

not. And, in that moment, instinctively she knew how things came to be as they were, — and, because of this knowledge, her cheeks flamed with a swift, burning colour, and with a soft cry, she hid her face in Miss Priscilla's gentle bosom. Then, while her face was yet hidden there, she whispered:

“ Tell me — tell me — all about it.”

But, meanwhile, Bellew, striding far away across the meadows, seeming to watch the glory of the sun-set, and to hearken to a blackbird piping from the dim seclusion of the copse a melodious “ Good-bye ” to the dying day, yet saw, and heard it not at all, for his mind was still occupied with Adam's question: —

“ What would Miss Anthea say? ”

CHAPTER XIV

Which, among other things, has to do with shrimps, muffins, and tin whistles

A TYPICAL Kentish Village is Dapplemere with its rows of scattered cottages bowered in roses and honeysuckle, — white walled cottages with steep-pitched roofs, and small latticed windows that seem to stare at all and sundry like so many winking eyes.

There is an air redolent of ripening fruit, and hops, for Dapplemere is a place of orchards, and hop-gardens, and rick-yards, while, here and there, the sharp-pointed, red-tiled roof of some oast-house pierces the green.

Though Dapplemere village is but a very small place indeed, now-a-days, — yet it possesses a church, grey and ancient, whose massive Norman tower looks down upon gable and chimney, upon roof of thatch and roof of tile, like some benignant giant keeping watch above them all. Near-by, of course, is the inn, a great, rambling, comfortable place, with time-worn settles beside the door, and with a mighty sign a-swinging before it, upon which, plainly to be

seen (when the sun catches it fairly) is that which purports to be a likeness of His Majesty King William the Fourth, of glorious memory. But alas! the colours have long since faded, so that now, (upon a dull day), it is a moot question whether His Majesty's nose was of the Greek, or Roman order, or, indeed, whether he was blessed with any nose at all. Thus, Time and Circumstances have united to make a ghost of the likeness (as they have done of the original, long since) which, fading yet more, and more, will doubtless eventually vanish altogether, — like King William himself, and leave but a vague memory behind.

Now, before the inn was a small crowd gathered about a trap in which sat two men, one of whom Bellew recognised as the red-necked Corn-chandler Grimes, and the other, the rat-eyed Parsons.

The Corn-chandler was mopping violently at his face and neck down which ran, and to which clung, a foamy substance suspiciously like the froth of beer, and, as he mopped, his loud brassy voice shook and quavered with passion.

“I tell ye — you shall get out o' my cottage!” he was saying, “I say you shall quit my cottage at the end o' the month, — and when I says a thing, I means it, — I say you shall get

off of my property, — you — and that beggarly cobbler. I say you shall be throwed out o' my cottage, — lock, stock, and barrel. I say — ”

“I wouldn't, Mr. Grimes, — leastways, not if I was you,” another voice broke in, calm and deliberate. “No, I wouldn't go for to say another word, sir; because, if ye do say another word, I know a man as will drag you down out o' that cart, sir, — I know a man as will break your whip over your very own back, sir, — I know a man as will then take and heave you into the horse-pond, sir, — and that man is me — Sergeant Appleby, late of the Nineteenth Hussars, sir.”

The Corn-chandler having removed most of the froth from his head and face, stared down at the straight, alert figure of the big Sergeant, hesitated, glanced at the Sergeant's fist which, though solitary, was large, and powerful, scowled at the Sergeant from his polished boots to the crown of his well-brushed hat (which perched upon his close-cropped, grey hair at a ridiculous angle totally impossible to any but an ex-cavalry-man), muttered a furious oath, and snatching his whip, cut viciously at his horse, very much as if that animal had been the Sergeant himself, and, as the trap lurched forward, he shook his fist, and nodded his head.

“ Out ye go, — at the end o’ the month, — mind that! ” he snarled and so, rattled away down the road still mopping at his head and neck until he had fairly mopped himself out of sight.

“ Well, Sergeant, ” said Bellew extending his hand, “ how are you! ”

“ Hearty, sir, — hearty I thank you, though, at this pre-cise moment, just a leetle put out, sir. None the less I know a man as is happy to see you, Mr. Bellew, sir, — and that’s me — Sergeant Appleby, at your service, sir. My cottage lies down the road yonder, an easy march — if you will step that far? — Speaking for my comrade and myself — we shall be proud for you to take tea with us — muffins sir — shrimps, Mr. Bellew — also a pikelet or two. — Not a great feast — but tolerable good rations, sir — and plenty of ’em — what do you say? ”

“ I say — done, and thank you very much! ”

So, without further parley, the Sergeant saluted divers of the little crowd, and, wheeling sharply, strode along beside Bellew, rather more stiff in the back, and fixed of eye than was his wont, and jingling his imaginary spurs rather more loudly than usual.

