

matters? Poor fellow! He desires to do what is kind and right, but his wife's influence stands in the way of the one, and her extravagance renders the other impossible."

Dr. Crawford had long been aware, through another channel, that his wife's little fortune ought to have been paid to him on her wedding day, and that Lord Carnelly had purposely deferred the payment. He was more really sorry for the want of candour in his brother-in-law than concerned about the money itself. They had been such friends in the old days, and Dr. Crawford thought sorrowfully, "He might have trusted me. Surely I was not likely to be less his friend because of the new family tie between us."

The doctor had abundant cause for displeasure, as even the interest of the money had not been paid, but he was far more anxious about Ida herself, and desirous that she should not be injured by the uneasiness which her brother's silence had caused. He accordingly telegraphed to Lord Carnelly, and begged him to send a message to his sister through the same medium, as she was grieved at his apparent neglect.

The answer was prepaid, and it came in these words:—"Lord Carnelly absent; yachting with a friend. No certain address. Expected home shortly. Telegram shall be forwarded as soon as possible."

Dr. Crawford recognised the name of the sender, John Morris, as that of Lord Carnelly's butler, and wondered a little

that no allusion was made to Lady Carnelly.

"She must be from home also," he thought, "and no doubt Morris, who is a trustworthy man, is left in charge, and bidden to answer any such communication as mine."

The doctor was mistaken in this supposition. Lady Carnelly was at home, but did not choose to answer the telegram herself. She therefore bade Morris use his own name, though she wrote the message apparently sent by the servant.

Scanty as was the intelligence thus conveyed, it was better than nothing, and Dr. Crawford hastened with it to his wife's side.

"I telegraphed an inquiry about Lindsay," he said, "and here is the reply. You see, darling, your brother is away, and probably out of postal bounds, so there is a fair excuse for his silence. You will hear from him before long."

The doctor spoke cheerfully, but Ida was not satisfied.

"He ought to have written," she said. "He had no right to pass over this birthday. I did so wish you to receive the little I can claim as my own, Andrew. So little, too, in comparison with Lindsay's share, and yet he withholds it."

The doctor would only treat the matter lightly.

"Then, dearest, we will not make a great trouble about this little, but rather be thankful that we are in no way dependent on it. When you placed this

dear hand in mine you bestowed the best you had to give, for I know your heart was given with it."

"No, Andrew," interrupted Ida, with a bright smile. "The heart was yours long before."

"True, darling, and I like to hear you say so, and to see the shadow clearing from your face."

He kissed her tenderly, adding as he passed his hand lovingly over her shining hair, "For ten times the sum your brother holds I would not have you suffer an hour's real heartache. The settlement is only a question of time."

Won back to smiles by her husband's cheery words and bright face, Mrs. Crawford strove to think that this neglect of Lindsay's did not arise from wilful unkindness.

"He never was a good man of business," she said, "and he always put off letter-writing as long as possible. I am sure you are right, Andrew. I will not worry myself and you about what cannot at present be helped. I suppose so long as the interest is paid a little delay can't matter much."

"Certainly not, dear," was the cheerful answer.

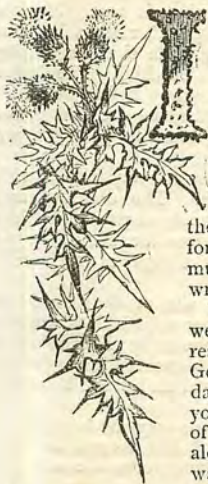
But Dr. Crawford did not tell his wife that hitherto he had received no interest from Lord Carnelly.

Before night a second telegram was delivered at the surgery door, and this caused serious anxiety to Andrew Crawford.

(To be continued.)

NORWEGIAN GIRLS.

By FRU ALHED SCHOU, FÖRDE.



If you wish to know something about Norwegian girls, their daily life in their homes, and their customs, I shall try and tell you something about them, and hope my readers will excuse the awkwardness of a foreigner who is not much accustomed to writing in English.

