

**THE WORLD AT WAR**



**ONLY AN  
ENSI GN**

**VOLUME 1. 2. 3**

**JAMES GRANT**

# **Only an Ensign**

**Volume 1, 2, 3**

**James Grant**

# Volume 1

## PREFACE.

To have entered, more fully than I have done, into the events and fighting prior to the Retreat from Cabul, would have proved unsuitable for the purpose of my story, and for these events I must refer the reader to history or the newspapers of the time.

An officer of the Queen's 44th Regiment escaped death in the Khyber Pass in the mode narrated in its place, by wrapping the regimental colour round him; and strange and varied as the adventures of Captain Waller may appear, after the last fatal stand was made by our troops, some such incidents actually occurred to a Havildar of the Shah's Ghoorka Regiment, after its complete destruction in Afghanistan, so there is much that is real woven up with my story.

Fiction, according to Sir Francis Bacon, infuses in literature that which history denies, and in some measure satisfies the mind with shadows, when it cannot enjoy the substance—the shadows of an ideal world. "Art is long and life is short, so we do wisely to live in as many worlds as we can."

25, TAVISTOCK ROAD, WESTBOURNE PARK,  
*August, 1871.*

## CHAPTER I. THE TIME WILL COME.

"*Le jour viendra*—it is the motto of our family—given to us by Henry VI. 'The day will come,'" said old Lord Lamorna, proudly, as he lay back in his easy chair, with his elbows resting on the arms thereof, and the tips of his upraised fingers placed together, as if he was about to pray; "and most applicable is that motto to you, nephew Richard, for I am sure that when you are my age you will regret not having taken my advice."

Richard Trevelyan smiled, but looked somewhat uneasily at his younger brother Downie.

"You are too rich to throw yourself away, and too well-born even for the most highly accomplished daughter of a cotton-lord, or knighted mill-owner," resumed his stately old uncle, sententiously; "a fellow knighted too probably for dirty ministerial work; but assume a virtue if you have it not, and let us see you——"

"Excuse me, my lord—excuse me, my dear uncle. I have no desire to—to marry; why you—yourself——"

"Don't cite me, Richard. You are only forty-three, if so much" (and here, for the information of our young lady readers, we may mention that Richard is not the hero of these pages). "I am past seventy, yet I may marry yet, and do you all out of the title," added Lamorna, with a laugh like a cackle.

"My brother Dick is certainly the most listless of men," said Downie, as he selected some grapes with the

embossed scissors, and filled his glass with chateau d'Yquem.

"I don't think that I am so," retorted Richard.

"Downie is right," said Lord Lamorna. "Why do you not go into Parliament?—I have two snug pocket boroughs here in Cornwall—and on one hand attack routine and red-tapeism like a Radical; on the other hand, denounce retrenchment and cowardly peace-at-any-price, like a Tory of the old school. You would certainly be popular with both parties by that *rôle*, and do good to the country at large."

"I have no turn for politics, uncle."

"Diplomacy then—many of our family have figured as diplomats; I was ambassador to Russia, after Waterloo, and in the olden time more than one of our family have been so to the Courts of Scotland, France, and Brandenburg; and I trust we all refuted the axiom of Sir Henry Wotton, 'that an ambassador was an honest man sent abroad to lie for the good of his country.'"

"I have no taste for diplomacy."

"What the devil *have* you a taste for?" asked his uncle, testily; "not domestic life, as I can't get you to marry, like Downie here; and you soon left the army, or tired of Her Majesty's service."

Richard flushed for a moment, and held his full wine glass between him and the light, as if to test the colour and purity of its contents.

"I know what bachelor London life is—another style of thing, of course, from yours, Downie—that which someone calls the hard-working life, which begins at two P.M. one

day, and ends at four A.M. next morning. There are the parks; the club, with its bow-window; flirtations at balls and assemblies; the opera, and parties to Greenwich; and then there is the darker picture of doing business with old Messrs. Bill Stamp and Cent.-per-Cent., in some dingy little den off the Strand. A bad style of thing it is to meddle with the long-nosed fellows in the discounting line; just as bad as—and often the sequence to—running after actresses or opera-singers. You may love them if you like; but, great Heavens! never stoop to the madness of committing matrimony with any of them, or for a moment forget the family to which you belong, and the ancient title that is your inheritance."

All this was said with undisguised point and pomposity; the cold grey eyes of Downie Trevelyan had a strange, sour smile in them; and Richard's face grew more flushed than ever now.