“ You will be wondering at the tantrums of

the man Grimes, sir, — of his ordering me and my comrade Peterday out of his cottage. Sir — I’ll tell you — in two words. It’s all owing to the sale — up at the Farm, sir. You see, Grimes is a great hand at buying things uncommonly cheap, and selling ’em — uncommonly dear. To-day it seems — he was disappointed — ”

“ Ah? ” said Bellew.

“ At exactly — twenty-three minutes to six, sir, ” said the Sergeant, consulting his large silver watch, “ I were sitting in my usual corner — beside the chimley, sir, — when in comes Grimes — like a thunder-cloud. — Calls for a pint of ale — in a tankard. Tom draws pint — which Tom is the landlord, sir. ‘ Buy anything at the sale, Mr. Grimes? ’ says Tom, — ‘ Sale! ’ says Grimes, ‘ sale indeed! ’ and falls a cursing — folk up at the Farm — shocking — outrageous. Ends by threatening to foreclose mortgage — within the month. Upon which — I raise a protest — upon which he grows abusive, — upon which I was forced to pour his ale over him, — after which I ran him out into the road — and there it is, you see. ”

“ And — he threatened to foreclose the mortgage on Dapplemere Farm, did he, Sergeant? ”

“ Within the month, sir! — upon which I

warned him — inn parlour no place — lady's private money troubles — gaping crowd — dammit!"

"And so he is turning you out of his cottage?"

"Within the week, sir, — but then — beer down the neck — is rather unpleasant!" and here the Sergeant uttered a short laugh, and was immediately grave again. "It isn't," he went on, "it isn't as *I* mind the inconvenience of moving, sir — though I shall be mighty sorry to leave the old place, still, it isn't that so much as the small corner cup-board, and my book-shelf by the chimley. There never was such a cup-board, — no sir, — there never was a cup-board so well calculated to hold a pair o' jack boots, not to mention spurs, highlows, burnishers, shoulder-chains, polishing brushes, and — a boot-jack, as that same small corner cup-board. As for the book-shelf beside the chimley, sir — exactly three foot three, — sunk in a recess — height, the third button o' my coat, — capacity, fourteen books. You couldn't get another book on that shelf — no, not if you tried with a sledge-hammer, or a hydraulic engine. Which is highly surprising when you consider that fourteen books is the true, and exact number of books as I possess."

"Very remarkable!" said Bellew.

"Then again, — there's my comrade, — Peter Day (The Sergeant pronounced it as though it were all one word). Sir, my comrade Peterday is a very remarkable man, — most cobblers are. When he's not cobbling, he's reading, — when not reading, he's cobbling, or mending clocks, and watches, and, betwixt this and that, my comrade has picked up a power of information, — though he lost his leg a doing of it — in a gale of wind — off the Cape of Good Hope, for my comrade was a sailor, sir. Consequently he is a handy man, most sailors are and makes his own wooden legs, sir, he is also a musician — the tin whistle, sir, — and here we are!"

Saying which, the Sergeant halted, wheeled, opened a very small gate, and ushered Bellew into a very small garden bright with flowers, beyond which was a very small cottage indeed, through the open door of which there issued a most appetizing odour, accompanied by a whistle, wonderfully clear, and sweet, that was rendering "Tom Bowling" with many shakes, trills, and astonishing runs.

Peterday was busied at the fire with a long toasting-fork in his hand, but, on their entrance, breaking off his whistling in the very

middle of a note, he sprang nimbly to his feet, (or rather, his foot), and stood revealed as a short, yet strongly built man, with a face that, in one way, resembled an island in that it was completely surrounded by hair, and whisker. But it was, in all respects, a vastly pleasant island to behold, despite the somewhat craggy prominences of chin, and nose, and brow. In other words, it was a pleasing face notwithstanding the fierce, thick eye-brows which were more than offset by the merry blue eyes, and the broad, humourous mouth below.

"Peterday," said the Sergeant, "Mr. Bellew!"