The education of Norwegian girls very much resembles that of the German. During the dark winter mornings you may perceive parties of them tripping gaily along the streets on their way to the schools, the snow falling light and

free on their coloured bonnets. A good education is considered of the greatest importance, and that old proverb, "knowledge is the best inheritance," is quoted more than once. Besides their own language, they commonly learn English, French, and German, and lately physics and mathematics have also formed a great part of their instruction.

At two o'clock, school-time then ended, they are in the streets again, hastening home

to partake of dinner, which is commonly served at that time.

The mistress of the house and her servants—generally one or two—have been busy during the forenoon—first, rearranging the rooms, then marketing, and at last the mother has superintended, or really cooked, the dinner.

There the mother is standing in the gateway welcoming her husband, who returns from his business, and her children, who are bounding up the stairs rejoicing in their liberty and the prospect of dinner. The children are already standing in the little passage taking off their things, and soon they are in the dining-room where the table is laid. The father is placing himself at the head of the table, the mother at his side; the children arranging themselves according to their age. The eldest one is saying grace, while the little one in his high chair devoutly clasps his chubby hands together. The conversation is very lively; everyone has something to tell, and the topics are discussed very unrestrainedly; praise and blame are distributed as justly as possible.

You would find the *menu* rather meagre, I think, daily fare consisting only of one dish and the soup; dessert is not partaken of every day. Boiled or roasted fish, with potatoes, milk soup, thickened with rice, is served to-day, while to-morrow it may be cutlets with young peas, and fruit soup, the favourite dish of all children. This soup consists of water thickened with rice or sago, while preserves

of wild and cultivated berries are added to get the flavour, and it is served quite hot.

As in Sweden, raw and smoked salmon, legs and shoulders of mutton, ox, and reindeer are very much used. We have not the Swedish "smörgåsbord" which I have seen described in THE GIRL'S OWN PAPER. This food is also used very much by the people; the prosperity of many a peasant is reckoned by the number of dried mutton legs decorating the roof of his larder. Many an old woman in the most secluded valleys guards these treasures as a dragon, and I am rather ashamed to say she is very proud when confiding to an envious neighbour that her "spegekjød" is ten to twenty years old; they both, of course, regard those yellow, old mummies with enraptured eyes.

Will you take a peep at the parlour, the door from the dining-room standing ajar? The window curtains are of a clear muslin, blooming flowers adorn the window-sill; ever-green plants are placed in the corners. Here is the piano, the bookcase, the *etagère* with all its little trifles. A boudoir and a drawing-room are frequently wished that cannot be gratified, so the parlour often is the best room; the household work is done in the dining-room and the bedrooms. The stoves, I am sure, you would find hideous; they are described as "black coffins standing erect," and they bear some resemblance to them, to be sure. However, they are very warm and cosy in winter, and it surely will be some time

before a new system of warming will be employed.

From the opposite side of the dining-room, the doors usually lead to the kitchen with the pantry; this we find very convenient. The bedrooms occupy the other side of the passage. The parents frequently have their little ones in their own room, while the girls and boys have the rooms adjoining.

The young girl is very fond of her own room. There she has her writing-desk, her little white toilet-table, with its pin-cushions and its trifles, given by her dear friends. There stands the likeness of her father and mother, framed by her brother when he was at home for his last holiday. The painted scripture text on the wall was done by that dear friend whom the earth already has hidden, but whom she hopes to once meet again. The white counterpane on her bed was knitted by the patient hands of dear grandmother; and the fox, whose skin lies before the bed, was shot by her father while she was yet a child. Sometimes the confirmation marks the close of the girl's school-days. Then she has to learn all the household duties; to make the jam, to preserve the vegetables, to iron and starch; and very proud she is when she is making the dinner alone some day. In the mornings, when the others have left home, she sits with her mother stitching, seaming, and darning. Her mother is very happy having her own girl as her helpmate, and looks fondly at the bright, young face.

Very often the young girl pursues her studies after the confirmation. Sometimes she passes a public examination, which serves her very well if she wishes the place of a governess. Many of our young girls earn their living as telegraphists, cashiers, and clerks. After many a struggle and much resistance, they have now obtained permission to study at the university. This law was confirmed last year, and already now we have female students of law and medicine. If her assistance is not required at home, every young girl has, as a rule, something to do, one or another employment.

