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CORNWALL

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THE LAND'S END

CORNWALL

PAINTED BY

G. F. NICHOLLS

DESCRIBED BY

G. E. MITTON

WITH
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CORNWALL

I

POPULAR IDEAS OF CORNWALL

To the mind of the ordinary Briton there is a curious attraction in "getting as far as you can"—a streak in mentality which has accounted in no small degree for the world-wide Empire. In England you cannot in one direction get any farther than the extreme point of Cornwall. Owing to the geographical configuration of Cornwall, the idea is magnified very vigorously into a really gallant effort to "get there," such as might be made by an individual stretching out not only to his full stride, but indulging in a good kick! We feel in very truth we have "got there," on to the edge of something or somewhere. As Wilkie Collins expresses it, the Land's End is "the sort of place where the last man in England would be most likely to be found waiting for death at the end of the world!"

Thus it is that Cornwall holds a special magnet which steadily draws a never-ending succession of strangers. Look only at those who do the feat of cycling or motoring from John o' Groat's to Land's End. Picture them in an indomitable long-drawn-out line, wheel to wheel; shadowy forms flitting over that last—or first—piece of road, full of hope and exultation at the thought of the journey's end, or full of anticipation at the journey's beginning. No road in England has been so wheel-worn as that strip running out to the most westerly point of England.

Some there are who are drawn by a similar magnet to the Lizard, the most southerly point of our land, but the attraction is not so potent. From time immemorial John o' Groat's to Land's End has formed the measure of Britain.

For very many years Cornwall has been known for its fine coast scenery, but wild and desolate scenery was not the fashion in Early Victorian days, and there were comparatively few brave souls who penetrated so far. It is rather remarkable to notice how many books about the charm of Cornwall appeared in the sixties, doubtless due to the opening of the Cornwall Railway in 1859. There is Wilkie Collins's *Rambles Beyond Railways*, 1861; J. O. Halliwell's *Rambles in Western Cornwall* and J. T. Blight's *Land's End*, the same year,

followed by Richard Edmonds's *Land's End District* the next year.

But Cornwall really began to be known by hundreds of persons in place of tens about 1904, and since then the number of visitors has increased to thousands.

This book is not written by a Cornishman, for the very obvious reason that no Cornishman could for one instant think impartially of his Duchy, any more than you could expect a Yorkshireman to believe that the "rest of England" was in any way to be compared with Yorkshire. The more individual and peculiar a person is, the more deeply is he loved by those who really know him, provided that he has lovable qualities. No characterless good soul ever wins the heartfelt devotion that is the meed of those who have unexpected kinks and corners in their personality, and in the same way a flat, featureless country, carefully cultivated and uninteresting, will never win to itself the true land-love felt for one that is varied, rough maybe, rugged a bit, and in a hundred ways surprising. Of all things human nature hates boredom, and the man or the country who can win free of any trace of boredom insures a reward. Cornwall has in a peculiar measure gained the devotion of its own people. Not only on account of its unexpectedness, but because it stands in some measure apart from the rest of England. The Celtic blood of its older inhabitants, while making them akin to the Welsh and Irish, cuts them off from the Saxons, whom so often and so heartily in the old days they fought.

The geographical position of Cornwall, with three sides washed by the sea, and even the "land" boundary mainly marked by a river, has influenced its sons, who, never being far from the sound of the surging waves, have gained something of the robust aloofness of the sailor. They are friendly to all, but guarded nevertheless; and standing thus apart, marked out by their territory, with small chance to mingle with inhabitants of other counties, the clan feeling among them has grown to be analogous to that of the clans in Scotland. All other Britishers are to the true Cornishman "foreigners." How then could a man so imbued with his own and his Duchy's place in regard to the "rest of England" write a book which should convey in any way the real characteristics of his land?

It would be a feat impossible.

The rugged outlines of a well-known face lose meaning with years of

familiarity, and are taken for granted; thus it is with landmarks in Cornwall, which would never figure in such a chronicle at all.

Therefore, as this book is intended not so much for those who know Cornwall as for those who will know it sometime in that future which lies beyond the reading of it, the impressions of an outsider are most fitting.

There are people who go to Cornwall once for a holiday and return to it ever and again, when they get the chance, unable to find satisfaction anywhere else; the "atmosphere" of the country has entered into their blood. They think with an ache of the coast in all its cruelty and glory, they picture the bright blue of the rain-washed skies in a burst of sunshine, and they recall the great "hedges" with a foundation or core of stone, generations old, overlaid by an ample covering of turf and grass, a hot-bed for the stonecrop and hart's-tongue, fern, primrose, or foxglove.

But what is a catalogue of words? It conveys nothing, any more than a catalogue of the names of books. Unless one can conjure up feelings, the attempt to explain the grip of the Duchy on recollection is useless. The clammy sea-wind on the face, the sense of great spaces, the grandeur of the coast, with its solemn, immovable rampart of cliff, and the pulsing life of the cold spray, for ever beating and frilling against the hard, glistening surface—these enter into consciousness. Of all things living, the swing of the seagull on motionless wings over a cavernous hollow brings one nearest to the realization of a dream.

Others again go to visit the Duchy and come away disappointed because they have not found exactly what they wanted or expected. They take small children to coast places of which they have only heard by name, and are dismayed to find there is no sand, no beach, no bathing—only hills steep as the blue slate-roofs; and a good deal in the "people's" part of the town, which is narrow, slatternly and disagreeable. But it is one of the traits of Cornwall that she embraces such wide variety and shows such startling contrasts close up against each other. There are certainly a great many places where there are no sands at all, nothing but sheer wild cliffs falling perpendicularly to the sea, pierced by gigantic caves, to be explored at low tide only, and a small strip of shingle on which bathers are warned to enter at their peril, for the huge breakers from the Atlantic roll in continually, and one moment you are over

head and shoulders in the smother of their foam, and the next stand naked to the winds, with a villainous undertow sucking away the pebbles from beneath your twitching soles. Carew, Cornwall's best-known historian, speaks of the Duchy's "long, naked sides." The writer on geology in the *Victoria County History* says: "It has been calculated that a single roller of the Atlantic ground-swell (20 feet high) falls with a pressure of about a ton on every square foot." Places where such forces are felt are the Poles apart from the usual English seaside resort, sarcastically described by "Q" as "A line of sea in front, a row of hotels and lodging-houses behind, all as flat as a painted cloth, with a brass band to help the morality." Yet even in Cornwall if you want sandy beach you can have it. There are sands that stretch for miles, firm and flat, such as the famous beaches at St. Ives; and in most places, even the rocky ones, there is some provision made for bathing of a sort.



CARBIS BAY

I think the reason why a small proportion of people are disappointed in Cornwall is that the advertisements are focussed on one aspect only. In

almost every one of them is the mildness of the climate insisted on, and this gives rise to semi-invalidish ideas. It is true that semi-invalids who go there in winter in search of warmth can find suitable places if they know where to go. Cornwall as a whole must have an equable climate, or we should not see the growth of exotic plants out of doors—myrtle, tree-geranium, aloes, palms, and camellias, to name only a few of the most abundant—but the whole county is by no means a hot-bed of warmth, and the winds are frequently very cold indeed. There are everywhere now first-class hotels, with the ample lounges which have superseded the shut-up drawing-room and smoking-room compartments of earlier days, and these hotels mostly have verandahs so placed that the glorious sun can flood them while the winds are kept at bay. There those who come to recuperate can bask in delight, and draw straight from the Atlantic the pure fresh air, which has a wonderfully tonic effect.

"The lungs with the living gas grow tight,
And the limbs feel the strength of ten.

God's glorious oxygen."

Two such verandahs come up before me as I write—that at Fowey, raised high, and overlooking the most lovely harbour along the whole coast, shut in by rising banks almost like a Norwegian fiord; the other, the verandah at Housel Bay Hotel, where, facing due south, you may sit in an atmosphere of summer which is indeed like a climate usually only to be looked for many degrees further south.

But though this aspect is the keynote of almost every advertisement, or at any rate every winter advertisement, it is by no means the most prominent or characteristic one of Cornwall, which appeals far more to the hardy than the weak. When I think of Cornwall the vision that comes before me is not that of sheltered sun-bathed balconies, but rather of a high wind making the breakers frill around the jagged bases of the cliffs, while above, amid the towans or sandhills covered with bent grass, the golf-balls fly. The tang of the air seems once again in my nostrils, carrying with it an exhilaration that makes the blood race in the veins and entirely prevents tiredness. Only in one place elsewhere have I felt that exact stimulus, and that was far west in the neighbouring land of Brittany, near the Point du Raz, which stretches razor-

like into the ocean, and in many respects strikingly resembles a bit of the Cornish coast. Many people will object that this is exactly what they understand Cornwall does not offer; on the contrary they have heard apologies for its stuffiness and the relaxing qualities of the air. Why yes, if one visits it in the height of summer, and goes to one of the many places situated in a hole or funnel and facing south, it might be very relaxing indeed; but the "advertisements for invalids," if one may so call them, usually refer to early spring and it is in early spring that the invigorating breezes may be found almost anywhere the whole way round, while the northern coasts are never stuffy even in summer.

Besides unusual golf facilities another feature appealing to the hardy and sound are the cliff paths, mere coastguard tracks, unfenced and unspoilt, which circle the whole coast. Those who keep to roads will never see the real Cornwall and that is why so many motor-bound souls miss it. One may wander for days on these cliff paths, lured on from point to point and bay to bay, always rejoicing in something new or glorious, something which beckons onward. At the foot of the vertical walls of rock are tiny sandy bays for ever cut off from the foot of man even at low tide, and inaccessible to all save the sea-birds, who well know it! My mind brings back visions of great pieces of rock, torn and ripped from their hold, and apparently flung pell-mell on the beach. Except that they are usually three-cornered and not columnar, they are somewhat like the drongs of Shetland in their piercing sharpness. Remarkably fine specimens of these isolated rocks are seen at Kynance Cove, near the Lizard, and at Bedruthan Steps, in Watergate Bay; but almost everywhere some stand up aloof from the neighbouring cliff.



KYNANCE COVE

Whoever loves the wild desolation of the northernmost Scottish coasts will feel at home in Cornwall. Of course the cliffs are not nearly so high—most of the Cornish cliffs could go four times into the finest specimens of Mull or Shetland—but there is not much lost by this. The human mind can only grasp up to a certain amount of size conveyed by the eye in vertical measure, and after the first awed glance down a 1,000-foot cliff, when the mind is almost stunned, the impression rapidly wears off, and all the grandeur needed is equally well conveyed by 300 feet of sheer precipice, while the details of the natural carving and the play of the wild birds on its crevices are far better observed.

The popular idea of Cornwall in the minds of those who have not been there is that there runs a long raised ridge down the middle like a spine, and that from this on each side the ground slopes away to the sea; but this is a very misleading idea. Cornwall is all hills, and yet has none to boast of. Brown Willy, not far from Launceston, reaching to 1,375 feet, is the highest, but yet

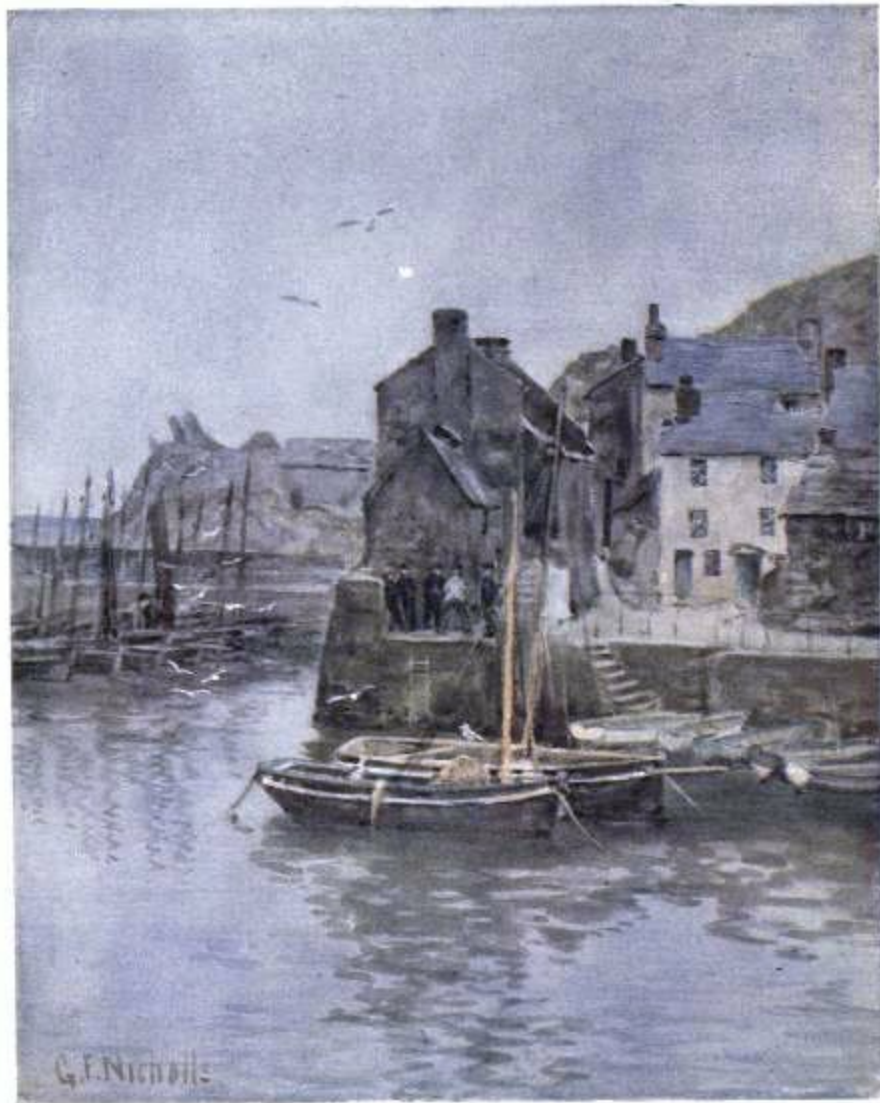
there is very little flat land anywhere. If you took a silk handkerchief, crumpled it up in your hand, and threw it on the table, it might fall somewhat as Cornwall is constituted. The people who live there are used to hills and not afraid of them. Why should they be? In most of the towns—and almost every small village is a "church-town," while every stream is a river—the streets are often at about the angle of an ordinary house-roof, and as a rule there are miles of hill to be negotiated in rising out of the towns for they lie in hollows or crevices, corresponding to the folds of the handkerchief. This is not wonderful considering the fact that the wind blows freely from the sea on both sides, and that it is in the hollows and sheltered nooks that vegetation flourishes. There are of course exceptions. Take such a town as Launceston. One main street has been engineered to go round in curves, so as to enable horses—horses bred to the work—to get up it, and at the top there is a bit of level, but most of the other streets fall sheer down. When babes who can scarce toddle scramble forth from their living-room on to a road slanting at an angle of forty-five degrees or more, which forms their only playground, naturally their leg muscles get strengthened, and as they grow up and have to start off to school, or return from it, up a hill that taxes the sinews of a "foreigner" till he groans, they make nothing of it. Roads seem to wander at their own sweet will with no inclination to the Roman ideal, but they never wander to avoid inclines; they tilt up and down again with the most gracious equanimity, and a man on a cycle who has struggled up a steep ascent and feels at last he will be able to reap the reward, as often as not finds the descent too perilous to ride without the utmost caution. Cornwall is not a county for cyclists except they be strong in the leg; but it is good country for those pedestrians who measure the day's journey by what they have seen and not by ground got over as the crow flies, for they can follow the enchanting little paths winding in and out by the great headlands of the coast.

Cornwall is no place for being in a hurry.

Many of the most famous sights, such as the great outlying cliffs at Gurnard's Head, and the Logan Rock, are not anywhere near a road. The roads keep inland, and for very good reason. These places have to be reached over long, sloping fields, and entail a good deal of scrambling—ideal places to resort to for a whole day with picnic provision, so long as one has a clear head and steady foot, but not to be sought as a "side-show."

Very many of the little coast places too are down at the end of what may be called long shafts, and to the ardent cyclist, intent on mileage, to go down, down, down, for miles till he can see the cows grazing in the fields high overhead, and to arrive at last at a little port where a few old salts sit and smoke and idle, and there is no way of getting out again but by the funnel, is a matter for as strong comment as conscience permits. Yet again for those who love what is beautiful and unhackneyed, there is charm beyond measure in the spirit of these places. In Polperro, which might be a bit of Brittany planted wholesale in our land; or Fowey, with its unforgettable harbour, where the blue tide creeps up like a stain of spreading dye; or in Mullion, with its huge rounded masses of rock lying off the coast.

Another popular idea of Cornwall, also mistaken, is that the interior of the Duchy is hideous and only the coast beautiful. There is much that is ugly no doubt; raw places where the half-grown mounds of rubbish and crumbling chimneys mark disused tin-mines; where the sharp and hard outlines of slate shriek at you everywhere; where ragged, scrubby fences break up an endless series of barren-looking fields, and the whole landscape gives the impression that it is flying at a terrific speed westward, heading into the prevailing wind, because all the trees and shrubs that have managed to survive it at all are bent nearly double. But what of the glorious wooded slopes in Bodmin neighbourhood where smooth roads wind between the rich growth of woods? What of the famous valleys such as Luxulyan and others? There is plenty inland attractive enough if one knows where to look for it.



AT POLPERRO

Perhaps this impression as to the interior has grown because the painting fraternity, now a recognized part of Cornish society, mostly paint views on or near the coast, having settled chiefly at and near Newlyn and St. Ives. Mr. Lewis Hind, in his book on Cornwall, says: "Probably two hundred canvases are despatched each year from the Delectable Duchy to Burlington House and elsewhere; of this number seven-eighths have been painted in Newlyn or St. Ives.... The great centres are Newlyn, St. Ives, and Falmouth, and the votes of the Cornish contingent, it is said, can turn the scale in an election at the Royal Academy."

The truth is, Cornwall must be taken in bits, and often the most hideous lie close up alongside the most attractive; however they only help to intensify that which is very good. People who look too cursorily are the most often disappointed.

Wandering about Cornwall certainly induces one ache, and that is the ache to be more knowledgeable. Those lucky creatures who know something of botany and geology here have delights not unfolded to others. Cornwall is a paradise for the botanist and geologist, because for the former there are rare species and some altogether unknown elsewhere, such as the *Erica vagans* so often mentioned, which grows in the neighbourhood of the Lizard. In fact Cornwall possesses more specialities in plant-life than any other county in England. For the latter because even the amateur can see the wonder and difference of the rocks: the pink tinged granite of Land's End, the great granite tors inland on the moors, and the variegated serpentine at the Lizard, as well as the cruel, sharp-edged slate of the northern coast. While as for the archæologist is there any part of Britain that affords him such endless material? A mere enumeration of the ancient stone crosses, the standing stone circles, the cromlechs, the British huts, the earthworks, the cliff-castles, the hill-castles or camps, the stone graves, the chambered cumuli, the barrows, and other relics of a long-past age, would fill pages. The moors are covered with them and the bare heights above Land's End are a rich hunting-ground.