Dinner was over in the stately dining-room of Rhoscadzhel; Mr. Jasper Funnel, the portly, florid, and white-haired butler, had placed the glittering crystal decanters before his master, who, with two nephews, Richard and Downie Trevelyan, were lingering over their wine; while in the western light of a September evening, through the tall plate-glass windows that reached from the richly-carpeted floor to the painted and gilded ceiling, the Isles of Scilly—the Casserites of the Greeks, the rocks consecrated by the pagan Cornavi to the Sun—could be seen at the far horizon, literally cradled in the golden blaze of his setting in the sea; for the house of Rhoscadzhel, in which our story opens, stands near the Land's End, in the brave old Duchy of Cornwall.

Audley Trevelyan, tenth Lord Lamorna, took his title from that little bay or cove which was one of the most

romantic spots on the bluff Cornish coast, until it was unfortunately selected by certain utilitarian speculators as a site for granite works; and near it is a place called the Trewoofe, a triple entrenchment having a subterranean passage, wherein Launcelot Lord Lamorna, with some other Cornish cavaliers, hid themselves in time of defeat from the troopers of Fairfax, as the tourist may find duly recorded in his "John Murray."

He was in his seventieth year; pale in face and thin in figure, and with his accurate evening costume, for his valet always dressed him for dinner even when alone, the old peer in every gesture and tone displayed the easy bearing of a polished man of the world, and of the highest bearing—keen but cold, calm and unimpressible.

He had yet much of the wasted beau about his appearance; he wore rosettes on his shoes and still adhered to a frilled shirt front and black watered silk ribbon for his gold eye-glass, with a coat having something of the high collar and cut peculiar to the days when George IV. was king. His features were fine and delicately modelled; his nose a perfect aquiline, with nostrils arched and thin, his snow-white hair was all brushed back to conceal the bald places and to display more fully a forehead of which he had been vain in youth from a fancied resemblance to that of Lord Byron. In short the Apollo of many a ball-room was now indeed a lean and slippered pantaloon, but still careful to a degree in costume and all the niceties of cuffs and studs and rings.

Calm and self-possessed as he appeared, when now lying back in his down easy-chair, sipping his iced wine and playing with the diamond that glittered on his wasted hand, and which had been a farewell gift from the Empress of Russia, he had been much of a *roué* in his youth, and

consequently was not disposed to enquire too closely into the affairs of his nephew.

Downie Trevelyan was already married, nearly to his uncle's satisfaction, his wife being the daughter of a poor but noble family; and as for Richard, he might run away with as many humble girls as he chose, provided he did not marry any of them, or make that which his haughty uncle and monetary patron would never forgive—a *mésalliance*; for Lord Lamorna was a man full of strong aristocratic prejudices, and a master in all the tactics of society, and of his somewhat exclusive, and occasionally selfish class.

His lordship's false teeth—a magnificent Parisian set that had cost him some fifty guineas—would have chattered at the idea of any member of his family making a mistake in matrimony. He had heard ugly whispers about Richard, but never could discover aught that was tangible. If it existed, Heavens! how were Burke, Debrett and Co. to record it when the time came that it could no longer be concealed?

Should any *mésalliance* be the case, he had vowed often that the barren title should go without one acre of land to his eldest nephew; and he would have willed that past him too had it been in his power to do so; but though a sordid Scottish Earl of Caithness once sold his title to a Highland Chieftain, and caused one of the last clan-battles to be fought in Scotland, such things cannot be done now.

The old man had one ever present, ever prevailing idea—the honour and dignity of the family—the Cornish Trevelyans of Rhoscadzhel and Lamorna.

His two nephews were men in the prime of life, but Downie was three years younger than his brother.



Richard Pencarrow Trevelyan, the elder and prime favourite with their uncle, was a remarkably handsome man, with fine regular features that closely resembled those of the old peer; but Richard had been reared at Sandhurst, been in the army and seen much of a rougher life than his uncle. He had a free bold bearing, an ample chest, an athletic form and muscular limbs, which riding, shooting and handling the bat and the oar had all developed to the full, and which his simple costume,—for he was fresh with his gun and his game-bag, from the bleak Cornish moors and mountain sides—advantageously displayed.

His dark blue eyes that were almost black, and seemed so by night, had a keen but open expression, his mouth suggested good humour, his white and regular teeth, perfect health, and his voice had in it a chord that rendered it most pleasant to the ear. Dark eyebrows and a heavy moustache imparted much of character to his face.

His brother, Downie Trevelyan, had never been an idler like Richard. Educated at Rugby and Corpus Christi, Oxford, he had been duly called to the bar by the Honourable Society of Lincoln's Inn, and was now in good practice as a Barrister in London. He had all the air and bearing of a gentleman of good style; but he was less handsome than Richard; had less candour of expression in eye and manner; indeed, his eyes were like cold grey steel, and were quick, restless, and at times furtive in their glances; and they never smiled, even when his mouth seemed to do so.

