to gather by enquiries from the Indians the habits and customs of the different tribes. The most daring of the adventurers were the two youngest, John Rolfe and Derward Weston. More than once they were reprimanded by their commanders for wandering too far with the savages into the interior of the country. But nothing could restrain them, and they struck up a great friendship with Wingina, the chieftain's son, who would scarcely leave them, and whose curiosity was unbounded, especially concerning the arquebuses which they carried. One day the three were together in the forest, and he made them understand that he desired to know to what use they put these arquebuses. So Rolfe, placing his gun upon his shoulder, fired. And lo! whole flocks of birds arose in the air, uttering a cry which was almost human in its piercing shrillness, and seemed as if a whole army of men had shrieked together. Some of the birds fluttered down to their feet, dead; terrified, Wingina threw himself on the ground, hiding his face in the green sward. It was the first shot fired in the New World.

Satisfied probably by what they considered their great success, the two commanders had not the courage or the activity to push forward or in any way to establish themselves in the country. They explored Roanoke Island and the surrounding neighbourhood; beyond they did not go, but decided, that having gained so much information they would return at once to England and report.

"It would be as well for us," said Amidas, "to try and persuade two or three natives to return with us. Imagine what our triumph would be then, for no one

will think but that we have penetrated into the heart of the country." This idea was not as easy to carry out as they imagined; for friendly as the natives appeared, they were suspicious. How could it be otherwise, when they did not even know of the existence of other lands?

Through Rolfe and Derward they succeeded in making the young chieftain Wingina understand their desire. And he communicated it to his father, the chief, and king of the tribe. Wingina declared that he was willing himself to follow the strangers. But this could not possibly be. He was to succeed his father as chief, who was an old man and might not live long. But he had two friends, Manteo and Wanchese, natives of the wilderness, and it was agreed that if the English would leave two of their men on the island, these two should accompany the expedition back to Europe.

"What say you, John?" said Derward. "I am ready to remain, and you always said you never meant to return."

"Neither do I," said John. "I have no ties in England, and I have no fear of these men. Let us offer ourselves as hostages!" and he laughed.

"I am willing," answered Derward. And, going to the commanders, they made their offer, which was readily accepted. A few days later, the two vessels, with Manteo and Wanchese on board, set sail to England.

Derward entrusted one of the sailors with a letter to Rosamund:

"Dear sister," he wrote, "I had no time before leaving to bid you farewell, but you must not therefore think I am indifferent. I have always had a great longing to travel, as you know, and so far this voyage has been but child's play, and entirely delightful. This country is marvellous; the rivers are full of fish, fruits and vegetables grow of their own accord. The savages are gentle, polite, and friendly. Therefore I and my friend John Rolfe have decided to remain here, until the next expedition comes out. We have no fear, and it is

important that in England you should have some idea of what the natives are like. Therefore we send two over, and we remain as hostages, my friend Rolfe and myself. Greet the father, mother, and Letty for me.

"Your brother,

"DERWARD WESTON."

When the vessels were well out of sight, the two friends walked by the sea-shore and took counsel together. As usual Wingina was strolling beside them; he was like a faithful dog, and never left them by night or by day. His wife prepared their meals, which were of the simplest. There were no animals on the land of any sort save birds, which they trapped. Fish abounded in the rivers, and were sometimes cooked after a primitive fashion on stones, but the savages more frequently eat them raw. For bread they had a sort of maize cake, their drink was water. They had but to stretch out their hands for fruits and vegetables. It remained with the Europeans to poison their bodies and to slay them with the strong drinks which they brought into the country.

"We have decided," said Rolfe, "to remain here, there is no going back now, therefore we will build for ourselves a wigwam similar to the natives."

"And in every way we will imitate their mode of life," said Derward.

They made this decision known to their friend Wingina, who forthwith set up a war-dance. Then, gathering together a party of Indians, they went straight into the forest, cut down trees, stripped them of their bark, and, planting the bare poles close together, formed a roof by bending the boughs and interlacing them. Then they proceeded to cover the whole with the bark. The work was done with marvellous rapidity, and before night they had a good shelter provided for them. From that day forth they adopted the dress and habits of the tribe. They found the clothes they had

landed in would not stand the wear and tear of forest life, so they made mantles and aprons out of deer-skins, which protected them from the rain and sunshine, and the slight cold which in the early autumn began to set in.

There were no minerals used in the country, everything was made of wood; the weapons were wooden swords, and bows of witch-hazel and arrows of reeds. The armour consisted of targets of bark, and sticks wickered together with thread. Thus accoutred they went and came, leading a primitive existence, as only men so young, and in whom the physical life predominated, could do. They had no care for the morrow—each day succeeded the other with some new simple joy. The women served them and were gentle, supplying their needs, making and mending for them after their fashion. They possessed nothing and yet they lacked for nothing. All the cares and narrowing needs of civilized life seemed to have dropped away from them.

Rolfe was a man of strong religious feelings; he had been nurtured in the early faith of the Reformation, which did away with the necessity of all outward signs and ceremonies, and now more than ever he experienced the futility of them. He had an old psalter and an illuminated missal which had come down to him from his mother; these sufficed him and his companion. They would go out in the forest together, and, lying under the trees in the deep moss, sing aloud the words of the great Psalmist, and they were content.

"At least we will remain Christian men," he said to Derward. The tribe to which they had affiliated themselves were not wholly ignorant of a religion. They had strange ceremonies, a marvellous credulity, a sort of fetishism, with a vague idea of the unity of the Divine Power. They believed also in an existence after death, and a future judgment.

Derward had a copy of one of the first Bibles printed in England. It had been found in his possession, fastened round his body, with his little hands laid upon it, when he was delivered into John Weston's care,

and it had been a habit with him from childhood to keep it about his person. He was no scholar himself, and with difficulty could read, but Rosamund would on the Sabbath-days sit under the great oak, in the adjoining field, and read to him and Letty, and other village children would often join them. Thus much of its contents was familiar to him, and, with his own knowledge and with Rolfe's help, the sacred book became to them what it should be to us all—their Law-giver. Anything they needed they sought and found there, because it is a marvellous thing, but nevertheless wholly true, that there is no knowledge, no daily lesson, no need for body or soul which we cannot find in that Divine Book, as it has come down to us from generation to generation. They possessed no other teacher, so by degrees their minds became impregnated with its wisdom and its truth, as it is well-nigh impossible should be the case to-day, because of the many and various influences of the literature of the present time. They never questioned, they believed. And thus the purity of the Gospel entered into their hearts, and sin had no place in the lives of these two men.

As the days and weeks went by, they seemed to breathe an atmosphere of peace and gladness. They bathed in the sea and their bodies became stronger; no animal food passed their lips, and they did not need it. Daily they walked many miles, with their bows and arrows and their fishing-tackle over their shoulders. Thus they grew with remarkable rapidity into the stature of men. Their frames filled out, they wrestled, they ran, they jumped; they knew no greater joy than to dance with the Indians, and they learnt their language with marvellous quickness. When they came back from their tramps they threw themselves into the long grass and laughed and made sport together, and the Indians loved them. In after-years they remembered these days, as we remember the days of our youth. They were troubled by no regrets, there were no shadows, it was all light, each day stood forth bathed

in sunshine. During this period they almost lost the count of days, and would have done so quite, if Derward had not instituted the cutting of notches in a tree, close by their wigwam. Every day a notch was cut, and on the Sabbath-day they left a space marked by a cross. Then they began again.

One event only marked this period of their lives, and that was the death of the Indian king Granganimeo. This made a vast movement in the village, for the funeral ceremonies were of great importance. It were too long to tell of what they consisted, and might possibly weary our readers.

The winter passed and the spring came before any news from Europe reached the exiles. One morning, on the horizon, they saw vessels approaching the shores, and at last a fleet of seven ships reached the Roanoke. Almost the first to land were Manteo and Wanchese. Naturally, Derward and Rolfe ran down to the shore with some of their own especial Indian friends to welcome the new-comers, and they learnt that it was no longer a voyage of discovery which had arrived, but emigrant ships possessing everything necessary to establish an agricultural state.

This expedition was under command of Sir Richard Grenville; he had promised Raleigh that he would send one out, and he had kept his word. Seeing the two young Englishmen standing with the natives, he called to them: "Are you the two men who remained behind with the last expedition?"

"We are," said Rolfe, coming forward.

"And which of you may happen to be Derward Weston?" he asked, shaking hands with Rolfe.

"I am," said Derward, joining his friend.

"Well, sir," said Sir Richard, "you have been particularly commended to my notice. Sir Walter Raleigh, my friend, has been anxious concerning you, and was vexed that Barlow should have left you behind. But you seem by no means to have suffered."

"We have not suffered at all," answered Derward.

"The natives have taken good care of us; we have nothing to complain of."

"I am glad to hear that such is the case," said Sir Richard. "We shall depend upon you as our guides and interpreters."

"We will serve you to our utmost," answered Derward.

"Do you know the country?" asked Sir Richard; "have you travelled?"

"We have not been above fifty miles in the interior as yet, because all the tribes are not friendly the one with the other, and we remained with Wingina, who is the chief of the tribe in these parts."

"Well, I propose going much farther inland," said Sir Richard, "and I trust we shall find the natives complaisant. At all events we have brought Manteo back, and he is devoted to us."

"I foresee no difficulties," said Rolfe, "if only you will leave the natives their freedom, and not attempt to subjugate them."

"Of course we will do our best, but they must know that we intend to be the masters. Is it not so, Lane?"

"Certainly it is, sir. Now the first question is how to house our people."

"I will show you our wigwam," said Derward, "in a few days you can all be under cover; and in the meantime, Sir Richard, Rolfe and myself will be happy to give you up our place, and we will go to our friends."

With a certain pride they showed their rude hut, which by degrees had attained to the appearance almost of a home.

"It is charming, quite charming!" said Sir Richard; "and I think we must make you our chief carpenter, Master Rolfe."

"Well, the first thing will be to hew down the trees," said Rolfe; and without more ado they set about the work. It prospered so well that in two or three days a village had arisen where before there had been but a few huts.

Rolfe and Derward became very popular with the emigrants. Manteo also was of great assistance to them, and it appeared as if all things were going well. Having housed his people and provided for their immediate needs, Sir Richard and Lane determined to go farther inland. They took with them John Rolfe and Derward Weston, with the native Manteo; in all there were about a dozen men. With these they determined to explore the coast, gathering samples of plants; and the savages, seeing their humour, told them that farther up, the River Roanoke gushed through a rock and dashed into a mighty sea beyond. They assured them that this country abounded with gold. They told of a city the walls of which were described as glittering with pearls. With these inducements, it was natural that they should go forth in high spirits; the greed of gold was the bane of all these early explorers.

And so it was in this case. The Indians began to feel, at least some of the tribes did, that a hostile influence had entered their land. Superstitious as the natives were, they looked upon these strangers as creatures of a different creation. There were no women amongst them, therefore they concluded that they were not born of women, and consequently were not mortal, but were men of an older generation risen to Immortality. Their prophets and their wise men were still more strongly prejudiced against them. They prophesied that there were more English yet to come, who would kill them and take their place. The use of firearms, which many of them saw for the first time, terrified them. Whenever they were sick, they attributed it to wounds from invisible bullets, discharged by unseen agents with whom the air was supposed to be peopled.

Living amongst them intimately, as Derward and Rolfe had lived, and being well acquainted with their language, Rolfe and Derward became aware of all this, and they did their very utmost to overcome their fears. They showed them the bullets, they showed them the gunpowder, and they charged their arquebuses before

them. But it was of no avail, fear had the mastery over them. And when they saw the seven ships, even Wingina was alarmed and said: "Have they come to take our land from us?"

"Surely," Rolfe had answered, "there is room for us all."

To get rid of the English became an absorbing idea amongst certain tribes of Indians. It was for this reason that they invented the story of "the city of pearls and gold". They had already learnt the foreigners' weak point.

So it was with considerable delight that the tribe saw the departure of Sir Richard Grenville, but it was with equal signs of annoyance that they took leave of Derward and Rolfe. They brought them gifts of fruit and maize cakes, repeating more than once to them, "Friends, friends!" The two young men responded, shaking them by the hand, as they had taught them was the custom in England. Wingina even fell upon their necks and besought them to remain with him, giving them to understand that there might be danger for them if they went on this expedition. Wingina had taken an intense dislike to Sir Richard Grenville, who, after his English rough fashion, spoke to the natives as if they were dogs. He was a man accustomed to command, rough but genial. By his own men he was feared, for they knew well that his passions ofttimes carried him away to do deeds and acts for which he was afterwards sorry.

The band of explorers departed, full of energy, determined to find such samples of the wealth of the country as would prove to those at home that the land was worth possessing.

CHAPTER IX

AMONG THE INDIANS

FOR the first couple of days all went well. They came to several Indian towns within a short distance of each other, and were well received, in a great measure owing to the presence of Manteo, Rolfe, and Derward. They found the country so beautiful and so well cultivated, that we read in an old day-book of Sir Richard Grenville's that he was enthusiastic in his admiration of the land. He wrote thus: "It is the goodliest soil under the cope of Heaven"; "the most pleasing country in the world"; "the country is very well peopled and towned, though savagely". "The climate is so wholesome that we have not had one sick man since we touched the land. If Virginia had but horses and kine and were inhabited with English, no realm in Christendom were comparable to it."

But both he and his men hated the savages. One day as they were walking together Derward remarked to Rolfe: "I doubt whether we shall get scot free from this expedition. Both Sir Richard and his men seem to think that the savages are no better than dogs in our own country. You know, Rolfe, that they are highly susceptible, and this way of treating them wounds them to the quick. If Sir Richard by some mischance flies into one of his passions it will lead to great mischief."

"I quite agree with you," said Rolfe, "and therefore I try my utmost to keep out in the open, away from the towns and villages. I have spoken to Manteo about it, and he agrees with me. But when Sir Richard insists upon something, there is no dissuading him."

That same evening they came to a somewhat large

village and determined to put up for the night there. As usual the natives gave them all they needed, but never having seen Englishmen before, they crowded round them while they were taking their meal, and watched with curiosity their manner of eating.

The English had brought a few utensils with them, such as knives and drinking-horns; and Sir Richard had a finely-embossed silver cup without which he never travelled—it was an heirloom, and he prized it greatly. When the savages saw it, they shouted and clapped their hands. The chief of the village more especially admired it, and tried to examine it.

"Hands off!" said Sir Richard harshly. Though he did not understand the words, the chief saw the forbidding action, and, frowning, retired into his own wigwam, which lay at some distance outside the encampment. When the meal was finished, the travellers lay down to rest. Derward was awakened out of his sleep by hearing a voice whispering something in his ear. He sat up, and by the light of the moon saw Manteo.

"What is the matter?" he asked.

"The chief is angry, very angry," he said. "There will be trouble, great trouble, you will see."

"About that cup?" said Derward.

"Yes, about that cup," answered Manteo. "If the great English chief had but let him touch it, he would have been satisfied. 'Does he think I will rob my own guest?' the Indian chief asks."

"I suspected as much," said Derward, "but there is nothing to be done. If I were to hint to Sir Richard that there is possible danger, he would as likely as not do some desperate deed which would set the land on fire. We must run the risk. Lie down beside me, Manteo, and if we hear any sound it will be time enough to act."

When day dawned Derward found that Manteo had left his side, and when they were ready to start he had not yet returned. He attached no very great importance to this, for Manteo often went on in front. They were

to start early that morning, and were soon on the road. Two or three hours later they stopped to partake of their first meal, beside the river, with the great trees of the forest overshadowing them. Suddenly there was an outcry. Sir Richard had opened a sack, which he always carried about his person, and in which he kept that identical silver cup—his gold was in it, and everything he possessed of any value. He opened it to take out the cup, and drink of the river which ran close beside them. The cup was gone! The jewels and money remained intact, but that which he most prized was missing! Up he started, his usually rubicund face crimson with anger, oaths pouring from his lips, for in those days English gentlemen were by no means chary of the words they used. The men gathered round him.

"What is it, what is it?" asked Derward; but before he asked he knew.

"I will kill every one of them," said Sir Richard; "they may as well know that Englishmen are not to be mocked at, and that their goods are to be respected. I saw it in his eyes last night, he would have taken it from me then."

"No, sir, I do not think he would," said Derward boldly. "They are like ignorant children, curious, but not thieves. If you had let him look at it, and examine it, he would have returned it to you, satisfied. He saw you distrusted him, and therefore he has taken his revenge."

"Well then, he may pay for it," said Sir Richard. "Set fire to the village, and destroy every blade of corn in the neighbourhood."

"You will not do that, sir," said Rolfe, coming forward. "The Indians are our friends now; if you treat them after this fashion you will make enemies of them, and the land will not hold us. We are as one man to a thousand."

"Ha! but we are Englishmen!" said Grenville; and he took up his arquebus and fired three times in the air. Instantly there was a great fluttering of birds and

screams from the forest trees. The savages came rushing out of their wigwams, which lay but a short distance from the English encampment.

"Tell them," said Grenville, "that if my cup is not brought to me within a quarter of an hour I shall fire the place."

"Then, sir," said Derward boldly, "your blood will be on your own head. We have never touched a savage, we have never injured one, and they trust us. Mr. Raleigh warned us against doing so."

"How dare you! I believe you are in league with these savages."

Proudly Derward drew himself up, and looked Sir Richard full in the face. His was a noble figure and a noble countenance.

"You may think what you like, sir, but this much I will tell you—" he answered.

Sir Richard Grenville's anger overcame his natural sense of justice.

"This is mutiny," he said. "Bind him, he is my prisoner."

Without making any attempt to escape Derward stood. Rolfe stepped forward, but Derward signed to him to keep back, and in the Indian language gave him to understand that he must remain free. "Go and warn the tribe," he said. As the last words were uttered, two sailors caught hold of him, bound him hand and foot, and threw him on the ground.

At the sight of this outrage Lane stepped up to Sir Richard's side. "Sir," he said, "I think you are mistaken. Derward Weston is an honourable youth." And, speaking lower, he added: "You know who recommended him to you, and his reasons for so doing."

"I care nothing about such follies," said Sir Richard. "Let him lie there, and if I fire the place he may burn with it."

Rolfe heard the words and sprang forward, but Derward shouted to him: "Hold, Rolfe, Manteo is on the scent!"

Sir Grenville was pacing like an angry lion up and down the banks of the river, Lane was beside him.

"I tell you I slept with it under my head; how then could he get it? He is a devil, the whole race is infernal, and if we are to come and live in the land they must be exterminated." A circle of Indians had formed round the camp. Fortunately they did not understand more than the fact that the Englishman had lost something. Rolfe went up to them and told them what had happened, and asked them:

"Do any of you know anything concerning this cup?"

They looked at one another. "The chief was angry, very angry, he would be revenged," they said.

"I feared as much," answered Rolfe.

Then, pointing to Derward, he said: "You see he is bound and a prisoner, because he has defended you. You will not let him die?"

The men looked at each other, and then in their own language answered: "We will go through fire for him, he is our friend."

"Tell the men to gather their belongings together and be ready to march," said Sir Richard, still storming up and down.

"What are we to do with the prisoner?" asked Lane.

"Let him lie where he is," answered Sir Richard.

"Sir," said Rolfe, approaching, "Manteo is not with us. He also has disappeared, and I was assured by the natives that he is gone in search of their chief, to persuade him to reveal to him where he has hidden the cup."

"I have told you," said Sir Richard, "that if it is not here before we start, I fire the village."

Rolfe shrugged his shoulders and turned away.

"Mark me," he said to Lane, "if he does carry out his threat we shall all live to repent it. They are our friends now, they will be our enemies for ever; the savages never forgive."

He walked over to where Derward lay. "Well, old fellow," he said, "we are in for it now, but if the

worst comes to the worst I don't think harm will befall you. The natives are on your side, they think you are suffering for them."

"In a certain way I am. Shall you follow Sir Richard?"

"Not a step farther than I need," answered Rolfe. "He is accustomed to display these tempers, but it will not answer with the natives."

"I wonder where Manteo is! He slept by me till morning, and when he disappeared, or why, I cannot tell," said Derward.

"He will come back with the cup, I am pretty sure of that," said Rolfe.

"March!" shouted Sir Richard. At the same time he strode towards Rolfe. "Go on in front, sir," he said, addressing him.

"Listen, Sir Richard," said the young man. "Either you set my friend free, or I remain with him. I shall not follow you."

"Mutiny again!" said Sir Richard, turning crimson. Rolfe looked him steadily in the face.

"This is a lawless land, sir," he said, "but if you murder us in cold blood there are those in England who will know it before long. I dare you to do it."

Sir Richard raised his arquebus to his shoulder, Rolfe did not move. Lane, who was a few steps behind, came up, saying, "Stop, sir, for God's sake stop!"

"What would you have me do with them? they have mutinied."

"We have not mutinied, for we are not your servants. My friend and myself are free adventurers, and we come and go when we will. Go with your own men, but leave us alone," said Rolfe.

"I shall report you to the home Government," said Sir Richard.

"You are welcome to do so," answered Rolfe; "we have done what we could for you. You do not know the natives, and you are dealing wrongly with them. We have built you wigwams, we are willing to show

you what we know of the land; but you will not heed us, and evil will come of it. Unbind my friend, and we will return to Roanoke with no more ado. Manteo will probably join you before long, and he will serve you as guide."

Angered beyond measure at the firmness of this mere lad, Sir Richard turned away, signing to the two sailors who had been on guard over Derward to follow him. Lane once more attempted to argue with Sir Richard. He reminded him that they did not know their way, and would now have to go through an enemy's instead of a friendly country.

"I tell you, Lane," answered Sir Richard, "we must show our power; if we suffer them to rob us, they will presently do worse. I will fire the village, and thus they will learn that Englishmen are not to be trifled with or molested. They are little more than animals, as such we must treat them." Gathering his men together, he marched through the little village. The natives had turned out of their wigwams, and stood sullenly watching them.

Taking his knife out of his pocket, Rolfe cut the ropes which bound Derward. "We will go back together," he said, "and let that man do his worst."

Derward sprang up from the ground. "Rolfe, look at those men!" he exclaimed, and pointed to the savages. "If Sir Richard molests them, our chance of remaining in this country and peopling it is gone for ever; there will be bloodshed, not for one day or two, but for many years. They will cease to trust us." Even as he spoke a flame sprang up at the farther end of the village, then another, and another. In less time than it takes to tell, tongues of fire were passing from one wigwam to another.

The savages rose with a shriek, the women and children ran hither and thither. There was the river flowing, they knew it was of no use, but they had sense enough to fly into the forest and cut down the trees as rapidly as they could, clearing a space all round. Rolfe

and Derward were amongst them, helping them with their greater knowledge, and they obeyed them like children. "Bad man! Bad man!" shouted the natives, shaking their clubs in the direction Sir Richard had taken. It was an awful scene, the women and children fled in every direction. The corn, which was already of a good height, and was to serve for their winter's store, was burnt to the ground, nothing remained. Had they not been so occupied in keeping down the fire the natives would certainly have given Sir Richard chase, but they could not. In less than an hour the whole village had disappeared, and there was nothing left but smouldering ashes.

The explorers had hardly gone three miles when they saw a man running towards them, and Manteo came in sight.

"What have you done, sir, what have you done?" he said, pointing to the village.

"Burnt it down, burnt it to the ground, to teach your people to respect our property."

Manteo might well have said "Do you respect ours, do you not take all you need?" but he was only a savage, and not quick at retort. Living in the midst of the white people, he had learned to believe them of a superior race, possessed of powers which *they* could neither make use of nor understand.

At the sight of the burning village his heart failed him. Throwing up his arms, he cried after the Indian fashion, and in the Indian language: "Alas! alas! there will be no longer peace in the land, the Indian will revenge himself upon the white man, and there will be war! Where are the Englishmen, our friends?" he asked.

"They have remained behind," said Lane, "but you must stay with us as our guide."

"And all that for this!" said Manteo, as he unwound a cloth and held up the lost cup. "If you had only waited, my lord, but a short time longer, you would have been satisfied. The chief only desired to show you

that he could satisfy himself if he chose. He crawled into your wigwam that night and took it from beside you, and you never heard him. I had lain down beside my English friend, Derry-Derry. I heard a sound, rose, and saw a figure leaving the encampment. I followed him, and we ran a great race together, but he outran me—my limbs got stiff in your country. He stopped at Wingina's wigwam, and the chief, when I came up, was persuading him to return the cup to you. This he agreed to do, and I have run all the way back to bring it you—for what?" Pointing to the burning village, he threw the cup on the ground in his grief. "It is ill luck, ill luck, and the people will not love you! An Indian never forgets, and never forgives!"

Manteo hesitated. After a pause, he said: "You had better turn back."

"Turn back!" exclaimed Sir Richard. "Why should we, when wealth lies before us?"

"You have never seen it, and neither have I," said Manteo. "And when you have eaten your provisions, you will find no more. You have made enemies for yourself, no Indian will give you food. You have burnt their corn, what will they do this winter?"

"We shall not need to trouble them, we have plenty," said Lane. "With care we can eke it out for several weeks."

"But I do not know the country," answered Manteo, 'they are not my people."

"Nevertheless you must go forward with us," said Sir Richard.

The Indian paused, thought for a few minutes, then he answered:

"If I must, I must, you English always have your own way;" and as if he had quite given up the idea of leaving them, he marched forward. But it was easy to see that he was disturbed in his mind. The truth was, that he feared an attack from the Indians. He knew how cunning they were, and how the destruction of their property would rankle in their minds. He was

also fearful concerning Rolfe and Derward. But as to arguing with Sir Richard, that he also knew was hopeless. The flames of the burning village were gradually subsiding, and as they marched forward he took careful note of the way they went, leaving, as the Indians always do, traces of their passage—a mark upon a tree, a broken branch, or some such sign, done so stealthily that his companions did not perceive it.

They marched all day through wild scenes, sometimes in deep valleys, then across ravines. There was no path in this primeval land, they had to make their way as best they could, ofttimes wading through deep waters, but always keeping as far as possible near the River Roanoke, because it was along its banks that the savages had told them they would find gold. If they could reach the Pacific Ocean it would be indeed a discovery worth returning to England with. And so they pushed forward. At length darkness began to fall, and the density of the forest obliged them to stop for the night. They had no huts here, and no tents with them. But the undergrowth of grass was so luxuriant, and the night air so balmy, that after having partaken of a good meal from the provisions they had brought with them they lay down to sleep. They had nothing to fear from wild animals, as there were none; there were only savages, who, armed as they were, did not alarm them. When they awoke in the morning they called for Manteo; but no Manteo was to be found, he had disappeared, and left no trace behind him. A handful of men alone, in a wild country, with no guide, seemed a hopeless state of things, and Sir Richard proposed returning. But to this Lane and several of his followers absolutely refused their consent. They had come thus far, and they would go farther. If there was gold to be found, they would find it. "Then you must go on alone," said Sir Richard; "let those who will follow me back, hold up their hands. You may be weeks on the road," he continued. "I have to unload my ships for the colonists, then I will sail back to England. If you

can gather wealth out here, well and good, but I know of a Spanish ship which I think will be lying across my road. It is a prize worth taking, because of its cargo, and will assure me, with the information I have gained of this country, a hearty welcome from Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth."

So they parted company, Lane and a dozen men deciding to continue their way up the river until they should come to the city of pearls with the walls of gold. Sir Richard turned his face homewards.

CHAPTER X

POCAHONTAS

WHEN Derward and Rolfe saw the burning village, and the angry faces of the men around them, they knew that their lives were no longer in their own keeping.

"We are in for it this time old fellow," said Rolfe. "We can only do our best to show them that it is not our fault."

And they did work with a will. Picking up the children, and carrying them beyond the flames, helping the women with their few household possessions, doing everything in their power to stay the mischief. And the savages were quick to recognize it; but still their anger was very bitter against the white-skins, and when, after a couple of hours, they looked upon their devastated homes, a certain number of them gathered together in council, and decided that if the White Chief could thus punish them because one of their number had carried off a worthless drinking-vessel, they too must be revenged, and the two white men must die. There was no use in their remaining now and rebuilding the old hamlets; they would go farther inland, and join the tribe of the Mohawks, whose chieftain, Powhattan, was a great man.

In a few hours they were ready to start, and, nothing loth, feeling that it was their only chance of safety, Rolfe and Derward followed them.

"We must make the best of a bad business," said Rolfe. "If we stay here Sir Richard may lay his hands upon us, load us with irons, put us on his ships, and take us to England. There the chances are we shall be hanged for mutiny."

"Which would be worse than being killed by the savages," said Derward. "Well, old fellow, we'll face it out."

And, apparently fearlessly, they went cheerfully on their way. After a time they perceived that there were two parties in the camp, one for and one against them; this was a matter of considerable satisfaction to them both. When opportunity offered, they were both careful to abuse their own countrymen roundly. "Bad man," said Derward, "they not know the Indians," and so forth. They were seemingly allowed perfect freedom, but by this time they both knew the natives too well not to feel sure that if they attempted to escape they would be brought back and killed on the spot.

"Where are we going?" asked Derward of one of the natives.