THE COAST NEAR THE LIZARD

This evidence of the lives and habits of the very ancient inhabitants adds much depth and flavour to the "atmosphere," and especially when it is remembered that the original Cornish are the purest example of that old race—the British. Mr. W. H. Hudson, in his book *The Land's End*, quotes Lord Courtney's saying: "The population of Cornwall in general has remained much more homogeneous, much more Celtic in type, than in other parts; and of all Cornwall there is no part like this [Penzance and Land's End district] in which we meet with probably so pure a breed of human beings."

The nation now calling itself British has Saxon, Teutonic, French, and Norse blood in its veins, as well as that of the original stock; but when the successive waves of invaders swept over the country, they usually exhausted themselves before reaching this remote corner, into which the oldest island stock was swept up.

This probably accounts for the queer impression one often gets in Cornwall of being abroad. It comes suddenly, rising like one of the Cornish mists and

enveloping one, until suddenly the conviction that one is across the sea, far from home, flows almost overwhelmingly over the mind. There is much more likeness and kinship between parts of Cornwall and parts of Brittany than between Cornwall and most of the rest of England. There is no doubt that Cornwall differeth not as "one county from another county," but as one county from all the rest. Here, where the British race had its last stronghold, the stamp of the national characteristics was retained in its effects much longer than elsewhere. Nowadays of course there is intermarrying and travelling, and frequent streams of new blood coming in—half the people you speak to are not Cornish at all—but still there is something remaining which stamps them as a whole. It has often been noticed that there are traces of Spanish blood to be found in the dwellers in the extreme west where many of the great Spanish galleons were wrecked in bygone days; just as there are found brown faces and black hair in the Fair Isle of the Shetlands, where half the population intermarried with some Spaniards of the great Armada wrecked on their coast. In this part of Cornwall one constantly sees women with clear-skinned faces, dark-brown eyes and hair, of a distinctly foreign type. The people, with their rather remote and surface friendliness, have often been described. They will greet you pleasantly and courteously—courteous manners have lingered here—small boys, and men too, still salute a stranger in passing with a greeting, and if one asks the way the answer will be no abrupt direction, but a careful and minute description repeated until clearly understood. Even in Wilkie Collins's time the people were noticeable for their courtesy. He says: "The manners of the Cornish of all ranks, down to the lowest, are remarkably distinguished by courtesy—a courtesy of that kind which is quite independent of artificial breeding, and which proceeds solely from natural motives of kindness and from an innate anxiety to please. Few of the people pass you without a salutation."

As it was then so it is now.

Yet everywhere one feels a want; there is a lack of something. Perhaps it is they are too matter-of-fact; a passing jest leaves them puzzled. There is none of the dry humour of the Scot, which makes every man you meet on the road in Scotland instinctively approach a remark from what may be called the humorous angle. As an example of the Cornish lack of this quality, when I remarked to a man who was showing me a real fine golf-links stretching over the sandy towans of bent-grass, "these sandhills are simply made for golf," he

answered: "Oh no, they were not made for the links; they were here long before!"

The people simply don't understand analogy or imagery; their minds are very literal. In this part of the world they may well be literal, for the hard necessity of making a livelihood from very poor material must crush out fun. Yet in spite of many hardships endured, it is a rare thing to see a pale or miserable-looking child. The children are round and rosy, with sturdy legs, as indeed they may well have for they need them. This general well-being cannot be altogether attributed to the pure air, because in the Shetlands and on the West Coast of Scotland where the air is just as pure the children are usually brown and thin. It may be that this is due to the lack of milk, the heaths of Scotland affording scant pasturage, while the constant moisture of the air in Cornwall makes the grass grow richly.

At midday you will see the bairns running along the street munching great pasties—a Cornish specialty—made with bits of meat and onion and potato in a cover of paste, and the pasty seems to be the school-child's usual dinner. Another specialty of Cornwall are the yellow saffron cakes, so unappetizing in appearance to those unused to them. Of the cream there is hardly need to speak. As one ardent admirer of the Duchy remarked: "Of course, Devonshire cream *is* Cornish cream, only they've managed to get all the credit for it." In spite of this testimony it seems to me there is a difference, the Cornish variety is at once more fluid and more lumpy, but this may be an erroneous opinion based on insufficient experience.

Of history Cornwall has little. The brightest jewel in her coronet is that she stood unfailingly for the Stuarts in the Civil Wars, and many a church holds a letter of thanks from King Charles I. Except for the struggles of that epoch, the Duchy has little to tell of what may be called historical times, but before them much. It is in the misty ages before the Norman Conquest that history was made in Cornwall, and every now and then we catch fleeting glimpses of scenes standing out bright and clear amid a general fog, just as we can to-day catch the vivid pictures of the landscape before the grey mists sweep down with incredible speed and blot them out. We see Athelstan's terrible fight with the Britons; his establishment of the collegiate church at St. Buryan in pursuance of his vow, when he returned victorious from the Scilly Isles. We get brilliant peeps in the legends of King Arthur; in the mysterious beehive

huts and stone circles of a people who have vanished; in the whimsical tales of the early saints who scattered themselves so freely over the land on their arrival from Ireland; and we find hieroglyphic messages we cannot read in structures we call cromlechs and in the cliff-castles.

Small wonder that Cornwall is a land of legend and story, and that tales of fabulous men and wonder-working men abound. In our very earliest nursery days, long before we could point to Cornwall on the map, we learned to repeat:

"Fee, Fi, Fo, Fum,
I smell the blood of a Cornishman.
Let him be alive or let him be dead,
I'll grind his bones to make me bread."

And if modern nurseries substitute "Englishman" for "Cornishman," that is distinctly their loss. The coast with its mighty fragments and giant "chairs" and enormous blocks of stone is quite obviously the home of giants.



II

THE GATEWAY OF THE DUCHY

The gateway to the Duchy is impressive—that is to say, the gateway by which far the largest proportion of visitors enter—the railway bridge of the Great Western at Saltash. This marvellous bridge of Brunel's has been often described; it does not impress by its beauty for it has none, but by its tremendous height and length. It is 2,240 feet from end to end, and rises 260 feet above the water. It cuts across the narrowest part of that great ganglion of waters which break up the land behind Plymouth Sound. On the north lie the broad inlets of the Rivers Tamar and Tavy, and to the south that of the St. Germans or Lynher River curves away, and all along it the line runs, crossing the broad inlets of mud at low tide and shining water at high tide, giving a glimpse of the famous Hamoaze at Devonport and the busy dockyards filled with the clang of driven rivets.

In the Hamoaze lies the *Powerful*, an establishment consisting of three ships for the training of boys, and also the *Impregnable*, used for the same purpose, with two ships attached; one of them has a fine figure-head of the Black Prince. These are close to the ferry to Mount Edgcumbe, the family seat of the Earl of that name. The lads have drillgrounds and playgrounds ashore, but live on board. When they all swarm about the decks and rigging in their white suits, to rest in the sun for a brief half-hour after the midday meal, it is as if a flock of sea-birds had alighted on the picturesque old hulk.

In old times the destroyers used to be moored, two by two, when in port, just below Saltash Bridge, and this place was called the "destroyer trot," but the war has changed all that. Above the bridge are two powder-hulks.

If we passed up the river in a small boat we should see a variety of bird-life. The most attractive are the cranes, measuring upwards of 5 feet in length, ash-coloured with blackish wings and black legs. They stand and fish on the margin of the river, especially at evening time, planted close together like sentinels up to their knees in the water. They rise most gracefully and their great wings move slowly in measured action. The gulls and rooks are jealous

of them, possibly seeing in this measured movement some imagined superiority, for they occasionally buffet them as they fly. There is a current saying accounting for the erratic allotment of days in the spring quarter. It is said that March borrowed a few days of February to catch the crane on her nest, but he only caught her tail, and so the crane has no tail since then! Milton speaks of the migration of the cranes when he says:

"Part loosely wing the region; part, more wise,
In common, ranged in figure, wedge their way,
Intelligent of seasons; and set forth
Their airy caravan; high over seas
Flying, and over lands with mutual wing
Easing their flight; so steers the prudent crane
Her annual voyage, borne on winds, the air
Floats as they pass, fanned with unnumbered plumes."

The most common birds up these tidal rivers are the sheldrake. They are plentiful and very tame as they sit dozing away the hours in little parties on the tide edge, or flying over the water with low musical quacks. They are extremely white when on the wing—in fact that is how one always thinks of them, white and orange. The orange flash is their bill, which is brightened in the springtime. They give poor sport for a gun, and don't seem to be of much use. They were the wildest of all wild fowl but have now taken on the tamest ways.

And all the time in spring you can hear the wild musical note of the curlew, and see the dun-coloured birds flitting against the green of the woods. They are shy and wary, and common along the shores on the sands which are exposed at low water. Ringed plovers can sometimes be seen running on the wet surface of the sands at the tide's edge, flocks of lapwings too. Teal is by no means infrequent up the rivers, and an occasional shag (cormorant) may be noticed swimming far up towards Saltash and fishing. In its spring dress, with its horn-like crest, and miserable-looking yellow face, and its lustrous dark-green plumage, the shag is a handsome bird. Mallard is fairly plentiful in the rivers, and you may see flocks sleeping away the day-hours on the flats, and recognize them by the longitudinally marked plumage of the drakes. Sometimes they fly back and forth as gulls do while they wait for the tide to ebb. Small birds there are, of course, in numbers, such as wag-tails,

sandpipers, and the oddly crying and flying redshank, a shore bird. It wheels above the tide-line, or rests, bowing quaintly, on some grassy hummock near a pool.

But these things can only be studied in leisured intimacy from a slow-going boat passing in the spring-time, when the blackthorn frosts the hedges and starry-eyed primroses grow to monstrous size. The train which flashes us across the bridge reveals none of them!

In the first glimpse of our first Cornish "town" we catch sight of a steep winding street, which serves as full introduction, for in many a Cornish town shall we see the same again! And then, even as the train runs in the cuttings of Cornish soil, we realize almost at once the key-note of Cornwall—the extraordinary richness of growth. Ivy bursts over every wall in a perfect cataract; ferns and small wild things fill every crevice with their grasping roots, and even in winter there is no thinness or barrenness to be felt for evergreens flourish amazingly. The wooded reaches of the hills dispel the idea that Cornwall is everywhere a treeless land, and the constant dampness of its climate is shown by the lichen which clings to every branch and twig like hoar-frost, so that in winter the whole mass has a curious shot-green-and-brown effect.



OLD BRIDGE AT LOSTWITHIEL

The West Cornwall Railway, reaching as far as Truro, was opened in 1852, and the Cornwall Railway in 1859. Both of these were afterwards absorbed by the Great Western Railway.

One of the most beautiful parts of the whole line is that between Liskeard and Bodmin Road. The woods run riot on the ever varying slopes, and the evergreens are so fine, with their abundance of clean, glossy leaves, that even the ordinary country roads have something of the appearance of a carefully tended private drive.

The Cornish valleys are especially treasured by the people and much admired, because they present such a striking contrast to the high bleak uplands. That it is only the wind which prevents the growth of trees may be judged from these valleys, where they flourish finely. Take Luxulyan Valley, running down to St. Blazey, a place where hundreds come for picnics. Even in any part of England it would be admired; here its charm is enhanced by its

surroundings. There are plenty of trees of a fair size, and the sides of the valley are covered with bracken and furze, from which peep out great grey rocks. Primroses and violets abound in the spring, and the mossy boulders and the extensive variety of ferns show a flourishing vegetation almost like that of a fern-house under glass. There is something also about the grey lichened rocks bursting out of the waist-deep furze and bracken that serves to emphasize the fulness of growth. The only drawback about Luxulyan is that it lies in the china-clay country, and the stream which runs down to ugly St. Blazey is white as milk. This china-clay is one of Cornwall's most living industries now that the tin-mining has declined, and the pilchards come so scantily. It is the product of decomposed granite owing to the action of fluoric acid. The works where it may be seen at its best are near Roche, on the little line between Newquay and Fowey, and here the piles of white earth might be mistaken for flour or whitening by those who did not know what they were. The clay is sent down by rail to Fowey, and the greater number of the steamers putting into that harbour are engaged in carrying it away. At Roche is an extraordinary rock starting sheer up from the plain. On the top was formerly a cell or hermitage, of which Norden says quaintly, "It standeth upon the wilde moares farr from comon societie."

There are innumerable "singing valleys" in Cornwall, though mostly small. I call them so because of the congregation of singing-birds here crowded together for lack of nesting-places, instead of being spread thinly over the district. As can easily be understood, there is no difficulty in nesting for the larks, who make joyous the wide uplands, or for the sea-birds who haunt the rugged coast, and only come inland at times of storm, or to follow in a white, restless cloud close at the heels of the ploughman as he turns up the sod and exposes the fat white slugs and delicious grubs. Nor is there any difficulty for the smaller hedge-birds, least of all the wrens, who, like red-brown butterflies, flit in perfect safety to the roomy depths of the age-old "hedges." These hedges in Cornwall are, particularly in the west, but a core of hard stone piled loosely together and covered with mud or sod and the growth of many generations of plant-life, and knitted by creeping plants till they stand broad-based and immovable like ramparts, and are used as paths by the inhabitants, who pass quickly and safely from one swampy field to another along their turfy tops. Indeed in flooded winter-time it is often the only possible path, and when the main road lay deep in water I have been reduced

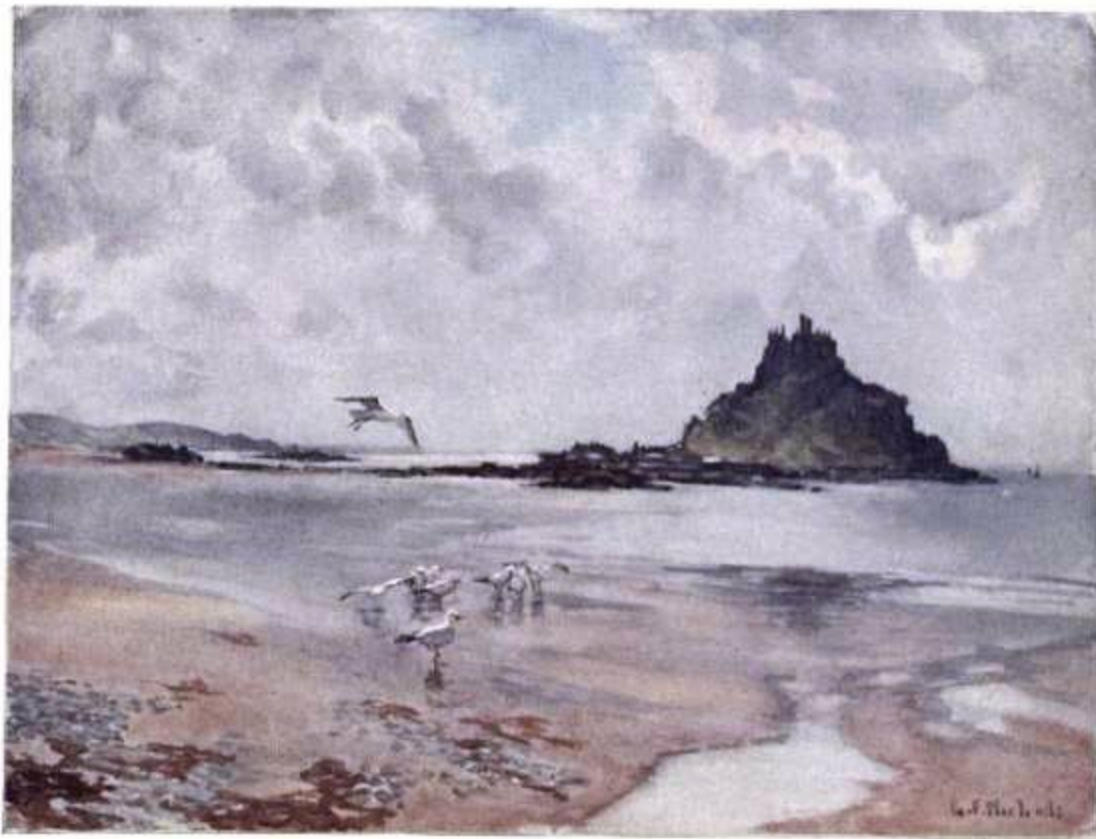
to dragging my bicycle on to the summit of a "hedge" and wheeling it precariously along. Such places are paradises for Jenny Wren, who springs into the maze of twisted stalks and heavy leaves, and hops about the spacious corridors in the perpetual twilight, perfectly secure from intrusion. Smaller birds too can make shift with the windblown specimens of shrubs that sometimes adorn such hedges, but the great majority prefer something of larger size and so gather wherever trees make an oasis.

One such "singing valley" is Landewednack, near the Lizard, called locally Church Cove, one of the sweetest of the Cornish coves. The little church is charming architecturally with its weathered pinnacles crowning the grey stone tower. The small-leaved Cornish elms cluster round the graveyard, and show through their warped and twisted stems glimpses of the infinite blue sea, giving an idea of boundless expansion, and adding to the snugness of the shut-in valley. The emerald-green moss clings thickly to the westward or windward side of the crusted trunks, and at their foot what a riot of vegetation! The sound of running water and the brilliant green of the grass, as well as the masses of long hart's-tongue ferns falling abundantly from the churchyard wall, all tell of perpetual moisture. Passing beyond the church, we come to a few thatched cottages placed anglewise to the steeply falling road, and near them see an immense hedge of veronica covered with big, furry, heliotrope-coloured blossoms, affording shelter to the straggling blue periwinkles below. Every niche and crevice of the wall shows small, green, flat leaves crawling out to the sun and light. Only a short way below, the cove comes to an abrupt end, and there is a steep drop made smooth for the boats, which have to be hauled up by pulleys, while the sea below for ever beats on the huge black stones. The marvel is how the boats are ever got up and down such a place, and that marvel confronts one everywhere in Cornwall. This cove is typical of hundreds,—vegetation down almost to the water's edge, a haunt of singing-birds, a tiny steep cove very inconvenient and dangerous for landing, and mighty cliffs rising at each side.

III

THE "TOE" OF CORNWALL

Penzance is strongly reminiscent of the Channel Isles to those who know both. There is the same odd mixture of sternness in the bare outlines of the stone houses—as bare as those on the Cumbrian Fells—and the unexpected luxuriance of growth, the flourishing tree-shrubs such as hydrangeas and fuchsias, in backyards and odd corners. When one gets a vista down the Morab Gardens in the midst of the town, with the steep green depths framed by the bushy-topped palms falling away to the brilliant blue sea, one might almost be having a peep in the Riviera, if we accept the lack of orange-trees, with their golden lamps, so beautiful to the sight, so disappointing to the taste! It is surprising to those coming from harsher parts of England to see the deprecating droop of the blue-grey tongues of the eucalyptus, the feathery grace of clumps of bamboo, and the glossy-leaved bushes of camellia. At any rate, whatever one compares the place with, one is conscious of an odd surprise at its un-English characteristics.



