

rubbing the face with slices of cucumber. But this is very cooling. Let the soap you use to wash the face be extremely mild, and the towel used softness itself. Do not rub hard by any means.

Now, girls with an unlimited supply of pocket money may go and purchase any number of face cosmetics with strangely sounding names, but they will be merely throwing their money away. The simple remedies I have just mentioned are quite as good and far better than many others.

At the risk of being considered reiterative, I must again, as in former papers, remind my readers that the digestion has a very great deal indeed to do with beauty of complexion, or the reverse. But the complexion and the eyes deteriorate from injudicious eating, even in cases where no dyspepsia may be complained of. If the blood be in the slightest degree over-heated, or ever so little charged with bile from inactivity of the liver, the skin comes to grief, and it is the skin of the face that suffers first. The best cosmetic ever invented could not cure this state of matters till the blood gets right again. Nature will effect a cure, however, if the diet be lowered, and only cooling food partaken of. When one, in summer, suffers from thirst to a considerable degree, it is a sign that more food than the system requires has been eaten. If then large quantities of fluid be swallowed, matters are rendered far worse, perspiration is induced, and once again the complexion suffers. No better drink can be partaken of for health sake than the juice of the lemon in soda water, or simply in cold water sweetened with sugar. There is no worse drink than those insinuating concoctions called "cups," so much in vogue out of doors, say at tennis matches or on the river. If you desire to have a rough, red face, and to secure for yourself a yellow skin before you are twenty-five, then by all manner of means partake of the cool exhilaration that is supposed to lie latent in those pretty "cups." I maintain that their coolingness is a fraud—that they heat the brain, the face, and the blood, and do mischief all round. So avoid them if you would retain calmness of mind and beauty of complexion.

What we medical men call acne, or pimples, are very disfiguring. They usually denote poverty of blood, and therefore small doses of quinine and iron should be taken twice a day for, say, a month, while cod liver oil and extract of malt—what is called the Kepler solution—if taken after every meal, a dessert-spoonful, often acts like a charm. As for an application, nothing, perhaps, beats the benzoated oxide of

zinc ointment. It can be put on at night and washed off in the morning. Then the face may be damped after the toilet with elder flower water, or simply rose water in which a little borax or carbonate of soda has been mixed.

As to a girl's hair, great care should be taken with this portion of the toilet. What I would warn the reader against is too frequent washing or wetting of the hair, and the application of greasy applications. Near the bulb of each hair, are the openings of two microscopic glands which secrete a natural lubricant for the hair. Now washing, especially with strong soaps, ruins these, while on the other hand the use of a moderately hard brush stimulates them, and so the hair retains a gloss that no art can imitate. Moreover, the use of this brush twice or thrice daily removes dandruff, and causes the blood to flow more freely through the vessels that nourish the hair. Length and thickness are therefore the two happy results, and what is more lovely or captivating than beautiful hair? But, above all, let me earnestly advise you to avoid those cosmetics and washes which we find in every hairdresser's window. Prettily got up they may be, but many a case of baldness has been engendered by their use.

For the sake of digestion and cleanliness, and to prevent decay and toothache, very special care should be taken of the teeth. The simpler the tooth-powder the better. Plain bicarbonate of soda is good and safe, so is charcoal, though unsightly. Sanitas tooth-powder is good, because it disinfects while it cleanses. But beware of powders you do not know the composition of, else the enamel of the teeth may be simply scoured off. Brush the teeth inside and out after every meal and before going to bed.

In a word, the teeth require regular attention several times a day, but the tooth-powders or washes cannot be too simple. The brush, I may add, should not be too hard. Medium is the word that ought to describe it.

It is a fact well known to physiologists, that the skin of the face, and therefore the complexion, may be injured by injudicious washing. The following hints may be borne in mind: 1. Let the water be neither too hot nor over cold. 2. Let it be soft—rain water is best. 3. Let the soap used be very mild. 4. Do not use a hard towel.

The warm bath taken frequently is very useful in maintaining a healthy complexion and skin generally. The cold bath has a tendency to reduce *embonpoint*.

I have already spoken of the evils of tight-

lacing, and maintained that no girl guilty of this folly can have a naturally good or clear complexion. But on the figure depends, to a great extent, beauty. No matter how charming in face a girl may be, if she is what her enemies would call dumpy, she—how shall I put it? Oh, I have it—she does not appear to advantage when walking on ahead.

But how is a girl to maintain grace of figure and consequently beauty of movement? Well, in condition of body she must lean to neither extreme. In very plain English, she ought neither to be stout nor scraggy. Scraggy is an ugly wee word, I confess, but it expresses a good deal. If there be any approach to this, greater plumpness must be sought for by regulating the health. Less exercise should be taken. If there is little appetite, a quassia mixture may be taken with advantage—a dose before each meal. Cod-liver oil does much good, so do warm baths. But as to food, plenty of milk ought to be used, and puddings of all sorts; good stale bread and butter, eggs, fish, and a fair allowance of meat with potatoes. I do not advise beer or wine. You cannot take much milk if you use either, and milk is far better. Instead of tea or coffee for breakfast, cocoatine made with milk should be substituted. As to the mind, contentment must be cultivated. Extract of malt, if taken in proper doses, soon restores rotundity to the figure, but flour food of all kinds is the essential.

Ladies, on the other hand, who are getting too rotund, should take time by the forelock. I can assure them that obesity, if it once commences, makes giant strides. It must be killed in the bud, or it becomes an intractable if not indeed an incurable disease.

Avoid advertised quack remedies. If medicine for the reduction of adipose tissue is to be taken, let a medical man prescribe it.

But avoid all oily and fatty foods, and all floury vegetables, cereals and sugar; take dumb-bell exercise daily, walk plenty; take a cold bath every morning; eat as little as possible.

It is a good plan to be weighed periodically. In a future paper I hope at an early date I shall have some hints to give about the prevention and banishment of tell-tale wrinkles. Wrinkles in the aged are all very well, but not in the young. I have called them tell-tale wrinkles. So they are. But they do not always tell the truth, as they make a young person out to be much older than she is. So I do not hesitate to proclaim war upon wrinkles.

## OUR HIGHLAND HOLIDAY.

By EMMA BREWER.

### CHAPTER I.

"Some sing of Rome and some of Florence; I  
Will sing thy Highland praise, fair Inverness."

—Professor Blackie.

OUR selection of the Highlands for a summer holiday was due to an accident, if anything in our lives can be designated by that term.

We heard that a young girl artist, whom we knew, had gone to Tongue for a few months, a place very far off in the Highlands, many miles from a railway station, absolutely quiet, and with an arm of the sea extending into the village itself.

It was the merest outline, but it was one of tranquillity, and as we proceeded to fill it in it

fascinated us. We gave up our plan of going to the "Riffl" and determined upon a holiday in the Highlands.

We went to Gaze and asked him to take two return tickets to Lairg, which is the nearest point to Tongue, and to secure a sleeping saloon for two. For these we paid £16 10s.

So, on a certain Thursday evening in July, we took our places at Euston at eight o'clock, and almost without fatigue reached Perth a little after seven in the morning, where good tea, coffee, rolls and butter were served to us in the station refreshment-room at a very moderate sum, and in half-an-hour we started again—this time in a Highland train—and reached Inverness at half past eleven.

On our arrival we went at once to the Caledonian Hotel, where we had already secured

accommodation. We found it extremely clean, comfortable, and quiet, the food was good and liberal, and the prices reasonable for Scotland. The back of the hotel looks over the River Ness.

Here we remained until Monday midday, as there was much to see that was interesting.

Inverness\* is beautifully situated in a highly cultivated and wooded district, and, as its name implies, is near the estuary of the River Ness, which flows from the great inland lake into whose waters fall those of the celebrated cataract of Foyers.†

On each side of the river is a beautiful walk bordered with wild roses and trees, and in the

\* *Ess* signifies a waterfall.

† These falls are eighteen miles from the town, and in summer one can go every day by steamer. Burns and Coleridge have both written about them.



river itself, about a mile from the town, there is a series of richly wooded islands laid out with walks and seats and connected with each other and with the river banks by bridges.

Here one can spend a very happy time, reading, chatting, or resting amid the singing of birds and the rapid flowing of the river.

These islands form one of the beautiful features of Inverness, and justly so. In ancient days the feasts given by the magistrates of the town to the king's judges were celebrated here.

The cemetery, it is said, has no equal for beauty of situation in the world: certainly there is no more lovely sight than it presents from the deck of a steamer as it approaches Inverness. It is a high, isolated hill, wooded on all sides, 200 feet above the sea-level; its name is "Tom-na-heurich," the Gaelic for the "boat-shaped hill," its form being that of a boat keel upward. It was bought and turned into a cemetery by the citizens of Inverness about a quarter of a century ago. It is so bright, calm, and cheerful that it is easy to think of it as "God's acre."

Of course there are fairy legends attached to it, but they belong to the far-off time before it became a cemetery. One which the people of Inverness are never tired of repeating is that about three hundred years ago two travelling fiddlers arrived in Inverness and gave notice that they intended to stay some time, and would be glad of engagements to play at festive gatherings in or near the town, and so it happened that one day they were hired by a venerable old gentleman with a long white beard, who conducted them by night to a palace of whose existence and name they had no knowledge.