"Glad to see you sir," said the mariner, saluting the visitor with a quick bob of the head, and a backward scrape of the wooden leg. "You couldn't make port at a better time, sir, — and because why? — because the kettle's a biling, sir, the muffins is piping hot, and the shrimps is a-laying hove to, waiting to be took aboard, sir." Saying which, Peterday bobbed his head again, shook his wooden leg again, and turned away to reach another cup and saucer.

It was a large room for so small a cottage, and comfortably furnished, with a floor of red tile, and with a grate at one end well raised up from the hearth. Upon the hob a kettle sang

murmurously, and on a trivet stood a plate whereon rose a tower of toasted muffins. A round table occupied the middle of the floor and was spread with a snowy cloth whereon cups and saucers were arranged, while in the midst stood a great bowl of shrimps.

Now above the mantel-piece, that is to say, to the left of it, and fastened to the wall, was a length of rope cunningly tied into what is called a "running bowline," above this, on a shelf specially contrived to hold it, was the model of a full-rigged ship that was — to all appearances — making excellent way of it, with every stitch of canvas set and drawing, aloft and aloft; above this again, was a sextant, and a telescope. Opposite all these, upon the other side of the mantel, were a pair of stirrups, three pairs of spurs, two cavalry sabres, and a carbine, while between these objects, in the very middle of the chimney, uniting, as it were, the Army, and the Navy, was a portrait of Queen Victoria.

Bellew also noticed that each side of the room partook of the same characteristics, one being devoted to things nautical, the other to objects military. All this Bellew noticed while the soldier was brewing the tea, and the sailor was bestowing the last finishing touches to the muffins.

"It aren't often as we're honoured wi' company, sir," said Peterday, as they sat down, "is it, Dick?"

"No," answered the Sergeant, handing Bellew the shrimps.

"We ain't had company to tea," said Peterday, passing Bellew the muffins, "no, we ain't had company to tea since the last time Miss Anthea, and Miss Priscilla honoured us, have we, Dick?"

"Honoured us," said the Sergeant, nodding his head approvingly, "is the one, and only word for it, Peterday."

"And the last time was this day twelve months, sir,—because why?—because this day twelve months 'appened to be Miss Priscilla's birthday,—consequently to-day is her birthday, likewise,—wherefore the muffins, and wherefore the shrimps, sir, for they was this day to have once more graced our board, Mr. Bellew."

"'Graced our board,'" said the Sergeant, nodding his head again, "'graced our board,' is the only expression for it, Peterday. But they disappointed us, Mr. Bellew, sir,—on account of the sale."

"Messmate," said Peterday, with a note of concern in his voice, "how's the wind?"

"Tolerable, comrade, tolerable!"

"Then—why forget the tea?"

"Tea!" said the Sergeant with a guilty start, "why—so I am!—Mr. Bellew sir,—your pardon!" and, forthwith he began to pour out the tea very solemnly, but with less precision of movement than usual, and with abstracted gaze.

"The Sergeant tells me you are a musician," said Bellew, as Peterday handed him another muffin.

"A musician,—me! think o' that now! To be sure, I do toot on the tin whistle now and then, sir, such things as 'The British Grenadiers,' and the 'Girl I left behind me,' for my shipmate, and 'The Bay o' Biscay,' and 'A Life on the Ocean Wave,' for myself,—but a musician, Lord! Ye see, sir," said Peterday, taking advantage of the Sergeant's abstraction, and whispering confidentially behind his muffin, "that messmate o' mine has such a high opinion o' my gifts as is fair over-powering, and a tin whistle is only a tin whistle, after all."

"And it is about the only instrument I could ever get the hang of," said Bellew.

"Why—do you mean as you play, sir?"

"Hardly that, but I make a good bluff at it."

"Why then,—I've got a couple o' very good

whistles,—if you're so minded we might try a doo-et, sir, arter tea."

"With pleasure!" nodded Bellew. But, hereupon, Peterday noticing that the Sergeant ate nothing, leaned over and touched him upon the shoulder.

"How's the wind, now, Shipmate?" he enquired.

"Why so so, Peterday, fairish! fairish!" said the Sergeant, stirring his tea round and round, and with his gaze fixed upon the opposite wall.

"Then messmate,—why not a muffin, or even a occasional shrimp,—where be your appetite?"