"To the great chief, Powhattan," he answered, adding, "He will judge you. He will say live or die!" Then he made a rapid movement round his head, which Derward had learnt to know meant scalping. When they stopped towards evening, and built a great fire to roast their corn and to drive away the mists which gathered up from the river, the two Englishmen sat down with them. Derward, happening to have upon his person a compass which had been given to him by one of the new emigrants, took it out and began explaining its uses to the head men. Their interest was marvellous. They asked him many questions, and Derward explained it to them in their own tongue, and he told them many other things besides. He also showed them his Bible, which, as we have said, he always carried about with him. It was not that either he or Rolfe had been exceptionally religious lads; they had been much like other boys, believing because they had been brought up to believe, and religion was part of their being, consequent on being born and bred in a Christian country. Now for the first time there awoke in Rolfe a certain feeling that maybe he had been sent among these savages for no other purpose than to teach them the

gospel truths, which had come naturally to him, but to them were unknown mysteries; he gave them to understand that this book was the Word of the Great God, of whose existence they knew. When he had expounded to them the very first elements of Christian truth, there came to some of them a great feeling of reverence. They kissed the Bible with awe as it lay open in Derward's hand. It is an inexplicable fact that these heathens, as we call them, had a vast amount of religious feeling; they worshipped, they loved, they feared that Unknown God whom the Athenians had worshipped, with ignorance equal to their own.

Having thus interested and amused the savages for some time, Rolfe and Derward wrapped themselves in their rugs and were soon fast asleep. The Indians looked at them with astonishment. They had been told that they were being taken to be killed, yet they made no noise—they did not cry out, they did not weep, they slept!

And the savages in their turn sat down close beside them, drew their skins over their heads, folded their hands on their knees, and slept also.

Before the dawn of day Derward was awake. He touched Rolfe, and in a low voice with a certain tone of pleasantry said:

"I say, old fellow, we are going like lambs to the slaughter. How do you feel?"

"Well," said Rolfe, "I can't quite explain it. I don't believe we shall be slaughtered if we keep quiet, but I think if we made an attempt to escape we should have no chance of life. There is nothing for it but to put on a bold face, keep them well amused, and make ourselves helpful. By this means we shall gain time, and I am fairly sure Manteo will make his way back to Roanoke, and by some means come to our help."

"Then we will think nothing more about it, but take the days as they come," said Derward; "we can but die once. I have got no one but Rosamund who needs me, and I am not sure that she does overmuch."

"I don't think anyone is much missed in this world," said Rolfe; "we are but atoms. I have neither father nor mother, as I told you, so I must take my chance."

Whilst they were speaking there was a certain movement in the camp.

"It is time we got up," said Rolfe. He rose and stretched himself. Instantly one of the savages came forward, frowning. Quite pleasantly, with a smile on his young face, Derward said:

"Did you think that we were going to run away? We have nowhere to run to, you are our best friends."

"We shall kill you," said the man.

Derward shrugged his shoulders. "We cannot help that," he answered; "if we go back to the English they will kill us. It does not matter to us who does the deed. You are angry with us for nothing. We helped to save your goods and your wives and children, and now you would kill us."

This palaver, as they called it, seemed to quiet the native. He left them and joined his people, and then by signs they bade Rolfe and Derward come and eat with them, and were as friendly as friendly could be. As if to console them, one of their number patted Derward on the shoulders. "Powhattan great chief, perhaps he will not kill you."

"We will hope not," said Derward, laughing merrily. In his youth and strength, standing alive in this beautiful world, what should he know of death? The life blood coursed through his veins, he knew not what pain or sorrow meant, his whole being was full of sensate gladness. Rising to his feet he exclaimed:

"Rolfe, let us have a race."

"Better not," answered Rolfe, "they will think we are running away from them."

"I must do something, let us have a wrestling match, then."

"All right!" said Rolfe; "they will think we are quarreling;" and he laughed. Throwing off their skin covering they placed themselves in position, with clenched

hands and well-poised body. Rolfe was older than Derward and more fully developed, but he was not as athletic. Derward had often fought thus on the village green, and was by no means an inferior wrestler. So now they sprang upon each other, then they loosed their hold, retreated, and sprang again. And as they did this the natives were attracted to them, and formed a circle round them. It lasted for about five or six minutes, and then Derward threw Rolfe, and stood over him. The savages thought from his attitude that he was about to kill him, and in a second one had leapt from behind on Derward, and with a great show of strength lifted him in the air, and then dropped him. Up sprang Derward, and, holding out his hand to Rolfe, tried to show them it was a game, but they did not understand until they saw the two friends embrace each other. Then they patted and made much of them. They felt their arms, they nodded complacently to each other as they passed their hands over their bodies, plainly admiring the sinew and strength of the white men's limbs.

"We are like prize pigs," said Derward, with all the mischief of a boy. "I wonder whether they will eat us when they have killed us."

"Just as likely as not," answered Rolfe, "if we fall in with a cannibal tribe."

They could speak thus, but they did not realize the possibility of it coming true. All that day they travelled as they had done the day before. These savages had a wonderful power of endurance. After their morning meal they never stopped to do more than drink a gourd of water, and they always offered the same to the two white prisoners. They, unaccustomed to this lack of food, began toward evening to feel ravenous, but they were too proud to exhibit any weakness before these savages. At last, they came to a larger Indian town than they had as yet made acquaintance with. The wigwams were of considerable size, and far more numerous.

"Powhattan!" they cried, and they halted.

Two of their number went forward, taking Derward

and Rolfe with them. The town was open, but nevertheless after a fashion it was guarded. As they approached they were hailed by two savages carrying huge clubs, who saluted the new-comers, staring angrily at the white men, and giving utterance to words which meant, "Why do you bring white men here? we will not have them."

"Because of the wisdom of Powhattan," said the first guide. "A great misfortune has befallen us. A party of white men have burnt down our wigwams, and laid low our winter store of corn. These are our prisoners, and we have brought them to Powhattan."

"Good! good!" answered the Mohawks, and instantly they clashed their cymbals together, making a loud, shrill sound which broke on the stillness of the night. The sound evidently roused the inhabitants of the town, for they came running down, and as Rolfe and Derward were marched in the direction of Powhattan's wigwam, they crowded round them, shouting, dancing, and waving their clubs, till it seemed to Rolfe and his companion as if they were going to kill them on the spot. But they looked at each other and held their heads high. "No sign of fear," said Rolfe in a low voice. "Our lives would not be worth an hour's purchase, if they thought we were afraid of them."

And the Indians danced and shouted, and looked verily like devils let loose. They were well-nigh naked, and their hair was plaited in little tight tails, standing out from their heads, with wonderful feathers stuck in here and there. And so at last they reached the big wigwam where King Powhattan dwelt. As they did so a child came running out. A crimson rag wound round her body was her only clothing; she was about ten years old. Instantly the savages threw themseves on the ground.

"It is the princess!" they cried; and Derward and Rolfe bowed themselves also. She came close up to them and gazed curiously at them.

"White men! white men!" she said.

She was a curious little person, not at all of the savage type. Her skin was bronzed, she was naked to the waist, and her young limbs had but just lost the roundness of childhood. A gold band was fastened round her forehead, retaining the masses of straight black hair which fell over her shoulders. She had large dark eyes, full of expression, and though the lips were thick, they were by no means objectionable. She wore rows upon rows of beads round her neck and chest; her arms also were covered with bracelets of silver and gold, curiously cut; her feet were unshod, but her ankles were encircled with massive anklets of silver. Naturally she struck the young men as a strange figure, of which they had never seen the like. As they stood there, she walked round and round them, curiously examining them. She asked an old woman who was beside her what was going to be done with them; and she answered that there would be a great feast, and that the princes of other tribes would be invited to witness the death of these enemies of their country.

"Your father will judge them," said the old woman.

Both Derward and Rolfe understood what was said after a fashion, but not entirely, because every tribe had a different dialect. But the prospect which lay before them was decidedly not reassuring. An idea struck Derward. He put his hand into his trousers pocket and brought forth a wooden doll. He was very clever at carving, and had spent some time over the toy. He had manufactured it after a certain fashion, and the legs and hands moved. Stepping a little in advance of Rolfe, he again bowed low, and handed the doll to the child. Stretching out her thin hand, she took it, and then ran away. At that moment a tall Indian, one of the king's principal attendants, declared the king was ready to receive them. The order to march was given. But Pocahontas ran forward, waved the man back, and, placing herself between the two white men, held out a hand to each of them, and so led them up to the big wigwam which belonged to the king. The matting



B 394

PRINCESS POCAHONTAS

was thrown on one side, and she entered with her captives.

It was a curious sight; the king sat on the ground, his greatest chiefs round him, and others in semicircles behind. There was a certain glitter of gold and beads about them; like the girl, they wore anklets and bracelets, and their clothing consisted principally of birds' feathers of many colours, made into a sort of apron. Their heads also were adorned with quills, red, blue, and green. Otherwise they were naked.

The two prisoners were led forward by the child, who, when they were within a short distance of the king, let go their hands and rushed to her father. It was evident at once to Derward and Rolfe that she was the delight of his heart, for he took her in his arms, and seated her on his knee. Then she showed him her doll, gesticulating wildly. After a time the king silenced her; then, turning to the men who accompanied them, asked how they had come by the prisoners. They told him their village had been burnt by the strangers, and nothing left to them. These men had offended their countrymen, and had therefore been left behind. Anyone who could have understood them would have been astounded at the perspicuity with which the chief questioned the accusers, until at last it was made clear that Rolfe and Derward had assisted the tribe. Rolfe he had already heard of, and he spoke to them both kindly, but told them that he had no power to set them free. According to the laws of the tribe, if any man injures any member of the tribe he must die. It was evidently a case of an eye for an eye.

"But we have not injured the tribe," said Derward; "we helped them to extinguish the fire, we carried their goods and chattels beyond the reach of the flames, as also their wives and children. And because we did this, our chief caused me to be bound, and would have taken me away with him and punished me; but my friend saved me. We have always been friends with your people. Wingina allowed us to dwell with him, and

when the ships which brought us over sailed back to our own country, we remained behind. You see we have learnt your language, and we warned our chief that he must not touch the Indian."

Attentively Powhattan listened to all this. "It is of no use," he said; "your people have slain ours, therefore you must die. But," he said, "if you care to live a little longer, I will manage to put off the great palaver for a few weeks, so you may enjoy life."

For this favour they expressed deep gratitude, and were conducted to a wigwam not far from the royal residence, and the women of the camp came and looked at them, touching their hands and their faces. But they did something better, at least more pleasing to Rolfe and Derward, namely, they brought them food, fruits which they had never seen before, and maize boiled down till it was soft. But what they relished more than anything else was a sort of root, which they cooked in ashes until it broke its skin, and there came forth a white flour, most delicious, and Derward recognized the root his father had planted, and called the potato. In fact, as the days went by, the two youths enjoyed themselves mightily. The princess spent much of her time with them. She was a sweet, gentle child, more than usually intelligent. And they, seeing this, set about teaching her English, so that before long she knew many words; they would, moreover, sing to her English ballads, and they even danced, which was a great delight to the whole camp.

"We are working hard for our lives, Rolfe," said Derward one day. "I wonder shall we win!"

"It will be a toss up," answered Rolfe. "If anyone saves us, it will be that child."

"Here she comes," said Derward, as Pocahontas appeared, gliding from wigwam to wigwam. She carried a big leaf in her hand, upon which was a crimson fruit. When she came up to them she gave it to Rolfe, and then she sat down cross-legged beside them.

"What beautiful things!" said Derward. They were

ripe red berries, the perfume of which was exquisite, and which, when they were introduced into England, were called strawberries.

Impatiently Pocahontas signed to them to eat.

"I never tasted anything more delicious," said Rolfe, and he smiled and touched the girl's hand in gratitude.

Then, speaking in her own language, which was now quite familiar to them, he said:

"What is the good, Pocahontas, of giving us these good things and making us live, if we are to die?"

At these words the girl broke out into passionate tears.

"You not die. The white man not die. Pocahontas save him. White man pray to his God, and Pocahontas pray, and the bad spirits will be driven out of the chiefs, and they will let you live."

Both Rolfe and Derward shook their heads. "In six days the feast will begin," said Derward, "and we shall surely die. Bring us no more berries, nor white floury roots, they are too good. Why should we grow fat if we must die?"

The two lads were certainly in magnificent condition; the air was so salubrious, the simple diet so healthy. Night and morning they bathed in the stream, and the Indian boys and girls swam with them; a gentler, kinder people it would have been impossible to find. That they should kill them by slow torture seemed out of all likelihood, and yet this sword of Damocles they knew hung over their heads. They had hoped that Manteo or King Wingina would have traced them. But after the destruction of their hamlets the tribe had marched with great rapidity in a direction which was seldom taken, carefully leaving no traces of the road they took, travelling by circuitous ways, fording rivers, where their scent was lost. And so Manteo had been unable to do anything for them. Their spirits began to flag as the days crept on, and they saw a terrible death looming before them.

CHAPTER XI

A MESSENGER OF ILL OMEN

"I HAVE seen all I want to see, and I know all I want to know," said Sir Richard Grenville, "at least for the present. I do not suppose Lane with all his boasting will go much farther. Gold we have found none, but it is a glorious country; if there is any gold, those that come after us may find it." Thus he spoke to the emigrants, who gathered round him on his return to the colony.

They were horrified when they heard that Sir Richard had burnt the towns and villages of the natives, and that he had allowed Derward and Rolfe to be captured. These two young men had made themselves very popular, and their absence was greatly regretted. This and other things decided Sir Richard to set his face homewards. He had acquired knowledge, if not wealth, to take back with him to England. It was evident to him, as it was to Lane, that, fruitful and beautiful as Virginia was, its future prosperity must depend upon the industry and knowledge of those who should attempt to colonize it.

The most clear-sighted among them felt, that if wealth was to be gained out of the earth it must be by the toil of their hands, even as Adam was bidden to go forth and labour and by the sweat of his brow to eat bread all the days of his life. When this fact first dawned upon them, the colonists were somewhat disheartened; but Sir Richard assured them that if they would but remain he would return and bring with him horses and kine, also women, without whom there was unbearable sense of desolation, one and all declared there was no home as long as women and children were lacking. So

Sir Richard hastened his preparations. As concerning Lane, what he prophesied proved true; he penetrated as far as he could, till provisions failed, then turned homewards, and reached Roanoke Island before Sir Richard started. When his men saw their comrades preparing to leave, their hearts failed them, and many insisted on returning home. They were not the class of men suitable to be cast ashore on a comparatively desolate island. Lane had perceived this, and at the last moment said to Sir Richard, "Send us out carpenters and labourers, not gentlemen;" and Sir Richard promised to do this.

"I am afraid Raleigh will be disappointed," said Lane, "and he will be more especially vexed at the disappearance of young Derward."

"I am of opinion," said Sir Richard, "that he is well out of the way. The queen will be better satisfied, and his father, who you know is still in the Tower in a miserable condition, now that he has no son to lay claim to his estate, may obtain his freedom."

"But he has a daughter," said Lane, "at least so I have heard."

"Ah well! they will have to get rid of her too," said Sir Richard carelessly. "If he is ever to be free, he must be childless."

Then, wringing Lane's hand, he added: "Courage! we shall not leave you long. I know Drake is likely to pass by the West Indies, and he will bring you provisions. Occupy your men especially in the growth of tobacco, for I am sure that will be a staple of the land. And as to those two young fellows, if you come across them, ship them off with Drake, and I will settle their little business when they come to England."

"I would rather keep them here," said Lane, "for they know the natives, and they are good hands at all manner of work. I shall be heartily sorry if ill befalls them."

"Well, please yourself," said Sir Richard; and with that he sprang into the boat which was to take him out

to the larger vessel awaiting him at the mouth of the river.

Those remaining behind stood and watched the ships sadly as they put out to sea. A feeling of isolation crept over them, and also a feeling of fear. Had they had a strong man amongst them this might have been easily overcome, but they had no real master, and they had no idea of the necessity of work. Lane, though a man of considerable strength of character, did not possess the qualities suitable for his station; he was, as most men of his class were in those days, a soldier, with no idea of organization; and so they drifted on from day to day, travelling up along the coast, making plans of the land and the country-side. All the colonists remained perfectly healthy, but they did nothing for the advancement and the growth of the country. Under such circumstances, it was impossible to make the country habitable; they took what they saw, they used their provisions with discrimination, but it never seemed to strike them that they could sow, reap, and build houses as they did in England. Therefore by degrees they fell into a state of deep despondency, their one idea and longing being the arrival of Drake, or of ships coming straight from England.

Grenville's journey home was more profitable to him than the time he spent in Roanoke Island. These gentlemen adventurers were in very truth the pirates of the sixteenth century. Many ships left the ports of Spain or England and were never heard of again, till, as chance would have it, sometimes after long years, a man who had gone out young came back old, and told how he had been captured by Spaniards or Moors or Turks, and had worked in the galleys, been sold in market-places, and had suffered all the miseries that human nature can bear. But human nature is tough, and can bear much before death releases a man from his miseries.

So it came to pass that Sir Richard on his return

journey met in the open seas a rich Spanish galleon. It was laden with a precious cargo, and was on its way back to Cadiz. To board it, to fight the crew, and rob the vessel of all it contained, was an action of which no gentleman in those days would be ashamed. The seas were open to all men, and the strongest was the master. Prisoners Sir Richard did not want, and neither did he care to slay more men than was necessary for his purpose. He politely requested the captain to deliver up his cargo. When the Spaniard, of necessity and with considerable ill-will, had transferred his rich stuffs, of gold brocade and satins and curious weapons, to the English vessel, Sir Richard, bowing, thanked him, returned to his own ship, and sailed once more to England, leaving the despoiled vessel to go on its journey. It was a curious sense of honour which permitted these robberies on the high seas to remain unpunished. Sir Richard knew full well that with this wealth on board he assured for himself a courteous welcome when he once more sailed into Plymouth Harbour. When Raleigh heard of his arrival, he hastened to meet him, and almost the first question he put to him was: "Have you come across the lad I told you of?"

"Yes, I did," said Sir Richard, "and a nice rascal he is! hand and glove with the natives, encouraging them to thieve. But I think he has got what he deserves; for he and his friend, a fellow called Rolfe, after they had openly rebelled against my orders, were carried away by the natives themselves, and that fellow Manteo assured me that they would be killed by the natives in revenge for my having burnt their village."

"You burnt a native village!" exclaimed Raleigh.

"Yes, assuredly I did," said Sir Richard. "They stole my drinking-goblet from under my very head, and so I taught them a lesson which they will not forget in a hurry. If we are to be masters of the land, the natives must respect us."

"Then let me tell you," said Raleigh, "you go the

wrong way about to make them do so. Have you never heard that the wolf is as gentle as a lamb till he has tasted blood? To my knowledge, there has never been any enmity between the Indians and the English until now. I am grieved that it should have occurred. I am told they are revengeful, and therefore I think it very probable that they have murdered the two lads; and mark me, they will not stop there."

Sir Richard Grenville swore a big oath, to which Raleigh answered by turning on his heel and walking away. He spoke truly; the Indians had been gentle with him because he was gentle with them. But now he felt that matters would never be again on the same footing. He told this news to his friend Philip Sidney, and asked him if it were possible to communicate with the Westons. "Perhaps it will be better", he wrote, "that you should tell them that the lad was killed in a raid with the Indians. I think there is little chance of his being alive, and you know, as I do, how wearisome it is to wait for those who never will return. If it should so happen that the lad's life be spared and he come home again, they will have had one sharp sorrow, the bitterness of which will be forgotten in the great after-joy. I think you will agree with me in this, waiting and longing kills life. It is like the wind of the Sirocco passing over the soul."

And Sir Philip Sidney answered, "You are right. No man knows better than I do what the agony of waiting means."

Always gentle and with great sympathy, one day Sir Philip mounted his horse and rode from Penshurst to Cranbury Hill. In the village he asked where the Westons lived, and they pointed out to him the moated farm lying half-way up the hill. When he reached the bridge which spanned the moat he looked around him. It was simply charming. The old timber house, with creepers climbing on the walls, the flight of stone steps leading to the porch doorway, was a picture in itself. So still, so calm! Not even his own beautiful

house at Penshurst seemed to him at that moment as fair as this yeoman's cottage. And he thought to himself, "These children, born in sorrow in the darkest prison-house in England, have been nurtured here; it is a pity their hiding-place has been discovered. After all, perhaps it is as well for the lad that he should disappear." So thinking he crossed the bridge, and, springing from his horse, fastened it by the reins to an iron bar used for that purpose. As he did so, he heard the lattice window open over his head. He looked up, and saw a girl's face framed amidst the foliage which clambered up to the window. It was a fair face, with bright golden hair, and blue eyes, which seemed even then to dance with merriment.

"Sir," she said, "what may be your pleasure?"

Doffing his cap as if she had been a lady of high birth, he answered her, saying:

"I have come on business to John Weston, fair maid. Is he at home?"

"I doubt if my father be at home at this hour," answered the girl, "but I will come down and open to you."

The lattice closed, and in a few seconds the door of the homestead opened and Letty stood before him. There was an anxious look now in her eyes, for in her heart she thought, "I do not like these grand gentlemen, they always bring some sorrow or vexation in their wake." Nevertheless she said pleasantly: "If you will enter, sir, I will send into the fields for my father."

Sir Philip bent his tall head and walked into the living-room. It was as spotlessly clean as anyone could desire. The few pewter plates on the dresser shone like mirrors, and in the deep window recess stood two spinning-wheels. Rooms were not light as in our day, for there was no glass, only horn, polished and fitted into the window-frames, which rather prevented the light penetrating freely into the habitation. Glass was as yet uncommon, and a matter of great luxury.

"Will you be seated, sir?" said Letty.

As Sir Philip took the one high-backed chair in the room which Letty offered him, he looked steadily at the girl.

"That's not she," he muttered between his teeth. Letty turned away, and, running out of the house, called to a man who stood by the big well, preparing to let down the bucket.

"Williams," she said, going up to him, "they've come again."

"Who be come again?" he asked, holding the iron handle back.

"A great gentleman," she said sadly. "He has a kind face and sweet manners, but oh, they bring us ill luck!"

"For sure they do," he answered sullenly. "Couldn't ye turn them off, Letty? Where be he?"

"In the living-room," said Letty. "Mother's gone down to the village, and Father's gone to look after the ploughing of the north field."

"And Rosamund, where be she?"

"With her books out yonder. But I would not call her for the world. These men must not see her, or they might whisk her away as they whisked Derward."

"True, true," said Williams slowly. "I will go and tell your father. Bide here till I come back; I do not love these gallants." So saying he drew up his bucket, unhooked it, covered up the well, and turned to do his commission, muttering as he went, "She don't like it, neither do I. It's no good omen when they come hanging about the place." And with that he went stolidly on his way to the north field.

Letty sat herself down on a bench close to the well, and leant her head against the wooden props. Letty was not given to tears, she was not superstitious, she was just a simple, healthy English girl, and yet at the present moment, she knew not why, her heart sank within her, and tears poured down her face. She wiped them away hastily, and as she did so she became aware that the stranger was standing in front of her. She

started up, and, like a frightened fawn, would have run away, but the stranger spoke to her.

"Do not be afraid, gentle maid," he said, "I will do you no harm."

"I am not afraid," she answered, turning round upon him. "But I do not like you, I cannot bear you coming here!" and she stamped her little foot on the ground. Not pettishly, but with a show of power and determination.

"And pray, why not? We have never seen each other before, and I have done you no harm," said Sir Philip.

"Ah! but you are all alike, just alike," she continued, "birds of ill omen. You have taken Derward away, and now you will take Rosamund—my sister Rosamund!"

"I have no such desire," said Sir Philip. "And if I bring you ill news it is no fault of mine."

She started at his words.

"Then it is true," she said. "Better out with it, you have bad news of Derward."

"Ask me no questions," said Sir Philip gently. "I came to see your father. I will be silent till he comes."

"You cannot now," she said, coming close up to him. "You must tell me, I cannot—I cannot wait."

Sir Philip looked at her kindly.

"My poor girl," he said, "have you yet to learn a woman's lesson of waiting?"

"No," she said, "I have not to learn it, I have learnt it already. Derward has been gone well-nigh three years, and we have been waiting for him all those days, weeks, and months."

Sir Philip turned away.

"I would another had been the messenger of ill news," he muttered to himself. "She can scarcely have been in love with him, she is little more than a child still."

As if guessing his thoughts, Letty went up to him.

"Sir," she said in a softened voice, "he was my dear friend. I had no brother, and he was as one to me.

Tell me what has befallen him, I pray you. Is it evil or good?"

He hesitated a moment.

"That depends," answered Sir Philip; "there are many of us, sweet maiden, who would gladly be where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest."

"But not Derward!" cried Letty; "he was so happy, so joyous! He was not weary at all, any more than I am. He could walk many miles, and come home refreshed. What has happened to him, dear sir?" and she joined her two hands pleadingly, leaning against the well.

At that moment her father and Williams came in sight; she ran towards them.

"Father, a mishap has befallen Derward, he will not tell me what it is."

"I would rather have told you first, my man," said Sir Philip. "It grieves me greatly."

John Weston had thrown his arm round Letty and held her to him.

"Is he drowned at sea?" he asked.

"No," said Sir Philip, "he is lost in the primeval forest. It is only known that the natives took him, and his companion, called Rolfe; since then nothing has been heard of them. And it is well-nigh certain that they have killed him, in revenge for some injury our own people had done to them."

"You are not sure, you are not quite sure," said Letty.

"I am afraid there is no chance of its being otherwise," said Sir Philip.

Letty threw her arms round her father's neck, and, hiding her face on his shoulders, wept bitterly.

"Sir, if you will allow me, I will take my daughter to her mother, the boy was to her as her brother," said John.

Sir Philip bowed, and moved on one side, to let father and daughter pass.

The same moment a gruff voice repeated Letty's words:

"You are not sure, you are not sure."

It was Williams who spoke thus.

"I wish I could doubt it, my man," answered Sir Philip as he turned away.

CHAPTER XII

THE PRISONER

WHEN Sir Philip rode away from the Westons an hour later he was sad at heart. He had felt it his duty to make it clear to them that a great injury had been done to the natives by the burning of their houses and their fields, and that Rolfe and Derward had been carried off by the savages as an expiation. The very tribe which had suffered had disappeared, no one had been able to trace them. With the persistency of love, which can never believe in the complete annihilation of the beloved, Rosamund kept repeating, "No one saw him dead, no one has distinctly heard that he is dead, therefore we will not believe it."

John Weston and his wife were less hopeful, they understood better the savage hatred and ill-will of the natives. As he was leaving, Sir Philip paused a moment in the window, where the two girls sat side by side weeping, Rosamund quietly, hiding her face in her handkerchief, Letty with more noise and little short sobs. Suddenly Rosamund looked up, and for the first time he saw her face.

"An unlucky race," he murmured. "Poor children!"

Rosamund heard the words and stood up. "Who is Derward, and who am I?" she asked. "Why are we unlucky?"

"Are not all children unlucky who have neither father nor mother to care for them?" said Sir Philip.

"It need not be," said Rosamund, "and in our case it is not. The having neither father nor mother has been no misfortune to us, for we have found both." As she spoke she went up to John and Lisbeth, and, laying hold of their hands, kissed them.

"You see," she said, "we are neither fatherless nor motherless, therefore if you consider us unlucky, tell me why and wherefore. It will make no difference to me, I shall not seek my parents. I will remain where I am, and in that state of life in which I have been placed, I ask for nothing better. But if any man has wronged Derward or defrauded him of his rights, I would gladly know it; I would lay his cause before the queen, who, they say, is just to all her subjects."

A strange smile flitted over Sir Philip's face, and he muttered, "As the humour takes her!"

"Well," said Rosamund, "will you answer me or not?"

"I will not answer you, because I cannot," said Sir Philip; "there would be danger both for you and for others if I did. Bide where you are contentedly, my child, no one will seek you here. You are sheltered and you are loved, what more can you desire? Farewell!" He raised her hand to his lips as if she had been a queen, and, turning, went out the house door, down the steps, to where his horse waited for him. The animal lifted his head and neighed when he saw his master. Sir Philip patted him, and had his foot in the stirrup, when a small white hand was laid on his, and a serious sweet voice said:

"Sir, will you not tell me?"

"My child," he answered kindly, "I cannot; we are all bound together in a solemn league to keep silence. But this I will do for you. Now that your brother is dead I will carry your request to a prisoner, who alone has the right to loosen us from our vows. Who knows, he may call you to him."

"So be it," said Rosamund; and there came over her features an expression of quiet patience, which Sir Philip had seen in other faces than hers.

So he rode away, and Rosamund went slowly up the steps and entered the room.

Letty met her. "Well, dear?"

"He will not tell me," said Rosamund, "he cannot; but

there is one, he says, who may send for me—a poor prisoner. Do you know who it can be, Father?" and she went up to John.

"No, my child, I do not know," he answered; "but you were given to us at the Tower steps, and that grim fortress hides many a secret."