They found there a brilliant assembly, to whose dancing they played all night; they themselves were well entertained, and in the morning on being dismissed they were greatly surprised to see that it was not from a palace but from the side of a hill that they were emerging.

They walked back into the town, and were astonished at the number of changes that had occurred in the few short hours they had been absent. Old friends had passed away, and people whose faces they knew not occupied their places; houses they had been accustomed to visit had fallen into ruins, and marks of decay had taken the place of prosperity; their familiar acquaintances were nowhere to be seen. They met with one old man, however, who remembered that his grandfather had spoken of two fiddlers whom he had entertained and who had gone off mysteriously, but that must be a hundred years ago!

With this old man they went to church, for it was Sunday, when, behold, at the very first words uttered by the clergyman the two fiddlers fell to dust.

Overlooking the river stands the castle, a very imposing object, now used as a gaol.

The idea that on this very spot Macbeth's castle stood, appears to be an error—that a castle has stood here for eight or nine centuries is certain; but Macbeth's occupied a site close to the railway terminus—in fact, the spot where now the tickets are collected.

Malcolm Canmore is supposed to have demolished this castle and built one on the site of the present building.

It seems that Shakespeare

must have visited Inverness, otherwise he could not have depicted the scene so well:

*Duncan.*

"This castle hath a pleasant seat; the air Nimbly and sweetly recommends itself Unto our gentle senses."

Two hundred years ago a handsome bridge was built across the river, having seven arches; one of these contained a vault which was first used as a gaol, and then as a madhouse. It must have been an awful place, and was only abandoned after a poor maniac had been devoured by rats. The gaol now in use is as a palace in comparison.

The Episcopal Cathedral, St. Andrews, is on the opposite side of the river, and forms quite an ornament to the town. It was built between 1866 - 1871. It cost twenty thousand pounds, and owes its existence to the munificence of the Episcopalians throughout Scotland and to the liberality of many Presbyterians.

We enjoyed the Sunday service; it was bright and earnest, and well attended.

The font is exquisite—a beautiful angel-woman, kneeling on one knee and holding out a large shell; it is modelled after Thorwalden's in the cathedral at Copenhagen.

As we re-crossed the river, after morning service, we found the streets thronged with country people all moving in one direction. We learned that once a year there is what is called a Gaelic Communion Week, from one Tuesday to the following Wednesday week.

The people come from far and wide, the old country women wearing white *mutches*, or caps, on their heads, and carrying their Bibles,

wrapped in handkerchiefs, in their hands. Some of them were very old and moved feebly, but all were bound for the large churchyard at the end of the street.

We followed. At the entrance sat three men at the "receipt of custom," having a wooden dish on a tripod before them, into which each person on entering dropped some little offering, and then hastened on to join the crowd among the tombstones.

At one end of the churchyard a sort of "three-decker" was erected, where the minister and clerk stood, and from which they came out when distributing the Bread and Wine among the devout worshippers. The whole formed a very touching and solemn scene.

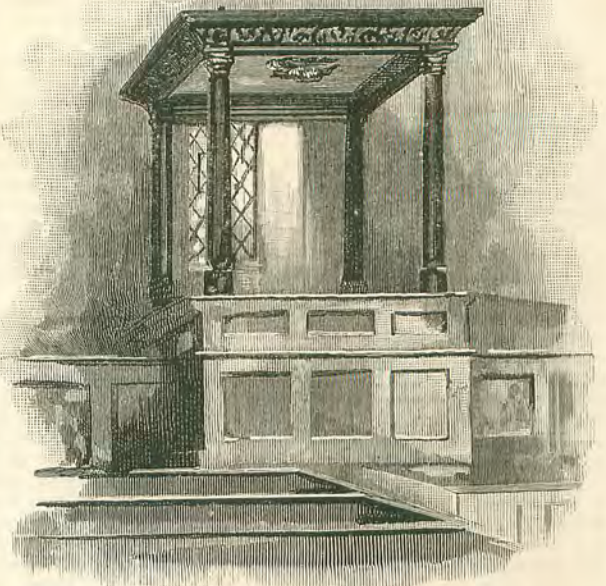
In one of the churchyards is a headstone, the inscription on which was carved by Hugh Miller, when he worked at his original trade.

We were very interested in the Annual Wool Market, which takes place in front of the Caledonian Hotel, and which occurred the week we were there.

The farmers come from all parts of the Highlands to attend it, and are met by the south of Scotland and English dealers and agents, and sales to a great extent are effected. No samples are brought, but all transactions are by *word of honour*.

It lasts from Thursday until Saturday, and when it is a good year more than half a million of money is turned over, and a hundred thousand stones of wool, and as many sheep, change hands. This meeting determines the price of wool all through Great Britain.

There are several charming excursions to be made from Inverness, both by coach and by water. It is the centre through which all pass who are going far north, and bears the same relation to the Highlands as Edinburgh does to the Lowlands.



PEW IN PARISH CHURCH, TONGUE.



EXCISEMAN'S COTTAGE, TONGUE.



Leaving Inverness at ten minutes past twelve on Monday morning, by the line running to Wick, we arrived at Lairg at half-past two. This was as far as the rail would take us on our way. The journey through Bonar Bridge and Tain was exquisite. Wooded ravines spanned by bridges, with dashing frolicking burns below, lofty mountains with their heads in the clouds, hunting lodges buried in woods, and glistening lochs surrounded by hills were to be seen in succession.

Lairg\* is a fishing station in Sutherlandshire, one of the most interesting and least known counties in Scotland.

Very few among the thousands of tourists who visit Scotland ever go to Sutherland, and the cause must be the lack of comfortable and rapid conveyance, and the difficulty and expense of travelling, because it is really one of the most interesting districts in Europe—the scenery is varied and magnificent, including mountain, valley, lake, rock, and sea; the only thing it lacks is trees. This is a sore point with the Highlanders, who are still very angry with Dr. Johnson for not seeing trees where none were to be seen.

A char-à-banc was at the station to convey us to the Lairg Hotel, about a mile and a half distant, and situate at one end of Loch Shin, which is a large Highland lake containing a plentiful supply of good-sized salmon.

As we approached the inn we thought what a pretty picture it made—a low straggling set of buildings, entirely covered with a rich honey-suckle in full blossom, whose perfume came forward to meet us with a welcome some distance before we reached it.

Lairg is a sort of junction for the north and west of the county. Three times a week, viz., Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays, a char-à-banc, or what is called here a coach, with two horses, starts at half-past six in the morning for Tongue, and at seven on other mornings for Lochinvar and Scourie, returning to Lairg on the intermediate days.

We took advantage of the one going to Tongue, paying ten shillings each for our fare. It is a long journey of thirty-eight miles, and in bad weather a wild one also—barren hills and lochs, with only here and there scraps of cultivated land surrounding some shooting-box or tiny cottage are all that meet the eye.

The so-called coach is not comfortable for passengers, being a combination of mail-cart, carrier's van, and char-à-banc.

It is not at all unusual to find oneself seated on the bread or the beef which is to serve for food during the coming week.

We started at half-past six in the morning, and reached Tongue at twelve, pausing for nearly an hour at Aultnaharrow, where there is a good inn, but where they charge a shilling for two glasses of milk.

The roads are excellent all over Sutherland, and with better carriage and horses the journey to Tongue might be performed in half the time.

There is only one hotel in Tongue, but it is large, scrupulously clean, and well furnished. It is kept by a Mr. and Mrs. Campbell, who personally look after it, and if one found fault at all it would be the want of punctuality in serving the meals.

We had previously secured rooms here, a very necessary piece of forethought in the fishing and shooting season.

Like most of the inns in the north of Scotland it is a combination of farm and hotel, and supplies almost everything except beef and bread, which are brought in from Lairg and Thurso by the coach.

The average distance between the inns in the Highlands is from fifteen to thirty miles, and as lodgings are scarce the proprietors enjoy a good deal of power over the traveller.

\* Lairg is derived from the Gaelic word *Loeg*, signifying *footpath*.

The Tongue Hotel is beautifully situated, being surrounded by the magnificent Ben Laoghal, the ruins of Castle Varritch, the Kyle of Tongue which comes almost up to its garden, and the hills which stretch away inland.

Ben Laoghal (pronounced Loyal), with its two arms, is the grand, picturesque, and prominent feature of the place.

Nothing can exceed the savage grandeur of its rocky precipices. In all weathers and under all circumstances this magnificent mountain is full of interest. On a summer morning, or after a summer shower, when the transparent mist is hanging about it or coiling among its peaks, its appearance is beautiful and fantastic, and on a moonlight night it is intensely weird and suggestive. Sometimes it assumes the form of a sleeping lion, on other occasions the royal arms. A sight of this mountain alone would repay a visit to the Highlands.

Castle or Caisil Varritch, overlooking the Kyle, was an old watch-tower; it is now in ruins. There is no special interest about it, but it lends dignity to the scene.

