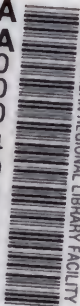
HOLIDAYS AMONG THE MOUNTAINS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HOLIDAYS AMONG THE MOUNTAINS

OR

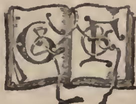
Scenes and Stories of Wales

BY

M. BETHAM EDWARDS

AUTHOR OF "CHARLIE AND EARNEST; OR, PLAY AND WORK," ETC., ETC.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY F. J. SKILL



GRIFFITH, FARRAN, OKEDEN & WELSH

(SUCCESSORS TO NEWBERY AND HARRIS)

WEST CORNER ST PAUL'S CHURCHYARD, LONDON

E. P. DUTTON & CO., NEW YORK

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HOLIDAYS AMONG THE MOUNTAINS.

CHAPTER I.

BEATRICE'S DIARY.

AUGUST 18th.—We left noisy, but brilliant Paris on Wednesday, stayed a night in London, and yesterday travelled by express train to Llangollen. Oh! what a treat it was to see the fresh green meadows, and cool rivulets, and gleaming orchards! but we came so fast, that we only got a peep at all these. However, we consoled ourselves for such short glimpses by thinking that we should soon be rambling all day long among woods and mountains; for we are going to take a tour through North Wales. There are five of us—Aunt Adèle, Uncle Louis, my cousin Sylvine, and Mademoiselle Allemeyer, our German governess—besides the servants.

I am Beatrice Greenwood, and am fifteen years old; Sylvine is only twelve, but we are good friends for all that. We live in Paris in the winter; but travel somewhere every autumn, for Aunt Adèle likes change, and my uncle is very rich.

Mademoiselle Allemeyer is the dearest, kindest creature in the world, and was as pleased as a child

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to get sight of the Welsh mountains, for they reminded her of Switzerland, where she has lived many years. I think we shall all enjoy this trip immensely. We have brought with us sketch-books, pencils, paints, a microscope, a tin case for ferns, and a blank book each for diaries—not that I think Sylvine will use any of these things, for she is too fond of idleness to care for anything requiring a little patience. Mademoiselle Allemeyer and I, however, intend sketching every pretty view we can, and collecting ferns, grasses, wild flowers, etc.; for we both take great interest in such things, and she knows a great deal about botany and natural history.

At Banbury we lunched off the celebrated Banbury cakes, and found them delicious. We afterwards passed through a very smoky district, the great centres of the hardware manufactories and coal mining operations. How dreary the tall black factory chimneys looked with the dusky light issuing from them! I thought of the poor people who work in the factories, and wondered if ever they got a holiday, and tasted real pure country air. I am sure they must want it.

We caught a passing view of Oxford, with its spires and university towers; Warwick and its grand old castle, which made me think of the days of Warwick the King-maker; Lichfield, where that clever, severe Dr Johnson was born, who wrote the English Dictionary, and whose Life Boswell has made so interesting; Wolverhampton and Birmingham, where guns, cannon, etc., are made; and Bildston,

with other towns that I cannot remember, where the poor inhabitants are chiefly employed in the collieries.

About five o'clock we reached Llangollen Road, where we alighted, and immediately proceeded, by coach, to the town. My uncle had ordered a carriage, but by some mistake it did not appear; however, we had no difficulty in getting seats in the coach, and enjoyed the novelty. We rode outside in order to see the valley, and had to climb up steps to get to our seats; when once seated, I felt as if I could never get down again, we were so far off the ground. What a lovely view we had! rugged mountains, rich foliage, and the little river Dee making white eddies over its stony uneven bed. Mountain after mountain rose around us. I don't wonder now how the ancient British contrived to keep off their enemies, when they had such natural defences; for, before roads were made, it must have been a great undertaking to climb such heights. Being very tired, we went to bed early, and slept, oh, so soundly! This morning Sylvine woke me by crying out—

"Oh! Beatrice, look at the mountains! look at the pretty river dashing over the stones, and at the donkeys climbing on the hills—pray don't sleep any longer."

I then rose, for it was eight o'clock; and we breakfasted on fresh trout from the stream. A Welsh harper played in the hall of our hotel all day, and Aunt Adèle sent Sylvine to give him half-a-

crown. He richly deserved it, for he played beautifully. After breakfast we went to see Crow Castle. Sylvine and I had donkeys, which clambered up the hill capitally; and what a steep hill it was! The ruins of Crow Castle are on the top, and are well worth seeing, for they are said to have been built by the Britons before the Roman invasion.

After dinner we took a long walk by the canal, which is very clear, and shaded by high banks crowded with trees. A beautiful wild swan rose from the waters just before us, and flew away over the hill. We also saw a squirrel in a little thicket, which greatly delighted Sylvine. Turning off by some slate walks, we came to Valle Crucis (or *the Valley of the Cross*) Abbey, a ruin of King John's time, and well worthy of being sketched, having a graceful archway entire. Whilst Mademoiselle Allemeyer and I sketched, what must Miss Sylvine do, but find her way to a little copse near, and get into conversation with a peasant child, who was perched on a tree gathering acorns. She was the oddest-looking little figure in the world, bare-legged, and wearing a black wide-awake hat and red petticoat, but having a pretty, good-natured face. She could not speak much English, however, and the dialogue was a curious affair; it ended by Sylvine giving her a penny, at which the child blushed and smiled as if it were almost too large a sum to take.

The poor people here seem very clean and civil, but do not speak English well. Susette, our maid, says London is a great deal more to her taste than

Llangollen; she says there is not a shop here worth looking at. As if we came all the way from Paris to look at shops!

CHAPTER II.

THE HOME ON THE HILL-SIDE.

FAR away from busy London, far away from the smoke and bustle of towns, and very, very far removed from wealth and worldliness, lived Jenny Roberts. I hope you are prepared to like her. She was not clever, she was not pretty, she was not free from faults; but she was always so willing to learn—her eyes were so bright with content and good-nature—and she was so sorry when she had done wrong, that most people who knew her loved her very much.

She lived in a lonely spot amid the Welsh hills. I think I must describe the place to you, it was so wild and solitary. Her father's cottage stood in a little niche on the side of a high hill, which sheltered it from the cold winds and snows of winter. Standing in Mr Roberts' porch, you could see a vast range of mountains, one rising above the other in countless succession, and varying in colour from violet, orange, dark brown, and emerald. They seemed so high and grand that you might almost fancy you were shut out from the world entirely, and that the inhabitants of the valley

below could not know what sorrow, or poverty, or sin was. The valley below was very lovely, with rich green pastures, and in the midst a little river, foaming and rushing with a noise like a cataract over its rocky bed. Here and there stood a small white house or stone-built, poor-looking cottage, but they were very few and far between. Cattle and sheep browsed on the turf by the river side, and even high up on the mountains sheep and donkeys might be seen climbing from place to place in search of food, but otherwise the place would have looked quite desolate. You might walk all round the valley and not meet a single living creature. In the autumn, however, it was not so desolate, for Nant Llysin was noted for its scenery, and English travellers visited it in great numbers.

Jenny's home was a neat little house with gable ends, on which grew bright red creeping flowers, and having a porch ornamented in grey stone. A small garden surrounded it, and a steep path cut in the rock led down to the road beneath. Down this steep path how many times in the day would Jenny run, lightly and swiftly as a squirrel, and very contented was she with her lonely mountain home. She had no brothers or sisters, but she had a father who made a friend of his child, and who made up to her for the want of any other companion. He was alike her teacher, her friend, and her playmate. Oh! how she loved him! Her mother had died when Jenny was a baby, so that she never knew what it was to have or lose a mother's love: but her

aunt had taken charge of her ever since, and though she was not perhaps so forbearing or so tender as a mother would have been, she was always kind, and the little girl loved her and was grateful. Aunt Ana was, however, no companion to her. She never joined in her games, or studies, or employments, and if it had not been for Mr Roberts she would have felt very solitary. It was impossible to feel dull with him. In the summer they took long walks together, and made collections of ferns and wild flowers; in the winter she sat on his knees during the long evenings, and he would tell her of far-off countries, of curious adventures, of strange stories in history, of the habits of birds and animals, of discoveries by sea, or wonders on shore; and all these subjects he would make as interesting as fairy tales. So, though Jenny had no parties or school-fellows, or pantomimes, or such holiday treats as many of us have, she was blithe as the little bird that sings in the wood, and wished for nothing beyond. Indeed, she had no time to think about being discontented, even had she been inclined to complain. Up with the lark, she put on her little felt hat, and slinging a small can on one arm, trotted down the rocky path and far down in the valley to fetch milk for breakfast. This was her usual task in summer-time, and she would return looking as healthy and happy as it was possible to be. Breakfast over, she would get together all her books, and, seating herself in the porch, learn her lessons there. Sometimes, when the day was unusually fine, this

was hard work. Her thoughts would stray very far away, or the mountains would look so grand in the sunlight, or the valley so lovely, that her eyes kept wandering to them instead of her books. Lessons over, she was free to run about at will, unless Aunt Ana wanted her to go on an errand, which she often did when they had visitors, and they generally had a party of travellers during the summer months, for Mr Roberts' income was very small. He was therefore glad to let his three prettiest rooms, and dearly Jenny liked having visitors. Sometimes they would take her out for a drive, sometimes they would lend her a new book, sometimes a pleasant lady or gentleman would chat with her by the hour together, or join in her walks with Mr Roberts. All this made a very delightful change, so that the arrival of tourists was always hailed joyfully by the little girl.

At the time our story begins she was twelve years old. Her cheeks glowed with health, her eyes beamed with cheerfulness, her voice was merry, and her step was light—do you think you shall love her?

And thus in quiet days of study, and rambles, and happy employments, with no hours of weariness, no hours of idleness, no envy of riches, no discontent at poverty, lived Jenny Roberts in the Home by the Hill-side.

CHAPTER III.

THE VISITORS AT THE VALE OF LLYSIN.

IT was a lovely day in August. The sun sparkled on the tiny cascades of the noisy river, the grand old mountains seemed to smile and dimple beneath the passing clouds, the birds sang joyfully in Mr Roberts' garden, the pretty squirrels frisked amid the branches of the fir-trees.

"Oh, squirrel, I wish I were you!" thought little Jenny, as she watched one little bright-eyed creature skipping about on the tree opposite. "No lessons to learn, nothing to do but to jump and play all day long."

"Jenny," called the voice of Aunt Ana from within, "be quick with your lessons this morning, I want you to go to the post-office for me before dinner."

"Yes, aunty," and the little curly head dived deep into Mangnall's Questions.

By-and-by it went up again.

"Aunty, do you think we shall have any visitors soon?" she asked.

"That I can't tell," answered Aunt Ana from the parlour; "but if you don't learn your lessons quicker, what will become of my errands if we do have any?"

The squirrel gambolled more prettily than ever, but not once did Jenny look up for a quarter of an

hour; then she ran to her father's room and laid her books before him.

"Please, papa, will you hear me now, for aunty wants me?" Mr Roberts put away his newspaper good-naturedly, and turning towards her, pointed to the clock.

"Twenty minutes behind time, Jenny, how is that?"

"Oh! dear papa, the squirrel was so pretty, and the birds kept singing, 'Come,' and everything looked so beautiful, that somehow I could not learn to-day."

He stroked her cheek and smiled.

"Then I fear we must learn lessons indoors, deary, if there are so many hindrances abroad. But now let us make the most of our time, and then for aunty's errand."

Over history, globes, arithmetic, botany, and Latin, time passed very quickly, and before lessons were quite finished, Aunt Ana popped her head in at the door and said impatiently—

"Can't you spare Jenny now, Owen?"

"If you want her very much she can leave her reading till after dinner," said Mr Roberts, looking up.

"Well, I think she had better do so. The coaches from Caernarvon and Bangor come in at one o'clock, and I want her to run and tell Mrs Williams that we have room for lodgers. Ten to one if there wont be visitors by the coach who will be asking for apartments, and we ought to be making a little money by our rooms now."

"True," answered Mr Roberts; "we have been rather unlucky this year: nobody has been to us yet."

"And I want to buy a new carpet for the parlour to make it comfortable before the winter, and to get Jenny a new dress or two. The child has nothing decent to wear."

Mr Roberts looked rather sad.

"Never mind, aunty," exclaimed Jenny, cheerfully; "I can do as well without new dresses as you can. We shall have some visitors before long, I dare say." Then putting on her little wide-awake hat and short cloak, she started off to the post-office.

It was about a mile off by the road; but Jenny took a shorter route across the pasture, for she had no fear of the quiet black cows who looked up at her as she passed, and the soft grass was far pleasanter to walk upon than the dusty roads. She liked, too, to cross the stepping-stones over the river, and to see the anglers beside it, intent upon their occupation; sometimes an artist would be there sketching the scene, and would let her look at his picture; so the walk by the fields was always preferred. The post-office was at the back of a large hotel where the coaches stopped, and having delivered her message Jenny seated herself on a bench in the shade, to watch their arrival. In a few minutes she heard the heavy rumble of wheels, and a coach drove up heavily laden with dust-covered passengers and luggage.

"Nant Llysin," said the fat, good-tempered coach-

man; "change horses here, ladies and gentlemen, and stop half-an-hour."

One by one the travellers alighted and went into the hotel for refreshment; but to Jenny's great disappointment, all returned to the coach again, and after a little delay, resumed their journey. She felt quite angry with them. Such a pretty place as Nant Llysin was, too! How could they pass through it without spending a single day there? There was another coach, however, to come in, and as dinner was not to be till two o'clock, she resolved to wait.

By-and-by, a carriage dashed up drawn by a pair of spirited horses, and stopped in front of the hotel, just opposite to where Jenny sat. There a lady, whose glittering silk dress quite dazzled her eyes, alighted, and went in, leaving two girls behind. One was about fifteen, with a clever-looking face and quick black eyes, that never rested on the same thing two minutes together; Jenny did not know whether she quite liked the look of her or not; but the little girl she loved at once. She was about her own age, and was very pretty, with small features and long dark hair, which was brushed off her forehead and hung in curls around her shoulders. Her dress, too, moved Jenny to admiration, the little white hat and feather, and the delicate blue dress, looked so well together, she thought.

Soon a gentleman rode up on horseback, and entered into conversation with them.

"Are you going to stay here, Beatrice?" he said to the elder girl.

"I don't know yet," she answered. "Aunt Adèle is gone in to arrange about it."

Just then the lady came out—

"Oh! you have come just in time to give me your opinion. Shall we stay here or go on?"

"It seems to be a good place for fishing. I should like very well to stay," he said.

"And what do you say, Beatrice?"

"I think we could get some pretty sketches here, and I have noticed a great many beautiful ferns. I should like to stay a little while."

"And you, Sylvine?"

"It would be good fun to cross those stepping-stones—do stay, mamma."

"Then I see no objection to the place," resumed the lady; "we must, however, inquire after nice quiet lodgings—"

Jenny jumped from her seat, and rushing across the road, stood before the party breathless with excitement. Then with a slight blush and some hesitation, she said simply—

"If you please, papa has rooms to let."

They all seemed a little astonished, and the elder girl looked so hard at her that she dropped her eyelids shyly; but, thought Jenny, I have only done what is right, and I do not mind what is thought of me.

"And where does your papa live?" asked the gentleman, with a smile.

"There," said Jenny, pointing to her father's cottage, which looked very small in the distance;

"we live in the white house at the foot of the mountain. It is such a pretty place."

"But I am afraid there would not be room for us, my child. One—two—three—four, we should want four bed-rooms, and two or three sitting-rooms."

The little girl's eyes glistened with tears of disappointment.

"We want so much to let our rooms," she said, artlessly.

"Oh, mamma! dear mamma!" cried Sylvine, springing up in the carriage, "do let us go to her papa's. We should only want three rooms. I could sleep with Beatrice."

"We have three rooms," said Jenny.

"Well, said the lady, "we can at least go and see. Would you like to drive with us, my dear, to your father's house?"

You may suppose Aunt Ana, who was setting the dinner table, stared not a little to see Jenny seated beside such smartly-dressed ladies, and wondered how she came there. Mr Roberts too, could hardly believe his eyes. However, it was soon explained, and then Mr and Mrs D'Aubencourt looked at the rooms, whilst Beatrice and Sylvine walked round the garden with Jenny.

"Oh! what a dear little summer-house cut in the rock, and what delightful dangerous little places to climb, and what a lovely clear spring!" cried Sylvine, breathless with eagerness; and stooping

down, she held her little hands beneath the sparkling water and drank from them.

"And what else is dear, delightful, and lovely?" asked Beatrice, smiling, half with amusement, half with annoyance.

"But don't *you* think everything is pretty here?" asked Sylvine, a little damped.

"Not everything, certainly. The house has a bleak, comfortless look, and the garden is bare of flowers. Don't think that I dislike the place," she added, as she saw Jenny's pained look, "I think it has a splendid view, and is very romantic; but Sylvine makes me out of patience—her tongue runs on so." Then she took Jenny's hand with a kindly smile, and after that, in spite of her sharp speeches, she liked her.

To Jenny's unspeakable delight, Aunt Ana soon came out with the news that Mr and Mrs D'Aubencourt had engaged the rooms, and begged the young ladies to come in and take off their hats and cloaks.

Sylvine jumped for joy, clapped her hands, and then throwing her arms round Jenny's neck, kissed her warmly, and exclaimed—"I am sure we shall have such nice games together. How delightful!" Beatrice followed Aunt Ana to the house in silence, thinking to herself—

"Where on earth shall I put my sketching tent and books?"

CHAPTER IV.

JENNY'S NEW FRIEND.

MONSIEUR and Madame D'Aubencourt were wealthy, and fond of change. They resided in Paris during the winter and spring months, but spent the latter part of the summer and the entire autumn in travelling from place to place. Sylvine was their only child, and always accompanied them. She was very much spoiled, but fortunately had a nice disposition; and thus, though she was often self-willed, was never ungrateful or selfish, and many loved her.

Beatrice Greenwood was Sylvine's cousin, and an orphan. Her parents had died when she was but six years old, and since then her uncle and aunt D'Aubencourt had brought her up, and educated her as their own child. She was a high-spirited, clever girl, rather apt to find fault with others, rather given to think too highly of her own acquirements, and rather disposed to look scornfully on those who had inferior abilities to herself; but when she made friends, she never neglected or forgot them, and when she had once resolved to overcome a difficulty, she never rested till it was done. Perhaps she felt a little jealous of Sylvine sometimes—perhaps she envied her the depth and sweetness of her parents' love; but if so, it was but natural, for she had no friends or protectors in the world but Monsieur and Madame D'Aubencourt, and she loved them ardently.

It was arranged that Beatrice and Sylvine, with their governess and maid, who came by the evening's coach, were to stay at Mr Roberts's, whilst Monsieur and Madame D'Aubencourt proposed taking up their residence at a quiet hotel near. You may imagine how delighted the two little girls were, and how a very warm friendship sprang up between them the first day of their acquaintance. Of course Beatrice teased Sylvine about her hasty friendships, and had her little sarcastic speeches ready upon every occasion, but sometimes she was so really kind that Jenny readily forgave her. A day or two passed very pleasantly. Jenny pursued her studies every morning, as usual, with her father, and Beatrice and Sylvine had their regular hours of study with Mademoiselle Allemeyer, their German governess; but I fear that it was very little Sylvine learned. Partly by coaxing, partly by pouting, she obtained holidays without end, and was only impatient that Jenny should have equal liberty. "I'll tell you what it is, Jenny," she said one day, in her droll, Frenchified English, "I can't amuse myself all the mornings without you anyhow; and I will summon up courage to speak to your papa about it; but somehow he is so different from anybody I ever saw, that I am quite afraid of him."

"Afraid of papa!" Jenny exclaimed, half vexed; "everybody loves papa so much."

"So do I—I love him—I am sure I do: but you don't know what I mean, Jenny. When I say I am afraid of him, I mean that I can't say to him what I

do to everybody. Now I think it is a shame for him to keep you to your lessons whilst I am here; and, after all, you learn a great many things which mamma says are quite useless. Mamma says if I learn dancing, and music, and singing well, she does not care about anything else, and none of these does he teach you."

Jenny looked puzzled and grave.

"You are different from me, Sylvine," she said at last; "I am sure papa teaches me all that he thinks I ought to know."

"Well," said the little lady, confidently, "I don't think there is any use in learning those dry sort of books."

"But papa is so much older than we are, dear; of course he knows best."

"Of course he must," exclaimed a voice behind them, and looking up the little girls saw Mr Roberts at the door. A smile was on his lips—could he have heard her words? was Sylvine's first thought. A bright blush rose to her cheeks, and running up to him, she exclaimed, with a comic mixture of repentance and mirthfulness—

"Oh! Mr Roberts, *did* you hear what I was saying?—if you did, please don't scold."

"Little girls should never say things I should not hear," he answered; "but I will hope you were saying something good, for I assuredly only caught Jenny's last words."

His kind playfulness encouraged Sylvine, and she said, placing her little hands coaxingly in his own—

"Do give Jenny a holiday, you dear, kind, darling Mr Roberts." He put up his hands as if shocked, and ran out of the room without a word.

The children followed him, and all three had a good game of hide-and-seek in the garden. Always full of fun, always in good temper, always ready to devise a new game or improve upon an old one, was there ever so delightful a playmate as Mr Roberts?

CHAPTER V.

THE STORM ON THE MOUNTAINS.

"MAMMA, mamma, cried Sylvine, one morning, as she rushed into her mother's dressing-room, "Jenny is going to market to buy eggs and fruit—may I go with her?"

"My dear, go to market! how can you ask such a thing?"

"But, mamma, Jenny is going—why may not I?"

Madame D'Aubencourt smoothed Sylvine's crumpled silk dress, and looked grave.

"What Jenny Roberts does is quite another thing. Consider, darling, the difference of your stations; it is all very well for you to be kind and friendly to her, but do not get too intimate; and as to your going to market with her like any little common cottage girl, I would not think of it for one moment."

Sylvine burst out into a passionate fit of crying.

"I would rather be a little common cottage girl, mamma, and then I could do as Jenny does. I would a great deal sooner go to market, and fetch milk and keep house, than ride in a carriage. If Jenny *is* poor, why should I not make her my friend all the same?—she is ten times more good-natured than Adèle, or Ziphyrine, or cousin Beatrice, or Appiline; and I love her better than any of them."