That evening it was as if a cloud rested on the household. They had learnt, those rough farm hands and the house wenches, that the young master had disappeared, and had been killed by the savages. Many of them wept, many of them said his father was to blame for letting him go, all were grieved. The house would never be the same again, they said, the life had gone out of it.

The two girls did not come in to supper, but stayed in their own room.

"I think," said Rosamund gently, "that the prisoner must be my father. I wonder who he is! Derward has told me that he remembers sitting on the knee of a man wearing a velvet suit cut after the fashion of the gentlemen who come here, with trunk-hose and buckled shoes, and a great white ruffle round his neck. I do not remember him. I remember nothing save what you do, Letty,—this dear homestead, which it seems to me now it would break my heart to leave."

Then they talked together of Derward, and of the savages who had slain him. And then they wept. "It was a cruel death—a cruel death!" they repeated again and again. They fell asleep that night, weeping in each other's arms.

The following morning, when John Weston and his men were assembled at early breakfast, Williams's place was empty. They thought that he might be occupied at some distance from the house and would come in later, but no one saw him that day nor the next. And no person could tell aught about him, so his chair remained empty awaiting his return.

. . . . . .

A man was slowly walking up and down a small room in the White Tower, of the Tower of London. He was of noble mien and elegant carriage, but on his face there was a great sadness, and his hair was white. He was evidently deeply preoccupied; his hands were clenched, and there was a nervous twitching of his lips.

"I have ruined so many already," he said, addressing himself to an elderly man, who sat at a table, looking at an open letter which lay thereon. "There is poor Warren, who was disgraced on my account, and has never obtained any other position, so that he must be desperately poor. Besides, this place is fatal to her race. How many have gone to the scaffold here, how many have died?" He counted on his fingers—"Their grandfather, their uncle, Dudley, Jane, and my gentle wife, maligned before all the world, but yet my true wedded wife, my pretty Kate! They did not kill her with the sword, but they let her die. And shall I, to still for a few short seconds the longings at my heart, let this child run the danger of crossing the Tower Bridge? No, I will not. They tell me she has been happy, that she is a fair maiden, like unto her mother when I held her a trembling bride in my arms, pleading gently, 'You will never let me be a queen, Edward, promise me, never!' And I never would have done so," he continued. "What care I for England's crown? We were happy in our love, happy in ourselves, until Derward was born, an heir, with the Tudor blood in his veins. Hearing of his birth, Elizabeth hated him, maligned his mother, and shut both Kate and her child up in this vile fortress. For maintaining their rights and their honour, I too was brought a prisoner and confined in the Beauchamp Tower." He stood still a moment, and a smile crept over his sad face. "But, though the queen knew it not, I had but what I desired—where love dwells there is no prison, but a heaven on earth. And we were fortunate, for good Warren, the Lieutenant of the Tower, was our friend, and many a happy hour have I spent within these dreary walls; sweeter perhaps

because they were stolen moments of great joy. Then our little girl was born, and we called her Rosamund, 'the flower of the world', in very derision. For many months we faced the storm, then we were told that the order had been given that the children should be taken from us, and cast out as unworthy of their heritage, the queen refusing to acknowledge our marriage. What would become of them? Would they be killed, like young Edward and his brother Richard, and buried in some hidden corner, where their little bones would bleach, and in years to come would be cast out as offal? Our souls revolted against this cruel mandate, therefore I sent them forth with honest peasant folk to live simple lives, to wed perhaps with churls. What matter it, so they were happy and escaped the royal hand. Elizabeth raved and stormed when she learnt that they had been sent far over the seas, unknown and unknowing. But Kate died, she could not bear the parting; long days and months she lingered, then the sweet spirit fled. 'If ever you should be free, Edward,' she said to me with her dying lips, 'seek the children, but let them never know who they are; let them be as simple peasants, else they will surely be dragged hither to waste their lives as we have wasted ours.' And I answered her, pressing my lips to hers, 'Talk not treason,' I said; 'love is never wasted, for it cannot die; the seed falls into the earth so that no man sees it, but surely it will spring up again more beautiful and in greater perfection. So be content, sweetheart.' So she was comforted, and, holding my hands, looking into my eyes, she passed away.

"But the relentless hand which had so tortured us held me still in bondage for the children. Would I reveal where they were, or would I not? Would I cast them off, and deny them their birthright? No, I wouldn't. Therefore I am still here. Now they tell me the boy is dead; my beautiful boy, with his long fair hair and bright blue eyes, his sturdy little figure and his pretty, wilful ways! He has never grown up to me, he is a child still. So let it be. There is still Rosamund.

Will the queen suffer her? Sidney writes me she is very fair, and has been made aware that there is a mystery concerning her birth, that her father is living, a prisoner, and she entreats to see me."

As he uttered the last words he walked to the window and looked out. "It would be very sweet," he murmured, "very sweet to feel a child's arms round my neck and the sweet young lips kissing me." He sat down, leant his head upon his hands, and continued slowly, with a deep pathos in his voice, "Would she call me Father, I wonder? To be a father, to have living children and not know them! How have I borne it, how do I bear it?" His hands dropped, and he answered slowly, as if speaking to another, "For her honour and my children's lives. No, I will not see her!" Once again he rose, walked rapidly up and down the room, glancing ever and again at the man who sat silent, and at the open letter.

For the first time his companion spoke:

"Your arguments, my lord, bespeak a noble heart such as I have ever known you to possess, but I think in this matter you ought somewhat to consider yourself. You have borne this long imprisonment with marvellous courage, such as would touch any heart save the queen's. You are still in the prime of life, and it is surely natural that you should desire to occupy your place in the world. Sir Philip told me but a few days ago that your daughter is the image of her mother, and like her she had no ambitions. The Westons have proved good friends to the children, and Rosamund desires nothing better than to remain with them as if she were their own. Such being the case, it seems to me that you are justified in granting her request. See the girl yourself, it could easily be arranged for her to come and see you. She need not know anything concerning you, save that you are her father. Now Derward is dead, the titles and estates will pass to your brother's children. You can dower Rosamund, and she will have naught to complain of."

"All you say is vastly good," answered the Lord Hertford, "but it does not tempt me. I have ceased to have any desire for the world and its ambitions, but—" He paused, then added quickly, "I have a strange longing to see this child, to hold her in my arms. She was such a pretty babe! When I took her out of her mother's arms she cried so piteously, as if I had done her a great injury, and Kate called after her 'My babe! my babe!' Alas! if I had not parted them then, others would have done so, and less gently."

"You did well," answered the older man, "but now you may surely give yourself this satisfaction."

"How can I?" he asked, almost eagerly. "A prisoner has so little change, that the prospect of something new has a strange fascination for me."

"There would be no difficulty; a little gold, and your prison doors would open to let her in and out. There would be no trace either of her coming or her going. And both you and she would be satisfied. Sir Philip has told me that she has entreated him to tell her who her father is, and to let her go to him. But she is of marvellous good reason, and if you tell her the story that you have told me, and which all the world knows, I do not think you will have any trouble in making her keep her own secret."

"So let it be," answered the prisoner, yielding to the intense longing which overcame all the arguments he had been building up against himself. It is a curious fact, but when we pile up reasons one upon the top of the other why we should not do a thing, that thing becomes of such importance, we dwell upon it, we think of it, and while even we reason that it must not, cannot be, we stretch out our hands and clutch at it, and all our reasonings are of no avail.

The elderly man rose instantly, evidently with the desire of not giving the prisoner time to retract, and, holding out his hands, said:

"To-morrow you shall have news."

"Let it be made clear to her that I cannot tell her either her own name or mine, it would be risking too much."

"Good, my lord, I will not fail."

They shook hands, knocked at the door, which was immediately opened from the outside by a warder, and he went forth, leaving the prisoner alone. But he was no longer alone, for as he sat or walked in those narrow precincts, or strove to interest himself in some manuscripts lying upon the table, his mind was carried back to the days of his youth.

"She must be well-nigh sixteen years old," he said, "the age when her mother wedded me, and Jane died, or rather was killed—there, on that open sward!" and he looked out of the narrow grated window on to the Tower Green. "Alas! alas! I would not have her know it for all the world. She has been brought up a peasant, in the open air. Her cheeks must be rosy, her eyes must be bright; shall I pale the one or dull the other? Let her be happy, nor dream evil dreams such as I have dreamt. Poor little maid!" Then, like a child, or rather like a man who has no occupation, he began counting on his fingers. "To-day, to-morrow, and next day, and the day after—yes, she will be here by that time!" A smile broke on his face, and his eyes had in them still something of the fire of youth; love had been quenched in them, but not wholly, he had tasted too much in his time of the sweet elixir of life to forget it. "I will go to bed," he thought, "and so the hours will pass, until the day dawns when I shall hold my child in my arms!" And he laid himself down on his narrow prison couch that night, with a heart in which there was a new-born joy and a new-born hope.

CHAPTER XIII

A JOURNEY TO LONDON

JOHN WESTON was in the north field a few days after Sir Philip's visit, when he was accosted by an elderly gentleman. For a minute he did not recognize him, then he knew him to be the same man who had come to him, begging of him to take the children. John was sore at heart for the loss of Derward; the boy had been very dear to him, and he missed him; so he frowned on his visitor, and said almost angrily:

"You gentlemen bring us no luck. What have you come to me for now—to take my girl away?"

"No," was the quiet answer. "I will not take her from you, but I would ask you to lend her me for the space of two days and two nights."

"She is not mine to lend or give," answered John fiercely. "I took her at your bidding, and you have paid me for keeping her. The boy is lost, and now if you will, I will pay you back little by little the money you have given me, but I will keep the girl."

"Even if her father asks for her?" said the old man.

"Yea, even if he asks for her. Why has he forsaken her all these years?"

"What he has done was to save her life and Derward's. Those who tempted Derward away did so with honest reason, but they were wrong. I was not told of it till it was too late. But all that is in the past. We cannot make or mend, we must abide by it. Only I would tell you, honest John Weston, that Derward's death may be the means of delivering his father out of prison. But the father's heart yearns for his daughter, and before a

step can be taken for his deliverance he would see her, and judge whether she be happy in her present condition. If he is satisfied, then maybe we shall persuade him to plead for his own freedom. The child will not know that she was born in a higher estate than yours, and he will dower her so that she may find a good husband who will cherish and care for her, as you have cared for your own wife. Does this content you? I tell you the truth, on my honour. Answer me."

"Pardon, sir," said John, "if I spoke roughly, but the child is very dear to me. "I am sure you would not wrong her."

"Wrong my daughter's child!" said the old man, tears gathering in his eyes.

"Enough," said Weston, "I will do whatever you command me."

"Then bring the girl to me to-morrow night, at the farther end of the village where the hamlet ends. I will be there with a horse for her to ride. You can accompany us if you will; it may be well that you should do so, unless you fear your absence will excite attention."

"Which it would do," said John. "Rosamund's absence will not be noticed; she may be ill a-bed, or any excuse may be made for her, but as for me, I cannot go abroad without my men knowing it."

"Good!" said the stranger. "I will meet her and bring her back to you, probably in three days, for we must sleep on the road. It is agreed, then, to-morrow you bring her to me, and four days later you fetch her?"

"So be it," answered John Weston.

The gentleman held out his hand and shook John Weston's rough horny palm; then John continued his ploughing, whilst the other re-entered the wood where he had tethered his horse, remounted, and rode away.

That night, when the girls were gone to bed and the house was still, husband and wife sat together by the fire.

"Of course you know what you are about, John,"

said Lisbeth, "but I shall not rest till the child is back again. I would you had gone with her."

"Safer not. We know too much already, Lisbeth."

"Be she a king's or be she a queen's daughter?" said his wife, speaking very low.

"I cannot tell you, I know not." He thought for a moment, then he said, "There be only Mary Stuart, the Papist queen of Scotland, and our own Elizabeth, who can by rights sit upon our throne. There was little Jane Grey, but Queen Mary killed her. I know of none other. But why need we trouble ourselves, sooner or later it will out. There never was a secret which did not some day force its way to the light.

"Well, you will tell Rosamund that to-morrow night she is to be ready to go with you."

"I will tell her," said Lisbeth, and she wiped her eyes.

"I am much afraid Letty will make a noise; she cannot bear Rosamund out of her sight. If Williams had still been here, I would have sent him with Rosamund and remained at home," said Weston; "there is no one else I could trust."

"Do you know where Williams has gone?" asked his wife.

"No, I do not; but I guess he is after news of Derward; he loved the lad," answered John. "And I find that he has taken his belongings with him. He was a free man, you know, and could come and go as he chose; he has neither wife nor child to hamper him."

"Do you think he has gone across the sea after Derward?"

"It would not wonder me," answered John. "Now we will to bed, wife, for I have to be up betimes to-morrow. And you also have much on your mind."

"Early to bed and early to rise" is an old English proverb, and so in many villages in England long after the curfew-bell had ceased to ring, lights and fires were out in hamlets and villages as soon as the moon had

risen. The sweet stillness of night reigned in fields and house, moon and stars looked down into the peaceful nooks and over the dark forests, and hushed the world to sleep. Unless it were a chance wanderer, there were few travellers to disturb the sleepers.

In John Weston's house there was but a flicker of light in the living-room; Letty and Rosamund had gone to their bed at their usual hour, and Letty slept, but Rosamund lay awake, waiting. The door opened softly, and Lisbeth called her in a low voice. Without answering she slipped out of her bed, gathered up a cloak and hood which had been apparently lying accidentally on a stool beside her, and with her shoes in her hand ran across the floor, slipped through the door, closed it carefully behind her, and went down the stairs into the living-room.

"It is getting late, we must hasten," said John.

"I am ready," she said, stooping and tying the strings of her shoes. "Good-bye, Mother!" She threw her arms round Lisbeth's neck, who held her close pressed in her arms.

"My child, my dear little one," she said, "it goes hard with me to let you go!"

"I will come back, Mother, I will come back, do not fear. I am going among strangers, because——" She paused. "I think it is a duty for Derward's sake. But I will come back to you and my dear Letty, I could not live without you."

"But they may tempt you with gold, and all that makes life great," said Lisbeth.

"They will never tempt me," answered Rosamund, "I have no needs. I will not be a great lady."

"Come," said John, taking her by the arm, "let her go, Lisbeth."

She slackened her hold of the girl, who slipped away, and, holding John's hand, went out of the house, down the steps, and across the drawbridge, at the farther end of which Rosamund stood still and looked back.

The moon was shining full on the little homestead

with a bright silvery light, the horn windows shone against the dark woodwork. There was scarcely a shadow resting upon it.

"I shall remember," she said softly, and, turning, followed John. When they reached the village they skirted it, John fearing lest any belated peasant should be about. At last they reached the sign-post; but long before, Rosamund had perceived a man on horseback, holding another horse.

"You are not afraid, Rosamund?" said John. "I would go with thee, but it might lead to questionings amongst our people. Besides, he who is travelling with you I know well; you can trust him."

"I am not afraid," answered Rosamund. And so they pressed forward until they reached the sign-post.

"Quick!" said the man on horseback, "we have a good distance to ride before midnight. Then we shall rest till morning: we must be in London to-morrow by sunset."

Whilst he was speaking he had thrown himself off his horse, and was standing beside Rosamund.

"You are taller than I thought," he said, examining her. "Let me see your face."

Rosamund threw back the hood which was drawn low down over her forehead, and the moonlight shone full upon her.

"Ah!" he said, "it is a resurrection!"

There was a tenderness in his voice which reassured Rosamund, and she saw that, though he was erect, with scarcely any of the signs of age, he was an old man.

"Come, my child," he said; and before she knew what he was doing he had lifted her in his arms and seated her on the horse.

"Are you steady, can you ride? I ought perchance to have brought a pillion with me."

"Oh no!" answered Rosamund; "Letty and I ride the farm horses and ponies bare back."

"That is good," he answered, smiling. "You have brought your daughters up well, John Weston."

"To the best of my ability," answered John. "Good-bye, Rosamund, my child! God bless you!"

"Good-bye, Father!" she answered, and, stooping, she kissed him. "Tell Mother I will come back," she added, as her companion began to ride forward, and her own horse followed.

"Yes, I am sure she will come back," said John to himself. "It is a strange matter altogether, and I cannot fathom it."

He walked slowly homewards in the moonlight.

Rosamund and her companion rode quickly. She was a good horsewoman, quite fearless. They did not speak, because they had nought to say to each other. She would not question him, and he could tell her nought. And so, beyond asking her once in a way if she were all right, and sometimes taking her horse's rein and drawing it into smoother paths, they rode on side by side until they reached a farmhouse. Here they stopped, and, dismounting, the man knocked three times at the door, which opened.

"Have you all things ready?" he asked.

"I have, my lord," was the answer, and, going to Rosamund's horse's head, the man held the animal, whilst her companion lifted her off.

"We rest here," he said, leading her into the house.

There was a goodwoman in the house, who at once took charge of Rosamund, gave her her supper apart from the men, and then took her to her chamber, bringing her a hot posset and some white bread, a custom in those days. She soon fell asleep, and awoke to find the sunlight shining in her room, and the woman standing beside her.

"Is it late?" she said, springing up.

"Fairly," answered the woman, "but my lord would not have you disturbed. He is waiting to break bread with you before you start."

"Good! I will not keep him long waiting," said Rosamund. And she got up with all the carelessness of youth, lightly, gladly, ready to begin a new day, with no

sense of fear, though all was strange about her, but full of a certain curiosity as to what life was to bring to her. Fear comes with knowledge, and Rosamund had no knowledge. So she ran lightly into the room and entered it as a sunbeam. Her cavalier of the night before was sitting at the table with a tankard of ale before him, bread of a finer quality than was usual, and a pasty of wild rabbits and cooked meats. He looked up at her, and the saddest of sad smiles came over his face. Rising courteously, however, he took her hand, wished her good-morrow, and led her to the table. All things came naturally to Rosamund; she had no fear of him, she hardly felt him to be a stranger, and as he helped her to the most delicate morsels she talked pleasantly.

"We shall have a good ride to-day," she said; "how the sun shines!" Her heart leapt within her, and she laughed from the very gladness of her heart. It was her first outing into the world. Her May-day jaunt to Cranbury Hill was the longest journey she had ever taken, and we all long when we are young to see the world. An hour later they started on their way. They rode all day, through towns and villages, up hill and down dale, through forest land and pleasant pastures. There was no cloud in the sky, it was of that blue so rarely seen in England. When they came to a smooth stretch of grass they put their horses to a canter, and the old man, looking at his companion, sighed. "They were both of them as fair as she is," he murmured, falling behind. "God grant that their fate may not be hers!"

"Where are we going? What is to be the end of our journeyings?" she asked once.

For a moment he hesitated. "I am taking you to a poor prisoner in the Tower of London. What he is to you, and you to him, I may not tell you. Only this I know, that his freedom depends on you, and maybe his life also."

"Has he been long a prisoner?" asked Rosamund.

"As many years as you can count of life," he answered.

"Is he an old man?" asked Rosamund.

"To you he may seem so," was the quiet answer, "for his hair is white, but he is verily in the prime of life."

"And shall I know who he is?" she asked.

"Yea and nay. The less you know the better."

"But you say I hold his life and his freedom in my hands. Surely he will tell me how that is."

"Maybe he will tell you." And then, as if to break off the conversation, he continued, "Now we will ride quickly, for we are nearing London. I will take you to an inn to refresh you, and so that you may brush off the traces of your journey ere you pay your visit."

Darkness was slowly creeping over the city when they entered it, and as they wound their way through the narrow streets and alleys of the great city, Rosamund for the first time felt her heart sink within her. As they descended Tower Hill the hoary walls of the ancient pile rose up before her. Along the side of the Thames was a chain of small towers, this was called the Outer wall. The approach to the Tower was defended by considerable outworks. Every tower was known by its own particular name, either taken from those who had dwelt therein, or for some other reason. There were from twelve to fifteen towers, many of them with large rooms, with passages leading from one to another, in separate blocks. The largest tower of all was the White Tower. The apartments were octagonal; the lowest one was twenty-eight feet in diameter, the walls thirteen feet in thickness. It were impossible here to attempt to give my readers anything but a very cursory idea of this fortress, which was in truth a town in itself. It has never had but one rival, and that was the great Bastille, in Paris, destroyed in the very beginning of the Revolution. Men and women have lived and suffered within these walls; men and women and children, of high and low degree. If these grim walls

could but tell their story, many a startling secret would be disclosed. But enough is known to sadden the gladdest heart, even to-day, with the thought of the depth and intensity of human suffering. Innocent or guilty it mattered not; whether they entered by the Traitor's Gate or across the drawbridge, it might truly be said, as in Dante's Purgatory, "All hope abandon ye who enter here".

As she came in sight of it, Rosamund shuddered.

"Is he there?" she asked in a low voice.

"He is," was the answer.

Then, turning their horses' heads to the left, they came to a hostel, in front of which hung a sign of "The Queen's Head". Riding into the courtyard my lord called to the host, who in his turn called to the ostlers, and a few minutes later Rosamund was ushered into a small room, evidently set apart for especial purposes. "There, Dame Tristam, I give her into your charge. See that she has a good supper, I will come back for her in an hour."

"Good, my lord, good!" answered the woman.

And she immediately took possession of Rosamund, who watched her companion's departure with a certain apprehension; then, settling herself in a large chair, laid her head back, and in a second was fast asleep.

CHAPTER XIV

A VISIT TO THE TOWER

A HAND upon her shoulder, and Rosamund awoke.

"Oh, sir, pardon me!" she said, springing up. "I did not mean to sleep!"

"Nature mothered you," answered her companion, smiling; "nature knows what we need, and gives it us when she can. Now you must be quick. Take her to a chamber, Dame Tristam, and let her wash and brush off the outward signs at least of her journey. I would have you look well, my child. I will order supper to be ready for you when you come back."

The dame took Rosamund by the hand, led her into a small back closet, and gave her a basin and a ewer with water. She also set to brushing her black cloth dress and bodice.

"My mother gave me these," said Rosamund, as she took a parcel which had been carefully fastened on her under skirt. It contained a white linen stomacher, and sleeves with broad white bands, made to turn back over the stuff ones. The only ornament she boasted was a fine golden chain, from which hung a gold heart with two hands clasped together over it. She had always worn this, it had been round her neck when Lisbeth had taken her. In the same parcel was a small velvet cap, which she and Letty had embroidered with silver thread, very delicately wrought.

"You have a careful mother, little one," said the dame.

"Yes, there is no better mother in all the world," said Rosamund.

When she had bathed her face and hands and put on the soft white linen and the dainty cap, the dame looked at her with admiration.

"You are a pretty maid," she said, "you might be a lady. I have seen many who could not hold a candle to you."

And certainly she was a pretty girl, a quaint prettiness maybe, more of a spiritual than a material beauty. Her face was delicate, the complexion fair with the very faintest tinge of colour, and the brown hair waved naturally on the broad white brow. There was a touch of melancholy in the well-cut lips, and a natural dignity in the carriage of the small head.

"I am ready," she said, when her preparations were completed; and she returned to the room where she had left her guardian. He was sitting on a chair, his head resting on his hands, an expression of deep sadness on his face.

"My God!" he exclaimed in a low voice, "she is her living image!" and, going forward, he took her hands in his and held her away from him the better to see her. Evidently a struggle went on in his own mind; he longed to speak to her, and he dare not. "The whole thing is madness," he said; "they had better have left you alone, my child."

"I can go back home now, if you desire it," she answered proudly; "there is no harm done."

"No, you cannot," he answered; "you have yet to learn that we can none of us go back on our ways, we must go forward. Now come and eat your supper."

The table was well spread, and Rosamund was hungry, for they had travelled far and fast and had taken but little time for food on the way. She was a healthy country girl, and found the good food much to her taste and appetite; she drank but water, though he pressed her to let him give her some wine after her long day. But she would not.

When they had finished, he rose, saying: "Now we will go." And addressing himself to the dame, he added, "We will sleep here to-night; you will keep a chamber for the maid next your own. I cannot say at what hour we shall return." And, taking

her cloak, he wrapped Rosamund in it, pulled her hood well over her face, and led her forth. They crossed the Tower Bridge, at the end of which, in the wall, was a low wicket gate beside the large entrance. He gave a long low whistle, which was answered, and the wicket opened to let them pass in. It was so dark that they could hardly see the outline of a man's figure standing before them. He did not wait to be spoken to by the new-comers, but said:

"You know the way, my lord; you will find a lantern behind the first door of the White Tower."

"Thank you, Joseph! Is all well?"

"All is well, my lord," answered the man.

Taking Rosamund's hand, they crossed the Tower Green together, and then entered beneath an archway into a vaulted passage, from which stone steps rose directly to the upper story. They met no one on their way, and at last came to a stand-still before an oaken door with heavy bolts and bars. He gave three taps at the door, and then he inserted a large key into the lock, turned it, and gently pushed Rosamund into the room. She made a few steps forward, looked up, and saw standing in the centre of the room, watching her, the prisoner we have already described. In her hasty passage across the Green and up the stairs her hood had fallen back, and left her face exposed to view. The man started, stepped forward, took her in his arms, and kissed her on her lips. Such a warm, loving kiss as Rosamund had never felt before.

"Oh, sir!" she said, and fought for him to let her go. He laughed a sad laugh as he placed her on the ground.

"It is not the first time I have kissed you, my child," he said, still holding her; "but you have had time to forget what a father's kiss is like."

"Are you my father?" said Rosamund.

"I am," he answered; "an unworthy one, seeing I have done nought for you to make your life joyous."

"Indeed you have," answered Rosamund, "for you

provided me with foster-parents, and until Derward went I never knew what it was to be sad."

"I am glad on't. Let me look at you, I have so many years to make amends for."

He seated himself, and held her before him.

"There is no mistake, Grey," he said, "she is her mother's child and mine. God bless her!"

And once more he took her in his arms and fondled her, and Rosamund felt the tears gather in her eyes at so much love. Father John had been good to her, and so had Lisbeth, but she had never felt anything like this. There was a something indefinable in this new love. He took her on his knee, and the man who had brought her sat beside them.

"You are foolish, Edward," he said. "I did not think you would have told her."

"Not told her!" he said. "Then I could not have kissed her, it would have been like bringing me a wooden doll. No, if we never meet again she shall know what a father's love is."

"But why have you not sent for me sooner?" said Rosamund. "Why are you here in this grim prison-house?"

"Because it has been the queen's pleasure," he answered. "I offended her high majesty, and so she has kept me a prisoner."

"And my mother?" said Rosamund.

"She was a prisoner too; and she died, she died here, because they took her children from her."

"Ah!" said Rosamund. "Tell me more of this, Father, I shall understand it."

"Grey, how much shall I tell her?" he said.

"You were never good at feigning, Edward. Tell her as little as you can, it will be better for her."

He paused for a few seconds.

"Then I will tell her nothing save that I am her father, and that my heart yearned so to see her after I heard of Derward's death, that I besought you to bring her to me. Do you understand, my child?"

"Oh yes! I understand," said Rosamund; "I am not a child. And I too have yearned after my father and mother since Derward left me, and since I knew John Weston was not my father nor Lisbeth my mother. Derward said it did not matter, that he would make a name for himself. But a girl cannot even do that."

While she was speaking to him, he had touched the gold chain on her neck.

"That was your mother's," he said. "It was my gift to her."

"And she died, though you loved her so?"

"In our family," said Lord Grey, "death and love are closely knit together."

"And will you always be a prisoner, Father,—always?" she said. "Why will not the queen let you free?" she asked.

"That I cannot tell you," he answered, "it is her humour. She would have thrown Derward into prison had she known where to find him. But I have good friends in the world who have guarded my children for me."

"But now Derward is dead. What harm can I do you?"

He shook his head. "Not much, truly," he answered, "but she may think it much."

"And you will not tell me your name nor mine own," said Rosamund.

"No," answered her father; "the only chance of your remaining at liberty is that you are John Weston's daughter."

"Then we will not talk of it," said Rosamund; but there came a set determination over her face and a quiet expression in her eyes. She looked round the room, and asked:

"What do you do with yourself all day, Father?"

"I read and I write, and I play the guitar sometimes," he answered, laughing. Lord Edward went across the room, and brought the instrument and laid it before her.

"Your mother was a sweet player, and as long as she lived beguiled the evenings with music."

"I have never seen nor touched a guitar," said Rosamund, looking at it curiously.

"Can you read and write?" he asked.

"Our minister has taught me to read in English and Latin, and even a little Hebrew. But books are scarce with us. Are they with you, Father?"

"Oh no!" he said, laughing. "See!" And he took her to the farther side of the room, where there were piles of books, some of them with costly bindings, others with merely paper covers.

"Those are *Shakespeare's Plays*," he said. "Have you read them, child?"

"No," she answered, "how should I? Father John has been mighty good to me, and whenever he can he buys me a book, but they are few and far between."

"Then I will give you as many as you desire," he said, and he took up a bundle of paper folios. "These are Will Shakespeare's last plays, you shall take them away with you, and when you would have more you have but to let me know."

"Let you know! How can I?"

"We will settle that somehow. She is a chip of the old block, Grey, she loves learning. Let me hear you read," he said; and he laid a volume of *Plato* before her in the original.