The village of Tongue is absolutely quiet. It consists of one quaint little street whose centre of life is the post and telegraph office, which attracts quite a tiny crowd on coach days. Besides this street there are a few crofters' cottages on the hills, the manse, the doctor's house, and the residence of Mr. Mitchell, a large sheep farmer, but the beauty of the place is Tongue House; we never tired of looking at it. It is a charming old place, and its old-world gardens are so warm, sheltered, and enjoyable. Its situation, too, overlooking the sea, the wild outline of rocks and cliffs surrounding the bay, its fine avenues and groves of trees, so very rare in Sutherland, the cooing of the wood pigeons and the song of the thrush, make up a whole that would be difficult to match anywhere in the world.

It was formerly the residence of Lord Reay. The Duke of Sutherland's factor, Mr. Box, lives here now, a man who has done much to make the crofters in this district content and happy—no trifling work in this our day.

If we had looked forward to quiet there could be no manner of doubt but that we had found it—it was almost oppressive.

We soon learned to love the place, however, and to take pleasure in its beautiful walks and wonderful variety of wild flowers. One day we found some *Primula Scotica*, which we carefully packed and sent south.

The Kyle, over which we could ferry, or on which we could sail, or in which we could bathe, was a constant source of enjoyment to us.

It is much frequented for sea-trout fishing, the best time being as the tide is running out or in, for the fish come and go with it. Cormorants, gulls, and divers frequent the shores; the latter are pretty, with their red bills and white breasts; and where the river meets the sea at Tongue there is a considerable ebb, and the long sandbanks produce cockles, of which the people are very fond, and inside which pearls of no mean order are frequently found.

This Kyle\* is one of the three deep indentations made by the sea on the north coast of Scotland, the other two being Loch Erribol and Kyle of Durness.

We soon made friends with the kindly people of Tongue, and learned their habits and manner of living.

We also visited the pretty school-house, with its magnificent sea view, where the boys and girls are educated together by a thoroughly good master; a pretty, gentle, young Scotch woman going twice a week to teach the girls needlework and knitting. The school is a good couple of miles from Tongue, but the children think nothing of the distance.

\* The Kyle of Tongue has some wonderful islands at its mouth, the most remarkable being Saints Island, Seal Island, and Rabbit Island.

On returning home in the afternoon the boys indulge in a hopping game, which terrified us, and which we had never seen played elsewhere; the boys stood in a row a little distance apart, with bare feet, awaiting flint stones, which were aimed by boys on the other side of the road; the game consisted in jumping at the right moment, so as to avoid the stone. As a rule this was done with much skill, but it often happened that the foot was very much cut, and it was quite a common sight to see the boys limping, with feet bleeding or bandaged. We tried to persuade them to adopt some other plan of amusing themselves, but they laughed, and assured us that it was a manly game, and that they weren't "milksofs."

To our surprise we discovered in this far-away northern village a library such as any town in England would be proud of. It is most comprehensive, and possesses rare reference books. For the privilege of using it half-a-crown a year only is required. All lovers of books will, however, be sorry to hear that for want of use and care the books are becoming mouldy and worm-eaten.

The coming in of the mail-coach from Lairg and Thurso was quite an exciting event each day, so 'also was the return of the gentlemen in the evening with their gillies laden with salmon. How tired we did get of eating salmon! Morning, noon, and night in some form or other it was served up, and we thoroughly sympathised with the Highland servants of old who stipulated that they should only be fed on salmon certain days in the week.

In and about Tongue the crofters are certainly not badly off, though it is the fashion to think they have a grievance because in other districts their class is depressed and miserable. As a rule they possess a well-built cottage, not a mud one, two or three acres of land, a few sheep, and one or two cows, besides the privilege of cutting peat.

Speaking with a person who was fully convinced that the crofters were ill-used, I said, pointing to a croft:

"How much does the crofter pay for this?"

"Ou ay, about three puns."

"And how much land has he got?"

"Ou, that parks and some moss."

"And how many cows?"

"Two or three."

"And sheep?"

"Ou ay, a few."

"And what does he pay for his house?"

"Why, that's his own."

"How is that?" I inquired further.

"Ou ay, he built it."

"Where did he get the peat from?"

"Off the moss shure."

"And to whom does the moss belong?"

"Why, to the Dook."

"Well then, where did the wood come from?"

"Ou, shure from Thursho."

"And the stone and the lime?"

"Why, from the same place."

"And who pays for that?"

"Oh, the Dook."

"Well then, what makes you say the crofters are ill-used, when the men have all this and permission to run their animals a certain distance on the town moss besides, and all for about three pounds a year?"

"Oh, shure, ma'am, but the crofters are badly used whatever."

The women work a good deal in the crofts, but the way they dodge out of sight the moment they see any one coming is comical in the extreme. They only do this with strangers, however, for twenty Highlanders might pass and they would not stir, but let one English person approach on foot or in a carriage and they are behind a peat stack in a moment.

The women knit a great deal in winter, they card, dye, and spin the wool themselves.



They obtain the fleece from their sheep; wash both the black and the white wool, mix it in such proportions and in such shades as please them, and card it between two flat pieces of wood covered inside with ribbed felt, after which it comes out in a long curl of short lengths; this being done, they proceed to spin it—removing all roughness meanwhile—into one long single thread or ply. When they desire a thicker thread they put two or more single ones together and thus obtain two-ply, three-ply and so on. They make, in this way, shawls, blankets, petticoats, socks, and stockings. They sometimes vary the colour by making a dye of heather and a sort of moss from the stones. These they boil down and then steep the wool in the liquid. As for the men, no greater obstacle can exist to the improvement of a country than a population of indigent crofters with no employment or resource except the cultivation of their own crofts which they have neither capital nor skill to do to advantage. Tongue, however, is an exception, for the crofts are well kept and the mode of cultivation good, the soil is rich, and the climate temperate.

Here, too, the men find employment both in the summer and early autumn as gillies to gentlemen who come fishing and shooting.

I saw a good deal of these gillies, one of whom was quite a character, and considered himself in the service of a certain gentleman who has been a regular visitor to Tongue for many years, in the fishing season. He takes a great interest in his gilly, and, besides giving him a suit of clothes when he leaves Tongue,

generally sends him one during the winter. The gilly's thanks, in a letter, for one of these is curious, and runs thus:—

"Honored Sir,—This comes hoping to find you as well as it leaves me at present thanks to God for all His mercies. Many thanks for the soot which is beautiful but I'd rather have the mon inside them. The fishing is doing very good whatever."

The use of the word *whatever* is peculiar, and is tacked on to the end of almost every phrase. A servant will say, for example, "You cannot have the lamp to-night, for the glass is cracked *whatever*."

Another word oddly used is *that*—"that cows" or "that parks;" but the most curious of all is the use of the personal feminine pronoun as applied to the other two genders; as an example I give a conversation I overheard between a gentleman and his gilly, the latter, addressing the master, said, "Shure an I think she must be a Mackay."

"Who, John?" asked the other.

"For see the way *she* walks over the moss, and how fond *she* is of it," was the answer.

Seeing that the gilly was speaking of himself the gentleman pressed him for still stronger reasons, which John summed up by remarking, "and then look at the colour of her hair!"

The collies which are to be found in every house in and about Tongue are the most beautiful and intelligent we ever saw. One day when taking a walk in the direction of Ben Laoghal we were accompanied by a little sky terrier named Mona, who, seeing a couple of tame rabbits playing on the moor in front

of a cottage situate high up above the road, could not resist the temptation of pursuing them. Off she dashed in pursuit, but in a moment, like a flash of lightning, a magnificent collie which had been lying sleepily observing our approach sped between her and her intended prey and stood at bay, not touching Mona, but simply defying her to move a step. It was magnificent.

Another beautiful creature belonged to the cottage where the schoolmaster lodged, and to whom the collie was greatly attached.

When the schoolmaster went out walking, nothing delighted the dog so much as accompanying him, when the master was at home; but nothing would induce him to leave the house with the women alone in it.

As a rule there are two churches in every district, the Established and the Free; the latter are almost always in commanding situations, being visible for a long distance. It was quite a sight to witness the people of Tongue, old and young, turn out on a Sunday morning to walk a distance of four miles to the Free Kirk, although the Established Church was in the village, close at their doors.

We attended the one near to us, which is very old, being built in 1689, when William III. came over and freed all the Presbyterian Churches of Scotland. It has a wonderful old pew in it, which looks like the old bed of Ware raised on poles. The harmonium is played by the doctor's wife, and the singing is not at all bad, but the sermons were very long.

## VARIETIES.

### AMATEUR CRITICISM.

*Miss Minor (after the concert):* "Fraulein Sprauler plays with a great deal of expression; but what do you think of her technique?"

*Miss Greening:* "I didn't notice that she wore one."

### ONLY IN IMAGINATION.

Most every mortal thinks his burden very hard to bear—

He thinks so, but 'tis all imagination.

The yoke of any other would be easier to bear—

He thinks so, but 'tis all imagination.

And the others for the happy long ago ever sigh,

While some are longing for the better days of by-and-by;

But all could make the present bright and happy if they'd try;

'Tis gloomy only in imagination.

### A PAINFUL SHOCK.

A shriek came from the parlour, and the mother rushed into the room in great agitation.

