CHAPTER XVI

A fugitive fine day which had strayed into the month from the approaching spring appeared the next morning, and Miss Alicia was uplifted by the enrapturing suggestion that she should join her new relative in taking a walk, in fact that it should be she who took him to walk and showed him some of his possessions. This, it had revealed itself to him, she could do in a special way of her own, because during her life at Temple Barholm she had felt it her duty to "try to do a little good" among the villagers. She and her long-dead mother and sister had of course been working adjuncts of the vicarage, and had numerous somewhat trying tasks to perform in the way of improving upon "dear papa's" harrying them into attending church, chivying the mothers into sending their children to Sunday-school, and being unsparing in severity of any conduct which might be construed into implying lack of appreciation of the vicar or respect for his eloquence.

It had been necessary for them as members of the vicar's family--always, of course, without adding a sixpence to the household bills--to supply bowls of nourishing broth and arrowroot to invalids and to bestow the aid and encouragement which result in a man of God's being regarded with affection and gratitude by his parishioners. Many a man's career in the church, "dear papa" had frequently observed, had been ruined by lack of intelligence and effort on the part of the

female members of his family.

"No man could achieve proper results," he had said, "if he was hampered by the selfish influence and foolishness of his womenkind. Success in the church depends in one sense very much upon the conduct of a man's female relatives."

After the deaths of her mother and sister, Miss Alicia had toiled on patiently, fading day by day from a slim, plain, sweet-faced girl to a slim, even plainer and sweeter-faced middle-aged and at last elderly woman. She had by that time read aloud by bedsides a great many chapters in the Bible, had given a good many tracts, and bestowed as much arrowroot, barley-water, and beef-tea as she could possibly encompass without domestic disaster. She had given a large amount of conscientious, if not too intelligent, advice, and had never failed to preside over her Sunday-school class or at mothers' meetings. But her timid unimpressiveness had not aroused enthusiasm or awakened comprehension. "Miss Alicia," the cottage women said, "she's well meanin', but she's not one with a head." "She reminds me," one of them had summed her up, "of a hen that lays a' egg every day, but it's too small for a meal, and 'u'd never hatch into anythin'."

During her stay at Temple Barholm she had tentatively tried to do a little "parish work," but she had had nothing to give, and she was always afraid that if Mr. Temple Barholm found her out, he would be angry, because he would think she was presuming. She was aware that

the villagers knew that she was an object of charity herself, and a person who was "a lady" and yet an object of charity was, so to speak, poaching upon their own legitimate preserves. The rector and his wife were rather grand people, and condescended to her greatly on the few occasions of their accidental meetings. She was neither smart nor influential enough to be considered as an asset.

It was she who "conversed" during their walk, and while she trotted by Tembarom's side looking more early-Victorian than ever in a neat, fringed mantle and a small black bonnet of a fashion long decently interred by a changing world, Tembarom had never seen anything resembling it in New York; but he liked it and her increasingly at every moment.

It was he who made her converse. He led her on by asking her questions and being greatly interested in every response she made. In fact, though he was quite unaware of the situation, she was creating for him such an atmosphere as he might have found in a book, if he had had the habit of books. Everything she told him was new and quaint and very often rather touching. She related anecdotes about herself and her poor little past without knowing she was doing it. Before they had talked an hour he had an astonishing clear idea of "poor dear papa" and "dearest Emily" and "poor darling mama" and existence at Rowcroft Vicarage. He "caught on to" the fact that though she was very much given to the word "dear,"--people were "dear," and so were things and places,--she never even by chance slipped into saying "dear Rowcroft,"

which she would certainly have done if she had ever spent a happy moment in it.

As she talked to him he realized that her simple accustomedness to English village life and all its accompaniments of county surroundings would teach him anything and everything he might want to know. Her obscurity had been surrounded by stately magnificence, with which she had become familiar without touching the merest outskirts of its privileges. She knew names and customs and families and things to be cultivated or avoided, and though she would be a little startled and much mystified by his total ignorance of all she had breathed in since her birth, he felt sure that she would not regard him either with private contempt or with a lessened liking because he was a vandal pure and simple.

And she had such a nice, little, old polite way of saying things. When, in passing a group of children, he failed to understand that their hasty bobbing up and down meant that they were doing obeisance to him as lord of the manor, she spoke with the prettiest apologetic courtesy.

"I'm sure you won't mind touching your hat when they make their little curtsies, or when a villager touches his forehead," she said.