"Peterday," said the Sergeant, beginning to stir his tea faster than ever, and with his eyes still fixed, "consequent upon disparaging remarks having been passed by one Grimes,—our landlord,—concerning them as should not be mentioned in a inn parlour—or anywhere else—by such as said Grimes,—I was compelled to pour—a tankard of beer—over said Grimes, our landlord,—this arternoon, Peterday, at exactly—twelve and a half minutes past six, by my watch,—which done,—I ran our landlord—out into the road, Peterday, say—half a minute later, which would make it pre-

cisely thirteen minutes after the hour. Consequent upon which, comrade—we have received our marching orders."

"What messmate, is it heave our anchor, you mean?"

"I mean, comrade—that on Saturday next, being the twenty-fifth instant,—we march out—bag and baggage—horse, foot, and artillery,—we evacuate our position—in face of superior force,—for good and all, comrade."

"Is that so, shipmate?"

"It's rough on you, Peterday—it's hard on you, I'll admit, but things were said, comrade—relative to—business troubles of one as we both respect, Peterday,—things was said as called for—beer down the neck,—and running out into the road, comrade. But it's rough on you, Peterday seeing as you—like the Hussars at Assuan—was never engaged, so to speak."

"Aye, aye, Shipmate, that does ketch me,—all aback, shipmate. Why Lord! I'd give a pound,—two pound—ah, ten!—just to have been astarn of him wi' a rope's end,—though—come to think of it I'd ha' preferred a capstan-bar."

"Peterday," said the Sergeant removing his gaze from the wall with a jerk, "on the twenty-

fifth instant we shall be — without a roof to cover us, and — all my doing. Peterday — what have you to say about it?"

"Say, messmate, — why that you and me, honouring, and respecting two ladies as deserves to be honoured, and respected, ain't going to let such a small thing as this here cottage come betwixt us, and our honouring and respecting of them two ladies. If, therefore, we are due to quit this anchorage, why then it's all hands to the windlass with a heave yo ho, and merrily! say I. Messmate, — my fist!" Hereupon, with a very jerky movement indeed, the Sergeant reached out his remaining arm, and the soldier and the sailor shook hands very solemnly over the muffins (already vastly diminished in number) with a grip that spoke much.

"Peterday, — you have lifted a load off my heart — I thank ye comrade, — and spoke like a true soldier. Peterday — the muffins!"

So now the Sergeant, himself once more, fell to in turn, and they ate, and drank, and laughed, and talked, until the shrimps were all gone, and the muffins were things of the past.

And now, declining all Bellew's offers of assistance, the soldier and the sailor began washing, and drying, and putting away their crock-

ery, each in his characteristic manner, — the Sergeant very careful and exact, while the sailor juggled cups and saucers with the sure-handed deftness that seems peculiar to nautical fingers.

"Yes, Peterday," said the Sergeant, hanging each cup upon its appointed nail, and setting each saucer solicitously in the space reserved for it on the small dresser, "since you have took our marching orders as you have took 'em, I am quite reconciled to parting with these here snug quarters, barring only — a book-shelf, and a cup-board."

"Cupboard!" returned Peterday with a snort of disdain, "why there never was such a ill-contrived, lubberly cupboard as that, in all the world; you can't get at it unless you lay over to port, — on account o' the clothes-press, and then hard a starboard, — on account o' the dresser, — and then it being in the darkest corner —"

"True Peterday, but then I'm used to it, and use is everything as you know, — I can lay my hand upon anything — in a minute — watch me!" Saying which, the Sergeant squeezed himself between the press and the dresser, opened the cupboard, and took thence several articles which he named, each in order.

“A pair o’ jack-boots,—two brushes,—blackening,—and a burnisher.” Having set these down, one by one, upon the dresser, he wheeled, and addressed himself to Bellew, as follows:

“Mr. Bellew, sir,—this evening being the anniversary of a certain — event, sir, I will ask you — to excuse me — while I make the necessary preparations — to honour this anniversary — as is ever my custom.” As he ended, he dropped the two brushes, the blacking, and the burnisher inside the legs of the boots, picked them up with a sweep of the arm, and, turning short round, strode out into the little garden.

