

UNCLE DICK CURNOW'S CONVERSION. A STORY OF EARLY CORNISH METHUENISM. BY THE REV MARK GUY PEARSE.

CHAPTER III

IN WHICH WE GO TO UNCLE DICK CURNOW AT LAST

"He was eighty-two, sir, when he died, was the old Uncle Dick; and that is a goodish many years ago now. A good height and tremendously strong in his young days. If you had seen the dear old man sitting down here all so quiet and good, you never would have thought what a wild one he was once."

But I must leave Miss Jennie's narrative, using it only with the rest of the information I had gathered. Good old Dick had been in his early life certainly the very leader in the fierce sports of those times. And no Irishman at a fair finds more delight in a scrimmage than did the Cornishmen of a hundred years ago. It was not enough for the champion of one parish to challenge the best man of some other place; the favorite method was for all the able-bodied men of the parish to gather "one and all," armed with stout sticks, and to go forth against the men of another parish whom they had challenged to such a battle. Broken heads and limbs were the necessary result of such contests in scores of instances, and not unfrequently loss of life. Now, Dick Curnow's glory was to challenge any three men to fight with clubs. In wrestling, and hurling, and fighting, and smuggling, he was always the leader; the strongest and most daring of those parts.

He was still a young man when the arrow of the truth first struck him; it stuck in his heart and he could never get it out again. It was Mr. Wesley's own hand that drew the bow at a venture—the text did not seem a likely shaft to smite such an one as this Dick Curnow. The sermon was preached to a vast crowd of people on "the Downs;" the text was this: "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth." Dick had listened, deeply wrought upon. There came over him a rush of bewildering thoughts; and more than thoughts—convictions. Hitherto, the strength that could knock any man down, that loved a fight and a fair wrestle, and the spirit that would not stand to be put upon by anybody, these were the grand things; this was all that was worth living for. But here, in an hour, all that was upset; and what he used to despise as good for women and children only had become the really beautiful things that he—big Dick Curnow—was breaking his heart about. Yes—to be gentle, and humble, and loving was finer than anything else.

When the congregation broke up Dick had gone away by himself to the seaside. He sat on a rock, high up the cliff, whilst the waves crept in and out hundreds of feet below him. The sun was setting. The breadth of golden glory that stretched away towards it over the waters changed to crimson. The ruddy glow filled all the sky and coloured all the sea, and tinged the cliffs, the grassy slopes, and the rocky pieces. But Dick sat still as one stunned—seeing nothing, and only wondering. What did it all mean, then? Must he turn round and be good? Must he go to chapel and sing hymns and pray? And if they put upon him, mustn't he fight them for it. No; he was sure it could not mean that. And there, the preacher was a little man; they said he was afraid of nobody, but for all that he was not made like Dick Curnow. He was made to go about preaching, of course. And Dick Curnow, he was made strong and big to go about fighting, of course, and wrestling and smuggling. For somebody must fight and wrestle, he supposed, just like somebody must preach. But it did seem hard, too; and as the sunset fell upon that round, honest face, the red glow shone in the tears that trickled down his cheeks. It couldn't be helped now, but if he only had been a cripple, or weak, or anything but big Dick Curnow, he might have been good and meek.

On this part of Dick's story Miss Jennie had her comment. "He said that he used to go about wishing that he was a cripple or a little child, or a woman, anything that was weak. A woman, indeed! But there, the men alays is so ignorant. I s'pose they can't help it, poor dears."

So young Dick lived on as before, thinking that there was nothing else for him. But, in the quiet night, or, in the midst of the deep stillness underground, the words would come back to him—"Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth!" And again there rose before him that true and beautiful life—to be quiet; to love; to forgive. Yes, that was the real life, and Dick shook his head sadly. It was all too late now. He was big and strong Dick Curnow. Ah, if he had always been a little child, he perhaps might have been

good then! In the winter evenings he would creep up to the chapel, listening at the window intently. He looked in upon the little company with a kind of awe. How he wished that he were weak and feeble and old, like Jan Treloar, the leader of the society. Then, sad at heart, he came home, and was off with a set of smugglers.

One night as Dick listened at the window, under cover of the darkness, the preacher had chosen for his subject the conversion of St. Paul. There was a somewhat vivid description of the persecution of the early Christians; of the death of Stephen, and of Paul's part in it. Dick drew nearer and nearer to the little window, until his face pressed close against it. "Here was a fightin' man; big an' strong o' course," Dick thought to himself. Then the preacher went on to tell of the light, and of the voice from heaven, and of the mighty change that was wrought in the man.