This rule is, with a few exceptions, universal with all girls, but you must remember there is little or no class distinction in our poor country. Nobility does not exist, and the daughters of our functionaries and our merchants are most frequently only too happy when able to earn their dressing money.

Our girls are very fond of reading, and we have writers and authors, whom we love very much. In stirring words, they tell of the exploits of their ancestors at the time when Norway was but little known beyond its own bounds, while at the same time they direct serious, sharp, and warning words to their descendants. We have true and beautiful tales from coast and mountains, and the poet peoples in his beautiful fairy tales this mighty nature with marvellous beings. He tells about the hideous gnomes in the dark mountains; about the beautiful wood-nymph, and he gives us the sad song of the unhappy water-sprite. But during recent years our modern poets have shown a great partiality for the modern French novelists, and their latest works are not fitted for young girls. I need not say this is a great sorrow to many a father and mother.

Of foreign authors, I think our girls love the English novelists the best. They know and value the works of Sir Walter Scott and Dickens, while Thackeray and Bulwer are as old and beloved friends to their mothers. Frequently the young girl is permitted to have a reading evening in the week. Then her friends arrive, bright and happy, at six o'clock in the evening, and when the tea and home-baked cakes have been served the knitting and the workbox are taken up, while the young hostess is reading aloud "David Copperfield" or "Ivanhoe."

Music is cultivated very much, but the voices are not so beautiful as in Sweden. The young musical girls generally are active members of the harmonic societies in the towns, where every winter the greater musical works are performed. The girls also very often pursue their musical studies at Leipsic and Berlin. The music of our own composers reminds us of the melancholy wildness of our mountains, but is also as sparkling as the music of the white streamlets and the shining waterfalls. It is very dear to our girls; but they love Schubert, Chopin, and Mendelssohn none the less.

As to pleasures, she is, as other young girls, very happy, and very busy when a dance is given at home. She decorates the corners of the rooms with evergreen plants and candles; she helps her mother in making the jellies and the cakes for the dessert. The supper of such a party very often consists of buttered pieces of various bread. This bread the mother and the girls have to butter in the forenoon, and then the pieces are covered with cheese of all sorts, chopped eggs with anchovies, neat slices of cold ham, meat with pickles, etc. The table is prettily laid with dishes containing the covered bread, while milk and beer are served as beverages, wine usually only at the dessert. All these preparations make a pleasant employment, and many a happy nod she gives mother and the aunts when they in the evening are playing the waltzes of Strauss and the quadrilles of national melodies.

As to outdoor pleasures, skating is very much enjoyed in the winter, and the blue "fjord," now covered with a coating of shining ice, forms then every day a lively sight, filled as it is by young and old. In the frosty, clear evenings, when the moon is shining peacefully on the rimy trees and shrubs, gay parties of children, girls and lads, are gliding down the slope on hand sledges, the air resounding with their merry young voices.

Our young girls are also very good pedestrians. Many a trip and excursion for the delightful summer holidays is discussed during the dark, stormy winter nights. In the summer you will meet parties of them at the steamer, in the railway carriage, in the mountains, and on the dusty high road; they are travelling alone, and very inexpensively, using their own legs as much as possible.

"But," you say, "we are wishing to hear a little about the fisher girls and the peasants; these young girls have, by your description, a very ordinary European appearance."

To be sure, I must tell you about our fisher-girls living at the stormy, naked coast on these seagirt islands. They are, indeed, very brave and hardy, these fisher girls. During the winter the men commonly sail away to the great fishing places in the north, which provide the Roman Catholic countries with a great deal of their Lenten food.

Then these women are alone—alone with the burdens and the few joys of their serious life. They have to steer the boat, to use the scoop in many a heavy gale, to guard the fishing nets standing in the deep open sea; they have to supply the homes with firewood and food. The minister of the little desolate red church on the island then delivers his sermons to a congregation of women and children.

Think of the talk in the homes of the absent men, the hopes for fine weather and good earnings; the anguish, the dread, and the prayers when the thunder peals are filling the air, and the tempest is lashing the waves.