Without hesitation she read. "Shall I construe it?" she asked simply.

Both men looked at each other with surprised delight.

"And to say she has been brought up in a little farm-house!" said her father. "Now I look at her closer, her brow is like Jane's, my Kate was less learned. Do you not think so, Uncle?"

"Yes, I am of your opinion. But we must be going, or the house will be shut up."

"True, true!" said the prisoner. "I shall be the more lonely because of the joy I have tasted. Do you take her straight back whence she came?"

"Yes, we must start to-morrow; it would not do for her to be seen about."

"Would it do him a mischief?" asked Rosamund.

"It might, and it might not. It is best to run no risk. Who knows but in a few months you may be free! Sidney and Essex have both promised to use their influence. But marriage and children are what our virgin queen will not tolerate. To lovers she is more lenient, but you are past that, so we must be patient."

"And you will not tell me your name nor mine?" said Rosamund, going up to her father and taking his hand.

"Not yet. Some day perhaps. Be patient, child; as I have said before, I long to be free out of this cage. I have learnt patience within these walls."

"It will come, I am sure it will come," said Rosamund, and she held up her face to him. "Good-bye, Father! Good-bye!"

"Good-bye, my child! God go with you! I am fear some of even knowing you within these walls, they have been fatal to so many of your race. Take her away, Grey, and bring her to me again when you can do so without danger."

So they went back the way they came, and reached the hostel in safety.

The dame took her to a little chamber, helped her undress, and left her with the moon shining through the window on to her little bed. She did not even try to sleep. There are times when sleep takes to itself wings and flies away, and Rosamund lay thinking, trying to unravel the mystery which seemed to envelop her. She had heard the man her father called Grey say in a low voice, "Derward's death will make it easier for you, the girl can be passed over". "Did they pass over Jane?" her father had answered. "Too near, too near!" Grey had answered; and then they had changed the conversation.

Rosamund's mind was very clear. The little learning which she had helped her to reason and to think:

she knew now without the telling that she belonged to a noble, nay, maybe a royal race, and in her imaginings she strove to put two and two together. She knew little of history, little of the royal race. Elizabeth was queen, Mary had been queen before her. Edward had reigned before her—but no, there had been Jane, Queen Jane, whose death had roused the pity of all England, who was talked of in the cottages, and pitied for her youth and her sad ending. And they had spoken of Jane, they had said she was like her. Had she royal blood in her veins, and was it for that reason the queen sought to find her and Derward and kept her father in prison? She fell asleep as the day dawned, and she dreamed that she was walking on Cranbury Hill, and had reached the top, where two roads met. At the end of one she saw a palace, people coming and going, and a lady riding in their midst gorgeously attired. She seemed to recognize some of the men, for they were like those gentlemen, who, as Letty said, were always getting them into trouble. And the other road was peaceful and silent. Flowers grew along the sides, and trees and plants. At the farther end there was a cottage instead of a palace, and Lisbeth and John and Derward and Letty stood in front of it, as if they were awaiting someone. She hesitated for a moment which way she would take—to the palace or the cottage, but her heart was drawn to the old place and the old ways. Those many rich-attired lords and ladies, their glistening jewels, repelled her. And while she was hesitating, a youth of gentle mien and noble bearing came up to her and took her by the hand. "This is the way of peace," he said. He had a student's face, and he held a book in one hand. "Are you sure?" she asked him. "My heart inclines me this way. But my heart may deceive me; perhaps my work lies yonder, my father belongs to those people, and he is in trouble."

"Which thy presence will not lighten," said the youth. "Believe me, come this way."

And as she was about to follow him, she woke.

After that she slept no more, but a clear knowledge

came to her. "I will not ask my father's name, I will never know it, but I will win his freedom, and then I shall be glad. I cannot think of him living alone in that grim prison-house;" and, jumping up, she threw open the little window and looked out. There before her were the walls, with turrets innumerable; a great mass of stone, through which it seemed to her the sun could never penetrate. Beyond she could see the glistening river along which even at this early hour barges and boats went and came. She leant with her elbows on the sill and thought. It was still early, and she went back into her room and dressed herself with care. Grey had told her that as soon as they had breakfasted they must start homewards, so she went downstairs into the room which they had occupied the previous evening, and to her astonishment found her guide there.

"Ah! that is well," he said, rising and taking her hand; "you keep country hours."

"Sir," answered Rosamund, "I am not a child, and I have been thinking all night long of what has happened. It seems to me from what you said that Derward and myself are hindrances to my father. Will you explain to me why this is? I heard him call you Grey, what am I to call you?"

"You may call me Uncle," he said, "it is your right."

"Then, Uncle," she said, as she lifted her head proudly, "take me to the queen."

"That is impossible," he answered, "she hates you."

"She cannot hate me, she does not know me, I am John Weston's daughter."

"She would look you in the face and tell you that is not true," he answered.

"But I would answer that it is," she said, "for I swear I will never call that man in the tower Father. I know not who he is, and I care not; I will love him as a stranger, but were he to come to me to-morrow with great wealth in his hand I would not take it. I am plain Rosamund Weston, and so will I remain till the

day of my death, unless I wed; I will tell the queen that such is my resolve."

"Ah! it was the marriage which was the undoing of your mother and father."

"Then I will never wed; I will take my oath thereto."

"Will you say this to the queen?"

"I will swear it to her," answered Rosamund, "if she will let him go free. I will not dwell with him, and I will not call him Father." As she uttered the words tears filled her eyes, for she remembered that caress which had so moved her.

"Now, my Uncle Grey, will you do my will, and take me to the palace?"

"The shadow which rests upon your father rests upon me also," he answered, "but if you will return with me to your home, I will speak to Philip Sidney, and he will help you to your desire."

"Good!" said Rosamund, "then let us hasten home."

Two nights later there was great joy at the Moat Farm; Letty laughed and wept in turns, and would not let go of Rosamund's hand.

"I have cried my eyes out," she said, "for the loss of you. Now we will dance for your home-coming. Fetch Tom the fiddler."

She was obeyed, and soon there was such merriment and laughter that the sounds descended to the hamlet, and from the cottages there poured forth boys and girls, who shouted one to the other: "Rosamund our Queen of May has come home, and they are dancing up at the Moat Farm!"

And so they trooped up the hill, and it was who should lead her in the dance. Never had Rosamund looked so glad. She was as a queen amongst them, and they were her people. She would never leave them—never, never!

CHAPTER XV

BETWIXT LIFE AND DEATH

I SUPPOSE it will be all over by this time to-morrow," said Rolfe, as he lay stretched on a bed of ferns and bracken in the shelter of his wigwam. It was mid-day, and the heat was intense, the Indians themselves had retired to their habitations to protect themselves from the burning rays."

"Oh yes!" said Derward, "it has come to an end at last. Of course they have to make up their minds what they will do with us. But I think they are sorry for us; they are not half-bad chaps these savages."

"I have always known that," said Rolfe, "and I do not believe there would ever have been any trouble with them if only the English had kept the peace. I wonder what we should feel like in England, if strange folk came and burned our towns and villages! Why, we should run them down like rabbits in their holes. There was no reason for it. However, we have done our best: we have worked for them, we have sung for them, we have played with them, and now they have got to make up their minds what they will do with us. They have prayed over us enough, they have used all manner of incantations, but they cannot discover anything except that we are good fellows like themselves. As for little Pocahontas, she is a brick. She has prayed and begged for us as hard as she could, poor little mite! I saw her this morning, sitting all crumpled up, crying as if her heart would break. 'Never mind,' I said to her, 'it will soon be all over.' But she wrung her hands, 'You don't know, you don't know!' she said."

"Well, I guess we don't know," said Derward. "I

believe it is a beastly business;" and a shudder ran through his young frame, so full of life and strength. "I should not so much mind if they would kill us outright, but to torture us in every limb, to cut us up into little bits, to grill us! No, I must say the idea is horrid!"

"We shall have to put a brave face on it, my boy," answered Rolfe. "We must show them what Englishmen can bear."

"I suppose so," replied Derward.

Rolfe looked at him from under his long lashes; he was sorry for him, more than for himself. He was younger, and had not roughed it as he had done. "I believe he will show the white feather," he thought. "That must not be." He sat up, stretched out his hand towards him, and said earnestly:

"It does seem hard, and we don't know why we should have been born into the world just for this useless purpose, but I suppose it is all right, old fellow. At all events, we shall soon know. We won't lose heart, and we won't lose our faith. It must be all right."

"Of course it must," said Derward, shaking himself. "Only, one can't help thinking of our home people. Rosamund and Letty would be so awfully sorry."

"Ah well! you see," said Rolfe, "I am alone. I have no one to care about me. Tell me about those two girls."

"I have told you about them a hundred times over," answered Derward irritably. "What is the use of thinking of them? They will not even know our end. John Weston must be wondering already why I have not come home with the others, for Sir Richard must be in England, and will have made his own story good." And with youthful impetuosity he added: "I shall owe that man a grudge when I feel the scalping-knife on my head."

"Hush! hush!" said Rolfe. "We are as good as dead men, let us at least forgive our enemies."

Derward stood up and stretched himself.

"The fact is, Rolfe, I don't want to die. There are such a lot of things I want to do. It seems so stupid to stop here." And, turning away so that even Rolfe might not see it, he brushed his hands across his eyes.

Older and wiser men than Derward have shrunk from death, especially such a death as lay before him. During the weeks they had dwelt amongst them, the savages had not failed to explain to him the various tortures to which they subjected their enemies. But somehow he had never realized them till now. They had not been badly treated; on the contrary, though they were not allowed to wander beyond the village, they received their portion of food, the best that could be found. They had lacked for nothing, and in return they had worked for their captors, making hatchets for the men, and rattles and strings of beads for Pocahontas and her companions. And now the end was coming, they were to be judged and executed on the morrow.

At this moment a little figure appeared in the doorway.

"Ah, Pocahontas!" said Rolfe. She came forward, holding in her hands fruits and flowers, and her face, which had been so sad before, was bright with smiles. Her dark eyes shone like stars, and she came and sat down on the bed of leaves close by Rolfe.

"You will eat and drink," she said, "and be merry. Pocahontas will not let them touch you."

"How can you prevent them, little woman? You have tried enough already," said Rolfe.

"Ah," she answered, "you will see! I have thought, and I have prayed to my god and to yours. If one will not hear me, perhaps the other will. I will not let you go into that other place we do not know of. You shall stay here—you will see! you will see!" and she rose laughing. Rolfe was her favourite, but nevertheless she and Derward were great friends, and she went up to him, and took his hand and stroked it.

"I have heard," she said in a whisper, "that they will let you go, but not Rolfe; but I will let Rolfe go."

"Do," said Derward, "I will not go without him. If he dies, I will die."

"And so will I," said Pocahontas.

"What are you two planning?" called out Rolfe.

"Never mind, never mind!" answered the girl, as she ran out of the hut. But they were not to be left alone. A young savage of their own age came in; he was followed by two or three others. They handed the two young men a rude sort of pipe filled with tobacco. They had grown quite accustomed to smoking, and indeed liked it. The savages formed a circle round them, and they smoked in silence. It was not very enlivening, but at least it diverted their thoughts. Whilst this was going on in their wigwam, the king was holding a council of the big chiefs. There were two parties in the camp. One side declared that they should both die, the other side that only Rolfe should suffer; Derward they said had been on their side all the time, he had even been bound for them, but Rolfe had been with the enemy, and had only come to them because of his friend. Influenced by his girl, the king strove hard for them to be set free, but all that he could gain was that Derward should be dismissed, and that Rolfe should be scalped, and killed by the tomahawk afterwards. When they had come to this conclusion, they came forth and announced in the camp that this was their decision, and that the ceremony would take place on the morrow. Then the king gave a great feast, for which preparations had been going on all day long, and they treated their guests with honour, choosing the best morsels for them. To their astonishment, Rolfe showed no sign of fear. Derward, standing up, gave them to understand that if they killed his friend they must kill him. Without much trouble this was agreed upon; they shook them by the hands, patted them on the shoulders, and gave other signs of satisfaction.

"You are a fool, old fellow," said Rolfe. "Why didn't you take your chance?"

"Do you think, when I got back to England I could

have looked a man in the face if I had let you die alone? No, no!" he said. "We have been companions well-nigh three years, we will go through it together." And, strange to say, the fear had died away, and he laughed and danced and made merry. The ceremony was to take place at dawn of day, and so at last they escaped to their wigwam.

"We will have a last sleep," they said. "We shall face the ordeal the better for it."

Before lying down the two young men knelt side by side and prayed:—"Lord, if it be Thy will that we should pass through this ordeal, we are content to do so. We only pray of Thee to give us strength to behave as men and Christians, knowing that this dying is but a little thing, that this life is but a span, but that life eternal is for ever and ever. So let us do Thee honour in our dying, that these heathen may know that Thou art with us, and that Thou upholdest us. But if it be Thy good pleasure to spare our lives, then surely we will strive ever after to serve Thee with all our strength, and will speak to these heathen of Thy power, and seek to our utmost to draw them to Thee. Make us Thy servants to do Thy will, and do Thou with us as Thou wilt. For Christ our Redeemer's sake. Amen."

Then slowly they repeated the Lord's prayer, and, lighting a torch, they read the story of Christ's death and sufferings. "He did it for all men," said Rolfe. "Surely if we by our death convert but one soul to Christ, the soul of that little child who has been so good to us, we shall not die in vain!"

Then they embraced each other, and lay down to sleep. It fell upon them gently, like dew in the morning. They did not see how, at early dawn, Pocahontas crept in and looked at them sleeping; then she went forth again and called her father and some of the young men, and they too gazed at the sleepers in wonderment. "They must have great spirits," he said, "to sleep thus before dying." And as they looked at them the two young men awoke.

"Ah, it is time!" they said, and sprang up, with a smile upon their lips, saying, "We are ready".

The savages brought them fruits and water, and they ate and drank; then they stepped forth into the morning light. The natives had formed a great ring, and in the centre there was a block, made out of a huge forest tree, and men stood round it with sharp wooden knives and tomahawks. Powhattan sat on a stool, arrayed in gorgeous state, with a cloak made out of the feathers of marvellously-coloured birds. His head was adorned with the same, and he wore strings of beads and bracelets and anklets of gold and silver. Other chiefs stood round him in the same apparel, and close beside Powhattan, kneeling on the ground, her face buried in his mantle, was the child. They had striven to take her away, but she would not move. And so she knelt beside her father, his hand resting on her head. There were no other women present; she was the king's privileged darling, he had never opposed her will, and would not have done so now if he could have helped it. The prisoners were brought and placed in the centre, and then there was a great discussion as to why and wherefore they were to suffer.

"I wish they would be quick about it," said Derward, whose nerves were highly strung. By nature he was not cool, he had not as much power over himself as Rolfe, who stood where they had placed him in a careless attitude, smoking a pipe.

Suddenly two savages sprung forward and seized him, pushing Derward on one side. Rolfe had just time to exclaim "Good-bye, Derward, and God bless you!" when he was rushed forward to the block. Derward closed his eyes. Why had they taken his friend first? He could not even move to follow him, for two men had gripped him by the shoulder. Suddenly there was a loud shout, a yell went round the whole circle, with a rumbling sound as of thunder. He looked up, the ranks had broken, before the block stood Rolfe, the executioners had raised their scalping-knives and tomahawks, with which they were ready to dash out his brains, but, clinging to him with her arms round his neck and covering the upper part of his body was the girl Pocahontas.[1] They could not have slain him unless they had slain her. She was a princess and the king's daughter, they dared not touch her. So with their tomahawks suspended in the air, anger and rage on their savage faces, they waited. One man, a great chief, stepped forward, and, bowing before the king, said in his own language:

"Is it your pleasure that justice should be done? If so, take thy daughter hence."

"It is not my pleasure," answered the king; "every-one of you knows that I have yielded to your will and pleasure, not to my own. If Pocahontas will not move away, and you think proper to slay her, then do so, it is your right. But my tribe and your tribe shall from henceforth be enemies, and I will fight you till I have slain every one of you."

As he spoke he made a sign, and all the men of his tribe crowded round him. The sun had risen on this wonderful scene; the birds' feathers with which the savages were clothed made a sort of rainbow encircling the two principal figures—the man standing, and the girl clasping him round the neck, almost to suffocation.

Once even he said, "Gently, Pocahontas, or your kindness will kill me."

She was breathing hard, her dusky face had a pale hue over it; she did not tremble, she did not move. Would she conquer and win life for him, or would they both die together?

Voices grew loud, shouts and screams from the savages. Derward was lost in the crowd that thickened round the victims. He strove to make his way toward them, when suddenly he caught sight of a dark figure striking to the right and to the left with his wooden sword and tomahawk.

"Manteo! Manteo!" he called out, and something like

[1] This incident happened, as described, to Capt. John Smith.

the silence after the rumbling of a storm fell upon the crowd.

"If you kill the Englishmen," shouted Manteo, "then the white men will fall upon you and slay you all! Sweep you from the earth with the great fire gun. They are coming, they are close behind!"

There was great confusion as Manteo made his way to where Rolfe still stood.

"Follow me!" he said; and Rolfe, with Pocahontas still clinging to him, obeyed. The girl did not loose her hold of him; she kept her arms tight round his neck, and her dark face rested close to his white one. Her eyes were wonderful to behold, like shining fires. Gradually a little band of men, amongst whom Manteo and Derward were conspicuous, gathered round them. "Move on!" said Manteo; and they walked straight to where the king sat. He rose, and strove to take his daughter from Rolfe, but he could not.

"Give us men to guard us, and I will take him and his friend hence," said Manteo, "to their own people. Quick! Is it to be or not to be?"

"Go!" said the king; and he signed to the five men who had sat with them and smoked the night before.

"We will be your guards," they said. "You need not fear, Pocahontas, we will accompany him."

But Pocahontas did not move or answer, and when they went to take her from him she fell lightly into their arms, and they saw that she had lost consciousness. Rolfe knelt beside her.

"I will never forget thee, my dark princess!" he said, and kissed her hands.

"Come quickly," said Manteo, "or they may alter their minds!" and, catching hold of Derward with one hand and Rolfe with the other, he and some twenty or thirty men started off running. The savages were stunned; they thought it was a supernatural power which had accomplished this deliverance. Their superstition was roused, and they made no attempt to hinder them. So the fugitives ran until they were many miles

away in the forest, and then they paused, and ventured for the first time to breathe freely.

"Saved, saved, Rolfe!" said Derward; and they threw themselves into each other's arms, embracing frantically.

"You cannot go back to your people, for there are none of them left," said Manteo. "A great man came with ships, and brought them provisions, entreating of them to remain. At first they promised that they would, but at the last moment they would not, and so he took them all on board his ship and sailed away with them."

"Do you mean to say Roanoke is forsaken, then?" asked Derward.

"Yes; there are a few huts, but that is all. You must come and dwell with me and my tribe. You know our tribe is established at Croatan, not far up the James river. We will befriend you, many of us are Christian. Your people have done me great honour, for by the orders of Raleigh, the chief who commanded the expedition, I have been made Lord of Roanoke."[1]

"There is nothing else for us to do," said Rolfe. "We owe our lives to you, and probably should not be safe anywhere else."

"Not for the present, at least," answered Manteo. "For as soon as your enemies find you have escaped them, they will turn round upon your friend Powhattan, the Mohawk chief, and there will be a great fight. They were ready to break out when we left them, but it was all so quickly done, and Powhattan's men surrounded us so well, that we escaped."

"You have all been brave, and good to us," said Derward; and they went among their Indian friends who were still with them, and shook hands with them all, and thanked them in their own language.

"Well, my lord," said Derward laughingly to Manteo, "you are master of the land; will you suffer us to go

[1] Manteo was invested with the rank of a feudal baron. It was the first peerage created by the English in America.

to Roanoke, and see if we can find some traces of our companions?"

"As you will," said Manteo, "but I do not think it likely you will find any trace of them. However, we will go if it will satisfy you."

They marched in that direction, and at last arrived at the island, to find it utterly forsaken; and all the signs were present to indicate that if any inhabitants had been left behind, they had been massacred by the savages.

"Then we are alone here," said Rolfe to Derward. "For the present we have nothing better to do than to live among Manteo's people even as if we belonged to them. I am fully persuaded that in time the English will return. The land is too fair for them to forsake such a country."

"I am content," said Derward; "we are both young, and we have time before us." And they went back with Manteo to his wigwam. He and his wife welcomed them, and the mother and the kindred of Manteo greeted them. King Wingina also heard that the two Englishmen whom he loved had taken up their abode with Manteo, and he sent for them, and besought their friendship. So the two friends who had faced death together dwelt in peace, and no one hindered them.

CHAPTER XVI

THE QUEEN'S VERDICT

THE lately knighted Sir Philip Sidney, who was at this time at the height of his favour with Queen Elizabeth, was crossing the courtyard of the Palace of Whitehall. The queen had but lately bestowed upon him a grant of thirty million acres in certain parts of America not yet discovered. Of late years the gift of unknown lands had become habitual. A great number of English noblemen found themselves thus masters of tracts of country in the Far West almost as large as England itself. What they were to do with them they did not ask, but they believed them to contain mines of future wealth.

Sir Philip on this occasion had not come to court on his own account, but rather out of his kindliness and natural courtesy. A maiden in simple attire was walking beside him. Her gown was of fine grey cloth with a fair train, her throat was enveloped in a sort of habit shirt, with a high collar, and small ruffle of white lawn, wrought with gold. The sleeves of fine linen were smocked; they were white like the winter's snow, tied with silken bands at the wrist. Her hair was for the first time in her life hidden away. She wore what was called a French hood, which consisted of three squares, the peaks standing up full three or four inches from the head. It was a chaste attire, and became well the face of her who wore it—even Rosamund Weston. She was very pale, and in her brown eyes there was an anxious look as, descending from the cabriolet in which Sir Philip Sidney had brought her to the palace, she walked beside him.

There was no sign of excitement in her manner; her carriage was dignified and graceful, as if the scene around her were familiar to her. A word to the usher from Sir Philip and they were admitted into the royal apartments, the ante-rooms of which were filled with applicants awaiting a possible interview; not always with the queen, but often with the lords in waiting, or gentlemen who had some influence at court. There were many present who evidently knew Sir Philip, and smiled and bowed to him, wondering in their hearts who the maid could be who was thus honoured by his attention.

At last they reached a door before which stood two men on guard, dressed in the curious habit of the day—crimson tunic and flat hat, and holding in their hands great halberds, such as we may still see at the Tower of London. Sir Philip spoke to one of them. He opened the door immediately, and allowed him to pass with Rosamund into an inner chamber.

"You will abide here for a few minutes," said Sir Philip, "while I seek the queen. You need have no fear, no one will disturb you, for no one can come through here without the password which I gave."

"I am not afraid," she answered with a sweet smile, "only I wish it were all over."

"Naturally," he answered, and with a kindly smile he left her.

She seated herself in the recess of a window, looking on to a courtyard below. It seemed very strange to her to find herself thus in the queen's palace, she, simple Rosamund Weston, who till within the last few weeks had never left her village. Had she thought much of herself, she might have been frightened at the greatness and the grandeur of all round her; but she was not thinking of herself, she was thinking of what she had come to do, namely, to deliver the prisoner, and to give up for ever a possible birthright.

The Lady Mary Sidney had designed her gown, and all the *et cetera* which made up her apparel. And, womanlike, she had taken a great delight in it. It dawned upon

her that in the position which she was willingly setting on one side she might always have had soft linen and rich attire. The feeling was one of those flashes of vanity which come to all girls at some time in their lives. She was roused by Sir Philip's voice saying:

"The queen is ready to hear your petition. Will you follow me?"

She rose immediately, and almost before she was aware of the fact she found herself in a small octagonal room, hung with tapestry, at the farther end of which was a high chair, in which a lady, whom she at once divined to be the queen, was seated. Elizabeth was at this time a woman over sixty, but in her dress and manner she might have been a girl of twenty. She wore a richly-brocaded crimson gown, the long bodice of which was gorgeously covered with lace and jewels; a deep ruffle of stiffened muslin and costly lace towered round her neck, opening in front, and showing her bare throat with strings of pearls and other precious stones which she wore round it. Her hair was dressed high, and bedecked also with jewels and feathers. Her feet, upon which she wore high shoes, also of crimson with gold embroidery, rested on a footstool. It was a gorgeous presence, and struck poor simple Rosamund with awe.

"Kneel," whispered Sir Philip Sidney in her ear.

And she knelt on the threshold, her hands folded before her.

"Your Majesty," said Sir Philip, bowing low before the queen, "this is the young maiden of whom I spoke to you, and for whom I ventured to ask a private interview, seeing she has a request to make which it were better others should not hear."

He had approached quite close to the queen, and as he spoke he dropped on one knee. The queen laughed a little shrill laugh, and, stretching out the hand in which she held a fan, she tapped him on the shoulder.

"You are a cunning courtier, sweet Sir Philip, accustomed to sing of shepherds and shepherdesses till

you have given them a value which is not their own. You distinctly told me that your protégé was a simple country girl; she has not that mien. Stand up and look me in the face, wench."

Instantly Rosamund rose, and, lifting her head, looked at the queen, who started, flushed, and said angrily to Sir Philip:

"Who is she, where have you found her? Is it to mock me that you have brought her here?"

Bending forward, Sir Philip spoke a few words rapidly in French. Now, this always delighted the queen. She was a good scholar, and she liked to be acknowledged as such.

"Not know? You say she does not know?" she answered in the same language.

Still with a certain tone of anger in her voice the queen asked:

"Whence do you come? What do you require of me? We are not accustomed to such visitors."

By this time Rosamund was trembling from head to foot, but with a considerable command over herself she said:

"Pardon, gracious Majesty, mine is a strange story, and only a queen whom I am told has wisdom like unto Solomon's could understand and unravel it. I do not myself understand it. Therefore when I have said what I know, I will leave it in your royal hands to deal with me as seems best to you."

"She speaks well," said the queen, looking at Sir Philip, and, bending forward, she whispered something in his ears.

"Let her tell her own story, your Majesty, and then, as she wisely says, nothing will be left for her but to abide by your decision."

Nothing flattered Elizabeth so much as when her wisdom was given full play. She loved to be compared to the great King of Israel, and though for some as yet unknown reason she shrank from the girl, still she was fascinated by her.

"Speak quickly, child," she said somewhat gruffly, "for we have a council at mid-day and it is now well nigh eleven o'clock."

Gathering herself together, forcing herself to speak, though her voice trembled, Rosamund answered:

"I am Rosamund Weston, the niece of John Weston, yeoman, of the Moat Farm, on Cranbury Hill. At least I was, so I thought. I had one brother, Derward, but he is dead, for he sailed in one of the ships which went westward ho to discover new countries."

The queen started.

"Is this so, Sir Philip?"

"It is, your Majesty. The lad was enamoured with the stories he heard, and he went to sea in one of Raleigh's ships some two years ago. The ship returned without him, but in the late expedition under Sir Richard Grenville to the island of Roanoke he was found again. Having lived with the savages, and made friends with the chief men of the tribes, he proved very useful, and when Sir Richard pushed inland he and his friend John Rolfe served him as guides. Unfortunately, for some petty theft Sir Richard fired a village. Young Derward did his utmost to prevent this act, and Sir Richard accused him of mutiny, and would have punished him for such. Both he and his companion Rolfe escaped and fell into the hands of the savages. We have heard since that they were carried inland, and that for Sir Richard's destruction of their property the natives wreaked their vengeance on them. There is not the least doubt but that both Derward and his friend are dead."

It was the first time Rosamund had heard the real story of her brother's death, and involuntarily tears rolled down her face.

"I understand," said the queen. "And so this girl comes to ask me to punish Sir Richard."

"Oh no! your Majesty," said Rosamund. "What good would revenge do me? It would not give my brother back to me."

"Then what do you want?" said the queen impatiently.

"Before Derward went to sea," said Rosamund, "he learned and I learned that we are not John Weston's children, that we were given to him and Dame Lisbeth in charge, when we were quite little, before I can remember. They went one night to the Tower of London, and we were given to them. They received also a goodly sum of money, to keep us, and be silent. Father John wanted money for his farm, and he has used it well, so that there is no such farm in all Kent as John Weston's."

"Why, this is treason!" said Elizabeth. "Who are these children, and by what right were they taken from our care and sent to strangers?"

Suddenly something seemed to flash across her mind, she rose quickly.

"Treason, to our royal person!" she said angrily. "This is punishable by death!"

Even Sir Philip turned pale.

"The girl is——" She stopped, or rather Sir Philip stopped her, saying quickly:

"She does not know, she has never heard the name. Do not give utterance to it, my gracious Majesty. Quick! go on," he whispered aside to Rosamund.

She, clasping her hands and terrified at the queen's anger, exclaimed:

"A few weeks back I was fetched one night by a man of the name of Grey——"

"There, there, I told you so! The Greys are mutinous!" said the queen. "Treason, treason everywhere!

Rosamund continued quickly:

"He took me that night to the Tower. There I saw a man who I was told is my father. He had been a long time in prison because he had offended your Majesty on account of Derward and myself."

