

# ROUGE ET NOIR.

Vol. VI

TRINITY COLLEGE, APRIL, 1885.

No. 2

## CORNISH REMINISCENCES.

### A TRAMP TO THE LAND'S END.

It was still early when after a hearty Cornish breakfast, pasties, fresh mackerel, "fermads," and other delicacies for which the county is famous, we started for a ramble to the Land's End. A few of the village fathers were leaning against the iron railings that fringed the cliff overlooking our tiny harbour. They talked of the weather, the fishing, the "Salvation Army," for at the time that movement was making a considerable stir in the neighboring town, Penzance. Hearty, broad-shouldered, well-clad men, they smiled as they looked down upon the scene beneath. Newly painted luggers, trim taut little craft, were lying on the beach inside the pier, the wavelets were dancing in, splashing against the shining bows, breaking with all their diminutive force against the great ungainly feet by which the boats were supported. Bright-eyed, manly fisher lads, little and big, were playing at marbles, at pitch and toss on the broad expanse of dry sand. There and there upon the wharf groups of men were busily overhauling nets, filling water kegs, attending to the hundred other little duties incident to a fishing life. Whilst further away to the left several artists worked with a will to reproduce some of the beauties of that glorious forenoon.

Our road lay for some distance through one of those charming lanes so characteristic of England; high banks on either hand clothed with ferns, with violets and primroses dripping with dew, a natural screen overhead of furze and thorn and waving woodbine shading from the sun. Then for perhaps a mile it led through some of the most fertile land in all England, land for which ten pounds an acre or even more was paid each year, but which produced the finest broccoli, Brussels sprouts, and other vegetables of which tons were daily sent by rail during the season to supply the market of the Great Metropolis. So we reached Mousehole (Mousel), a picturesque little fishing village, taking its name from a cave, called on account of its shape, the Mouse's hole, which lay a little to the west of the village, and which, if report spoke truly, had often been used in the good old days when smuggling and wrecking were not unknown in Cornwall as a place for the concealment of contraband

stores. From Mousehole, a two miles' stretch along the cliffs, brought us to Lamorna Cove, one of the most charming pieces of rock and water scenery in this part of Cornwall, to-day the waves were dashing with great fury against the rocks which, wherever they presented a perpendicular face to the water were much scarred and broken. Already the hand of man had commenced to mar the beauty of the place, it was being extensively quarried and huge masses of granite—Lamorna Cove yields several very beautiful varieties—were lying here and there waiting till they should be broken up and squared and made suitable for building purposes. A row of these blocks, some of them eight or ten feet long, and proportionately broad and thick, stood out in all their native symmetry, almost ugly against the beautiful background of open sea and native fern-clad rock. A little stream bubbled through the centre of the valley, and this we followed till we reached the road, passing on the way an old-fashioned mill that had been standing in the days of good King Charles.

Keeping to the road, an hour's smart walking brought us to Trereen (Treen). But I must not omit mention of a circumstance which, at the time, struck us as being worthy of notice. A portion of the road was bordered by a bank of fine reddish clay, through which the road had been cut. Into its face had been driven several tunnels on the level with the road, five or six feet in height, the depth we did not venture to explore, and these had been used as a rude but very convenient kind of pig sty, the entrance being provided with a half door. Passing Trereen we again took to the fields, which are here divided from one another, not by wooden or natural fences, but by large, flat stones placed side by side, on end, and after a little hunting found the Logan. Of logging or rocking stones, there are many examples along the coast, but this one is, on account of its greater size, styled *par-excellence* the Logan, a great mass of rock, weighing more than seventy tons, perched high above the water on the side of the sea cliff, and so nicely balanced that by placing the shoulder underneath and straining upwards it can be made to move, but ever so slightly. Time was when far less force was needed to make it see-saw backwards and forwards when, as is reported, it swayed up and down moved by the blasts of the gales. But that was years ago, before a, thoughtless naval officer, with the help of a number of