It is quite a pretty sight, when all these husbands, fathers, and sweethearts are expected home, and the wind is fair, to look at the young girl or fond mother standing on the lonely, grey cliff. She is shading her eyes

with the lifted hand while she sends yearning, longing glances outward to the endless blue sea.

There is a great difference between the life of the fisher girls dwelling at the grand, open sea and the life and customs of the peasant girl among the mountains.

The peasant life is secluded and lonely; the tall mountains surround their valleys with an impenetrable wall, secluding the inhabitants not only from the world, but in winter also from the sun. I cannot describe that feeling of loneliness which seized me in my mountain home the first time I saw the sunbeams dancing on the mountains far away, and I suddenly understood that the tall, dark mountain just opposite our house would prevent those blessed rays reaching us, the children and the flowers, for ever so long. So in the long winter, when the sun is far away, and the avalanche is threatening the home, the peasant girl leads a solitary, serious, and industrious life. In the long evenings her mother teaches her how to spin and weave the wool of her own pretty lambs, into blankets with beautiful original patterns. She also is very occupied with the peculiar embroidery used in the mountains, and which is much sought after in the towns.

While a child she has to frequent the parish school three days in the week. She hears about her Creator and the Christian faith; she learns to read, write, and do sums, together with some history and geography.

Every child in the country is able to read and to write, but, alas! the knowledge of household matters is very slight in some places on the coast and in the more secluded valleys.

The poor people in these places do not know how to use all the good things which God, the Almighty, has given them. They cannot prepare their milk, their butter, and their cheese as well as they ought, nor utilise the fat meat of the mountain sheep, or the abundance of fish in the waters. But they are docile, industrious, and good, and I trust that the sense of true economy more and more will be awakened. Their life in the mountains teaches them to be patient and forbearing, while it at the same time steels and hardens their will and energy.

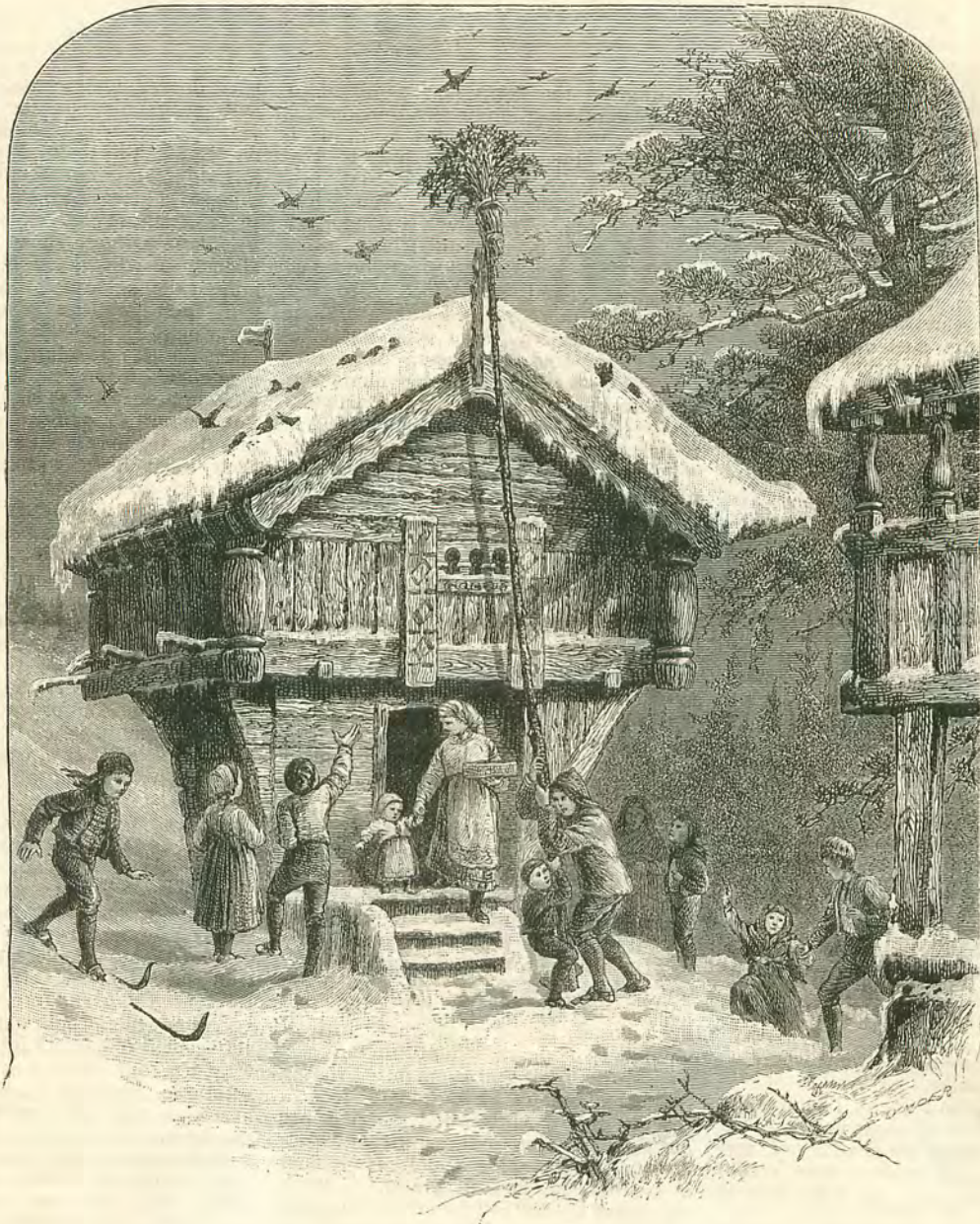
Life is teaching them patience and reliance on the will of God, that is true. Many a burning prayer is whispered, many a hot tear is shed by the mother while she sits waiting by the bedside of her sick child. The doctor is far away; it may be days before he comes to relieve and to soothe the dreadful pains. Perhaps he is coming too late, poor grieving mother!