"Good Lord! no," he said, starting. "Ought I? I didn't know they were doing it at me." And he turned round and made a handsome bow and

grinned almost affectionately at the small, amazed party, first puzzling, and then delighting, them, because he looked so extraordinarily friendly. A gentleman who laughed at you like that ought to be equal to a miscellaneous distribution of pennies in the future, if not on the spot. They themselves grinned and chuckled and nudged one another, with stares and giggles.

"I am sorry to say that in a great many places the villagers are not nearly so respectful as they used to be," Miss Alicia explained. "In Rowcroft the children were very remiss about curtseying. It's quite sad. But Mr. Temple Barholm was very strict indeed in the matter of demanding proper respectfulness. He has turned men off their farms for incivility. The villagers of Temple Barholm have much better manners than some even a few miles away."

"Must I tip my hat to all of them?" he asked.

"If you please. It really seems kinder. You--you needn't quite lift it, as you did to the children just now. If you just touch the brim lightly with your hand in a sort of military salute--that is what they are accustomed to."

After they had passed through the village street she paused at the end of a short lane and looked up at him doubtfully.

"Would you--I wonder if you would like to go into a cottage," she

said.

"Go into a cottage?" he asked. "What cottage? What for?"

He had not the remotest idea of any reason why he should go into a cottage inhabited by people who were entire strangers to him, and Miss Alicia felt a trifle awkward at having to explain anything so wholly natural.

"You see, they are your cottages, and the people are your tenants, and--"

"But perhaps they mightn't like it. It might make 'em mad," he argued. "If their water-pipes had busted, and they'd asked me to come and look at them or anything; but they don't know me yet. They might think I was Mr. Buttinski."

"I don't quite--" she began. "Buttinski is a foreign name; it sounds Russian or Polish. I'm afraid I don't quite understand why they should mistake you for him."

Then he laughed--a boyish shout of laughter which brought a cottager to the nearest window to peep over the pots of fuchsias and geraniums blooming profusely against the diamond panes.

"Say," he apologized, "don't be mad because I laughed. I'm laughing at

myself as much as at anything. It's a way of saying that they might think I was 'butting in' too much-- pushing in where I wasn't asked. See? I said they might think I was Mr. Butt-in-ski! It's just a bit of fool slang. You're not mad, are you?"

"Oh, no!" she said. "Dear me! no. It is very funny, of course. I'm afraid I'm extremely ignorant about--about foreign humor" It seemed more delicate to say "foreign" than merely "American." But her gentle little countenance for a few seconds wore a baffled expression, and she said softly to herself, "Mr. Buttinski, Butt-in--to intrude. It sounds quite Polish; I think even more Polish than Russian."

He was afraid he would yell with glee, but he did not. Herculean effort enabled him to restrain his feelings, and present to her only an ordinary-sized smile.

"I shouldn't know one from the other," he said; "but if you say it sounds more Polish, I bet it does."

"Would you like to go into a cottage?" she inquired. "I think it might be as well. They will like the attention."

"Will they? Of course I'll go if you think that. What shall I say?" he asked somewhat anxiously.

"If you think the cottage looks clean, you might tell them so, and ask

a few questions about things. And you must be sure to inquire about Susan Hibblethwaite's legs."

"What?" ejaculated Tembarom.

"Susan Hibblethwaite's legs," she replied in mild explanation. "Susan is Mr. Hibblethwaite's unmarried sister, and she has very bad legs. It is a thing one notices continually among village people, more especially the women, that they complain of what they call `bad legs.' I never quite know what they mean, whether it is rheumatism or something different, but the trouble is always spoken of as `bad legs' And they like you to inquire about them, so that they can tell you their symptoms."

"Why don't they get them cured?"

"I don't know, I'm sure. They take a good deal of medicine when they can afford it. I think they like to take it. They're very pleased when the doctor gives them `a bottle o' summat,' as they call it. Oh, I mustn't forget to tell you that most of them speak rather broad Lancashire."

"Shall I understand them?" Tembarom asked, anxious again. "Is it a sort of Dago talk?"

"It is the English the working-classes speak in Lancashire. 'Summat'

means 'something.' 'Whoam' means 'home.' But I should think you would be very clever at understanding things."

"I'm scared stiff," said Tembarom, not in the least uncourageously; "but I want to go into a cottage and hear some of it. Which one shall we go into?"