To Dick it was no bit of dead history but a page of to-day, real and present. Suddenly the little company inside was startled by a voice, "Please, sir do he live anywhere hereabout, do he?" Instantly everybody looked round at the window, whilst Dick suddenly remembered where he was, and stunk off, whispering, "If he's livin' within fifty mile o' this parish I'll find 'em out an' see if 'tis true."

The next day Jan Treloar was at work in his little tailor's shop, when Dick appeared in the doorway. The young giant looked up with such a pleading face and such an earnest voice that anybody might have read all the secret of his trouble in a moment. But old Jan never expected to see any signs of grace in this young leader of mischief. He sat up half-a-dozen stairs, perched on his crossed legs in a sort of windowledge, stitching away solemnly at some garment, meditating on the dust which it must enclose, and finding in it sad emblems of our frail humanity.

"Please, Mest' Treloar, where do that fightin' chap live to, what they was a-tellin' about up to chapel last night?"

Grave old Jan Treloar started very much as if one of his own needles had pricked him smartly. He stroked the pious fringe of hair that he wore down over his forehead and groaned.

"A fightin' man, an' up to chapel! La, Dick Curnow, whatever are 'ee a-tellin' about them?"

"Why, last night, up to chapel, Mest' Treloar; an' her so good as killed one o' 'em, too. I should dearly like for to see the man an' hear all about it from his own lips, for to make sure that tes true. Livin' anywhere hereabouts, is he, Mest' Treloar?"

"What!" gasped Jan Treloar, "he do mean St. Paul! To think of it!" And the old man held up his hands, horrified as much at the thought of the apostle being alive now, as at his being spoken of as "a fightin' chap." He groaned again over such shocking depravity. "La, Dick Curnow! Wherever do you expect for to go to?" And Jan Treloar stitched away at his work, shaking his head very solemnly and muttering to himself.

Poor Dick came away from the place more discouraged than ever. "Aw dear," he sighed. "I s'pose I'm worst of all the fightin' chaps, an' that tes no good for me to try to be good. And yet if the Lord spoke to one of 'em and made 'em all so good, why shouldn't He speak to me. Perhaps He should send day. I do wish He would."

CHAPTER IV

IN WHICH DICK CURNOW HAS HIS LAST TURN AT SMUGGLING.

As the weeks of that winter passed away Dick's companions noticed a strangeness in him. The old sprightliness of manner was gone. He who used to be so quick to pick a quarrel was now very slow to avenge himself. And though he had not lost his skill in a turn at the old combats, yet there was a carelessness in following up his advantage which was quite unlike the Dick of former time. At the public house, too, when the smuggled brandy passed amongst his many comrades, Dick's place was generally empty. They often talked of the change, wondering what could have brought it about. "Love," said a sly old sailor, winking his eye, "the very fellow to set the girls' hearts a-flutterin' is young Dick; and the old man dipped his red nose into the big tumbler, took a long pull, and winked again. Nonsense," laughed another, "he'd want all the more o' this here for to keep his courage up if that was it." "Some little concern of his own what he isn't going partners in—just like him growled an ill-looking fellow who owed Dick a grudge. "No," said another, putting down the empty glass that he drained, "Dick Curnow has been a different man ever since the Methody parson preached 'pon the Down, 'an that's what 'tis." "Ef that es it, I tell 'e, cumrades, he wont get over it—they never do," said an old man in the corner who was solemnly puffing at his pipe.

But as for young Dick himself, he went on quite unconscious of any

change. To him the possibility of such a thing would have been a great joy. No, he could only think of himself still as big, strong Dick Curnow; he could never be good and gentle and loving like the blessed were.

But there was one thing that Dick Curnow never thought of altering—did not wish to alter in. If he were ever so meek and gentle and loving, he need not give this up. It was smuggling. Men who "met in class" took their part and place in the venture. Old Jan Treloar could have stoked that pious fringe of hair and steered a boat upon this errand at the same time; or he could have left his board to lead a hand at storing the goods and came back again without feeling condemned. The natural love of adventure might have been questionable, and the money getting might have been condemned as encouraging covetousness; but with every cornishman it was a bounden duty to protest thus against any interference with their sea-rights, and the liberties of their creeks and harbours. Probably no requirement of Methodism was regarded as so harsh and unreasonable as Mr. Wesley's rule on this matter. A conscience had to be created in relation to it; and the most stubborn prejudices had to be overcome.