"Hush, my love," said Madame D'Aubencourt, soothingly; "I have no fault to find with Jenny, but of course there is a great difference between you, and what is very right and proper for her to do, would be very unbecoming in one of a superior station."

Sylvine, however, would not be reasoned with or consoled, and having shed many tears, retired to the window in sullen silence. By-and-by she saw little Jenny come forth from the cottage, dressed in her neat grey stuff frock, and wearing her usual shabby hat, but looking as bright and happy as if she had worn the gayest silks weavers ever made. On her arm she carried a good-sized basket designed for her purchases, and having looked up at the hotel window, with a nod and smile to Sylvine, off she trotted. Her way lay through the valley and over a high hill where the path was cut zig-zag in the rock, and beside which grew lovely ferns, and clusters of firs abounding with squirrels. At the foot of the hill she had to cross the river by means of stepping-stones, and then a shady path by the water's edge led to the little town where the market was held. Now Jenny had described all these beauties to

Sylvine with great enthusiasm (for she dearly loved every inch of her wild, beautiful country), and the little girl's heart burned with impatience to be with her friend. Disappointed and miserable, she returned to Mr Roberts' cottage.

Beatrice was busily painting in their pleasant little sitting-room. Plump, good-natured Mademoiselle Allemeyer read aloud to her from a French book. Both looked up at Sylvine's approach.

"Why, what a grave face my little cousin has!" exclaimed Beatrice. "What is the matter, Sylvine?"

"Oh! Beatrice, I wish I were a little cottage girl—I wish my mamma and papa were as poor as Mr Roberts."

Mademoiselle Allemeyer took off her spectacles and shrugged her shoulders. "What a little unwise child it is!" she said in French; "I only wish my papa and mamma were as rich as yours, my dear."

"What is the use of being rich if we can't do as we like?" asked Sylvine, gloomily.

"And if you were a little cottage girl, I suppose you could do as you liked always, Sylvine?" said Beatrice. "Of course you would never be obliged to go out on errands in the wet and cold,—of course you would never be obliged to eat brown bread and cabbage soup, when you would rather have roast pheasant and custard pudding,—of course you would never have to go barefoot when your father should happen to be without work—"

"Beatrice, how can you be so unkind as to laugh at me in that way? I will never, never tell you my

thoughts again," said Sylvine, indignantly, and wept afresh.

"Don't cry, little one," interposed kind Mademoiselle Allemeyer, "I am sure Beatrice did not mean to hurt your feelings."

"Not for the world, my dear little cousin," said Beatrice, rising from her chair and kissing her impetuously; "why do you get such ideas in your head?—they only make us unhappy."

Now Sylvine very clearly saw that she was in the wrong, and that she had nobody to blame but herself, but like a little foolish, spoilt thing as she was, must needs give way to her temper, and uttering some more angry words, put on her hat and rushed into the garden.

"I will go and meet Jenny," she thought, and noiselessly opening the little wicker gate, she advanced towards the valley. How beautiful everything was! The sun sparkled on the small cascades of the river—the mountains gleamed with the purple and gold of heaths and ferns—the wild swan rose graceful and lovely from the water's edge, and the little bright-eyed squirrel hopped from bough to bough. But Sylvine had no admiration for these. A heart that is discontented within itself is utterly lost to the beauties of the outer world, and Sylvine felt almost provoked that the skies were not gloomy to suit her own feelings. Everything seemed to say—

"Why are you not happy?"

And as she knew that her own folly hindered her from being so, it was a double vexation.

On she went in moody thought. By-and-by she came to the foot of the mountain which she had seen Jenny cross, and taking the first pathway, began to ascend. She soon found, however, that it was very hard work. To a little nimble mountaineer like Jenny Roberts it was an easy matter enough to climb the highest rock in Bretteyn, but to delicate Parisian Sylvine, who always had a pony phaeton and servant at her command, this climbing, and panting, and scramble was by no means pleasant. Her shoes, too, were of the thinnest-soled kid, and before she had got half way up they were quite disfigured by scratches and tears, whilst the sharp stones hurt her feet. However, she would not turn back. It was more than an hour before she reached the summit; and there a wild strange scene was before her. To the right—to the left—in front, stretched one after the other a constant succession of hills. Not a house was in sight—not a single human being. Here and there on the little patches of green were donkeys or sheep feeding—but oh! how quietly! At the foot of the mountain on which she stood was a narrow foot-path, which wound towards another hill in the distance. There was also a path in the contrary direction. The little girl stood irresolute. Which would she take? Which had Jenny taken?

"I'll try the one that winds towards the hill," she determined at last. "Any how, I can turn back again."

By-and-by she felt a large drop of rain fall on her

cheek, and looking up, saw that the sky was overcast and threatening. In five minutes more, rain poured down in torrents, the wind blew, the lightning flashed; then a tremendous peal of thunder rolled overhead.

Sylvine looked round in terror. The mountain-tops were covered with mist—the rain came down with increasing force—the place was utterly solitary. Where should she find shelter? Rushing franticly hither and thither in the vain hopes of finding some cover from the storm, soon she was drenched to the skin. In her first hurry and fright, the strings of her hat had loosened, and it fell unheeded, leaving her long curls to be tangled and soaked by the wind and rain. At last she caught sight of a short overhanging furze, and crouching beneath it, shielded herself a little from the violence of the storm.

It did not last long, however, for in Wales storms are generally short and severe. Soon the sun shone out. A rainbow hung over the hills. The clouds shook off a few last drops, and rolled away in the distance. Then Sylvine emerged from her covert; trembling in every limb with the chill of her wet clothes, her bright blue dress all stained, and jagged, and bespattered; her little shoes ragged, and covered with mud; her hair clinging to her shoulders in one long damp mass.

Her first thought was of return; but then the dreary, toilsome mountain! and so wearied as she was. Tears came into her eyes, and she walked towards the mountain with slow steps.

Just then she heard a voice calling to her from

behind. Oh! what a joyful sound it was; and looking round, she saw a man on the hill opposite, who carried something in his arms, which looked like a little lamb. He shouted to her, and though she could not understand what he said, she stood still and awaited his approach.

"Perhaps he will show me the way home," she thought; "and if not, why should I be afraid of him? Mr Roberts said the other day only wicked people need be afraid of anything or anybody; and I hope I'm not very wicked."

As he came near, she saw that his face was good-natured, and he held tenderly in his arms a poor little lamb. Sylvine immediately liked him; she liked everybody who was kind to animals, and going up to him, she stroked the tiny creature gently, and said,—

"Has it fallen from the rock?"

He shook his head.

"Is it ill?"

Again he shook his head. Ah! thought Sylvine, he is Welsh; he does not understand me. Then she pointed with her finger in the direction of Bretteyn, trying to make him understand she wanted to go there. His face brightened.

"Nant Llysin Hotel?" he said.

"From Mr Roberts's," she answered, and he smiled, and touched her dripping dress.

"Must change"—

"But I must get home first," said Sylvine, and pointed towards Llysin again.

He held up his hand in the opposite direction.

"Change there—go home dry—not catch cold."

She guessed his meaning, and followed him along a narrow path which led down to a hollow, where, entirely shut in by rocks and trees, was a little cottage. The door stood open, and an old woman, wearing a high-crowned black hat, and busily knitting stockings, sat by the fireplace. A neat little girl peeled potatoes at the table, and Sylvine remembered to have seen her face at church. This the child seemed to remember also, for she curtsied, and said something to the amazed old lady; and at a request from the man left the room. By-and-by she returned, bearing on her arms a coarse, but tidy, striped woollen frock, a black wide-awake, a calico pinafore, and a pair of thick leather shoes with wooden soles. She then beckoned Sylvine aside with a half-timid, half-proud manner (for evidently the little maiden was pleased to lend the young lady her clothes), and in a kind of back kitchen assisted her to dress. Sylvine felt in her pockets, and was quite sorry to find only twopence halfpenny, a silver thimble, and kaleidoscope to give; but the child seemed ready to cry with joy, and curtsied over and over again. The man now came forward, and Sylvine having almost forgotten her past discomforts, walked quite gaily by his side towards Bretteyn, and chatted to him all the way, not ten words of which could he understand, though he now and then nodded kindly, as if to say he guessed it.

CHAPTER VI.

THE WONDERFUL PILL.

BUT I think it was a long time before Sylvine forgot that storm amid the mountains. In the first place, a bad cold, which she caught from exposure to the rain, kept her in bed two days—a thing she particularly disliked; and then she had many reproofs from Mademoiselle Allemeyer for going out without her permission, thus occasioning great anxiety to all, especially to her parents. But it was Mr Roberts who, more than all, impressed this event on her mind. Of course, Jenny must needs repeat all her dear Sylvine's adventures to her father, for she never felt satisfied in her mind till she heard his opinion on everything; and you may be sure that he by no means approved of little girls running off to all sorts of wild places without permission, just because they happened to be ill-tempered at a contradiction. So on the first evening of Sylvine's recovery from her cold, he called Jenny to him, and said—

"Run and call Sylvine hither. I am going to tell you a story in the twilight."

Sylvine had not yet seen Mr Roberts since her unlucky freak, and she now peeped in with a shy smile and a blush.

Mr Roberts smiled on his hearers, and then began—

THE STORY OF THE WONDERFUL PILL.

"When I was a boy I went to a large school in the suburbs of London. It was a private establishment, and the gentleman who kept it was a philosopher—in other words, a lover of wisdom.

"Well, Professor Markham, in spite of our idleness and stupidity, and countless other troublesome qualities, never gave up the hope of making us wise in time, and worked at his task with more patience and earnestness and zeal than I can by any words express to you. Ah! if we boys had worked but one quarter so hard ourselves, what shining men his pupils would have become! Your father, Jenny, might perhaps have been by this time Lord Chancellor, or a great writer like Lord Macaulay, or a speaker in Parliament like Lord Palmerston—"

"Hush, papa, and go on," exclaimed Jenny.

"Well, my dears," resumed Mr Roberts, "let me only warn you both. Should it ever be your lot to dwell near a lover of wisdom, catch every word that falls from his mouth, and treasure it up like a gold guinea. Oh! the guineas we might get! But now to go on. It was Professor Markham's custom to give a prize every Christmas to the boy who could solve a riddle which he usually composed himself, and a fortnight's time was given for the solution. This riddle was copied out on a little slip of paper for each boy, and we were all forbidden, on our honour, to consult with each other about it. I will say that during the three years I was in the school, I

never knew this rule to be broken. Idle and mischeivous we all were, but we despised a lie. On the day of the breaking-up, the solutions of the riddle were all sent in to the master sealed, and at the distribution of the other prizes, a prize was awarded to the one who had guessed aright, both riddle and answer being read aloud.

"At last the day came. A good many of our friends and relations were assembled to hear the examination poems and compositions read, and to see the prizes distributed. On a large arm-chair, his silver spectacles in his hand, his benevolent face smiling on us all, sat the Professor. Oh! the dear, kind old man! what hearts we boys must have had, to have vexed him as we sometimes did! Many and many a time when I have passed by the old school in later years, tears have come into my eyes to think that he was dead, and that I could never, never tell him my gratitude and my penitence. Think of this, little girls, and never be undutiful to teachers who spend so much time and pains in instructing you."

Sylvine here blushed a little, and whispered to Jenny;

"I'll never speak rudely to Mademoiselle again, never; if she were to die how wicked I should feel!"

Mr Roberts took no notice, and continued—

"I remember a good many boys had prizes that year, and the Professor was greatly pleased with

our improvement. This he told us in a little speech, in which he said——"

"Oh! please, Mr Roberts, don't tell us the speech till afterwards, we *so* want to hear about the riddle," exclaimed Sylvine.

"I must tell my story my own way, and I think it will do you no harm to exercise your patience a little, as the Professor did ours," said Mr Roberts, at which Sylvine, feeling somewhat reproved, looked as patient as she could, though she was dying with curiosity.

"The Professor said he was more especially satisfied to find that we had exercised great and *silent* patience regarding the riddle, which he confessed he had made as difficult as possible, but which he said had been admirably solved."

"Then I'm sure you did it," cried Jenny, forgetting everything in her eagerness.

"Patience, if you please," said Mr Roberts, "and you shall hear the riddle:

"*There is a certain pill made up of very bitter ingredients that we are very fond of dosing ourselves with, though it makes us very ill afterwards, and cures no ailments whatever. Query—the composition, nature, and effects of this medicine?*"

"Now, children, can you guess this riddle?"

"I think I can," said Sylvine, "it means *ices;* I always eat them when I can get a chance, they are so nice; but I am always sick afterwards."

"Wrong," said Mr Roberts.

"Then it must be difficult, indeed," demurely answered Sylvine, and puzzled again.

"I think I know, father," said Jenny, half-shily; "it means being fond of fine clothes, for you have often told me that vain people only get laughed at, and being laughed at is as bad as a pill, I should think."

"Wrong again," said her father, smiling.

"Well, then you must tell us," pleaded both the little girls. And Mr Roberts said:

"*Ill-temper is a pill that we are often dosing ourselves with, for no doctor ever recommended such a thing. It makes us miserable for hours, sometimes days afterwards, and does every harm, but no good. It is made up of Discontent, Selfishness, and Vanity, and has the power of making the prettiest face ugly, and the pleasantest face disagreeable.*

"I got the prize, which was the very prayer-book I now use; and now, little girls, how do you like my story?"

"Oh! what a delightful, curious, puzzling tale?" cried Sylvine. "I never read one in all my books I like half so well."

"I never like written stories so well as papa's," said Jenny, quietly; "I suppose it is because he is a philosopher."

"Of course," Sylvine said; and she liked the story so well that she never forgot it, and it kept her from many a sulky fit in after days.

CHAPTER VII.

PREPARATIONS FOR A JOURNEY.

"JENNY," said Sylvine one morning, "I wonder that you do not get tired of leading such a dull life—no parties—no new dresses—no play-fellows—no visits—it would not suit *me* at all."

"I never feel dull; my lessons are an amusement, and you know, Sylvine, I have never been used to parties and such things, so I don't feel the want of them."

"But I'm sure in the winter you must feel very dreary with nothing but those dismal mountains to look on."

"They never look dismal to me," said the little Welsh girl, heartily. "I love to see them, either in the sunshine or the snow. And all the winter nights papa tells me such delightful stories about Prince Llewellyn and Owen Glendower. Oh! Sylvine, if you could hear papa, you would learn to love the mountains."

Sylvine made no answer, but did not look convinced; and Jenny felt vexed. Ah! she thought, she is already tired of me, and of Llysin; she misses her Parisian friends and amusements: and Jenny was in a measure right. The little French girl had been so accustomed to change and pleasure, that she soon grew tired of the peaceful tranquillity of such a spot. She was too indolent to amuse herself with drawing, or reading, or botany,

as Beatrice did, and as it was now her holiday time, she only did holiday tasks. If Jenny had been equally idle, and could have been with her all the day, she would not have minded; but her mornings were very long in solitary pleasure seeking, and she envied Jenny's happy face of content.

"I cannot think how it is, Beatrice," she said one day, "but though Jenny is poor, and I am rich, she is a great deal happier than I."

Here Madame D'Aubencourt entered. She always called at Mr Roberts's every morning.

"Sylvine," she said, smilingly, "here is grand news for you. Papa has determined to leave Bretteyn, and make the tour of all North Wales, and he has decided upon taking Beatrice and you with him—"

"Oh, Aunt Adèle, how charming," cried Beatrice, clapping her hands. "Only consider, Mademoiselle Allemeyer, what sketches we shall make, what lovely scenery we shall pass through."

"Sylvine does not seem to approve of the plan," said Madame D'Aubencourt, looking disappointed. "What is the matter, my love?"

"I should like to go; but I don't wish to leave Jenny," and Sylvine's eyes filled with tears.

"But, my child, this is folly; you know that you must leave Jenny sooner or later; she cannot go back to Paris with us."

Sylvine twined her arms around her mother's neck, and whispered entreatingly—

"Mamma, mayn't she take the tour through Wales? Do say yes."

Madame D'Aubencourt looked grave.

"My dear, I think you are unreasonable in asking such a thing. Surely Beatrice is a companion for you. Why do you need any one else?"

"But Beatrice is three years older than I, and Jenny is just my age, you know, mamma; and oh, it would be such a treat to her, poor little thing. I know it would."

"Jenny is contented enough where she is," answered Madame D'Aubencourt.

"But I should like her to go with me, dearest mamma," pleaded Sylvine, earnestly.

"Well, we must consult papa," replied her mother; "but don't hope too much, for I cannot think he will consent to it."

That same day, however, M. D'Aubencourt received an unexpected letter from some old friends, who were residing at Bangor, urging him to go and spend some weeks there. It was therefore arranged, that whilst Monsieur and Madame D'Aubencourt stayed with Mr Armitage, Beatrice and Sylvine, under the conduct of Mademoiselle Allemeyer, should make a tour of the beautiful neighbourhood of Nant Llysin; and in this excursion Jenny was invited to join. Mr Roberts at first hesitated, but seeing that the invitation was really cordial, consented. This plan, as may be imagined, occasioned universal satisfaction, and it would be difficult to tell which face was the brightest, Jenny's or Syl-

vine's. Perhaps Jenny's anticipations were the most pleasurable; for it must be remembered she had never travelled, and Sylvine had already visited many places in France, Belgium, and England. Oh! the delight of packing up! Oh! the unspeakable delight of seeing Gelert's Grave, and Snowdon, and Carnarvon Castle; and hundreds of scenes that she had heard of often and often during the long winter evenings.

The little girls had a great deal to consult Mr Roberts about before starting on their first trip, and he it was who procured them their nice little red-bound diaries, their pointed sticks for climbing the mountains, their water-proof cloaks, and cotton umbrellas.

"Oh! father," said Jenny, on the evening before departure, "what lots I shall have to talk about all the winter evenings."

"And instead of listening to stories, you will be able to tell me plenty," said Mr Roberts.

"You must read my diary, papa, and so must Aunt Ana."

"If you wish me to read it, you must write it plainly," exclaimed Aunt Ana, looking up from her stocking mending.

"I will, aunty; only sometimes, perhaps, I shall be too hurried and flurried to write well."

"When you are hurried and flurried, or on the top of Snowdon, or outside a coach, or on a donkey's back, I should advise you not to write at all," answered Aunt Ana, who was rather impatient at young

people's disorderly habits; "and mind, Jenny, never go out without taking your umbrella. Though your dress is not handsome, it is worth taking care of."

"And have your eyes about you," rejoined Mr Roberts; "see all you can and make the most of your opportunities; for Nature is the glorious book that God lays open to all; we neither want dictionary nor grammar to understand it; but only inquiring minds and truth-loving hearts."

Sylvine, who was sitting very quietly by, now looked up with an expression of earnestness very unusual to her.

"I don't think I quite understand what you mean, Mr Roberts," she said.

"I mean this, Miss Sylvine. There are many pleasures and privileges which are only to be obtained by money, such as fine houses, handsome carriages, rich dresses, and the like. But all these are far from being the best gifts of God. They are gifts, doubtless, and we ought to be thankful for them; still, He has given us more precious things still. What are so beautiful as the stars, and sea, and flowers? What sight so grand as the stars, and sea, and mountains? and the singing of birds in spring time is surely a concert worth paying to hear. But this beauty and variety of God's earth, because it is always around us, we generally see unheedingly and unthankfully. Is this right?"

Sylvine crept close to him and laid her little hand fondly on his own.

"Oh! Mr Roberts, if I were only as good as you," she said softly.

He stroked her long curls kindly, and answered—

"Dear, God will always give good thoughts to those who ask Him."

"Do tell us a story, papa," said Jenny on the evening before departure; "tell us a story about Prince Llewellyn, or Snowdon, or Carnarvon Castle, or any place we shall see."

"Oh! do, Mr Roberts," cried Sylvine, eagerly; "I know nothing about Wales at all."

"Tell us the story of Owen Glendower, and how he hid himself among the mountains," added Jenny.

"Who was he?" asked Sylvine.

"Don't you know about Owen Glendower?" said little Jenny, enthusiastically; "why, he was one of the most celebrated men that ever lived in Wales, and he made himself sovereign, and was so good and brave, that the Welsh loved him a great deal better than they did Edward the Second, and followed him to battle, and—"

"Don't tell me the end of the story till I have heard the beginning, for I hope he was not killed," exclaimed Sylvine; "and now, dear Mr Roberts, please tell us a nice long story, and let it be all about Wales, and mountains, and adventures"

So Mr Roberts began his story.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE STORY OF OWEN GLENDOWER.

"YOU must first know, that when the Saxons made themselves masters of England, the ancient Britons fled to Wales, Cornwall, and Brittany in France, and this is the reason why, even at the present time, the languages of these provinces are something similar. Those who have seen the mountains and inaccessible rocks of Wales, no longer wonder how it was that the inhabitants were so long enabled to defend themselves from their enemies, and to maintain their independence. But they were a very brave, hardy people, as the history of Caractacus and Vortigern testify to us. The last Welsh king was Llewellyn, who resisted for many years the attacks of Edward the First, but was at last killed in battle in 1288, and his brother David was taken prisoner at the same period, and beheaded like a common traitor. David being the last of that ancient and noble race of kings, Edward took undisputed possession of the country, and promised the Welsh a prince of their own nation, who could speak no English. A few days after he presented to them his little son Edward, who was born at Carnarvon Castle, and ever after the eldest son of the English sovereign has borne the title of Prince of Wales. Edward the First, though a prince of great courage and ability, was of a very cruel disposition, and no act recorded of him is more cruel than the massacre

of the Welsh bards. These unfortunate men, by their noble songs of liberty and patriotism, inspired their countrymen to continued efforts of independence, and for this reason, as is supposed, they were hunted down and slain without mercy. Many stories of them are still cherished by the natives, as well as their beautiful songs and melodies. And fortunate are those who, like us, have had the opportunity of hearing 'Poor Mary Anne,' of the noble race of Shenkin, and the 'Rising of the Lark,' played by Welsh harpers.