ST. MICHAEL'S MOUNT

The "front" is not the great attraction at Penzance. No doubt the wonderful bay, with its priceless jewel of St. Michael's Mount, does at all times satisfy the imagination; but the flat esplanade, the singularly ineffective strip for sea-bathing, and the rather dull style in which most of the houses are built, are not in themselves attractive. The bay can be seen better elsewhere, from the heights of the very ample churchyard of St. Mary's for instance, overlooking the grey slate roofs, or from Newlyn Hill, when at sunset time all the colours of the spectrum may be reflected on the Mount, and the only thing one can say with perfect certainty is that it is never twice exactly alike. One of the most lovely visions is when the sun catches it through a rift in sombre clouds, bathing it in a kind of unearthly radiance or dawning light, while Penzance, with its tall-pinnacled church tower, is all mouse-grey. And when a rainbow arches over one side of the steep slope, as I have seen it, it is almost unearthly.

Sometimes the Mount disappears entirely, melting into its background, or

only the castle is left visible, apparently unsupported except by a filmy mist. There is no end to the vagaries played by the lights and shadows and sea-colours on this wonderful instrument. Indeed the Mount is chiefly valuable for this reason, because, owing to the fact that it is private property, and that access to it is much restricted, it is not nearly so much an object of intrinsic interest as its grand counterpart in Brittany.

It must be a strange place to live on. When the St. Levan family arrive they have to go over by launch from Penzance, probably after a long journey by rail; and the weather, if tempestuous, must make even such a short crossing unpleasant. Once there, there is the stupendous steep to climb—no trifle, even though the roads are graded. Dining out with county neighbours must be an almost impossible feat, and grand as the surroundings are, they must pall very soon because of their limitations. Tradition says that the men-folk of the family are not supposed to be able to swim properly until they can swim all round the Mount, a fine undertaking in view of the rocks and shoals!

The Mount in Brittany is only 57 feet higher, but looks much larger, which is curious, as it stands considerably farther out to sea, being $1\frac{1}{4}$ miles away; the Cornish one is only about 1,200 feet from the mainland. Perhaps the reason is the greater variety and grandeur of the buildings on St. Michel.

The old name of Marazion was Market-jew, and the two together certainly make most people imagine there is some Israelitish association; but this is unfounded. Marazion is "the market by the seaside," and Market-jew "the market on the side of the hill." Some have supposed the Mount to have been the Ictis of the ancient tin trade, where the merchants from far met the inhabitants to barter for tin. "When they have cast it [the tin] into the form of cubes, they carry it to a certain island adjoining Britain called Ictis. During the recess of the tide the intervening space is left dry, and they carry over abundance of tin in carts" (Diodorus Siculus). Many other islands have been suggested to fit this account, even the Isle of Wight; but the bed of the sea must have changed very quickly if people could in historic times pass over to it on foot at low tide!

The legend of the fair land of Lyonesse is supported by the evidence of a submarine forest in Mount's Bay, noted by Borlase in 1757. This seems to have been a wood chiefly of hazel, but with alders, oaks, and other trees, and

is by no means the only case of a submerged forest being found around the shores of Cornwall. Great trunks have been disclosed, and even hazel-nuts and twigs; but it is a big step from the subsidence of some parts of the shore and the consequent submergence of forest land, to the story of the overwhelming of such a land as Lyonesse, reaching out as far as Scilly and containing many villages and churches.

To return to Penzance. The town is very irregular, its meandering streets meet at all angles, and here and there are linked by narrow, passage-like cross-cuts, oftentimes as steep as wynds. There is a very noticeable prevalence of Nonconformist places of worship, and these show, as most of their kind do, a hideous lack of architectural beauty, a sort of defiance of the pride of the eye. The Cornishmen since Wesley's crusade have been strongly Nonconformist, notwithstanding the fact that Wesley himself was a son of the Church. They probably find the rigidity of the Established Church too formal for their fervent souls. Nonconformity appeals to them as it does to their cousins the Welsh, and it is a curious thing that St. Mary's, the most ancient of the churches, should be the opposite of this, with ritualistic services, whence the smell of incense is wafted into the uncompromising streets.



NEWLYN

The greatest son of Penzance is Sir Humphry Davy, who was born here in 1778. He belonged to an old Cornish family. His statue stands at the head of the sloping Market-jew Street.

Though Penzance has not in itself anything very remarkable to show in the way of beauty, it is certainly a good centre for excursions, being at the very joint of the swollen and deformed "toe" of the county. Roads start from it in all directions over this much-sought peninsula, and it would be easy to spend not one, but many weeks hunting out all the quaint and interesting things, both natural and artificial, to be seen within reasonable distance.

Newlyn, home of the painting colony known all the world over, is close to Penzance, and straggles up the side of a terrific hill. Rows of stereotyped villas in terraces now overlook the bay, and are eagerly taken as they are built. But round the harbour linger still the odours of the typical old fishing village, and there are few sights more suggestive to the imagination than the scattering of the red-sailed fishing-boats as one by one they pass at evening

time out between the narrow horns of the harbour to their rough, wet nights of toil in the clammy sea air. Newlyn is famous for its apple-blossom, and the vision of the bay between masses of apple-blossom in springtime is one never to be forgotten. Newlyn itself is easily accessible compared with Mousehole, right round the corner, tucked away under the cliff. Here a name for once is thoroughly suitable, for the little place is hemmed in by the towering hills, and the principal ways on foot out of it are by tiny overgrown lanes, so narrow that two people can hardly pass, so steep that in places they are veritable staircases, with rotten wooden steps, or those made from hollowed mud worn by many feet. Yet whether the name really does mean what it appears to, or is only a corruption of some other word with a totally different significance, is not known. R. Edmonds (*Land's End District*) suggests "Mozhel" or "Mouzhel," meaning maids' brook or river, as a stream used for washing by the women runs through the town.

The constant steep places in Cornwall are a great puzzle to many people who come with an idea that the Duchy is neatly and evenly sloped, rising in the middle and falling down to the sea on each side. As has been explained, this is very far from the truth. A pilgrimage round the county is like climbing a succession of ridges. The steeps are so steep that they demand real physical effort, and even the drops put a strain on unaccustomed leg-muscles. Newlyn Hill taxes the strength of those coming from normally level districts. It is to be hoped that only horses born and bred in Cornwall are used for the charabancs and other public vehicles; it would be sheer cruelty to bring horses from flat-lands here.

If we scrambled along the coast beyond Mousehole we should come to Lamorna Cove, a deep indentation filled with scrub-bush and small trees. Wherever it is possible trees grow in Cornwall; they take advantage of every atom of shelter, and every cleft in the ground out of the raging wind is filled with them.

The soil is wonderfully fertile, and the constant wet—not even its most ardent admirer denies that Cornwall gets rather more than its share of rain—develops a prodigal amount of growth in the way of ferns and creepers and other plants that like warm moisture. At Lamorna is a colony of artists; they have settled here as an outpost from Newlyn, for the natural beauty and remoteness of the place suit them. They have their picturesque houses within

friendly reach all up and down the little glen, and take pride in their gardens, with wonderful rockeries and babbling streams, and all the rich growth that the soil and climate bring forth. They drop in on one another at all hours, and know all about each other's concerns. They are a friendly, kindly, generous-hearted clan. Here, where the woods are white with hawthorn in the spring, the stream gushes down in endless waterfalls, and the waves burst and break on the rocks in the cove below, every one of them can find endless scenes for his or her brush.

Mrs. Alfred Sidgwick's book, *In Other Days*, gives a picture of Lamorna Valley in the guise of fiction: "It was a brilliant March day, warm in the sun, cold in the wind. The gorse and the blackthorn were both out, spreading the wild copse and common of the valley with a shimmer of white and gold. The old bracken still lay in patches of ruddy brown, primroses were just beginning shyly, and the short grass of the open places had not put on its summer hues yet. The sky was clear and deep, with little white clouds scudding across it; larks were singing, and in the distance sounds of men at work in the fields were heard. The air was scented with herbs and fresh from the sea, but sheltered by the lie of the low hills, and by old, long-neglected trees. In some places the trees were of a great height and girth, making a gloom over the huge moss-grown granite rocks strewing the earth and edging the little stream.... A small swamp full of peppermint scented the air."



LAMORNA COVE

That is the work of a close observer.

In this neighbourhood there are many of those curious relics of bygone times, which are bestrewn about Cornwall more thickly than any other part of England. The Fougou Hole in one of the gardens is a weird place, and its meaning and use is even yet little understood. It is a tiny, damp vault, made of great, unhewn stones, and reached by a hole in the ground. Here it is said harried cavaliers took shelter in the Civil Wars, but the Hole is much older than that; it dates back to those strange times beyond the dawn of history of which we only get vague glimpses.

In the fields above, gaunt stones rise like pointing fingers to the sky. These are called "The Pipers," and mark the scene of Athelstan's defeat of the British in 936; it is the "place of blood." But if they were really erected by Athelstan in the tenth century, and are not, as is possible, relics of Druid worship, they are modern compared with the Fougou Hole. Not far from them, in the midst of a grass-field, are the "Merry Maidens," a circle of grey

stones about 24 yards in diameter; there are nineteen of them altogether, none quite the height of a man, and some much smaller. They convey an impression of immovable solemnity, as such age-old things always do, for they are planted so securely, and look so indomitable with their grey, lichen-covered sides four-square to the winds. Local tradition tells how the Merry Maidens were caught dancing on the Sabbath to the music of the pipers, and turned to stone, but history is silent as to their origin. There is indeed all over Cornwall many a reminder of the ancient world now lost to all record. In various other places are to be found other circles of Merry Maidens just as much of a problem as these, but none so perfect or so impressive.

The long, narrow, rectangular tower of St. Buryan, crowned with pinnacles, dominates all the landscape; exactly of this pattern are most of the Cornish church towers. They are generally as much alike as if they had been turned out of a mould. This is one of the most interesting of the many interesting churches in Cornwall. After Athelstan's triumphant victory near Lamorna, he vowed he would establish here a large religious foundation if he were successful in his further expedition to the Scilly Isles; and when he returned a conqueror he carried out his vow. This was about 930. Of course, there is nothing remaining of that church, but the present building contains much grotesque carving of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, and the greater part of the building must have stood from the fifteenth or sixteenth. There is a peacefulness about the ancient church, set in the long, billowing fields bordered by rugged hedges, gorse and ivy-grown, that appeals peculiarly to some natures. It is all very quiet.

Down on the shore, not many miles away, is a great pile of splintered rocks jutting out into the sea, to be reached by a narrow neck. This is Treryn Dinas or Castle, where is the famous Logan stone. The striking thing about the rocks is that so many take the form of cubes, some of the most astounding being almost exactly the shape of the ancient Egyptian obelisks. There are so many shattered, square-edged lumps, resting on small bases, that the difficulty to the stranger is to discover the real Logan Rock, which brings hundreds of visitors to the place in summer. This headland has evidently been at one time a fortified cliff-castle, and in passing over to the peninsula visitors cross the first line of defence or earthworks, though few would notice it.

From Penzance we might run out by any one of the diverging roads across

the peninsula, and be sure of coming upon some relic of the most ancient race inhabiting these islands.

By way of Madron we should pass the Lanyon Quoit or Cromlech, a great slab of rock 18 feet long, supported on three other slabs which are just a little too low to allow a man to stand upright beneath it. In 1816 it fell or was blown down; before this a mounted man could sit under it. When Lieutenant Goldsmith in 1824 committed the silly trick of upsetting the Logan Rock, and was condemned by the Admiralty to rebalance it at his own expense, the apparatus brought down to the duchy for the purpose was also used to replace the cap of the Cromlech, though why it should be of less height now than before is not known.

Amid the bleak hills around are to be found constant remains of ancient British villages, rather in the manner of the Picts' houses of Scotland. That the strange people who lived in them thrashed corn for food and kept cattle, there is plenty of evidence. They lived in these little beehive huts, which were sometimes placed singly, sometimes two or three together, often with an embankment round, or a good cave near for retreat if necessary. The huts are circular and built without cement or mortar. Fragments of pottery have been found in and around. Some of them are near Chun Castle, that ancient earthwork, one of the half-dozen or so in the "toe" of Cornwall. This district was the last stronghold of the British race, who had retreated before the Western invaders to the very extremity of the land.

By any one of these roads we should come at last out on to the coast road—rather grandiloquently called "The Atlantic Drive"—running from Land's End to St. Ives. This has been compared with the famous Corniche drives of the Riviera. But beware! Don't expect too much, or you will be terribly disappointed. Yet if you go with an open mind, expecting nothing, you will see something of very real interest and carry away new knowledge.

The fields are in many places simply covered with stones. How the corn finds room to grow is a miracle. The constant winds try everything growing very severely, and there is a look of bare poverty about the land. It is often compared with Ireland, and called the Connemara of England; but in some ways, especially in the amount of stones, it is more like bits of Galloway. Stone is employed for objects which elsewhere are usually made of wood.

The stiles are broad slabs of granite, the gate-posts are granite blocks, and as we have seen, the very "hedges" are stone. The name Zennor suggests gauntness of a Puritan kind. The whole of the great hill above Zennor is covered with immense and, if one may use such an expression, dignified stones. Away up among them is another huge quoit or cromlech, probably marking the burial-place of some chieftain long before Arthur's date. It is a grand place for burial too, austere and solemn, overlooking the ocean, and with a limitless horizon. The man who was buried here must have had imagination if he chose the spot for himself beforehand. The tearing winds shriek over the ragged furze and mighty stones, and howl in the crevices of the monument above him; the great black clouds roll in, and the whole country is drowned in a blinding squall of hail; the sky clears, patches of brilliant blue appear, and the sun strikes down on the dripping stones, while all the little rills and streams race down the soaking ground and over the roads in the wayward manner of Cornish streams; and still the old chieftain sleeps on, lulled by all the music of Nature in this wild outpost which England thrusts into the sea.

The road surface round here is tolerably good. Much of it is granite, and the tiny crystals glitter in the sun like diamonds, and quickly dry up after the whirlwinds of rain that pitilessly descend in winter time. The road winds along around the desolate hills, keeping mostly rather far inland, and it passes by acres of rough land covered with the wayward gorse, where small, fox-red cows take an interest in the stranger. In spring primroses grow to enormous sizes, with leaves as large as those of foxgloves; and the foxgloves in their turn decorate the hedges, rearing their tall spikes of magenta-coloured bells in profusion. Pigs abound, and great grey sheep-dogs, of the Old English bobtail breed, come shyly to make friends. And everywhere in irrepressible masses is the furze, the quick-burning fuel of the poor, a godsend here where wood is so precious.

Almost due west of Penzance is the mining region, where until lately there was great activity, now comparatively still. St. Just is the centre of this district; but it is not what one would expect in a mining town. Right in the heart of it, where now the children make their playground, is a great amphitheatre, one of the best known and preserved of the many like it that at one time held hundreds of Cornish folk to watch the open-air plays that delighted their hearts until Wesley's teaching made them think them wrong.

After that they served as meeting-places for Wesley himself in many instances. The church, with some peculiarly quaint frescoes, and the Plan-anguaré, the plane as it is called locally, give St. Just a character of its own. Down one terrific hill, falling at an angle that no one unless he lived in Cornwall would dare to make a road, and up another, is Botallack, with its well-known mine, now stilled, and the taint of the red tin is felt in earth and air for many a mile beyond.



IV

FURTHEST WEST AND FURTHEST SOUTH

It has been the invariable creed of every writer on Cornwall that visitors seeing the Land's End for the first time must be disappointed with it. Disappointment there may be after a very cursory inspection, but it is evanescent. It only lasts as one approaches across the flat ugly ground where sodden patches of raw earth lie in ridges, and the dun walls of the unsightly hotel present their dreariest side to the newcomers. Particularly is this so in the height of the season, when public vehicles of every variety and degree of manginess decorate the landscape and the picture-postcard craze is at its strongest.

But those who stay long enough to see the place quietly or those who visit it in the winter when there are few disturbers of the peace, tell another story.

The reef of broken and pinkish tinged granite, decorated by weird streaks of brilliant yellow lichen, is frequented by "guides" who point out fancy resemblances to faces in the weather carved rocks. The reef is small; there is not much that is grand about it; but if one sits there while the sun sinks, a glowing ball, into the sea exactly opposite, and the ruby and diamond points of the lighthouses flash out far and wide, and perhaps a clear pale sickle moon begins to sharpen in outline in the fading sky, there is plenty on which to exercise the imagination. The granite, being split by the action of the weather into long columns, and divided again horizontally into blocks, gives the impression of a series of obelisks built up of separate stones. The general effect is rather like the famous cavern at Staffa. In places however the rocks are split into such massive and even-edged blocks that it is very difficult to disentangle the natural from the artificial, and one often imagines oneself to be gazing at the ruins of a castle which is really only some cloven cliff hammered by natural elements and not by tools of man's making.

On the seaward side the hotel lounge has been carried out in a great bay, and from the sweep of windows there are no less than four lighthouses to be seen, with their varying flashes. The bright ruby spot is the Longships Light on a

grisly reef so near that it looks as if you could throw a stone upon it, though really two miles away. It is only red on the landward side. Ships usually pass outside this reef unless the sea is very calm, for it is a dangerous coast. It seems hardly believable that at times the men in the lighthouse are held up for two months by the swell which prevents their relief arriving, but so it is, and even on the calmest days it is no easy matter to land. The Longships is a reef composed of several rocky islets, some of which are connected by bridges and in fine weather the men can walk about and even fish, but in rough weather the great doors in the tower are closed for days together. When the swell comes, rolling from out the profoundly disturbed depths of the Atlantic and heralding a storm, the sheeted foam flies high above the lantern and often the last vision one has before night drops like a black curtain is that white froth of breaking foam around the glowing red eye in the tower. Further out to the south is the well-known Wolf Lighthouse, and far to the west that on the Scilly Isles.

Even in the depth of winter, on clear white frosty moonlight nights, there are those who motor down to see the Land's End by moonlight, but usually the "trip" element occupies a very small part of the day and of the year; and for the greater part of the time the place is strangely solitary. When the storms beat on the coast, driven by the wild west winds, the boom and clangour is heard as far inland as Lamorna Cove.

The chief characteristic of the weather is its uncertainty; there are clear bright intervals when the sea and sky are of electric blue and the headlands are etched out on them in black, and then all in a moment the lowering wall of storm comes up visibly; the outlines of everything are obliterated in one sweep, and a squall of hail as big as peas shrieks around, whitening the ground, then flies on in its mad course, to be succeeded by the joyous freshness of the clean-washed air and the glory of the vivifying sun. In winter time it is not safe to go two hundred yards from the hotel without a mackintosh, and yet just across the waste of heather along the little sheep tracks on the slopes, what wonderful views are to be seen in the steep-sided bays filled with a smother of foam, where the stones being driven irresistibly against one another grind off their harshnesses.

It is a terrible coast, and nearly always, even on the calmest day, when the wolves might be supposed to be sleeping, the sudden baring of a fang in the

whitening of some jagged rock, a moment before invisible, shows the lurking danger.

But what perhaps catches the imagination most sharply at that "raw edge" is the tradition of the Land of Lyonesse, lying between here and the Scilly Isles.