"What is it, my daughter?" she exclaimed. "Has this—this person from New York been uncivil?"

"Not intentionally, mamma," said the young Boston maid, faintly. "But it was a painful shock. He said, 'hippopotamuses,' instead of hippopotami."

### SOME TIME TO WAIT.

*Husband:* "Are you not ready yet?"

*Wife:* "I'll be ready in a minute. I've only got one glove to put on."

*Husband:* "One of those ten-button gloves? Well, I'll sit down and write four or five more letters."

**WISE FORGETFULNESS.**—There are two things that we should learn to forget—the good we have done to others, and the evil they have done to us.

### KEEP THE PASSIONS IN CHECK.

An old man was once walking with a little boy. They came across four shrubs. The old man said to his youthful companion—

"Pull up the least one."

He obeyed with ease.

"Now the next."

He obeyed, but it did not come so easily.

"And the third."

It took all his strength to move its roots, but he succeeded.

"Now the fourth."

In vain the lad put forth all his strength. He only made the leaves tremble; he could not move the roots. They had gone strongly into the earth, and no effort could dislodge them.

Then the wise old man said to the ardent youth, "This, my son, is just what happens with our passions. When they are young and weak one may, by a little watchfulness over self and the help of a little self-denial, easily tear them up; but if we let them cast their roots deep into our souls, there is no human power can uproot them—the Almighty hand of the Creator alone can pluck them out. For this reason, my child, watch well over the first movements of your soul, and study, by acts of virtue, to keep your passions well in check."

**A WORD TO AUTHORS.**—There are ten thousand people who can write "ideal" things for one who can see and feel and reproduce nature and character. Ten thousand, did I say? Nay, ten million. What made Shakespeare so great? Nothing but eyes, and faith in them.

### ON A BAD SINGER.

When screech-owls shriek, their note portends To foolish mortals death of friends; But when Corvina strains her throat, Even screech-owls sicken at the note.

### THE COOL CARVER.

It is not every one who can display the coolness of the gentleman who once carved a goose with such misplaced energy as to send it under the table. Seeing that the guests evinced some discomfort, and an anxiety to know where it had gone, he said—

"All right, ladies and gentlemen, I have my foot on it."

### NEEDLEWORK IN DAYS OF OLD.

The different kinds of ornamental needlework in favour with ladies two hundred and sixty years ago may be seen from the following quotation from Taylor, the water poet:—

"Tent-work, raised-work, laid-work, prest-work, net-work,

Most curious pearl, or rare Italian cut-work;

Fine fern-stitch, finny-stitch, new-stitch, and chain-stitch,

Brave bred-stitch, fisher-stitch, Irish-stitch, and queen-stitch,

The Spanish-stitch, rosemary-stitch, and maw-stitch,

The smarting whip-stitch, back-stitch, and the cross-stitch.

All these are good, and these we must allow,

And these are everywhere in practice now."

**LEARNING BY LAUGHTER.**—We never thoroughly know people until we hear them laugh.

### ABOUT A HUSBAND.

There are many curious entries in Pepys' Diary, and here is one of them—

"Up, to walk up and down the garden with my father, to talk of all our concerns about a husband for my sister, whereof there is at present no appearance; but we must endeavour to find her one now, for she grows old and ugly."



## OUR HIGHLAND HOLIDAY.

By EMMA BREWER.

CHAPTER II.  
TO DURNESS.

BEING so far north as Tongue, we thought we should like to see Cape Wrath, and begged Mr. Campbell, our host, to make arrangements for the journey.

We started from our hotel in a dog-cart about midday, and drove to the ferry on the Kyle. Here we ran up a scarlet flag as a signal, and, having unharnessed the horse, sat for three-quarters of an hour awaiting the ferryman.

On asking if they had seen the signal, and why they had kept us waiting so long, the answer was, "Ou ay, but we were just at dinner"—evidently a sufficient answer for reasonable beings.

I could not help thinking of the traveller of a hundred years ago, who, being kept a long time waiting for the ferryman, wished him employment in his trade in the regions below; and of the irritable man, with whom we sympathised, who said, "Because the gentlemen whom Achilles dismissed to the navigation of the Styx were obliged to wait shivering in the cold till Charon chose to admit them, must we wait in rain and cold till he of the Kyle chooses to see and hear?"

At length we were on the other side, and having paid four shillings and fourpence halfpenny for the crossing of our three selves and the coachman, cart and horse, we were soon on our way to Durness, where we were to stop for the night.

Our drive lay through a wild country, but fortunately on a good road. Formerly there was no road westward between Tongue and Erribol, and he who wished to go from one to the other had to engage a guide to lead him over the eight miles of bog.

We passed but few houses, and were more and more struck with the grand, almost savage, beauty of the scenery, into which a certain picturesqueness was introduced by the one or two gipsy encampments on the way. We were strongly reminded of Dr. Johnson's description of his tour in the Highlands: "I sat down on a green bank, with a stream running at my feet, in the midst of savage solitude, with mountains before me and on either hand, covered with heath."

At rare intervals we passed a shepherd's house, or saw in the distance the peat smoke from his chimney. It seemed to us that the life of a Sutherland shepherd must be almost appalling in its loneliness—out all day on the hills alone with his sheep and his collies, no human being to speak with for weeks together except he have wife and children. And as to the life of the wife, it must be even more dreary than her husband's.

One told us she was often very frightened at the visits of tramps and gipsies in her husband's absence.

The children, if there be any, see no face but that of father and mother; but they look happy and healthy playing before the door, and certainly it is no small advantage that they are removed far from the dirt, smoke, and noise of the great world.

The shepherds as a body are well educated, intelligent, and moral; their food is simple and abundant, consisting of milk, oatmeal, and mutton; and the air they breathe is so fresh and pure that there can be none to surpass it in the wide world.

The hills of Scotland were not always so lonely—the people used to form the wealth of the chief, and the stronger and more numerous they were the greater his importance.

It is different now, when sixty or seventy thousand acres are often let to one man for sheep-walks.\*

There is an old prophecy that the Highlands would be overrun and ruined by a race of white dwarfs, which the Highlanders believe to have been fulfilled by the introduction of sheep. A crofter, giving us his opinion upon things in general, said, "The Highlands are turned into a manufactory for making beef and mutton for the English market."

On we drove till we reached the Hope River ferry. Anything more romantic and majestic than the rugged precipitous Ben Hope,† its lone loch and sparkling river, as they appear at this spot to the traveller, would be difficult to find.

"There's nothing left to Fancy's guess; You see that all is loveliness."

We crossed the river, without unharnessing the horse, on a large flat boat, moved from one bank to the other by means of a windlass and chain underneath the boat, and connected with the banks: it is called the "Hope chain boat ferry."

We paid one shilling and eightpence, the sum demanded, and went on our way to Loch Erribol, through scenery growing ever grander and more beautiful.

The approach to this lake through steep walls of rock reminded us greatly of that to Riva, in Austrian Italy.

This loch, one of the finest and safest roads for shipping in Europe, is about ten miles long and from one to four miles in breadth. The water is deep, and its saltness is much the same as that of the ocean.

It is by no means deficient in grandeur of aspect, for the elegant and lofty form of Ben Hope is seen rising at the further extremity, and at the other some wild Alpine scenery.‡

Here we took leave of the dog-cart, which, after an hour's rest for man and horse, would return to Tongue, and descended a very steep pair of steps into a sailing boat, which conveyed us in an hour and a half to the other side for the small sum of one shilling and three-pence.

Here a wagonette awaited us from the hotel at Durness, and during the eight miles' drive we caught lovely glimpses of a summer sea playing in caverns

\* Three acres to a sheep may always be reckoned.

† It is said that Ben Hope always gives warning of a coming storm by making a peculiar hollow sound.

‡ Loch Erribol penetrates inland to the roots of a group of wild mountains.—*Geikie*.

and among the rocks and in bays of silver sand; and alas! we passed some wretched hovels of the crofters quite unfit for human habitation.

We reached the hotel in time for the evening meal, having performed the journey from Tongue, a distance of eighteen miles, without the slightest fatigue or inconvenience; and certainly for beauty, variety, and grandeur it was a journey not to be excelled anywhere.

The roads, which are very good indeed, are mostly the work of this century, for previous to 1811 there were no formed roads in Sutherlandshire except the one from Bonar Bridge to Tongue.

The hotel was very full, and rooms had been prepared for us at the top of the house—the very quaintest little rooms possible; they were like ships' cabins, with sky-lights, sloping roofs, and beds let into the wall. There was one great fault about them, however—the beds and bedding were full of fat moths.

The telegraph wires end here, but it is proposed to carry them to Cape Wrath.

Late in the evening we walked down to the sands and watched the magnificent sunset over the sea. The water was a deep ultramarine blue, with steep black rocks springing out of it, and forming innumerable small bays and coves floored with the finest and softest silver sand.

Over all the sunset cast a gold and crimson tint, shading off into pearly pink and tender lemon; and then as we sat there the evening star twinkled and sparkled in a sea of pure pale green, and the sunset became only a memory.



TONGUE.



It was an ideal evening, and we were able to enjoy it to the utmost, for it keeps light in this far-off northern region until midnight in the month of August.