“A fine fellow is Dick, sir!” nodded Peterday, beginning to fill a long clay pipe, “Lord! — what a sailor he’d ha’ made, to be sure! — failing which he’s as fine a soldier as ever was, or will be, with enough war-medals to fill my Sunday hat, sir. When he lost his arm they gave him the V. C., and his discharge, sir, — because why — because a soldier wi’ one arm ain’t any more good than a sailor wi’ one leg, d’ye see. So they tried to discharge Dick, but — Lord love you! — they couldn’t, sir, — because why? — because Dick were a soldier bred and born, and is as much a soldier to-day, as

ever he was, — ah! and always will be — until he goes marching aloft, — like poor Tom Bowling, — until one as is General of all the armies, and Admiral of all the fleets as ever sailed, shall call the last muster-roll, sir. At this present moment, sir,” continued the sailor, lighting his pipe with a live coal from the fire, “my mess-mate is a-sitting to the leeward o’ the plum tree outside, a polishing of his jack-boots, — as don’t need polishing, and a burnishing of his spurs, — as don’t need burnishing. And because why? — because he goes on guard, to-night, according to custom.”

“On guard!” repeated Bellew, “I’m afraid I don’t understand.”

“Of course you don’t, sir,” chuckled Peterday, “well then, to-night he marches away — in full regimentals, sir, — to mount guard. And — where, do you suppose? — why, I’ll tell you, — under Miss Priscilla’s window! He gets there as the clock is striking eleven, and there he stays, a marching to and fro, until twelve o’clock. Which does him a world o’ good, sir, and noways displeases Miss Priscilla, — because why? — because she don’t know nothing whatever about it.” Hereupon, Peterday rose, and crossing to a battered sea-man’s chest in the corner, came back with three or four tin

whistles which he handed to Bellew, who laid aside his pipe, and, having selected one, ran tentatively up and down the scale while Peterday listened attentive of ear, and beaming of face.

“Sir,” said he, “what do you say to ‘Annie Laurie’ as a start—shall we give ‘em ‘Annie Laurie’?—very good!—ready?—go!”

Thus, George Bellew, American citizen, and millionaire, piped away on a tin whistle with all the gusto in the world,—introducing little trills, and flourishes, here and there, that fairly won the one-legged sailor’s heart.

They had already “given ‘em” three or four selections, each of which had been vociferously encored by Peterday, or Bellew,—and had just finished an impassioned rendering of the “Suwanee River,” when the Sergeant appeared with his boots beneath his arm.

“Shipmate!” cried Peterday, flourishing his whistle, “did ye ever hear a tin whistle better played, or mellerer in tone?”

“Meller—is the only word for it, comrade,—and your playing sirs, is—artistic—though doleful. P’raps you wouldn’t mind giving us something brighter—a rattling quick-step? P’raps you might remember one as begins:

‘Some talk of Alexander
And some, of Hercules;’

if it wouldn’t be troubling you too much?”

Forthwith they burst forth into “The British Grenadiers?” and never did tin whistles render the famous old tune with more fire, and dash. As the stirring notes rang out, the Sergeant, standing upon the hearth, seemed to grow taller, his broad chest expanded, his eyes glowed, a flush crept up into his cheek, and the whole man thrilled to the music as he had done, many a time and oft, in years gone by. As the last notes died away, he glanced down at the empty sleeve pinned across his breast, shook his head, and thanking them in a very gruff voice indeed, turned on his heel, and busied himself at his little cupboard. Peterday now rose, and set a jug together with three glasses upon the table, also spoons, and a lemon, keeping his “weather-eye” meanwhile, upon the kettle,—which last, condescending to boil obligingly, he rapped three times with his wooden leg.

“Right O, shipmate!” he cried, very much as though he had been hailing the “main-top,” whereupon the Sergeant emerged from between the clothes-press and the dresser with a black bottle in his hand, which he passed over to

Peterday who set about brewing what he called a "jorum o' grog," the savour of which filled the place with a right pleasant fragrance. And, when the glasses brimmed, each with a slice of lemon a-top, — the Sergeant solemnly rose.

"Mr. Bellew, and comrade," said he, lifting his glass, "I give you — Miss Priscilla!"

"God bless her!" said Peterday.

"Amen!" added Bellew. So the toast was drunk, — the glasses were emptied, re-filled, and emptied again, — this time more slowly, and, the clock striking nine, Bellew rose to take his leave. Seeing which, the Sergeant fetched his hat and stick, and volunteered to accompany him a little way. So when Bellew had shaken the sailor's honest hand, they set out together.

"Sergeant," said Bellew, after they had walked some distance, "I have a message for you."

"For me, sir?"

"From Miss Priscilla."