In the mountains they are very familiar with the thought of death. The old men and women buy their winding-sheets when they are at town; it is a solace for them, knowing that they keep these things in their red-painted chests.

The mountain girl sits at the church on Sundays arrayed in her sober, black woollen dress, her hair scrupulously hidden by a pointed bonnet, both parts reminding of an ancient court dress used in Europe hundreds of years ago.

What a long, toilsome way she has gone to hear the word of God. She forgets the long way homewards, the snowstorm, the mist, and the mountain fog, for the joy of meeting her friends and her relations. She is so happy when singing those dear old psalms of her childhood together with the assembled congregation.

But look at my little valley a bright summer day, transformed, as it is, to life and beauty. The tall mountains dressed in green, with the perpetual snow glittering on their heads, the fresh white waterfalls leaping joyfully from the cliffs, the clear river sometimes running as a



YULETIDE IN NORWAY.

(From the painting by A. Tidemand.)

silver string between the green banks, sometimes dancing and bubbling over the stones. Look at the silvery leaves of the trees and the shrubs, at the rich verdure, inhale the pure mountain air, it brings everyone strength and health.

The traveller who on such a day happens to hear the church bells ringing merrily for the bridal procession, forgets, in seeing that pretty sight, the poverty which weighs on many of these homes.

The mighty mountains form a beautiful frame for the picturesque sight. The bridegroom is leading his bride, and very proud he

is. To-day, the only day in her life, the girl is permitted to show and loosen her flaxen hair, whose golden waves are flowing down her shoulders. The bridal crown, a holy inheritance from her ancestors, is on her head, glittering, and heavy with silver and stones. Her breast is studded with national jewellery, brooches, and chains. Her red petticoat adorned with golden lace, her white linen bodice shines between the green leaves, she looks like the beautiful wood-nymph herself. At the head of the procession walks the fiddler, playing his finest dances; the relations, arrayed in their festive dresses, are walking

behind the bridal pair. Festive salutes resound in the mountains, the governor of the feast makes his best speeches and his best bows; it is a day of sunshine and of joy.

In the mountains a wedding is seldom celebrated in the winter. I believe they want the shining waterfalls, the silvery leaves, and the beautiful sun to look and shine on their feast.

These are a few scattered words about Norway, its homes, and its girls. I have much more I could say about my distant country, but I fear to occupy more space in these pages.