There is a great lack of trees in Durness, as in most parts of the Highlands; but there are wonderful caves, deep ravines, and fissures, which are only what we expect in a limestone district such as this. The most remarkable of these is Smo; it may be approached either by sea or by a pathway from the road. We took the last method of reaching it, and descended about a hundred yards down to the shore. After crossing a rivulet and walking a few steps we found ourselves in this grand and magnificent cave. We held our breath with wonder as we noticed the Gothic-like transverse arches and its immense height and width, which in some places measured a hundred feet. It seemed to us exactly like a scene in Rider Haggard's *She*.

As we stood the noise of the waterfall stole upon our ears, and our voices echoed and re-echoed. There are two other caves leading out of this, but they can be penetrated only with great difficulty. Of course tradition has handed down these caves as the homes of fairies and spirits of the dark, and we do not wonder at it.

Sir Walter Scott visited them in 1814, and was delighted with them.

The rocky headlands jutting out into the sea at Durness are very bold and abrupt. We saw boys making their way up and down precipices, moving from shelf to shelf and

crevice to crevice as easily as if they were on even ground.

The country round is full of magnificent wild scenery, and the sheltered little sandy bays are excellent for bathing.

There are one or two drawbacks to the perfect enjoyment of Durness,—one is that the storms from the north-west drive in the sand to such an extent that serious injury is done to the farms, and the second is the miserable dwelling-places of the crofters, which are constructed without any regard to health or decency—a marked contrast, indeed, to those in Tongue. It is no unusual circumstance to find the same roof covering the cattle, the poultry, and the human beings.

It cannot be necessary that filth and darkness should reign in these hovels, and it was with something like displeasure that we turned from the glorious views without to the wretchedness within.

The home of the crofter, together with his natural indolence of character, does not allow him to enjoy the advantages within his reach, nor combat the evils to which he is exposed.

The Duke has afforded many of the crofters the means of emigrating, and, strange to say, that in another country they have put their shoulder to the wheel and are doing well, having given up the spiritless, idle sort of life they had fallen into here.

The crofters stand greatly in need of instruction in the laws of health and cleanliness, and in the use of common things. They are very prejudiced, and often refuse food which lies at

their door. For example, neither the poor nor the "better-off" will touch mushrooms; indeed, they can scarcely be brought to cook them for the English who go out to pull them for themselves.

We were so surprised to find that very few of the crofters could swim, notwithstanding that they have the sea and the lochs all about them.

One tries to account for the poverty of the people when dwelling amongst them, and we came to the conclusion that the soil in Sutherland is not adapted for a numerous population. There is not enough to feed the people on; all necessary grain even has to be imported. True, the bays are full of fish, but there is no market for the surplus, and no means of conveying it to distant towns; and the worst of it is that the men are just content to get a mere existence out of their bit of land—called here a croft—the smallness of which prevents a proper rotation of crops.

We must not forget to state that while walking along the sands we listened a long time to the bag-pipes, and were particularly struck with their melancholy cadence, and thought how true the words of Geikie were when he said: "A plaintive wail seems ever to rise as their undertone—we seem to hear the solemn surge of the Atlantic breakers, or the moan of the wind across the desolate moors."

Before going to bed we made arrangements with the landlord for our journey on the morrow to Cape Wrath, which we were looking forward to with pleasure.

(To be continued.)

## VALÉRIE;

OR,

### THE ADVENTURES OF A RUSSIAN GIRL.

#### A TRUE STORY.

By ANNIE M. LAINSON.

#### CHAPTER II.



FROM Perma to Tobolsk is nearly nine hundred versts; the roads are good, the fields fertile and well cultivated, and the way is through Russian and Tartar villages, where the inhabitants look happier than you would suppose possible so near the borders of Siberia—that land full of the abominations of desolation.

Farther on the town of Perma still more astonished the eyes of the simple girl, to whom even the most trifling necessities appeared elegant.

But its streets shocked her ideas of niceness by their dirtiness, mansion and cottage alike, surrounded with an air of fetid pestilential vapour, being enclosed with swamps and undrained marshes, while here and there sombre forests for miles gave this place a desolate aspect; and at times they were stopped by inundations, and had to retrace their steps in a sidelong direction. But notwithstanding all this Valérie was so delighted to have got thus far on her perilous journey that she began to think that she had even exaggerated the dangers of the voyage.

Truly the weather was unusually fine, and she had not always now to go on foot, for they often encountered both carts and chariots, the occupants of which, seeing her foot-sore and

weary, would ask her to mount their carriages. Valérie accepted these offers with gratitude, for in them she saw daily the hand of a Heavenly Father caring for His forlorn child.

But now came a time of trial. Ere they reached Casan they got once more into the dreary morass, and the old man, the faithful servitor, the companion of her journey, was taken ill. He fell, and could proceed no further.

"My dear young mistress," he cried, as he sank upon the glistening snow, "what will you do now? God help you, my dear young mistress!"

"Ah, dear Caesar!" she cried, "do not fear, my poor old friend. You shall not die, but live and declare the goodness of God." And she took his aged head upon her knees and bade him take courage.

"Ah! no, my young lady; my work on earth is done!" he cried feebly; "but a better preserver will be yours." And so saying, his head fell back, and with one faint sigh his spirit departed.

Some peasants passing just then were attracted by the cries of Valérie, and asked her in Russian what she desired.

But French had been the language in which she conversed with her parents. Although she knew the Russian of the courts in its pure diction, yet this peasant jargon was to her a strange tongue. However, she pointed to the corpse by her side and made them understand that she wanted it carried to the nearest hut.

They were very kind, and although it was some distance they regarded her wish. But the people of the cabin, seeing the old man was dead, refused to allow the dead body to

enter the house for fear of being defiled thereby, as they were Jews, and it was therefore buried outside. But they took poor Valérie in and were very good to her; but she wept, and could not be comforted for the loss of her humble friend.

Once more Valérie continued her solitary way, and as she went she shed tears afresh; but to all she was an object of curiosity as well as pity.

Ah! she little knew till the old man was gone from how much he had spared her. If a peasant stopped or questioned her rudely the sight of her aged companion at once commanded respect; but now, if tired and asked to ride by any passer-by, she dared not accept for fear of injury or insult; besides, she had but three roubles left, and to eke this out she therefore begged shelter only at the poorest cabins, content with the meanest accommodation and the coarsest food so that she might but pay her way.

Travelling thus slowly she did not arrive in Casan till the first days of October. A strong wind from the north-west had been blowing many days, and the River Volga was so clogged with ice as to render her journey across almost impracticable. She begged of the boatmen to take her across, but they refused, telling her it was impossible.

"How long will it be before it is navigable?" she asked.

"At least two weeks," they said.

"I pray you," she replied, in a beseeching voice, "in the name of God above help me to cross the river. I have come all the way from Tobolsk, and I am going to St. Petersburg to ask pardon of the Emperor for my father, who



So it was settled that when David and Amy went to London I should go to Mrs. Maxwell's to stay for an indefinite time.

By this time the other guests began to arrive, and we spent one of the happiest evenings it was ever my lot to spend.

As our ways lay together Mr. Temple walked home with us, and on the way talked of the prospect before me.

"You will find a true friend in my aunt," he said. "She has been like a mother to me, and I am sure you will find it so should you need advice or comfort at any time."

So Amy and David went to London. I had happy letters from them from time to time, and I, on my part, sent them news from the old village. And so seven months passed happily. The children's music improved wonderfully, and we had grown very fond of each other, when another change was to come in my life. Mr. Maxwell was appointed to a consulship in India, and was to sail at the end of September. They would have liked me to go with them, but I had a clinging to the old country, neither did I care to go so far from Amy and David.

Mr. Neville was quite well now, and would soon be able to resume his old work, so that I should no longer be needed as organist. David and Amy were going to Switzerland for a month, so I proposed to join them there.

The time rapidly drew near for me to leave Harleigh. On the day before I left I went to

S. Aidan's for a last practice, and, it must be confessed, to shed a few tears. Now that the time had come for me to leave my birthplace I was very loth to do so.

I played over all my favourite hymns and anthems, wondering if I should ever see the inside of that church again, for who could tell what might happen when I once left? Ah! who could tell? And even as I thought this the vestry door opened and Mr. Temple came out.

"Miss Stuart," he said, "will you play 'My God, my Father, while I stray'?"

He stood beside me while I did so, and when I had finished I said—

"I suppose this is the last time I shall play on this dear old organ."

"The last time!" he echoed. "Why should it be? Why must it be? Don't you know that I cannot do without you?" And then he told me that it was he who had proposed that I should go to Mrs. Maxwell's. "I could not bear the thought of your going away where I might never see you again. Promise me that you will not go away and leave me."

I promised, for I knew then that if I had gone away from him the very light would have seemed to go out of my life.

"Is not this the most fitting place, my Madeline, in which to seal our vows? Let us thank our Father for his loving guidance and goodness to us both."

So we knelt down, and Marcus lifted up

his heart in prayer, thanking God for His goodness in bringing us together, and asking for strength for us both to walk through life according to His word and commandment, and that we might be taught, in all the joys and sorrows of life, to say, "Thy will be done."