Unlike Richard, he was closely shaven, all save a pair of very short and legal looking whiskers. To please his uncle was one of the unwearying tasks of his life; and even now, with this view, he was in the most accurate evening dress,

thus affording a complete contrast to the rough and unceremonious tweed-suit worn by his brother—his coat broadly lapelled with black silk *moiré*, his vest with three buttons, *en suite* with his shirt studs, which were encrusted with brilliants. His cold formality of manner rendered his periodical visits to Rhoscadzhel somewhat dull to Lord Lamorna, for somehow few people cared much for Mr. Downie Trevelyan. He had married judiciously and early in life, and had now several children; and thus, while joining his uncle in reprehending or rallying Richard on his supposed anti-matrimonial views, his cold, pale eyes, were wandering over the appurtenances, the comforts and splendour of that magnificent apartment, in which he was mentally appraising everything, from the steel fire-irons, to the gold and silver plate that glittered on the carved walnut wood side-board, whereon were displayed many beautiful cups, groups and statuettes (race-trophies of Ascot, Epsom and other courses) which had been won in Lamorna's younger days, when his stud was second to none in England, and certainly equal to that of Lord Eglinton in Scotland; yet he had never been a gambler, or a "horsey man," being too highly principled in one instance, and too highly bred in the other; and so we say, while the legal eyes of Downie appraised all, he thought of his eldest son, Audley Trevelyan, then a subaltern in a dashing Hussar Regiment, and marvelled in his heart, if he should ever reign as Lord of Rhoscadzhel, manor and chace, with all its moors and tin-mines.

"You were right to marry young, Downie," said the old lord, resuming the theme of their conversation after a pause, adding, as if he almost divined the thoughts of his younger nephew, "your boy Audley is, I hear from General Trecarrel, a handsome fellow."

"He is a perfect Trevelyan, my lord," replied Downie, who was studious in always according the title to his relative, "and then my daughter, Gartha, bids fair to equal her mother, who was one of the handsomest women in London."

"To see your family rising about you thus, must afford you intense pleasure, Downie; but I cannot understand our friend Dick here at all. My years may not be many now, and I do not wish my hereditary estate to change hands often, or my lands to be scattered even after I am done with them."

"I do not comprehend your fears, my dear uncle," said Richard, smiling; "your estates can never lack heirs while God spares me—and then there is Downie——"

"And his son Audley the Hussar—you would say?"

"Exactly," replied Richard, but in a strange faint voice, and as he spoke he felt that the keen grey eyes of Downie were regarding him attentively by the waxen lights of the chandelier, which Mr. Jasper Funnel and two tall footmen had just illuminated, at the same time drawing the heavy curtains of crimson damask over the last flash of the setting sun, and the ruddy sea whose waves were rolling in blue and gold, between the bluffs of Land's End and the rocky Isles of Scilly.

"You cannot be a woman-hater, Dick?"

"No—far from it," replied Richard, as a soft expression stole over his manly face; "there can be no such thing in nature."

"The truth is—but take your wine—I strongly fear, that during your military peregrinations, you have got yourself

entangled now—and unworthily perhaps."

"My lord—you are mistaken," replied Richard firmly—almost sternly; "but what causes you to think so?"

"Your so decidedly declining an introduction to General Trecarrel and his two daughters—the most beautiful girls in the duchy of Cornwall. They come of a good family too; and as the couplet has it:—

"By Tre, Pol, and Pen,  
Ye may know the Cornish men."

"The General resides somewhere near Porthellick, does he not?" asked Downie, who saw that his brother was changing colour, or rather losing it fast.

"Some one told me, Dick, that it was rumoured you got into a scrape in Edinburgh, 'that village somewhere in the North,' as one of our humourists calls it; it was to the effect that your landlady had fallen over head and ears in love with her handsome lodger, who was ditto ditto in her debt, and had to soothe her ruffled feelings and settle her bill, by matrimony at sight."

"An utter scandal!" said Richard, now laughing. "Your allowance to me, ever since I left the Cornish Light Infantry, has been too generous for such a catastrophe ever to occur."

"And next came a story, that when you were at Montreal with the regiment, you made a precious mess of it with some pretty girl, and—to use Downie's phraseology—parted as heart-broken lovers, to figure as plaintiff and defendant at the bar."

"Worse still and as false, my lord!" exclaimed Richard, now pale with suppressed passion.

