

so large a following in Bideford that the bishops were moved to be broad-minded and speak of meeting-houses with leniency. But to hear William Bartlett on the text: "They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters," was, if for the moment it touched the religious emotion, a dry entertainment, despite the text, to seamen who had dabbled in buccaneering. Many had more than dabbled. To listen to much of that and take it home to one's heart, one would resolve to leave the kicking tiller for the kicking ploughshaft: scuppers sometimes spouted blood into the Caribbean Sea.

Into Bideford then, drove the Upcotts, father and younger son. John was now fifteen years of age and a boy by that age is well advanced with his note-book, packing it with suggestions of things that he will examine in due course.

As they entered the town a party of soldiers were digging in the road-side at the top of the High Street. John remarked their uniforms, their swagger, and took special notice of how the officer stood, wrist on hip, head flung back, looking on his men with insolent eyes.

They drove slowly there, partly for the sudden declivity, partly because of the men's tools being thrown on the road and the men giving no heed to passage-way for others; so John had opportunity to note that the men, exchanging speech at their work—they were dropping a long beam into the hole that had been dug—looked at each other with the same insolent blankness of countenance that their leader