"From — indeed, sir!"

"She bid me tell you that — the peaches are riper to-night than ever they were."

The Sergeant seemed to find in this a subject for profound thought, and he strode on beside Bellew very silently, and with his eyes straight before him.

"That the peaches were riper, — to-night, — than ever they were?" said he at last.

"Yes, Sergeant."

"Riper!" said the Sergeant, as though turning this over in his mind.

"Riper than ever they were!" nodded Bellew.

"The — peaches, I think, sir?"

"The peaches, yes." Bellew heard the Sergeant's finger rasping to and fro across his shaven chin.

"Mr. Bellew, sir — she is a — very remarkable woman, sir!"

"Yes, Sergeant!"

"A — wonderful woman!"

"Yes, Sergeant!"

"The kind of woman that — improves with age, sir!"

"Yes, Sergeant."

"Talking of — peaches, sir, I've often thought — she is — very like a peach — herself, sir."

"Very, Sergeant, but —"

"Well, sir?"

"Peaches do — *not* improve with age, Sergeant, — 'and the peaches are — riper than ever they were, — to-night!'" The Sergeant stopped short, and stared at Bellew wide-eyed.

“Why — sir,” said he very slowly, “you don’t mean to say you — think as she — meant — that —?”

“But I do!” nodded Bellew. And now, just as suddenly as he had stopped, the Sergeant turned, and went on again.

“Lord!” he whispered — “Lord! Lord!”

The moon was rising, and looking at the Sergeant, Bellew saw that there was a wonderful light in his face, yet a light that was not of the moon.

“Sergeant,” said Bellew, laying a hand upon his shoulder, “why don’t you speak to her?”

“Speak to her, — what me! No, no, Mr. Bellew!” said the Sergeant, hastily. “No, no, — can’t be done, sir, — not to be mentioned, or thought of, sir!” The light was all gone out of his face, now, and he walked with his chin on his breast.

“The surprising thing to me, Sergeant, is that you have never thought of putting your fortune to the test, and — speaking your mind to her, before now.”

“Thought of it, sir!” repeated the Sergeant, bitterly, “thought of it! — Lord, sir! I’ve thought of it — these five years — and more. I’ve thought of it — day and night.

I’ve thought of it so very much that I know — I never can — speak my mind to her. Look at me!” he cried suddenly, wheeling and confronting Bellew, but not at all like his bold, erect, soldierly self, — “Yes, look at me, — a poor, battered, old soldier — with his — best arm gone, — left behind him in India, and with nothing in the world but his old uniform, — getting very frayed and worn, — like himself, sir, — a pair o’ jack boots, likewise very much worn, though wonderfully patched, here and there, by my good comrade, Peterday, — a handful of medals, and a very modest pension. Look at me, with the best o’ my days behind me, and wi’ only one arm left — and I’m a deal more awkward and helpless with that one arm than you’d think, sir, — look at me, and then tell me how could such a man dare to speak his mind to — such a woman. What right has — such a man to even think of speaking his mind to — such a woman, when there’s part o’ that man already in the grave? Why, no right, sir, — none in the world. Poverty, and one arm, are facts as make it impossible for that man to — ever speak his mind. And, sir — that man — never will. Sir, — good night to you! — and a pleasant walk! — I turn back here.”

Which the Sergeant did, then and there,

wheeling sharp right about face; yet, as Bellew watched him go, he noticed that the soldier's step was heavy, and slow, and it seemed that, for once, the Sergeant had even forgotten to put on his imaginary spurs.

CHAPTER XV

In which Adam explains

“ ADAM! ”

“ Yes, Miss Anthea. ”

“ How much money did Mr. Bellew give you to — buy the furniture? ”

Miss Anthea was sitting in her great elbow chair, leaning forward with her chin in her hand, looking at him in the way which always seemed to Adam as though she could see into the verimost recesses of his mind. Therefore Adam twisted his hat in his hands, and stared at the ceiling, and the floor, and the table before Miss Anthea, and the wall behind Miss Anthea — anywhere but at Miss Anthea.

“ You ax me — how much it were, Miss Anthea? ”

“ Yes, Adam. ”

“ Well, — it were a goodish sum. ”

“ Was it — fifty pounds? ”

“ Fifty pound! ” repeated Adam, in a tone of lofty disdain, “ no, Miss Anthea, it were *not* fifty pound. ”

“ Do you mean it was — more? ”