Marcus took me straight home to Mrs. Maxwell, and told her I had promised to be her niece and his wife, and she gave us a mother's blessing, for she said—

"You will be more like a son and daughter to me than nephew and niece."

David came to fetch me the next day, and when I told him he said—

"I am so glad, dear Madie. He is the one brother-in-law I would have chosen. I shall not be afraid to trust my little sister to him."

It was arranged that I should live with Amy and David until we were married. We did not have to wait long. Our dear old friend Mr. Harvey died at Mentone in December, and the living of Harleigh was presented to Marcus. He, of course, was impatient to settle down in the Vicarage, and so we were married in the early spring.

And as we look back across the vista of years, we cannot help but sing—

"For peaceful homes and healthful days,  
For all the blessings earth displays,  
We owe Thee thankfulness and praise,  
Giver of all."

A. MABEL CULVERWELL.

## OUR HIGHLAND HOLIDAY.

By EMMA BREWER.

### CHAPTER III.

FROM DURNESS TO CAPE WRATH.

"Lands may be fair ayont the sea,  
But Hieland hills and lochs for me."

By half-past eight in the morning the dog-cart was at the door to take us to the Durness

Kyle, about two miles off. The trap in which we were to be driven to the Cape had been sent off at five in the early morning to meet us on the other side.

It is this variety of boating, walking, and driving which makes travelling in the Highlands so enjoyable.

Arriving at the Kyle, which is about six miles long and one broad, and possessed of bars and shallows which frequently shift their position with north winds, and which at ebb make the Kyle look like a large field of sand, the coachman whistled for the ferry-boat to come across.

On its arrival, rowed by two Highlanders, an old man and his grandson, we embarked; but little did we know what awaited us. Not being high water it was impossible to reach the pier on the other side, and we ran on to a sand-bank instead, between which and the landing-place was a considerable amount of water.

While we were pondering on our next move the old Highlander coolly stepped into the water up to his waist, and remarked, "Ou ay, I maun jest carry the leddies across." He stood with his back close to the boat, and said calmly, "Jest mount on me back, leddy."

We all hesitated, but the girl friend with us volunteered to be the first, and started. She was much taller than the man, and the rug she carried completely swamped him, while her toes touched the water, whereupon he called out, "Turn yer toes up, leddy."

We are apt to think this sort of thing picturesque and romantic, but that is a delusion, as the reality proved.

By the time the old man came back for a second "leddy" we were perfectly helpless with laughter; still, the second was safely landed in the same fashion; and when it came to my turn I absolutely refused to move until planks were obtained and laid down. This being accomplished, I performed my part less grotesquely than the other two had done.

This Kyle of Durness is of great interest to the geologist, for into its head it receives a little stream which in its previous course through peaty regions has collected organic acids known to be destructive to limestone rocks. On its passage into the Kyle it has



CAPE WRATH.



eaten away the base of the low cliffs on either side.

The journey to Cape Wrath was a marvellous one—solitary to a degree: there were but three houses the whole way.

The road was an exceedingly good one, having been formed by the Lighthouse Commissioners in 1828. It is eleven miles long, reaching from the Kyle to the Cape.

This making of roads has had a distinct bearing upon the progress of the north. Without them no country can advance in wealth or comfort.

Up to the end of last century the roads were here little more than cattle or horse tracks, and all the country through which we were now travelling so comfortably was then practically cut off from the rest of the kingdom. It used to take people two months to come from the northern Highlands to London, travelling each day about thirty miles. The ferries and the bridges are much older institutions than the roads, and were well attended to long before highways were thought of.

It was one o'clock before we approached the Cape. The drive had prepared our minds in a measure for something wonderful, but the sight which burst upon us baffles description. It was the most solitary and grand we had ever seen in our lives.

The Cape itself is a superb rock of red granite, rising sheer out of the sea to the height of four hundred and fifty feet, detached and standing some way from the mainland, and covered with sea birds.

On both sides of the Cape there are immense stacks—detached gothic-like pillars. They are magnificent, towering in most places from two to seven hundred feet of perpendicular height.

Standing, or rather soaring up into the blue brilliant sky, in the midst of dazzling white buildings surrounded by a wall, is the colossal white lighthouse,\* the ultramarine sea stretched out far below, and bounded only by the horizon.

Perched on the edge of the precipitous sea-gull-haunted rocks the lighthouse looked as though it and all belonging to it would topple over into the ocean; and even as we stood there on a warm summer day it was not difficult to imagine what being there on a stormy winter night would be like. It must be something awful!

A field of yellow and red flowers, or weeds like flowers, was almost a relief from the prevailing blue, white, and green; and as we dismounted and prepared to enter the lighthouse our eyes quite ached with the general brilliancy.

Mrs. Morrison, the wife of the lighthouse-keeper, a kind, charming little woman, came out to receive us, and, taking our wraps, led us into their dwelling-place, which bore marks of refinement throughout. The neat little sitting-room was provided with a piano, a good library, and a tapestry picture representing a scene from the *Lady of the Lake*.

We noticed some books labelled "Northern Lights Lending Library," and on enquiry we learned that a society in Edinburgh supplies books and magazines to all the lighthouses in Scotland, permitting them to keep the former

three months and the latter one month, supplying also stamps for their return. They get *Cornhill*, *Chambers' Journal*, and *Illustrated London News* among many others.

As we ascended the steep stairs of the lighthouse we were struck by the spotless cleanliness of all that met our eye. In answer to a question Mr. Morrison told us that in winter it is so cold the glass goes down seven-teen degrees below freezing point.

We came out on the tiny balcony, and had a superb view of the black frowning rocks nine hundred feet high.

These form a complete obstacle to the lighthouse people getting fish, although it is all about them in profusion, for no foothold is obtainable from which to cast out lines.

As we stood there gazing across the ocean, it was an odd feeling that nothing stood between us and the North Pole. I do not think I ever felt more impressed with the majesty and power of the Father of the Universe, and the littleness of those things which seem to us so great in our daily life, than I did then.

The view along the coast was unrivalled, and one stack, as they call the isolated rocks, was pointed out to us as "the Sutherland shepherd who wants neither meat nor drink," and indeed it bore a rough resemblance to a man, while the small rocks scattered about might be taken for sheep.

Beyond the balcony we climbed up two steep ladders, each steeper than the last, and found ourselves confronted by the huge framework of lamps and reflectors, all dazzlingly bright, made so by rouge and chamois leather.

The lightkeepers watch all night, the two taking it in turn, four hours on duty and four hours off. A whistle from the lighthouse passes into the bedrooms of the dwelling-places on the other side of the pavement, to rouse the men for the watch.

In the winter they keep the light burning sixteen hours, during which time the lamp is twice filled, and five gallons of oil are burnt. There is a flash every two minutes, the lamps being coloured red and white.

Mr. Morrison said they preferred oil to gas—that the latter would be no improvement on the paraffin.

It is very hot up here at night though there are ventilators and a good draught, without which the lamps would not burn.

The day we were there it was very hot in the lantern though all the blinds were drawn. Mr. Morrison said that if the blinds were not closely drawn the hot sun would set the lamps alight striking them through the glass.

Descending into the space below the lantern we saw the clock which keeps *sun time*, and were interested to find a difference of twenty-and-a-half minutes between it and Greenwich time. Here, too, are the works of the lights, which look like the interior of an immense clock.

Stevenson constructed the light; it revolves by clock-work, and is wound up like a clock. While it is going all right a bell rings, so that the lightkeeper can read quietly, for he would know in a moment if anything were wrong by its stopping.\*

In this space hung a photograph of a flame

of one of the lamps; here also was a book in which visitors write their names—the Lord Provost of London, as they call the Lord Mayor, being duly represented by Sir Henry and Lady Knight.

The Sheriffs and Lord Provosts of Glasgow and Edinburgh come once a year to inspect, and this they do unexpectedly. These northern lighthouses are quite separate from the Trinity Boards. It is scarcely possible to imagine the intensely isolated lives of lighthouse and light-ship keepers. The authorities do well to change the men from one lighthouse to another: this is done about once in five years. Mr. Morrison has been in the service twenty-nine years. Take the two families who live here—there is no doctor nearer than Durness, and a steamer enters the creek, two miles from the lighthouse, once a year only with the stores of provisions and necessities, and their lists for the coming year must be ready to go back.

We were told that one year the Duke of Edinburgh was inspector, and there was no possibility of getting to the lighthouse but by the yearly provision steamer, and Mrs. Morrison told us that what with receiving him who was prince and inspector all in one, and taking in the stores, it was a day of sore perplexity to them.

The length of the coast line of the British islands is about 9392 nautical miles—4469 belonging to Scotland. These are watched over by about six hundred lighthouses and lightships, and are said to be more efficiently lighted than any of similar length in the world.

Notwithstanding that these lighthouses stand on the most exposed and surf-lashed parts of our coasts there is no need to be anxious about the safety of the lighthouse keepers, so securely are they built.

During the summer solstice at Cape Wrath there is literally no night; the sun seems to set and rise almost at one and the same time and place, thus realising the Scriptural phrase, "There shall be no night there."