"It was not me, it was my sister Mary," said the queen. "But she was right. You should never have been born."

"That is what I have come to ask your Majesty. Let me be dead as Derward is dead, and let this poor man who has been so long in durance go once more forth into the world and live. For it is not living where he now abides."

"Is she so very simple? Does she know what she asks?" said the queen, turning to Sir Philip.

"She knows enough to understand that she is selling her birthright, to give her father liberty and life," answered Sir Philip. "She does not even ask how or why."

"No," said Rosamund, stepping forward and kneeling low before the queen's footstool, "I am Rosamund Weston, and I would remain thus. I swear solemnly that I will never seek to know what other name I might have borne, or what estate I might lay claim to, so your Majesty give this poor man his liberty."

"Will you put that in writing," said the queen, "and sign it?"

"Most gladly," answered Rosamund.

"But if this brother of yours should return and lay claim to what you are so willing to resign?"

"He never will," said Rosamund. "And if it please God he do return I will answer for his honour with my own, and I will deliver myself up to your Royal Highness to do with me as you think right."

There was such nobility in the girl's face and manner, such perfect dignity! She did not cringe or pray; she asked a simple boon as one woman might ask from another higher than herself, and the queen felt it. Elizabeth was sensitive in the highest degree, and could appreciate a character so firm and yet so gentle as was Rosamund Weston's. And then the mood was on her.

"Try her, Philip," she said; "tell her who she is."

"It is your desire? I beg of you to pause and think whether it be well to do so or not."

"I do not require to think, I command you," said Elizabeth.

And Sir Philip spoke:

"You are of royal blood, Rosamund," he said, "the daughter of the Earl of Hertford, and Katherine Grey his wife, sister of Jane Grey, who perished in the Tower for assuming to call herself queen."

"I know, I know," said Rosamund, forgetting in whose presence she stood. "And you think I would be queen, your Majesty? Never, never! I am plain Rosamund Weston."

"Yes, you are nobody," said the Queen harshly, "for the marriage of which Sir Philip speaks was declared null and void, and the children born thereof illegitimate. It is because your father disputed this that he was imprisoned, and has remained there, seeing that he is obstinate, and will not allow that you and your brother cannot claim to be his and Katherine's lawful heirs."

"Poor Father!" said Rosamund. "But that will not matter now, seeing I am ready to sign any deed, claiming only to be John Weston's daughter; for he is willing I should bear his name, and will adopt me as his daughter."

The queen bent forward and looked at the brave girl, with an almost soft expression in her steel-grey eyes.

"Do you know what you are renouncing?" she asked.

"No," replied Rosamund; "but I know what I possess in the love of John and Lisbeth Weston, and I desire no better life than the one which I have led up to the present time with them."

"But you may marry," said the queen, "for you are a fair maiden, and your rights, as your father calls them, may pass to your children, as was the case with your mother. Your father has no rights, but your mother was, as I am, great-niece to Henry VII."

"I will renounce it for myself and my descendants," said Rosamund, smiling. And then her overwrought nerves gave way, and she threw herself at Elizabeth's feet, laid her head on the cushion, and thus prone on the ground sobbed forth:

"Let my father go free, gracious queen, or let me take his place!"

"You are willing to go to prison for the freedom of a father whom you do not know?" asked the queen.

"Yea, yea, I am quite willing!" she answered.

"It is well," said the queen. "I will grant your request. Sir Philip, call my secretary."

Sir Philip looked at her.

"Go!" she repeated. And he obeyed.

Rosamund lay still, and the queen looked at her. She was like a wounded dove, so delicate in form and shape and colouring. The queen sighed. She too had been a prisoner in the Tower, she too had known what it was to stand in daily fear of her life! But she did not speak to her, she let her lie there in sweet abandonment. The door opened, and Sir Philip, followed by the secretary, entered.

"Write," she said, as the latter took his place at the table, "an order for the confinement of Rosamund Weston in the Tower of London, at the queen's pleasure, also for the liberation of my Lord Hertford within the next twenty-four hours." When she heard the last words Rosamund burst into a flood of tears.

"Oh you are gracious!" she cried. "Long live our gracious queen!"

The utter unselfishness, the sweetness, of the spontaneous thanks touched the hearts of all those present. There was not so much as a thought of self—her father would be free, what mattered the rest? Sir Philip watched the queen closely. He saw that she was moved, her lips half-opened to speak again, but she caught his eye, and the cold grey shadow of queendom enveloped her.

"Call my guards," she said. "Rise, maiden."

Rosamund obeyed, and stood with folded hands at the foot of the throne, with quiet dignity, and with a countenance so soft and sweet, so tender in its yielding, that Sir Philip could not bear to look at her. She was such a child; did she know what she was doing? Her aunt and her mother had both died in that Tower, almost as young as she was. Was she going thither to fade, as

the flowers fade when no sunlight warms them into life? He knew that one word from his lips might suffice to send him also to that dreaded Tower—that tomb of youth, ambition, and happiness! So he kept silence. Surely the queen would relent at the last moment. He looked at her covertly. Her lips were tightly shut, her eyes were cold, there was no sign of yielding. The door opened again, and two of the queen's guards entered and stood to attention.

"Give me that paper to sign," said her Majesty to the secretary. On bended knee he approached with the parchment and a pen. The queen took the pen and signed "ELIZABETH R.". "Affix the seals, let all things be done in order," she said.

Rosamund had not moved, but now she lifted her head, and a glorious smile played over her face, a smile of infinite joy, such as one sees in pictures of the early martyrs. Truly it is the interpretation of that most holy thing, self-abnegation.

"Remove the prisoner," said the queen, "and take my order to the Lieutenant of the Tower. If you have any message for your own people," she added, addressing herself to Rosamund, "you can have speech with Sir Philip Sidney."

The girl curtsied low.

"I would ask one favour more of your Majesty," she said.

"What—another! Are you not satisfied that you have got your will, maiden?" exclaimed the queen.

"I am satisfied," she answered; "only of your graciousness, I would entreat you not to let my Lord Hertford know how and why he has obtained his freedom. Let him think it is of your Majesty's great goodness." And once more clasping her hands gently, she added, "He might not chose to take it."

"So be it," said the queen. And addressing herself to the guards she said, "You will tell the Lord Lieutenant that he has no reason to give my Lord Hertford why or wherefore he is set free, it is my pleasure."

The men bowed.

"Go!" said the queen to Rosamund.

Once more she curtsied, and then she turned and went, not slowly or unwillingly, but with a light step and a smile on her lips. No captive ever went so readily to her prison. She passed out, and the door closed upon her.

For a few seconds the queen leant back in her chair. Sir Philip watched her. There was yet time, she might withdraw her order, she might send him after Rosamund! But she did not move, she gave no sign, only suddenly she burst into laughter, a shrill, hard laugh. Not the soft music which gladdens the heart of man and makes the world seem brighter.

"What a thing it is to be of royal blood, be it but a few drops!" she said. "That girl has my father's blood in her veins, she would go to her death like a queen. But we must quench it. She must marry a man of low degree, so it will be diluted. Have I done well, Sir Philip, to your humour?" she added sarcastically.

"Your Majesty has acted according to her own wisdom. How shall a poor man who has no royal blood in his veins venture to judge Her Majesty?"

The queen looked at him, and said in a low voice:

"You are sorry for the maid?"

"I am sorry for her, as I would be for any wild bird suddenly caged. But your Majesty knows best, it may be necessary;" he paused, then added slowly, "for a time."

"You will be careful, Sir Philip," said Elizabeth, "not by any word or sign of yours to signify to others where Rosamund Weston is confined. You understand?"

"I do, your Majesty. It may be hard and difficult to accomplish, for it is known that she came hither with me; but I am bound to obey your Majesty, and I will do so."

"It is well, now conduct me to the council chamber;" and the queen, descending from her chair, walked towards him, holding out her hand.

He took it, raised it to his lips, and then called out in

a loud voice so that the guards could hear: "Make way for the queen!" Immediately the doors were thrown open, and he led her along the corridor, towards the council chamber, guards going before and following after. A herald blew a trumpet, and pages called out: "The queen, make way for the queen!"

CHAPTER XVII

LETTY'S SORROW

WHEN Sir Philip left the palace that day he was in his heart sorely puzzled. How was he to account to anyone, the Westons or his own friends, for Rosamund's sudden disappearance? John Weston would surely demand her of him, and when Lord Hertford was set at liberty he would do likewise. To avoid immediate enquiries he betook himself to Penshurst, to consult with his sister, Lady Mary Sidney; he had always recourse to her in any difficulty. They were more than ordinary sister and brother, they were comrades and friends. When he entered her room on the following day, she looked up smiling.

"Well, what is the result?" she asked. "Was the queen gracious? Has she granted the child's prayer?"

"She has and she has not," he answered. "Mary, I am sorely puzzled, for I cannot even tell you the truth, and yet I would have your advice."

"That is impossible, if I know not the whole case."

"You might try," he answered, bending forward. "Read as you would read in a book, between the lines, only do not tell me what you read."

"Good!" she answered, "I will do my best;" and she came and sat down beside him.

"Women are strange beings," he said, "they give with one hand and they take away with the other. At this hour Lord Hertford is a free man, but why and by whose means he is ignorant, and he is to be left in his ignorance. Such are the queen's orders."

Mary laughed. "Surely he will guess, unless the walls of his prison have dazed his brain. Tell me, did

the child look well, did she play her part becomingly?"

"As if she had been at court all her life," answered Sir Philip; "you have an apt pupil. She curtsied as if she had never done anything else, and she spoke to her majesty with becoming modesty, but not with servility."

"Did you take her back yesterday to the Moat Farm, or did she join her father, Lord Hertford?"

"I have told you," said Sir Philip, "that he is not to know through whom he has won his liberty, and I have not been to the Westons'."

"Then where is the girl?"

"That is what I cannot say. There lies my difficulty."

"But you left her, where?"

"She left me in the queen's chamber."

"And went forth alone?" asked Lady Mary.

"Alone, and yet not alone," he answered. "There, it is no use talking, I cannot answer you, for if I do I run the chance of losing my head or finding myself shut up in Lord Hertford's place."

Lady Mary looked at him in surprise. "What will you tell the Westons?"

"Just so—what shall I tell the Westons?"

She paused. "What you have told me," she continued quickly. "I will go with you. They are reasonable folk, and they will trust your honour."

"I am not to be trusted," said Sir Philip. "The girl may disappear, I may never know her whereabouts. The queen bound me by a promise, and I, like a fool, gave it. I thought only of the one thing that we went for, the liberty of Lord Hertford."

"Oh you poets!" exclaimed Lady Mary. "You never see beyond the present moment, the present desire."

"If I had refused the queen, she would have forced me or made a prisoner of me. Not that this thought troubled me, for I did not think at all, except for the gaining of our request. And when we obtained it I was triumphant. And so was Rosamund. She went forth from the queen's presence with a beaming face, she had

no after-thought, and as she passed before me she smiled. How could I be otherwise than content? Only when I had conducted her majesty to the council chamber did it strike me that the whole thing was a huge mistake, and might involve me in much trouble. I think the queen knew it when she bade me farewell, for she said with a smile of irony, 'You have much business to see to, Sir Philip, we will excuse your attendance on our person for some days'."

"And you do not know what has become of the girl?"

"I heard what her majesty said, but I am bound over to silence," he answered.

"Order the horses, we will ride over to John Weston's at once," said Lady Mary.

"It is nearly mid-day," said Sir Philip, "we shall not be back till night. Is it not too far for you, Mary?"

"Nay, this matter must be settled without delay. Your responsibility does but increase with every hour. We will ride quickly."

In less than half an hour they were mounted and riding on their way. They did not speak much, though now and again, to cheer him, Lady Mary talked of matters which concerned them both. Among other things, of her approaching marriage, and the separation which this would entail, for she was betrothed to Lord Pembroke, and an early day had been fixed for their marriage. It was somewhat late in the afternoon when they reached the Moat Farm.

"Ah, here they are again, these great folks!" said Letty, spying them from the window. "It means more sorrow, Mother, more sorrow. And my sweet Rosamund is not with them."

Without waiting for her mother's answer, she ran out.

"Rosamund, where is Rosamund?" she asked.

"Do not take sorrow by the forelock, child," said Lady Mary, as her brother lifted her from her horse and she came up the steps to the house. Letty curtsied, but there was no smile on her pretty face.

"Oh, my lady!" she said, "we have no peace in these days of coming and going. Where is Rosamund?"

Lady Mary's only answer was to put her arm round Letty's neck and kiss her. Sir Philip came slowly behind. A man has always less courage than a woman where home disasters are concerned, and at this hour Sir Philip would sooner have faced a foe with whom he could fight, than this gentle girl, and Dame Lisbeth, who stood meekly in the background. It was Lady Mary who carried the position. Loosening her hold of Letty she went up to Lisbeth, and, taking her hand, said:

"My brother and myself are in great trouble. He went up to London, as you know, with Rosamund, but she has not come back with him. She went forth out of his presence of her own free-will, and he has neither seen nor heard of her since."

"You mean, my lady, that he has lost the child?" exclaimed Lisbeth.

"Yes, he has lost her," Lady Mary answered.

"I was not master of her fate, she went and came of her own accord," said Sir Philip.

Letty began to cry; Lisbeth looked vacantly about her; then, saying "I will tell my husband", she ran out of the room, to return a few minutes later with John.

"What is this my wife tells me, sir?" he said, not forgetting in his trouble to salute both Lady Mary and Sir Philip courteously. "Can it be true that you have lost the child?"

"I have not lost her," answered Sir Philip, "but she went from me and I could not stop her. John Weston, you know me for an honourable man, you know full well why she went to London. She has attained her object, but she has sacrificed herself. My solemn belief is that it will come all right if we remain silent. The situation is a difficult one. She has powerful enemies, but she has also powerful friends. I would entreat you all to keep silence, to let no one know that she has disappeared. So one day you may find her in your midst again. If not, John Weston, I will tell you where and from whom

to claim her. For henceforth she bears your name, she is your daughter, and belongs to none other."

He looked John Weston straight in the face as he spoke, and the man understood, though the women did not.

"I will follow your advice, sir," he answered, "up to a certain time, and you will stand by me I am sure, if I am called upon to claim my daughter."

"I will stand by you at any cost to myself, John," said Sir Philip, "and I hope and believe we shall gain the day." While the two men were talking together, Lady Mary was occupied with Lisbeth and Letty.

"Be patient," she was saying. "I do not believe any harm will happen to her. There is a secret. You know it, you have always known it. After clouds come sunshine, and this is what you have to look forward to. We cannot tell you more now; we do not know more ourselves, not much at least. But it will all come right. Rosamund is so good and pure, and loves others better than she loves herself."

"Ah, that she does!" cried Letty.

"Then rest content," said Lady Mary. "Be sure when she comes back to you there will be no shadow between you. She will come home a free maiden, and no one will take her from you."

"Are you sure of that?" said Letty; "not even the father she has been to seek?"

"No," said Sir Philip; "I answer for that. He has no right over her. Henceforth she is John Weston's daughter. As such he can claim her any day, only for the present it is well to bide in patience, both for her sake and for mine."

"I understand," said the farmer, "and I will allow nothing to vex either her or you as far as I can help. For one year I will wait, after that I will take matters in my own hands."

"So be it," said Sir Philip. "I do not think you will have to wait so long."

The clouds had broken, everything seemed simpler to

them all; the calm, strong words Sir Philip had spoken brought comfort to their hearts, and the matter being so to speak settled, Lisbeth's thoughts turned naturally on hospitality.

"You have come a long way, my lady, will you partake of our poor fare before you ride homewards?"

"Indeed we will, I am starving," said Lady Mary. And then there was a great bustling, and the table was soon laden with simple but good fare, of which they all partook together, Sir Philip insisting thereon. A common trouble draws people so quickly together, that when the brother and sister rose to go, they felt as if they were leaving old friends.

"I will keep you informed of everything which can interest you," said Sir Philip. "At the same time I advise you again to keep quiet; to all enquiries of strangers just say 'Rosamund has not returned yet, she is with friends'." This they agreed to, and then Sir Philip and Lady Mary took their leave. They rode away thankful that they had found honest folk, who were willing to trust them, and not to raise more difficulties than the position demanded.

At first Letty went about her work, if sadly, yet after such a fashion that no one particularly noticed her; but at the end of a few weeks she was so altered, her rosy cheeks so pale, that her father and mother were alarmed. Usually she was so noisy, so full of life; but her spirits seemed quite to have left her. She would neither eat nor laugh nor make merry. No one had ever thought that Letty would take anything seriously to heart, but this loss of her two friends was more than she could bear; she sat in the window at her spinning-wheel, but she did not spin. She moved about the house and garden a ghost of her former self. She had not even Williams to talk to; no news had been received of him, no one knew what had become of him. At her wits' end what to do, Lisbeth sent for the minister, who, though he had not spoken much of it, was deeply concerned at the loss of his pupil, and when he heard

the story of Sir Philip Sidney's visit and its results, he was grieved. No one really knew that she had gone up to London, because some days before she had been sent for to Penshurst, and had remained there. Communication was not easy in those days between one place and another, and so the Westons knew neither where she went nor when she left Penshurst. The conclusion the minister came to was that they should do as Sir Philip had asked them, namely, wait patiently. But this was a hard matter for Letty, and she moped about the place and would not listen to any reason.

"She will die!" said her mother sadly. And the neighbours were only too ready to re-echo the cry. The truth was, Letty was lonesome, neither she nor her mother knew, let alone strangers, how her life had been wrapped up in Rosamund and Derward. So the days and weeks went by, and she grew paler and paler, wearying for those who were far away. Hers was one of those faithful hearts, which, loving once, loves always. She never reasoned, she never strove after any effect, she just simply lived in their lives, and when they failed her, her own life waned. She had taken to wandering in the fields and meadows, sometimes sitting down and weeping, sometimes merely folding her hands in inaction, wondering in her heart what she could do to find her Rosamund. One day it came to pass that she had gone farther than usual, and had come to a little brook over which a rustic bridge had been thrown. She sat down at the water's edge, and fell to thinking. Suddenly she saw a man crossing the bridge and coming towards her. He wore a great cloak wrapped round him, and a soft cap on his head, from beneath which a quantity of grey hair was visible. She started up, for she recognized instinctively that he was a gentleman, and she hated gentlemen. She reckoned that they had been the cause of all her misery.

"This is my father's land, sir," she said passionately. "Go away!"

"Pardon me," said the stranger. "I have been

directed this way to John Weston's farm, the Moat Farm I think they call it."

"Well then, you may turn back," said Letty impetuously.

"But is this John Weston's farm?" insisted the man.

"That is no business of yours, we will have no gentle folk about our place again. You have brought us ill luck—Derward is gone, and now Rosamund is gone!"

He stepped quickly forward, and asked eagerly:

"Rosamund—Rosamund who?"

"Rosamund Weston," she answered boldly; "and now I am all alone, and my heart is breaking!"

"Poor little maid!" he answered kindly; "if your heart is breaking, it is because it is so young and tender. I have suffered much, I have neither wife nor child, and I am old. And yet my heart has not broken."

"Then it must be very tough," said Letty. "But old folk do not feel like young ones. You have suffered, but you will not suffer much longer. We have so many years to live; how can I live without my friends?"

"By hope," answered the stranger. "*I* have wished to die, but hope has kept me alive—the hope of finding my Derward and my Rosamund," he answered.

"Oh, who are you?" she said. "I, too, want to find Derward and Rosamund."

"I am their unhappy father," he answered. "Come, sit down and tell me all about them, and why you are mourning their loss."

"You their father!" said Letty. "Methinks Rosamund has gone to find you. A great gentleman, Sir Philip Sidney, fetched her away, and she has never come back again. That is why I do not love gentlemen. Have you not seen her?"

"Many months ago I saw her," he said; "an old friend brought her to me, but I have not seen or heard of her since. I was in prison, but they have set me free. Why I know not, and I do not care if only I could find the children. They tell me Derward is dead."

"They tell me so too," said Letty, "but I do not think it."

"Is he your sweetheart?"

"Oh no!" said Letty; "he is my dear brother."

"Then why do you think he is not dead?" he asked.

"I don't know. Something tells me that he is not dead," she replied.

"That is hope," said her companion, smiling; "I think you and I are beginning to understand each other. We will both agree that Derward is not dead, and we will put our two heads together and find him."

A light came into Letty's eyes.

"Yes, we will; nobody looks for him, they simply say that he is dead. Ah, I forgot! Williams is gone, and I think he is looking for him. Williams loved him."

"Who is Williams?"

"A farm labourer who loved Derward, and could not abide here without him. When he heard that he was dead over the sea he disappeared. I know he hated the sea, but he loved Derward so well that he would not mind it if he could find him on the other side." She spoke of the other side as if it had been a mill-pond, and the stranger smiled.

"Well, that settles Derward," he said. "I think when I have found Rosamund I shall go after Williams too."

"I don't think that will be very difficult for a man," she answered. "I am only a girl and cannot go far, for I have no money, and then it would break my mother's heart."

"Hearts seem to break easily about here," said the man. "But if I am to find Rosamund, you must tell me how and when she went away, and all concerning her."

"If I were sure you were her father. But Sir Philip said the other day that my father was hers, and no one else had a right to her."

"We shall see about that," said the stranger haughtily. "Now tell me what I ask you."

"Tell me your name first," said Letty.

"My name is Edward Seymour." She hesitated a moment, then she said:

"It can do neither good nor harm. If you find her, well and good; if not, someone else must. I will not rest until I find my friend again."

"Then I will be your knight," he answered. "I will not rest till I have found Rosamund, and it seems to me, from what you have already said, that this Sir Philip Sidney can help us in the matter."

"Yes, and Lady Mary, his sister. She is a sweet lady. She came and told us that Rosamund was lost, but only for a time; and she took supper with us, and Father promised he would wait one year for news of Rosamund, but then he would move heaven and earth to find her."

"I will not wait a year," answered Edward Seymour. "I think you have given me a clue, fair maiden, I will go to Penshurst. In the meantime you and I are friends; tell no one you have met such a man as Edward Seymour. In two days I will come back here and tell you what I have learned."

She jumped up with all the quick alertness of the old Letty.

"Oh, I am glad!" she said. "I am sure you will find her."

"Yes, I will," he answered; "and when I have found her, I shall have two daughters instead of one. Fare thee well, sweet maid!" And he kissed her hand, as if she had been a princess, instead of a plain yeoman's daughter.

CHAPTER XVIII

HOME AGAIN

"I ASSURE you," said Sir Philip Sidney, "that your best mode to ensure the rapid liberation of your daughter Rosamund will be for you to disappear. Take ship and sail for the West, and when you return you will find the maiden with John Weston. I will take care that the news of your departure shall be conveyed to the queen. You are impoverished, you have no object in life; the queen is not likely to give you any appointment, and your absence will be agreeable to her. As long as you are here, I doubt whether you will find Rosamund."

"Where is she?" asked Edward Seymour.

"That I am not at liberty to tell you. When you return, as I have said before, I have no doubt you will find her."

"On your honour, can you assure me that no harm will happen to her in the meanwhile?" asked Edward Seymour.

"I think she may suffer if you remain here, but she will not if you go."

"I will think the matter over and let you know. If it were any other man who advised me I should not heed him," said Seymour; "but you are not like other men, Sir Philip, therefore I will take the matter into consideration."

The poor prisoner, Edward Seymour, Earl of Hertford, had been two days at Penshurst. At first Sir Philip had refused him all information, but at last he had spoken thus to him:

"I can do nothing for you," he said; "I am bound to

secrecy. You know what the queen is, and she has taken possession of Rosamund. But I am persuaded it is merely bravado, and to make you wince, for you know full well she does not love you. Leave her alone, and she will come round."

Not seeing the possibility of acting otherwise, and fearful of raising the queen's ire, Edward Seymour decided to follow this advice.

A few weeks after this interview Philip Sidney received the command of troops destined for Holland, to fight against Philip of Spain in the Netherlands. A day or two later a letter from Edward Seymour reached him, asking him to enroll him as a volunteer. "I shall so far fulfil your advice of leaving the country," he wrote. "You can, if you will, inform her majesty of my intention, and I trust this may soften her heart toward my daughter."

"Good!" answered Sir Philip; "it is better than his knocking about here." And he wrote promising to do as he was asked. A little later Edward Seymour sailed with Sir Philip to the Netherlands, but before he did so he sought out Letty Weston, and told her.

"If I am killed, my child will be liberated," he said; "if I remain here, I am told I shall do her only harm."

And Letty with many tears agreed that he was right.

Sir Philip's surmises proved true. He had hardly been gone a month when, without any warning, one evening as the shadows were falling and the lights began to glimmer in the cottages, the door of the Moat Farm opened gently, and Rosamund entered. Letty's arms were quickly round her neck, and the girl's sweet voice was murmuring in her ear:

"Oh, my darling, my darling!"

Rosamund, the taller of the two, took Letty's face in both her hands and kissed her. She had no voice to speak. And then she passed to Lisbeth, and to John, Letty still clinging to her. She was like a ghost of herself; she did not speak, she could not. She seemed to them to have grown taller, and there was an expression

on her face which they had never seen before. She trembled slightly, and from time to time she looked round, as if she were not sure that she was alive and not dreaming. Her eyes were dry, with a tired, hunted look in them. Gently, with motherly hands, Lisbeth took her and placed her in John's great chair.

"Rest, my child!" she said; and she signed to those who would have crowded around her to keep back. They had heard no horse's tread, they knew not how she had come thus suddenly into their midst, but they asked no questions. It was autumn, the evenings were getting cold, so they threw fresh logs on the fire, and the flames lit up the room, and that still figure. She wore the same grey dress which she had gone away in, only the head-gear was missing. In place of it was a soft silken kerchief tied under her chin. Her dark hair was smooth upon her forehead, and her face had lost all colour.

"What have they done to her?" thought Lisbeth; "where is she come from?" Then it struck her that perhaps Rosamund had had no food, and she went and brought her a bowl of milk, and some girdle-cakes which she loved. Without asking her, she fed her like a child, for it seemed as if she had no strength, no will; there was a look of fear in her eyes, and at the least sound she started. Lisbeth was not a wise woman, but she was a loving one, and she was a mother. Therefore she understood.

"Now you must go to bed," she said, "and Letty too. Come!" and, taking Rosamund by the hand, she lifted her up, and led her away to the little chamber overhead, smelling of sweet lavender. The lattice window was wide open, and the stars and moon looked in upon her. The silver sheen entered into the room, casting a long strip of light over the bed. Rosamund stood in the midst of it, and suddenly it seemed as if her soul came back to her, and that she realized where she was. Throwing up her arms, she fell upon her knees, and for the first time she spoke:

"Thank God! Thank God!"

"Amen," said Lisbeth gently.

"Amen," responded Letty.

And then they both gathered her in their arms, undressed her, and laid her in the bed.

"Now, Letty," said Lisbeth. And as Letty lay down beside Rosamund, she gathered the frail broken lily into her strong young arms and covered her face with kisses. Lisbeth sat beside her, and held her hand, and sang softly to her as she had done when she was a babe. Thus the poor frightened soul was stilled and calmed. Love and peace entered into her, fear took flight, gradually the eyelids drooped, and thus, lying in the moonlight encircled by love, she fell asleep.

Then, and only then, Lisbeth left her. "If she wakes, call me," she said to Letty.

But she did not awake till the morning.

. . . . . .

"I tell you, Derward, I never close my eyes at night but what I hear a voice crying in my ears, 'Teach her, teach her the Law of Christ'. My soul is troubled within me! The Holy Spirit seems to demand of me why I was created, and the answer comes to me, 'To lead the blind into the right path'."

The speaker was John Rolfe. Both he and Derward were sitting at the door of their wigwam, busy preparing weapons, hatchets, and arrows, for the making of which they were famous among the Indians. They had dwelt amongst them ever since their deliverance, and though frequently expeditions had brought English emigrants to Virginia, they had never mixed with them, nor sought to join themselves to their own people. They had built for themselves a house which was the admiration of the savages, they had cultivated the land which had been given to them, and they lived in peace. Their friendship for each other had grown, and they were content with their simple lives. "Some day,"

they said, "we will return to England, or maybe we will join our own people, if ever they succeed in establishing a settlement here."

But up to the present time the ships which put in at the different points along the coast stayed only a few months, and then returned to England. There was no settled colony; as a rule the men were very miserable. They did not seem to understand the Law of God, "In the sweat of thy brow shalt thou eat bread". Gentlemen came out, where workmen were required; and those who were left behind, after the ships sailed away and they had exhausted their provisions, had to solicit food from the Indians to preserve themselves from starving. Greed and covetousness were also hindrances to their advancement. They thought everywhere to find gold, and, discovering none, they were angry and discontented; not understanding that the wealth of the land lies in the earth, if they would but seek for it. No country was healthier and more fertile than Virginia. The death-rate of even those who suffered most was but small. But there was no head, no leader to enforce law and order amongst them, or to teach them that if they would not work, neither should they eat.