There were several whitewashed cottages in the lane, each in its own bit of garden and behind its own hawthorn hedge, now bare and wholly unsuggestive of white blossoms and almond scent to the uninitiated. Miss Alicia hesitated a moment.

"We will go into this one, where the Hibblethwaites live," she decided. "They are quite clean, civil people. They have a naughty, queer, little crippled boy, but I suppose they can't keep him in order because he is an invalid. He's rather rude, I'm sorry to say, but he's rather sharp and clever, too. He seems to lie on his sofa and collect all the gossip of the village."

They went together up the bricked path, and Miss Alicia knocked at the low door with her knuckles. A stout, apple-faced woman opened it, looking a shade nervous.

"Good morning, Mrs. Hibblethwaite," said Miss Alicia in a kind but remote manner. "The new Mr. Temple Barholm has been kind enough to come to see you. It's very good of him to come so soon, isn't it?"

"It is that," Mrs. Hibblethwaite answered respectfully, looking him over. "Wilt tha coom in, sir?"

Tembarom accepted the invitation, feeling extremely awkward because Miss Alicia's initiatory comment upon his goodness in showing himself had "rattled" him. It had made him feel that he must appear condescending, and he had never condescended to any one in the whole course of his existence. He had, indeed, not even been condescended to. He had met with slanging and bullying, indifference and brutality of manner, but he had not met with condescension.

"I hope you're well, Mrs. Hibblethwaite," he answered. "You look it."

"I deceive ma looks a good bit, sir," she answered. "Mony a day ma legs is nigh as bad as Susan's."

"Tha 'rt jealous o' Susan's legs," barked out a sharp voice from a corner by the fire.

The room had a flagged floor, clean with recent scrubbing with sandstone; the whitewashed walls were decorated with pictures cut from illustrated papers; there was a big fireplace, and by it was a hard-looking sofa covered with blue- and-white checked cotton stuff. A boy of about ten was lying on it, propped up with a pillow. He had a big head and a keen, ferret-eyed face, and just now was looking round the

end of his sofa at the visitors. "Howd tha tongue, Tummas! " said his mother. "I wunnot howd it," Tummas answered. "Ma tongue's th' on'y thing about me as works right, an' I'm noan goin' to stop it."

"He's a young nowt," his mother explained; "but, he's a cripple, an' we conna do owt wi' him."

"Do not be rude, Thomas," said Miss Alicia, with dignity.

"Dunnot be rude thysen," replied Tummas. "I'm noan o' thy lad."

Tembarom walked over to the sofa.

"Say," he began with jocular intent, "you've got a grouch on, ain't you?"

Tummas turned on him eyes which bored. An analytical observer or a painter might have seen that he had a burning curiousness of look, a sort of investigatory fever of expression.

"I dunnot know what tha means," he said. "Happen tha'rt talkin' 'Merican?"

"That's just what it is," admitted Tembarom. " What are you talking?"

"Lancashire," said Tummas. "Theer's some sense i' that."

Tembarom sat down near him. The boy turned over against his pillow and put his chin in the hollow of his palm and stared.

"I've wanted to see thee," he remarked. "I've made mother an' Aunt Susan an' feyther tell me every bit they've heared about thee in the village. Theer was a lot of it. Tha coom fro' 'Meriker?"

"Yes." Tembarom began vaguely to feel the demand in the burning curiosity.

"Gi' me that theer book," the boy said, pointing to a small table heaped with a miscellaneous jumble of things and standing not far from him. "It's a' atlas," he added as Tembarom gave it to him. "Yo' con find places in it." He turned the leaves until he found a map of the world. "Theer's 'Meriker," he said, pointing to the United States. "That theer's north and that theer's south. All th' real 'Merikens comes from the North, wheer New York is."

"I come from New York," said Tembarom.

"Tha wert born i' th' workhouse, tha run about th' streets i' rags, tha pretty nigh clemmed to death, tha blacked boots, tha sold newspapers, tha feyther was a common workin'-mon-- and now tha's coom into Temple Barholm an' sixty thousand a year."

"The last part's true all right," Tembarom owned, "but there's some mistakes in the first part. I wasn't born in the workhouse, and though I've been hungry enough, I never starved to death--if that's what `clemmed' means."

Tummas looked at once disappointed and somewhat incredulous.

"That's th' road they tell it i' th' village," he argued.

"Well, let them tell it that way if they like it best. That's not going to worry me," Tembarom replied uncombatively.

Tummas's eyes bored deeper into him.

"Does na tha care?" he demanded.