There seems very little foundation for this poetic fable and though, as already said, the roots and trunks of trees have been found in Penzance Bay and it is possible there may have been some landslip on a large scale in prehistoric times, there seems geologically nothing to point to a complete submergence of miles of land at the extremity of Cornwall. Tradition speaks of a land covered with villages and churches—indeed, no less than a hundred and forty churches—all buried in the shifting water by reason of one great convulsion, and Tennyson has placed here the scene of Arthur's rule and his last battle:

"For Arthur, when none knew from whence he came,
Long ere the people chose him for their King,
Roving the trackless realms of Lyonesse,
Had found a glen, grey boulder and black tarn."

And again:

"So all day long the noise of battle roll'd
Among the mountains by the winter sea;
Until King Arthur's Table, man by man,
Had fall'n in Lyonesse about their lord."

The Scilly Isles are supposed to be the tops of the hills belonging to the lost land and so are the Seven Stones, a jagged ridge midway between them and Land's End, whence in fine weather the isles can be seen as faint cirrus clouds lying along the horizon. But though this is the nearest point to the islands, they can only be reached by steamer from Penzance, the *Lyonesse* going and returning alternate days. There is no harbour at Land's End and the cruel fanged rocks would make the direct voyage very dangerous, so the journey has to be lengthened out from Penzance.

As for the islands themselves, those who brave the crossing come away with strangely mixed feelings according to their temperament. If they go bathed in

the glamour of *Armored of Lyonesse*, by far the best of Besant's books, they will see the romance and charm of these windswept bits of rock. If they are there in the spring they will visit with delight the acres of carefully tended flowers guarded by high thick walls and hedges from the ever sweeping western winds; if a little later in the nesting time of gull and guillemot, razor-bill, puffin and cormorant, say the first week in June, then the sights of bird-life will well repay them. They may even find the nesting-places of the tern, shearwater, or such voracious pirates as the kestrel and peregrine, or the stormy petrel; but this will be in the outlying islets, as the greater traffic and population of late years has driven many of the shy birds away. The halcyon days when sea and sky are one soft blue dome and the water washes and laps around the rocky shores give a glimpse of peace and remoteness such as one might imagine form part of heaven. The masses of cloud piled up in towering grandeur, the vast horizons and even the beat of the sudden squalls will find response in some people. But there are few save islanders born and bred who can revel in the lash and struggle and constant menace of the black winter days.

Surrounded by water on all sides the temperature is kept equable, hence it is that narcissus, violets, anemones, daffodils and other of the earliest spring flowers can be grown in the open and sent to be delivered in London weeks before the home counties can produce them.

It is rather curious that the name by which the whole group is known should not be that of the largest, or even of one of the largest, islands. Scilly is a mere rock rising from the sea to the west of Bryher, it is flat and cleft in two by a deep chasm through which the water runs. The currents are very strong and it is not often a landing is possible here. St. Mary's, the principal island, is the one where the steamers arrive, at Hugh Town. This name has not any authentic derivation, though it has been suggested it may be connected with the word "huer," to call or cry out. Tresco is next in size, and in summer a steam launch runs across to it from St. Mary's. Here lives the proprietor of the Scillies, Mr. Dorrien-Smith, in a comfortable house amid a perfectly glorious garden, in which are the ruins of an old Abbey built in the time of Henry I. There is some fine rock-scenery to be found in the outlying islets, if one takes the trouble to look for it in a boat, and some of the views of the scattered islands seen from a height on a clear day can never be forgotten.

To the north of Land's End is the sweeping curve of Whitesand Bay leading up to Cape Cornwall. It is possible to bathe off the shore with certain precautions. Directly inland is the little village of Sennen, which for many years boasted "The First and Last" house in England; and down on the shore Sennen Cove, where the families of the lighthouse men live, and the Atlantic cable comes ashore.

Whitesand Bay has historical memories; Athelstan sailed from here to conquer the Scilly Isles after his sanguinary victory at St. Buryan. It was a bold undertaking considering the means at his disposal. The shore of Whitesand, which is low-lying on an otherwise iron-bound coast, has naturally been the landing-place for those who arrived at this extremity of England. Stephen disembarked here when he first came to the country from France and so did Perkin Warbeck. In the centre of the bay the granite and slate meet and mingle.

No other place can vie with the Cornish coast for curious and suggestive names. We have here Vell-an-Dreath meaning "The Mill on the Sand." All traces of the mill have disappeared, but the tradition of it lingers. It was kept by a father and son, it is said, who found themselves attacked by a roving gang of Spaniards who had landed to harry the country. The native Cornishmen made a stout resistance, and finally escaped the back way under protection of a cloud of smoke, carrying stout sacks of flour on their backs to protect them from bullets. The Spaniards destroyed the mill, which was never rebuilt.

Close to the southern end of the bay is a detached rock called The Irish Lady, which with some imagination may be likened to a mincing dame flouncing out to sea. Such rocks are not at all uncommon in Cornwall, one, very well known, is Queen Bess at Bedruthan Steps. Towering above the lady on the mainland is Pedn Men Dhu, Black Rock Headland, a pile of massive granite. Further along we find Carn Barges, the Kites' Rock; Carn Towan, the Rock on the Sandhills; Polpry Cove, the Clay-Pit; Carn Leskez, the Rock of Light, said to be where the Druids kindled their sacred fires, but much more likely the place where faked beacon fires were lit to lure ships to destruction in the bad old days! Close off Cape Cornwall are the Brisons, two fearful shattering piles, and near them Priests' Cove, right under the headland.

The coast to the south of Land's End is even more interesting, and if any of those who say they are "disappointed" with Land's End could walk round here they would soon recover. The coast-line is serrated by innumerable small bays like deep bites and in each one some wild and strange rock-forms imitating natural objects can be seen. We pass at first by Carn Greab, Cock's Comb Rock, where a conspicuous group includes the Armed Knight, and then we come to a tiny island called Enys Dodman, which has a great archway scored through it by the action of the waves. Pardenick Point rises perpendicularly about two hundred feet from the sea; the curious "pillar" appearance of the rocks is very striking, and not less so the reddish veins which run like streams sheer down the granite in places. Anyone lingering here, as the sun sets and the shadows grow long, can make out all sorts of weird shapes and haunting faces in the cliffs, as odd as any mediæval artist's conceptions embodied in gargoyles. We pass Mozrang Pool, the Maid's Pool, and then the Red Rock, and the Chilly Carn; next a chasm called by the poetical name of "The Song of the Sea," and so to the "Cove under the Vale." All along the coast, those who have time to explore it will find strange sea-caverns, logan-stones, natural arches and other fantastic forms.

Then we reach Tol Pedn, where is quite the grandest scenery in the whole district. Approaching from the landward side on an autumn or late summer day the heights are seen covered by a wonderful carpet of purple or crimson and gold. It is made by the intermingling of the dwarf gorse and the heather, which are so interwoven they could not be separated. As the result of this close embrace these two plants, both small, form a gorgeous tapestry of colour, and the vast heights and sounding hollows of the headland are glorified by them. Tol Pedn means Holed Headland and evidently refers to the Funnel, a great chasm a hundred feet in depth and eight feet in diameter, cut out as if by a giant cheese-scoop down to the roaring sea. Below, the tide scours the bottom at every return, and at low tide it is possible to enter from the beach. In early spring the close sward on the higher reaches is starred with little blue squills. Great care must be taken not to slip and lose one's balance on this short turf, because in Cornwall one is never fenced in by puny supports. The Chair Ladder usually attracts much wonder, it is an immense pile of upright blocks. The whole scarping and shaping of the cliff is vigorous and original, and looking down from above into one gully after another you can see the gulls float in effortless dignity over the measureless gulfs below.

Just round the corner from Tol Pedn is to be found one of the quaintest little fishing villages, Porthgwarra, where a tunnel has been cut through the solid rock to allow the fishermen to get down to their boats. The rocks are fine red granite, and with the brilliant blue of the sea on a sunny day and the yellow ochres of sand and sail there are "ready-made" pictures at every turn. Looking out from the darkness of the tunnel the colours are enhanced. One of the most attractive points about the many mighty caverns along the coast are the clean-cut, brilliantly clear pictures to be seen from their dark interiors.

All these and many other curious and fantastic things may be found by those sure of eye and foot. For one of the greatest charms of Cornwall is its variety and unexpectedness, at all events as regards the coast.

For a hundred people who go to Land's End it is safe to say only one visits the Lizard. Though the usual run of tourist conveyances have found it out, it is more difficult to get to than the western extremity, and is a little out of the way. Yet in the opinion of those who have seen both the Lizard beats even the fantastic scenery to the southward of Land's End.

The approach is nothing short of lamentable in its dulness. Except for an oasis about half-way across Goonhilly Downs, the wide, flat, dead-alive plateau occupying the heel of Cornwall, there is nothing to note. Even right on to the end the feeling of dismay grows. The meek green fields carry one down almost to the shore, for though we have come across a bit of heath *en route* which recalls how repeatedly we have been told that the *Erica vagans* grows here and nowhere else, we leave this behind and wind once more between grass fields toward the dreary little cluster of houses called Lizard-town, which looks not unlike a forsaken coast-guard station from the distance. To reach the famous Housel Bay Hotel we must branch off before getting to the town, and following a lane which looks as if it led merely to a lighthouse, we come quite suddenly on the building, facing due south in the centre of a little bay. Not until we have passed the hotel and got out to the cliff paths does the surprising interest of the scenery begin to unveil itself, and the orderly sanity of the fields, which vexed our eager souls, is forgotten. On the two horns of the bay stand the flashing lighthouse and Lloyds' signal station. We are here at the most southerly, as we have just been at the most westerly, point of our country.

The cliffs are carved into many fantastic and bewildering shapes. Before we have got very far we are brought up short by an immense hole or funnel, cut clean-lipped from the short turf, and just the shape of one of those paper twists shop-keepers make for sweets. It is much larger in circumference than the Funnel at Tol Pedn. No railing protects the edge; people at the Lizard are supposed to have their wits about them. By lying down flat and approaching cautiously, we can peer over and see that here also the sea runs in on the floor. This is one of the cliff vagaries made within the memory of man. On the night of February 19, 1847, the hole appeared suddenly, yet so quietly that no one knew of it until it was seen. There had apparently been a shell or roof which had given way as the sea scooped out the earth from below. Yet that such a sudden catastrophe is possible shows how little we know about what goes on under our feet.

A little further on a column of spray shoots in fluffy steam from a blow-hole every few seconds after the last billow has fallen away. Near it a huge boulder perched on a great plinth balances at an uncertain angle. How did it get there? At every turn "chairs" of stone extend a silent invitation to us to seat ourselves and gaze at the ships passing and repassing in a silent and endless procession.

The Serpentine rock streaked with hornblende, felspar, slate and green-stone, shows changing colours like a pigeon's breast. It weathers into columns and pillars and arches and caverns, as if on purpose to delight the hearts of children of a larger growth, too old for spades and pails. Only a mile or two away at Kynance Cove these wonders come to perfection in the torn and twisted rocks lying in masses on the shore, which is covered with shining sand in summer but scoured black and stony by the rough seas in winter. By Caerthillian Cove we may pass to Pentreath beach and Yellow Carn and thus to Kynance. At places the cliffs have broken away forming a natural quarry and here come the people from the little town above, and search for well-coloured fragments of serpentine to fashion into candlesticks, and brooches, and ash-trays to sell to tourists. Dark red is a rare and popular colour and dark green also; chocolate with splashes of green, like variegated marble, is often seen. There is little fishing to be done on this wild rigid coast, and beyond some rough farming and their "serpentine" shops, it is hard to see what the population live upon. The rocks at the Lizard are split more often horizontally than vertically, and instead of being sharp upright columns as the granite

fragments are at Land's End, these are broad lumps giving a curious sense of steady untiring watching with uplifted heads.



CAERTHILIAN COVE

One interesting point about rock scenery is that it changes so little in the course of years that the impressions of those who saw it long ago are still not out of date. There are two very simple little books, two generations old now, but full of charm when read on the spot, Mrs. Craik's *An Unsentimental Journey in Cornwall* and the Rev. C. A. Johns's *A Week at the Lizard*, 1848. Mrs. Craik, who wrote *John Halifax, Gentleman*, came here with two nieces near the end of her life, and gives a picture of Lizard-town which might stand to-day. With a horse and "shay" they visited the various points of interest along the coast, climbed into the dank caves and mounted the slippery weed-strewn rocks. It was a bold journey to make at the time, and their taste was in advance of most of their contemporaries who had not learnt to delight in the grand and desolate places of the earth. The Rev. C. A. Johns is well known as the author of *Wild Flowers of the Field*, which ran through numerous editions and is the most popular of his many natural-history books.

Not many days after reading Mrs. Craik's book at the Lizard, I was in the light railway running to Newquay in the north of the county and saw a girl of about sixteen, deeply absorbed in a book, opposite to me. It was bound in the dingy maroon cloth so beloved by the librarians of Free Libraries, and peeping over I saw it was *John Halifax*, thus nearly sixty years after publication giving as much pleasure as when it was new! If the good lady could have known it, how pleased she would have been!

When the sun falls over the shoulder of the cliff in the west, the revolving light from the lighthouse begins to flash out with a regular monotonous beat on its long night vigil. At any time after dark one can see the huge pencil of light darting round, striking the white signal station opposite, losing itself in the sea and so returning. There is something awe-inspiring in that regular sweep of pulsing light every three minutes, hour after hour, carrying its silent sure message to those at sea. If anything happened to the Lizard light what terrible wrecks there would be on this jagged coast!

Nearly as impressive is it to catch by night the glimmer of the Morse code flashing from ships which are revealing their names and journeys to those ever-vigilant watchers in the signal station as they pass. What stories that signal station might tell of the journeyings to and fro, of the ships conveying food and clothes and necessities from port to port! Here is a vessel bound from Galveston to Havre with cotton, she is British; about every second or third that come by is laden with coals from Cardiff; here is another from the other direction, bringing fruit from the Mediterranean to Liverpool, with all the beating up the Irish Channel yet to face; passing it, and doubtless hailing it in transit, is another Liverpool ship carrying a general cargo to Italy, and when times are peaceful and there are no scares from submarines, the great American liners from Plymouth swell the number with their enormous bulk. It is a regular, and, if one may use the expression, a well-beaten track around this great blunt headland, and it is small wonder the enemy submarines haunted it to find their prey, as men wait hidden beside the tracks of wild animals in the jungle.

V

KING ARTHUR'S LAND

Tintagel can never disappoint anyone. The very spirit of romance is in the place. If you have climbed across the narrow neck that links the "island" to the main, and passing through the low doorway of the ruined castle, have crossed the space surrounded by the broken wall, and so gone out again to the plateau above, you will find yourself among the sheep and cut off from the world, apparently swinging in space. There are great mounds all around, in shape like graves, covered with coarse tufty grass munched by the ragged sheep whose hair is blown into knots by the ceaseless wind. It takes very little imagination to picture that around lie the bodies of a mighty host of warriors, at peace at last in sound of the booming sea which clashes in its mad rush through the caverns deep beneath, with the wind whistling over them boisterously, or crooning low even on the mildest summer day.

It is quite likely, as experts say, that the present ruins date only from the twelfth or thirteenth century. Arthur may never have set foot on the tufty grass of the cube-shaped island; there may never, for that matter, have been an Arthur at all, but lying in the grass above the slaty ruins and looking through the serrated arch to the onyx-green sea, fretting the black rock, all these doubts seem simply silly and fly away light as the spume flying inland in great balls.

The spirit of Arthur and his fighting men lives here still. It may possibly have been summoned up by the thoughts of the countless host of pilgrims who have come expectantly to the most beloved of all the shrines of British history. For thoughts if repeated may conjure up visions.

And the vision of Tintagel, that needs no seeking, but comes pressing on you as insistently as the sea-laden air, is one of old-time warriors impregably ensconced. With their castle standing on the very edge of the gulf—narrower then than now—which separated them from the mainland. Guarded by a drawbridge crossing that sharp space so that three men could well hold back an host. Protected on all other sides by the sheer cliff, with a fortification at

one point where it was just possible to land. Having above a wide plateau from which to gaze seaward and landward far over the rolling slopes of the country, along the deeply broken coast with its sugar-loaves of detached rock, or else out to the shifting ocean, they were in an enviable situation. They had a well of water on the very summit of their stronghold, and pasture for sheep by the dozen to insure plenty of mutton. They could laugh to scorn any such enemies as that age could bring against them.

There are several such striking vantage points along the Cornish coast, one at Tol Pedn, another at Treryn Dinas where is the Logan Rock, and there are signs they have all been utilized, but none of them had the superb advantages of Tintagel with its wide level of turfy heights, and the living water flowing from the heart of the rock.

There is no doubt that some such man as Arthur existed, though it is hardly likely he was the model of refined sensitiveness and perfect chivalry romancers have made him out to be. At any rate he was a gallant warrior if the old chroniclers are to be believed, and it is probable that his standard of conduct was high above his age, or the legend of his virtue would not have clung to him so persistently. The notion that such a king in Cornwall would neglect such a position may be dismissed as absurd, and so we may take it that Arthur fortified himself here on the heights, from whence he ranged far and wide, even so far as Scotland, to win his victorious battles. And all proof seems to point to it that he met his death in Scotland far from the beating of his beloved savage waves in Cornwall.

All this coast is slaty shale; there is a miniature quarry just away to the west round the next headland, and the materials lying to hand were not likely to be neglected in days when transport was more of a consideration than now. So the crumbling walls which cling to the cliff are of slate, sharp and jagged, and inside the arches present a serrated edge like a crocodile's teeth. These arches are pointed which shows they were of later date than Arthur, and the rest of the masonry can hardly be said to have any style. The first mention of Tintagel in public records is in 1305, and in 1337 the castle was fairly habitable, at any rate that part of it standing on the mainland. We can imagine the original castle, which this one superseded, to have been much the same only with heavy round arches. So we can picture the past without great difficulty. And lying in peace we can repeople the place with the gorgeous

figures of Tennyson's Idylls, much better known to most people than *La Mort d'Arthur*. The constant splash of the waves and the steady cropping of the sheep are broken now and again by a Woof! exactly like the growl of an angry beast. This is caused by a blow-hole in the cliff from which, when the wind is strong and onshore, the spout of water is sent out forty feet or more.

Right beneath us is a cavern cut through the solid rock from side to side, and into this the sea scours at its height, the breakers from each end meeting with a shock in the middle. The rocks, which are so black and frigid outside, are rounded within, and coloured a strange sea-green, with almost a wan look, while the floor is composed of myriads of flat stones, round and oval, all sizes, from a sixpence to a soup-plate, making a natural pavement easy to the tread. The beach at the mouth of the cave is the same, armoured by myriads and myriads of flat smooth rounded stones lying so closely together as to give the appearance of a dragon's scales; it would not be hard to conjure up imaginary dragons here for the cave is by tradition "Merlin's Cave," and magicians and dragons are always regarded as contemporaneous. These plates of slate, for they are nothing else, have had all the angles scoured off them by the scourging surge. The village people collect them, picking out all that are of one size, to form neat pavements. You also see them set like some strange mosaic on the fronts of the houses, stuck in mortar, and making a deep frieze; the effect is not beautiful.