But with this winter came at once Dick Curnow's last venture and the beginning of this new life. The ship was expected at a little well-known and well-hidden creek to the north of St. Ivart's. It was a bigger venture than usual, and for some days the men of the place had been anxiously on this lookout. At last a fishing-boat brought tidings that she was hanging off the coast. The coast-guard had been decoyed to a distance part of their district by means of rumors and by appearances that looked suspicious. The signal was given and soon the little ship cast anchor in the creek. All the place turned out to help. Swung on the backs of the donkeys that rased in long strings, or borne on the broad shoulders of the men, the kegs were carried away and stored in well-known holes and excavations, under gardens and cellars, or behind crafty wainscots, or up in unsuspected attics. Before the short December day was done the little ship was nearly cleared. What was left Dick Curnow could stow in his boat, as he would have to pull round to St. Ivart's. And leaping on board Dick made his boat fast to the stern, the anchor was heaved, and the ship drifted out with a gentle wind. The sun had set, and the misty gloom of the evening was thickening; well Dick stood up in the well-board, flung off the ropes, and struck for the pier. Then suddenly out of the misty gloom swept the long boat of the coast-guard close upon him. One man against eight armed men, and he, too with his boat so heavily laden, there was no chance of escape. The officer sprang up in a moment, and called on him in the Kings name to surrender.

"Iss—when you can catch me," cried Dick, defiantly. The discharge of some firearm whistled uncomfortably near as the only reply to his impertinence, and the water flew from the eight oars that now gave chase. Dick headed for the land, a point that stretched between St. Ivart's and the little creek. Kicking the kegs overboard, and pulling with his might, he drove the heavy boat well on until he could hear the waves breaking on the rocks not far away. But the pursuers crept nearer and nearer. The cliffs loomed out of the mist now; two minutes more and he would have his boat where they dared not follow him. But the pursuers were upon him, and thrusting out a boat-hook, one seized the boat, and Dick was helpless.

The officer put his pistol down. "We have got you at last," he cried, in a rage, mad at the trick that had been played upon him. But before a hand could be laid upon the boat, Dick shouted "Come on," and the next instant dived overboard. He rose far off in the gloom to hear their furious threats, and knew that they were coming after him as near to the shore as they dared to venture. He struck out for a cave that opened close by, and, thinking it a good place for shelter, swam in, and soon stepped up on its hard sandy floor. Drenched and shivering with the cold, he sat down, slapping his hands against his sides. Then wet, numbed, and almost stupified, he crept about in the dark place, and looking out at the mouth of it, wondering if he could swim away and get to some other place. Were they waiting for him still? Suddenly the little remaining light of the cave was darkened with a deafening boom, and a dreadful rusk of wind. Then Dick sprang up.

"I'm caught!" He knew, as everybody along that coast knew full well what the booming meant. The cave, high-roofed and deep within, was at the mouth narrow and low. The tide had risen, until now each wave swept over the mouth, driving in the air that flew back again with the boom of a cannon as the wave began to recede. Soon the cave itself would be filled with water. Dick began to grope his way upward and backward nearly as far as he could reach. Should he swim for it in the dark, diving past the mouth. No; those breakers that thundered so ter-

ribly there cut off all hope that way. What could he do? A little while and the waves would cover the spot on which he stood. He crept back until he stood on a little pebble ridge that came close up against the roof of the cave.

Again Dick sat. All his strength and courage were nothing now—and never would be any more. He was just a little child—weak and helpless. Might he not kneel down to pray? Get right down on the ground, like the other fightin' man did? He would. He had heard tell of another world; perhaps the Lord would let him be a little child here instead of being big, strong Dick Curnow. And then, perhaps, he might come to be among the blessed. So Dick lay down and prayed his first prayer; "Lord, I'm Dick Curnow. Please, Lord, I couldn't help being big and strong, an' I am sorry for it please, the Lord. But please, I do want to be meek and gentle and lovin'. I did mean to be when I got old and feeble. But I shan't ever be that now. Please Lord, bless me, for all I was so strong an' big—for I can't do nothing now. Please, Lord, an' I am just the same as a little child. Amen."

Dick had scarcely finished his prayer, and had not stirred from the place, when instantly there flew over him a shower of sand and gravel. He was rolled over by something that rushed against him, and that immediately after splashed into the water.