"You may well suppose that the Welsh soon tired of the English yoke, and in the reign of Henry the Fourth, Owen Glendower asserted his freedom, and raised his standard, to which flocked high and low, rich and poor. This great man and patriot, who may well be classed with William Tell, with Robert Bruce, and with William Wallace, was descended from Prince Llewellyn, and is said to have inherited a large estate, and to have taken the name of *Glendower* from a lordship of his property called Glyndowrdwy. Shakespeare who has drawn this chieftain in very glowing colours, makes mention of his English education in that dialogue between Hotspur and Glendower, where they quarrel concerning the division of their land.

"'*Glendower*.—I will not have it altered.
Hotspur.—Will not you?
Glendower.—No, nor you shall not.
Hotspur.—Who shall say me nay?
Glendower.—Why, that will I?

Hotspur.—Let me not understand you, then,
Speak it in Welsh.
Glendower.—I can speak English, Lord, as well as you,
For I was trained up in the English court;
Where, being young, I framed to the harp
Many an English ditty, lovely well.'

"Shakespeare also makes Glendower conscious of his high mission :—

"'At my birth
The front of heaven was full of fiery shapes;
The goats ran from the mountains, and the herbs,
Were strangely clamorous to the frighted fields.
These signs have marked me extraordinary;
And all the courses of my life do show
I am not in the roll of common men.'

"It was at Corwen that he resided, and the site of his place is still marked by a clump of fir-trees. Here he loved to entertain his friends, whilst his poor retainers were not forgotten, and many a story is yet told of his hospitality and kindness. Indeed, nothing can equal the love and admiration with which the inhabitants of this district regard his memory, or the veneration they show to any relic or place connected with him. In the ancient church of Corwen they delight to point out the door by which he entered his pew, and at Rûg, two miles from that town, his dagger, knife, and fork, are exhibited in a sheath of richly ornamented silver. As a husband and father Glendower is reputed to have been most affectionate, and we may well suppose with what anxiety his wife and children looked forward to the success of their beloved hero.

His daughter Gwenfrewi or Winefred was married to the Earl of Mortimer, who of course joined his father-in-law's cause, so that the poor lady had a double cause of suspense. It seems that though Mortimer could speak no Welsh and his wife no English, they were a very loving couple, and Shakespeare gives a pleasant picture of them. Mortimer says ;—

> "'I understand thy looks, that pretty Welsh,
> Which thou pour'st down from those swelling heavens.'

"And again—

> "'For thy tongue
> Makes Welsh as sweet as ditties highly penned,
> Sung by a fair queen in a summer's bower,
> With ravishing division to her lute.'

"Lady Mortimer was very beautiful, and endeared herself to every one by her charities and sweetness of disposition. She was also very courageous, and more than once followed her husband on his warfaring excursions, when she, like Florence Nightingale, dressed the wounds of the poor soldiers and ministered to their wants. For twelve years Owen Glendower sustained a variable war against the English, and took a great many strong castles, sometimes gaining great advances. During this time he held his parliaments as if he were in reality a sovereign prince, and an old building is shown at Maehynlleth as the Senate House where he was acknowledged and crowned as sovereign. It was at this meeting he narrowly escaped being assassinated

by the treacherous David Gann, who afterwards attended Henry V. in the French wars, and proved himself a very faithful squire, so we will hope he repented of his attempted wickedness. Indeed, that Glendower was acknowledged Prince of Wales is testified by a treaty signed with Charles, King of France, in which he begins thus in true regal style, "Owen, by the grace of God, Prince of Wales." In the year 1403, however, ambition led him on to more daring and less honourable exploits. We can forgive him for entertaining a desire to free his beloved country from the English tyranny, and to preserve its freedom, but we can only grieve to think he so far forgot his better aspirations as to take the part of a common rebel. He now joined in a conspiracy with Earl Douglas, the Earl of Northumberland, and his son, Harry Hotspur, the object of which was to dethrone Henry of England. Having conferred together, they resolved upon collecting their forces and striking a sudden blow. Hotspur and Douglas marched at once to Shrewsbury, where Northumberland was to follow with the main army, and Glendower had promised to join them with 10,000 men. Before these movements could be effected, however, the king had reached Shrewsbury at the head of his forces, and they were obliged to risk a battle. Shakespeare's splendid play of Henry the Fourth, from which we have just quoted, will give you a much better idea of this sharp contest than we can, and of its two heroes, the king's son, Madcap Harry as he was called, and the courageous

fiery Harry Hotspur. The king commanded in person, and displayed great skill and courage; his son, who on this day began his soldier's career, also performed great feats of bravery, and though wounded in the face by an arrow, would not quit the field. On the other hand, Hotspur and Douglas showed themselves no less valiant, and the victory remained for several hours undecided. The two armies were pretty equal in number, consisting of about 14,000 men, and both sides showed themselves equally determined to win or die. The king had caused several of his followers to wear armour similar to his own, and Douglas, who desired to fight with him personally, was thus several times deceived, and thought he had slain him. He was, however, himself taken prisoner, and the gallant Hotspur was slain. When they found their beloved young commander was killed, gloom and despondency filled the hearts of his soldiers, and victory decided for Henry of England.

"Alas for Owen Glendower! The fatal battle of Shrewsbury blighted his high hopes and ambition, for what was his little army against so powerful a king? He was never fated to free his beloved country; he was never destined to wave the banner of independence from his grand old mountains. He was never destined to liberate his countrymen from their oppressors, and to realize the prophecy of his own bard, Gryffyd Lloyd:—

"'Strike then your harps, ye Cambrian bards!
The song of triumph best rewards

A hero's toils. Let Henry weep
His warriors wrapt in everlasting sleep;
Success and victory are thine,
Owen Glendourdwy divine!

"'Dominion, honour, pleasure, praise,
Attend upon thy vigorous days,
And when thy evening star is set,
May grateful Cambria ne'er forget
Thy noontide blaze; but on thy tomb
Never-fading laurels bloom!'

"But his prospects were very gloomy after that 'sorry fight.' So forlorn seemed his last hope that even his soldiers forsook him in despair. One by one his castles fell from his hands, his lands were wrested away, and for twelve weary years he wandered in various disguises among his native mountains like a branded felon. Many interesting stories are recorded of the faithfulness with which the Welsh country people protected him; and though, like Charles Stuart, a price was set on his head, he was safe among the poorest of them. There is a mountain at Beddgelert which is called the Hill of Flight, from his having secreted himself there in a recess when hunted down by the English; and many such hiding-places are pointed out to tourists. On one occasion, when he was lodged in the outhouse of a cowkeeper, his wife dressed herself like a milkmaid, and went bare-legged, and with her hair loosened and brushed awry, to see him. So well did she personate a peasant girl, that some of Henry's soldiers took milk out of her pail,

and laughed and jested with her without discovering that she was Glendower's wife.

"Another and still more beautiful story is told by the inhabitants of Llansyllan, about a little Welsh girl whose courage and good sense preserved Glendower from falling into the hands of the English. Her name was Jenny Fechan, or Vaughan, and her parents, who dwelt on a dreary hill-top, gained a scanty living by keeping a few goats. These it was Jenny's business to tend, for by day they fed on the hill-side, and at night were herded under shelter. One day, as Jenny collected her little flock and drove them into their rickety wooden shed, what was her terror and surprise to find there a man crouching on the straw. He was dressed in a beggar's costume, but his figure was noble and his face sorrowful and kind in expression.

"'Little maid,' he said, 'be not afraid. I am thy prince, Owen Glendower. Will you refuse him this poor lodging?'

"At this, Jenny, who had heard many stories of his brave attempts to free her native country from tyranny, and of his unhappy defeat, burst into tears, observing so great a man thus brought low, and cried—'O great prince, I am sure my father would gladly die for you, and whatever we have is yours.'

"Then she entreated him to enter her father's hut and partake of what poor hospitality they could offer, for she was a simple little thing and

could not at first understand why there would be danger in it. It seemed to her impossible that any one should dare lay hands on such a man. When, however, she understood that it was of the highest importance that his presence should be kept a secret, she ran off towards the house and brought to him a cake of oaten bread and a woollen petticoat of her mother's to serve as coverlid. Hardly had she run back again when a couple of fierce-looking soldiers came to the foot of the hill, and stood there undecided whether to take the trouble of coming up.

"Then they rode on in pursuit, and Glendower lay two nights concealed in the goat-shed, where little Jenny took him victuals and drink and made him a warm bed. On the third morning, she put on him a suit of her father's clothes, and Jenny took a little bundle in her hand and the two set off for Pen-y-cwd, Glendower personating her uncle taking charge of her to a place. You may imagine the poor parents were very anxious, but the little maiden bade them good-bye so smilingly, that it cheered them somewhat and they felt sure no harm would happen to the child. After a few days' hard walking they reached Pen-y-cwd, where some of Glendower's friends were ready to receive him, and here the two parted. It is said that Glendower wept as he embraced the child, and said—

"'My child, such a heart as thine is worth a crown of gold.'

"He gave her a silver coin as a remembrance

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and under the charge of an old man she trotted back to Llansyllan.

"We can well fancy her, grown to be an old woman, with children and grandchildren clinging to her knee, Jenny Fechan would repeat this story of her youth, and show her silver relic of the brave Glendower.

"After wandering about and suffering many perils and hardships this unfortunate man died in 1415, at his daughter's house in Herefordshire, and it is consolatory to think that his last hours were comforted by the love and presence of one he so tenderly loved. Such is Owen Glendower's history. A brave man, in a good though unsuccessful cause, he will always command respect from the admirers of patriotism, and though no proud monuments are erected to his memory, as have been to that of more successful heroes, he will always live in the hearts of the Welsh people, for whose liberty and happiness he fought so well."

CHAPTER IX.

BEDDGELERT AND THE STORY OF PRINCE LLEWELLYN'S HOUND.—JENNY'S DIARY.

"AUGUST 29TH.—We rose early, for we had a great deal to do, and we were to start for Beddgelert at eight o'clock. I could not eat a bit of breakfast, though we had some fresh trout from

the river, but Sylvine eat and drank just as though it were an ordinary day and we were going nowhere at all. At eight o'clock the carriage came, but we were some minutes getting off, for Beatrice's books, sketching umbrella, and *our* luggage (I mean Sylvine's and mine), took up a great deal of room.

"It seemed so strange for me to leave papa and Aunt Ana, and I felt almost inclined to cry, but papa said, 'Why, Jenny, it's only for a week or two, you know;' and that recalled me to my senses. What a long time we could see them standing at the door as the car crept slowly up the hill: then all at once we turned a corner of the valley, and went on the level road at a quick pace. We passed a great many coaches quite laden with tourists, and I thought how many times I had seen them and wished to jump in and travel about like other people. But now I *was* travelling about, and oh! I felt so happy and thankful. The morning was lovely. I do believe that cows and birds and even flowers rejoice in a beautiful summer's day, for cows seem to low and saunter as if for pleasure; birds sing twice as merrily, and flowers are twice as bright as in wet weather. We saw an immense deal as we passed along, and sometimes Sylvine asked permission of Mademoiselle Allemeyer to have the car stopped, and jumped out to gather fern-leaves and wild flowers. But I sat still and kept my eyes open, thinking of my diary. The mountains seemed to grow higher and higher, the nearer we came to Beddgelert, and though I don't like them better

than *my* mountains, they are certainly grander. What a beautiful wild place Beddgelert is. Oh! if I could but draw!—but as I cannot, I must tell you about it, papa, as well as I can. Fancy, then, a green lovely valley, between noble mountains, a bridge covered with moss, over the river, and trees growing beside it: cars and donkeys, and carriages constantly passing to and fro, a splendid hotel (oh! so much larger than the Squirrel Inn at Bretteyn), where there is a Welsh harp always playing, and a grand piano, and such lots of ladies and gentlemen. Then there is the church which was once a priory, and the grave of that dear old faithful Gelert—"

At this point of her narrative Sylvine burst in:—

"Oh, Jenny, I quite forgot about the diary, but I have been in the garden with a little girl whose name is Emily Hill; her papa knows mine, so of course we shall be friends. I found her out quite by chance. But do let me see what you have put in your diary."

She looked over Jenny's shoulder and read the last few lines.

"Gelert—who was he?" she asked with surprise.

"He is buried *there*," answered Jenny, pointing to a meadow, in the midst of which stood a group of birch trees surrounded with palisades.

"But *who* is Gelert?"

"I can't tell you in just one moment, but you ought to know all about him. Will you have patience to listen?"

"Let me call Emily Hill, then, to listen too," and off Sylvine darted.

By-and-by she returned, holding by the hand a little girl who greeted Jenny rather formally, and then turned away from her as though she did not consider her worth any further attention.

"Now, Jenny," said Sylvine, "let us go in the garden, and you must tell us about Gelert. Do you know who Gelert was, Emily?"

"A dog," she said, rather disdainfully; "it is not a pretty story."

"I think it very pretty," said Jenny, quietly.

"Well, do let me hear it, and then I can judge too," exclaimed Sylvine, impatiently, and the three girls walked into the shady garden, where they sat down to listen to the story of

PRINCE LLEWELLYN'S DOG.

"A great many years ago there was a Welsh prince whose name was Llewellyn the Great. He had a hunting seat here, for in those days Wales was infested with wolves, and they used to have large and very powerful dogs called wolf-hounds to hunt with. Prince Llewellyn had a great many, but one amongst them was his favourite, and it was called Gelert. It was the most faithful, affectionate creature in the world, always following his master, or his master's children, from place to place, and every night used to sleep at the door of his room. One day there was a grand hunt, and the barons and princes from far and near were invited to join in the sport; of

course a great feast was given at the Prince's hunting-seat, and there were numbers of strange cooks in the kitchen to assist his men in preparing it. Now Prince Llewellyn had a little child yet in its cradle, a fair, tender, little baby, too young to know anything of hunts or feasts, and who was left in its nursery to the care of a gossiping, worthless maid. This maid had strict injunctions not to leave the cradle for one moment; but no sooner was her master gone to the hunt, and her mistress ridden out with her ladies to view the sport from a distance, than she stole into the kitchen to chatter with the strange cooks. Meantime the Prince had missed his faithful dog Gelert from his side, and did not seem to enjoy the hunt so much that day. Somehow he could not but think that something had gone wrong with his favourite, and you may fancy how glad he was to see him run forward from the house at the sound of his horse's hoofs. But his jaws were covered with blood, as he came joyfully up to his master, licking his feet and hands. 'What is this?' cried Llewellyn, calling his servants from high and low, and then—for he thought of his infant—he rushed to its room, Gelert following with joyful tokens of affection. What were his feelings on seeing the cradle overturned, the coverlid and floor all besmeared with blood. 'Villanous beast,' he cried in mad rage and grief, 'is this thy return for thy master's kindness?' and with his sword he slew his old dog Gelert, who fawned on him even in dying. But just as he sheathed that dreadful sword, he heard

a child's cry, and lifting up the cradle beheld his infant alive and unhurt: then—for the truth flashed on him—he searched the room, and there under the tapestry lay the body of a dead wolf. Poor, poor Gelert! he had saved his master's child, and had been killed as its murderer. It is said that Prince Llewellyn, though a giant of size and strength, and the bravest man of his times, wept very sore for the loss of his favourite, and was a graver man for years after. And he buried it under those birch-trees yonder, where its tomb is still remaining, and the place was ever afterwards called *Bedd-gelert*, or *the Gelert's grave.*"

A tear stood in Jenny's eye as she finished her story, and Sylvine had become deeply interested.

CHAPTER X.

SYLVINE'S DIARY.

"28TH.—I am quite ashamed of not having written a line yet, for Jenny has already filled two pages of her diary. Well, to begin:—Susette, our maid, did not call me till eight, or I should have had a walk in the garden before breakfast; but as soon as that was over, we all dressed to set out for Pont Aberglaslyn. On our way, we met an old Welshwoman, riding on a horse, and carrying a bag of corn before her; she looked so odd in a man's black hat and white handkerchief tied round her face; but I am getting quite used to this droll costume now, for all the poor women

wear black hats or wide-awakes, and striped coloured skirts, with wooden shoes, and grey stockings. And oh! how quickly they knit stockings as they walk along; they never look at their work, but walk on, perhaps chatting to some one, perhaps looking about, but knitting all the while. The cottages here are not nearly so pretty and comfortable as those I have seen in England, but are very small, with no nice gardens. Jenny knows so many things that I do not. She can tell the names and kinds of ferns and wild-flowers that we see, and all the anecdotes of the places we pass through, and the heights of the mountains, and a great deal more. Indeed, I don't know what Beatrice would do without her, for she is always asking her about this thing or that. I wish Beatrice would let me look in *her* diary, for I am sure it is very cleverly written. Susette does not like Wales at all. 'Oh, mademoiselle,' she said, dolefully, 'I do wish we were going back to London. There is something to see there.' 'But there is plenty to see here, Susette,' I said. 'Indeed, mademoiselle, I don't see much beauty in this wild dreary country, with everybody near you speaking that odious Welsh *patois*,' she answered. 'Now, in London there are sights really worth seeing, the lovely parks and splendid carriages, and the shops in Regent Street.' 'You should study the beauties of Nature, Susette,' I put in, smiling, at which she shook her head and went away. I do believe I begin to know what is meant by the beauties of Nature, now, and this is all owing to Mr Roberts

and Jenny—my dear Jenny Jones, as I call her sometimes. At one time I used to like toys and pantomines and sights a good deal better. But now, whenever I take a walk, I look about me, with both eyes wide open, and say to myself, 'Now, Sylvine, look at the grass—look at the rainbow—look at those pretty ferns—look at those splendid mountains, and think what a beautiful world you live in!' This is just Jenny's way of feeling about things, and I hope one day to be like her—she is so good, and merry, and obliging—but I do not think I should like to be without pocket-money as she is, or to wear such shabby dresses.

CHAPTER XI.

BEATRICE'S DIARY.—THE ASCENT OF SNOWDON.

"SEPT. 1ST.—Those children, Sylvine and Jenny, work so hard at their diaries that I must take care or I shall be quite behind them. I don't think I ever spent three happier days than these at Beddgelert; the scenery is so magnificent and everything so new to me. I almost envy little Jenny Roberts her mountain home; for it seems to me that those who live in the country, especially in so beautiful a country as this, are more apt to love God, for the blue sky, and grey rock, and mountain stream, and dashing cascade must, I think, bring thoughts of Him, who in His goodness and power created all.

"Yesterday was very fine, and we made the most of it. At six o'clock, Sylvine rushed into my room half-dressed, and crying out 'Snowdon! Snowdon!' and directly after Mademoiselle came in and told me to dress, for the morning promised to be fair, and she intended us to ascend Snowdon. We started early, on ponies, and Sylvine's new friend went with us, for the two children had made up their quarrel, and Mrs Hill asked good-natured Mademoiselle to take charge of her. I was quite sorry she consented, for Emily is a pert, disagreeable child, and by no means a nice companion for Sylvine.

"I rode a great part of the way by Jenny's side, for I saw that Emily had managed to get Sylvine all to herself, and I did not wish the little thing to feel lonely. Oh! Sylvine, Sylvine, why will you be so silly and always make friendships with those you know nothing about."

"It is five miles from Beddgelert to the summit of Snowdon, and excepting a few little children and some tourists, we met no one. These children were wild little creatures, who lived in the cottages above the road-side, and they followed us for a quarter of a mile, holding in their hands trays of crystals, and bits of copper ore, crying 'a penny-lot!' which, I suppose, was all the English they could speak. Mademoiselle Allemeyer, in her usual good-natured way, gave them some pence; but at the same time said she thought it a pity to encourage such troublesome little things. The solitariness of the road

almost makes one feel sad. However, Jenny and I chatted gaily as we rode along, and I found her very intelligent and companionable. Of course, she has some odd countrified notions; but this is only to be expected, brought up as she has been, without any society whatever. By-and-by, we came in sight of Snowdon. How grand and immense it looked! Its vastness and rugged beauty humbled me. I felt so small and insignificant beneath it; and the thought came to my mind, how glorious God must be, when so glorious are His creations. Jenny's face glowed with rapture.

"'Oh, Beatrice!' she said, in her curious Welsh accent, 'I don't wonder at Prince Llewellyn and Owen Glendower, and William Tell being so brave! I think that looking on such magnificent mountains makes one feel how powerful God is who takes care of us, and who is always on our side when we are in the right.'

"'And you think that Owen Glendower was in the right, you little patriot?' I said, laughingly.

"'Every one ought to be free,' she answered, demurely, 'and if I had lived then, I should have helped him all I could.'

"'And embroidered a scarf for your knight to wear on the field of battle?' I asked; at which she was silent, thinking I was laughing at her. But I had no intention of doing so, and I admire her favourite hero Glendower very much; he would have made as good a king as Henry the Fourth, I have no doubt.

"We now began to ascend. Snowdon does not appear so high as it really is, on account of its great breadth, and the height of the narrow rock near it. But as Justice Talfourd says in his 'Vacation Rambles,' which we have just read, 'you might fancy it crouched to conceal its height.' What a good idea! The sunlight played on its huge shoulder as we ascended, and we could see the clefts and chasms below lying in deep shadow, with here and there gleams of coppery red. Mademoiselle Allemeyer and I have been studying the geology of Snowdon, which made our ascent doubly pleasant. I think to enjoy travelling thoroughly, we always want to know a little of geology, botany, history, etc. It makes everything a great deal more interesting, and I only wish I had brought more books with me. We soon came to the side of a deep hollow, and here the guide stopped us, that we might look down. It was a grand, but awful sight; the steep precipice, the shining black pool below, and the ridge between our horses' feet so narrow!

"'Hurrah! Hurrah!'

"We were at last on the top of Snowdon.

"A foreign-looking gentleman who had preceded us, had taken off his hat, and waved it delightedly, with many cheers. And now we could see the grand prospect round us. The sky was clear, and lighted up a glorious panorama of mountain, sea and valley. Tears came into my eyes at a sight so lovely and so splendid. On one side lay Anglesey, with the green sea gleaming

beyond; on the opposite, a succession of mountain scenery belted by the sea; also, before me, the gigantic Capel Curig mountain, Moel Siabod, and the Pass below; whilst behind, the peaks of Merionethshire were outlined, blue and shadowy, in the distance.