But the ruined castle on the island is not all that remains of man's handiwork here, for high on the mainland, on the great boss of earth fronting the island, are the remains of another castle, now falling piecemeal into the gulf below as the cliff crumbles. Some hold that the "island" was originally an island in reality, and that the slender neck of rock now linking it to the mainland is the result of cliff-falls and débris. But whether that was so or not the purpose of the landward castle can only be guessed. It may have been an outwork, though that seems rather unnecessary. Over it hover screaming jacks, who love the sheltering crevices of artificial walls, and occasionally may be seen a red-legged and beaked Cornish chough which here alone on the Cornish coast is not extinct, and is supposed by the children to re-embody the spirit of King Arthur.

Arthur lived about A.D. 500. His story is so overlaid with legend that it is difficult to find any grains of truth concerning him. Tennyson makes him of

miraculous birth, cast upon the shore by a wave at Tintagel, of which the earlier name was Dundagil, but even amid the romantic surroundings of Tintagel we cannot swallow that bit of poetic licence.

Gorlois, Duke of Cornwall, went to pay homage to the King of Britain, Uther Pendragon of glorious name, at the noble city of Winchester, and, like a foolish man, took his beautiful wife Igera with him. Uther kept his eye on the lady and presently the unhappy husband, having returned to his domain of Cornwall, was besieged in the strong castle of Damelioc, not far from Tintagel. Damelioc, represented to this day by an earthwork, is on the road running through Delabole to Padstow, or more correctly Rock, and is about eight miles from Tintagel. Meantime, Gorlois had left his wife in Tintagel, probably thinking his own life would be safer if he were apart from her, for he must have been well aware of all the consequences his foolish indiscretion had brought about. This did not save him; he was slain, and meantime the British King obtained access to Tintagel and wooed the lady.

In due time Arthur was born, and succeeded to the chieftainship or Dukedom of Cornwall, apparently without question, and proved himself one of the strongest and bravest rulers that ever held high position. His arms were everywhere triumphant, and about a dozen victories are placed to his credit, but he fell at last, fighting his traitorous nephew Mordred somewhere about the year 542, when Mordred was slain and Arthur, mortally wounded, carried from the battlefield to die. This was the Battle of Camulodunum and it was for long supposed to have been fought quite near Tintagel, close by the present town of Camelford, the similarity of names giving colour to the error. Besides there was a very fierce battle fought near Camelford in some remote time, and the tradition of it is strong to this day. The place is marked by Slaughter Bridge, to be found by going half a mile down a side road from the station. It is a small bridge over a tiny stream, and it is supported by great blocks of stone instead of piers. If you linger there a girl comes from a rough shanty near and says she will show you King Arthur's tomb. A short scramble takes you down steep banks where tree-trunks grow out horizontally turning up at an angle to reach the light, and brambles and creepers cling thickly, while the long hart's-tongue ferns dip in the running water, floating down stream like strange seaweed; then you see a great monolith with a Latin inscription, of which the only word still decipherable is "filius." You point out to the little guide that in all probability King Arthur was not buried here

at all but in Scotland where the evidence shows that the Battle of Camulodunum was fought, and she makes no objection provided the fee is forthcoming.

No doubt some great chieftain was laid here after the battle, where thousands were killed, so that a thousand years later the bridge retains the name of Slaughter Bridge, but it is likely the event took place long after Arthur's death. For its date is generally now acknowledged to be the year 823 in the time of King Egbert. It was between the Britons and Saxons, and history does not say which was victorious. It may have been a drawn fight, in which case the ground was strewn with bodies and the waters of the stream dyed crimson all for nothing.

It is in later times that the dignity of King has been conferred on Arthur, and some suppose he was King of Britain; but it seems more likely that he gained slices of territory spasmodically as the result of fighting, and was really only ruler in his own corner of the country continuously, though his battles spread his name far and wide. There were so many rulers in those days and the country was so cut up that it is not likely he was able to assert himself supremely, and the conquests of Ireland, Denmark, Norway, Gaul and Spain attributed to him are pure legends. In a very interesting little book called *King Arthur in Cornwall* by W. Howship Dickinson, the case is put clearly:—

"The evidence which is wanting with regard to Arthur's battle on the Camel comes to light on the Firth of Forth. There is reason to suppose that tradition did not err in the fatal association of Arthur and Mordred, though the place of the last scene was not Cornwall but Scotland. The name Camlan which has been freely given by later writers to the supposed battle on the Camel, is not to be found there, nor, so far as I can ascertain, in Cornwall.

"Skene and Stuart Glennie maintain with much converging evidence that Camlan is Camelon on the river Carron in the valley of the Forth, where it is said are the remains of a Roman town. Here, according to Scotch tradition Arthur and Mordred met. We have evidence which appears to be sufficient that Mordred was King of the Picts, or, as he is sometimes termed, King of Scotland, and the head of a confederacy of Picts, Scots and Saxons, or, as some authorities have it of Picts, Scots and renegade Britons. With this composite army he gave battle to Arthur and his faithful British force, in

which the latter were defeated and Arthur slain.

"It is worth noting as in favour of the Scottish location of the battle that Geoffrey [of Monmouth] who places it on the Camel states Mordred's force to have consisted of Picts and Scots. It is surely improbable that Arthur could have been confronted in Cornwall by a great army of these northern savages.... It may be added that an earthwork with double lines of circumvallation in the neighbouring valley of the Tay now known as Barry Hill, is designated by tradition as Mordred's castle."

Where Arthur was buried will ever remain an open question; Glastonbury long claimed the honour but that has for some time been discredited by those who have gone into the evidence. The romantic account of his "passing," as given by Malory and Tennyson is very fine. It tells how Arthur, wounded to death, is carried down to the waterside and gives his sword, Excalibur, to Sir Bedivere to throw into the water, and how the knight, after some hesitation, does as he wishes, when a hand and arm arise out of the surface of the lake, brandish the sword three times and disappear. Then a little barge appears and carries the dying King off to the Vale of Avallion from whence he will one day return. The grand myth about Excalibur is generally said locally to have taken place at a dreary little pool known as Dozmare, a lonely tarn, flat and bleak, fringed by reeds, on a tableland several hundred feet above the sea near Brown Willy, and on this assumption many a persevering tourist has paid it a visit. But Tennyson in describing the scene took a much more beautiful place as his model, for he describes Looe Pool which could by no possibility be associated with the tragedy. This is close to Helston at the entrance to the Lizard Peninsula. It is two or three miles long, and formed by the widening out of the little river Cober. The water formerly escaped into the sea but gradually a bar was built up, and there was an old custom by which the Corporation of Helston had to present the lord of the manor with two leather purses, each containing three halfpence, in consideration of which they were then allowed to cut through the bar, but that has long been discontinued. The bar is now a mighty thing where great stones are hurled by powerful waves and even on a calm day the thunder of the surf breaking on it is heard for miles. The water of the lake is otherwise drained. Its banks are well wooded.

In Tennyson's *Mort d'Arthur* when Sir Bedivere, last survivor of the Knights

of the Round Table, carried his mortally wounded ruler from the stricken field—

"On one side lay the ocean, and on one
Lay a great water, and the moon was full."

And when Sir Bedivere, charged with the mission of throwing the magic sword Excalibur into the water, left the dying King:—

"From the ruin'd shrine he stept
And in the moon athwart the place of tombs,
Where lay the mighty bones of ancient men,
Old Knights, and over them the sea-wind sang
Shrill, chill, with flakes of foam. He stepping down
By zigzag paths and juts of pointed rock,
Came on the shining levels of the lake."

Thence twice he returned faithless, his mission unperformed, to report:—

"I heard the ripple washing in the reeds,
And the wild water lapping on the crag."

All around Tintagel there are innumerable references to King Arthur. In fact it might be said that only the devil is more popular in this respect than Arthur, for his name occurs perhaps a little more frequently. Mr. Dickinson says: "We have King Arthur's Hall, Hunting Seat, Bed, Quoit, Cups and Saucers, Tomb and Grave." The cups and saucers are the round holes weathered in the stones on the summit of Tintagel island. The grave is a sepulchral mound lying within Warbstowe Bury, one of the largest British camps in Cornwall. This is not very far north of Boscastle. It is a vast circular mound with a sort of crater on the top, and in the middle of this is another mound, which has been called a Viking's grave and the Giant's grave as well as King Arthur's.

Another place much associated with King Arthur, which cannot be passed over, is the earthwork known as Cardinham Castle about four miles east of Bodmin. This has been identified by good authorities with Caradigan where Arthur held his court, to which there are many references in Arthurian legends.

On the other side of Tintagel, on the road between Camelford and Wadebridge, and not four miles from the latter place, is Killibury Castle identified with Kelliwic. Arthur was "lord of Kelliwic," and these associations all taken together carry a fair amount of evidence as to the presence of the chivalrous ruler in this district.

Whatever else is doubtful we cannot but be sure that Arthur's existence and reputation contributed in no small degree to the preservation of the men of the British race in this corner of the island when they were in danger of being pushed back into the sea by the oncoming Saxons, and it is to this that Cornwall owes in some ways its distinctive character, preserving racial features that are found nowhere else. The men of Ireland and of Wales are related certainly to the original Cornish but there is a distinct cleavage. Arthur may have made his fame known right across England, his victories may have carried him to the capital, Winchester, and beyond, but it is certain that his name will ever be associated most strongly with this far corner of the country where he was born and where he had his homeland associations. And these associations, being the very earliest of the British race surviving, serve to attract from far our Colonial brothers and our American cousins; Tintagel will never lack visitors.

But with the castle we have not exhausted by any means all that is worth seeing here.

Leaving the castle on the mainland we come very quickly to the "little grey church on the windy hill" with its graveyard wall almost swallowed up in rising grass and turf, and some of the tombstones heavily buttressed against the prevailing winds. The church tower must have formed a mark for generations to men of the sea. It stands up straight and bleak with never a tree to hide it. The entrances to the graveyard are over a pavement of round stone bars placed a few inches apart so that the cattle dare not cross them for fear of slipping in between with their narrow hoofs. There are many marks of great age inside the building and the grey stone walls, that have been many times restored, have heard the strong west winds whistling round them from the sea and moaning the tale of the wrecks on the coast for many generations.

All along this coast are steep descents and strange rock freaks. To the north, across the gully leading down to Tintagel Castle, there is a mighty fracture

which has split asunder a huge angle of rock, that looks as if it only needed a giant push to thrust it back into the fracture, closely fitting. Yet the chasm below is so sheer and stern that no one can climb up the sides. The sea-birds know it. It was a happy chance for them that made this citadel free from the sullyng steps of man, and the steep slopes of brilliant green amid the bare rock surfaces are peppered all over with them as if with a handful of comfits.

The wild music of a host of gulls is the bagpipes of the coast, and arouses the same feelings in the breast of the sea-lover as the pipes do in that of a Scotsman. It is associated with the sound of the surge and the deadly thrust and heavy swell at the foot of the tough cliff. These things tug at the heart of a sea-lover. Lying amid the prickly furze, sheltered for a moment from the deadly wind-whistle, and gazing across that unscalable chasm, we have before us that gull-fortress exactly as it and its kind have been reproduced on the canvas of a well-known painter many many times. What business has he to do the thing so well that we are familiarized with the stern beauty of the haunts of the freest of birds, and feel when we see them in Nature that half the charm has been forestalled by the blunting of our sensibility?

It is no easy task to scramble along these rough cliff edges, and one not to be undertaken by cripples or invalids.

Not very far is one of the valleys so attractive to the Cornish folk, who find in them the growth and snugness that contrast so impressively with their bleak uplands.

Down the Rocky Valley a stream gushes merrily, tumbling in miniature waterfalls every few yards, and meeting at last the oncoming wave with a shock as the sweet water mingles with salt. Everything grows amazingly, and the huge rectangular rocks high overhead on each side of the gully, are mostly draped in masses of ivy. They resemble ruins, as Cornish rocks often do, so that it is frequently most difficult to distinguish the natural from the artificial. Most people's idea of ivy is neat flat clinging stuff but here it grows in lumps, yards in thickness, and decorated with brilliant bunches of black berries in the season when there is little else to compete with it. In the valley which leads from the nearest station, Camelford, to Tintagel just such masses may be seen. The road runs downhill for about four miles, leading mysteriously into what seems the mouth of a quarry. The sides are covered

with untidy, loose clumps of furze, with mighty stones, and ever and always, in all corners, moss so rich that it might almost be mistaken for a bed of miniature ferns. Climb up on one side and you get a glimpse into a pool, with sides sheer like a hewn cistern, and something so weird and awful in its onyx depths that it suggests robbery with violence, suicides, hangings, and anything else gruesome, while the water drips perpetually from the green lines of slime on its sharp walls. Further on are the glistening piles of slate from a disused quarry. The real quarry of Delabole, famous far and wide, is behind, beside the railway, from which one may look right down into it. The road to Tintagel opens out at last and then, if we are lucky enough to be going westward at sunset, we may see suddenly a hazy glow as of a forest fire over all the wide expanse of sea and sky, and outlined against it the great black lumps of rock off Trebarwith Strand.

With Tintagel must be associated Boscastle but a few miles along the coast to the north, for hardly anyone who visits the one place will fail to see the other, yet the two are singularly different. Boscastle lies all down the sides of one of those curious clefts, which would be called chines or denes elsewhere, and in this instance the drop is extraordinarily steep. To go sheer down is a feat most people will find difficult, even on foot, and the new road has been designed to help. Even that would be accounted steep in any ordinary place. Down, down it goes into the neck of the funnel, and looks for all the world as if it were leading to a slate quarry, and then suddenly there opens out one of the grandest harbours on the coast, with huge sloping cliffs running alongside and curving round, making the entrance both difficult and dangerous. With their lovely curves and angles they add greatly to the vision. From the heights of these cliffs Lundy Island can be seen when the air is clear. There is an old saw:—

"When Lundy is high it will be dry
When Lundy is plain it will be rain
When Lundy is low it will be snow!"

If the word of the inhabitants is to be trusted the last contingency must come seldom indeed!

The name Boscastle comes from Bottreux or Botreaux-castle, spoken quickly and run together. The site of the castle, which had ceased to exist by Queen

Elizabeth's reign, is still pointed out. The town lies in two parishes and the church of Forraburry, belonging to the one, stands well up on the western cliff.

Care must be taken in climbing about the shore for the cliffs are very steep. Just to the north or east is Pentargon Bay, cutting deeply into the land, and near it the Seal Caves though seals seldom come there now. The waves dash in with tremendous force, especially with a westerly wind, which is common, when some grand sights may be seen. The black walls of the slate rock and the white spray of the shattered waves and the strange blue tint of the sea compose some pictures finer than any that have yet found their way on to a painter's canvas.



VI

THE SANDY BEACHES OF THE NORTHERN COAST

What a splendid series of resorts lie along the northern coast of Cornwall! Take them in order as they come. St. Ives, Newquay, Padstow, and Bude, leaving aside for the moment the smaller ones, or those like Boscastle and Tintagel, which stand in a class by themselves and have been already referred to. All these four have certain characteristics in common but each has a distinct individuality. That is one of the charms of Cornwall, nothing is cut to a pattern. By far the best-known is of course the first mentioned, St. Ives, with its splendid bays or "porths," with acres of firm sand, and its unrivalled golf-links at Lelant. It seems odd that a place should be able to face due east in Cornwall, yet somehow part of St. Ives manages to do it, that part of it which is on Porthminster Bay and is most favoured by visitors. The town is curiously placed, for the older part lies on a neck or isthmus protruding northward between two magnificent bays, and it is the curve on each side of the neck that makes the east and west side face respectively Porthminster or Porthmeor. From the east you look straight across to Godrevy Point and lighthouse.



ST. IVES

St. Ives could never pall because it is not all to be seen or understood at a glance, and those who stay there longest admit they know it least. Seen from almost any point there is a view which demands attention, whether it be the green ruggedness of the island—only technically an island—against the soft blue of the sea, with the terraced lines of drab houses rising in tiers in front of it, or the harbour with its boats and screaming gulls and the old weather-worn church abutting on it. The prevailing tones of all the buildings are drab and grey; drab stone, drab stucco, drab paint with pale slate-grey roofs; a little red brick or tile would be an improvement from an artistic point of view.

It is an odd feature of Cornwall that however bare and treeless some parts are, and they could hardly be barer in the Hebrides, yet the towns are generally warmly encompassed by trees. It is so at Penzance and it is so here. Woods rise behind the houses, and the richness of the evergreens makes a shelter even in winter, while the ferns are inexhaustible in number and of great variety. The season is only for two months of the year, August and September, during which months the place is packed and the numerous

inhabitants who live upon the yearly godsend of the "foreigners'" money, are hard put to it to supply accommodation; but all the year round there is a certain number of visitors who find in the clean fresh air, the glorious golf-links, second to none, and the wide views, just what they need. It is true that tiresome change at St. Erth junction has to be faced before reaching the town, but this is nothing compared with the days when the junction was the very nearest point of rail, and the rest of the journey had to be completed by road. This was altered in 1877 and the innovation was a great factor in the growth of the town. The road approach from this direction is well graded and has a good surface, but from the Zennor side so much cannot be said. A new road is being cut through and the approach improved, but even when it is completed, there must still be the long and precarious descent through a squalid part of the town to face.



A STREET IN ST. IVES

The region of the visitors is mainly above the station, facing Porthminster Bay, where terraces of houses exist for the sole purpose of providing accommodation, but there is a secondary part above Porthmeor Bay where rows of neat little houses claim their share. Down on the harbour front and curving round behind it is the old town with its indescribable jumble of what can scarcely be called architecture; where outside staircases, and overhanging first-floor rooms with no visible means of support, twisted archways and narrow passages are inextricably mingled. The names of some of these places are quite delightful, Puddingbag Lane, Chy-an-Chy, Street-an-Garrow,

Bunkers' Hill, and the Digey, while away westward is Clodgy Point. The old inhabitants must have had a genius for nomenclature.

St. Ives is the haunt of a colony of artists who rival those at Newlyn, and what with artists, fishing and visitors, the rest of the inhabitants manage somehow to live. But the fishing is not what it was; gone are the golden days when the shoals of pilchards announced by the "huers" from the Malakoff bastion were sufficient to provide a good livelihood for the whole town:

"The pilchards are expected on the coast in October, when their appearance gives rise to general excitement at a place like St. Ives. Often have been described the patient watching of the *huers* on the cliffs, who with a huge trumpet at length announce their joyful discovery, and by the waving of bushes telegraph the movements of the shoal marked by the colour of the sea and its hovering escort of gulls; the rush of men, women, and children to the shore with shouts of *heva! heva!* which is Cornish for the classic *Eureka*; the marshalling of the seine boats; the shooting of the huge nets; the enclosure of the luckless victims by myriads; then the hurried orgy of capturing, pickling, and storing, stimulated by its promise of prosperity to the whole place."