"Tes the devil!" cried Dick, picking himself up very slowly, and brushing the sand out of his eyes—not so much frightened as bewildered. What a dreadful man he must be! That instead of hearing a voice like the other fightin' man did, he should have been knocked down in this fashion. But as he turned round Dick saw that where the creature had rushed from there was a little glimmer of light, white, clear, and silvery. Dick in his simplicity, thought this was heaven. The good Lord had answered his prayer after all; or perhaps it was the shining of the Lord that came to the other fightin' man. That would be best of all. Creeping up to the hole, Dick saw that on the other side of it there was another opening filled with this light. He began to dig at it as well as he could until the passage was large enough for him to get through. Here was an old mine-working that he knew down which the full moon was shining brilliantly. It was not the Lord after all then! And Dick was big and strong once more. Climbing up by the rough stones and the earth where the old workings had fallen in, he soon stepped out upon the top of the cliff, and went home. Sadder than ever he sat that night, cold and shivering before the fire, at his mother's house. There—he had hoped that he was going to be a little child. But there was no chance for him. He must be worse than anybody else, he supposed. What a dreadful thing it was to be so big and strong.

Here, too, there comes in another comment of Miss Jennie's. "The doctor always laughed at the old Uncle Dick's devil. He said that o' course 'tweren't nothing but a seal. May be the doctor is right, for all that Uncle Dick would stick to it that he must know best, 'cause he was there. But seemin' to me that folks now-a-days would sooner for to believe it was a lion or a unicorn, so long as they could get the rids of the devil. Not that I should mind that—not a bit. But get 'em fool to believe that anybody can get the rids o' the devil by tryin' for to believe that he's dead."

THE HELPFUL DISCIPLE.

"But Barnabas took him and brought him to the apostles, and declared unto them how he had seen the Lord in the way."

"Next to the man who achieves the greatest and most blessed deeds is he who, perhaps himself wholly incapable of such high work, is yet the first to help and encourage the genius of others. We often do more good by our sympathy than by our labors, and render to the world a more lasting service by absence of jealousy and recognition of merit, than we could ever render by the straining of personal ambition. Thus did Barnabas save Saul for the work of Christianity. To his self-effacing nobleness is due the honor of recognizing, before they had yet been revealed to others, the fiery vigor, the indomitable energy, the splendid courage, the illuminated and illuminating intellects, which were destined to spend themselves in the high endeavor to ennoble and evangelize the world."

If Christians lived nearer to God they would have no difficulty in loving one another.

There is no greater mistake than to suppose that Christians can impress the world by agreeing with it. No; it is not conformity that we want; it is not being able to beat the world in its own way; but it is to stand apart and above it, and to produce the impression of a holy and separate life—this only can give us a true Christian power.

Letter from United States.

The year has opened with the most cheering and hopeful prospects to the nation. Business, which had long been depressed, has revived in all its departments, and health and plenty everywhere abound. The laboring classes generally find employment. With the exception of some portions of the Southern States, the country is in a most prosperous condition. In some of the old slaveholding States, while the colored people cannot be held legally as slaves, as formerly, there is a disposition to keep them under control, and to keep them as near former slavery as possible. This, as a matter of course, gives great dissatisfaction to the colored people, and many of them are leaving for the Northern States. The old slaveocracy dies hard, and clings to its power with the tenacity of life. But yield they must to the present order of things, and when it is fully done, they will find the colored people, who properly instructed, enlightened, industrious, valuable citizens, and just such as are needed in the South.

IN THE RELIGIOUS WORLD.

We are enjoying great prosperity, both in our home and foreign work. Some of the churches were crippled for a season by the general financial embarrassment of the country, but are coming out of their trouble with new vigor and prosperity. In the foreign field, the church was never gathering so beautiful a harvest. All her foreign missions are enjoying great success, and never before was the gospel attended with such extraordinary power. The outlook is most encouraging.

THE DEATH OF BISHOP HAVEN

has caused deep sorrow throughout the Methodist Episcopal Church and the nation. He was a great man, eloquent in speech, brilliant as a writer, wise in counsel, broad and far-reaching in his views, a great student and deep thinker, and a profound theologian. He was a Methodist of the original stamp in doctrine and discipline. Hearty identified himself with the abolitionists, and was a champion in the anti-slavery cause. He was a strong advocate for the oppressed and down-trodden, and the colored people throughout the South hailed him as their friend. Every great moral enterprise of the day received his hearty support. He has left a deep impression on the nation, for he was deeply interested in all that pertained to the nation's welfare and life. He died in Malden, Mass., where he was born, at the age of fifty-eight. His last days were most triumphant—his last words were shouts of victory.

IN THE LITERARY WORLD.