"What should I care for? Let every fellow enjoy himself his own way."

"Tha'rt not a bit like one o' th' gentry," said Tummas. "Tha'rt quite a common chap. Tha'rt as common as me, for aw tha foine clothes."

"People are common enough, anyhow," said Tembarom. "There's nothing much commoner, is there? There's millions of 'em everywhere -- billions of 'em. None of us need put on airs."

"Tha'rt as common as me," said Tummas, reflectively. "An' yet tha owns

Temple Barholm an' aw that brass. I conna mak' out how th' loike happens."

"Neither can I; but it does all samee."

"It does na happen i' 'Meriker," exulted Tummas. "Everybody's equal theer."

"Rats!" ejaculated Tembarom. "What about multimillionaires?"

He forgot that the age of Tummas was ten. It was impossible not to forget it. He was, in fact, ten hundred, if those of his generation had been aware of the truth. But there he sat, having spent only a decade of his most recent incarnation in a whitewashed cottage, deprived of the use of his legs.

Miss Alicia, seeing that Tembarom was interested in the boy, entered into domestic conversation with Mrs. Hibblethwaite at the other side of the room. Mrs. Hibblethwaite was soon explaining the uncertainty of Susan's temper on wash-days, when it was necessary to depend on her legs.

"Can't you walk at all?" Tembarom asked. Tummas shook his head. "How long have you been lame?"

"Ever since I wur born. It's summat like rickets. I've been lyin' here

aw my days. I look on at foak an' think 'em over. I've got to do summat. That's why I loike th' atlas. Little Ann Hutchinson gave it to me onct when she come to see her grandmother."

Tembarom sat upright.

"Do you know her?" he exclaimed.

"I know her best o' onybody in th' world. An' I loike her best."

"So do I," rashly admitted Tembarom.

"Tha does?" Tummas asked suspiciously. "Does she loike thee?"

"She says she does." He tried to say it with proper modesty.

"Well, if she says she does, she does. An' if she does, then yo an' me'll be friends." He stopped a moment, and seemed to be taking Tembarom in with thoroughness. "I could get a lot out o' thee," he said after the inspection.

"A lot of what?" Tembarom felt as though he would really like to hear.

"A lot o' things I want to know about. I wish I'd lived th' life tha's lived, clemmin' or no clemmin'. Tha's seen things goin' on every day o' thy loife."

"Well, yes, there's been plenty going on, plenty," Tembarom admitted.

"I've been lying here for ten year'," said Tummas, savagely. "An' I've had nowt i' th' world to do an' nowt to think on but what I could mak' foak tell me about th' village. But nowt happens but this chap gettin' drunk an' that chap deein' or losin' his place, or wenches gettin' married or havin' childer. I know everything that happens, but it's nowt but a lot o' women clackin'. If I'd not been a cripple, I'd ha' been at work for mony a year by now, 'arnin' money to save by an' go to 'Meriker."

"You seem to be sort of stuck on America. How's that?"

"What dost mean?"

"I mean you seem to like it."

"I dunnot loike it nor yet not loike it, but I've heard a bit more about it than I have about th' other places on th' map. Foak goes there to seek their fortune, an' it seems loike there's a good bit doin'."

"Do you like to read newspapers?" said Tembarom, inspired to his query by a recollection of the vision of things "doin'" in the Sunday Earth.

"Wheer'd I get papers from?" the boy asked testily. "Foak like us hasn't got th' brass for 'em."

"I'll bring you some New York papers," promised Tembarom, grinning a little in anticipation. "And we'll talk about the news that's in them. The Sunday Earth is full of pictures. I used to work on that paper myself."

"Tha did?" Tummas cried excitedly. "Did tha help to print it, or was it th' one tha sold i' th' streets?"

"I wrote some of the stuff in it."

"Wrote some of th' stuff in it? Wrote it thaself ? How could tha, a common chap like thee?" he asked, more excited still, his ferret eyes snapping.

"I don't know how I did it," Tembarom answered, with increased cheer and interest in the situation. " It wasn't high-brow sort of work."

Tummas leaned forward in his incredulous eagerness.

"Does tha mean that they paid thee for writin' it--paid thee?"

"I guess they wouldn't have done it if they'd been Lancashire, "Tembarom answered." But they hadn't much more sense than I had. They

paid me twenty-five dollars a week-- that's five pounds."

"I dunnot believe thee," said Tummas, and leaned back on his pillow short of breath.