During the years which John Rolfe and Derward Weston had dwelt in the land they had heard of several ship-loads of colonists who had landed, but they had never been tempted to join them. Those two had taken up their abode so far inland that no other European had ventured within many miles of them. Their lives were of the simplest; they fed on fish, and fruits and vegetables, which were abundant, and they had no trouble in procuring these articles of food, for the Indians brought them all they needed. The tribes were divided into comparatively small numbers, seldom exceeding eight hundred or nine hundred; they dwelt in hamlets or villages, always at some distance from each other. There was no regular fighting between them, but there was a continual small warfare going on, in

which the two Englishmen refused to join; they were friends with all men.

At first they had lived with Manteo, but of late years they had joined themselves to the Mohawks, and thus their old relations with the great chief Powhattan had been renewed. They had done no great deeds. Sometimes Derward would be impatient at this inaction. "I will go home," he would say, "and I will remain at home, or come out here again with ships and men, and all that is so necessary to make this beautiful land a paradise."

"And you will fail," said Rolfe; "the time has not come. But it will come; as long as we keep peace with the Indians and teach them civilization, and at the same time learn from them, we are laying up stores for the future. Knowledge is power, and we must gain knowledge; but above all things, I am persuaded that we are called upon to convert these savage people to the worship of Christ. It is borne in upon me more and more every day."

"Well," said Derward, "you know I am as great a believer as you are, but it is not in me to preach. When I begin to speak I forget everything I ought to remember. You can try your hand at it if you like, but I—I have not the same call."

Derward was, if possible, the more popular of the two among the savages. He was an adept at all athletic sports; not only did he associate freely with the chiefs of Powhattan's tribe, but also with the neighbouring tribes, the Chickhominies. He went from the one to the other, he entered into all their sports, he sat with them at night over their fires, smoking the calumet of peace. The young men were devoted to him. Sometimes Rolfe would accompany him, and sometimes he would remain in their own wigwam. It is not to be supposed that the women and girls of the tribe should be indifferent to their presence amongst them. Many a chief offered them their daughters in marriage, but so far they had refused to ally themselves with the

heathen. And yet John Rolfe was sorely tempted, for Pocahontas, the child who had saved his life, had become a beautiful maiden, and the tenderness which she had felt for him had grown with her growth. She with other women of the tribe made clothes for them, and attended to their needs. As long as Pocahontas was a child, every day she would bring her basket of fruit and vegetables to the entrance of their wigwam and stay and talk with them. She was modest and gentle; she learnt a fair amount of English, and like a child she obeyed these English friends. Other women and girls of the tribes did likewise, and so there grew up within them a great reverence for all things pertaining to John Rolfe's nation. Sometimes, as the two men sat outside their wigwam, a group of women, children, and girls would gather round them and would say, "Tell us of your women"; and Rolfe would tell them, and sometimes he would go further, and he would speak to them of his God and of his Christ. And many a summer evening Pocahontas would sit at his feet, and listen as he read out of the Book, which they had all learned to revere. Thus, in ignorance of what was going on in the world beyond this unknown land, those two lived and grew to man's estate. They knew that occasionally their fellow-countrymen came and went. Sometimes there would be bitter complaints of how the English infringed upon the natives' rights, how they sought to be masters in the land. But when this news reached Powhattan he would say, "The land is vast, there is room for all men". And in truth, as time went on, the natives grew rather to despise the English than otherwise, for they were almost always beggars. As we have said, they would not work, but sought food from the Indians; they would go out to the villages in companies of ten or twelve, until at last the Indians rose against them, and plans were made to murder, starve, and destroy this foreign people. It is a long story, this battle between two races for predominance. Which would succeed was at this time doubtful. Forty and

fifty men, sometimes even two or three hundred, would come from England and seek to establish themselves in Virginia, but the Indians could be reckoned by hundreds, nay by thousands. Numerically they were strong, but their weakness lay in their lack of unity. Each tribe fought for itself; they were always at war with one another. Therefore they had no strength. Their arms were also inferior, for it was a crime punishable by death for an Englishman to teach an Indian how to shoot.

As we have said, few English colonists ever penetrated as far as Rolfe and Derward had done, but at last it so happened that a foraging party did push inland. They were a boisterous lot, intent on pillage; and a rumour had reached them that there were some English who had joined themselves to the Indians. This was a frequent occurrence, for more than once parties of English had been put ashore and left, with the object of colonization. When, however, fresh vessels came out from England to see how they had prospered, in most cases they found that, like Roanoke Island, the places were vacant. Those they had left had disappeared; whether they had died, or done as Rolfe and Derward did—joined themselves to the natives, it was impossible to tell; they left no trace behind them. The party who had now started were determined to forage the land. They were headed by a man called Argull, who had no knowledge of the country, and no sympathy with the natives; so far he had found them untractable, and as he was now running short of food, the Indians having refused more than once to supply his needs, it was a matter of necessity for him to obtain provisions. Rumours had reached him, among other things, that Powhattan had a daughter whom he dearly loved. He determined, therefore, if he could not procure what he required by fair means, he would waylay her, make her a prisoner, and claim for her release a large ransom. It was a mean plot, but the majority of his followers were mean men, not deserving of the name of English-

men; they were of those who bring disgrace upon our nation. Alas! there were too many men who, having nought to do at home, carried their evil ways into the New World.

Powhattan and his chief men were well aware of the approach of the English, but they had no fear, and they took no measure for defence. As usual, Rolfe and Derward remained quiet; they had no wish to join themselves to these foraging parties, it was no gain to them. They were content to live their own lives until such time as they should be made aware that a well-established party of colonists, with a good leader at their head, had landed, and were ready to settle themselves in the country after a serious fashion, willing to face difficulties and privations. Frequently they had been with the Indians to different parts of the coasts of Virginia and Carolina to see if this had happened. But they had always found that when the first difficulties arose the colonists had taken flight and disappeared. For a little time it had seemed possible that Captain John Smith, a man of great parts, would have succeeded in establishing the London Company on a firm footing. But he, after he had undergone every privation, having been made prisoner and endured many other evils, was injured by an accidental explosion of gunpowder, which inflicted wounds such as the surgical skill of Virginia could not relieve. He was therefore obliged to return to England, his only reward being the ingratitude of his employers; he received no recompense, not a foot of land, not even the house he himself had built. But nevertheless his judgment had been so clear, his spirit so strong, that he is acknowledged as the true leader who first planted the Saxon race on the borders of the United States. He is known as the Father of Virginia. Wherever there was danger, he had gone to the fore. An open, honest man, he had declared emphatically that England was not to expect Virginia to yield gold and sudden wealth. He was the first man who ventured to say, "Nothing is to be expected without labour". "Do not send me gentle-

men, I entreat of you; rather send carpenters, husbandmen, gardeners, fishermen, blacksmiths, masons, and diggers-up of tree roots, they will be better than a thousand such as we have now." By some curious coincidence, though he had heard of the two Englishmen who lived among the Indians, they had never met, and when invalided home they were still strangers to him.

We have wandered perhaps somewhat from our subject, but it seems necessary that our readers should understand the great difficulties which these pioneers had to face in the accomplishment of what to many seemed a hopeless task.

When Smith left the colony, it consisted of four hundred and ninety persons in Jamestown. Six months later, from idleness and vice, famine had reduced the number to sixty. Being well informed on these facts, it is not surprising that young men like Derward and Rolfe should have held themselves aloof. They had been both disgusted and angry at the vice and indolence of their countrymen. As we have said before, they had joined themselves to the Indians, but they had also worked with and for them, they had not been idle. They cultivated their own land—the land which had been apportioned to them; they grew to have a great pride in the vegetables and fruits which they reared, most of them unknown in England. And as the years went on, and they began to feel the strength of their manhood, their understanding ripened, and they realized that the time would soon come when they would return to England, to give a full account of the country, taking with them specimens of the riches of the land. Then if they could gather together men who would be willing to labour, willing to earn their bread by the sweat of their brows, they would return, and with the help of their Indian friends they would establish themselves in the land. "And we will Christianize the country," they said; "we will build churches, we will preach the word of God to those with whom we have dwelt in such perfect amity." But until that time came

they would not mix themselves up with what seemed—and rightly seemed to them—adventurers. Therefore when they once again heard that a foraging party was coming out to beg their bread or unduly seize it, they advised Powhattan to refuse to assist them.

"They that will not work, neither shall they eat," they said. "They can work the land, as we have done; but if they choose to sit in idleness, let them die, they are but cumberers of the earth." It was a hard judgment, but the young are often hard. But in the main they were right. Therefore when two or three of the foraging party arrived and presented themselves as beggars before Powhattan, he refused to give them corn, fruit, and vegetables, and so they went away angry. Derward and Rolfe did not show themselves. "We do not belong to them, and we will not know them," they said, "unless they come after a respectable fashion."

The party apparently retired into the woods, to make their way back to the coast, whence they had come, and the Indians thought themselves well rid of them. A river ran on the outskirts of the village, for the Indians never established themselves where there was no water, and a party of women went down early in the morning to fetch what was necessary for their consumption. Amongst them was Pocahontas, who loved to be about at this early hour, and never disdained to do as the other women did. She carried some large gourds, hollowed out and cunningly made with spouts. Approaching the river she sat down on the edge, a little apart from her companions, and put her feet into the stream. She was a comely girl, tall and slim, with soft dark eyes and long black hair; not crimped or curly like the negro race, but smooth and jet black. From childhood she had been so associated with the two Englishmen that she was more thoughtful than any of the girls of her tribe, and in her attire more modest. She wore a sort of woollen shawl wound round her body, leaving the neck and arms exposed, but otherwise covering her almost to the knees. Round her throat

and neck she wore beads of many colours; her hair was also bound round with beads, and just behind the ear was a bunch of crimson and deep-blue feathers. As she sat thus she drew from beneath the folds of her shawl a book, which she opened, and, pointing with her finger to the words, read slowly, half-aloud. Her companions were accustomed to her ways, and left her, laughing and making merry together, some of them doing as she did, washing their feet and legs in the clear water. They could not have been thus employed more than five or ten minutes when, looking round to where they had left her, they saw that she was gone. It did not trouble them, she went and came as she chose, so they returned to the village. After a time her father and those of her own household began to wonder where she might be, and came out asking the women; but no one knew—they told the story of how she had been with them, and how she had disappeared. When the news reached Derward and Rolfe they looked at each other.

"Impossible!" said Derward. "Surely they would never do it!"

"They would do anything," answered Rolfe; "they are a set of rascals. Some people might say, perhaps, that we have wasted our lives here, but anything were better than joining the riffraff which they send out to us from England."

There was much wailing in the village. The men set off to the right and to the left to seek for Pocahontas. It did not strike them that she had been kidnapped.

Derward and Rolfe, taking with them their arquebuses, which they seldom used, also set forth.

"We will fire our guns. The English will think that we are some of their own party, and will come to meet us."

This they did, and they had not gone above a couple of leagues when they saw two men coming from beneath the thick foliage of the forest towards them. They stopped to permit them to approach.

"Good-day!" shouted the strangers. At the sound of

one voice Derward started. "I am dreaming, it cannot be!" he said. But nevertheless he hastened his steps, pushing the branches on one side, and in a few seconds they stood face to face with their fellow-countrymen. Derward threw out his hands, and exclaimed in a voice of mingled astonishment and gladness:

"Williams, my old friend!"

CHAPTER XIX

AN OLD FRIEND

MASTER DERWARD!" Unless he had spoken to him, Williams would not have known him with his strange dress and his bearded face; but though the voice was deeper it had still the same ring in it, and the older man, as he clasped his hands, said with the quaint Puritanism which was fast growing up in England:

"Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace."

"Nay, nay," said Derward, "not so fast. We have found each other, and I shall not let you go. Rolfe, this is my old friend Williams, who has taught me all the field work I know, and was my good friend until I cast all things away to come out here."

"I know you, I know you," said Rolfe, catching at Williams' other hand and shaking it.

"Well, you be queer figures!" said Williams, looking at them from head to foot.

They both burst out laughing.

"It is years since we had a coat and breeches," said Derward.

"They would not know you at home," answered Williams, walking round them.

"Ah! tell me of them at home," said Derward, for the sound of the old familiar voice and the word home had moved him beyond measure.

"Are they alive and well? Rosamund and Letty must be grown women now."

"They were well-nigh that when I left," said Williams. "And that be, let me see, some ten years ago."

"And what have you been doing all this time?" asked Derward.

"Seeking for you, sir," said Williams, "and a pretty dance you have given me. I have been to the right and I have been to the left. I have been hungry and thirsty, and I have lain down to die. But I have always got up again, I be that tough! Once in a way, just for a change like, I put out to sea, and got half-way home, but I always came back again, for I had said that I would not go home without you, Master Derward; I made sure you were not dead. I was a prisoner once for two years in a Spanish galley, but I got off somehow. Then there was the Armada. The Spaniards got a licking there, and I went sailing after them. I had taken to the sea by that time, and they were all so busy with fighting and keeping the Spaniards out of England that they forgot what was a-going on here. They did not remember to send ships to Virginia, and when I did get back, why, lor', we found nothing but ruins and bones!"

"I know," said Derward; "they went and came, and they did no good, even as you are doing no good now, Williams. What sort of rascals are you with, to come kidnapping a girl?"

"I didn't do it," said Williams; "it's Captain Argull. He said 'They won't give us bread, they won't give us food, and we are half-starved. They say the chief Powhattan has a lovely daughter, though she be dark. We will take her, and hold her until he gives us wherewith to fill our stomachs.'"

"For shame, Williams! You will have to give her back, and that pretty quickly or you won't be hungry long, for you will all be dead men. My friend here and I guessed what game you were up to. Where's your captain? He had best give us the girl."

"That he will never do till you give us food. Be you an Indian, Derward?"

"No, we are Englishmen still," he answered, laughing; "but we have cast our lot in with the Indians, because they are more respectable folk than the English who come out here."

"Lor', Master Derward, you should have come home and fought in the Armada. You would have made a great big name for yourself then. You might have been Sir Somebody by this time."

Derward shrugged his shoulders.

"I have been quite happy," he said; "and happiness is a great thing, Williams."

"But they have missed you at home," answered Williams.

"Oh! they have got accustomed to that by this time," answered Derward.

"Well," said Rolfe, who had been talking to Williams' companion, "I make out that we had better go at once to this captain. If he will not give up Pocahontas before night, he and his men will be nowhere. Lead the way, Williams."

"Don't you go amongst them, sir. Send word by my chum, Dawson. They would do by you as they have done by the girl, they would keep you. Dawson will take the message."

"He is right," said Rolfe, "we should be fools to put our necks into this gentleman's noose; let these men go back, and tell Captain Argull that unless the girl is brought to her father before sunset his account is settled. Not as much as a pea will he get as long as she is in their holding. You understand?"

"Yes, sir," said Dawson. "Come along, Williams."

"No, no!" said Williams. "I found the Master, and I stick to him."

"But you will take the message, Williams?"

"No, no, it is well-nigh ten years since I have been on the tramp. Dawson will find them out soon enough, they are not so far off." And he winked at his companion. "We knew there were two Englishmen out here, that is what made me join them." And he crossed over and stood by Derward.

"And after I have carried my message I will come back and bide with you, I don't like their company any better than Williams does," said Dawson.

"Very well," said Rolfe, "but not without Pocahontas. Or they will scalp you, and do various other things, which are by no means pleasant to the human frame."

"And Williams?" said the man.

"Well, we may manage to get him off scot-free, but I am not too sure of that. What do you think, Derward?"

"I would sooner he went back, at present it is not safe for him to show himself. We know where you are to be found, and we know that, having no forage, you cannot go far. Go back, like a good chap, Williams, with Dawson, and see if you cannot be a peacemaker. We will meet you here with King Powhattan this evening."

"Well, if you order me to go, I must," said Williams. "But you will not play me false? I left everything to come after you, master, and I have had a hard time of it."

And something like a glistening of the eyes told that the man's soul was sore within him.

"I swear that I will meet you in this place when you come back, and then we will abide together for ever," said Derward. "Do you think I have no heart, Williams?"

"You had plenty when you were a lad, but now you are a bearded man, and the heart grows hard as we become older," he answered.

"Not when you have led such a life as I have," answered Derward, "in the midst of nature and with the God of nature."

"That's well," answered Williams. "Sometimes I have forgotten Him, but I have allus gone back to Him; and when things are bad, I've been down on my knees and prayed to Him to mend them. And He's allus heard me, or I shouldn't be here to-day. Come along, Dawson!" and he wheeled round and started off at a quick march the way they had come.

"I don't half like leaving Pocahontas in the midst of

such a set," said Rolfe. "Do you think they will harm her?"

"They won't dare to," answered Derward, "especially now that Williams will keep an eye on her. He will not let her go. What a good faithful fellow he is! He must have left home soon after I did! And now we will go and make a clean breast of it to the king, and be back in time to receive our messengers."

As they returned they saw scouting parties of the Indians coming back to the village; they were looking black as thunder, they scowled at them as they approached. Calling one of them by name, Derward went up to them. As we have said, he was their special friend.

"We know where the princess is," he said; "two white men met us in the wood and told us. And we have sent word to the chief, that if they do not bring her back to us before sunset then we will kill them all."

"Good, good!" they shouted in their own tongue, and began leaping frantically. "Good friends!" they repeated, slapping them on the shoulders.

"Of course we are your friends," answered Rolfe; "Pocahontas will soon be with us again." With that they strode into the village, which was full of women waiting for news. Round the king's wigwam were gathered the women of the family, weeping and wringing their hands. Pushing their way through them, elbowing to the right and to the left, the Englishmen entered the king's presence. He was looking stern, yet there was a certain sadness in his face. He had always been a good friend to the English, stood up for them on every occasion, and treated them with the greatest hospitality, and now they had taken from him his beloved daughter, the one creature he loved more than all others! Rolfe and Derward knew this, and, kneeling before him, they entreated his pardon.

"To-night, great King, she will be with you again," said Derward, "or we will slay our own people."

Then they told him how they had made a rendezvous

in the forest, where Pocahontas was to be brought to them.

"I am grieved," said Powhattan.

"Not more than we are," said Rolfe, "for all these years Pocahontas has been to me as a sister." He looked round as he uttered these words; then, once more bowing low before the king, he said: "Will you do me one kindness more? I will tell you something which will prove to you that no one can be more grieved than I am."

Immediately Powhattan made a sign, which signified to those present that they were to take their departure. There were some among the chief men who were jealous of the two Englishmen: they would themselves have willingly espoused the princess, but so great was her influence over her father that, contrary to custom, he had listened to her entreaties not to marry. So when they went forth they began talking among themselves, and the women joined them.

"These Englishmen have brought us ill luck," they said, "we should not have kept them amongst us." And much more they said, murmuring, as they stood outside, but at present our chief interest lies within the wigwam.

When the three were alone, Rolfe went up to the king.

"O King," he said, "I love your daughter better than my life, which she saved. For months I have been fighting a battle with myself, for it is not good for us Christians to marry a heathen maid. I have taught Pocahontas all things concerning our God and our Christ, and it needs but a little more, and she will be a Christian. Then no one but yourself, O King, can forbid our marriage. You have been to us as a father; we have friends amongst the tribes—Manteo, Wingina, and many of your young men; we are content to stay with you until we can build a village of our own, bringing our own people across the seas to dwell in the land. Therefore, O King, I beseech of you to give me your daughter in marriage. Let her be baptized into our faith, so will her name never be forgotten, and there will be union amongst us for ever."

He spoke ardently, for he dearly loved the girl, and, as he said, he had done battle with his conscience for her sake. He remembered God had visited the sons of Levi with His displeasure because they took unto themselves strange women, and he doubted if he might unite himself with one of "barbarous breeding" and of a "cursed race"! His earnestness surprised the king, but Derward had long been aware of Rolfe's desire, and, stepping forward, he said:

"Great King, if you will but give your consent to my friend's desire, we will not wait till sunset for her to be delivered to us, but we will take fifty of your men, and cross the forest until we find where the English are camped, and we will demand her of them. My friend will have a right to claim his betrothed, and if they oppose us, why then, we will fight."

The Indian king looked at the two young men, and answered:

"What you ask is agreeable to me, because I love you as if you were my sons; and though I have not seen the best of your nation, I believe it to be a great nation, for you know many things of which we are ignorant. You are gentle in your speech, yet you are brave as lions. From the first I have welcomed you, seeing that it is to our advantage to learn from you. Therefore, if my daughter will consent, and will, as you desire it, worship your God, I am willing she should be Rolfe's wife. I will never go back from my word which I now give, but for the present we will be silent, and not speak of it to the chiefs, or it might injure you. It shall be done as you say. I will call in my chiefs, and tell them that we will not wait till sunset, but will start at once for the English camp and demand my child. If they refuse to give her to us we will give them battle."

"You will remember, O King, that they have firearms and you have none," said Derward. "We have stored up our powder and ammunition and we will make use of it, but it will not go far. Your arrows and spears must do the rest. Our best chance will be to surprise

them. They have already received our message, for the man we met in the forest—an old friend of mine in England—has all these years been seeking for me, and I would beseech of you, if the others are slain, that he should be spared."

"Surely I will," the king replied, "if you will be answerable for him." And then, lifting up his voice, he shouted, calling his chiefs by their names, and they came rushing in.

"We will not wait," said the head chief, "we will fetch the princess home ourselves; we want no white men with us."

"Such is my will also," answered Powhattan, "but the Englishmen will go with us. They will speak for us, and if my daughter be given back to us we will not fight them, we will send them out of the land, to the coast whence they came. Now get your shields and spears and tomahawks, for we will start at once."

There was still some grumbling, a murmur of discontented voices, but Powhattan paid no heed to them, and soon not fifty but one hundred men were following him with Derward and Rolfe, in the direction where they guessed the English camp lay. As they approached it they went softly. It consisted of not more than fifty or sixty men; but they were not gentlemen, they were the sweepings of a class of ne'er-do-wells—sailors from seaport towns, apprentices who had left their masters for no good reason, and such like. Their appearances were miserable; they had been marching through the forest for a month or so, and their clothes were torn and ragged. Provisions had failed them, and they had had to live on wild fruits and berries and anything which came to their hands; life is dear, and hungry men are not difficult to please. Of ammunition, also, they were running short, for if there were no beasts or kine there were birds in the air, which were so tame that they hardly moved when men came near them. So they had slain and eaten many, thus saving themselves from starvation. When

they saw themselves suddenly surrounded by half-naked savages in full war-paint, shrieking and yelling as they approached, their alarm was great; they had not reckoned upon this, they had heard the Indians were gentle and ever ready to give what they were asked for. The resistance of Powhattan had therefore surprised them. The kidnapping of his daughter was an after-thought of starving men; they knew full well they could not return the way they had come unless they had food, and they were in an exhausted condition. At a word and sign from Powhattan, his men stopped. Derward hoisted a piece of white linen, which they still possessed, as a sign of peace, and he with the king and Rolfe advanced.

"We would speak with the commander," said Derward. "In the meantime neither side will enter into hostilities—shall it be so, sir?" he continued, addressing himself to a tall military man of angular bearing, who came forward to meet them.

"What is your name, sir?" he asked.

"Derward Weston, at your service," was the short answer.

"I think I have heard the name of Derward Weston; you have been long in these parts," said Argull. "It indeed seems to me that you are a savage yourself."

"We have adopted the life and customs of our friends," said Derward. "They received us when we were lonely and forsaken. We have been with them nigh upon ten years, and now I have come to ask you by what law of civilization you disgrace the English name by laying your hands upon a woman, and provoking to war a gentle and peaceable nation?"

The captain shrugged his shoulders.

"I have no reason to give you," he answered, "save the law of necessity. When men are starving they must be fed, and we have no means of obtaining food in this country except we ask for it, because there are no sheep or kine, not even goats."

"Had you not learned that in England? When you

came out why did you not bring what you needed?" said Rolfe. "This land is a perfect land; there is no lack of pasture; sheep and oxen would breed and propagate here far better than they do at home, needing less care."

"Then why not go back to England and do this yourself?" said the captain indignantly. "Is it possible men can live in a land with only fruits, vegetables, and a weed they call tobacco for sustenance?"

"A very good weed it is too," said Rolfe impatiently; "we have lived after this fashion and prospered. But that is neither here nor there. We have come to claim Powhattan's daughter, whom you kidnapped as she was sitting peacefully by the river-side."

"Well, it was a mistake, I allow," said Argull; "but hungry men must help themselves, and for days now we have not had solid food between our teeth."

"Just so," said Derward; "you come to this country and you will not work, at least not many of you, and so you starve. It is the law of God; why do you grumble? The earth is fruitful, and the land is good. But you lust after gold, and so you go away empty-handed. Bring forth the maiden we have come to claim, or if you will not, I will let loose the natives upon you, and I will not be answerable for what they may do."

"We do not wish to keep the girl, but we ask you for a ransom in kind. Then we will go back from whence we came. There is nothing to be done here," said Argull.

"We will not bargain with you; bring forth the maiden." Already the Indians were approaching so near, that with the point of a spear they could have slain their man; to yield thus without a show of fight was to Englishmen of those days hard lines. One or two of them shouldered their arquebuses.

"I warn you," said Rolfe, and he and Derward sprang forward, "if you fire one shot we shall not attempt to hold them back; you will be your own murderers." At the same time he struck down the arquebus of the man nearest to him.

"Don't be fools," he said. "Give up the girl, and we will see what we can do for you."

Sullenly Argull gave the order.

"I suppose I must trust to your honour," he said. "You are only the mouthpiece of your friends."

Upon this Powhattan stepped forward and said quietly in the broken English he had learnt from Rolfe and Derward:

"I am the friend of the English, I do not desire war. Give me back my daughter, and I will provide you with what is necessary, that you may not starve on your journey back. But tell your people that Powhattan the savage says 'the land is good, but there is no gold save what you can win by your own labour'. And if you must eat meat, then bring it from your own country, we have no need of it."

At that moment the ragged, bearded, weary-eyed Englishmen broke their ranks, and there came running forward with her pretty bare feet the Princess Pocahontas. On either side of her were Dawson and Williams.

"I knew you would come for me!" she said. "They have been very good to me, only they are so hungry." As she spoke she laid her hands in Rolfe's, and looked up into his face with soft, glad eyes; then her father patted her on the shoulders and drew her out of the circle, and, turning to the savages, said: "Here she is, quite safe!" And they uttered yells of delight, and pressed round her.

"Now we will kill the Englishmen who have stolen you," they said in their own tongue.

"Nay, you will rather fetch them food, maize and peas and birds and fish; we must have a feast to-night. Yonder, where the forest ends and the land is flat. Go back and bring what is needed. Shall it not be so, my father?"

"Yes, we will feast because you are safe, and because it is your will. They have not harmed you?"

"No, no, they have not harmed me, they have been very good," she said. "They brought me fruit, though they had but little for themselves." And, freeing herself, she went across to the English camp, smiling and holding out her hands to the rough men, as if they had been her friends. Seeing this the savages relented, and at a sign from their king they turned and went back in the direction of the village.

"Now come," said the girl, taking Rolfe's hand, and with her father on the other side she beckoned to the Englishmen to follow her, and they did so; behind came Argull and Derward, Williams and Dawson. Argull shook hands with the king, who said in his quiet, cold Indian fashion:

"Peace is better than war."

"Under the circumstances it certainly is," said Argull. But when he was walking beside Derward he added:

"And you have lived ten years among this people! You are dressed as they are, you speak their language, you are one with them. Why have you done this?"

"Because I have found peace among them," said Derward. "I am a young man still, only seven-and-twenty, but once I throw off this life I shall throw away much happiness."

That night the country was bright with bonfires; the Indians danced and wrestled and made merry. Foremost amongst them were Derward and Rolfe; and between the sports, whilst the English feasted to their heart's content, though not quite to their liking, Rolfe would return ever to where Pocahontas sat on the ground beside her father. What he said to her no one heard, but under the dark skin there was a glow, and in the soft black eyes a gentleness and a look, which is the same in every land where women listen to the tale that men whisper in their ears. To them it was their betrothal night.

"And thou wilt love my Christ and worship Him with me?" said Rolfe. "First thou wilt be a Christian maid, and then my dear wife?"

And she answered, "I will."

All he said she might not understand, but enough to make her heart glad. It was a long night, but with the rising sun, well laden and accompanied by some twenty natives to guide them on their way, the English took their departure, shaking hands with the king and his daughter, and with any of the chiefs who had forgotten their enmity of the previous day.

To Derward and Rolfe the captain said:

"Do you two men mean to spend all your lives here?"

"I cannot answer for Rolfe," replied Derward, "but Williams and I shall soon go home. I have many plans for my future life, if I can bring the English to understand how to make of this beautiful country their home."

"Well, you may try," said Argull, "but I will not be one of the number. I am tired of it. John Smith has done his best, but he has given it up; there is a man called Gates now at Jamestown who is like minded with you, I should advise you to go down and consult with him. Your experience is so great I am persuaded he would give you a hearty welcome."