"Don't look so darkly, Richard," said Lord Lamorna, who saw the flash in his nephew's dark blue eyes; "I have had a pretty little box at Chertsey, and a villa at St. John's Wood in my day, when my friends, raven-tressed, or golden-haired as the case might be, were amiable and tenderly attached—but deuced expensive; so I must not be severe upon you," added the old man, with his dry cackling laugh. "It is not these kind of little arrangements I fear, but a *mésalliance*; and there are scandals even in London—yes, even in the mighty world of London, though there they soon die; they don't live and take root, as in the so-called purer air of the country."

"I cannot understand all those vague hints, tales and rumours, or who sets them afloat," replied Richard, making an effort to preserve his calmness.

Downie saw the veins rise in his brother's forehead while their uncle had been speaking; and he smiled a quiet smile, as he bent curiously over his glass.

"Full many a shaft at random sent,  
Finds mark the archer never meant;"

and he could see that some of the random remarks in the present conversation, rankled deeply in Richard's breast; and that this conversation had verged, more than once, on somewhat dangerous ground.

"Well, it is a marvel to me, Richard, how a handsome fellow like you can have escaped so long, known as you are to be the heir to my title and estates," continued the old lord, still harping on the same topic: "for the girls now go in

for winning in matrimony, as we used to do at Ascot and Epsom."

"How, my lord?" asked Downie, as if he had never heard the joke before.

"By a neck—a bare neck and bosom added; witness the beautiful and aristocratic demi-mondes at the Opera! Elizabeth was the first English-woman who, to excite admiration, exposed her person thus. The virgin queen wore a huge ruff certainly; but it stuck up *behind* her, she was *décolletée* enough in front."

"I prefer her Scottish rival—collared to her pretty neck, and sleeved to the slender wrist," said Richard Trevelyan; "by Jove, I should not have cared for flirting with a woman who carried a fan in one hand and a hatchet in the other."

"Our ancestor, Henry Lord Lamorna, was governor of Rougemont Castle, in Devonshire, under Queen Elizabeth," said the peer pompously; "but having married the daughter of a simple knight in Surrey, he lost Her Majesty's favour at Court, and had to live in retirement here at Rhoscadzhel. Let that mistake be a warning to you, Richard."

"It happened pretty long ago," replied Richard, laughing; "and at forty years of age I am surely unlikely to commit an act of folly——"

"If it be not committed already?"

—"And lose your favour, even by marrying, 'the daughter of a simple knight.'"

"With my favour you would lose this fine estate. But give me your hand, Dick, I know you will never do aught unworthy of our good old Cornish name of Trevelyan!"

With a grand old-fashioned air—yet one full of kindness—the proud old man presented his thin white hand to his nephew, who pressed it affectionately, and then rose to withdraw.

"Whither go you, Dick, so soon?"

"Oh—anywhere, uncle," replied the other, wearily.

"How, sir?"

"Merely into the lawn to enjoy a post-prandial cigar," replied Richard, whose face wore an evident expression of annoyance, as he bowed and quitted the room.

"We have worried him, I fear," said Downie, with a self-satisfied smile.

"Don't use slang—it is bad in tone," replied his uncle; "but I cannot make your brother out—I hope he is not deceiving us all. Gad, if I thought so—if that Montreal story should prove true——" the peer paused, and his keen blue eyes flashed with anger at the vague thoughts that occurred to him.

"Oh, do not fear, my lord," said Downie Trevelyan, in a suave and soothing manner; "though sham diamonds often do duty for real ones."

"What do you mean?" asked his uncle, haughtily.

Downie only smiled, and bent over his glass of Burgundy again.

"*Neb na gare y gwayn call restona*," said Lord Lamorna, significantly; "I hate proverbs: but this is a good old

Cornish one; 'he that heeds not gain, must expect *loss*.' When do you expect your oldest boy home from India?"

"He may arrive next week, perhaps, my lord, and he will at once dutifully hasten to present himself to you."

"He must be well up among the Lieutenants of the Hussars now?"

"Yet he means to exchange into the Infantry."

"Why?"

"It is a matter of expedience and expense, my lord; even with forage, batta, tentage, and so forth, he finds his regiment a very extravagant one."

"I shall give him a cheque on Coutts and Co., for I must not forget that you did me the honour to name him after me."

"But you did us the greater honour in being his sponsor—and in bestowing upon him a gold sponsorial mug."

"With the *Koithgath* of the Trevelyans for a handle, and another perched on the lid; well, well—he may be my successor here—who knows, who knows," mumbled the old man, as he prepared to take his-after dinner nap, by spreading a cambric handkerchief over his face, and Downie glided noiselessly away to the library, with a strange and unfathomable smile on his colourless face, and he muttered,—

"I too may say—'the time will come!'"