"I didn't believe it myself till I'd paid my board two weeks and bought a suit of clothes with it," was Tembarom's answer, and he chuckled as he made it.

But Tummas did believe it. This, after he had recovered from the shock, became evident. The curiosity in his face intensified itself; his eagerness was even vaguely tinged with something remotely resembling respect. It was not, however, respect for the money which had been earned, but for the store of things "doin'" which must have been required. It was impossible that this chap knew things undreamed of.

"Has tha ever been to th' Klondike ? " he asked after a long pause.

"No. I've never been out of New York."

Tummas seemed fretted and depressed.

"Eh, I'm sorry for that. I wished tha'd been to th' Klondike. I want to be towd about it," he sighed. He pulled the atlas toward him and found a place in it.

"That theer's Dawson," he announced. Tembarom saw that the region of the Klondike had been much studied. It was even rather faded with the frequent passage of searching fingers, as though it had been pored over with special curiosity.

"There's gowd-moines theer," revealed Tummas. "An' theer's welly newt else but snow an' ice. A young chap as set out fro' here to get theer froze to death on th' way."

"How did you get to hear about it?"

"Ann she browt me a paper onet." He dug under his pillow, and brought out a piece of newspaper, worn and frayed and cut with age and usage. "This heer's what's left of it." Tembarom saw that it was a fragment from an old American sheet and that a column was headed "The Rush for the Klondike."

"Why didna tha go theer?" demanded Tummas. He looked up from his fragment and asked his question with a sudden reflectiveness, as though a new and interesting aspect of things had presented itself to him.

"I had too much to do in New York," said Tembarom. "There's always something doing in New York, you know."

Tummas silently regarded him a moment or so.

"It's a pity tha didn't go," he said." Happen tha'd never ha' coom back."

Tembarom laughed the outright laugh.

"Thank you," he answered.

Tummas was still thinking the matter over and was not disturbed.

"I was na thinkin' o' thee," he said in an impersonal tone. "I was thinkin' o' t' other chap. If tha'd gon i'stead o' him, he'd ha' been here i'stead o' thee. Eh, but it's funny." And he drew a deep breath like a sigh having its birth in profundity of baffled thought.

Both he and his evident point of view were "funny" in the Lancashire sense, which does not imply humor, but strangeness and the unexplainable. Singular as the phrasing was, Tembarom knew what he meant, and that he was thinking of the oddity of chance. Tummas had obviously heard of "poor Jem" and had felt an interest in him.

"You're talking about Jem Temple Barholm I guess," he said. Perhaps the interest he himself had felt in the tragic story gave his voice a tone somewhat responsive to Tummas's own mood, for Tummas, after one more boring glance, let himself go. His interest in this special

subject was, it revealed itself, a sort of obsession. The history of Jem Temple Barholm had been the one drama of his short life.

"Aye, I was thinkin' o' him," he said. "I should na ha' cared for th' Klondike so much but for him."

"But he went away from England when you were a baby."

"Th' last toime he coom to Temple Barholm wur when I wur just born. Foak said he coom to ax owd Temple Barholm if he'd help him to pay his debts, an' th' owd chap awmost kicked him out o' doors. Mother had just had me, an' she was weak an' poorly an' sittin' at th' door wi' me in her arms, an' he passed by an' saw her. He stopped an' axed her how she was doin'. An' when he was goin' away, he gave her a gold sovereign, an' he says, `Put it in th' savin's-bank for him, an' keep it theer till he's a big lad an' wants it.' It's been in th' savin's-bank ever sin'. I've got a whole pound o' ma own out at interest. There's not many lads ha' got that."

"He must have been a good-natured fellow," commented Tembarom. "It was darned bad luck him going to the Klondike."

"It was good luck for thee," said Tummas, with resentment.

"Was it?" was Tembarom's unbiased reply. "Well, I guess it was, one way or the other. I'm not kicking, anyhow."

Tummas naturally did not know half he meant. He went on talking about Jem Temple Barholm, and as he talked his cheeks flushed and his eyes lighted.

"I would na spend that sovereign if I was starvin'. I'm going to leave it to Ann Hutchinson in ma will when I dee. I've axed questions about him reet and left ever sin' I can remember, but theer's nobody knows much. Mother says he was fine an' handsome, an' gentry through an' through. If he'd coom into th' property, he'd ha' coom to see me again I'll lay a shillin', because I'm a cripple an' I canna spend his sovereign. If he'd coom back from th' Klondike, happen he'd ha' towd me about it." He pulled the atlas toward him, and laid his thin finger on the rubbed spot. "He mun ha' been killed somewheer about here," he sighed. "Somewheer here. Eh, it's funny."