"You tempt me to do so," answered Derward. "In the meantime, when you return to England, if you should happen to be in Kent I can promise you a good reception at Cranbury Moat Farm. Tell them that I am alive and well, and will be with them in the course of the following year. I have given them no news of myself, save once or twice, and then I misdoubt me my letters were lost. But now that my plans are ripening, I shall go to them not as a beggar but as a gentleman of this new country, which in my mind is destined to be a great one, of which England will one day be proud. *I* shall be proud to be one of the founders of it. Will you tell them this at home?"

"I will," answered Argull. "But I will also tell them, that to my mind you are a dreamer of dreams."

"Dreams sometimes come true," answered Derward, smiling.

"I trust yours may," he replied, looking at the young and handsome man, so strong and well-built, worthy in

all respects to be the founder of a new country, and to raise up sons and daughters in the far west, of good old English stock.

The two men shook hands, and so they parted.

It was a year before Argull found his way to the Moat Farm, and told the story of what he had seen, sitting by John Weston's hearth. And so they knew that Derward was not dead.

CHAPTER XX

A FORSAKEN LAND

"THEY will not hold out much longer," said Williams, leaning against the door of Derward's wigwam. "There's no head amongst them; we parted company because we hoped on either side to get supplies. And yet it is well situated, and a promising colony. If Smith had not left them, it would have lived."

"And you mean to say they are forsaking it?"

"Yes; what can starving men do?" he answered.

"I think," said Rolfe, "I will go down and see things for myself. What say you, Derward?"

"I am ready," he answered.

"You see," said Rolfe, with a certain awkwardness in his manner, "Pocahontas is ready and willing to be baptized, but I would like the ceremony to be performed with due reverence. The minds of these Indians are simple, but in all religious matters they still require to see and to feel; therefore, if you are willing, we will start as soon as we can."

"There is nothing to detain us," said Derward. "That is what I feel, we are now ready for all emergencies."

Dawson and Williams, strange to say, tried to delay them. The misery in the colony was very great, they affirmed.

"I doubt," said Williams, "whether you will find any inhabitants left in Jamestown."

"That does not matter to us," said Derward; "our needs are few, we can carry what we want on our backs."

"Very well. If such be the case, I am ready when you are."

It was a great exodus, for many of the tribe insisted on accompanying the Englishmen part of the way. Amongst these, naturally, were the king and the Princess Pocahontas. The farther they advanced the less hopeful they became. They had heard that the colony had been forsaken, and as they approached the little town their fears were realized. The Indians who had come with Derward encamped at a little distance from the settlement.

"Because," said the king, "either we shall join you if you summon us, or you must return with us."

This being agreed upon, the four Englishmen, with half a dozen Indians, hastened on their way. Alas! matters were worse than they had imagined. Even as Argull had done, other parties of English had wandered in small numbers into the country, had begged food from the Indians, and had been murdered. It seemed as if the Indian tribes were uniting to deliberately destroy the colonists. Plans were laid to starve out the whole colony. Famine stared the English in the face. Thirty men had taken a ship, and gone out to sea as pirates. They declared it was the only means left of saving their lives. In the midst of all this despair and horror, there had come to them a man of great parts, Sir Thomas Gates. He had been wrecked off the rocks of the Bermudas, and his ship had been broken up; but with admirable patience, thankful that no life had been lost, and finding plenty of food on this fertile and uninhabited island, the crew and their leader had constructed two vessels, with which they embarked for Virginia. Here they hoped to find friends and plenty, instead of which, to their horror, they found famine and despair. Gates strove to rally them, but in vain; they would hear of nothing but of putting out to sea, and pushing on to Newfoundland, where they were sure to find ships belonging to English fishermen. The fear of the colonists was so great that Sir Thomas was forced to yield to them. It was at this juncture that Derward and his party arrived. At the sight of the Indians who accom-

panied them the colonists could scarcely be persuaded to stay an hour on land. Some of the men had belonged to Argull's party, and were somewhat more reasonable. Gates, Rolfe, and Derward took counsel together what they should do.

"We will help you," said the young Englishman, as they looked at the little town which had risen on the banks of the river.

"I cannot understand what this failure means," said Rolfe. "It is a sheer lack of order and organization. Make them stay, and make them work."

"I cannot," replied Gates: "they are more like raving maniacs! Rather come with us to England. You are men of experience, and know the country; you can explain what our needs are, and why we fail. Building up houses and forsaking them—it is hopeless!"

"We intend coming to England," answered Derward; "but not just yet—in a few months."

He and Rolfe had decided that when they went they would go together. And Rolfe had said:

"I will take Pocahontas with me as my wife. You will see that her presence will do more than ten men."

It was with regret that they saw Gates and their fellow-countrymen drop down with the tide in the two pinnaces they possessed.

"I will tell you what is lacking," said Rolfe, "the spirit of true faith. If we had but a holy man amongst us, who would bid these half-taught men, who, in very truth, have less religion than the savages, where to look for help, and on whom to lean, how to fulfil God's law, and serve *Him*, not themselves only, success would follow their efforts. They bring all their weaknesses, all their vices, into this new country, and so they are driven out by the hand of the Almighty. They are not worthy."

His heart was sore within him; he had the true apostolic feeling, the missionary zeal. The two friends walked round the little town with Williams, Dawson, and the Indians, pointing out to the latter with a certain sadness all those signs of civilization which had been

gradually accumulating. The little town had known good days under John Smith. There were workshops, and many other proofs of occupation; but two things were lacking—there were no traces of a woman's hand anywhere, there was no sign of a God amongst them. None of those little sweetnesses of life, only the hard existence meted out to men when they are alone! It was unsanctified. Therefore it was that despair had entered into the hearts of those men, and there had been no one to comfort them. No women's voices, no children's chatter, nothing to work for but their bare selves; and no one to welcome them when they came back from their labour. So they ceased to labour, they would not work; they sat down in indolence, feeding their bodies like animals when there was food, and starving from very apathy when there was none.

"Truly God's wisdom is made evident here," said Rolfe. "He gave Eve to Adam in the Garden of Eden, where there was love and plenty, because He knew of the dark days which were coming when a woman's smile would be needed to sustain him."

"We must remember this," said Rolfe, "when we build a city."

Derward smiled.

"You have found your mate," he answered, "but I think I shall have to go farther for mine."

"Then go," said Rolfe, "the sooner the better."

Williams was standing beside them whilst they thus conversed. He smiled.

"I am afraid you have lost your chance, master," he said. "She was a pretty young thing when I left England, but ten years be a long time for a woman's beauty to last, more especially when they take to fretting as she had begun to do."

"Letty fret!" said Derward. "She was a sunbeam! I have often thought of her golden hair and her rosy face."

"She were but sixteen then, she be six-and-twenty now. That's a long spell. Time flies. master."

"I'll never believe that Letty can grow old," exclaimed Derward. "But as soon as your business is settled, Rolfe, we will go to England. I wish you could have married Rosamund, we would have brought them out together."

"I love my love," said Rolfe, "and shall never love another."

"That is as it should be," said Derward, and they dropped the subject. But for the first time in all these years Derward had an impatient longing to go home. He dreamed of the moated cottage that night, and of Letty's face; and he heard her voice calling to him, "Come home, Derward, come home!" and he replied as he stood up that morning, "Just as soon as ever I can!"

They strolled down to the river and bathed. Then they went to work, closing the doors of the houses, mending the fences, and doing various things to prevent the place from falling utterly to ruin.

In a storehouse they found some suits of clothing, and for the first time for many years the two men dressed themselves after European fashion. The Indians looked at them almost sadly.

"You will leave us," they said.

"If we do, we will come back to you," said Derward, laying his hand on the Indian's shoulder. "We shall go for your good, and I hope we shall come back for your good. But whatever we do or wherever we go, we shall never forget the happiness of our Indian life. We were but boys when we came to you, we are men now. And as men we must work."

So much did they find to do, that the sun was setting when they thought of returning to the Indian encampment. It was a lovely June night, the country was crimson in the gorgeous sunset. They stood all together, the four Englishmen and the Indians. Somehow both Rolfe and Derward were loth to go.

"I think we will stay another night here, and start at sunrise," said Rolfe.

"I have a sort of feeling as if I could not tear myself away, that something must be going to happen," answered Derward.

Even as he uttered these words, they saw coming up the river, not only the two pinnaces which had left the day before, but also a long-boat.

"I told you so!" said Derward triumphantly. And they ran along the shore, waving branches which they broke off the trees, and shouting a welcome.

Men answered their greeting, waving in their turn kerchiefs and hats. So they sailed on till they reached the little harbour. The first to land was a tall, thin, delicate-looking man of noble appearance, who, holding out his hand said, in a pleasant courtly voice: "It is nice indeed to be thus welcomed."

A second after Sir Thomas Gates sprang on land exclaiming: "You here still, Derward! That is a good sign;" and he shook him warmly by the hand.

"We could not tear ourselves away; we could not believe you were gone," was the answer.

"At the mouth of the river we met Lord Delaware's long-boat laden as you see, and I had no difficulty in making my men return with him. But we never thought you would have stayed on."

The late unhappy fugitives were landing now with contented faces, almost with gladness at seeing the place again. They had gone forth ready to burn it to the ground on account of their misery, and now they exclaimed with joy at the sight of the houses—their own houses. There was one man at Lord Delaware's side who differed from the others. He wore the habit of a minister, and there was on his face a look of benignity and peace, which attracted all men to him. As he stepped ashore he had knelt, and those following him immediately uncovered their heads. For a few seconds there had been silence, as his voice rose in clear, slow tones:

"May the Lord bless our outgoing and our incoming! May He bless the labour of our hands, and make of us a holy people, for His name's sake! Amen!"

"Amen!" rang out upon the still evening air.

"It has come at last," said Rolfe, burying his face in his hands; "God's people have come to sanctify the land."

The stillness and the quiet were broken now by the opening of doors, the unfastening of latches; the newcomers had to be housed, and the old inhabitants were proud to give them hospitality. The best house was offered to Lord Delaware and his staff. It was but a wooden house, raised up from the ground on stakes, and surrounded by a verandah.

"To have forsaken all this labour of their hands!" he said, as he stood surrounded by Sir Thomas Gates, Derward, and Rolfe.

"I think," he added, turning to the young men, "it is partially your faults. It seems that you have dwelt ten years with the Indians, that you know their ways, their country, and all its resources, and yet you have let your countrymen come and go without giving them a helping hand."

"What you say may be true, my lord," said Derward, "but we were but youths when we came out here, and we have enquired often what sort and kind of men they were who came to colonize the land, and we judged them not of the right sort. They had no fear of God amongst them; they were gentlemen who could not handle the spade or the pickaxe, so we would not join ourselves to them. But we have not been idle; we have learnt all that there is to learn and to be had in this country. And if you have now brought with you men who will work, we will unite ourselves to them, and do the best we can to help and teach them."

"That is well spoken," said Lord Delaware. "See, they are right willing, they only want guiding."

The boats were being unladen with marvellous rapidity.

"We will have supper and then we will rest," said Lord Delaware, speaking loud so that all might hear him. "To-morrow morning at sunrise we will meet in yonder open space, and we will consecrate ourselves to

the service of God. For the land is the Lord's and the fruits thereof, and He giveth the rain in due season."

A great cry went up from the emigrants: "God save the King!"

And thus for the first time Rolfe and Derward knew that Elizabeth had ceased to reign.

In every human mind, educated or uneducated alike, there exists ever a strong tendency towards superstition. Good luck or bad luck, good omens or bad—how often do we hear these words!

And this little colony possessed men of all degrees—godless and god-fearing, good and bad. But at this hour the good held the preponderance. The colonists, old and new alike, were overawed. Some had been shipwrecked and preserved, others had been in utter wretchedness, suffering from disease and famine, and yet they now lived and were glad. Thus it came to pass that when they all met on that glorious morning, a deep sense of the infinite mercies of God overshadowed them all.

"It is the will of God that we should dwell in this land," they said. "It is the arm of the Lord of Hosts, who made the Israelites to cross the Red Sea, and then possess the land of Canaan."

"Doubt not," said their minister, "but believe that God will raise our state and build His church in this excellent clime."

This first day was dedicated to the worship of God, and to the settling of matters with order and discretion. After the colony had made their supplications to God, Lord Delaware read out the commission which he had received from England, and it was accepted by old and new colonists.

Hours were fixed for work, hours for rest. The houses were repaired, and made warm and secure; covered above with strong boards and matted on either side, after the fashion of Indian wigwams.

All seemed about to prosper. The first piece of work undertaken was the building of the little church. It was

of the simplest kind, resting on rough pine columns fresh from the forest, of rugged architecture, as wild if not as frail as the Indian wigwams. Out of the trunk of a tree a font had been hewn hollow like a canoe. This was the work of John Rolfe — a work of love, a work of faith. When it was complete, he went to Alexander Whitaker, the minister, and told him the story of the Indian maiden whom he had won over to Christianity, and asked him if he would baptize her.

"Only too gladly," he answered, "if she will renounce her idolatry."

"That she is prepared to do," said Rolfe. "I will bring her to you to-morrow, and after she is baptized, I will ask you to perform another ceremony—to make her my wife."

"You are sure that you desire this?" said the minister, hesitating. "Do you realize that you, an Englishman, are taking to yourself a well-nigh savage maiden? You love her to-day. Has she that within her which will retain your love, and make you faithful one to the other unto death?"

"I believe she has," said Rolfe, "or I would not do this thing."

"Well then, it shall be as you desire," answered the minister.

The following day, at an early hour, the whole colony went forth to meet Rolfe's bride. For the first time she laid aside her Indian clothes, and presented herself in a white linen gown of exquisite simplicity. Derward and Rolfe had given much thought to it. It was to them a serious matter, and Derward, who was a clever draughtsman, had sketched something which resembled closely the gowns which Letty and Rosamund wore. The modest kerchief folded across her bosom; the veil which covered her head, but was thrown back from her face and fastened with a silver arrow, such as the Indian women wore; her dark face, not black but of a deep brown; her large dark eyes, and her coal-black hair, gave her a striking appearance, especially to men who had never seen the

like before. She walked between her father and her uncle, Opachisco—splendid specimens of their race, which, alas! soon deteriorated, and is now almost extinct. Friends and relatives crowded round her. At the church door Lord Delaware, Rolfe, and Derward met them, and conducted her to the font, and here in broken accents she openly renounced her country's idolatry, professed the faith of Jesus Christ, and was baptized. She was, indeed, the first-fruits of Virginian conversion. The baptismal ceremony was quickly followed by the marriage. And when she and Rolfe came forth man and wife, natives and English alike cheered them. A great feast was made, and Lord Delaware and Sir Thomas Gates made speeches, telling the colonists that this was a great day, and that more than ever they believed that henceforth they would take root and flourish in the land. Powhattan, his brother and friends, shook hands and brought gifts to Lord Delaware, promising their friendship and their support.

And so the day came to an end, and Pocohantas remained with her husband in the English colony, the only woman.

"But it will not be so long," said Lord Delaware; "it is a great mistake. If we are to be successful we cannot live without women."

"No," said Derward. "And we must have horses, kine, and sheep also. I will go home to England and bring them out. Why, look, my lord," he said, pointing to the country around him, "what is to prevent our having as good farms here as we have in England? Let every man have his plantation, what he sows he will reap. In time we shall have dairies, and everything just as we have at home. Of vegetables and fruits, of birds and fish we have an abundance. It is only the four-footed beasts that are lacking amongst us, and they can be supplied."

"Of course they can," said Lord Delaware.

We have said that this noble Englishman was of delicate appearance. His mind and spirit were strong,

but his frame was feeble, and after a few weeks he fell ill; the change of country, the change of climate, were too much for him, and it was decided that he must go home for a time, and that Sir Thomas Gates should be governor in his stead.

So before the equinoctial gales threatened them, he with Derward, Rolfe and his wife, Williams, and a few others, besides his crew, bade a temporary farewell to the colony.

"I see you go with a heavy heart," said Sir Thomas Gates. "You are taking the very nucleus of the place away with you;" and he pointed to Derward and Rolfe.

"It is but for a short time," answered Lord Delaware. "They are men who can speak from experience, to whom others will pay heed. They will do more than I can do. We shall not be long gone, and what we shall bring back with us will establish our power for ever."

Sir Thomas felt that he spake truly. He went hither and thither telling the colonists what the governor said. And Rolfe and Derward did as much among the Indians. Powhattan promised that he would see to the well-being of those remaining; some chiefs of powerful tribes went so far as to desire to be called Englishmen. Everything was hopeful, and it was with easy hearts that the homeward-bound travellers bade their friends farewell.

Far down even to the river's mouth the Indians crowded along the banks, and every time they caught sight of Pocahontas standing with her husband at the prow, they yelled with delight. They only left them when the boat, crossing the bar, put out to sea, and as the night fell disappeared in the horizon. Then slowly and sadly they returned to their wigwams.

"The English are great people," said Powhattan. "It is well to be friends with them."

CHAPTER XXI

OLD AND NEW THINGS

TWO men stood on the farther side of the wood facing what had been Cranbury Moat Farm. The bridge crossing the moat lay between them and it.

"Surely we are mistaken," said the taller of the two, and taking off his cap he passed his hand over his brow.

"I guess we are not mistaken," said Williams.

"It is the same, and yet not the same," answered Derward.

"You must remember, master, that you have been away well-nigh fifteen years. It is the old made new."

Instead of the narrow stone steps leading up to the little porch there was now a handsome, broad, wide flight, ending in a covered doorway supported by carved oak pillars, round which roses twined. On either side were benches. The whole was in massive oak. In place of the little windows at which Letty and Rosamund were wont to sit and spin, was a wonderful mullioned window jutting out, which at this hour was ablaze with light from the setting sun. Above it was a similar window with coloured glass, so that this centre building, roofed in with crimson tiles and a bunch of stacked chimneys, was worthy to form the centre of a great mansion. To accomplish this, on either side wings had been thrown out, the walls of which were already more than half-way covered with ivy. It was a very fair homestead, yet Derward sighed.

"I had not thought of this," he said. "Father John must have prospered since the days of old. You are sure, Williams?"

"I am sure."

"Well," said Derward, "we will try our luck." And they crossed the bridge, which was now no longer of plain light wood, but had been made solid, with oaken rafters, ornamented on either side with railings of curious-fashioned short pillars and a balustrade.

"As I look at it," said Derward, "I see it is the same, but different."

"Well, *we* are different," said Williams; "you went forth a lad, and you have come back a man."

"True," answered Derward, but it seemed to him as if he had lost the joy of home-coming. Was all to be changed? Was he to find nothing of what had been?

"If they turn us back, we must try elsewhere," said Derward; and he strode up the steps to the house door. There he paused. Laying his hand upon the handle—formerly it had been a latch—he turned it. It gave way, and he entered. Then he smiled, for he recognized the old hall, with its great rafters across the ceiling, its broad open fireplace, above which there stood out now a carved oak mantel-piece; and straight beyond, facing him, there was a great staircase. The hall, for such it evidently was, was panelled high up with oak, and the staircase matched it. In the centre was a long table, and the floor was spread, as was the custom in those days, with fresh sweet straw. There was no light in the room, save the embers on the hearth, and the glorious light of the setting sun. The two men stood silent, Williams in pure admiration, Derward with mingled feelings which he could not define.

"Look!" said Williams in a low voice, touching Derward's arm; and he, raising his eyes, saw standing on the topmost step of the staircase a woman's figure. Tall and comely, in a gown of a pale greeny-blue hue, which fell in graceful trailing folds behind her. A white kerchief was folded across her bosom. A soft muslin ruffle round her neck framed in a face of tender colouring, of sweet expression, but not over-gentle, for as she saw these men the grey-blue eyes shone down upon them askance. The



B 394

"AT LAST, DERWARD!"

bright hair curled over her brow was drawn up at the sides, and hidden beneath something between a kerchief and a cap.

"Sirs, what is your pleasure?" she asked in a clear voice.

Instantly the two doffed their caps. Derward stepped forward. Immediately a change came over the woman's face. A smile brilliant in its gladness broke over it, she ran lightly down the stairs, holding out her hands and saying:

"At last, Derward!"

And he answered her:

"Are you Letty?"

"At your pleasure," she answered, trembling all over, even as if she had been a young maiden still, instead of a woman in her prime.

"I was a bit hasty to ask," he said, "for I know you now. You have not altered a bit, and—" He had no need to finish, for she said:

"Williams!" and, loosening her hand from Derward's grasp, she held it out to the old serving-man. Then, standing at the foot of the stairs, she called aloud:

"Mother! Rosamund! Derward has come home!"

And in a second Dame Lisbeth and Rosamund appeared on the top of the stairs, but with one leap Derward was beside them. Rosamund's arm was round his neck, and Dame Lisbeth was holding on to him. He fairly carried them back into the hall, and they stood together, hardly knowing what to say or do, hardly realizing what had happened.

"What have you done to the old home?" he asked at last. "Is it all new? Has Father John found gold in his fields?"

"We will tell you all that later, Derward," said Rosamund, "it is a long story. And here comes Father."

And so once more there was shaking of hands and much ado. The news spread fast that Master Derward and Williams had come home. Of the wenches he had left behind there were none; they had all married and

dispersed in the village or in neighbouring hamlets, but some of the old farm hands were still there, and they, when they heard the news, came in to welcome the young master.

"Surely ye be not Master Derward!" they said, looking at his tall, stalwart figure and his bearded face. It was difficult for them to understand that he was the lad they had played with and made much of.

So true is it that we never realize that those from whom we are parted can change or age. They go from us boy or girl, and as such we think of them for long, long years, till ofttimes the hair which was so golden has turned as white as snow. It is even so with our dead; it is hard to realize that—

> Not as a child shall we again behold her,
> For, when with raptures wild
> In our embraces we again enfold her,
> She will not be a child.
>
> But a fair maiden in the Father's mansions,
> Clothed with celestial grace:
> And beautiful with all the soul's expansion
> Shall we behold her face.

So they killed the fatted calf that night, and Derward insisted that they should do as they had done in former days, partake of the feast with the whole household. In the big kitchen which lay behind the old hall they sat down, master and men, mistress and maidens, and for once there was joy almost without a shadow. Father John was a hale and hearty man, who did his day's work with as much ease as in former times, though his hair was white; and Lisbeth's face was so sweet and gentle, that the many lines thereon could not mar it; she was as active as ever, coming and going—the true housewife. Rosamund and Letty were no longer girls, but comely women; and if the charm of youth had passed away, there was the more perfect beauty of the woman. This evening their youth seemed to come back to them, their eyes laughed. After all they were in the

very prime of life, with gentle experience and knowledge; women who had thought and sorrowed, and were ripe as the mellow peach on a southern wall. The marvel was that they were unwed.

It was still early in September, but the nights were chilly, and so they heaped on the wood in the great hall. Father John and Lisbeth, with the children as they still called them, gathered round the hearth. Rosamund sat holding Derward's hand, and Letty on a low stool leant her head against Lisbeth's knees. Oh how glad they were! How sweet was the peace which came to them!

"Tell us all about yourself now," said Rosamund.

"No," said Derward; "mine is a short tale, and quickly told, yours must be a long one. Tell it me first. Father John, I left you in a cottage, and I come back to find you in a great house. How is it?"

Rosamund's fingers tightened round his, and she answered:

"I will tell you, Derward."

"Ay do," said John; "speech comes easier to you than it does to me."

Then quickly but very clearly Rosamund told the tale, how she had gone to prison that her father might be set free, how she had renounced their birthright. "Yours also, Derward," she said, "because we thought you were dead; but now you are alive. And my word is passed that you will never claim the name or heritage of the Earl of Hertford."

"And if I do, what then?" said Derward, a flush of pride coming over him. "If I am truly my lord's son, why should I not stand forth before the world as such?"

"I pledged my word you would not," said Rosamund. "My lord was grieved because I did this thing, and had he known it I doubt whether he would have left his prison. But my promise was written on parchment, signed and sealed. You cannot go back from it."

"And is my lord still living?" asked Derward.

"It is he that has built this mansion for me, and it is he who has dowered me. But I am by my own will,

and by the law of the land, Rosamund Weston. It is a joy to me, and I would not have it otherwise. Think of it, Derward. You have been a free man all your life; how would you bear to become a courtier, to live amidst men and women whose ways and manners you are ignorant of? Does a bare title tempt you?"

Derward hesitated, and his brow was knit. It is not easy for a man—it was not easy for Esau, to find himself cast out, to have lost his birthright.

"Think of it," said Rosamund softly, "think of it. And if by to-morrow you are still dissatisfied, go to my lord and tell him so. My word was pledged to Queen Elizabeth. Now James is on the throne; that may perchance alter things for you, but not for me," she said. And, rising, she went over to John and Lisbeth, and threw one arm round the neck of each.

"I will bide with these, my dearest and my best, until God parts us."

"So be it," said John.

And Lisbeth raised her face to Rosamund.

"We shall be a care to thee when we grow older," she said gently.

"A sweet care," answered Rosamund and, stooping, she kissed them both.

"And me," said Letty, tears filling her eyes. "Am I naught amongst you?"

Quickly Derward turned to her.

"You, Letty! Why, I have come across the seas to make you my dear wife, and to take you back with me."

"Not as my Lady Hertford," she said quickly. "That I will never be. You must choose between a title and myself, Derward."

"Then it is done," answered the young man, and the cloud passed away from his face.

Taking both her hands he lifted her up, and they stood together in the firelight, a fair woman and a brave man. Both so strong, so full of life, with such untainted honour written on their faces. Young oaks

ready to be transplanted into fresh soil, and to take root in a new country, spreading out their branches, till young saplings should grow up around them as the trees of the forest, and children should play beneath their shadow.

Standing there they were silent, till Derward said:

"I have waited for you, Letty; I knew I should come home one day. Have you waited for me?"

The girl flushed crimson.

"Indeed she has, Derward," said Rosamund. "She has had many a swain, but she has turned her back upon them all. She has never told us why or wherefore, but we knew, didn't we, Mother?"

"Ay," said Lisbeth, "we guessed it."

And then they all laughed, and Derward laughed.

"You will give her to me, Father John?"

"I needs must," he answered. "She would not be content to part from you, now you have come back. But maybe you will stay with us?"

"No," he said, "I will not; I have promised to go back, and I have set my heart upon making the new country as great as the old one. I know its needs, and I must give them help; it is my duty, the path cut out for me. And Rolfe my friend is of the same mind. Are you afraid, Letty, or will you go with me?"

"Afraid!" she answered; "afraid, when you are with me! Oh no!" And she looked up to him.

"That is well," he answered. "With your leave, Father John," he said, bending his head.

"Ay," answered John.

And Derward took her face in his hands, and kissed her on the lips.

CHAPTER XXII

SIR WALTER RALEIGH

"OH, leave the work and come out with me!" said Derward, coming into the hall early the following morning, and finding Rosamund and Letty busy dusting and making the place fair with great bunches of autumn leaves and flowers. They looked up laughing at him, stretching forth their hands in greeting.

"You would have us know," said Rosamund, "that my lord has come home!"

In the wild gladness of his heart he kissed them both by turns.

"Now come along!" And he took them by the hand, threw open the great door, and ran them with him down the steps into the garden, dewy with morning freshness and bright with the first rays of early sunshine.

"Ah! if you knew," he said, "how I have lived for years in the open air, in forests and by rivers; how I have wandered miles in the far country, with only Friend Rolfe and savages for my companions! By the by, I have to speak to you of Rolfe. He has come with me to England, and has brought his wife with him."

"Where have you left them?" asked Rosamund.

"I thought it better to come on first," he answered; "and I think I was right. But now, if you all are willing, I will go back to London and bring them. Rolfe's home has been mine for these last fifteen years; we have lived together, fought together, and almost tasted death together. I should be glad for you to know him."

"And we should be glad," said Letty; "he must be like part of yourself."

"Just so," said Derward, smiling at her, pleased at her comprehension.

"And his wife?" asked Rosamund.

"Ah! that is a story by itself," said Derward. And he told quickly and easily Pocahontas' story; how as a child she had saved them from a cruel death, how as a child she had loved and served them, and how this tender friendship had grown into something more between her and Rolfe.

"You see," he said, "Rolfe had no Letty to think of; and the girl is very sweet though she is dark and a savage."

"Is she very savage?" asked Letty, with that ignorance which existed then in England, and exists still among a certain class, of all that lies beyond the boundary of our sea-girt island.

Derward laughed.

"My dear child," he said, "it is impossible for me to answer you, or to know what impressions she will make upon you. I do not see that she is savage at all; she is a sweet, gentle woman, and since she has been a Christian she strives with all her little might to live as a Christian woman should live, and Rolfe helps her. He is a great man, Rolfe; I am a savage compared to him. I misdoubt me that but for him I should have forgotten many things. He kept me straight, he kept me true. He is some years older than I am; not many, but enough, especially at first, to make me follow in his steps. Ah! you do not know how we have sat at night over the camp fires, and read and re-read the one Book we possessed. It was perhaps well we had not many, or this one would not have grown so dear to us. And then he would lie back and preach to me. Often, unawares to him, for he was so wrapt in his own thoughts, the Indians would come round our wigwam and listen to him."

"But did they understand?" asked Rosamund.