Alas! they come but scantily now and there is not much of any sort of fishing to be had. Though just enough to account for the brown-sailed boats lying in the harbour and the blue-jerseyed men belonging to them without which, it may be presumed, the artists would find some paucity of material and perhaps disappear also.

St. Ives would not be a Cornish town if it lacked hills and there are plenty to give exercise to leg muscles; but yet there are some places almost flat, and one has only to descend to the sands to secure a perfectly horizontal walk!

This is not a guide book and there is no need to go into detail about the ancient church in the very midst of the workers, or the restored tiny chapel out on the "island" that really once was an island, which overlooks as in blessing the drying nets that blacken the green of the grass on the slopes below. The chunk or bite out of this island on the east is Porthgwidden Cove, and the Foresand runs from here to Penolva Point whence begin Porthminster Sands. On the hill behind the town rises the hideous Knill monument where the little girls dance around on July 25 every fifth year, in memory of the conventional alderman who left such directions in his will, and yet after all is

not buried here.

The impression carried away from St. Ives is of light and freshness and space, and of width of sand that would attract attention anywhere, but which here in Cornwall is phenomenal; and of enough modern comfort and cleanliness to make things very pleasant though within reach lies the old kernel of the town in piquant contrast.

The name Porthminster means "church of the sands" and it is curious that the church should thus be referred to in one of the principal place-names when the St. Ives' people had originally to go to Lelant for their services, marryings and buryings. Finding this state of things intolerable they petitioned for a church of their own and completed it in 1426. It was built close to the shore for the obvious reason that the stone of which there was abundance in the neighbourhood, could be more easily brought by water than overland, but it was not so near the sea as now, for in the seventeenth century "there was a field between the churchyard wall and Porth Cocking Rock, and sheep grazed on it."

The church of Lelant was rapidly being overpowered by the sand which has swallowed up many ancient oratories or "cells" built low down on the shore, and it was only saved by the planting and rapid spreading of the coarse rush grass which binds the surface of the towans together in a kind of mat and prevents the sand from drifting.

St. Ives with its eastern aspect is fresh even in the summer, and yet strange to say not very cold in winter, as the flowering shrubs which grow so well testify.

Newquay is not at all like St. Ives; it has no quaint muddled fishing town behind the "visitors' front," and it lies all along the top of high cliffs so that its main street is almost level, or at any rate, level for Cornwall. At one end is Towan Head not unlike St. Ives' Island, and from thence the bay runs in great scoops or curves cut off from each other except at low tide. These sandy bays, surrounded by high cliffs, resemble to some extent those at Broadstairs, and the aspect of Newquay is the same as that at Broadstairs for it faces mainly north. It is airy and spacious and light, and its signmark of originality lies not in its front so much as in its back, the long estuary of the Gannel River which forms a kind of back-door entrance. But villas and boarding-

houses are rapidly springing up along the Gannel estuary, facing south, with their backs to Newquay proper, and thereby a bit of very fine wild land is being spoilt. There are excellent golf-links along Fistral Bay and huge hotels have sprung up to reap what harvest of visitors there may be, indeed it is a stock joke to say of Newquay, as may be said with much truth about Oban, "every second house is an hotel."



FROM LELANT TO GODREVY

No one who looks at the map even cursorily can fail to note the extraordinary number of places in Cornwall beginning with the prefix St. This would be natural in Roman Catholic Ireland but it is whimsical in Methodistical Cornwall. It is, however, but one of the many signs of the very ancient history of the place which gives it so much charm. These reminders keep cropping out constantly among the modern surroundings, as the granite outcrops on the Bodmin moors and again at Land's End and the far-lying Scilly Isles, which are too but granite peaks.

Newquay for all its newness lies in a district of ancient memories. Only a

mile or two away eastward are St. Columb Minor and Major, in fact Newquay itself is really in the parish of St. Columb Minor. Not far from St. Columb Major there is one of the most perfect remains of an ancient castle of the earthwork kind. It is called Castle-an-Dinas, or, locally, King Arthur's Castle. It is enclosed by three rings of earth and stone, of which one was probably strengthened by a moat, and the inmost part covers an acre and a half. But a little way from St. Columb Major on the other side is St. Mawgan at the end of the Vale of Lanherne, one of the well-wooded rich Cornish valleys which are so much admired by the inhabitants. Cornish people go for their picnic-parties and pleasure days to a valley as most people would to the seaside.

Newquay Bay is really one crescent or horn of a much larger bay extending right up to Trevoze Headland, and within this sweep lies Watergate Bay and Bedruthan Steps with its detached rocks and fine natural scenery. Dividing Watergate and Newquay Bays is Trevalgue Head, an island connected with the mainland by a footbridge. Here the sea-pinks flourish abundantly covering all the ground with their frilled blossoms when in flower. They do well almost anywhere in Cornwall, but exceptionally well here, and the sheet of pink-tinged ground, caught as a foreground to a vivid summer sea, is a sight not to be forgotten. The only thing that spoils the fine cliff effects is that the whole coast here and northwards is composed of slate—a substance which does not lend itself to beauty of line or colouring.

But by far the most "saintly" associations of Newquay are on the other side. Across the Gannel is Crantock called after St. Crantock, St. Patrick's great friend, one of the three bishops chosen to revise the laws of Ireland after the country was converted to Christianity. Crantock landed here and built his church. A mile or two away on the shore is the Holy Well, still visited by curious men and maidens, and within the memory of those living held to have a miraculous power of making rheumatic men sound again. Holy wells in Cornwall are almost as plentiful as saints, possibly the one is always associated with the other as the outward sign of wonder-working power.

The extraordinary stretch of sand called Perran Beach would be remarkable anywhere, but it is more remarkable still on the rock-bound coast of Cornwall. Norden, with unconscious Irishism, describes Perran as being "almost drowned with the sea sande." The whole region for three miles in

length and as much in breadth is sand alone. Inland a few plantations of pines struggle to survive just beyond its zone, and the little slate-roofed houses have a strangely glaring unfinished look; the hedges which divide up the land show here and there straggly scrubby bushes all bent violently eastward by the prevailing winds, and in the dreary corner of sandhills between them and the sea is somewhere to be found the tiny chapel of St. Piran, which is very interesting because it is the very earliest ecclesiastical building to be found in the land. It dates from the eighth or ninth century and is only twenty-five feet long. It was covered with sand as if buried in a snow drift and for seven centuries was completely lost. It is probably to this it owes its preservation. Sir A. Quiller-Couch's irreverent but amusing story concerning it in his *Delectable Duchy* is known to most people. St. Piran, or Kieran as he is called in Irish, came over from Ireland in the sixth century and settled down here, where many wonders grew up about his name and his fame spread far and wide. Hundreds of people who never enter a modern church find themselves strangely impressed by this little ruined church buried amid the sand dunes with its record of between thirteen and fourteen hundred years of sanctity behind it. The very name Perranporth and its neighbour Perranzabuloe are so peculiarly and distinctly Cornish that they draw the inquisitive to them. The latter means Perran in the Sand. There is some very curious rock-scenery near Perranporth, where all the fantastic freaks of caves and natural arches, so common in Cornwall, can be seen at their best.

Far deeper than the inlet of the Gannel at Newquay is that of the River Camel, near the mouth of which Padstow stands. This is an estuary filled with water at high tide and lying in long melancholy reaches of sand at low tide. Padstow clusters round a very old-fashioned little port, where seafaring men congregate and discuss the weather and prices. There is not a great deal of fishing and only a little general trade, as the mouth of the river requires ticklish navigation. There is an enormous hotel standing on a height, and a very attractive church with an old Elizabethan mansion of the Prideaux-Brune family behind it. But all the sands are on the other side of the estuary, at Rock, whence the ferry-boat paddles to and fro about every hour. The rolling dunes have been utilized for fine golf-links and the all-encroaching sand has done its best to swallow up the little chapel of St. Enodoc, as it once succeeded in doing with St. Piran's; so far it has been kept at bay, but it still drifts in whenever it gets the chance. The links run out in the direction of

Pentire Point, one of the fine coast headlands. It is very remarkable in Cornwall how constantly names are duplicated, one might imagine it would give rise to difficulties to find a Pentire Point here, and an East and West Pentire Point at the mouth of the Gannel near Newquay, many miles south, and just below this Pentire Point is Hayle Bay, and opposite Lelant near St. Ives we have again Hayle at the mouth of the river. Newlyn by Penzance is well known, and Newlyn East south of Newquay not so well. We have St. Just in Penwith and St. Just in Roseland. There are doubtless many other instances.

Of all the four seaside places discussed in this chapter Bude has perhaps most strongly its own character. Whoever heard of a seaside place with a sweet-water canal running down the beach? Canals are not usually associated with beauty and the very word canal is enough to frighten off many people. But the canal at Bude is quite peculiar. It only serves the purpose of a harbour for the ketches or fishing-boats apparently, and a very awkward harbour it makes too when a distracted ketch harassed by the strong flowing tide and baffled by a teasing wind, noses this way and that and fails to hit the narrow entrance. Then, a thing of beauty and distress, she heels over on the beach as the tide runs out, and the natives gather round to speculate whether she will "break her back" or not.

Bude possesses a breakwater too, but the oddest breakwater! For, instead of curving round like most normal ones, it sticks out straight into the sea and forms a favourite public promenade, with the added excitement that in rough weather you may very easily be swept off the hog's back of rounded stones and dashed to pieces against the rocky masses on either side.

Owing to the fact that Bude Bay is on a coast facing sheer west, the quarter of the wildest winds, the waves drive in with great force sometimes. The thunder of the surf on the shore may be heard like the deep pedals of an organ and all the air is hazed by the flying scud. To see the sun drop like glowing copper straight into the sea, behind ridge upon ridge of the "wild white horses" is most impressive. The strata of the rocks on the shore are most weirdly bent and contorted. It is difficult to conceive the state of convulsion which twisted them into the shape of innumerable up-ended triangles, one within the other, fitting like puzzle-boxes, or bent them right back like gigantic hooks. There is one great layer of rock which looks like the back of a

whale, half a-wash, with all the ribs showing.

Bude is peculiar in the fact that it has all sorts of scenery combined in one place. The high downs covered with short grass lie north and south, and between them is the bay covered at high tide but showing a fine stretch of easily accessible hard sand at low water; while, as may be gathered, the rock scenery is well worth seeing. Here, as at so many places along this coast there are excellent golf-links, in this case in the very centre of the straggling town on the "Summerleaze." There is a second golf-links on the heights above Wrangle Point, belonging to the old Falcon Hotel by the bridge.

About two miles inland is Stratton, the scene of the victory of Sir Bevil Grenville over the Roundheads, a victory which was within an ace of being a defeat. The Earl of Stamford had marched into Cornwall, with forces of about seven thousand men, and camped at Stratton, where he was attacked by Sir Bevil with half the number and defeated. Grenville came of a famous Cornish family which numbered among its members Sir Richard, who with his little ship the *Revenge*, tackled the great Spanish galleons and managed to damage many of them before he fell mortally wounded as is recorded in Tennyson's much-quoted poem!

Further north still, the very last place of note on the Cornish coast, is Morwenstow, visited by hundreds of people because of its association with its one-time vicar, the Rev. Robert Stephen Hawker, a muscular Christian of a peculiarly pungent personality. His generosity and kindness toward his fellow-men was unstinting, but he was withal full to the brim of eccentricity. He married while still a youth of twenty at the University, his godmother, who was twenty-one years his senior, and they lived happily together until her death in extreme old age. Hawker believed in ghosts and was exceedingly superstitious; there are many curious stories still current as to his doings, and the life of him by the notable novelist Baring-Gould is well worth reading.



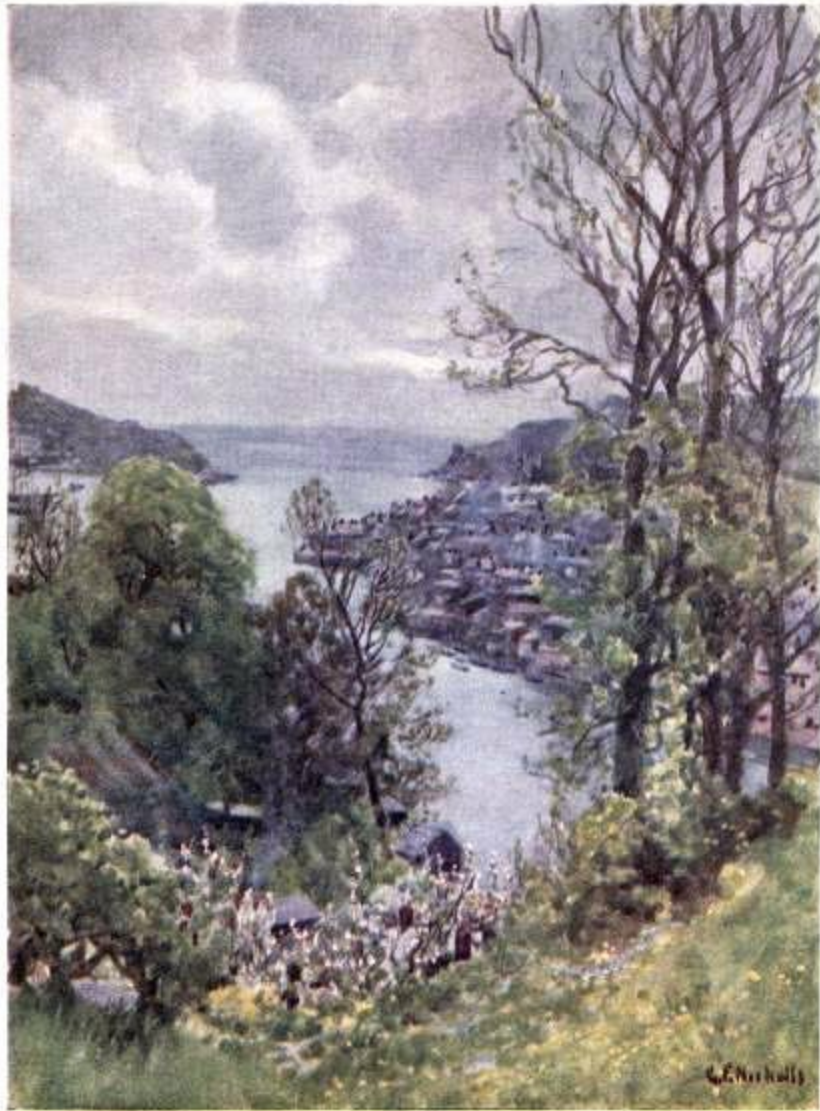
VII

THE INLETS OF THE SOUTH COAST

Fowey is perhaps the best known by name of all the Cornish towns. This is due in some measure to its being the home of Sir A. Quiller-Couch, who has made it familiar to thousands in his stories of *Troy Town* and *The Delectable Duchy*. But people who go to Fowey should be prepared to find it unlike anything anywhere else. Fowey Harbour is a long narrow slit penetrating into the land and closed in on each side by very steep hills which drop down sharply to the water. On the west lies Fowey town close to the mouth of the harbour, built on the hillside. It consists of one long narrow street, so constricted that only here and there, where the houses fall back a little, has it been found possible to drop in a few feet of pavement, otherwise foot-passengers take their chance with the traffic. There are houses on each side. Those on the seaward side are built right on to the water so that many of them have ladders hanging from their backyards by which the men can climb down into their boats. Passing casually along the main street and glancing into an open doorway one sometimes sees the passage falling downwards like an open shaft, the lower end a rectangle of blue dancing water!

On the other side the levels, if they can be called levels—for there is hardly a foot of level land anywhere—rise high overhead. In following any of the quaint crooked streets it is possible at one moment to look up at school children playing in a courtyard high overhead and five minutes later to survey the same children shortened in perspective by being seen from above!

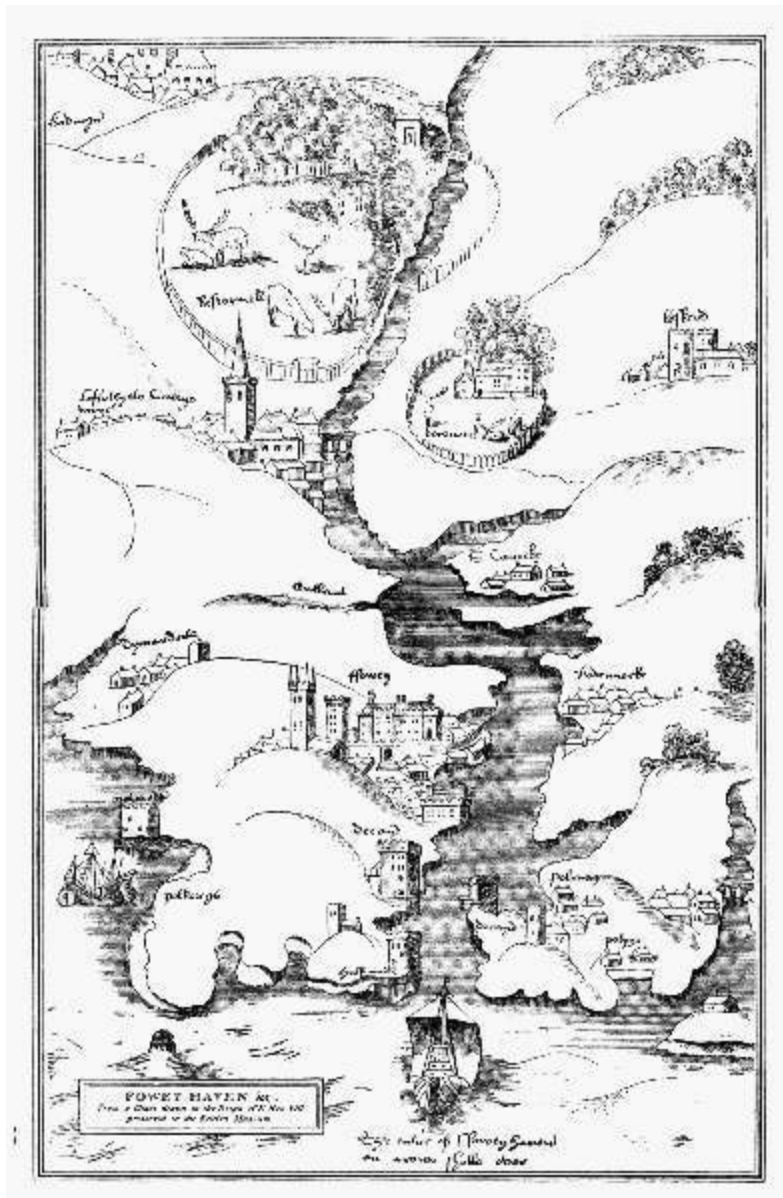
In the very midst of the town is the splendid old church, and near it, but so tucked away it is not easily discovered, is Place House, the seat of the Treffrys, an old Cornish family. The oldest parts of this have stood since 1457 and it is said that here once was a palace of the old Earls of Cornwall, which is quite probable, as they could hardly have chosen a better spot.