Tembarom watched him. There was something that rather gave you the "Willies" in the way this little cripple seemed to have taken to the dead man and worried along all these years thinking him over and asking questions and studying up the Klondike because he was killed there. It was because he'd made a kind of story of it. He'd enjoyed it in the way people enjoy stories in a newspaper. You always had to give 'em a kind of story; you had to make a story even if you were telling about a milk-wagon running away. In newspaper offices you heard that was the secret of making good with what you wrote. Dish it up as if it was a sort of story.

He not infrequently arrived at astute enough conclusions concerning things. He had arrived at one now. Shut out even from the tame drama of village life, Tummas, born with an abnormal desire for action and a feverish curiosity, had hungered and thirsted for the story in any form whatsoever. He caught at fragments of happenings, and colored and dissected them for the satisfying of unfed cravings. The vanished man had been the one touch of pictorial form and color in his ten years of existence. Young and handsome and of the gentry, unfavored by the owner of the wealth which some day would be his own possession, stopping "gentry-way" at a cottage door to speak good-naturedly to a pale young mother, handing over the magnificence of a whole sovereign to be saved for a new-born child, going away to vaguely understood disgrace, leaving his own country to hide himself in distant lands, meeting death amid snow and ice and surrounded by gold-mines, leaving his empty place to be filled by a boot-black newsboy--true there was enough to lie and think over and to try to follow with the help of maps and excited questions.

"I wish I could ha' seen him," said Tummas. "I'd awmost gi' my sovereign to get a look at that picture in th' gallery at Temple Barholm."

"What picture?" Tembarom asked. "Is there a picture of him there?"

"There is na one o' him, but there's one o' a lad as deed two hundred

year' ago as they say wur th' spit an' image on him when he wur a lad hissen. One o' th' owd servants towd mother it wur theer."

This was a natural stimulus to interest and curiosity.

"Which one is it? Jinks! I'd like to see it myself. Do you know which one it is? There's hundreds of them."

"No, I dunnot know," was Tummas's dispirited answer, "an' neither does mother. Th' woman as knew left when owd Temple Barholm deed."

"Tummas," broke in Mrs. Hibblethwaite from the other end of the room, to which she had returned after taking Miss Alicia out to complain about the copper in the "wash-'us'--" "Tummas, tha'st been talkin' like a magpie. Tha'rt a lot too bold an' ready wi' tha tongue. Th' gentry's noan comin' to see thee if tha clacks th' heads off theer showthers."

"I'm afraid he always does talk more than is good for him," said Miss Alicia. "He looks quite feverish."

"He has been talking to me about Jem Temple Barholm," explained Tembarom. "We've had a regular chin together. He thinks a heap of poor Jem."

Miss Alicia looked startled, and Mrs. Hibblethwaite was plainly

flustered tremendously. She quite lost her temper.

"Eh," she exclaimed, "tha wants tha young yed knocked off, Tummas Hibblethwaite. He's fair daft about th' young gentleman as--as was killed. He axes questions mony a day till I'd give him th' stick if he wasna a cripple. He moithers me to death."

"I'll bring you some of those New York papers to look at," Tembarom said to the boy as he went away.

He walked back through the village to Temple Barholm, holding Miss Alicia's elbow in light, affectionate guidance and support, a little to her embarrassment and also a little to her delight. Until he had taken her into the dining-room the night before she had never seen such a thing done. There was no over- familiarity in the action. It merely seemed somehow to suggest liking and a wish to take care of her.

"That little fellow in the village," he said after a silence in which it occurred to her that he seemed thoughtful, "what a little freak he is! He's got an idea that there's a picture in the gallery that's said to look like Jem Temple Barholm when he was a boy. Have you ever heard anything about it? He says a servant told his mother it was there."

"Yes, there is one," Miss Alicia answered. "I sometimes go and look at it. But it makes me feel very sad. It is the handsome boy who was a

page in the court of Charles II. He died in his teens. His name was Miles Hugo Charles James. Jem could see the likeness himself. Sometimes for a little joke I used to call him Miles Hugo."

"I believe I remember him," said Tembarom. "I believe I asked Palford his name. I must go and have a look at him again. He hadn't much better luck than the fellow that looked like him, dying as young as that."