"After our first delight was over, we sat down and ate a hearty lunch. The foreign gentleman was merriest of all, and was so witty and mirthful that he kept every one laughing. The most comical thing was that he and Mademoiselle Allemeyer turned out to be old friends, and there was such a shaking of hands, and asking of questions! It seems that he is a teacher of languages in a school in Devonshire, and taking a holiday-tour in company with a French gentleman, named Monsieur Emile. The German gentleman's name is Müller. Whilst Mademoiselle Allemeyer and I were talking to the Herr Müller, I was provoked to see how foolishly Sylvine was behaving, sitting with her arm round Emily's waist, and chatting to her as fast as possible; whilst she had not a word or look for Jenny, whom a few days ago she seemed so fond of. I dare say, before long, it will be all Jenny again, and Emily neglected. Sylvine is loveable, and a good child in many things; but she is sadly fickle, and if she grows up so, who will care for her friendship?

"We reached Beddgelert about five o'clock, after spending one of the most delightful days I ever remember to have had. I have been writing this before breakfast, having risen early on purpose; but

Jenny tells me Mademoiselle is down, so I must leave off.

"Same day, after breakfast. I just add a few facts about Snowdon, which Herr Müller told me. Snowdon is an ancient Saxon name, meaning a snowy height; its British name, Craig Eryri, means the same thing, and its highest point is called Ywyddfa, or the conspicuous. Its height is 3571 feet. I have read that the highest part of Snowdon is under snow the whole year. Herr Müller, however, told me this is a mistake, and that it is as much as 800 feet below the point of continuous snows. Strange to say, it was at one time a 'royal forest,' and abounded with deer; but the last was killed in the year 1600; I forget the exact date, but in the seventeenth century. Its geology and botany are very interesting."

CHAPTER XII.

THE FAIRY TALE OF GIANT SNOW-STORM AND PRINCESS LADY-FERN.

JENNY'S Snowdon expedition was not so entirely happy as Beatrice's. Sylvine's neglect grieved her bitterly. Emily Hill's cold impertinence she could bear with patience, for she did not love her; but for Sylvine she had conceived a sincere and ardent affection. It was the first friendship she had made, and though she did not rush into friendships as Sylvine did, when she once formed them they were

lasting. It was therefore a sad trial to find that she was neglected for a comparative stranger, and the thought would come, "Is Sylvine so good and so true as I imagined her to be?—does she really love me?—or am I wrong in being jealous—am I unjust to her?" Poor little Jenny's heart was very heavy as she rode slowly down the mountain; just behind she could hear Sylvine and Emily talking merrily and confidentially of London, and school, and people, of all of which she knew nothing. Mademoiselle Allemeyer, Beatrice and Herr Müller, were carrying on an interesting conversation about the ancient history of Wales, which at any other time she would have listened to, with eagerness, but now, her heart was too full of other things, and she hardly heard their words. Tears stole down her cheeks.

By-and-by a pleasant voice interrupted her sad thoughts.

"Come, young lady, as your Rosinante won't talk to you I will; you shall be witty and I will be merry, so it shall be hard if we cannot entertain each other."

It was Herr Müller, Mademoiselle Allemeyer's German friend, and the sound of his good-natured voice, and the sight of his kindly smile, won Jenny's confidence at once. She brushed away her tears and said with a pretty, modest blush—

"Oh! sir, I can't be witty."

"Then you must do the merriment and I'll do the wit," answered Herr Müller smiling, "so you must laugh a good deal at what I say, and then I

shall feel that I am making myself agreeable. Well, and what do you think of Snowdon, and how would you like to stand perched on the top of it on a cold winter's night with all the fairies and genii dancing minuets round you?"

Jenny laughed gaily.

"But there are no fairies or genii now, and I never heard of any who lived on Snowdon."

"No? Oh! you may be sure there were numbers, only perhaps their lives have not been written. There are as many thousands of wonderful people, whom history has said nothing about, as there are heroes and heroines at whose names everybody blows a trumpet. But should you like to hear a real Snowdon fairy-tale, a tale that shall be all about Snowdon, beginning—middle—end?"

"Oh! if you would but tell me a fairy-tale," said Jenny delightedly. "Papa tells me stories, but they are generally about real men and women, and I do *so* like a story about unreal people, sometimes."

"Then you shall have unrealities to your heart's content," replied Herr Müller, and after walking silently beside her pony for a few minutes, rubbing his hands together as if they were two flint-stones and he wanted to strike a light, he began—

THE STORY OF GIANT SNOW-STORM AND PRINCESS LADY-FERN.

"Many years ago, before you and I were born, or churches were built, and when giants and genii and fairies played pretty pranks upon everybody who

hadn't an eye in the back of his head, there lived in Wales a mighty giant named Snow-storm. I really don't think anybody ever knew his exact height, but this I can certify, that he could stride about the world so quickly that one day he would lay down to sleep on the plains of Norway, and the next you would see him puffing and blowing as he toiled over the Welsh hills. Well, there lived at this time a king of Carnarvon who had a lovely daughter called Lady-fern. She was so beautiful that the sun came down to kiss her whenever she walked on the hill-side; and the number of young princes who had died for love of her exceeded the leaves of the largest birch tree in the kingdom. Indeed, so troublesome were these poor suitors of Lady-fern that her father's hair had grown grey on account of the worry, though he was quite a young man. But I am sure if I had lived in those days I should have troubled the king as much as any of them, for never was a princess half so blue-eyed, and so golden-haired, and so rosy-cheeked as Lady-fern, and though she was not so meek and tractable as she ought to have been, for she was sadly spoilt by all this flattery, she had very winning ways and found her way to a heart as deep as the Red Sea. So spoilt and unreasonable was she that she considered nobody half good enough for her, and when any beautiful young Prince rode up to her father's castle clad in velvet and gold and poured a bushel of silver money in her lap and said—'You shall ride in a turquoise carriage, drawn by milk-white horses, and you shall have a different dress for every day in

the year, and a bushel of money on our wedding-day—and a great deal more, ten times sweeter than this,—her answer was always the same 'No,' and the poor prince would ride away quite crest-fallen and sorrowful, but she would turn to her maids and laugh as gaily as if nothing had happened. At first there were great quarrellings and fightings amongst all these rejected lovers, each fancying the others his rivals, but after a little time, when they found that it was no use whatever, and that Lady-fern would have nothing to say to any one of them, they altered their tone.

"'Let us join together and make war on the king, her father,' said they; 'if she will say No to please herself, let us make her say Yes to please us. We will arm ourselves in steel from head to foot, and each take a sword a yard long, and besiege the king in his palace. There he will be compelled to give her up, and we will draw lots to see who shall marry her, and the matter will be ended for ever and ever.'

"They concocted this plan one summer evening in a lonely glen, for they wished of course to keep it a dead secret, lest the king should get scent of it and make preparations.

"But the next morning when Lady-fern was getting her breakfast a little robin came chirping and pecking at her window.

"'Oh! dear little red-breast,' said Lady-fern, 'here is some bread for you, and if you come to-morrow you shall have some more.'

"But the robin looked up and looked down with

its bright little cunning eyes, and when it saw that nobody was within hearing, perched itself on her shoulder, and whispered the whole plot into her pretty pink ear.

"Then when all was told, it picked a few crumbs, for it was a long journey from the glen, and, chirping, 'I'll come again when I hear more,' flew straight away.

"So, Princess Lady-fern went to her father, and repeated the story. 'And we'll get a splendid army together, and teach the princes whether I am to say *yes* when they please,' she said scornfully, and threw back her head till her golden hair trailed on the ground.

"'Alas!' said her father, 'where is the army to come from? There is not a prince in my kingdom, or within the three kingdoms round, who is not my enemy for love of you, and what will my servants be against so many?'

"'Arm them with golden shields and long swords,' said haughty Lady-fern, 'and there is not one of them that won't die for their mistress."

"'But we haven't any shields or swords, for my reign has been a reign of peace,' said the king, and fell to weeping bitterly.

"'I won't weep till I can find nothing better to do,' cried the Princess, and swept out of the room. She went straight up into an old tower at the top of the palace, where lay piles of old furniture, and other things, covered with dust and cobwebs. Lady-fern pulled down the dirty piles, one by one, with her dainty little white hands, till at last she

came to something hard and heavy. Rubbing off the cobwebs with her green velvet dress (so impatient was she) she saw it was a suit of armour, apparently gold; but so soiled and besmeared, that the nature of it remained a matter of doubt. Then she rubbed and rubbed away till it grew bright as the setting sun; and when she saw what a splendid suit of armour it was, all of pure gold, and delicately hinged, her heart jumped for joy. And she robed herself in her richest dress, which was of pale green, all glittering with diamonds and emeralds, and put on silver shoes, and combed her hair with a golden comb, till it hung round her shoulders and down to her waist, in curls as round as guineas. When she was arrayed thus, she ordered her servants to fetch the suit of armour from the tower, and carry it to the highest hill near; and it being placed there, making a large heap (for it was so big and heavy) she seated herself on the top.

"'Here I will wait,' she said, 'till a champion comes to deliver me from the princes.'

"So the sun, who had left his ruby palace betimes, and was now travelling southward, stopped on his way to kiss her as she sat there like a pale rose amid green leaves in a golden vase.

"'Oh! Sun!' cried Lady-fern, 'be my champion, and kill the princes.'

"'Fair maiden, I cannot,' replied the Sun, 'for I am bound to my kingdom in the West; and if I don't get there before twilight, my spouse, the Moon. will come to seek me, ready to die of jealousy.'

So the sun passed on.

By-and-by, a knight rode by, whose hair was iron grey, and whose frame was broad and portly. Twenty men followed him, all armed from head to foot.

"'Oh! gentle knight, put on this armour, and be my champion,' said Lady-fern.

"And the knight bade his men halt at the sound of so sweet a voice; but when he saw that it was Lady-fern who spoke, he shook his head, and said, 'Nay, but my six brothers all died for love of you, and when I have forgotten them, I will be your champion.' So he passed on.

"Then a merchant came along, leading a donkey laden with silks and spices and jewels; and he was making the best of his way to the palace, expecting, as usual, to strike some good bargains. Surely I may rely on him, thought Lady-fern, for I am the best customer he ever had; so she raised her voice, and said,

"'Oh! merchant, put on this armour, and defend me from the princes, and I will reward you with half my jewels and gold.'

"But when the merchant looked up, and saw the princess sitting there alone, and in trouble, he, after the fashion of worldly people, made a great bow, but offered no help.

"'Beautiful Princess,' he said, 'only kings' sons are fit to fight for kings' daughters; and if I so far mistook my place, all the princes in the kingdom would cry shame, and I should sell no more wares.'

"So the merchant passed on.

"Then a beggar chanced to come that way—one, whom Lady-fern had befriended many and many a time; but now she begged instead, and clasping her little white hands, said—

"'Oh, beggar, you are strong and bold of heart; put on this armour and fight the princes, or I shall be carried away into a far country, and never be able to give you any more cold pasties.'

"But the beggar, who was both crafty and a coward, thought he should be on the safest side if he kept friends with the princes; so he suddenly feigned a great lameness, and said—

"'Most beautiful mistress and benefactor, I have got the rheumatism from sleeping so many nights out of doors, and every bone in my body shakes like a leaf.'

"So the beggar passed on. And now the day was waning, and a great sadness fell over Lady-fern's heart.

"'If I could only fight myself,' she thought, 'I would not humble myself by begging of these heartless wretches.' It made her sadder still to see a last glimpse of the sun's crimson robe as he turned round the corner, and to think that he too, her old friend, had forsaken her. All at once she heard a twitter close behind, and looking up, beheld her little faithful robin.

"'The princes are on their way,' whispered he in her ear, 'and are marching at a great pace. I have flown so fast, that I have only breath left to tell you

this. Then the robin fell down as if dead, and she, weeping, to lose her only friend, picked it up tenderly, and placed it in her bosom.

"By-and-by she saw a dark shadow moving over the plains far away, and the shadow grew darker and darker, till she saw that it was an army. At that sight, Lady-fern wept more bitterly still, and held her white hands towards the sea, crying 'Oh! Sea, foam and surge, and swell, and drive a large ship ashore, that I may jump in and sail far, far away to a land where no princes make love.'

"But the sea remained as calm as a babe asleep, and the ships sailed on, and the princes came nearer and nearer—so near that she could see their armour shine in the glooming.

"Soon a Star popped out of its soft bed of clouds, and twinkled its bright eyes as it danced, away in the sky.

"'Oh! Star,' cried Lady-fern in great distress, 'come down in your golden chariot, and take me away with you.'

"But the Star said, 'If I once come down, I should never be able to climb so high again, so I cannot help you, pretty princess.' And the star winked and danced as gaily as ever, and the princes came nearer and nearer.

"Then Lady-fern uttered a great shriek of despair, and fell to the ground nigh unto fainting; but all at once she felt her robe stirred by a mighty wind that came from the north, and looking round, beheld a giant coming towards her, making vast strides, and

puffing and blowing as he did so. At so awful a sight, and with the coldness of his breath, Lady-fern almost froze with terror; but she took courage, and holding up her little hands, cried pitifully—

"'Good giant, I am weak, and you are strong—oh save me from my enemies the princes.'

"And giant Snow-storm, for he it was, thought he had never seen a maiden half so beautiful as Lady-fern, with her pink cheeks, and torquoise eyes, and golden hair; and though he was tired and well nigh out of breath, for he had travelled that very day from the Polar Regions, he knelt down at her feet and whispered (even his whisper was like distant thunder)—

"'Fear not, most beauteous maiden. I am a match for many princes, and even if I were a dwarf and they were giants, yet would I gladly die for so sweet a lady.'

"'What shall we do for armour? This that I have is only fit for a common-sized man, and the princes are armed from head to foot.'

"But, lo! when Giant Snow-storm put his little finger into the mailed sleeve, it stretched, and stretched, till it covered his whole arm, and so did the corslet, and helmet, and shield; and by the time the princes had arrived at the foot of the hill, where they remained in bewilderment, he was ready to meet them.

"Then he rushed forth, and what with killing some and frightening a good many, he won a complete victory; and the whole army of suitors was scattered

like leaves in Autumn. When this mighty work was done, he calmed his wrath and returned to the hill where Lady-fern still sat, and she (who looked like a snow-drop beside an Alpine fir, he being so large and rough, she so small and delicate) asked him what reward he wanted. 'Only one thing I ask,' said the giant, 'and that is, that you will marry me.'

But Lady-fern, now that the danger was over, burst out into her old saucy laugh, and cried—

"'That would never do; I am so small and you so large that the whole world would die of laughing. An elephant might as well marry a mouse. Ask anything else of me, and you shall have it.'

"'I will have this reward or none,' said giant Snow-storm. But so desperately in love was he, that before he had got ten paces his heart broke with a mighty bang, and he fell down dead, and the noise of his fall was heard at the antipodes. At that moment the little robin jumped out of Lady-fern's bosom and flew out of sight.

"Then when Lady-fern saw that the good giant was dead, and that even the robin forsook her, a great mist passed over her eyes, which left them so clear that she could see to the bottom of her own heart. And oh! when she saw how foolish and vain she had been, how cruelly she had provoked her lovers, and how ungrateful she had showed herself to her generous champion, she could not sufficiently repent, and wept till her tears ran down the hill side. And she resolved to make the best amends she could to giant Snow-storm, who had fought and died for her, and to bury him herself. But so heavy and big

was he, that she could get no one for love or money to dig a grave, and was obliged to be content with covering him up as he lay there. So day after day, night after night, did she dig earth with her dainty little fingers, not a soul helping her save her faithful robin, who had now come back; and the two worked on, till after many years giant Snow-storm was hidden by the mould, and though here and there the gold of his armour gleams through the thin places now, when they gave up their task all was covered smoothly. Then many kings' sons came to woo her as before, but she refused them all meekly and softly, and went every day to weep at the foot of the giant's tomb, till at last her tears formed a lake there. And one day, being weary of weeping, and weary of her suitors' importunities, she threw herself into the lake of tears, crying—'The dead giant is dearer to me than all the living princes, and I will lie at his feet for evermore.'

"And many and many a day, the little robin chirped sadly around Lady-fern's lake, and sowed seeds of pretty mosses over the grave of giant Snow-storm, and hundreds and thousands of people walk over his dead body, but nobody knows how he came there except you and I."

"Oh! what a lovely, splendid story," cried Jenny with enthusiasm, and she turned her pony's head, so that she could see the grey mountain. "I shall never see Snowdon again without thinking of the giant, and the princess, and the little robin. And look, Mr Müller, you can see his great shoulders, and huge knees as he lies in a bent posture; and

we saw the lake at its feet this morning—and oh! it seems all so true to me."

"So it does to me, and only see, his very armour shows coppery yellow here and there," said Herr Müller.

And now they had arrived at the hotel, and the Herr Müller took his leave, for he was going the next morning to Capel Curig. You may be sure Jenny felt very sorry at having to say good-bye to him so soon. After all I doubt whether Sylvine or Emily had enjoyed their ride home so well as she had done; and when they knew the delightful story they had missed, they were ready to cry with vexation.

CHAPTER XIII.

WHAT HAPPENED ON A WET DAY.

THE next day was rainy, and there was no possibility of going out. Directly after breakfast Beatrice brought out her painting, Mademoiselle Allemeyer fetched a book and began reading to her, and Jenny sat close by, interested both in the picture and the book. Sylvine and Emily flitted to and fro in a state of restless discontent, grumbling at the weather, grumbling at the dryness of Mademoiselle's book; grumbling because they had nothing to do.

"Oh! if the sun would but come out!" cried Sylvine, dolefully; "how shall we pass the time away?"

"You silly child," answered Beatrice, "time flies fast enough without your wishing it to go. If you would only follow my advice, I can tell you of many things which you might do, and which would make time pass quickly."

"What things?"

"Promise me that you will do one of them," said Beatrice, who was rather fond of teasing.

"Oh, no, it might be something I don't like," and Sylvine turned to Jenny.

"Do come and act charades with Emily and me," she said in a coaxing voice.

Jenny jumped up readily, though she would far sooner have staid to hear the book.

"I don't wish to act charades," said Emily, ungraciously; and at this speech Jenny sat down again, feeling glad to be released, though somewhat vexed at the rudeness with which her offer had been rejected. Beatrice remarked both the speech and the look, and said sharply—

"Really, Sylvine and Emily, you are both very ungrateful to Jenny. Yesterday you utterly neglected her, and to-day, in spite of it, she is willing to oblige you, and yet you never offer her a thank."

Sylvine blushed and said—

"I beg your pardon, Jenny, dear."

Emily said nothing, but looked very much out of temper, and after that she never liked Beatrice; meantime Sylvine, who now felt ashamed of her late neglect of Jenny, had seated herself by her side, and resolved to interest herself in the book. Emily,

however, soon enticed her away under pretext of having something to show her in her bed-room, and the reading went on uninterruptedly.

JENNY'S DIARY.

"SEPTEMBER 3rd.—Oh! I am so unhappy; if I could only get back to father I don't think I would ever leave him again. I little thought when I left home a few days ago that I should so soon want to get back again. Dear, dear Nant Llysyn, I have never been miserable there. But I will try to write my diary, though I have cried till my head aches.

"This morning Beatrice finished her lovely picture of the Pass, and when she went up to dress for dinner left it on the table, still wet with the last colours. It was so pretty that after she had gone I looked at it again, but only for a minute, and then ran up-stairs to do my hair. I met Sylvine and Emily in the hall, and Sylvine came with me to our room (we sleep together), and rung for Susette to curl her hair. I don't know where Emily went to, for she was so cross at what Beatrice had said to her that she did not speak a word to me. We were about a quarter of an hour up-stairs, and then Mademoiselle came to tell us dinner was ready. When we opened the parlour door we saw Beatrice standing by the window looking as if something dreadful had happened, and so there had, for her painting table was knocked down, and a glass of

dark-coloured paint water had fallen over her beautiful picture.

"'Oh! Mademoiselle,' she cried in great distress, 'look at my poor picture; all my labour has been for nothing.'

"'Who has done this?' said Mademoiselle Allemeyer, sharply.

"'It's all a mystery,' answered Beatrice; oh! my poor, poor picture!'

"Mademoiselle Allemeyer then questioned the servants, but could get nothing more than that they had found the table upset when they brought in the dinner.

"'Who was in the room when you went up-stairs,' my love?' asked Mademoiselle Allemeyer of Beatrice.

"'Nobody. Oh, yes, Jenny was, for she staid to tell me the story of the Bard's Chair.'

"Then every body, Mademoiselle, Beatrice, Sylvine, even Susette looked at me, and I felt that I was suspected. Oh, how wretched I was! but I went up to Beatrice and said quite firmly, 'It was not I that upset the table, Beatrice.'

"Nobody spoke, and then we sat down to dinner, but I could not eat a bit, for I was sure that if Sylvine and Beatrice believed me, Mademoiselle and Susette did not. Emily was not there, for she always took her meals with her mamma, who is staying here. I felt so glad she was away. All dinner time everybody was silent and uncomfortable, poor Beatrice thinking of her picture no doubt. After

dinner, Sylvine and I went into the garden. 'Oh, Sylvine,' I said, 'who could have overturned Beatrice's table? I believe Mademoiselle suspects me, and I am sure I never told a lie, for papa has always so particularly warned me against the smallest shade of an untruth, and I know how wicked it is to be deceitful. It makes me so wretched to be mistrusted. If I had overturned the table it would have been by pure accident, and though I should have felt very grieved, I should not have been ashamed to confess it.' And then I cried again. Sylvine was very kind, and said a good many things to console me, but all through the day Mademoiselle Allemeyer and Beatrice have seemed colder to me. I try to bear it patiently, hoping and feeling sure that they will soon have the same good opinion of me that they once had. But it is hard work alone; if were father here I should not mind half so much."

CHAPTER XIV.

MR JULIAN.

AMONGST other excursions made from Beddgelert, was one to Festiniog, the prospect of which would have been quite delightful to Jenny, but for the weight on her little heart. Besides, the pleasure party was got up by Mrs Hill, and she could not bring herself to believe that she should be happy in Emily's company. "I do not dislike her," she reasoned to herself; "papa always told me never to

dislike anyone, or keep up angry feelings; but I know she will say unkind things to me, laugh at me, make disagreeable remarks on my dress, and take Sylvine away from me—so I cannot like her. I would much rather never be with her, for she makes me so unhappy that I fear I shall really feel angry and bitter towards her. Oh! how I wish she would love me and be ladylike and good, like Beatrice and Sylvine."