We have several recent issues from the press of more than ordinary interest. Among these is "The Life and Words of Christ," by Cunningham Gouge, D.D., a work unsurpassed in our Christology, for the breadth and scope of its thought, the force and beauty of its style, the charming appropriateness of its illustrations, and the clear and life-like descriptions of the land, scenes, and time in which the Saviour lived. He has succeeded beyond any other writer, in bringing before the reader the world in which Jesus moved and lived; the customs, scenes, and influences under which he acted. The work was originally published in two large volumes, but is now published in one by the "American Book Exchange," and at a price so low as to place it within the reach of all.

Messrs. Appleton & Co., one of our most extensive publishing houses, are issuing works of great value both in matter and mechanical execution. Among these is "Picturesque Europe," a work unequalled for the extent of its information in the field it traverses, and beauty and elegance of its design and finish. It brings the European world before us in a manner most attractive and instructive. It contains sixty-three exquisite steel plates and one thousand wood illustrations, from original drawings. It is the most superb work of book-making known in modern times, and reflects great credit on the enterprising publishing house. "The Journal," a monthly devoted to general literature, is a periodical of great excellence, and well deserves a place in the first rank of magazine literature.

A new and beautiful edition of Dr. McCosh's works, in five vols., has been issued from the press of Robert Carter & Bros.; an edition that will greatly delight multitudes who read the writings of this great metaphysician and divine. They have issued other volumes that will long be cherished among the choicest in the language for enlightening devotion, and inspiring the heart with heavenly longings: Macduff's "Memories of Patmos;" Bosar's "Brook Besor;" and Prime's "Songs of the Soul."

The new edition of Webster's Unabridged Dictionary, just issued by Messrs. G. & C. Merriam, is a book of wonders—marvellous, indeed, for the amount of information it contains. The previous edition was regarded as perfect, but the present contains 4,600 new words and meanings, and also a biographical dictionary of over 9,700 names. It contains 3,000 engravings, which are of great value. We know of no dictionary in all respects equal in the English language.

The next number of "Scenes of the Bible" will be looked for with interest. It will contain the first of the series of articles on "The Reign of Peter the Great," by Eugene Schuyler. It is called the "Midwinter" Scribner, and its first edition will consist of 125,000 copies. The magazine has been enlarged, and its illustrations are numerous and superb.

COTTON SEED AND LINSSEED CAKE

Dr. Lawes estimates the nutritional value of these two concentrated foods, at \$29 per ton for the former, and \$23 for the latter. This is more than the market price of cotton-seed meal with us at the present time. Does this not appeal to the American stock feeder, to use these concentrated foods more abundantly? American Agriculturist.

THE BOY

RAISING BY EXAMPLE

Stullman, R. A. Boston, retains a place where he has a quarter of a century. One of the boys of the press thought and expressed his opinion. He offered \$200 for the boys in years of age, who most Indian corn acre. Each boy was to send his name to the President of the Agricultural Society, awarding the prize reported. A committee was appointed to measure every plot present at the and weighing of at the Tawn House. Each boy was to send his name to the Agricultural Society, awarding the prize reported. A committee was appointed to measure every plot present at the and weighing of at the Tawn House. Each boy was to send his name to the Agricultural Society, awarding the prize reported. A committee was appointed to measure every plot present at the and weighing of at the Tawn House.

The average yield trials was just shelled corn per acre was awarded to Mr. Deford, for 160 bushels. The next A. O. Bennett, of Vels; Cyrus H. Smith; Willie B. 142 bushels; Charbon, 141 bushels; Deering, of Waterbury boys raised 131 to 12 raised 120 to 13 duced 110 to 119 bushels; 100 to 109 bushels who grew 100 bushels others produced 90 acre. 29 obtained 7 only 15 fell below 7 corn per acre. 1 poor soil, lack of fertility of the boys getting entitled to high prize. Under we commend the intelligence and contest.

This shows what a reducing corn in a con between 43 and tude. Not having us, we can not judge such crops, the cost tion, etc., nor are in the present case result is the effect on selves, and upon many county and elsewhere led to think, reason, each examine into it and that one succeed than themselves. Allen's thoughtful to his native county, future results, many and of dollars expected that might have heartily wish the result Allen for every county and where there is no likelihood of necessary prize often given to be appropriated by benefit of some of our boys of 17 and up to be the actors upon few years hence.

BENSON POROUS LAME AND WEAK Lumbago, Rheumatism, Neglected Coughs, and other ailments. They are the best any one who has used them, and he will confirm the above by all Druggists. Price 25 c.