"Some did. Pocahontas speaks English quite well, and understands all things; and Manteo, and King Powhattan, and Wingina, and many others. Rolfe has

come over to England more especially to be ordained a missionary preacher among the heathen. He thinks of nothing else, he dreams of nothing else."

Rosamund laid her hand on his.

"Dear brother," she said, "go bring them to us. They shall be to us brother and sister. Is it not so, Letty?" And Letty nodded.

"I will go to-morrow," he said, "not to-day. We will have this one day to ourselves."

And so it was agreed between them, and Father John and Lisbeth were told it. The best guest-chamber was prepared, the windows were thrown wide open, and the linen, smelling of sweet lavender, scented the whole room.

Oh how happy they were! how joyous! Their days had been sad, but now joy had blossomed for them, and the two girls went hither and thither singing like birds; and Derward went with Father John all over the farm, up the hillside, and down into the village. He examined with great care John's flocks and kine.

"That is what we want," he said, "and that is what you must give me, Father. We have no sheep or kine of any sort in this beautiful land of Virginia. No cows mooing, no cocks to wake us with their crowing at early morning, only the many-coloured birds singing in the trees."

Father John was astounded, he could not understand such a state of things, and he answered frankly:

"You shall take what you will, as Letty's dower. We are rich, we have more than we need. Do you know that Lord Hertford has bought the house and land, and paid me the money down in good gold, to be Rosamund's for ever, when we are dead? But until then it is mine, and the produce of the land is mine. He is a great man, my lord. You must not go hence again without visiting him."

"I have no intention of doing so," answered Derward firmly. "Neither have I any intention of forcing my claims upon him. I will remain what I have made

myself, a new man in a new country. And if it please God to give me children, I will teach them to love the old country as I love it myself."

"Well spoken," said John.

The following morning Derward took his departure, Williams always accompanying him. They were quite inseparable.

"We will come back within the week," said Derward, "to stay with you as long as you will keep us. I do not think we shall return to Virginia before the spring, because of the storms at sea, and the many dangers. Will that be too long for you to keep us, Mother Lisbeth?"

"Too long!" she exclaimed. "The house will be dull again when you are gone."

"Only henceforth you will hear of us, you will know of our doings; no ship will return to England without news. I shall be no longer a wanderer; we shall build houses, and dwell therein."

Then, turning to Letty, he threw his arm about her. "We shall go forth well stocked," he said. "You will have much to do."

"Which I shall do gladly," she answered.

They saw him ride away with light hearts. They had still much to do to prepare for their guests, but the trouble seemed to them as naught for the joy which had come to them. The week passed swiftly by, and early one forenoon they saw horses and riders coming up the hillside. Then Letty and Rosamund ran out and stood on the bridge to welcome them. Father John and Lisbeth came on to the upper step.

Derward rode first, Rolfe followed with his young wife on a pillion behind him, Williams with Dawson came behind, riding on each side of a covered cart which contained all their belongings. So they crossed the drawbridge, which, though it was seldom drawn up, was still a drawbridge. Rosamund and Letty walked beside Derward's horse, and waited on the other side for Rolfe and his wife to come up. They saw the dark face beneath

the hood, and marvelled, for they had never seen the like. But they also caught sight of a pair of pleading eyes—dark eyes. They did not wait for Pocahontas to come to them, but went to her. Letty with her strong arms lifted her from the horse, and embraced her. Then they both shook hands with Rolfe.

"You have been a brother to my brother in a strange land," said Rosamund, "now I must be your sister."

Rolfe heard the sweet words, saw the gentle grace and beauty of the speaker. He was more touched than he had been for years.

"I am glad I came home," he thought, "and brought Pocahontas with me. She will surely learn much from my countrywomen, more than I could have taught her."

They all entered the house together, and the Indian girl marvelled at what she saw, and would not let go Rosamund's hand. She was dressed as they were; Rolfe had taken care of that; only he had let her have her way, and she wore under her dark cloak and hood a crimson dress, which suited well with her dark skin and darker hair.

After the first few days they were as one family. Pocahontas was like a child amongst them, with such pretty childish ways, so soft and kittenish. They loved her from the first, and she loved them. She was always happy, always singing her little Indian songs, following Lisbeth about in kitchen and in dairy, learning "English way", as she said. And she learnt quickly. They quite forgot that she was dark and that they were fair. Her life was so fair, her love for Rolfe so beautiful in its utter forgetfulness; she had no thought but for him, she had no will but his.

"She is teaching me a lesson," said Letty one day, looking up at Derward. "I am learning wifely duties from Pocahontas."

"You do not need to learn them," answered Derward, "you were never without them." And then he told her what he had not yet told even to Rosamund, that he had been to see his rightful father, who had received

him with open arms, and had entreated him to abide in England and assume his lawful position.

"But I answered him that it was too late, that it would displeasure you, and bring me no joy. 'Then am I to have no heir?' he said pitifully. We talked the matter over, and we agreed together that if it be your will, Letty, but only if it be of your own free-will, the first son born to us, if it please God to give us a son, shall, as soon as he is old enough—passed infancy, be brought to England and given to Rosamund to rear. *He* shall take up the family name and titles, and succeed to the earldom. He will be more fitted for it than I should ever be," continued Derward. "It seems to me right it should be thus, for my dear mother's sake."

Tears had gathered in Letty's eyes, and fell fast as she leaned her head on Derward's shoulder.

"It will be hard," he whispered, "for both of us, but it will be right. Her children were taken from her, and she died in prison. Must we not make amends, even with our own heart's blood?" He held Letty close to him, and looked down upon her.

"Yes, we must," she answered, lifting her head and looking in his eyes. He kissed her shining hair, but all he said in answer was "I thank you".

That was a busy winter; the women span and wove, and made garments and house-linen, until one almost marvelled that their fingers did not ache. And Pocahontas learned these gentle arts, and worked right willingly for Rolfe and for herself. Here in the old country they were weaving the meshes which were to bind the old with the new!

Derward and Rolfe worked with Williams like farm labourers. They put their hand to everything, disdaining nothing, even the minutest details, which might serve them in the future.

As we have said, they had brought roots and plants over from Virginia, which they planted in the old-fashioned English garden; strawberries and raspberries, and many other fruits which are now so familiar to us that

it seems as if they had ever been indigenous English plants. In every cottage garden the two friends went about planting potatoes and teaching the cottagers the way to rear them. Already a few had been grown in different parts of England, but Cranbury now became a centre of new things. Farmers came from distant parts to see and learn.

Derward felt keenly the many gaps which existed amongst the men he had known in his youth. Sir Philip Sidney had died at Zutphen, leaving behind him a glorious memory, which even now remains untarnished—the memory of a great Christian gentleman. Most of the early pioneers of the New Land had met their fate by sea or land, but one there was the thought of whom was bitterness to Derward, and many a day he rode up to London and remained there, visiting a poor captive in a narrow cell, with scant light and scant kindness. He who had been a ruler of men, now sat day after day writing a story of those adventures which had made all men look up at him. He had nothing left; his sons were dead. The queen whom he had served, and who had flattered him, had proved ungrateful, and the new king was little better. This man was Sir Walter Raleigh, and Derward moved heaven and earth to open his prison gates. Feeble and aged he came forth one day, and rode with Derward to Portsmouth, because no other man but he had the power to check the pirate spirit which broke forth when vessels came from the Far West. Having accomplished his task, he went back to prison; the time for his deliverance had not yet come. Derward grieved for him and loved him, as only such men can be loved. Raleigh had one idea still, with which he tempted a king who loved gold above all other things. He pointed out to Derward on a map, that for certainty there lay in Guinea great mines of gold, which would yield inestimable wealth to anyone who could discover and work them. By the help of Lord Hertford this was laid before the king, who promised to consider the matter, and to enable

Raleigh to make the necessary preparations granted him temporary liberty.

The end we all know. He failed and died! He returned to England a failure, so he mounted the scaffold, a weak old man, and laid that great head, which had served England so well, on the block. A traitor's end? Rather a saint's and martyr's, for surely he was such!

But Derward did not stay in England to witness this, and ever afterward he thanked God for having spared him this great sorrow.

A few days before Christmas he and Letty were married. Never were there such doings at Cranbury, either in the past or in the future, as in this happy year! The Moat House was thrown open, and the mummers made great sport. The yew and the holly hung in great masses from the rafters, and were wound up the beautiful staircase, mingling their greenness and their red berries with the blackness of the oak. The whole house was one bower!

About a week before Christmas, John Weston, Derward, and Rolfe had gone out into the forest. Williams and Dawson were with them, and together they chose out the biggest tree, and set to work to hew it down. It was a great labour, for they had to make a clearance, so that when it fell there would be space for it. Many days they were at work, and on the last day other labourers came with ropes and axes, and there was a mighty crash when this king of the forest fell. And the women came out to look at it, and Letty well-nigh wept over it. "You beauty!" she said.

The hewing off of the branches, it was pitiful to see. And then they measured the hearth and cut the yule log, and with much difficulty it was dragged to the Moat House. It could not be brought in by the front-door because of its size, but on Christmas-eve all the villagers assembled outside, dressed after a quaint fashion, bedecked with ribbons and cock's feathers on their heads, singing and shouting and making much ado,

and they dragged it through the house into the hall, and placed it in position on the hearth. Then there was the lighting of it, which was no little matter, seeing it had to burn all that night and the following day, for if by chance it should be extinguished, it would mean ill luck to the housewife for all the coming year. On the contrary, if it burned steadily and well, it was a happy omen.

"If I sit by it all night it sha'n't go out," said Williams. "If ever we wanted good luck it is now."

Nothing was omitted of old customs, old even then. With great state and ceremony the boar's head was brought in and placed before John Weston, ale brewed especially for the season was served out to all who came to the house. There was no stint, either for rich or poor. The feast was at its height, when the stamping of horses' feet across the drawbridge attracted John Weston's attention.

"What traveller may that be?" he said to Derward. "Who on this Christmas night has no home?"

"I will go forth and see," answered Derward, rising. He opened the house door and went out upon the steps.

A man had just thrown himself from his horse, and was tying the animal's rein to the lintel-post.

"Who are you?" called out Derward.

"A lonely man," was the answer, "who would ask your good-will, and pray of you to let him be your guest for this one night."

"You are right welcome, sir," answered Derward. He had recognized the voice. "Who has a better right here than you?" he said, going forward to meet him. He gave him his hand, then the two walked into the hall together. All men started as they gazed at them, for there was no mistaking father and son! They were the image of one another, only one was old, with stooping shoulders and pure white snowy hair, with a joyless countenance as if he had known much sorrow. The other was young and strong, with the love-light in his eyes, and the triumphant look of one who feels his own

strength and power. As they stood on the threshold every man and woman rose, and Derward said in a loud voice:

"Three cheers for our most honoured guest!"

He named no name, but it was not needed. It was not the first time that the imprisoned Earl of Hertford had shown himself at the manor-house.

Lisbeth curtsied low after her old fashion, but Letty and Rosamund came close up to him, bidding him welcome, Letty in her bridal gown and Rosamund in fair attire. Bending their knees they knelt before him, and he laid his hand upon their heads, and, stooping, said in a low voice:

"God bless my dear children, and make them happier in their low estate than I have ever been in my high station!" Then he took his place between Derward and John Weston, and, perceiving Rolfe with Pocahontas beside him, he called:

"Is that John Rolfe and his young wife?"

"Yes, sir, it is," said Derward. "I have been remiss in not presenting him to you. Come, Rolfe."

And Rolfe rose with Pocahontas and came round to the old man. And he looked at her, smiled graciously, touched her hand, and made room for her between him and Letty. Then the feast went on, and afterwards, when it was over, there was dancing and much music and games of all sorts and kinds till long past midnight, when the villagers and servants dispersed, and there remained around the yule-log, still blazing high, only the house party and the stranger guest. They could not approach the hearth for the great heat it gave forth, and so they sat on the settles at the farther end of the room, and spoke together as only those can who are linked by the ties of friendship and of love—without fear, and with deep interest in one another's concerns.

"You will remain here this night, sir?" said John Weston to his guest.

"Truly I will," he answered; "my hearth is cold and lonely, and yours is warm. You and I will keep

watch together, Father John; let the young folk go to rest."

So it came to pass that when they had partaken of the posset of wine with spices and sugar and all manner of things which Dame Weston brewed herself, the young men and women dispersed to their own chambers, but John Weston and his guest sat in the two great chairs side by side, to watch the yule-log. So the old watch while the young sleep, and as their sand runs out, their hearts are not over-sorrowful for the life which is ending, because they taste of a new joy in the hearts of their children, and they are glad in their gladness.

CHAPTER XXIII

THE HEIR

IT was May-day once more, the trees were white with apple-blossom, the ground was flowered with bluebells, all nature rejoiced. But in the Moat Farm there was sorrow. Sorrow for a young life which had passed away, leaving behind it nothing but sweet memories, and a great sadness in many hearts. Ever since she had come to England, Pocahontas, Rolfe's Indian wife, had been more or less ailing. She had not always remained at the Moat Farm; so many people desired to see her, that Rolfe had been obliged to take her to London, where she had been received at court, caressed, and made much of. A little son had been born to them in the early spring, and great was everyone's delight. She had come back, as she said, home, and Lisbeth had tended and cared for her, and at first both mother and child had prospered; but the cold March winds had made her shiver, they were not like those in her own country, they seemed to nip her, and quickly as a candle goes out she lay down and died. It was not long, she did not even know herself that she was passing away. They all thought it was only weakness, and that with the summer she would be well again; and Rolfe and Derward delayed their journey back until she should be hale again. There was not a man or woman for miles around who did not come to see her, bringing her flowers and all the early produce of their gardens. And she was quite happy with her baby, showing people that he was like Rolfe, with a white skin, only the hair and eyes were dark, as hers. They carried her out into the fields the day she died, and when they

brought her in, she sat in the great chair beside the hearth, and talked of her own country and her own people; then suddenly she laid her head back and closed her eyes, holding Rolfe's hand in hers, and so she died.

A sweet flower nipped in the bud, leaving a spotless name and the image of a perpetual youth. It was a great blow. Rolfe seemed broken with his sorrow, he hardly understood it at first. But after a short spell, walking with Derward in the orchard, he said to him:

"It is my call! Had she lived I should have been wrapped up in her, but now I have nought to do but to be about 'my Father's business'. Of worldly goods I have no great need; henceforth I am God's servant to preach His Gospel to the heathen."

"What will you do with the child?" asked Derward.

"The child!" he repeated slowly. "I will leave him with Rosamund, she will mother him until he is old enough to come out to me. Is that not the best thing I can do for him?"

"Surely it is," answered Derward. "The Moat Farm will be very lonely when Letty is gone, but a child is always an occupation, they will be glad to have him."

When, in the first days of June, Derward and Letty with Rolfe bade farewell to the old homestead, Pocahontas's babe remained behind. John Weston went down to Portsmouth with them, but as the men and Letty rode away, they turned round for a last look at the old homestead, and they saw Lisbeth weeping, with Rosamund beside her holding the child in her arms. Such was the vision they carried away with them to the New World.

This expedition was very different from any other which had been previously sent out to Virginia. It consisted of no fewer than six ships, with three hundred emigrants—men, women, and children; and, what was almost more important, upwards of one hundred kine, as well as suitable provisions. Nothing was lacking. For weeks beforehand Derward had scoured the country and brought in all manner of things he deemed necessary;

there was no want of provisions of every sort. Nature seemed to favour them, for it was summer weather and the sea was smooth as glass; rapidly, without accident of any kind, they crossed the great waters. Sir Thomas Gates was with them, he held the first patent for Virginia from the king. When the ships appeared on the horizon, the inhabitants of the little colony feared that it might be a hostile force coming against them. Great was their joy when they saw the English colours floating at the mast, and the cry went up to greet the emigrants as they landed, "Lord bless England, our sweet native country!" and ever afterwards night and morning they prayed that prayer.

What followed after this it were too long to tell, it belongs to history, but Virginia grew and flourished; and John Rolfe with Alexander Whitaker worked together, preaching the glad tidings of great joy, not to their own people only, but to the heathen. Sir Thomas Gates and Derward Weston were as pillars of strength in the land; they brought order amongst the colonists, they made good laws, and everything they laid their hands to prospered. So Virginia grew to be, as we all know, the first and greatest jewel in the English crown.

. . . . . .

A man holding a child of some three or four years old by the hand was walking up the Strand on a warm June morning. For some reason people turned and looked at them, they were certainly an uncommon pair. The child was dressed after a courtly fashion in dark-blue velvet, short breeches fastened at the knee with a bunch of ribbons. His little feet were shod in black leather shoes with silver buckles, his collar was of costly lace, with sleeves to match. Fair hair curled half-way down his back, in its profuseness almost hiding the beautiful child's face, so ruddy, with eyes so blue, half-shadowed by a large felt hat, from which hung a plume of royal purple to match his coat, which was richly embroidered and lined with white silk. Beneath the

coat was a long brocaded waistcoat. He might have been a prince as he strutted by his father's side, chattering the while—that baby talk, which has so much and yet so little meaning. His father was by no means so richly attired; his nether clothes and coat were of fine grey cloth, his hat likewise of the same colour and material, only the crimson feather was fastened with a rich aigrette, and swept round the otherwise plain hat. The face beneath it was sunburnt, the beard and moustache russet, and his hair fell on to his neck. He was stalwart and splendidly built, with broad shoulders. He had the appearance of one born to command, but there was a shadow on his face as he walked in the sunlight. He held the child's little hand firmly in his as he stopped before a mansion, known in London as Hertford House, and went slowly up the steps, drawing the boy up with him. When they reached the great doors, which, as was the custom in those days, were thrown wide open, and saw the hall filled with servingmen, his brow flushed. For a second he hesitated, then he advanced into the hall and stood looking around him.

The chief steward, with his silver chain of office, came forward hastily, and asked in a somewhat careless tone:

"What may your pleasure be, sir?"

"To see the Earl of Hertford," answered Derward, looking at him.

"What name, sir?"

"No name," answered Derward.

"My lord does not receive everyone who presents himself," said the steward. "You must have a passport to my lord's presence."

Derward—for it was he—smiled.

"Virginia," he said shortly.

"Virginia!" repeated the man, with a note of irony in his voice.

"Yes, Virginia," answered Derward. "Be quick or I will pass before you; I am not accustomed to wait in halls for the pleasure of valets," he added haughtily.

There was something in his manner so majestic, that involuntarily the man turned on his heel to obey him, and a slight titter went round among the other servingmen.

Derward paid no heed to it, but walked quickly after the steward and reached the door of the earl's library at the same moment.

"Go on, man!" he said impatiently, and, stretching out his hand, he knocked himself at the door.

"Come in!" said a voice which Derward remembered well, because of its deep sadness. Pushing the steward on one side he entered, closing the door behind him. He took off his hat, and the child's also, and thus, bareheaded, advanced to where an old man with white hair and a sad face stood waiting for them.

"Derward!" he exclaimed.

In a second the son was on his knees before his father.

"Sir," he said, "I have brought you my son, my first-born."

An expression of deep emotion crossed the earl's face as he said slowly:

"It is very good of you, Derward. Rise, do not kneel to me." And he gave him his hand, which Derward kissed with almost as much emotion as his father showed. The old man, stooping, lifted the child in his arms, kissed him, and looked at him as if he recognized him.

"He is just as you were, Derward, when I carried you down the Tower steps and gave you to John Weston. Is it your will that he should take what by right is yours—my name, titles, and wealth? There is still time for you to retract, come home, and claim your own. King James will accept you as my son and heir as easily as he will take the boy. Think what you are throwing away," he added.

"I am throwing nothing away," Derward answered; "at least not as far as I am concerned. I would not exchange my lot for any name or title in the world. I would not part with this child, if it were not for my mother's honour. I feel as if I were laying a burden on him, and the parting is very bitter. I should have

brought him to you sooner, sir, but his mother could not let him go until another son was born to us, so shall we not be childless. Still, he is our first-born! You will remember *that*, my lord. A man loves his first-born son above all others."

"Who do you tell it to?" answered the earl. "You were my *only* son, Derward, and I believe if I had known when I sent you forth to save your life that I should lose you for ever, I should not have had the courage so to do. I would rather have kept you a prisoner in the Tower, and had your love; so perchance I should have saved your mother's life, for, after you were gone, she never smiled again."

"Poor Mother!" said Derward. "My Letty's heart is also very sad, but she is a brave woman—one seems to breathe a stronger life in that new land; and then she knows the child will fill my place. He will rule in England, a peer amongst his peers, and I shall rule in my place, and govern the New Land. So shall we both fulfil our destinies."

Whilst listening to his son the earl had seated himself, and had placed the child between his knees. It struck Derward that when he entered that room an old man had received him, but now the look of age had passed away. The earl sat straight up in his chair, his head was held high, and his eyes shone with pride and gladness.

"I am an old man, Derward," he said; "who will take care of the child?"

"Rosamund," answered Derward. "You will let him be reared at the Moat Farm; Rosamund will bring him to you whenever it is your pleasure to see him. I do not think he could live in a city, he was not born to it. And mayhap you will go from time to time to the old Moat Farm. I understand you have been doing so of late."

"Yes," said the earl; "I find it lonely in this great house, and it is worse still in my houses in the country."

"Of course it is," replied Derward. "But it will be less so when the children and Rosamund come to visit you. You know she has Rolfe's boy with her. He has grown a nice little lad. And he and Edward have already had great sport together. Is it not so, boy?" He leant forward and touched the child, who laughed and held out his hands to his father, saying:

"Me play with Johnny—Johnny good boy!"

"All you have said suits me well," answered the earl, "but I misdoubt me Rosamund will not come to me."

"She has promised me she will when she has the children to bring with her; but she will come only as Rosamund Weston; the promise she made to Queen Elizabeth holds good with her. She will not come as your daughter, only as the child's guardian."

"So be it," said the earl; "I am glad to have him and her on any conditions. Now I know I shall not die alone, for my sweet Kate's face will hang over me."

Then, changing his tone to one of brisk gladness, he said:

"Throw open the doors, Derward, and bid my steward come to me."

Derward obeyed, wondering what he was about to do.

The old steward came quickly forward.

"My lord's pleasure?" he asked.

"That you should gather into the great hall all the inhabitants of this house, great and small, from you, my head steward, to the scullion in the kitchen. I would speak with them. And to-night this gentleman and this child will sleep in my house. Tell the bedchamber-women such is my pleasure. You will also see that dinner is served for us in the great hall, sumptuously served, as when I receive men of high estate."

The steward bowed and cast a look at Derward, remembering that he had not received this guest, who was to be so highly honoured, over civilly; he also looked at the child, who sat on the earl's knee, and then he went forth. In that quiet room, which served

the earl as library and audience-chamber, they could hear a great coming and going in the house, and the sound of many voices.

"What are your intentions, sir," said Derward, "by thus honouring me?"

"To let all my household know that you are my son, and this is my grandson, who will succeed me, possibly whilst still a child, for I am an old man; also, that it is of your own free-will you renounce your birthright, with its titles and estates—that you abdicate them in favour of your son, whom I henceforth acknowledge as my heir. Is that well done, Derward, according to your liking?"

"It is nobly done, my father," answered Derward, for the first time giving him that name.

The child had slipped off the earl's knee; he was tired of the stillness and the strange talk, and was running round the room with a beautiful greyhound, whose quick movements delighted him. The animal seemed to understand that he was his playmate, and he crouched and leapt with such gentleness, that at last in very delight the boy threw his arms round his neck and kissed him.

"We have not many animals in Jamestown yet," said Derward, "but the boy loves them."

"Then he shall have as many as he will," said his grandfather. "He shall ride and he shall hunt, he shall do all I would have done, and yet did not do. Ah, Derward! to look back upon such a life as mine has been, such a marred life, is bitterness in these last years, when I can no longer pick up the broken threads and weave them into anything worth leaving behind me."

"Yes you can, Father," he said. "Am I not giving you the child?"

"True," said the earl; and he looked down with a strange joy on that bright head which lay now close against the greyhound.

The child had no idea of his importance and how great the position was which lay before him in the future, and as the two men looked at him, he wearied

with the unfamiliar sights and sounds, with the game he had been playing, and fell asleep. The earl laughed.

"That is what we men cannot do. Happy child!" he said.

Then they talked of many things, in the past and in the future. Derward told of the prosperity which was gradually dawning for the New Country; not that they were free of troubles, for the emigrants were not all easy to manage, and there was a growing need for legislation. Other towns were rising at short distances one from another, and much was being done for the prosperity of the land.

"The tobacco-plant will be our great staple," said Derward. "I am much mistaken if it does not prove a source of wealth to the inhabitants."

In the midst of their conversation the steward, now with his wand of office, came in and threw open the door, announcing:

"My lord, all is ready."

With some difficulty they roused the boy, who, like all children whose sleep is broken, began to weep; but a word from Derward comforted him. It was a strange sight to see that strong, stalwart man speaking so tenderly to the little child, smoothing his long curls and caressing him.

"Where be we going, Father?" he asked, still tearfully. "Into the hot street?" He shook himself and stretched his little limbs, as if the atmosphere of the room oppressed him.

"I am so thirsty!" he said.

"Fetch a cup of milk," commanded the earl.

They would not hurry him, they waited the child's pleasure! He was the master! The milk was brought, and the earl would suffer no one to feed the child but himself.

"Are you better, my son?" he asked tenderly when he had finished. And the child laughed. The earl lifted him from the ground and held him in his arms; his own figure straightened with, to him, that precious burden.

Thus with Derward at his side he went forth, the steward walking before him, through a crowd of servants and retainers such as was customary in every great household in those days. When they reached the hall the earl ascended the long platform where he was wont to dine in state and receive his guests. It was raised one step above the hall itself, and opposite him was a gallery for the musicians or the players, as the case might be. At this moment the trumpet sounded one, two, three blasts, and the earl stood in front of the oak chair, which was almost a throne, and where it was his wont to stand on great occasions. He raised his hand to command silence.

"Friends," he said, "a strange thing has happened to me. There is not one amongst you who does not know how, for many years, I was a prisoner in the Tower, by the will of her gracious majesty, Elizabeth. My wife Katherine, the legal descendant of Mary Tudor, daughter of his majesty, Henry VII, was also imprisoned with me, and she died there. But we had two children, whom I sent forth to be nurtured and cared for by a good man and a good woman, whom they called father and mother from that time forth; thus they grew to man's and woman's estate without knowing of their birthright. They learned it, but alas! too late. This gentleman had chosen his path in life, had sailed Westward Ho, and is now, with others, building up a new city in a new country. My daughter Rosamund bought me my freedom, and went to prison in my stead, having sworn that neither she nor her brother would ever assert their claim. I believe the promise she made would now be null and void. But they hold by it. Is it not so, Derward?"

"It is, my lord," answered the young man. "I would not exchange my home over the sea to be King of England."

A murmur ran round amongst those present.

The earl continued:

"So be it," he said; "but," he added, raising the child aloft, "he has been very good to me, my dear son, for

he has given me *his* first-born son in my old age, so that I may not die childless and alone. This is my grandson and your future master, Lord Edward Seymour, later to be the Earl of Hertford. Will you greet him?"

And there went up such a shout as might have been heard in the streets:

"Long live the little lord!"

And the child, half-frightened, hid its face in the old man's grey hair, as he sat on his shoulder.

"Look up, Edward," said his father, touching him, "look up."

And the child obeyed, clapping his hands when the trumpets once more sounded, and the three generations stood close together.

"Thank you, friends, thank you!" said the earl.

Wine was brought forth, and every man drank his cupful, raising it on high and calling out:

"To the earl and his sons, long life and happiness!"

Then the crowd was marshalled into the servants' quarters, and there was much feasting that day above and below the salt, for at the hour of dinner there appeared at the earl's board a vast number of old friends, many of whom Derward had heard spoken of, and a few he knew.

After the first course the child was weary, and, falling asleep, was delivered over to the housekeeper to be cared for and tended. It seemed to the earl that this day was the happiest of all his life, and he said as much to Derward when they parted that night, adding only:

"I would your mother had lived to see it!"

"Nay, Father, she has been spared much suffering," said Derward.

He slept that night for the first time under his father's roof. The following day they all travelled down to the Moat Farm, to give the child into Rosamund's care.

There it stood, the dear home, to welcome them with open doors and windows. Loving eyes smiled upon them, loving arms were stretched out to take them in. The Indian woman's child and the earl's son clasped

each other in the bond of brotherhood. Henceforth, even as there was joy and laughter in the old home, there was joy and laughter in the new home.

The children who grew up in Derward Weston's house knew full well they had a brother in Old England, and that the tree from which they sprang was the same. They loved and prayed for him morning and night at Letty's knees, even as the young earl and Johnny Rolfe, the missionary's son, prayed at Rosamund's. The golden chain of love and kinship was stretched across the mighty ocean, and so they prospered, and grew alike in strength and power, Old England and Young England! For, as the poet sang long afterwards:

"How skilful grows the hand
That obeyeth Love's command!
It is the heart and not the brain,
That to the highest doth attain;
And he who followeth Love's behest,
Far exceedeth all the rest!"