## CHAPTER II. RHOSCADZHEL.

On the smooth lawn his brother was walking to and fro, with a cigar between his firm white teeth, with his heart a prey to bitter and exciting thoughts; and though Richard Trevelyan is not, as we have said, the hero of these pages, to the lawn we shall accompany him.

"What the deuce can be the secret spring of all this intrusive solicitude upon my uncle's part about having me married, as if I were a young girl in her third season?" he muttered; "I have often feared that Downie suspected me—as a lawyer, it is natural he should suspect every one of something more than he sees or knows; and yet—I have been so wary, so careful! My poor Constance—still concealment—still dissimulation for the present, and doubts of our future! No hope for us, save in the death of that old man, ever so good and kind to me. Did he really but know Constance, how sweet and gentle she is! A curse be on this silly pride of birth and fortuitous position which is our bane—this boasting of pedigree old as the days of Bran ap Llyr, the ancestor of King Arthur. By Jove, it is too absurd!" and he laughed angrily as he tossed away his cigar and then sighed, as he surveyed the façade of the stately mansion, and cast his eyes round the spacious lawn that stretched far away in starlight and obscurity. "And yet must I stoop to this senile folly," he added, half aloud; "for 'twere hard to see all these broad acres go to Downie's boy, the Hussar, past me and mine!"

The seats of the Cornish aristocracy have usually little to boast of in architecture; but the mansion of Rhoscadzhel\* was an exception, being a rare specimen of a fine old Tudor dwelling, which had suffered more from the rude hand of

civil war, than from "time's effacing fingers," and was built, tradition avers, from the famous quarry of Pencarrow, and of good Cornish freestone.

\* Cadzhel, Cornish for castle.

A massive iron gate, between carved pillars, each surmounted by a koithgath, or wild cat, rampant—a crest of which Lord Lamorna was as vain as ever was old Bradwardine of his heraldic bears—gave access to the avenue, a long and leafy tunnel that lay between the house and the highway leading to the Land's End. The branches of the stately old elms were interlaced overhead, like the groined arches of a Gothic cathedral and a delightful promenade their shade afforded in the hot days of summer, when only a patch of blue sky, or the golden rays falling aslant, could be seen at times through their foliage.

Engrafted in the later Tudor times upon the ruins of Rhoscadzhel, of which there is still remaining the fragment of a loopholed tower and ponderous granite arch shrouded in ivy, with its modern *porte-cochère* and vestibule floored with marble, its mullioned windows filled in with plate glass in lieu of little lozenge-panes, its dining hall and drawing rooms lighted with gas when such was the wish of its proprietor, the mansion, though retaining all the characteristics of the days when Queen Bess held her court at Greenwich and danced before the Scottish ambassador, had nevertheless all the comforts, appliances and splendour, with which the taste and wealth of the present age could invest it.

The great dining-hall had remained almost unchanged since the days of the first Charles. Its vast chimney-piece, which rose nearly to the ceiling, was covered with marvellous scrolls and legends, and innumerable wild cats'

heads among them, over all being the arms of Trevelyan of Lamorna; *gules*, a demi-horse *argent* issuing from the sea, adapted from the circumstance of one of the family swimming on horseback from the Seven Stones to the Land's End, when they were suddenly separated from the continent by a terrible inundation of the ocean, and as this dangerous reef is no less than nine miles from Scilly, where a light-ship points it out to the mariner, the feat was well worthy of being recorded, at least in heraldry.

The furniture here was quaint and old, massive and richly carved, and though the vast stone-flagged chamber, where many a Cornish cavalier has whilom drunk "confusion to Cromwell and the Rump," and where still stands the great dining table with its *daïs*, where of old "the carles of low degree" had sat below the salt, is sombre and gloomy, somewhat of lightness is imparted by the splendid modern conservatory that opens off it, with marble floor and shelves of iron fret-work laden with rare and exotic plants.

It boasts of a chamber known as "the Queen's," wherein Henrietta Maria had slept one night before she fled to France, and since then no one has ever occupied the ancient bed that, like a huge catafalque, stands upon three steps in the centre of the wainscoted room which like several others in Rhoscadzhel, has hangings of faded green tapestry, that are lifted to give entrance; and where the hearths, intended for wood alone, have grotesque andirons in the form of the inevitable *koithgath* on its hind legs. And on the walls of these old chambers hung many a trophy of the past, and many a weapon of the present day, from the great two-handed sword wielded by Henry Lord Lamorna at the Battle of Pinkey down to the yeomanry sabre worn by the present peer at the coronation of George IV., a peer of

whose effeminacy the said Lord Henry would have been sorely ashamed.

