

Miss Go-lightly would be met with a side-wise waggle of the head, a half-wink, or leer, to Sis there would be respect tendered as matter of course and accepted so. The lascivious, healthy, robust young stable boy, a great blade, who was on terms familiar with many scattered maids, had been seen to come to Sis with a spray of white heather one morning when the hills were aflame and present it to her in silence and with a bow that was greater than an achievement. Something in the morning hills with the spray of white among the purple, something in that Devon sky, or out of the Devon spaces had granted the stable Don Juan entrance into, for him, another world; and he had in him, it would appear, the native greatness to at least visit that world. So he brought the heather to Sis.

John was learning life in many ways, and some of his lessons were taught then, as you might say, and learnt afterwards.

One day in the autumn of 1685 the pony was put into the shafts and, as Upcott had several calls to make in town, John went with him to play groom. These were great days for John, for there was always stir in Bideford. In the river would be ships from Newfoundland, ships from Spain with wool. There would be tobacco ships, ships from Raleigh's colony.

There were men to be found who had been with Blake and could acknowledge it. There were men who durst not tell the names of captains they had served. There were those who had been to and