FOWEY

If we pass on by the long narrow main street we come out eventually on heights terminating in Gribbin Head. But Fowey is not recommended for people with weak hearts unless they intend to sit upon the charming verandah of the hotel as suggested in the first chapter. Wherever one turns there are steep hills to negotiate, and the magnificent views gained across the deep inlet must be bought by hard labour. Yet having said that it is but fair to add that nowhere in Britain are there sights to beat these. The harbour lies like a Norwegian fiord between its hills, and the water ranges in all imaginable blues and greens as the light wanes and changes, while there are ever coming

and going craft of many kinds. Fowey is not a fishing village; anyone who said it was would have to reckon with Sir A. Quiller-Couch! The harbour is visited by ships in search of cargo such as the china-clay which forms so large a proportion of the export, and the graceful vessels, often sailing-ships, which come to fetch it, are towed in and out by the little tugs which work unceasingly about the narrow straits. And the inlet is one of the most popular for yachts all along the coast. There is here reproduced a most interesting chart of Fowey Harbour, drawn in Henry VIII.'s time, and now in the British Museum. This reproduction is taken from Lysons' *Magna Britannica*. As will be seen, it shows Lostwithiel, Liskeard, and even Bodmin, with a pictorial representation of the stags grazing in Restormel Park. Even at that date the twin forts guarding the narrow entrance to the harbour were "decayed."



In Henry III.'s reign Fowey men rescued some of the ships of the men of Rye, and Fowey was therefore honoured by the Cinque Ports "with armes and privileges." In the time of Edward III. Fowey supplied more ships to the King's Navy than any other port in England, which is an amazing fact. At the Siege of Calais there were forty-seven ships from this little place! The men of Fowey were always known as bold sailors, having been brought up upon the water it seemed their natural element. So stung were the French by the wasps issuing from this nest that they made a descent on Fowey in 1457 when Lady Treffry, whose husband was not at home, led the defence and helped to beat back the attackers to their ships.

In later times Fowey earned a base reputation for being the harbour of pirates and eventually was punished by being obliged to transfer its ships to Dartmouth.

Those who like boating and sea-fishing will find plentiful opportunity here to indulge in both.



BODINNICK FERRY, FOWEY

Just opposite Fowey town a deep bite into the land cuts off a projecting tongue, reached from the west by ferry, and the piled houses upon it, falling down their mountain-side, lack something of the beauty they might easily have had in such a situation. But further down, where at Bodinnick ferry passengers are carried to and fro there is much to admire. Bodinnick is an inland village which has fallen by accident upon a seashore, at least that is the impression it gives. The walls are lined with bladder seaweed, the seaweed that goes "pop" to the delight of children. This hangs in black masses above the incoming water, but over it rise woods and trees, and ivy and ferns, and

all the paraphernalia of a country lane. The ivy in fact tumbles riotously down on the top of the seaweed! The cottages, maintaining their balance with difficulty on the perilous slope rising from the ferry, are covered with rose bushes. Candytuft and violets come out in their season to creep over the rough stone walls; white pigeons flutter overhead and glimpses of large-leaved plants of a kind more often associated with a tropical climate, peep at one from backyards. There is nothing conventional or suburban about Bodinnick! It takes no trouble to clear away the bits of broken crockery or rusty tins; perhaps it likes the feeling of homeliness they give, and the sleepy cats appear to like it too.

From Fowey there is one road and only one, which leads across the headland westward to Par sands, but there is a choice of two routes by railway, one running along beside the inlet, which is of course the mouth of the River Fowey, and giving lovely views of the wooded reaches about the mouth of its tributary the Lerryn, which, following the custom of rivers in this district, has a considerable inlet to itself. While Penpoll Creek, nearer the sea, affords a comfortable harbourage even in a very high wind. But the one road and the two railways do not sum up all the ways of getting out of Fowey, for you may persuade the burly round-eyed old salt who has spent his life in crossing and recrossing hundreds of times, to put you over at Bodinnick, and then you can wander at your own sweet will by any of the innumerable tracks over the great rectangle bounded on the west and north by Fowey River (which turns at a right angle about Bodmin Road), and on the east by Looe River. This lump of land is cut up and seamed by valleys and broken by hills. On the sea-line, about halfway across, is the tiny fishing village—really a fishing village this time—of Polperro, than which no quainter thing exists in Britain. You drop down, down, down, to Polperro until you can look up and see the cows grazing high overhead as you might in an Alpine valley, and then you plunge into the miniature confused streets of the town, and following them at random may or may not come out at the little port, and walking along the rude jetty see the outer harbour and the small beach. The smell of fish is strong in the air; the fishing-boats lie in neat rows, supported by legs to prevent their heeling over when the tide runs out. The houses cluster on the steep hillside in terraces, and below them a collection of blue-guernseyed stout-booted men, with wholesome sea-tanned faces, lounge about as if they were the idlest set in Christendom, though their work demands the hardest toil and

greatest endurance of any calling man can follow.

Polperro is strangely like a little town in Brittany and has something about it also which recalls the inland villages tucked away in the spurs of the Alps or Apennines above the Riviera. It is easy to imagine that anyone having visited it and trying to recall where he had looked upon such a scene, would search his memory for tours abroad and never think of England.

A good road leads up out of this valley on the Looe side and once the hill is surmounted it may be remarked with surprise that at the cost of going a little round it actually tries to keep on the level; that is not a practice habitual to Cornish roads, which seem to take a pure delight in a switchback manner of progress. This road was cut in 1849, the means of arriving at Polperro before that being something like falling down the face of a cliff. Polperro was the home of Jonathan Couch, the naturalist, grandfather of the novelist Sir A. Quiller-Couch, who lives a short way off at Fowey. Mr. Thomas Couch's *History of Polperro* embodying his father, Jonathan Couch's, notes, and published in 1871, may still be read with interest. He pictures himself standing on the height of Brent. "Immediately below are the harbour, valley and town of Polperro; the Peak with its striking jagged outline and massive black colouring; the sail-loft resting in a recess on its side; the ledges of rocks here and there hollowed into caverns, and the quays, between which are the fishing-boats riding quietly in tiers. Further up among the hills which shut this scene in you see strange, and apparently confused, groups of houses, having a general tint of whitewash, and, above them, on the southern side, the little Chapel of St. John."



LOOE

Though many new and better-class houses have been built, this description still holds good. The cliffs all round are very sheer and steep, dropping straight into the water, which is deep up to the base. In some of the little old houses there are low, dark rooms smelling strongly of fish and brine, with the beams showing. Mr. Thomas Couch says: "In the old home of the Quillers [his mother's family] there was hanging on a beam a key, which we, as children, regarded with respect and awe, and never dared to touch, for Richard Quiller, Jane's father, had put the key of his quadrant on the nail with strong injunctions that no one should take it off until his return [which never

happened]; and there, I believe, it still hangs." This doubtless gave "Q" his idea for the key on the beam in that curiously unequal story, *Dead Man's Rock*.

The two Looes, East and West, facing each other across the mouth of the river,—which here *looks* like the mouth of a river and not a fiord as at Fowey—are easily understood. You can see them both from the bridge, whereas in Fowey on first arrival it is very difficult to know where you are and I doubt if anyone really knows even after staying there awhile, for there is no place where you can get a comprehensive view unless it is from the opposite shore at the expense of much toil and trouble. The Looes lack the picturesqueness of Fowey but on the other hand you can get about much more easily and there is bathing on the front. The woods lying inland have a great and peculiar charm. Not very far above the bridge the river bifurcates, the two branches being east and west to match the twin-town. Here in the wide sandy estuary sea-birds congregate, and the boats are drawn up in rows beneath the overhanging trees, which come right down to the very lip of the water. It is difficult to contemplate without amusement the golden era before the Reform Bill when this little place returned four members to Parliament, two for the handful of houses each side of the river! It is difficult—but perhaps not quite so difficult—to realize that Looe sent twenty ships to help King Edward III. to besiege Calais.

But these inlets we have been sketching are small indeed compared with the mighty harbours of many ramifications such as those at Devonport and Falmouth. Devonport has already been touched upon elsewhere, and we can pass on now to Falmouth with its wide opening in Carrick Roads and the long thin fingers or tongues of water diving deep into the heart of the land. One of these goes up to Truro and it is one of the popular excursions from both towns to sail up and down in the summer steamboats from one to the other. Falmouth itself lies along both sides of the neck of land ending in Pendennis Point, and, though on a much larger scale, is in that respect not unlike St. Ives in situation. The southern side boasts the beach and what may be called Villadom for its share, and the northern looks upon the harbour and faces over to the hamlet of Flushing where the ferry runs continually. There are steep streets in Falmouth as everywhere else in Cornwall, and even the main street passing all along beside the water, mounts a tough hill toward Penryn. The glimpses of the crowded harbour and the variety and picturesqueness of

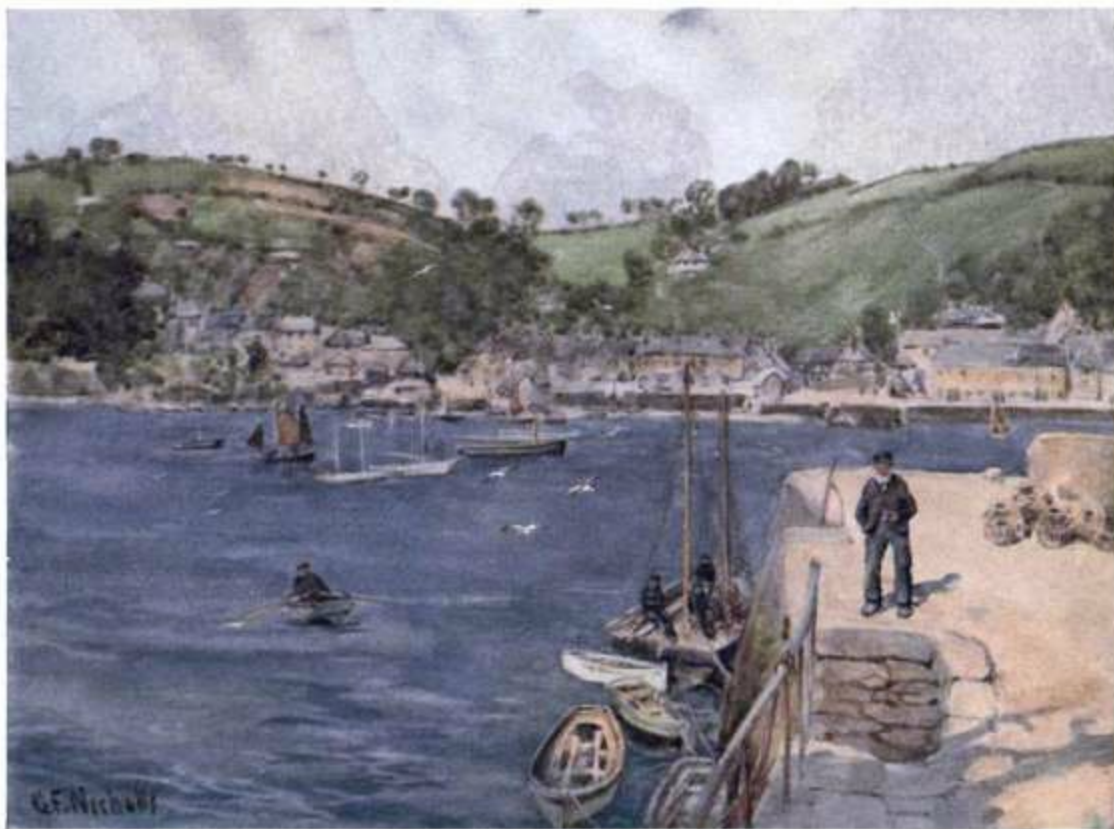
the boats and ships that find their way in are a never-failing source of interest and pleasure.

Before the days of steam Falmouth was of more importance than it is now, and many a sailing ship started from here with a cargo of passengers who had travelled as far as possible on land before committing themselves to the uncertain sea. But Falmouth is particularly known for having been the starting-place of the Royal Mail Packets which went to America, the Indies and other parts of the globe. The mails were sent down by the authorities, who chartered armed brigs with a crew of thirty men and sent them off to run all the risks of the sea and to fight if need be in defence of their valuable cargo. Many a stubborn fight there was too and many the weeping widow of Falmouth who mourned her man in vain. It is supposed that Falmouth first became a station for "packets" in 1688, and the number sailing from the port was increased from time to time until in 1763 there were boats going to Lisbon, the West Indies and New York continually. Therefore for about 150 years, until 1850, Falmouth was the port for the mail-packets, but when steam power was applied to ships she lost the mail service which was transferred to Southampton.

There is a school of artists here, an offshoot from the Newlyn school, which seems to have been the parent swarm of many a cluster.

The castle on the headland, now in the hands of the military, dates from the time of Henry VIII.

Facing Pendennis Point are the jagged jaws of another peninsula singularly like a crocodile's head. On the lower jaw is St. Mawes, a pretty little place with a rising hill behind. This peninsula is called by the pretty name of Roseland, which has however nothing to do with flowers, being derived from Rhos, the Celtic word for heath or gorse.



FLUSHING—FROM FALMOUTH

About a mile along the southern shore of Falmouth is the Swan Pool, a sheet of fresh water cut off from the sea by a narrow bar of sand, and supposed by the Falmouth folk to outrival completely the better-known Looe Pool near Mullion.

The whole of the Lizard peninsula is nearly shorn through by the Helford River, which almost reaches across to Looe Pool. If this is the heel of Cornwall, it, like the heel of Achilles, is vulnerable, and nearly severed by the slash! There is less to say about the Helford River estuary than any other. Beyond the fact that it was once a well-known harbourage for pirates it does not seem to have any striking title to fame.

It is rather odd that though Cornwall is so liberally endowed with coast-line, so that at no part of the Duchy is one really far from the sea, yet she should have in addition these delightful winding waterways cutting deeply and widely into her south coast and affording excellent means of transit.



VIII

CORNISH TOWNS

If an enquiry were made among the Cornish towns as to which of them it were fittest to mention first, it can be easily imagined that one and all would claim the honour for themselves. And truly each has something to say for itself. Penzance is the town best known to the majority of visitors, because the railway ends there, and "London to Penzance" has become almost as common a phrase as "London to Cornwall." But so far as we are concerned we need not bother about Penzance as we have already given it full space. Truro could advance good claims for she is the seat of the Bishop's See and possesses the modern cathedral, the only one in the Duchy, and also she is the educational centre with fine county education offices. Bodmin, however, is really the county town as the Assizes are still held there, an honour she has disputed with Launceston for many centuries, the Assize Courts having swayed to and fro between them. Even now there is talk of removing them from Bodmin owing to the difficulty of getting there. Bodmin is not on the main Great Western line but only connected with it from Bodmin Road by a branch line. Launceston can outshine the others by reason of her fine ruin of the ancient castle and an historical record second to none, but at present official recognition she cannot claim.



TRURO

Beyond these three we need not go. The coast-towns have been already visited, and as for smaller ones inland, such as Liskeard, Camelford, Redruth, Cambourne, Callington and Helston, they cannot hope to compete.

Truro is just the picture of what one imagines a market-town to be. On market-days its open spaces are filled with country carts and the quaint little covered-in omnibuses, like those used by the peasantry of France on their immensely long straight roads. There is a buzz and clamour of talk outside the doors of the old Red Lion Inn, or, as it now seems to be the fashion to say—hotel. This is the house in which Samuel Foote, actor and dramatist, was

born in 1720; his father was at one time Mayor of Truro. The house is worth seeing on its own account, for it has a massive carved oak staircase—alas, thickly overlaid with varnish, and some moulded ceilings unusual in an inn.

Truro is well watered, as it stands between two small rivers which join in the creek by which steamboats go down to Falmouth through pretty wooded scenery. The town itself is quite tolerably flat for a Cornish town, but long hills run up out of it on all sides. The oldest part of the cathedral is that which was the parish church, incorporated into the new building. About the cathedral there have been many opinions, but a modern cathedral can hardly escape severe criticism considering that it has to compete with all the dignity and reverence of those which have stood hundreds of years! The white stone shows up well, and though the town is more or less in a basin the tall spires are seen from the surrounding hills to advantage. There are good shops in Truro and much that is of interest, including the very fine collection in the Museum of the Royal Institution of Cornwall, now housed in a worthy building. Here anyone who has wandered in the hills and over the barren moors and seen the relics of hoary antiquity so freely scattered, can look with seeing eye on the more valuable specimens which have been found and are now cared for and preserved where they will not be stolen or lost.

Even in Domesday Book Truro is mentioned, and at that time there were two towns, Great and Little Truro, standing under the shadow of a fortress held by the Earls of Cornwall, now vanished, though its site is known and pointed out near the station. The town's charter was granted in 1130 and renewed in 1589, so it is not much matter for wonder the inhabitants look upon it as the first city in Cornwall, and, in olden times, so bore themselves that they earned for their city the nickname of "Proud Truro."

The cathedral was in great part due to the energy of Bishop Benson, afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury, who was made first Bishop when the See was created. Bishop Benson "delighted in the Cornish people and was never tired of observing and analyzing their character." He did much for Truro in many ways.

Bodmin stands almost in the middle of the Duchy with two long fingers, that of the inlet of Fowey on the south and that of the inlet of the River Camel on the north, pointing directly at it. It is a very quiet little town but has somehow

managed to preserve its charm. The fine old parish church, almost worthy to take rank as a cathedral, is in the midst, easily to be seen. The church is the largest in Cornwall and parts of it date from 1125. It once had a very striking spire, destroyed by lightning in 1699. Bodmin means the Monks' Town, and even though it has the enormous barracks built in the usual style, just outside, it still keeps something of the monkish atmosphere. Bodmin scorns Truro's claims of long descent, turning to Athelstan as its founder. Athelstan, who founded here in 926 a Benedictine Priory of which some traces even now remain. The town is in a beautiful and well-wooded neighbourhood, and anyone taking the trouble to climb Beacon Hill just outside will be rewarded. It was at Bodmin in 1498 that Perkin Warbeck, who had disembarked near Land's End, gathered 3,000 men together and started his disastrous campaign by launching himself against Exeter. In Bodmin meet, or rather "meet with a gap between," the two rival railways—the Great Western and London and South Western; the latter station is a terminus, and the line running northward connects the town with Wadebridge and Padstow. The former comes from Bodmin Road where it joins the main line, and continues also to Wadebridge.



THE BANKS OF THE FAL, FALMOUTH

Between Bodmin and Launceston stretches the wild tract of country known as Bodmin Moor. A more desolate region it would be hard to find or one more covered with relics of primitive man. Norden has said in writing of Cornwall, "The rockes are high, huge, ragged and craggy not only upon the sea-coaste ... but also the inland mountayns are so crowned with mightie rockes as he that passing through the country beholding some of the rockes afar off may suppose them to be greate cyties planted on the hills, wherin prima facie ther appeareth the resemblance of towres, howses, chimnies and such like."