And many a Vandyke, Kneller, and Lely were there, with portraits of the Trevelyan of past times, who now lay under their marble tombs in yonder little church upon the hill, where among dust and cobwebs hung their helmets, spurs, and gauntlets, and the iron mace of one Launcelot Trevelyan, who was a man of vast stature; and it is as great a source of wonder to the village children as the rickety ruin of a gilded coach which at certain times is drawn forth to the lawn and aired carefully, being that in which the grandfather of the present peer brought home his bride in patches and powder, and it is supposed to be the first vehicle of the kind ever seen in the duchy of Cornwall. Thus, as Richard Pencarrow Trevelyan thought over all these possessions with their traditional and family interests, of which, by one ill-natured stroke of the pen, his proud uncle might deprive him and his heirs for ever, a bitter sigh escaped him.

Beyond the quaint façade of the ancient house, from the mullioned windows of which, half hidden by ivy and wild roses, there streamed out many a light into the darkness, his eyes wandered to the fertile fields, all bare stubble now, to the wide open moor overlooked by many a wooded tor, and to the beautiful lawn, in the centre of which stands one of those wonderful *logan-stones*, so peculiar to Cornwall and Brittany, a ponderous, spheroidal mass of granite, so exquisitely balanced that it may be oscillated by the touch even of a woman's hand; and as he turned away to indulge in deeper reverie by the shore of the adjacent sea, he raised his right hand and his glistening eyes to the stars, as if some vow, as yet unuttered, was quivering on his tongue.

"Yes?" he exclaimed, "please God and pray God, the time will come; but not as my good uncle, and not, as the careful Downie, anticipate. Marriage! how little do they know how, in the great lottery of life, my kismet—as we used to say in India—has been fixed—irrevocably fixed!"

### CHAPTER III. THE ALARM BELL.

The season was autumn now, and on the succeeding day—the last he meant to spend at Rhoscadzhel for some time at least—Richard Trevelyan appeared in the breakfast parlour again in shooting costume, with a scarlet shirt having an open collar, and with a brown leather shot-belt over his shoulder; while his uncle, who, even when at his slender morning repast, in his elaborately flowered dressing-gown, wore accurately fitting pale kid gloves on his shrivelled hands, for such things were a necessity of the old lord's existence; thus he glanced again with an air of annoyance at the dress worn by his eldest nephew, as he considered it a solecism, decidedly in bad taste, and that something more was due to his own presence.

Downie's costume, a fashionable morning coat came more near his lordship's ideas of propriety.

Mr. Jasper Funnel, in accurate black, was at the side-table, to slice down the cold meat, pour out the coffee from its silver urn into the beautiful Wedgewood cups, and to carve the grouse and other pies; for Cornwall is peculiarly the land of that species of viand, as there the denizens make pies of everything eatable, squab-pies, pilchard-pies, muggetty-pies, and so forth.

"I heard last evening the new chime of bells you have put up in Lamorna Church," said Richard, as he seated himself and attacked a plate of grouse, the recent spoil of his own gun; "how pleasantly they sound. Who rings them?"

"I cannot say—never inquired," replied the old peer, testily; "I can only tell you one thing, Richard."

"And that is——"

"They were wrung out of my pocket by the vestry."

At this little quip, Downie obsequiously and applaudingly laughed as loudly as he was ever known to do, and just as if he had never heard it before.

"However, I need not grudge the poor people their chime of bells; I am rich enough to afford them more than that, and occupying as we do a good slice of this *Land of Tin*, for so the Phoenicians named this Cornish peninsula of ours as early as the days of Solomon, we have its credit to maintain; but bring us home a well-born and handsome bird, Dick, and I shall have the bells rung till they fly to pieces—by Jove I will! Only, as I hinted last night, let her be worthy to represent those who lie under their marble tombs in that old church of Lamorna; for there are bones there that would shrink in their leaden coffins if aught plebeian were laid beside them."

Richard shrugged his shoulders, and glanced round him with impatience.

"Let us look forward, my dear uncle," said he; "in this age of progress all men do; and of what account or avail can a dead ancestry be?"

Downie smiled faintly, and Lord Lamorna frowned in the act of decapitating an egg, for to his ears this sounded as rank heresy or treason against the state.

"By heavens! nephew Richard, you talk like a Red Republican. With these socialistic views of equality, and so forth, I fear you will never shine in the Upper House."

"I have no desire to do so; you see how simple my tastes are——"

"In dress decidedly too much so."

"And how happy and content I am to lead the life of a quiet country gentleman; and have done so ever since I left the Cornish Light Infantry."