After we had been minutely through the lighthouse we entered the dwelling-house, and found that Mrs. Morrison had prepared a meal for us with her own hands, reminding us of the welcome given to strangers in old Biblical days—a meal consisting of delicious tea, hot scones and buttermilk, and one which we thoroughly appreciated after the drive in the keen northern air and the fatigue of examining the lighthouse.

We were glad to find that as often as possible the residents at the lighthouse went to church on Sundays at Durness, that being the nearest to them.

Bidding farewell to these kind, hospitable people, we returned to Durness, and the following day made our way back to Tongue much in the same way as we had come, only that we had to cross Loch Erriboll in a storm, and had sharp showers and wind during our drive; but nothing really mattered, and we quite agreed with Dr. Johnson: "The wind was loud, the rain was heavy, and the whistling of the blast, the fall of the shower, and the roar of the torrents, made a nobler chorus of the rough music of nature than it had ever been my chance to hear before."

The journey from Tongue to Cape Wrath and back cost us, independent of our hotel bill, £4 4s. 2d. for three people, and included carriages, kyles, etc.

(To be continued.)

\* Not on the detached rock, as is supposed generally, but on the edge of the mainland. It is of course granite, and was built in 1828.

\* Land birds often strike the light, but sea birds rarely, if ever.





## OUR HIGHLAND HOLIDAY.

By EMMA BREWER.

## CHAPTER IV.

TO THURSO AND JOHN O' GROAT'S.

"Skerry and holm and stack  
Fringed with the foam and the wrack."



AFTER a stay of six weeks in Tongue, we left one fine day by the mail coach for Thurso.\* Starting at seven in the morning, we took nine hours to perform the journey of forty-four miles, and that over a very good road.

The running of the mail coach between these two places was established in 1811, and it is time that there was some improvement both in the kind of carriage and horses and in the time occupied on the journey. We passed a good many groups of people on their way to the summer celebration of the Sacrament; there were young and old, men and women, all carrying their little bundle of finery with them, and in some cases bound on a two days' journey. These great gatherings—are they altogether good in their results? was a question one could not help asking.

We were in Sutherlandshire in the morning and in Caithness in the afternoon: the first grand and mountainous, the latter somewhat flat and uninteresting except for the abundance and beauty of its plants and wild flowers. The Royal Hotel, whither we directed our steps as soon as we were released from the heavy, uncomfortable coach, is one of the best in Scotland, and we felt in Paradise accordingly. It was quite a pleasant sensation to feel ourselves within a few minutes' walk of the railway, from which we had been cut off so long, and its whistle sounded sweet as a lute in our ears. We were quite excited at the sight of so many people and shops, and for the first evening were content to do nothing more than walk about and look at them. All seemed prosperous, yet there was an air of desolation about the town in consequence of the inhabitants permitting grass to grow in the streets.

But everything was forgotten as we made our way to the sea, and stood on the shore of "the finest bay in Britain."† To the right the magnificent Dunnet Head and Thurso Castle; to the left the weird, solemn Holborn Head, which, with its bold precipitous ridge, forms a gigantic wall to protect the Scrabster roadstead and lighthouse from the fury of the Atlantic; and exactly opposite, across the

Pentland Firth, the Orkneys, watched over and guarded by the Hills of Hoy. These hills rise gradually from the summit of a range of rocks of tremendous height which overhang the sea. The height of Hoy Head is 1,200 feet; it is of old red sandstone, and looks like an immense red wall of rusty iron.

The Old Man of Hoy is an isolated rock resembling a human figure, and serves as a landmark from the Caithness coast, and for ships far out at sea. Its height is about 600 feet, but unfortunately of late years large masses of rock have occasionally fallen from it. Malcolm, the soldier-poet of Orkney, has likened it to

"A giant that hath warred with Heaven,  
Whose ruined scalp seems thunder riven;  
Whose form the misty spray doth shroud,  
Whose head the dark and hovering cloud."

Or, in Daniel Gowie's words:—"Heedless alike of calm and storm, the old man of the sea, like a grim and veteran sentinel at his post, keeps silent watch and ward amid the lonely waters."

Very lovely, solemn, and grand was the scene all around us; indeed, it would have been almost depressing but for the blue sky above us and the clear, crisp air which bestowed health and spirits upon us as we drank it in. We stood there, never tired of gazing, till hunger and drowsiness sent us back to the hotel; but we promised ourselves to return in the morning, and make acquaintance with the coast.

The next day was clear, bright, and sunshiny, and after breakfast we made our way to the shore of the bay where we had stood last night. Turning to the left, we came upon a green and charming walk on the cliffs, which, following every curve and bend of the sea, led us on to Scrabster, a little fishing-village, and an anchorage for boats of large size. As many as a thousand vessels enter the roads of Scrabster during each year. As we came down from the cliffs it looked so pretty with its whitewashed cottages, and full of life, for men and women both were occupied in emptying the boats and packing and sending off the fish just caught. The whole place smelt of tar, herrings, and fish generally. We were a little tired with our three-mile walk, and went to a quiet cove, took off our shoes and stockings, and sat on some large smooth stones with our feet in the sea.

We must not forget to state that Scrabster is the port from which the mail boat St. Olaf starts every evening for the Orkneys, performing the passage in fine weather in about three hours.

Having rested for an hour, we began the ascent to the lighthouse, which is perched on a green slope on Holborn Head, and surrounded by immaculate white walls. It was erected in 1862 by David and Thomas Stevenson, engineers, of Edinburgh. It is a flashing light, showing a flash every ten seconds, *white* towards the Pentland Firth and Dunnet Bay, and *red* towards the anchorage ground. Although one of the smallest lanterns in use, it can be seen in clear weather at a distance of thirteen miles.

The lighthouse is not very high, and the top is reached by three very steep ladders rather difficult to climb. Having scrambled up to the lantern, we balanced ourselves on the tiny ledge inside it and admired the lamp, which is entirely of glass, and bright and clear as polishing could make it. In the windows were two large panes of red glass showing safe

anchorage, while the white panes were, as I have said, for ships at sea.

Lighthouses are very necessary in this Pentland Firth,\* owing to the strength of the tides and the wonderful velocity of the contiguous currents in opposite directions. So dangerous are these that strange ships always require pilots for the Firth.

The two eddies, or whirlpools, in the Pentland Firth are the Men of Mey and the Boars of Duncansby. The former appear with the ebb, and the latter with the flood tide: and even when the surrounding Firth is quite smooth, these huge breakers rush together and leap up like boiling water in a cauldron in a furious fashion.

The view from the lantern was superb, but Holborn Head itself was gruesome. Its name, Holborn, signifies "Hell's Child," from *Holla*, the goddess of hell, and *biorn*, child. At its extremity there is an immense insulated rock called the Clett, about four hundred feet high, and only a stone's throw from the mainland, from which it has evidently been washed by the surging beating waves of the ocean. It is the home of innumerable sea-birds, whose cries can be heard miles away. As we gazed we saw hundreds moving to and fro. Holborn Head was one of Robert Dick's favourite walks, and he tells of these birds sitting in long rows "like a lot of bottles on end" on the ledges of the Clett, where they breed and bring up their young.

It was getting towards evening when we began to turn our steps homeward to the hotel. We would gladly have been rowed across the bay, for we were tired, but no one could be found sufficiently at leisure to row us.

Thurso is one of the most bracing and invigorating towns on the coast, and as it is in a measure under the influence of the Gulf Stream, it is peculiarly suited during the summer and early autumn to invalids from tropical countries. Bathing machines occupy a quarter of a mile stretch of sandy beach quite clear of rocks or stones for ladies, and to the west of this are a number of reefs, which divide the sea into little creeks and bays, which the men make use of for bathing. There is scarcely any darkness here in June, July, and the early part of August, the reflection of the sun in the Atlantic being visible for the short period it drops below the horizon.

We were very interested in the old fishing part of Thurso. It is very quaint, and full of narrow lanes and bye-ways, and we enjoyed sitting or standing at the river mouth to watch the boats come in and turn out their stores of fish,† for the River Thurso is a good angling river, and a splendid one for salmon. £20 a rod is, I believe, paid monthly for the salmon fishing. Dr. Smiles, who knows this part of the world intimately, says that the fish, after feeding and cleaning themselves in the Pentland Firth, make for the fresh water, and the first river they come to is the Thurso, up which they swim in droves.

The occupants of Thurso Castle are the Sinclairs, who have done more for Thurso than it is possible to relate. More than a hundred years ago, when Sir John Sinclair began his improvements, the whole country round was in a most desolate and discouraging state: three-fourths of the county consisted of deep peat moss and of hills covered with heather;

\* Sir Roderick Murchison twice took the same journey when going from Tongue to Thurso to see Robert Dick.

† So Hugh Miller called it.

\* It is considered that about 10,000 vessels pass through it annually.