On the day appointed, Mrs Hill came into their sitting room, and drawing Mademoiselle Allemeyer to a corner of the room, said—"My dear Mademoiselle, I thought it best to come and tell you my arrangements, as you would then know how to make yours. I should like Sylvine, of course, to ride in our carriage, with Mr Hill, Emily, and myself; Beatrice, I know, will be pleased to join the two Miss Markhams, very nice girls, who have just come here with their mother, and who she will frequently see in London—my son Frederick will make a fourth for their vehicle. There will then be Julian, my eldest son, Mrs Markham, yourself, aud Julian's college friend, young Kennedy, for the third carriage. Don't you think I have planned it well?"

Mademoiselle Allemeyer coloured, looked grave, and hesitated.

"Would you prefer to take Sylvine with you?" asked Mrs Hill, "if so, Lucy Markham can change places with Mr Kennedy, and Mr Kennedy can ride with us instead of your pupil. As Madame D'Aubencourt is so old a friend of mine, I wished to show

her child all the attention in my power, that is why I proposed—"

"No, Madame Hill," answered Mademoiselle Allemeyer. "No, no, I am sure Sylvine's mamma will be pleased that you take such an interest in her; but I was thinking of another little charge of mine, and as I am sorry to see there will be no room for her, I think I must ask you to excuse me, as I shall feel it my duty to stay with Jenny—"

Here Jenny, who had heard all this conversation from the farther end of the room, rushed up to Mademoiselle Allemeyer, and bursting into tears, cried out—

"Oh! dear Mademoiselle, please go—do please go, and don't think about me. I shall not mind being left alone—"

"Hush! hush!" said Mademoiselle, soothingly; "no, indeed, Mrs Hill, I could not think of leaving Jenny, as she was placed under my care."

"How very awkward; I had quite forgotten there was another little girl—Emily ought to have reminded me," said Mrs Hill, with vexation; "what is to be done?—would you really mind being left here for two days, my dear, if I give you a nice present instead—Mrs Jones, the landlady, will let you play with her children, and take care of you."

"I don't want any present, and I don't want to play with Mrs Jones' children," burst out Jenny, indignantly; "I would not keep Mademoiselle at home for anything—"

And then the remembrance of Mrs Hill's kind

words, and of the disappointment she had just received, made her tears flow afresh, and she sobbed out—

"Mademoiselle, let me go back to papa; I am not afraid of travelling by coach alone, and I am so unhappy; let me go home to father."

"Who wants to go home to papa?" said a cheery voice at the door.

"Oh! Julian, is that you? What business have you here, in Mademoiselle Allemeyer's sitting-room?" asked Mrs Hill, turning to him; "but we are in such perplexity and trouble, do help us out. You know we have hired three carriages to take us to Festiniog, but each carriage will only hold four people, and we are thirteen."

"How is that?"

"Why, in the first place, there are five of us—three Markhams, one Kennedy, Mademoiselle, Beatrice, Sylvine—"

"And the thirteenth—"

Mrs Hill pointed to Jenny, who had thrown herself on the sofa, and with her brown hair cast in disorder off her brow, and her face hidden in her hands, sobbed aloud.

"Come, come, Miss Thirteenth," said Mr Julian's frank, kindly voice, "leave off crying and begin to dress, for I will make room for you somehow, I'm determined."

But Jenny could not readily make up her mind to take comfort from him—was he not Emily's brother? was he not Mrs Hill's son? though his voice sounded

kind, she could not help thinking he was making fun of her all the time.

"I don't want to go," she said; "your mamma does not wish to have me, no more does Emily; I would rather stay here."

Julian approached the sofa, and laying a gentle hand on Jenny's arm, bade her look up; the touch and voice were both so friendly and tender that she took courage and did so.

But was he really kind, and good, and pleasant as he seemed to be? How she wished his name was not Hill.

"Well, little lady," he said, "sit up, put the hair off your eyes, and talk to me. You don't want to cry any more, you know, for you are going to Festiniog after all."

"It was not that—not that alone that made me cry," answered Jenny, ingenuously, "I was very much disappointed, but I should not have minded, only—only—"

She stopped short and blushed. Could she say to him that his mother and sister had been unkind to her.

"Only what? I want to hear all about it, from beginning to end."

"I cannot tell you all," she said gravely.

"Why not? Come, if it was not the disappointment you were so unhappy about just now, what was it?"

"I was unhappy because—because, I thought your mamma and sister did not want me, and—"

"And what?"

"I ought not to tell you," she continued hurriedly, and with rising tears, "I ought not to tell you, but I will speak the truth. I thought your mamma did not like me because I am poorly dressed, and countrified, and ignorant—" she was sobbing now, "and oh! I cannot help it, and papa says I can be a lady just as well in print, and be as good and clever in poverty; and I never thought that being poor was a thing to be ashamed of till how."

A great vexation came over Julian's face.

"You must not think of such things," he said, "or imagine that people despise you. Forgive and forget, you know, that is the way to get through life."

"I know it is," answered the little girl, thoughtfully; "but I think sometimes, forgiving is easier than forgetting. Don't you, Mr Hill?"

"Very often: call me Mr Julian."

"I shall like that, it is such a pretty name."

"And what is yours."

"Jenny Roberts, and my mother's name was Vaughan, and she was descended from Owen Glendower," Jenny answered, quite proudly.

"A very nice name and a very noble ancestor—"

"Jenny, Jenny, come and dress," cried Sylvine at the top of the stairs.

"Shall I ride in the same carriage with you, Mr Julian?" asked Jenny, ere she obeyed the summons.

"Yes and no; which means I shall not be in the carriage, but yet I shall. There is a puzzle for you."

"Oh! I know, you will ride on the box!—how kind of you to give up your seat to me; thank you, thank you, a hundred times."

CHAPTER XV.

ADVENTURES OF THE FISHING PARTY.

"I AM going to fish in the river; who will accompany me?" said Frederick Hill the next morning after breakfast.

"And I am going to see the waterfalls and to sketch," said Julian; "who goes with me?"

"I will," said Beatrice.

"And I," said Jenny.

"I will go with Frederick," cried Sylvine.

"So will I," rejoined Emily.

"And I," added Mademoiselle Allemeyer, "to take care of you all three."

"We are quite able to take care of ourselves, thank you," said Emily, pertly.

"For shame, Emily," exclaimed Julian, with rising colour; if you are so very disagreeable and ill-mannered, I think you had better keep at home, for I am sure your company will be no loss. Mademoiselle, I am much obliged to you for so kindly offering to accompany my sister."

Lucy Markham, a bright-eyed, talkative girl, here joined the group.

"Do let me go with you anglers," she said; "I will help to keep Sylvine from tumbling into the water, Mademoiselle, and make myself generally useful besides."

"We shall give you the lunch-basket to carry then, of course," said Frederick.

"Oh, no, Fred," put in Charles Kennedy, slily, "let me carry that, by all means, for I am always the first to be hungry, and it is not safe in the hands of those ladies."

"Indeed it is," said Sylvine with dignity, "and if you say such things we wont let you have any cake at all; will we, Lucy?"

"Of course not; not a single crumb."

"Then I will go with the sketchers. Here Ju, give me a colour-box and camp-stool; I'm suddenly turned from angler to artist."

"We'll give you some cake, if you behave well," whispered Sylvine; "do go with us."

So the matter was settled and the two parties set off. Frederick, Charles, Mademoiselle Allemeyer, Lucy, Sylvine and Emily, to the river; Julian, Beatrice, Mary Markham, and Jenny to the Falls.

How happy they were! They were not a noisy, romping, gay party, like the other, but enjoyed themselves in a quiet, reasonable, pleasant way. Julian was clever, and so were Mary and Beatrice; they talked of different places they had seen, people they had met, books they had read, and events that had happened to them. It was a great treat to Jenny to sit under those hanging trees, gaze on those dark rocks and falling waters, and hear such conversation. It was like reading a delightful book, a book in which every page was beautiful and new, and illustrated with pictures. Sometimes she timidly asked the explanation of a word or sentence, and then, either of the speakers

were glad to give it. Mary kindly lent her a pencil and sketch-book, and helped her to draw a little bit of rock scenery. Beatrice gave her the use of a paint brush and colours to finish it up, and when the drawing was complete, it won universal praise as a first attempt.

I must now relate what befel the anglers. They started forth merrily enough; Charles and Frederick bearing their long fishing-rods; Lucy and Sylvine little baskets of cakes and sandwiches; Emily an umbrella (much against her inclination, I assure you), and good, placid Mademoiselle Allemeyer a book.

"Now, Charley," cried Frederick, "you and I must lead the way, of course, as these ladies are not supposed to know a good angler's station."

"Well, I think we shall do very well over against the stream yonder, where the lane ends; the landlord told me there were plenty of trout here."

"I can see one, two, three," cried Sylvine, delightedly clapping her hands; "look, Frederick, can't you see some pretty little fishes swimming about in the water? Catch them, do."

"I should be clever to get them now, Miss Sylvine; see, how at the sound of your clapping they have edged away. We anglers must be as quiet as mice."

"As quiet as mice all day?"

"Yes; when we are fishing."

"Then it must be very dull. I hope you will not want us to be quiet also," pursued Sylvine, somewhat gravely.

"That depends whether you are near us or not," answered Frederick.

"We'll run away and play at hide-and-seek in the wood," whispered Sylvine; "wont we, Emmy?"

It was a pretty place they fixed upon, a skirt of rock covered with heath and fern which led down by rather steep steps to the streamlet, whilst behind lay a wood tangled with hazel, cloud-berry, furze, hawthorn, and shaded with lofty oak and birch trees.

"This is very nice," said Mademoiselle Alleymeyer; "we can watch you at your fishing, and yet our reading or talking will not be near enough to be a disturbance, I suppose?"

"Oh! dear no, ma'am," replied Frederick, "and I hope our company will be no disturbance sometimes, for you may be sure we shall often pay you visits."

So the two young men clambered down the rock, Lucy brought out her work, and Mademoiselle opened her book.

"We will go in the wood," said Sylvine, and off they went, after a caution from Mademoiselle not to go out of the path, or too far away from her.

It was a lovely day for such a walk. The bright blue sky gleamed between the lacework of green leaves above their heads; the sunlight streamed across the red beech leaves and lighted up distant coppices; birds carolled everywhere; sly-looking squirrels leapt among the branches, or rested with tail erect to gaze on them. Who would not wish to walk through a wood on such a day?

They walked on for some time, and by-and-by came to a breaking off of the path into two; one

leading quite through the wood, the other edged by steep ledges of rock overhanging the stream. Unconsciously they had ascended a great height, and were surprised now on looking down to see how narrow the stream looked, and how small the figures of Frederick and Charles appeared in the distance.

"We had better go back, Emily," said Sylvine, "we must have have come farther than we thought."

"Oh! we have been away no time as yet. It is so pretty, do let us go a few steps farther."

Sylvine followed rather reluctantly.

"A few steps, then, to oblige you; it can't make much difference."

"No, indeed," said Emily, and went on.

"And now we *must* go back," repeated Sylvine.

"But we need not go home the same way, all through the wood again; let us clamber down these rocks and walk back beneath them by the side of the stream, think, how delightful that would be!"

"We cannot get down," said Sylvine, peeping timidly over; "see how steep and uneven they are; Jenny could, because she is used to it, but I am sure we should fall; dear Emily, let us go back by the wood."

Emily made no answer, but gathering up her frock, and planting her feet firmly on two crevices, going down backward as you would a ladder, made a step or two.

"There now; what is easier or safer than this? I find two places for my feet, I hold on two points of rock by my hands, and creep down as nicely as possible. Come, Sylvine, don't be a coward."

"I'm not a coward, Emily, but we were told not to leave the path."

"Oh! that's all very well: you're a silly little coward and nothing else. Here I am at the bottom. Hurrah, hurrah!"

Sylvine did not like being called a coward; none of us do; and this foolish fear of being called cowards, even by those we despise, often leads us into mischief. Besides, she reasoned to herself, Emily is safe down, and why should I take more harm than she? Mademoiselle wont be angry when she finds what a nice adventure we have had.

So she followed Emily, and after many fears and bruises, got safely to the ground also. Now they gambolled on gaily, a strip of turf just offering width enough to walk side by side between the rushing rivulet and craggy embankment.

The river here made a sudden turn, and, broken in its quiet course by huge blocks of rock scattered around in all directions, dashed impetuously over them, making here and there fantastic cascades, and sweeping away every vestige of a path beneath the jutting crags, flowed hurriedly and noisily under their dark shade.

"Oh! Emily, what shall we do?" cried Sylvine, in terror.

"Can't we climb up as we climbed down? or, perhaps, we might cross the stones higher up, where the river is quieter; but don't sit down and cry, Sylvine; there is nothing to cry about."

By contriving to hold on the slippery green rocks,

she kept her footing a few steps further on, and Sylvine, encouraged by her success, timidly followed.

Emily peered forth under the shadows below.

"I can see some steps cut in the rock, leading, no doubt, up to the wood above," she said; "if we can but reach them we are safe."

Another effort made, and another small advance gained.

"The steps at last!" exclaimed Emily, joyfully.

But another difficulty arose; the supposed steps proved to be nothing but a jagged rock, having the appearance of stairs, and worn even by the course of the waters—so even and so slippery with the wet moss on it, as to offer a very insecure footing.

"We'll try it, anyhow," said Emily, who prided herself upon her courage—a courage, alas! which often led her into trouble; not the true noble courage which can bear trouble meekly. And she did try it, made a step or two, missed her footing, fell down into the bed of the river below!

She gave a loud scream of agony, "Help, Sylvine! help!" but it was not needed, for Sylvine, though she was not naturally bold and fearless, now felt the responsibility and danger of the moment too great for hesitation or fear, and in an instant was knee-deep in the water tugging hard at Emily's frock. Had Emily possessed any amount of presence of mind she might have rescued herself; but she had sprained her ankle badly, and the pain and fright together rendered her utterly helpless. So, dripping wet, pale, and shivering, she was dragged to the foot

SYLVINE ASSISTING EMILY AFTER FALLING INTO THE WATER. Page 94

of the banks and lay there, too frightened to cry. Sylvine wrung the water out of her clothes with all the might of her little hands, and did her best to act the part of comforter.

"Never mind, Emmy, I'll find my way back alone and get Fred to come for you; I won't be gone long; and when you get home and have some stuff rubbed on your ankle, it will soon be better."

"But I can't be left here all by myself," answered Emily, crossly; "I am so cold and wet, and, oh! my foot, how it aches!"

"Then, dear Emmy, I will cry out with all my strength till somebody comes who can go to Fred for us. I shall make such a noise, I'm sure to be heard."

She jumped to her feet, and called out in her loudest voice—

"Fred! Julian! here we are! help!"

And the high rocks echoed back her own words; but there was no other answer. Again she tried, and again the echo rang through the glen and died away.

Tired and despairing, having now no word of consolation to say to each other, both the children burst into passionate tears. It was indeed a gloomy spot—beautiful to look down upon, in happiness and safety, from the heights above, but gloomy and sad to be shut in its solitude, with no living being in sight; no more cheering sound than the everlasting plash and eddy of the waters; no more cheering sight than those high steep rocks on the side of which grew, here and there, a few stunted trees, but even they were out of reach. And on the other side of the stream, Sylvine could see a sloping, pleasant

path of bright turf, leading by easy ascents up to the wood. What a little, little way across it seemed; but it might as well have been miles apart, for the clear, brown, cruel waters interposed.

Yet an hour ago how lovely this little river had appeared to her; how she had rejoiced to see it foam and sparkle in the sunlight. Ah, how happy she had been only an hour ago!

"Don't you think we shall soon be found?" cried Emily, with a sudden start.

"I don't know; it seems such a dark solitary place, I fear no one could hear us if we scream ever so loudly; and oh, Emmy, I'm so hungry."

"I wouldn't mind being hungry if my foot did not pain me so, the pain makes me sick. Could you give me a little water to drink, Sylvine?"

Sylvine hollowed her hand and fetched some water, after which Emily looked revived and said—

"Did you say you were hungry? I have a biscuit in my pocket; eat it."

"No, Emily, I'll only eat half."

"Yes," replied Emily, shortly, "take the whole. I led you into the scrape, and I deserve to be hungry first."

Sylvine put the damp curls off her brow, wiped her eyes, and munched the biscuit with great relish. Even that scanty meal gave her courage.

Both looked up, but it was impossible to guess the distance; it must, however, be a good way off. They could just get a peep at a smooth green pasture high above their heads, and this they knew to be an enlargement of the grassy path they had so unwisely left.

"I don't like being left alone, for I'm afraid you

would never find the way, and the path is so unsafe at the foot of the rocks, you might fall into the water; and yet I don't want to be here all night. Oh! what shall we do?" wailed Emily.

"I don't know what o'clock it is, but I fancy it must be two hours since we left the others. Don't cry, Emmy, by-and-by I will try and call out again; they may be nearer and hear me; and—and—if they are not here soon, perhaps I had better find my way back alone."

"Give me your hand, Sylvine, if I could only walk a little way."

She tried a step or two, but with her sprained foot it was agony; then both sat down again, silent and sorrowful. An hour passed so.

The sun was now getting low in the horizon, a cool breeze stirred the trees, and the little girls shivered in their thin dresses, for in Wales autumnal evenings are very chilly. Emily shook from head to foot in consequence of sitting so long in wet clothes.

Once, twice, three times Sylvine had called for help in vain. At last, as the sun sank behind the lowest mountain-top, she jumped up and prepared to seek her way to the village.

"Good-bye, Emmy," she said, kissing her; "don't be afraid, I shall soon get home, and I will send a nice thick shawl to wrap you in and a cake to eat. I'll leave you my cape, for I shall not be so cold walking."

She took it off and carefully bestowed it round the shivering girl, who was too wretched to thank her.

Just then—but what happened must be told in another chapter.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE SEARCH FOR THE LOST.

"HOW hungry I am!" said Lucy Markham; "it must be getting time to have lunch."

Mademoiselle took out her watch.

"Yes, it is already two o'clock; how quickly the time has passed over this charming book. But those naughty children, where can they be?"

"Shall I go a little way into the wood and call them?"

"A thousand thanks, my dear. My own lungs are not very good."

Lucy put on her hat, which for coolness she had thrown off, and darted off, nimble as a hare, among the trees. She went about two hundred yards, then seeing no one, made a trumpet of her little plump hands, and shouted—

"Sylvine! Sylvine! where are you?"

No answer; but her voice startled a wood pigeon from its nest, who flew above her head far, far away. Again she cried louder still,

"Sylvine! Emily! come here."

No answer, and a little bright-eyed squirrel watched her from a fir-tree, as much as to say, "It's no use, they can't hear you." She walked on a few steps farther, and by-and-by she met a tiny, toddling child.

"Little one," she said stooping down and giving him a penny, "have you seen any one pass this way—two little girls with hats on?"

"Na na," he answered, for he could not understand a word of English.

"What, ma'am?" said a good-natured voice suddenly, and a woodman jumped from the midst of the thicket into the path. He was employed clearing a part of the wood, and was now returning with his little boy to dinner, for he lived down in the valley.

"I want two little girls; have you seen them?"

"Indeed, ma'am, no; I've seen no one; but I've been busy down yonder, a good way off."

Lucy returned to Mademoiselle in great discontent.

"Tiresome children," she said, pettishly; "no one knows where they are, and I can see or hear nothing of them. I will call Frederick, and send him into the wood, his voice is louder and will be heard soonest. But I must positively eat something first, or I shall be famished."

She snatched a sandwich, and eating it quickly, called to the young men below, who put up their tackle and clambered up, bearing a basket of fine fish.

"What fine sport we have had; see these trout, Miss Markham," said Charley Kennedy, "and such lots more: but we must stop to eat."

"And we must stop to look after these children," Lucy answered; "only fancy, they took it into their heads to ramble in the woods two hours since, and have not come back. I think we had better eat our lunch and then all go on the search, taking different paths; don't you, Mademoiselle?"

She looked round, but Mademoiselle was gone. Too anxious to wait for anything, she had started off ere they had perceived it.

They all set off, Frederick following in the track taken by Mademoiselle, Charley and Lucy forcing their way through a narrower and more difficult one. Long brambles and hazel boughs every now and then came into their faces, and poor Lucy's muslin dress got sadly torn, but they pushed on, nevertheless, with good heart.

They had gone on for an hour like this, without discovering a trace of the missing children, when suddenly they came to a great clearance in the wood. By-and-by the trees grew fewer, the rocks more steep and broken, the sound of water below noisier still; at last they stood looking down upon it, and there, on a slab of dark rock, surrounded by wild waters and crags and over-arching trees, were the two children, Emily half sitting, half lying at Sylvine's feet, whilst the latter, stooping, wrapped her little mantle round her.

"Sylvine! Emily! Ho!"

With a wild scream of delight Sylvine rose to her feet.

"I've sprained my ankle," cried Emily, fretfully.

"And I am so hungry," said Sylvine.

"I dare say you are; can't you catch a carp?" shouted Charley, who must always have his joke, though at heart he was as kind as possible. "Well, we'll feed you gloriously as soon as we get you, but that's the difficulty. Will you be afraid to stay here whilst I go to the village for a boat, or donkey, or fishing-net, or something to get you away with? It's impossible for me to get down there, or if I did, I could never carry you up."

They looked rather doleful at the prospect of being again left in that dark glen.

"Good-bye, little Misses Robinson Crusoe, I will go as quickly as my legs can carry me."

And he and poor Lucy threaded their way through the wood again right cheerily, meeting Frederick and Mademoiselle in their way, who had began to be very anxious but were rejoiced to hear of the lost ones being found.

You may be sure the time seemed long to Sylvine and Emily whilst they awaited their deliverance, but hope gave them patience, and if they cried at all, it was for joy. By-and-by a fishing punt appeared in sight rowed by Charley and a peasant from the village, who, when the rocks were reached, jumped out, and wading above his knees in water, bore them one by one on his shoulders to the boat. Oh! the joy of the two girls as they once more felt themselves in safety. How they demolished the bread and apples Charley had thoughtfully provided for them, and how glad they were to alight and find themselves with kind, grave Mademoiselle and Lucy.

"Oh! dear, dear Mademoiselle," cried Sylvine, as they all turned their steps towards the inn, an invalid carriage having been brought for Emily, "do forgive me, for I have been so wretched."