"Your demands upon my pocket are certainly so moderate, that I cannot think you are playing me false, Dick," said the peer, with a pleasant smile; "egad, if I thought you were doing so, I'd have you before the Mayor of Halgaver, as our Cornish folks say!"

"Trust me, my good uncle," replied Richard Trevelyan, with a glistening eye, and laying a hand caressingly on the old man's shoulder, as he rose and adjusted his shot-belt; "and now I go to have a farewell shot on the moors."

"Why a farewell shot? you have been here barely a fortnight."

"Nevertheless, I must leave Rhoscadzhel tomorrow."

"Positively?"

"Yes, uncle."

"Pardon me," continued Lamorna, drily; "but may we inquire for where?"

"Oxford—and then town after, perhaps."

"Oxford—and town too," replied his uncle, testily; "the last time you left this for London, if General Trecarrel was right, you were seen for a month after in his



neighbourhood; and, if his story were true—and I dare not doubt it—you did not get beyond the border of Cornwall—and were certainly not so far as Devonshire."

"Trecarrel was, I hope, mistaken," urged Richard.

"I hope so, too."

Richard's face was pale, and to conceal his emotion, he stooped and caressed his favourite pointer, which had bounded in when the butler opened the door; and soon recovering from his little agitation—whatever its secret source might be—he politely and affectionately bade his uncle "good-bye for the present," nodded to the silent and observant Downie, took a double-barrelled breech-loader from the gun-room and sallied forth, unattended by game-keepers, desiring quite as much to indulge in reverie and enjoy a solitary ramble, as to have a shot at a passing bird.

To Richard it seemed that he had read a strangely keen, weird and unfathomable expression in his uncle's eyes, as they followed his departing steps on this particular morning—an expression which, somehow, haunted him.

The season, we have said, was now autumn, and a tender, mellow tone rested over all the landscape; Richard Trevelyan was fond of the strange, wild district—the land of old tradition, of bold and varied scenery—amid which his youth and so much of his manhood had been passed, and he looked around him from time to time with admiring eyes and an enthusiastic heart.

A soft warm shower had fallen that morning early, refreshing the fading September leaves in the belts of coppice that girt the upland slopes, and in the orchards, where the ripe golden apples were dropping amid the thick sward below. Above the purple, and often desolate moors

which are so characteristic of Cornish scenery, and where the small breed of horses, the little black cattle and sharp-nosed sheep of the province were grazing, the wooded *tors* or hills stood boldly up in the distance, their foliage in most instances presenting many varied tints. There were the brown madder, the crisped chesnut, and the fading beech, the more faded green of the old Cornish elm, and the russet fern below, from amid which at every step he took the birds whirred up in coveys; while Richard, lost in reverie—the result of his uncle's remarks of late—never emptied a barrel at them, but walked slowly on looking round him from time to time, and filled with thoughts that were all his own as yet.

The place where he loitered was very lonely: here and there a gray lichen-spotted druidical monolith stood grimly up amid the silent waste; in the distance might be seen the gray expanse of the ocean, or some bleak looking houses slated with blue, as they usually are in Devon and Cornwall, or perhaps some of those poorer huts, which, like wigwams, have cob-walls; *i.e.* are built of earth, mud, and straw, beaten and pounded together, just as they might have been in the days of Bran the son of Llyr, or when Arthur dwelt in Tintagel.

Richard Trevelyan threw himself upon a grassy bank, and his pointer, doubtless surprised by his neglect of all sport, lay beside him with eyes of wonder and tongue out-lolled. In the distance, about a mile or so away, Trevelyan could see Rhoscadzhel House shining in the morning sunlight; and again, as on the preceding evening, he looked around with a bitter smile upon tor and moorland, and on the wondrous druid monoliths that stand up here and there on the bleak hill sides, each and all of them having their own quaint name and grim old legend.

How came each to be there? "Without patent rollers; nay, without the simplest mechanical contrivances of modern times, how was so huge a mass transported to yonder desolate and wind-swept height? How many yoke of oxen, how many straining scores of men must it have taken to erect the least of them! What submission to authority, what servile or superstitious fear must have animated the workers! No drover's whip would have urged to such a task; no richest guerdon could have repaid the toil; yet there the wonder stands!"

And some such thoughts as these floated through the mind of Richard, as his eyes wandered from a cromlech or slab that rested on three great stones, to a vast *maen* or rock-pillar, that might be coeval with the days when Jacob set up such a stone to witness his covenant with Laban.

"Shall I ever wander here with Constance—and if so, when," thought he; "assuredly not while my uncle lives; but his death—how can I contemplate it, when he is so good, so kind, so tender, and so true to me? Oh, let me not anticipate that."

