

"Varcoe? Varcoe?" said the rector, communing with himself, "surely I remember the name? Ah, yes, there were two of them, I think; brothers, Richard and Henry. Is it possible, my dear," continued the old gentleman, "that one of these can be your father?"

"Yes sir," returned Amy, "Richard Varcoe was my father."

"Dear me, dear me!" cried Mr. Summerford, every line of his fine old face glowing with pleasure, "you must shake hands with me once more if you please. Why, Miss Varcoe, your father and I were good friends, though I remember that he was a Dissenter, and a preacher too. But we had one bond that drew us together: he was an antiquarian and so was I. At my suggestion he even began to make a little collection, and the then vicar authorized him to gather all the old panels,—finely carved they were,—and the brasses from the church. And your father? ah, my dear, I see he is dead; forgive me. The other brother was ambitious, he went off somewhere, to Australia, I believe."

"He too is dead, Mr. Summerford," said Amy, "he was never again heard of."

"But the collection, Mr. Summerford," remarked Gilbert, "still exists and is in excellent order. Upon my word, as Dr. Teulon says, the world must be a small thing when such meetings as these occur."

"I think you asked why I never spoke of Cornwall," said the rector. "Well, to say the truth, my memory of that time is sometimes rather painful to me. *Fubes renovare dolorem*, if you will pardon me the quotation. In those days I was living on forty pounds a year. I used to flatter myself that I had a gift of writing verses: some little things I wrote I had printed, paying for them out of my little savings. I loved the country, loved the people, but I was glad to accept a curacy here in Norfolk."

The good man heaved a sigh, as well he might, for he was thinking of the time when he, too, had a little romance of his own, of the time when he had loved, and

was loved by, a governess in a rich man's household; of her patient waiting until preferment should come to her betrothed; of her sudden removal just as the long ordeal was ended. 'This life of ours is filled with such experiences, dear reader, and the humblest-looking man thou hast this day met might perchance, an he would, tell a story of hope deferred and blighted expectation. Well for those who, having endured the fire, have been purified thereby! "*Omnes sancti*," says à Kempis, "*per multas tribulationes et tentationes transierunt, et profecerunt.*"

The arrival of old Hingston with the keys set the whole party in motion towards the church, or, as the rector chose to term it, the chapel, Hilton Parva being the mother parish. It was an interesting building of the fourteenth century, and was remarkable for its magnificent east window and a Lady Chapel or transept, containing many tombs of Priors and of the Mowbrays, predecessors of the Arderne family as lords of all the broad acres in the vicinity that did not belong to the Priory. On one of these tombs was the cross-legged, recumbent figure of a crusader at whose feet there lay a small sculptured buckler emblazoned with something like what Egyptologists call a "cartouche," and a sort of combination of a cross and a horseshoe, with four signs or letters which the rector said were Hebrew or Chaldee for MMRA, and upon whose mystic meaning he poured forth a flood of learned speculation. During their exploration, Mrs. Arderne, Amy, and Eliza Teulon kept close to Mr. Summerford, while Dorothy Teulon and Gilbert wandered off to the belfry and climbed the spiral staircase of the tower. As for the doctor, he took an early opportunity of pleading that he had patients to visit, and left the church to attend them.

The view from the tower had no particular attraction for Gilbert, who smiled when his companion affected to be in raptures over it.

"I suppose," she said, "you have seen