"Let us hear all about it," replied Mademoiselle Allemeyer; "mind, Sylvine, the whole truth. Child, child, you little think of the anxiety you have caused."

CHAPTER XVIII.

BENIGHTED.

THE next day they were to return to Beddgelert; the Hill party proposing to proceed to Llangollen by way of Bala and Corwen, which places they had not yet seen, whilst Mademoiselle had received instruction from Madame D'Aubencourt to meet her with her young charges at Bangor. So the pleasant party would be broken up; for pleasant it had been to all, and to Jenny especially, in spite of her aversion to join it. The hotel being full and every vehicle in request, only one carriage could be obtained and three cars, not the easiest thing in the world for a journey. However, every one put on a cheerful countenance, and declared themselves ready to bear any amount of jolting; so preparations for departure went on cheerily enough. When all were ready and mustered on the terrace for departure, the landlord came up with a rueful countenance, "I am very sorry to disappoint you, Madam," he said, bowing, "but I find that I can only offer you two cars, one unknown to myself having been sent to the next village—I am very sorry—very."

"How very provoking!" exclaimed Mrs Hill, "now that we are all ready for starting, and I have written for horses and carriages to meet us at Maenturog! Julian, what is to be done?"

"I can't imagine. Oh! let some go, and some stay. When will another car be in, Mr Humphreys?"

"It is impossible to say, sir; any minute or any hour."

"Then, mamma, you and those who prefer it had

better start at once, and we who stay can follow directly the car comes. Who volunteers to stay?"

"Let me go with you, mamma," said Emily; "I don't like riding in cars."

"Who goes with my mother, who stays with me?" said Julian.

"May I stay, please?" asked Jenny, timidly.

"Then I stay if Jenny does," put in Sylvine.

"I'll wait for you, Ju, with pleasure," said Charley.

"And I want my dinner, so I'll go with my mother," added Fred.

"I'll wait, too, if I am allowed," said merry Lucy.

"And pray don't exclude me," rejoined Mademoiselle, Julian dropped his hand.

"The poll is closed," he said, smiling; "I can take no more votes; two cars will only hold six."

"But if Sylvine stay, I should like to do so too," Emily said, discontentedly. "I thought of course she would go with mamma."

"Too late, too late, Miss Emmy. Only six are required to wait, and the six have already declared themselves. Besides, you don't like riding in cars."

"She'll have to ride in a car, any how," said Fred, who was fond of teasing; "mamma said just now, Mrs Markham, my father, and herself would fill the carriage, and we young ones were to ride in the car; so Emily you are in for it. Oh! what a jolting we shall have!"

Almost ready to cry with vexation, Emily took her seat; and with waving of hands the first party drove off. The others dispersed in the garden, where Sylvine and Jenny had a good game at hide-

and-seek, in which Charley joined them. All Charleys, I think, are fond of fun.

In about two hours time the landlord came running out in a great fluster.

"The car is come, ladies and gentlemen, and I have ordered a fresh horse to be put in immediately; in the meantime, won't you come in and take a cup of tea or some refreshment; you have a tedious journey before you."

"Will it be prudent to wait for that?" asked Julian, taking out his watch; "we don't wish to be late."

"Oh! never fear, sir, the roads are good and the lads know them well. Do take a sandwich or glass of ale or something."

Tea was soon provided, and having partaken of it hastily, the little party soon started. It was now late in the afternoon and heavy clouds drifted across the mountains, obscuring their summits or resting midway on their surfaces. Jenny rode with Lucy and Charley, who were about the two merriest companions one could have had, and Charley told such droll stories; Lucy said such funny things, that she well-nigh cried with laughter.

Just then a few heavy drops fell, indicative of the storm coming on.

"Oh, goodness! these Welsh showers are no jokes, and you ladies have no umbrellas; what is to be done?" said Charley, for once looking serious.

"We must get wet, I suppose," answered Lucy, brightly, "and go to bed directly we reach home, to prevent cold."

The rain now fell in torrents, and dense black

clouds obscured the sky; it was growing almost dark. Charley wrapt his rug round Lucy and Jenny as well as he could, but even that was ineffectual to cover them entirely, whilst he himself with his light shooting jacket buttoned to his chin, smiled and whistled as if nothing were the matter. Soon the other car came up. "Charley," said Julian, "this will never do; we must get shelter somewhere, if only a cowshed; we shall otherwise soon be wet through, and these ladies will catch no end of colds. Ask your driver if he knows any house or shelter near; ours hardly understands a sentence of English."

Charley obeyed, but only received in reply a shake of the head; at this Jenny got up, and said to him in Welsh—

"We cannot go on in the rain. These gentlemen wish you to drive them to the nearest shelter you know of; anywhere, so long as we can get under a roof."

The man immediately said that there were two cottages close by in a hollow, and he would drive them there; only poor people lived in them, but he supposed at least they had a room fit to sit in. This answer Jenny joyously translated to the others, and in five minutes' time they were set down at the top of a little hollow in which stood a tiny stone house, surrounded by a garden. Julian's loud knock was answered by a tidy girl in blue cotton bodice and red petticoat, whose black intelligent eyes immediately guessed the tale, and she beckoned them in cordially. The room was small, low-roofed, and humble, but there was still an air of comfort in it. A tin of hot potatoes stood browning before the fire,

and a kettle of milk boiled on it, giving a pleasant prospect of supper. One or two curious pictures, representing various heroes and heroines of Wales hung over the mantelpiece; in one corner stood a spinning-wheel and a huge bundle of yarn; a rude black clothes' press, a row of flowers in pots, a cupboard of earthenware (some jugs ingeniously replenished with tin handles), a hymn-book and newspaper, these, with a few chairs, completed the furniture. She motioned them to sit down, and then, without the slightest bashfulness, sat down at her wheel, and industriously went on with her weaving, scarcely taking her eyes off her work. At the end of an hour's time, during which the storm had in nowise abated, an elderly and respectable looking man entered the cottage. He was very wet, though wrapped up in a waterproof rug.

"Your servant, ladies and gentlemen," he said in good English; "I see the storm hath driven you into my poor house, and I am afraid it will keep you here for some time yet. I thought it would have kept me on the mountains all night."

"You are a shepherd, then?" asked Julian.

"No, sir, I'm na' shepherd, indeed; but I keep a few cows which pasture on the mountain-sides by day, and are housed in sheds hard by here at night. About two hours ago I went to drive them home, seeing the storm pending; but I was na' soon enough, and I thought I never should have got the poor beasts together. Now Greta, girl, get your father's supper."

The last words were spoken in Welsh, and

immediately the girl jumped up and prepared their evening meal. The first business was to pour the milk over the potatoes and mash them with salt, pepper, and butter in a flat dish; having done this, she placed it by the fire, and brought out from a cupboard a slice of bacon which she fried, and placed over the potatoes. When this savoury mess was put on the table, the man turned round with a smile.

"Indeed, ladies and gentlemen, it's humble victuals, but if you are as hungered as I am, it won't taste bad, and I'm sure you're most welcome to it."

"Thank you, my friend, a thousand times," replied Julian; "we are not hungry, or I am sure we should much enjoy such a good meal. Your daughter seems a capital cook."

"Indeed she is, sir," replied the countryman, with evident pleasure at the remark; "Greta is a good girl, and might have had lots of places at service before now, but she likes her father better than to leave him; and now the child is gone I could na' part with her."

"You have lost a child, then?" said Mademoiselle.

"Yes, I have lost a child," replied the man, sorrowfully. "I fear we shall never find little Angela again—"

At the mention of this name Greta put down her knife and fork, and looked at her father with wet, wistful eyes.

"Ah, girl! how you prick up your ears at hearing the little lamb's name. She was na' kith nor kin of our'n, lady, yet we loved her; poor little Angela, God save thee!"

Here Greta jumped up, and laying her hand on her father's arm, said a few words earnestly. He answered her again, and then turned to the strangers.

"She wanted to know what I was saying about our baby, and thought I had heard of her, but I fear me I never shall. Is na' London a great way off?"

"It is a good way."

"Across the sea, may be?" he continued.

"No, no, it is not beyond the sea; we could get to it from here in little more than a day."

He looked thoughtful, and then said—

"But it's a long way for all that; a long way for those who are poor and ignorant. If I thought I could find the child I would go nathless; only what would happen to the poor daughter at home?"

"If you don't mind telling us, we should so like to hear about your lost child, and perhaps we might help you to find her."

His eyes brightened, and turning round to Greta he translated Julian's speech, and seemed to ask her opinion in the matter. She nodded, and hastily dispatching his meal, he brushed away a few tears and told his tale.

CHAPTER XIX.

LITTLE ANGELA.

ABOUT five years ago, in the spring-time, before the hotels and lodging-houses were crowded with visitors, I was looking after my cows on those

mountains yonder, one morning early, when I was startled by the cry of a young child.

High and low, right and left, for a quarter of an hour, I searched in vain; at length, under the shelter of some shrubs, I found a woman, pale, death-like, and woebegone, with a tiny, golden-haired little girl kneeling beside her and crying bitterly. The woman looked about twenty-five, the child about three, and both were dressed in a curious, outlandish way, with handkerchiefs made into hoods over their heads, strings of beads round their necks, and white bodices, ornamented with coloured flowers; they did not look coarse and common like country people, and yet did not look like ladies. At a first glance I took them for foreigners, and I was right, for when I gave the poor thing a little whisky out of my flask, she sat up and began talking in a strange language. By-and-by she seemed to understand that she was in a new country, and tried to say a little English. All I could understand, was this, "Save baby—bad father!" and this she kept on saying over and over again. Well, I got her and the child home, when Greta made them some porridge, and nursed the little one, and I found them quite comfortable by the time I got back at night from the mountains. Still she was as much in the dark as ever regarding their name, country, and business, for the poor woman could not understand a word of Welsh. When I had taken my supper, however, and the baby was in bed, she came up to me and said—

"I go work—keep darling from bad father; I work to pay you."

I wanted to know her name and story, but she made no answer except that her name was Saffi, and kept on repeating the same words. Then she brought out a little bag of money, shillings, sixpences, halfpence, poured it out on the table, and counted up the pieces. They came to one pound, three shillings, and a penny. Having taken back one shilling, she pushed the others to me.

"You good man; daughter good; keep baby, love it. I go to work; will come again soon and bring you more. Promise to keep the child—I promise to work."

"You are going to leave it?" I said.

She answered me as well as she could that she was going to work for its maintenance, and in the meantime wanted me to take care of the child, as it had a bad father, who would take it away, and make it learn to dance at fairs and live in wickedness. At last she got up and went away, only turning round to repeat again—

"Keep it from father."

We saw no more of her for some time, and meanwhile our darling grew in health and beauty. She was tall of her age, and slight, with fine golden curls, blue eyes, and fair white skin, just now and then a little rosiness in her cheeks. She was wondrously quick and lively, soon speaking Welsh and English, and learning everything we could teach her. Alack! it was not much. I can read a little and write the letters, and do a few easy sums, and that is all; but though we could not make her clever, we could teach her to say her prayers, and we loved her as well as if we had known everything that is to be learned in

books. She was very happy with us and loved us dearly; never forgetting her mamma, but often saying little prayers she had taught her in a strange tongue. Venice, I think she said, was the name of the place she came from, but she was such a wee thing that she could not of course remember much. So time slipped by, and one summer day her mother came, looking as thin and pale as ever, but dressed more like English people, and better able to speak to me in that language. She told me that by singing in the streets she had got a little money, which she had come to bring me, and that she would soon go away again. I refused to take the money, and wanted her to stay with us and earn her living by sewing, or service, or some such thing. But she shook her poor head and replied :—

"Good man, I know what you say is kind and good, but I cannot, dare not, abide by it. I should like, oh! how I should like, to live here in peace and innocence with you and my Angela, but so long as I keep in London her father will not seek her elsewhere, and if I disappear entirely, he will never, never rest till he has found her."

She wept bitterly, and clung to me in a frightened, bird-like way as she said this, and added :—

"I can bear cruelty and hardship myself, but it would kill me to see my darling dressed up in silks and spangles, and dancing at fairs and other wicked places of amusement, learning naught but vice and sorrow. Oh! no, my friend, let me go and keep her here; here she learns nothing but to live harmlessly and to

love God; and if—if ever he comes, her father, her enemy, hide her, flee with her, never give her up."

I promised, and again, after spending one day with us, she went away. Ah! poor soul, how she smiled in spite of her misery that day; how she gambolled with her darling on the mountain side; how she sang to us after the evening meal, almost forgetting in her glimpse of happiness the misery to come. But night came, the child slept, and she had to say farewell. My tears fall now as I think of those partings.

But I must hasten my story. Two years more passed away, and our darling was old enough to go to the church school in the valley, and to help Greta home with the kine. She looked too fair and angel-like for household work, still we thought it wisest to accustom her to be useful and homely, as she would have to earn her own living most likely one day.

It was a mild day in February, three years ago, when we lost her. I remember the day so well. Greta had gone to a fair at Tremadoc to sell some stuffs and stockings, and as I crossed the mountain a company of strolling players and mountebanks went through Maenturog on their way to it. Amongst them was a poor pale little child, about our darling's age, and it made me sad all day for thinking of the fate she had been spared. Greta could not be home till night time, as she was coming in a carrier's cart, and I went home early to supper, thinking the child would be dull alone. Ah! I remember as I clambered down the hill side, that I wondered how she would manage to cook the potatoes and pork for daddy, as she called me; how she would run up to the garden

gate, with her golden curls roughening in the wind, to look for me, and how she would jump into my arms, saying, "Supper is ready, and *I've* cooked it," with such harmless pride. I must end my story, for my heart is too full to say more. The strolling players passed our Angela on the road, as she was returning from school, and I suppose her father was among the number and knew her. Whether it was so or not we never knew, but at midnight when I got to Tremadoc, the players had gone—no one could tell me whither. The little golden head never made our cottage bright again; our darling is gone like a helpless innocent lamb into the great cruel world. God in heaven keep her, and give us patience to bear this trouble.

I think there were few dry eyes as the honest man finished his story, and poor Greta, who understood well the subject of it, buried her face in her apron and sobbed aloud. At this the father wiped away his own tears with his sleeve, and patted her on the shoulder with a cheering word or two. It was beautiful to see these simple-hearted people so full of love and sympathy.

"Do not despair, my friend," said Julian, kindly; "London is not so large a place but that your little Angela may be found. No doubt her father was among the strolling players you mentioned, and took her away with him. But it is quite possible that her mother may have rescued her again, and fled with her to some other place of safety. When I get to London I will make every inquiry, and perhaps I

may discover some clue to their whereabouts. What is the mother's name!"

"Carla Saffi; a curious name and difficult to spell," answered the man. "Oh! sir, God bless you for your kindness in troubling yourself about me. If you could see right into my heart you would know that I am grateful. I could be quite happy never to see our little girl, if I did but know that she was growing up innocent and God-fearing as she was here."

"Let us hope for the best," replied Julian.

The moon was now up, and having taken leave of their host, Evan Evans, and the good Greta, the little party pursued their way homewards. You may imagine that they talked a good deal of little Angela on their way.

CHAPTER XX.

TWO DAYS AT CARNARVON. BEATRICE'S DIARY.

"SEPTEMBER 4th.—A lovely day. We started at one o'clock for Carnarvon, and drove outside the coach, which was quite a novelty to us, and very pleasant, as we had such a good opportunity of seeing the scenery. I was sorry to leave Beddgelert, and shall never forget the wild beautiful vale, the grand mountains, and the birch-trees that hang so lovingly over poor Gelert's grave. The affair of the picture makes us all very uncomfortable. I do not so much grieve at the thought of my labour being wasted, as I do at the suspicion of Jenny's deceit;

for she is so simple-hearted, so sweet-tempered, and so intelligent that I had begun to love her very much. I feel very, very disappointed. Oh! if we could but find out that she is innocent after all; yet who else would have done it?

"We have left Emily at Beddgelert; so much the better, and I do believe Sylvine is not sorry, for Emily was so selfish that she wanted her own way in everything. I hope we shall not meet her again; yet we all miss her brothers, Mr Kennedy, and the Markhams. We had a good view of grand old Snowdon and the mountains round Beddgelert as we passed along, and saw a very pretty cascade and a little lake, called the One-mile Lake. At the sight of this, Jenny started up from her seat, and cried, 'Oh! Sylvine, that is Lady-fern's lake, and she is buried beneath the waters, and Snowdon is the giant that died for love of her.' Of course I wanted to know what all this meant, and she repeated to me a pretty fairy-tale that Mademoiselle's friend told her on her homeward journey from Snowdon. The road to Carnarvon was solitary to the utmost degree. A few stone-built hovels and cattle-sheds here and there, and one or two little children, bare-legged and quite wild looking, who ran by the coach with crystals and ores to sell, were the only signs of human habitation. There were also countless small black cows feeding on the pasture, and sheep browsing among the rocks. They climb to the most dangerous looking crags and points; the mystery is, however they get down. The pastures being so well watered all through the year are very

rich, of a bright glistering green; I do not wonder at the Welsh milk and butter being so delicious when the cows have such grass to feed on. We saw some girls in the meadows milking, and one was returning with her tin pail flung over her shoulder; she looked such an odd figure, with her bare red legs, and uncombed hair partly covered by an old black hat, and wearing a pink and white cotton bodice and coarse blue skirt. How different to the neatly dressed, tidy village girls in England! We passed a lonely little inn, called the Snowdon Ranger, where we changed horses, and also some hamlets near to Carnarvon; we saw a nice little church, around which were a great many gravestones all formed of slate, and for the most part tastefully trimmed with flowers. It reminded me of the cemeteries I saw in the villages on the Rhine last summer. I like the custom so much.

"Directly after dinner we went to look over the castle. Jenny walked about with Sylvine, quietly looking at everything, and with a somewhat more cheerful face than she had yesterday; still she is constrained, and quite unlike her happy little self. Carnarvon Castle is a grand old place, by no means dilapidated, but as whole and strong as if it might last for centuries. A curious old Welsh woman sits at the entrance with a table of books, toys, and pictures for sale. Sylvine bought a doll dressed in Welsh costume, with high black hat, to take home to her little friend Zèphyrine. How she will laugh! I bought a book of Welsh melodies; Mademoiselle a pair of worsted stockings for her father, and Jenny

a pincushion for her Aunt Ana. We climbed up one of the towers and had a splendid view of the town below, the sea, the Carnarvon mountains, Anglesey, and the greater part of the castle itself.

CHAPTER XXI.

VARIETIES OF TALK AND TRAVEL.

"TO-MORROW we shall see Mamma," cried Sylvine, joyfully; "what a great deal we shall have to tell her!"

"I hope your diary is in good order," said Mademoiselle Allemeyer, "and that you are quite ready to show it."

"I'm afraid it is not very neat—but Jenny's is delightful," answered Sylvine. "Jenny, do read your diary to Mademoiselle."

"I think I must defer the pleasure of hearing it till to-morrow," replied the German lady, "for it is certainly high time for you to go to bed, as you will get up early in the morning."

And Sylvine and Jenny took her advice readily, for they were both tired. About half an hour afterwards Susette opened the door gently.

"May I speak to you, Mademoiselle Beatrice?" she said in French.

"Certainly; come in."

"Oh, Mademoiselle, I beg your pardon, but I will not keep you many minutes. I know that Miss Jenny is fretting, and I thought it right to tell you, when I left the young ladies just now I saw that she

was in tears, and indeed I have caught her with tears in her eyes several times lately. And, Mademoiselle, it was not she who spoilt her picture; I feel quite sure who it was, though I do not like to say."

"What do you know about the matter, Susette?" asked Beatrice, determined to get at the truth.

"I only know this," replied Susette, "that when I was putting on my bonnet to come to Carvarvon, Mrs Hill's maid came to me, for we were very good friends, and said, 'My young lady will be glad when your ladies are gone!' Why so? I asked; 'Because there is a little secret she is afraid will come out,' she said; and then she told me that the morning before, just at dinner-time, Miss Emily ran to her and said—'Oh, please, Hortense, if any one asks you, don't say I have been into Mademoiselle Allemeyer's dining-room since I dressed.' 'Why not, miss?' asked Hortense, 'Because—because,' she replied, with a blush, 'I don't want them to know—that is all." But when we heard about the picture, we understood very well what it meant."

Beatrice not wishing to encourage Susette's gossiping propensities, dismissed her without a remark upon her disclosure, and taking up a night candle, went immediately to Jenny's room. Aware of Emily's want of candour and right feeling, she at once freed Jenny from all implication in the affair of the picture, and felt a joy at heart to be enabled to do so.

A ray of moonlight streaked the two little beds, showing Sylvine's rosy checks amid her shining hair, and Jenny's gentle face. Both were very quiet as Beatrice peered softly into the room.

"Are you asleep, Jenny?" she said.

"No, Beatrice, not yet; but Sylvine has slept soundly from the moment Susette went down."

"And why cannot you sleep, darling?" said Beatrice, sitting down by the bedside.

"Because—because I was thinking about you."

"And what about me?"

Jenny hestitated, and Beatrice stooped down to kiss her, as if by way of encouragement.

"I was thinking, Beatrice, that I should be so happy if you liked me as well as you once did;" and a tear or two fell as she spoke.

"Then be happy, for I have come to tell you that if ever I loved you, I love you now twice as well."

"Oh! Beatrice, do you mean it? Do you really think now that I did not hurt your picture?" asked Jenny with tearful eagerness.

"I do, indeed, mean it, and I cannot tell you how sorry I am for such a suspicion. I know it has vexed you, though you have been very patient and uncomplaining. Oh! Jenny, will you forgive us all?" The little girl threw herself into Beatrice's arms and wept tears of joy. She never asked her for explanation; she never referred to the trouble she had gone through; she only expressed, again and again, her gratitude and delight.

The next day at an early hour our travellers were out on the beach, for they were to take the mid-day train to Bangor, and wished to see all that they could of Carnarvon before leaving it. Little Jenny's face glowed with happiness, and Sylvine was in un-

usual spirits; of course they had a great deal of chat about the picture, and, after many guesses and opinions, somehow discovered Emily Hill, or Emily's maid, to have been the offender.

"I never thought it was you, and nothing should ever make me," she said warmly; "and I wish I could think Emily had not done it, but I don't see who else it could be."