How often in autumn, in the gloomy mornings of November, had he pursued the fox over these desolate moors, often breakfasting by candle-light in his red coat on a hunting morning, to the great boredom of old Jasper Funnel?

What joy it would be to gallop over that breezy wind-swept moor, with Constance by his side! To walk with her through yonder dense old thicket, and tell her that every tree and twig therein were her own; to drive by yonder cliff, Tol Pedn Penwith, the western boundary of a beautiful bay, and where in the summer evening, the forty Isles of Scilly seemed to be cradled in the glory of the western sun; to

show her all these places with which he was so familiar, and perhaps to tell their children in the years to come—for all Richard's habits and tastes were alike gentle and domestic—the old Cornish legends of Arthur's castle at Tintagel, of the magic well of St. Keyne, and of Tregeagle the giant—the bugbear of all Cornish little people; the melancholy monster or fiend, who according to traditions still believed in, haunts the Dozmare Pool, from whence he hurled the vast granite blocks, known as his "quoits," upon the coast westward of Penzance Head; the deep dark Pool, his dwelling place, is said to be unfathomable and the resort of other evil spirits.

Desolate and begirt by arid and dreary hills, it presents an aspect of gloomy horror; and then when the winter storms sweep the moorland wastes, and the miners at the Land's End, deep, deep down in mines below the sea, hear the enormous boulders dashed by it on the flinty shore overhead, above all can be heard the howling of Tregeagle! For ages he has been condemned to the task of emptying the Dozrnare Pool by a tiny limpet-shell, and his cries are uttered in despair of the hopelessness of the drudgery assigned him by the devil, who in moments of impatience, hunts him round the tarn, till he flies to the Roche Rocks fifteen miles distant, and finds respite by placing his hideous head through the painted window of a ruined chapel, as a bumpkin might through a horse-collar; for these, and a thousand such stories as these, are believed in Cornwall, nor can even the whistle of the railway from Plymouth to Penzance scare them away.

Richard Trevelyan was smiling when he remembered how often he and Downie, when loving little brothers and playfellows, had been scared in their cribs at night by stories of Tregeagle; and of that other mighty giant who lies buried beneath Carn Brea, where his clenched skeleton

hand, now converted into a block of granite (having five distinct parts, like a thumb and fingers) protrudes through the turf.

He could recall the dark hours, when as fair-haired children, they had cowered together in one of the tapestried rooms of Rhoscadzhel, and clasped each other's hands and necks in fear of those hob-goblins, which people the very rock and cavern, and even the very air of Cornwall. Downie was a man now, legal in bearing, and cold-blooded in heart. Richard had painful doubts of him, and remembered, that, strangely enough his hand *alone*, had always failed to rock the logan-stone in the lawn before Rhoscadzhel, and such monuments of antiquity, have, according to Mason, the properties of an ordeal—the test of truth and probity:

"Behold yon huge  
And unhewn sphere of living adamant,  
Which, poised by magic, rests its central weight  
On yonder pointed rock: firm as it seems,  
Such is its strange and virtuous property,  
It moves obsequious to the gentlest touch  
Of him whose heart is pure; but to a traitor,  
Tho' e'en a giant's prowess nerv'd his arm,  
It stands as fixed as Snowdon!"

Even the childish hands of his little daughter Gartha, could rock the logan-stone, when Downie's failed to do so. Why was this? Was there indeed any truth in the ancient test of integrity and purity of heart; or was it but an engine of religious imposition? And now amid these unpleasant speculations, there came to the loiterer's ear, the tolling of a distant bell.

He started up, and listened.

It was, beyond a doubt, the house-bell of Rhoscadzhel, and was being rung violently and continuously, for the

breeze brought the notes distinctly over the furzy waste.

What could have happened? Fire—or was he wanted in haste? Was his uncle indisposed; were his fears, his hopes and wishes, though blended with sorrow, to be realised at last?

His breath came thick and painfully, and he remembered with something of foreboding—for his Cornish breeding rendered him superstitious and impressionable—that as he had passed Larnorna church that morning, he had seen, on the rough lichstones at the entrance to the sequestered church-yard, a coffin rested prior to interment, while the soft sad psalmody of those who had borne it thither—a band of hardy miners—floated through the still and ambient air; for the custom of bearing the dead to their last resting place with holy songs—a usage in the East, as old as the fourth century—is still observed in Cornwall, that land of quaint traditions and picturesque old memories.

Springing to his feet, Richard Trevelyan discharged both barrels of his gun into the air, and hurried in the direction of the manor house.

As he drew nearer, the sonorous clangour of the great bell, which was now rung at intervals, but with great vigour, continued to increase, adding to the surprise and tumult of his heart, and the perturbation of his spirit.