Though he flatters the Cornish highlands in calling them mountains, yet it is true enough that the tors out-cropping in this region do take on most curious shapes. The most remarkable of all is the unstable-looking Cheesewring, southwest of Launceston, and rather difficult of access. Here stones are piled one on the top of the other, each larger than the last, till the effect is that of a gigantic and misshapen mushroom. But it was not built deliberately, it just happened so. How—no one knows, but the suggestion is that the mass was once banked in by earth, which was washed away, leaving the bare pinnacle of stone. In the midst of the moor Brown Willy and Rough Tor rise with considerable picturesqueness, and their surfaces are strewn with the old beehive huts of a people whose history is lost.

But those who are not familiar with the country should not wander far from the road as the bogs and marshes are really dangerous. They find their culmination in the odd little lake called Dozmare Pool associated with the story of King Arthur. This has no apparent outlet, and was once reported to be of fabulous depth.

Launceston stands in a category by itself; though both the preceding towns are fairly hilly, it outdoes them magnificently in that respect! The streets up from the station are so steep that only by one of them, graded for the purpose, can vehicles mount at all. The others are merely for foot-passengers. Yet if looked at on a map which does not give contours, it will be seen that Launceston in reality is one very long straggling street running from end to end with various branches. This street dips down into the hollow where the railway is and mounts the other side. Baring-Gould says of Launceston, "Scarcely another English town has such a picturesque and continental appearance," but that is a matter of opinion. The name, meaning Church-Castle-Town, is very explanatory, for the church and castle are the two outstanding objects of interest. The former is most curious, for every foot of the walls outside is covered by granite carving, mostly of secular subjects and hacked out instead of chiselled.

At the east end beneath the east window is a recess with a figure of Mary Magdalene much worn and tormented, and no wonder, for it is one of the Launceston superstitions that anyone who can chuck a pebble so as to lodge on the statue's back—no easy feat as the slope is slippery—will have a year's good luck, and many there be that try! The church is dedicated to St. Mary

Magdalene and is, as churches go, of no great age. Curiously enough it was not at first the parish church but merely the development of a chapel.

The present building dates from 1511 and the tower is older. What is very singular, and accounts for the choice of subjects on its quaintly carved walls, is that they were not designed for a sacred building at all. They were done for Henry Ashe of Trecarell, a wealthy Cornishman who had a great mansion and was rebuilding it regardless of cost; but in the midst of the work his only son, a child, was drowned and the mother died almost immediately from the shock, so the wretched father passed on the granite carvings, designed for a gateway to his mansion, to the church, where they now attract many curious visitors and adorn, not only the walls but the very fine projecting south porch. The rose, the pomegranate, the Prince of Wales's feathers are frequently repeated with the arms of Trecarell and Ashe. In order to give it an ecclesiastical finish certain sentences in Latin such as "Oh how terrible and fearful is this place. Surely this is none other but the house of God and the gate of heaven!" are embossed on shields round the base.

A much more ancient church is that of St. Stephen away on the opposite heights beyond the valley. Some authorities think that the name Launceston really means Llan Stephan, the church of St. Stephen, and there is some colour for this, as it is possible the original town was around the older church and that the other grew up near to the castle. Baring-Gould boldly claims that the present town has no right to the name at all, but should be called Dunheved meaning "Swelling Hill." The castle keep certainly stands on a most appropriate swelling hill, just the place for such a fortification, with a magnificent view over miles of country.

The present remains, the great keep with its rings of stone, is of Norman origin, but there was most certainly a Saxon castle here before it. It stands in delightful grounds, freely open to all, and a very sanctuary for birds. A winding stair runs within the wall and even in the present roofless condition it needs but little imagination to transport oneself back into feudal times, when the womenfolk cowered within the small rooms behind the solid masonry, and the warriors guarded the loopholes, watching, waiting for attack.

Launceston is peculiarly rich in churches; besides the two mentioned there is St. Thomas, in the valley between, where have been discovered the ruins of a

priory. From this the doorway of the White Hart Hotel in the market-place came.

Down a side street is one of the old city gates, the only one remaining to show that Launceston was once walled. The chief point of interest about this, however, is apparently the very substantial tree, which, in most mysterious fashion, has found root-hold in the stone crevices and continues to flourish many feet above the ground.



IX

CORNISH CUSTOMS

Old customs, and festivals carrying in them the germ of a meaning and significance long forgotten by those who practised them but intelligible to students of antiquity, continued to be observed in Cornwall when they had died out in most other places. There is no part of England where so many curious observances, superstitions and festivals are still observed as in Cornwall.

Midsummer Day merrymakings were long kept up in many places, especially in regard to the part played by fire, and Richard Edmonds, secretary for Cornwall to the Cambrian Archæological Association, writing in 1862, says:—"It is the immemorial usage in Penzance, and the neighbouring towns and villages, to kindle bonfires and torches on Midsummer Eve.... St. Peter's Eve is distinguished by a similar display.... On these eves a line of tar-barrels, relieved occasionally by large bonfires, is seen in the centre of each of the principal streets in Penzance. On either side of this line young men and women pass up and down, swinging round their heads heavy torches made of large pieces of folded canvas steeped in tar and nailed to the ends of sticks between three and four feet long.... On these nights Mounts Bay has a most animating appearance although not equal to what was annually witnessed at the beginning of the present century when the whole coast from the Land's End to the Lizard, wherever a town or a village existed, was lighted up with these stationary or moving fires.... At the close of fireworks in Penzance, a great number of persons of both sexes, chiefly from the neighbourhood of the quay, used always, until within the last few years, to join hand in hand forming a long string and run through the streets playing 'thread the needle,' heedless of the fireworks showered upon them, and oftentimes leaping over the yet glowing embers. I have on these occasions seen boys following one another jumping through flames higher than themselves."

This is a significant reminder of the custom of passing children through the fire referred to in the Bible.

May Day celebrations are still kept up in the little town of Helston, the key to the Lizard. This saturnalia is held on the eighth of the month instead of the first, because the eighth is the festival of the apparition of St. Michael, who is represented in the Town Arms. The festival is called the "furry dance," a word which some writers have associated with "forage" or "foray" because the young people make a raid on all gardens and out into the fields early in the morning to collect flowers and green boughs. Polwhele connects the word with the old Cornish "fer," a fair or jubilee. Rather unsuccessful attempts have also been made to bring in the goddess Flora, and suggest a corruption of Flora-day to fit the present name.

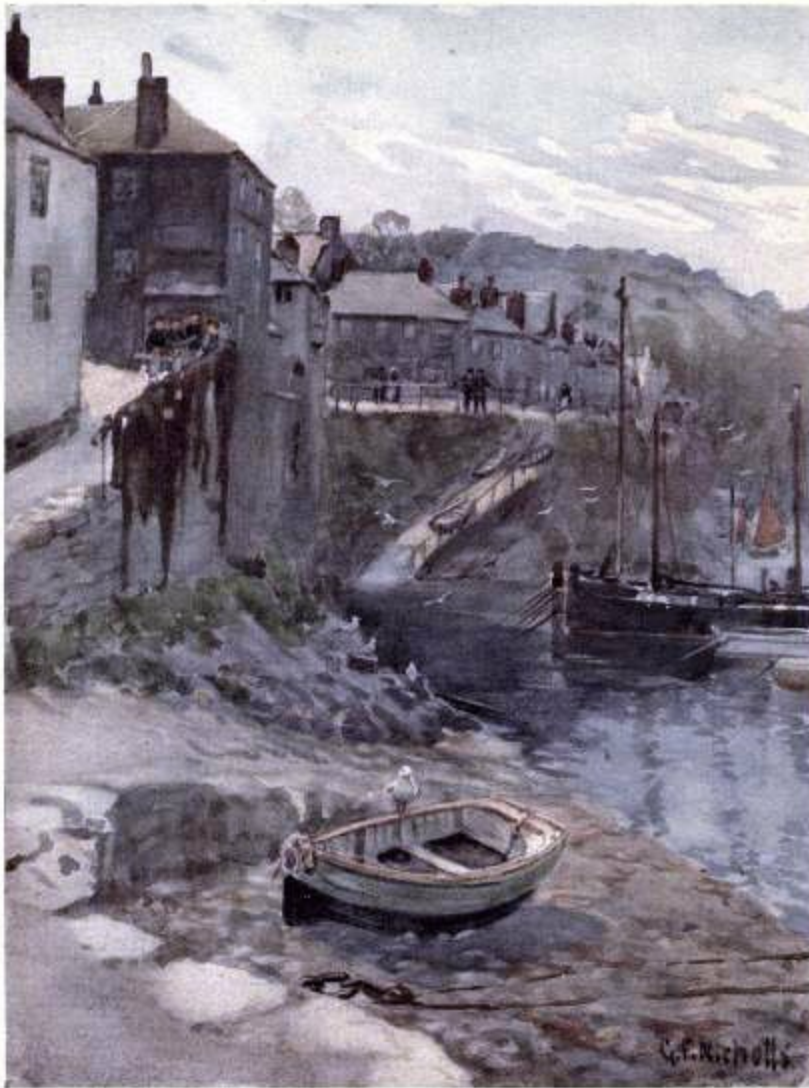
The day is a general holiday and anyone caught working is subjected to unpleasant penalties. About midday the most important person present leads off with his partner down the main street to the tune of a hornpipe—a local tune—and they are followed by a gay crowd. The throng threads in and out of the houses, in by the front door and out by the back if possible, for all doors are left open for them. Woe be to the churl who kept his shut! At length they arrive at the Assembly Rooms where a real ball begins.

This curious performance slackened off for some years, but the Helstonians, finding that their little town owed a good deal of advertisement to this special festival, have revived it with goodwill, and now are inundated with visitors at the recurrence of the anniversary.

Furry Day used to be held at Penryn on May 3 and at the Lizard on May 1 and also in the parish of Sithney, but now it can only be seen at Helston.

May Day has peculiar significance as being the celebration of the return of spring, and it is the custom at dawn on that day in some parts to dip weakly infants in the holy wells, which abound in Cornwall, to ensure strength. This is still done, though either secretly or in a jesting spirit, at the holy well of Madron near Penzance of which Madron is the mother parish.

Many people adorn their houses in Cornwall with boughs and garlands in honour of the day even at the present time. May Day was the great day for miracle plays, so beloved by the old Cornishmen before they learned to consider them sinful under the teaching of Wesley. The best of the old amphitheatres, at any rate the one most accessible, is the Plan-an-Guaré at St. Just referred to elsewhere.



AT NEWLYN

At Padstow hobby-horses still prance round the town on May Day. Edmonds says:—"The hobby horse, or effigy of a horse, is, at this festival of the moon, dipped in a pool of water, and, for the same reason perhaps, that a similar figure was, in Ireland, passed through fire at the festival of the sun; to preserve the cattle from death and disease." Sun and moon being represented by fire and water.

Mr. Baring-Gould says:—"During the days that precede the festival no garden is safe. Walls, railings, even barbed wire, are surmounted by boys and men in quest of flowers. Conservatories have to be fast locked, or they will

be invaded. The house that has a show of flowers in the windows is besieged by pretty children with roguish eyes begging for blossoms which they cannot steal. The Hobby-horse Pairs, as they were called, *i.e.*, a party of eight men, then repaired to the 'Golden Lion,' at that time the first inn in Padstow, and sat down to a hearty supper of leg of mutton and plum-pudding, given them by the landlord. After supper a great many young men joined the 'pairs,' *i.e.*, the *peers*, the lords of the merriment, and all started for the country, and went round from one farmhouse to another, singing at the doors of each, and soliciting contributions to the festivities of the morrow.

"They returned into Padstow about three o'clock in the morning, and promenaded the streets singing the 'Night Song.' After that they retired to rest for a few hours. At ten o'clock in the morning the 'pairs' assembled at the 'Golden Lion' again, and now was brought forth the hobby-horse. The drum-and-fife band was marshalled to precede, and then came the young girls of Padstow dressed in white, with garlands of flowers in their hair, and their white gowns pinned up with flowers. The men followed armed with pistols, loaded with a little powder, which they fired into the air or at the spectators. Lastly came the hobby-horse, ambling, curvetting, and snapping its jaws. It may be remarked that the Padstow hobby-horse is wonderfully like the Celtic horse decoration found on old pillars and crosses with interlaced work. The procession went first to Prideaux Place, where the late squire, Mr. Prideaux Brune, always emptied a purse of money into the hands of the 'pairs.' Then the procession visited the vicarage, and was welcomed by the parson. After that it went forth from the town to Treator Pool 'for the horse to drink.'"

In Hitchins' *History of Cornwall*, edited by Samuel Drew, he says of the hobby-horse of Padstow: "The head, being dipped into the water, is instantly taken up and the mud and water are sprinkled on the spectators to the no small diversion of all."

The Maypole festivities have been given up of recent years, but hobby-horses still prance the streets.

Hitchins gives an account of a few local superstitions, some of which are not peculiar to Cornwall:—

"The sound of the cuckoo, if first heard on the right ear, denotes good luck; but to hear the voice first on the left, is an omen of undefinable disasters. To

spit on the first piece of money that is received in the morning will ensure a successful day in trade; and to hold up a silver coin against the new moon on its first appearance can hardly fail to secure lunar virtue for a month. To bite from the ground the first fern that appears in the spring is an infallible preventive of the toothache during the year; and the first ripe blackberry that is seen will put away warts. To pay money on the first day of January is very unlucky as it ensures a continuance of disbursements during the year; and to remove bees on any day besides Good Friday will ensure their death; while to work oxen on that day is an act which few would dare to perform lest they should suddenly die in the yoke. To whistle underground is an offence which few miners will suffer to pass over in silence; but to whistle while the farmer is winnowing his corn will as inevitably bring the wind as on board of a ship or boat, it is certain to secure a favourable breeze."

Polwhele says: "The custom of saluting the apple-trees at Christmas with a view to another year, is still preserved both in Cornwall and Devonshire. In some places the parishioners walk in procession visiting the principal orchards in the parish; in each orchard single out the principal tree, salute it with a certain form of words and sprinkle it with cyder or dash a bowl of cyder against it. In other places, the farmer and his workmen only, immerse cakes in cyder and place them on the branches of an apple-tree in due solemnity; sprinkle the tree, as they repeat a formal incantation and dance round it."

The harvest custom where the last handful of corn is cut, being called "a neck," and then dressed with flowers and carried off in triumph has been often referred to.

The men of Cornwall have long been celebrated for wrestling, they being no whit behind the men of Devonshire and Somerset in this.

They have other special games of their own too. Of which the chief is "hurling," though now only kept up in the parishes of St. Columb Major and Minor, in other words in the neighbourhood of Newquay, though a collection is made at St. Ives in a silver "hurlers' ball." The game is that of a ball being flung and thrown from one to the other, with goals which may be two miles apart. Sometimes one match takes days to decide. It is an extremely rough-and-tumble sport. In the season a match is played on the wide flat firm

expanse of Newquay sands and hundreds take part in it, badges being used to discriminate between the players. And on Shrove Tuesday a game is played in the town of St. Columb the ball being thrown up in the market-place and all traffic being held up for the occasion. The goals used to be "either the mansion-house of one of the leading gentlemen of the party, a parish church, or some other well-known place." The ball is rather larger than a cricket-ball, but not so large as a football, and is silvered over. The struggle is expressively described by Carew:—"The hurlers take their way over hills, dales, hedges and ditches, through bushes, briers, mires, plashes, rivers; sometimes twenty or thirty lie tugging together in the water, scrambling and scratching for the ball."

These customs and sports are only samples, for there are many quaint ideas still held in certain parishes which would almost provide the material for a book by themselves, and are far too numerous to collect together in a sketch like the present. However, enough has perhaps been said to show how the Cornish spirit still lingers in spite of the influx of "foreigners" growing ever greater yearly.

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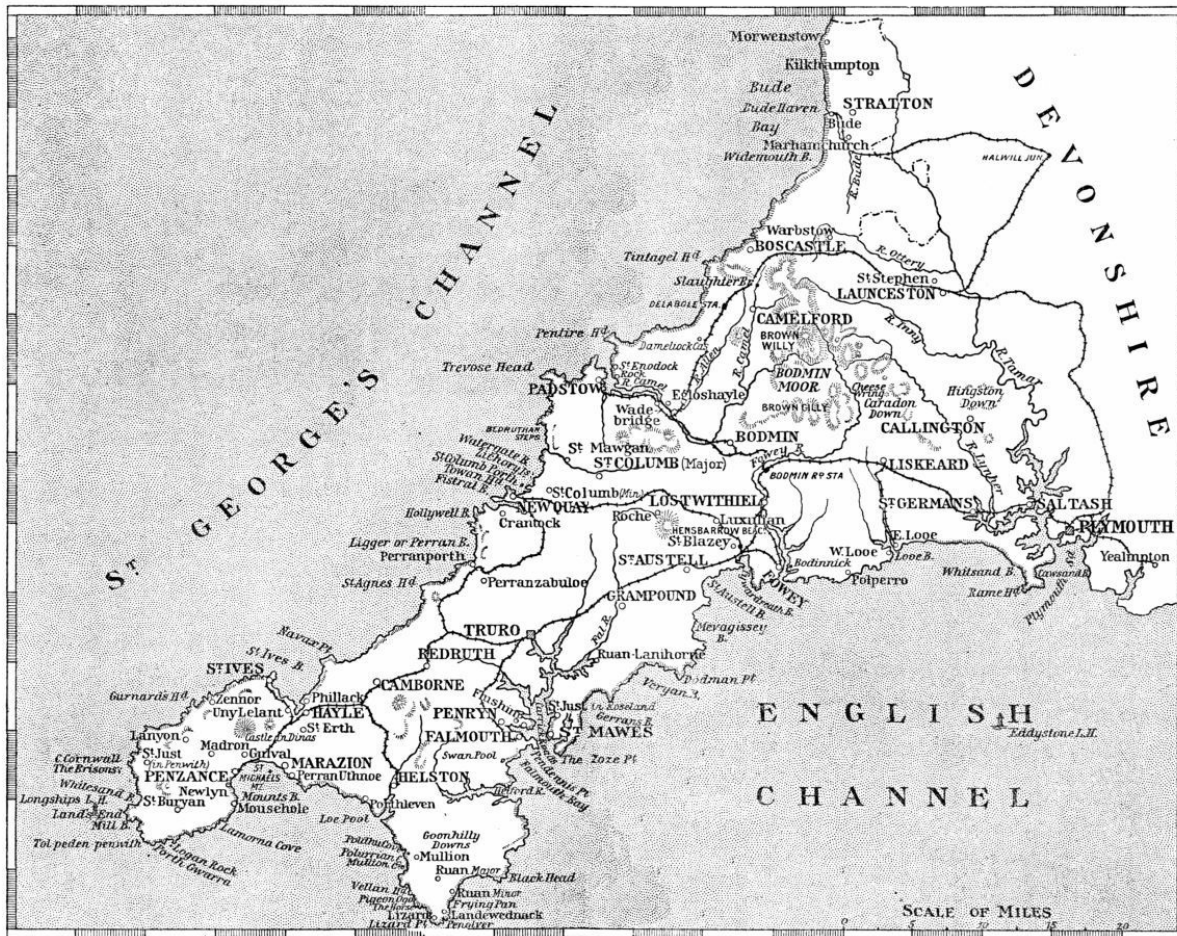
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