"Well, it is all over and past, and let us try and forget it," said Jenny. "It is always best to forget vexations; as Aunt Ana often says, 'Take account of the fine days, let the wet ones go.'"

"What does that mean?"

"That we should remember pleasant things, and always be grateful for them, but not think too much of what has been a vexation to us, especially if we could not help it."

The tide was now low, and many beautiful seaweeds lay on the shore.

"Come, Jenny; come Sylvine," cried Beatrice: "use your hands and eyes, and pick up every bit of pretty seaweed you can see."

"What do you want them for?" asks Miss Sylvine, who feels rather indolent.

"For my portfolio of seaweeds, little idle thing," replied Beatrice, smiling. We can't pick up these things at Paris, you know, Sylvine, and when we are settled there for the winter we shall be glad to have some relics of our summer tour. You shall see what lovely pictures these seaweeds make."

"Well, I don't mind helping you to collect them, but I can't see how they are to be made into pictures."

"Wait and see. Look at Jenny; doesn't she remind you of the little fisher-girls on the coast of Normandy, with her plaid dress tucked up, and her blue petticoat and high wooden shoes?"

Sylvine, not to be outdone, tucked her own little white dress up, and ran out on the sand to assist her, but she did not make quite so good a fisherwoman. However, between the two, Beatrice's basket was filled, and having sorted out those specimens she wished to retain, they returned home, where dinner was waiting. Dinner over, Beatrice's picture-making began. First of all she brought out a dozen or so sheets of stout cartridge paper, and three soft camel-hair brushes. Then she proceeded to spread a knot of seaweed upon one of these pieces of paper, which she did very carefully with the aid of her brush and a large needle, and so arranged the weed as to form of it a pretty picture, as much varied in light and shade as a group of flowers. After she had done one or two, Sylvine and Jenny tried their hands at it, and, after a few efforts, succeeded tolerably, though their groups were more clumsy than Beatrice's. When the weeds were all placed on paper, they were carefully laid in the portfolio beneath heavy weights. A little stroll into the town, tea, and the writing of their diaries finished the day. The next morning they took the early train to Bangor; a very pleasant journey along the sea-coast.

CHAPTER XXII.

CONTENT IS HAPPINESS.

"MAMMA, mamma!" cried Sylvine, wildly waving her little white hat out of the window. "Oh! mademoiselle, the train has stopped; do open the door and let me get out to speak to mamma!"

Just then the door was opened by Monsieur D'Aubencourt himself, and Sylvine, all radiant with delight, held up her rosy face to be kissed.

"Oh! papa, papa, where is mamma, and are you going back with us to Nant Llysin, and how long are we to stay at Bangor?" she said all in a breath, and speaking a curious mixture of French and English.

"Tiens, ma petite, voilà ta maman" (Gently, darling, here is mamma), replied M. D'Aubencourt, smiling at his little daughter's impetuosity, and looking down with great pleasure on her healthful face.

Here Madame D'Aubencourt came forward, leaning on Mr Armitage's arm; he was a grave but pleasant-looking man, and a clergyman of the Church of England. Hardly seeing him, so excited was she, Sylvine embraced her mother again and again, and rattled on—

Oh! darling mamma, we have seen so much, and have been up Snowdon; and Jenny is such a dear; and I've worn out three pairs of boots——"

"And have you no greeting for Mr Armitage?" said her mother, with some vexation. "I am afraid, Sylvine, that you have grown as countrified and ill-mannered as any cottage child."

Sylvine blushed, and holding out her hand, said—

"Please, Mr Armitage, excuse me. I did not know you were the friend mamma is staying with."

The clergyman smiled, and shook her hand cordially.

"I hope we shall be good friends," he said, kindly, "and you must amuse my daughter Kate with your adventures."

"I did not know you had a daughter, sir."

"Yes; but poor Kate is an invalid, and cannot climb up Snowdon and travel about as you do," he replied with a sadness in his voice.

Here they were joined by Mademoiselle Allemeyer, Beatrice, and Jenny, who followed behind, rather shy at having to encounter strangers.

"And who is this little girl—another niece?" asked Mr Armitage, taking Jenny's hand.

"Oh dear, no!" Madame D'Aubencourt replied quickly; "she is a Welsh acquaintance of Sylvine's, who lives in the Vale of Llysin. What is your name, my dear?"

"Jenny Roberts," answered Jenny, blushing, for Madame D'Aubencourt always treated her in rather an off-hand way.

"Not Jenny Jones, the Maid of Llangollen," said Mr Armitage, with a smile, "but Jenny Roberts, the Maid of Nant Llysin. And a wild, lovely spot, too. I remember it well."

They now proceeded to Mr Armitage's house, Sylvine walking between her parents, her long curls fluttering in the sea-breeze, her eyes dancing with pleasure. Mr Armitage lived in a pretty house,

commanding a wide prospect of the bay and distant mountains, and his daughter, who was lying in an invalid's chair on the lawn, gave her new guests a hearty welcome. She was a fair, sweet-looking girl, about twenty-five, with delicate firm features, which told you that she suffered much and suffered patiently. At Sylvine's age, she had been rosy-cheeked, full of health, vigour, and activity, but a fall from her horse, at the age of fifteen, had injured her spine and rendered her an invalid for life. Kate Armitage could not move from one room to another without assistance; she could not take pleasant walks or rides; she could not travel from place to place. Yet she began every day with prayer and ended it with praise.

Our travellers spent a delightful day at Bangor; indeed no one could be near Kate Armitage without being happy. She seemed to know at once everybody's tastes and pursuits, and found ways and means of gratifying them without the least ostentation or show. Sylvine and Jenny were told at once where to find her aviary, and rockery. Beatrice and Mademoiselle Allemeyer were enraptured with a portfolio of rare water-colour drawings she procured from her sitting-room, whilst she entered into an animated conversation with them regarding their recent tour. At two the dinner-bell rang. There was no ceremony at Mr Armitage's; the children dined with the rest of the family, and Sylvine was quite astonished to see her mother attired in a simple morning dress without any jewellery whatever. Kate lay on the sofa, and there was quite a scramble between Sylvine and Jenny for the pleasure of

handing her the salt or the wine. At first, Jenny had felt somewhat abashed at dining amongst so many who were almost strangers to her, but Mr Armitage and Kate seemed to do their utmost to make her feel at home, and showed her exactly the same attention as they did to Sylvine.

When dinner was over, Kate drew the little girls into conversation.

"Now," she said, "I expect you to tell me numbers of delightful stories about Snowdon, and the mountains and the valleys that you have seen. Do you collect ferns? do you keep diaries?"

"We write diaries, and Beatrice has collected a great many ferns and seaweeds, and written accounts of them," said Sylvine.

What good girls! You must let me see these diaries; and have you written down the legends about Owen Glendower, and King Vortigern, and Offa, and the Druids?"

"Who were the Druids?" asked Sylvine.

"Perhaps Jenny knows—ask her?"

"The Druids were the priests of the ancient Britons," replied Jenny, modestly, "who used to live in woods and pray to the sun and moon, and to fire and water, as if they were gods."

"Quite right; and do you know when this horrid superstition was done away with, and the true God worshipped instead?"

"Not exactly, ma'am."

"About the year 600, and I could tell you a pretty story concerning the introduction of Christianity into England."

"Oh! I should so like to hear it. I know nothing about history," cried Sylvine.

"Then you have a great many pretty stories yet to learn. But I think I must defer mine till the evening, for I heard your mamma propose a walk before tea."

"I would rather hear the story," said Sylvine.

"But you can hear the story after tea, when there will be no chance of going out," replied Miss Armitage, gently; "and two pleasures are better than one."

Sylvine, always impetuous, darted off to put on her hat; Jenny lingered behind.

"I wish you could go too," she said, with tears in her eyes. Kate Armitage drew her to her bosom and kissed her tenderly.

"Bless you, my child, for that sympathy," she answered softly; "it is good of you to remember the invalid."

The walk proved a pleasant one, and the little party returned home with good appetite for the nice muffins and butter with which the tea-table was supplied. The evening closed in early, and it was twilight when the table was cleared, and the children, with Mademoiselle Allemeyer and Beatrice, gathered round the sofa to listen to KATE'S STORY.

CHAPTER XXIII.

ETHELBERT AND ALFREDA; OR, THE LITTLE CAPTIVES.

TWELVE hundred years ago, when our beautiful England had neither churches, nor towns, nor

roads; when only a few huts in a boggy marsh stood where the streets and buildings of London now cover a space of many miles; when there were no shops, or carriages, or books; when there were no tall ships in the river, and no rich cargoes of silks, and corn, and coal, piled in the docks, there lived in Kent a Saxon nobleman named Egwurth. He was a rough, fierce man, chiefly delighting in war and the chase, and never scrupled at seizing on any neighbour's property which might lie conveniently near him. He was harsh to the poor also, paying his servants but little wages, and treating them like slaves, and everybody so hated and feared him that he was called the Terrible Man. But there were two beings in the world to whom he never spoke an angry word, and these were his twin children, Ethelbert and Alfreda. They were, at the time my story begins, about twelve years old, and were much alike, both having fair, delicate complexions, blue eyes, and long golden hair. It will be difficult for English children of the present day, who have learned to read and write, and many other things besides, who have nice clothes to fit them, and warm houses to live in, to imagine the life of these little Saxons. They lived in a rude kind of wooden palace, more properly speaking, hut, amid the wild tangled woods and lonely hills of Kent, and were utterly untaught in anything useful or civilizing. As Egwurth the Terrible Man was of so warlike a nature, he took great pleasure in teaching his little son to hunt, and ride, and shoot with the arrow, and as to poor little Alfreda, she must have led a sadly savage life, having no companions of her own age, and no

amusements beyond pet dogs, and rude toys made of reeds and wood. But in spite of all this, the children were very happy. Sometimes a gleeman came to their father's house, and would stay several nights, making them so merry with his entertaining stories and songs, that the rough Egwurth would laugh till the tears ran down his red cheeks, and Ethelbert and Alfreda would clap their little hands for joy, and dance about in their quaintly shaped garments.

One summer day when Egwurth was far away hunting wild boars, a powerful nobleman, whom he had offended by his greed of gain, made a sudden descent upon his house, and as the men were all gone to the chase with their master, and only a cook, a turnspit boy, and some women were left at home, they met with no resistance, and pillaged and ravaged at will. Every vessel of silver, every spear, and bow, and riding whip, were seized on: the frightened servants were treated with the utmost roughness, and were compelled to give up Ethelbert and Alfreda. And so, weeping and wailing, with their hands tied behind them like slaves, the poor little twins were carried away, and at nightfall when Egwurth returned home, he found his house deserted, his goods plundered, his children gone!

For some time the Terrible Man was speechless with the agony of his rage and grief, then striking his spear to the ground, he swore a terrible oath to avenge the spoiler of his hearth and home. All that night he paced the room with dreadful groans and tears, and no one durst speak to him for the blackness which clouded his brow. In the morning he

picked up by chance a little sandalled shoe which he knew belonged to Alfreda, and at that sight he shrieked aloud, and then placing it in his bosom, prepared to take revenge. But just as he was starting at the head of his men, in quest of the aggressors, one of the women servants who had hidden herself in a wood-shed for fear of her master's wrath, now rushed forth, and kneeling at his horse's feet, cried out—

"Oh! master, promise to spare my life, and I will tell you of your children."

"Speak, woman, and you shall not be harmed," cried Egwurth, white with impatience.

"Your children are not dead," said the woman; "your false neighbour, Cedric, came with a band of armed men and took them away, and we hid up, for we feared when you should come home and say, 'Where are my children?' But what could a few weak women do against fifty men?"

"On, on!" shouted Egwurth to his men, and rode straight away towards the territory of Cedric, neither stopping for food or drink. Once or twice, however, he took out the little shoe and kissed it.

We must now relate what became of Ethelbert and Alfreda. Weeping bitterly, and with heavy chains around their little wrists, they were placed on a rude kind of litter, and carried far through wood and hill till they reached the sea-coast. It was now the early dawn, for they had travelled all night, and one of the rough men who guarded them compassionately gave them some hard bread and a morsel of dried meat. Ethelbert took courage to address him.

"Where are we going to?—what will they do with us?" he asked timidly.

But the man only shook his head and pointed to the sea.

A little way from the shore lay a ship at anchor, a curious, clumsily built vessel, having a kind of small dwelling-house on deck. By-and-by a boat was sent ashore, and after a good deal of talking in a foreign tongue between the rowers and the nobleman, the children were led to the water's edge, and ordered to get into the boat. Then, for they now understood that they were sold into slavery, the poor little twins threw themselves at the feet of their cruel conqueror, and with their long golden hair streaming to the ground, begged for mercy. As well as their fetters would allow, they pointed to the direction from whence they had come, and then to the sea, crying with tears and sobs,—

"If we cross the sea, we shall never, never see our father again, and what will become of him without Ethelbert and Alfreda. Have pity, good lord, and send us home."

But the stern man turned away without a word, and the rowers, who were dark-haired and fierce-looking, and spoke a foreign tongue, dragged them roughly into the boat. And the boat reached the ship, and the ship cast anchor and sailed far, far away from the woods and hills of Kent, and Egwurth sought revenge, as a lion his prey, ever crying, "My children, my children."

After many days, and weeks, and months of tossing on the wide ocean, the little captives reached the

shore of a fair and beautiful land called Italy, and were carried to Rome. Never having seen anything beyond their father's rude wooden palace, with its coarse wooden benches, uneven floors, and windows made of horn, you can fancy with what wide-open eyes they viewed such a splendid city as Rome then was. With terrified hearts and bent heads they stood in the market-place to be sold as slaves, trembling every moment lest some buyer should come to separate them. It happened on the second day of their exposure a grand procession passed by. First came a crowd of priests robed in white and red, each bearing lighted candles; they were followed by others clad in white and yellow, who carried branches of palms and crucifixes; then came a canopy borne on men's shoulders, and on which was seated the Pope, dressed in glittering robes; and the procession closed with a band of young girls wearing white garments and chaplets of flowers, who chanted as they walked slowly by. Pope Gregory, on his way through the city, noted the fair sweet faces of the Saxon children, and afterwards inquired who they were. He was answered that they came from England, then called Angle-land. "Alas!" he said, "they would be not Angli, but Angeli (meaning angels) if they were but Christians." So he sent for the little captives, and having freed them from their slavery, took charge of their education, had them taught to read and write, and above all instructed in the beautiful religion of Christ. But he did not stop here. He sent over St Augustine, and many other good monks, to convert the Saxons and Britons

from their idolatry and heathenism, and after a time, the horrid rites of the Druids were entirely done away with; the people learned to worship God with pure hearts and lives, and the blessed name of Christ became known throughout the land. Ethelbert and Alfreda never forgot their native land, but when they were grown up, entreated their kind protector to let them return home, and assist in the good work. "We have a father," they said, "who was a fierce and hard man; but he loved us, and we can never be happy till we have seen him again. Suffer us to return to the island beyond the sea, that we may comfort his old age, and lead him to the foot of Christ before it is too late."

So Pope Gregory let them go, and no words of mine can ever tell with what transports of joy Egwurth, the Terrible Man, received his children, whom he had long lamented as dead. He was an old man now, and could no longer draw the bow and throw the spear as in his robust manhood; but never in the hunt, or the chase, or the fight, had he lost the little shoe which he carried in his breast as the only relic of his darling; and now, when she had come back to him a tall, fair woman, with a foreign dress, and skilled in much learning, but with the same old love in her heart, his face softened from its dark expression of rage and misery, and he wept like a little child upon her bosom. And she told him of the gentle Jesus of Nazareth, who died that others might live for ever, and of the heaven above which He has promised to all who believe in Him and repent of their sins, till at length the beauty and

blessedness of the religion of peace dawned on the Saxon's mind, and he knelt to Heaven with mingled joy and fear, crying—

"Lord, pardon me, for the sake of my children."

So the mission of Ethelbert and Alfreda was accomplished at last, and they were happy.

CHAPTER XXIV.

WOODS AND WATERFALLS.

THE next halting place of our travellers was at the village of Bettws-y-coed, or the Chapel in the Wood, where everything that is lovely and grand in nature are combined. Woods of fir and beech, mountain ash, and weeping birch; little nooks of tangled cloud-berry, and stone-bramble, and juniper-shrubs; golden hazel coppices, mountains orange and purple with gorse and heath, dashing cascades over grand old rocks, tiny streamlets bubbling down every hill-side, and making little eddies at the foot; valleys of glowing pasture, and rocks of grey ruggedness; oh! who could be in so sweet a place, and not thank God for the earth he has given us!

It was arranged by Monsieur and Madame D'Aubencourt that they should stay two days at Bettws-y-coed, and then proceed to the Valley of Llysin. After a week at Llysin they intended returning to London. Poor little Jenny looked very sad at thoughts of parting from Sylvine. On the first morning of their arrival, they all went to the Swallow Falls, the little girls riding on ponies, and the rest of the party in a car. Jenny, who could

ride pretty well now, though not so gracefully as Sylvine, looked quite like a wild little mountaineer, with her sunburnt, glowing cheeks and short curly hair all blown over her face by the breeze.

"My dear Mademoiselle Allemeyer," said Madame D'Aubencourt, "whilst Jenny Roberts is Sylvine's companion, I wish you would give her a few hints as to personal tidiness; and, good gracious! what a hat she has on—could you not give her one of Sylvine's old ones to wear? I feel quite ashamed of her appearance."

"I don't think Jenny is untidy, Aunt Adèle," said Beatrice; "but her father, it seems, is poor, and her wardrobe is but scanty."

"The little girl is very well, my dear," added M. D'Aubencourt, shrugging his shoulders; "you cannot expect her to be dressed like our Sylvine; and indeed in this wild country the little Welsh Jenny's dress is by far the most prudent."

Meantime Jenny and Sylvine were chatting away merrily enough, little thinking of hats and dresses.

"I shall write such long, long letters to you," said Sylvine, "and tell you every single thing that happens, even to my lessons. Oh! what lots of masters I shall have when I once get back to Paris. M. Rossi, to teach me dancing; and Signor Billetti to teach me Italian; Madame Lissau, for music; and Herr Scrober, for singing; then Mademoiselle Allemeyer, for German, and scales, and exercises, and no end of things. Now, you, Jenny, are much luckier, and I do wish I had only Mr Roberts to teach me, as you have. How I should like to stay

all the winter at Nant Llysin, and hear all your papa's funny stories—and oh! what lots of holidays I should get."

Here they reached the falls, and having alighted, the whole party entered a small enclosure, in which was a curious wooden summer-house, or hut, inscribed—

"MARY JONES, GUIDE."

A pretty-looking, modest girl stepped forth as they entered, and intimated, in curiously mixed Welsh and English, that she was Mary Jones. Following her a few steps down a winding path, a glorious scene burst on their sight. On either side arose high banks covered with firs, beech, elms, ash, and other mountain shrubbery. A leaf here and there glittered like gold amid the verdure, which spoke of the approaching autumn. High over black rocks, the river Llugwy is precipitated with impetuous force, its snowy cataract being broken by jutting crags, which dash the water about in all directions. Their smiling guide led them to a flat rock at the foot of the cataract, from whence they could safely sit and watch the foaming cascades; and after having enjoyed the spectacle in silent admiration for some minutes, they returned home. Sylvine and Jenny gathered a wild flower or two as a remembrance of the place, and you may be sure that Mary Jones was well rewarded.

Dinner over, Mademoiselle Allemeyer and the three girls took a walk through a lovely little wood at the back of the village. When they had reached a sunny spot where a felled tree afforded a good seat, they sat down to rest.

"And now, dear Mademoiselle," said Beatrice, coaxingly, "do tell us the different names of all the trees we can see, for I want to put a full account of them in my diary."

"Oh! my dear, what a request," answered Mademoiselle, lifting up her hands; "all the trees we can see, why, it would take an hour to give you an account of one. First of all, there is the name, for, like the names of persons, it must have had an origin; then there is its native country to tell of; its time of emigration to England; its relations and family; the visitors it entertains; its place of abode; its business——"

"Oh! what business *can* a tree have?" cried Sylvine, laughing.

"Everybody and everything has its business in this world," said Mademoiselle Allemeyer, "and trees may have many things to do. In the first place, they give board and lodging to hundreds and thousands of living creatures."

Again Sylvine laughed and opened her eyes.

"I have heard of owls living in old oaks," she said, "and I know that birds build their nests in trees and hedges, but they don't feed on them."

"You forget the bright-red hips and haws that keep the poor little robins from starving all winter," resumed Mademoiselle; "but it was not of birds I was thinking. Myriads of insects live in trees and on their leaves."

"Do tell us about them," said Jenny.

"It would take too long to describe even one or two trees accurately, with all its belongings," answered

the German lady, smiling her placid smile; but I will tell you a story instead; a story that was told to me years and years ago, when I was no older than Sylvine."

"Oh! please do, Mademoiselle, we have never heard one of your stories yet!" exclaimed Beatrice.

"It was told me long ago by my dear father, who was very fond of studying plants and flowers, and such things, and ever since he told me that story I have loved them too."

And Mademoiselle folded her hands in her quiet manner, and, with a tear in her eye, for she remembered her childhood at the grand old city of Nüremburg and her kind father long, long dead, thus began.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE KING OF THE FOREST.

THERE was once a great discontent and murmuring amongst all the trees of the forest because they had not a king.

"Let us have a king," thundered forth the Oak, and stretched out his great arms to attract attention; "let us have a king like all other civilized institutions, and then every tree shall know its place, and not tread on its neighbour's toes."

"Let us have a king," said the stiff Poplar, and held himself bolt upright; "let us have a king who shall prevent such a corpulent old body as yourself from breaking my slender nose."

"Let us have a king," said the Birch in a gentle

whisper, and bending its head meekly to the ground; "let us have a king who shall keep order, and prevent the harsh chestnut-tree from brushing all my hair into my eyes."

"Let us have a king," echoed the Elm; "a king who shall prevent my enemy the north wind from blowing every rag off my back."

"Yes, we will have a king," added the Beech, "who shall chastise that rogue the autumn when he comes to rob me of my golden coins."

"And who shall keep him from shaking off my silver feathers," said the Willow; "by all means let us have a king."

So the trees of the forest agreed to have a king; and now that this was decided on, the great difficulty was, who should it be?

It was a very hard matter to settle, and I believe the bickering and quarrels about it would have lasted till now if it had not been for a proposal made by the Oak.

"What is the use of all this *hemming* and *ha'ing*," he cried out in a great rage of impatience, "let us act like reasonable beings. We have resolved to have a king, and him who is worthiest will we crown; but of course every one thinks himself the worthiest, and we must never choose by such one-sided voting. Let us meet this day next year, and he who can bring the greatest number of votes and recommendations from others, he is the one to reign over us."

So the matter was settled for the time, and each tree went his way, seeking for adherents to uphold him in the great election. And time glided by, and

the north wind came, stripping the elm of his raiment, and leaving him naked in the cold air, and the autumn crept stealthily into the forest, and robbed the beech of its golden coins one by one, and all the willow's silver feathers of which he made shoes to flee noiselessly away, till the eventful day came at last.

You may imagine that what with the trees who came to claim the crown, those who came to look on, and those who came to act as voters, the forest was as crowded as it well could be. Notwithstanding this, however, great order prevailed, for the choosing of a king is not an every-day affair, and everybody felt the importance of the occasion.

The first candidate for regal honours was the Elm, who reared his lofty head as if it already wore a crown, and pointing to his host of supporters, said haughtily,

"Of what need is there for me to say much. All of you know that I am the descendant of a very noble family, who came over from Italy to settle here long before many of my neighbours ever heard of such a place as England, and have made ourselves so ornamental and useful into the bargain, that what the world would do without us I cannot imagine. Living we are the delight of all eyes by our majestic height and handsome form, whilst our dead bodies are worth their weight in gold." He ceased, and then from the crowd at his feet a country carpenter stepped forth.

"If it were not for the elm," he said, "I might as well try to fly up to the moon as to get a living by

my trade. There is no wood in all the forest that will stand sun and rain so well; what would farmers do without strong gates to keep cattle out of their wheat-fields, and strong carts to carry it to market when reaped? I vote for the elm."

"So do I," said the miller; "for my water-mill wheels, which are made of his bone, are as strong as ever, though they have turned the water for years; and the corn that has been ground there has fed a whole parish."

"So do I," said a plumber, "and a hundred of my fellow tradesmen; for I have made pumps these twenty years, and never yet of any wood but elm. I am sure nothing is more necessary than good water to drink, and how people would get it without pumps passes *my* ingenuity."

And many others also voted for the elm. Then the Birch advanced, and with its head drooped modestly spoke as follows :—

"I have long been honoured by the title of Lady of the Forest; and as Queen Victoria has shown us pretty plainly that women can govern as well as men if they give their minds to it, I have resolved to offer my humble services, and can only say that if you make me your queen, I will do my best to please you all."

She bowed meekly and retired. The upholders were not quite so meek. A whole flock of schoolmasters rushed forth and cried all in a breath—

"The Birch-tree for ever! Our scholars are so mischievous and idle, that if it were not for the birch-rod we should not get a single task well done."

Hardly had they thus said, when a multitude of people, who had come all the way from the northern forests of Europe, ranged themselves in the voting ground.

"There is no fuel so good for iron furnaces as birch sprays," said a charcoal-burner from the Black Forest.

A troop of dark-haired German girls, with short blue skirts, red bodices, and curiously ornamented caps, now joined hands and danced before the spectators.

"We have sung 'Buy a Broom' in all the great cities of Europe," they cried; "and when our brooms have been of good birch twigs no one has refused to buy them. Make the Birch-tree queen of the forest, and see how we will dance at her coronation."

"It is the bark of the birch which keeps the rain from drenching us in our beds," said a Norwegian; "and no tiles in the world can make a better roofing. If she is not made queen there is no justice in the world—that's plain!"

A Laplander, who looked like a child (for he was but four feet high), with lank black hair and yellow skin, now appeared, whilst a multitude of his countrymen, as small as himself, followed at his heels and echoed his words.

"I can say more than all," he exclaimed, in a shrill voice, "for she is the only friend we have. No other tree is good-natured enough and hardy enough to brave our cold winters, and she soles us, clothes us, and houses us; from her precious bark we make our shoes, baskets, cords, and lo! a large sheet of it with a hole cut in the middle for the head, forms the

very useful-looking coat I have got on. Who wants a better?"

And he turned himself round and round to be admired; certainly his coat did very well—it covered him.

Then the Lapps retired, and immediately there was heard a great buzzing of wings, and a swarm of moths and lovely butterflies flew into the empty space. There were the Camberwell Beauty, with its magnificent wings, and the pretty Brown-hair Streak, and their cousins, Kentish Glory Moth, Blossom-under-wing Moth, Peppered Moth, Light Orange-under-wing, Oak Beauty, and a great many more.

"The Birch-tree gives us her leaves for breakfast, dinner, and supper, and she ought to be Queen of the Forest," said the butterflies.

"The Birch-tree lets us curl up in her wood whilst we get ready our summer garments," said the moths, "and we give her our votes by the dozen."

And now the Crab-tree took the field. Before he could speak, a countless crowd of schoolboys of all ages and countries came rushing forward, and shouted with deafening voices,—

"Apples for ever, hurrah! Down with birch rods!" they cried. "King Apple and half holidays for ever!"

The Crab, or Wild Apple-tree, spoke very tartly:—

"My good friends and neighbours," he said, "surely my claims to public favour will not be disputed. I am the father of Ripson Pippin, Nonpareil, Squire Bacon, and Russet. I am the sole originator of pie, pudding, and puff; the supreme relish of all appetites. I will say no more, but leave my claims to your consideration."

And greengrocers, apple-women, cooks, and children spoke very warmly for the Crab.

Then appeared a slender tree, with waving branches and silvery, who was as modest and gentle as the crab had been sharp and conceited.

"I am the Osier," she said, "and have no fruit wherewith to savour my recommendations, but I have endeavoured to devote my life to usefulness."

"That you have," cried a basket-maker; "I don't know what use all the good things would be at Christmas, unless we had hampers to send them about in."

"And oh! we find such cosy places to build our nests in among her branches," piped forth a little Marsh Tit.

"And such nice swings for *me*," echoed a pretty Titmouse.

"And such nice singing bowers for us," said the Black Cap and Sedge Warbler.

"We are all so grateful to the Osier," put in some fashionable ladies, "for our wicker chairs are the most comfortable things in the world, and our dear little work-baskets—what should we do without them?"

"You are certainly not very grateful to us," exclaimed a Juniper tree, angrily, "what can be more useful or pretty than the work-boxes, knitting-cases, desks, and trays made of our bone? Wicker baskets are well enough for poor people, but Tunbridge ware is far more elegant and suitable for ladies."

After that, a great many ladies voted in favour of the Juniper. Then the Walnut tree had a great deal to say. His fruit was so good pickled, and so good

ripe. His arms and legs made such handsome tables, sofas, and what-nots. He was such an ornament—and a great deal more.

He did not want for followers, and the next aspirant was the Hazle, who was clad in gold and hung with nuts from top to toe.

"Who likes to go a-nutting, speak up for me."

This is all he said, and immediately a pretty red squirrel with bright eyes climbed up to its head, and squeaked forth—

"I like to go a-nutting."

"Don't we like it?" said some ploughboys, and grinned with their white teeth; "oh! it's jolly fun."

"And don't I like it!" chirped a nuthatch. "Good people, pray make the Hazle king, for he is the most generous tree in the wood."

"We can't eat the nuts, but the leaves fatten us nicely when we are caterpillars," said Brown-muslin Moth and her relations, Emerald, Copper-underwing, May High-flyer, Dark-bordered Beauty, with others that I have no time to mention.

"It's all very well to think of one's dinner, but one must also think of one's back," said the Spindle-tree, coming forward in its ruddy autumn dress, and with its pink seed-vessels fluttering as it moved. "It would never do to starve, but it would certainly never do to go naked. My wood is made into spindles, on which the weavers spin their thread, and it is thread that makes calico, and calico that makes shirts."

"Brightly spoken," added a linendraper, "and the spindle has my hearty approval."

The Lime spoke next, and pianoforte and toy-

makers praised its wood, and bees the honey of its blossoms; and then came the dark-leaved pyramid-shaped Yew.

"Bows and arrows are only boy's play now," said he, "but don't forget that in days of old they have played a great part in history. It was by the aid of good yew bows that English archers won the battles of Cressy, Poictiers, and Agincourt. It was by the aid of a good yew bow that William Tell knocked the apple off his son's head and saved Switzerland."

Many other trees said their say, and each had good qualities to bring forward. Last came THE OAK.

There were loud cheers from all quarters as the venerable patriarch appeared. He spoke slowly and with great dignity.

"A thousand years have I lived in this forest," he said, "and though grey and wrinkled, I am still strong and lusty, and put forth green leaves with the sprightliest of you. I have seen kings and races of kings pass away. I have seen mailed knights of Normandy ride beneath my spreading branches when the English people were enslaved and desponding. I have lived to see carriages of steam flash by with daily thousands to the marvel of the world, the great English London. The leaves of my forefathers formed the civic crown of the Romans, and covered the baldness of Cæsar; the ribs of my brothers formed the man-of-war that carried Nelson to Trafalgar."

It will be impossible to tell all the names of those who voted for the Oak to be king of the forest.

First came a drove of pigs.

"Grunt, grunt," they said; "acorns are food fit for kings' tables." Another grunt, and off they went.

"You give us meat and drink and covering," said a thousand insects, "and we will do our little best for you."

"You are a very handsome picture to copy," cried a painter, "and there is not a pretty landscape in England without an oak."

A tremendous cheering was then heard, and a company of jack-tars rushed in, in blue jackets and white trousers. Dancing a wild kind of hornpipe, they tossed up their caps and shouted—

"The Queen and the Navy for ever! Hurrah for the jolly old oak!"

And the Oak was made King of the Forest.

CHAPTER XXVI.

HOMEWARD BOUND.

THE next morning the whole party went in cars to the lovely Dolwydellan Valley, where on a steep rock, stands the remains of an old castle, celebrated as the birthplace of Llewellyn the Great. One old square tower of solid stone-work still remains, which Beatrice sketched, whilst Jenny and Sylvine scampered about like little mountain goats. Jenny, of course, had a great deal to say about her hero, and, when she was tired, sat down on a mossy stone, and pulling out her diary (which she always carried in her pocket), tried to describe the view. This Sylvine was much too indolent to do, but find-

ing Beatrice and Jenny too busy to be idle with her, she had recourse to her father, and scrambling to his knee, told him an abridged history of mademoiselle's tale. Returning home to an early dinner, they immediately set out for Corwen, and had a lovely drive between range after range of mountains, glowing with the bright hues of furze and heath; passing quaint little villages, and many peasant women, whose high black hats, and unceasing knitting, much amused them. At Carig-y-Druidirwr, or the Stones of the Druids, the horses were fed and the children regaled on apples, and now Jenny's cheek brightened with joy, for in another hour she would see her father.

At last the Vale of Llysin gleamed paly-green in the distance, with its rushing river, and grey rocks, and the wee house on the hill-side that her heart loved—oh, so well!

And now the carriage stopped at the wicker gate, and Mr Roberts came out with kindly greeting; Aunt Ana followed, looking no less pleased. Jenny rushed to her father's arms, forgetful of the presence of Monsieur and Madame D'Aubencourt, forgetful of everything but the joy of seeing him again.

They had a very merry tea, as you may suppose, to which Monsieur and Madame D'Aubencourt stayed; immediately afterwards returning to the hotel, and at eight o'clock, the children went to bed thoroughly tired.

The next morning, after breakfast, a little note came from the hotel to the effect that Madame D'Abencourt wished to speak to Mr Roberts, who went without delay.

"I wished to see you," said the lady, "in order to talk to you about a little matter on which Sylvine's heart is much set. She is very anxious for your daughter to return with her to spend the winter in Paris; will you consent to her going?"

Mr Roberts looked somewhat surprised.

"I knew you would not be prepared for this," she continued, "but thought it better to hear your decision at once, as we are anxious to return home as early as possible."

"Indeed, you are most kind," replied Mr Roberts, "but I must at present decline any invitations for my child, though I feel sure it would be a great delight to her."

"Perhaps you are thinking of her return," said Madame D'Aubencourt; "but do not be uneasy on that head. We should certainly have friends returning to England who would take charge of her."

"I thank you very much, but it was not of that I was thinking. To speak frankly, madame, I could not well afford the expenses of such a journey for Jenny now, and even if I could, I think it would not do. A visit in so wealthy a family might perhaps make her feel the poverty of her home on her return, and unsettle her for her old duties and studies. It will most likely be her lot to earn her own living when she is grown up, and it is for that future that I am endeavouring to fit her. Rich dresses, expensive living, servants, and visitors are things she will have little to do with."

"Your reasons are certainly good ones," replied Madame D'Aubencourt, "and I will not try to per-

suade you from anything you think best for your little daughter." And so the matter ended. When Mr Roberts returned to the cottage he found the three girls seated in the parlour, busily putting up drawings, books, etc.

"Well," he said, "what have you got to show me after all this jaunting about?"

Beatrice brought out her sketches, dried ferns, and sea-weeds; Jenny slily produced her diary; and Sylvine hers, much defaced with blots and erasures.

"I've got nothing worth showing," she said, with a blush and a sigh; "Jenny's diary is as good as a history, and as neat as can be; and as to Beatrice, look at *her* collection!"

Mr Roberts was equally ready to see and praise all. Very pleased was he at the witnesses of Beatrice's industry; very smilingly he glanced at Jenny's clearly written diary; very patiently he deciphered Sylvine's scrawl. "Good," he said, emphatically, when his scrutiny was over. "We must take heed of what passes round us; we must seize every opportunity of gaining knowledge, and we must love God better, for every pleasure His works give us."

Beatrice selected one of her prettiest drawings and placed it in the good man's hand.

"Do take this as a keepsake from me," she said, with tears in her eyes. "You are the first one who has taught me to love Nature, and I shall always be grateful to you and remember the Vale of Llysin."

He took the drawing with quiet, earnest thanks, and placed it in his desk.

"I have nothing to give you," said Sylvine, sorrowfully. A moment after, however, she rushed from the room, and by-and-by returned carrying a little Prayer-book.

"This is *my* keepsake," she said, and clambered to his knee for a kiss; "and, oh! you dear, good Mr Roberts, I do so wish you would come to Paris and teach me all the clever things Jenny knows."

CHAPTER XXVII.

GOOD-BYE.

THAT evening, when Jenny went to bid her father good night, he took her on his knees, and said seriously—

"My dear child, I have something to say to you before going to bed. Are you aware that Sylvine has wished you to return to Paris with her?"

"Yes, papa; she has often talked about it."

"Madame D'Aubencourt has herself spoken to me on the subject, and I have thought best to decline the invitation for you at present. Are you very disappointed, darling?"

Jenny hid her face on his shoulder to hide a tear that would come spite of her efforts to restrain it.

"No, father," she whispered; "I should very, very much like to return with Sylvine, but I know I cannot, and I have tried not to think upon it."

Mr Roberts kissed the little girl's forehead.

"Well done, Jenny," he said; "it is good to learn self-control and self-denial, for it would vex me very

SYLVINE'S KEEPSAKE.

Page 152.

much to see you unhappy; but I am sure you will not lose your cheerful looks for so slight a thing. We shall be very happy together all the winter, shall we not?"

"Oh, yes."

"And when you are older, and have finished your first education, perhaps you may have the chance of visiting Paris."

"What do you mean by my first education?" asked Jenny, raising her head.

"I mean the education I can give you—the education of childhood; but education itself is never complete. We must be learning all our lives, you know; we must learn from books—from people wiser than ourselves—from nature, and from life. I try to learn something every day. Think of this, deary; and now good-night."

The next day was a very busy one, for there was a great deal of packing to do, and Sylvine and Jenny both contrived to make themselves of use. It was a good thing that they found employment, as it prevented them from thinking of the separation on the morrow. Once or twice, however, Jenny could hardly restrain her tears; she had never had a friend of her own age before, and dearly loved Sylvine; it was therefore a severe trial to part from her. Sylvine seemed to guess what was passing in her mind, for she said several times during the day, "I will write to you once a fortnight, Jenny; and if ever I come to England I will see you again."

Morning came. Jenny made a great effort to eat her bread and milk, but the rising tears seemed to

choke her. Mr Roberts noticed her sad look, but said nothing; Beatrice noticed it also, and, good-naturedly, attempted to cheer her.

"Now, Jenny," she said, "you must be very busy all winter and get as clever as possible, for who knows but that we may visit Wales again next year. You must make her write long letters to us, Mr Roberts, and see that she tells us all the news, and whether Giant Snowdon wakes to life and runs away, or another Glendower arises to incite all the good quiet old Welsh women to arm for their country."

"Oh, Beatrice!" cried Jenny, smiling through her tears, "I never saw you so funny before."

"Let us have a run round the garden," whispered Sylvine.

The two little girls ran off with arms entwined, and Sylvine held her hand under the spring, and drank of its clear waters.

"Oh! you pretty sparkling waters," she said; "oh! you grand old mountains; oh! you lovely green meadows—when shall I ever see you again?"

She turned to Jenny with a serious expression on her bright face.

"Dear Jenny, what a good, contented, unselfish girl you are! I believe I shall always be better for knowing you; and though—and though," here she coloured and hesitated, "I have often been disagreeable and unkind, you have never been angry with me, and I shall always love you, Jenny, as long as I live."

She clasped her arms around Jenny's neck, and her long golden hair mingled with her friend's

brown curls as she held her in a long embrace. Then the carriage drove up, and both knew that they must part.

"Good-bye, dear, dearest Sylvine, do not forget me," was all that Jenny could say, for her heart was full to overflowing.

"Good-bye, dear; I'll write often."

The other adieus were soon made, and in another moment the carriage rolled off. When it was out of sight, Jenny crept close to her father, and laid her cheek on his arm.

"What a happy summer this has been, papa," she said, softly; "but it seems soon gone."

"Yes," replied Mr Roberts; "and as time goes so quickly, we must make every day as good and happy and innocent as we can, and then we need not look back on the past with regret."

And Jenny never forgot those words spoken to her in an hour of sorrow.

CONCLUSION.

A LETTER FROM JULIAN HILL TO JENNY ROBERTS.

LONDON, Christmas, 185—.

"DEAR LITTLE JENNY,—I write not only to wish you a merry Christmas and a happy new year, but to be the bearer to you of some good news. You remember that kind, honest man, Evan Evans, in whose house we sheltered on our way home from Festiniog; and you remember, most

likely, the touching narrative he gave us of his poor little adopted child, Angela Saffi. When I returned to London I lost no time in making every possible inquiry, but it was some time before I obtained the desired results. At length I happened to see in a newspaper the account of an accident which had happened to a man in a theatre, named Andrea Saffi. It seemed that he had been engaged as clown, and fell from an immense height during his performance, so injuring his spine that he died the next day. The writer of the notice recommended to the charity of the public his widow, Maria Saffi, and only child, a girl of ten years, both dependent on their own exertions for support. You can fancy how eagerly I rushed off to the widow's humble lodging (the address was given in the paper), and found, to my great joy, that it was indeed our friend Evans' little Angela and her mother. The poor woman gave me a long account of her troubles since that February afternoon, when her husband with his fellow-actors, on their way to Maenturog, encountered the little girl, and took her up with them, he of course recognising her as his own. The poor child could not be consoled for losing her happy mountain home and kind friends; but at last, by dint of promises and threats, her father prevailed on her to leave off crying and to eat. After many wearisome journeys they reached London, where she was placed with other little girls under the care of a dancing mistress, in order to fit her for the stage. Her mistress was not unkind, but she could not be happy away from

the friends of her childhood, and she grew silent and thin and pale.

At length, one day, when her father had threatened to beat her if she did not laugh and eat like other girls she ran away, and hid in the wilderness of London streets. Here her mother found her, and the two lived for some time in a small attic in Camberwell, earning a scanty pittance by needle-work, and never daring to go out in broad daylight lest they should be discovered. At length, they had saved up a small sum of money, sufficient to carry them to Harwich, from which place they intended to cross over to Antwerp, and beg their way back to Italy. They did not dare to seek the old loved home in Wales. But on the eve of their starting came the tidings of Andrea Saffi's death; and though as he had been so cruel they could not love him, still they buried him decently and put on the best mourning they could afford. I helped them all I could, and you will be delighted to hear that a large sum has been subscribed to them by generous people in London, with which they intend to furnish a small house somewhere near our old friend Evans, and to take in lodgers during the summer season. Maria is also able to do many little things in fancy work, which she will easily sell to tourists. Fancy, my little Jenny, with what tears of delight Evan Evans and the good Greta will welcome their lost darling, their little strayed lamb, their golden-haired Angela.

"This is a long letter to you, little friend, and I have still more to say. Sylvine and Beatrice are

well and happy in Paris; dear Mademoiselle, who was so kind to us all, is gone to Nüremberg to see her sister and nephews and nieces. Charley, frank, merry, noisy Charley, is gone into the country to make his brothers and sisters merry, and to spoil the shape of the Christmas pudding. Mamma, Emily, and Fred are well, and busy decking the house with holly. I have been hard at work in my study reading Greek and Latin; for I shall soon be ordained as a clergyman now, Jenny, and I wish to be behind no one in my preparation. I wish and pray earnestly to do my duty to the utmost through life, and never to let pleasure, or sorrow, or joy come between me and the work God has given me to do. And though you are a little girl, Jenny, I am sure you will understand that you have also duties and work given by God to do, and that you must pray night and day that your work in life may be well done. Pray also, my child, that your heart may be kept innocent, and thankful, and true, and that you may never prove unworthy of the teachings you have had in childhood.

"Many happy, useful, blessed years to my little Jenny.—"From her affectionate friend,

JULIAN HILL."

THE END.

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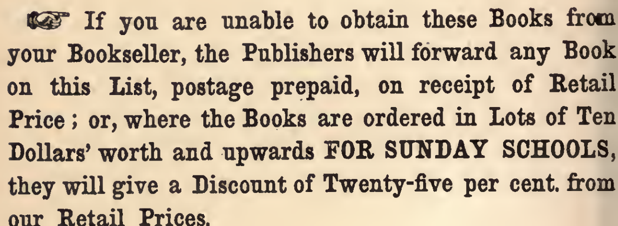

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