† An old fisherman told us that it was his belief that the rains in October carried the juice and quintessence of the plants into the lakes, whereby the fish are nourished.



and one of the first things he did was to make a road through the centre of the county. The post used to arrive once a week from the south by runners, and Sir John used to say he would never rest till a mail coach drove daily to Thurso; and it became a proverb in the county when any impossible scheme was mooted, "That will come to pass when Sir John sees the daily mail at Thurso." In his old age he witnessed the long-promised coach drive up, amid the enthusiastic cheers of the people, to the very gates of Thurso Castle. Now in this year of 1891 the post arrives twice a day from the south and once from the north. Once when he was anxious to show the people what energy would do in accelerating labour, he caused one of his own sheep to be publicly exposed at a cattle show. He then had it sheared and the wool washed, spun, dyed, woven, and made into a coat, which he wore a week or two later at a rural *fête*. It was this very man who introduced the Cheviot breed of sheep into Scotland. He found it most difficult to collect any statistics, as the farmers objected to counting their cattle and belongings on the score of its being very unlucky to do so.

Of course we went to see the house of Robert Dick, with whom Dr. Smiles has made us so well acquainted.

There is a splendid library in Thurso, and the librarian, Mr. Campbell, is a most interesting and intellectual man. He is thoroughly acquainted with all the history of Thurso, of which he is part, bone and flesh. We asked him whose works were most in request, and he named, among others, Besant's, Black's, Annie Swan's, and Jane Worboise's. It is made great use of in the winter, when, during the hours it is opened, books are given out at the rate of one a minute.

Our next desire was to see John o' Groat's, and we consulted our kind landlady, Mrs. Henderson, as to the means of getting there. The result was that a wagonette stood at the door of the hotel next morning at nine o'clock, the expense of which was to be shared by two ladies who were staying in the hotel, and who had asked to accompany us. The drive of twenty-two miles occupied about two hours. I don't know what we expected to see, but

what we found was a charming little hotel of curious construction on the coast, having opposite to it the picturesque island of Stroma,\* or, as its name implies, the "island in the current," and to the right of it Duncansby Head, the most beautiful headland in the north of Scotland, together with the two immense pillars of rock known by the name of the Stacks of Duncansby; and still a little farther north, but quite within view, the two Skerries, keeping watch over the eastern entrance to the Firth, and by their two lighthouses, one higher than the other, acting as sure guides to the mariner. All these we saw as we stood on the coast immediately after getting down from the wagonette.

All we could hope to do in the course of one day was to get a near view of Duncansby and a pocketful of "groatie buckies," which are found on the beach below the headland.

"He is considered lucky

If, after searching on the sands,

He find a groatie buckie."

It is said if you are fortunate enough to find many you will live to be very old, for every groatie means a year of life. So first eating a little luncheon—for the drive had made us hungry—we started off on our expedition.

How beautiful Duncansby Head is! It is of pale red sandstone, and the chasms with which it is indented are very rugged, bold, and grand. It is almost surrounded by the sea, and on the land side the surface is of a beautiful green, sloping down to a little running brook—a greater contrast to the sides facing the sea cannot be imagined. From its top a glorious view is to be had of the Firth, the Skerries, and the Orkneys. As to the Stacks,

they stand out in the sea bare and red, resembling icebergs in their tall fantastic form, though from a distance they look like huge spires of some old Gothic edifice, and when touched with crimson by the rays of the setting sun they look glorious. In the summer months they form the rendezvous of innumerable sea-fowl, and on the top of the larger one the eagle has for ages had its eyrie.

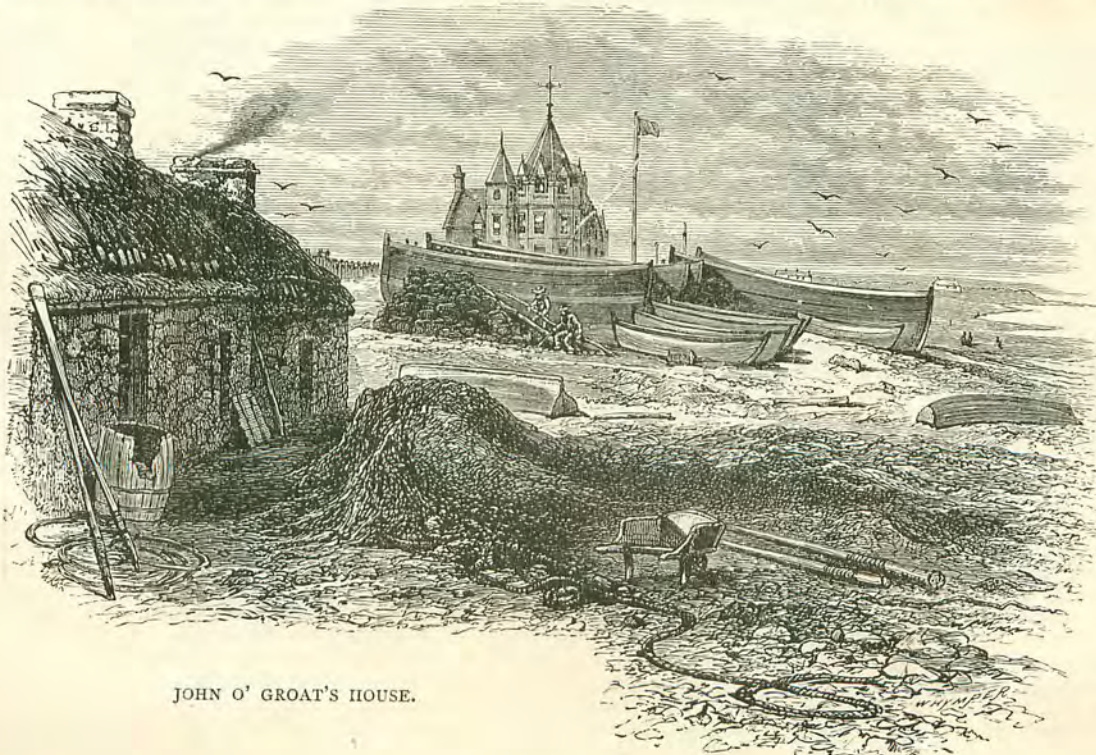
Mr. Calder, who was intimately acquainted with this coast and its inhabitants, relates that about half a century ago a tailor one day climbed up to the eyrie for the purpose of stealing a young eaglet. No sooner had he reached it than the old eagle, a majestic bird of the golden species, came flying forward to protect her young. One flap of her wings would have been sufficient to hurl him to the bottom, but fortunately he had his large scissors in his pocket, with one stroke of which he felled the bird. He managed with great difficulty to get to the bottom, but he afterwards declared that not for the whole of Caithness would he perform the feat a second time.

While we were picking up the "groatie buckies" the rain suddenly came down in such force that we were soon wet to the skin, and in this condition we arrived at John o' Groat's Hotel, late in the afternoon. We had to dress in any coats, dresses, or under-garments the landlady could supply us with, while she kindly dried our clothes. We were a most grotesque and motley group—our best friends would scarcely have recognised us.

There is not a brick left of the old house built by John o' Groat, but the present hotel is supposed to be on its site, and built somewhat in the same form—that is, *having eight sides*.

Previous to 1496 there is no mention of John o' Groat, but in that year there is a statement that John Groat of Hugh obtained a portion of the land in Duncansby called "penny land,"\* and paid yearly for it three measures of malt. A second statement is that the ancestor of Groat was a ferryman

\* The "penny lands" were let to small tenants, who, besides the rent, yielded a variety of minute services to the landlord.



JOHN O' GROAT'S HOUSE.



between Caithness and Orkney, and had frequent disputes with passengers about his fares, till at length the magistrates interfered and fixed the rates at fourpence—that is, a groat—for each passenger. A third is that in the reign of James IV. of Scotland, Cavin and John de Groat, brothers from Holland, arrived in Caithness with a letter from the King, written in Latin, recommending them to his loving subjects. These brothers bought the lands of Warre and Duncansby, in the parish of Canisbay, and in process of time the family increased and property extended till there came to be eight different proprietors of the name of Groat. At an annual festival a dispute arose as to who should take the head of the table, which threatened serious consequences, when John Groat, then a very old man, interposed. His ingenious plan was the promise to build an octagonal house with a corresponding number of doors, to prevent all quarrels about precedence among the eight different families or proprietors of the name, among whom the property seems in process of time to have been divided.

Such are the traditions of this famous John o' Groat and his curious dwelling. Robert Dick expressed his opinion of him, viz., that he was a real poet, or he would not have selected such a lovely spot for his home.

On asking what use was made of the sea-fowl which congregated in such numbers on the Stacks and Skerries of the north coast, I heard that puddings were made of the fat found in their stomachs, and that some fifty years ago, men having to be out on the sea in very stormy weather, used to tie a bundle of these puddings to the end of the cable, believing that they hindered the waves from breaking on the boat, and that they calmed the sea—oil upon the waters; but unfortunately the smell of the grease attracted the whales.

On our drive to and from John o' Groat's we were struck with the peculiarity of dividing the fields by means of Caithness flags set on end: it gives a desolate character to the country such as we, with our beautiful green hedges, can have no idea until we see it.

We reached the Royal Hotel at Thurso between nine and ten, delighted with our day,

notwithstanding the thorough wetting we had had.

We spent a good deal of time here in looking into the condition of the poor, not only in their homes, but in the workhouse and hospital. Whenever we found ourselves in desolate places far from centres of life, we always made a point of talking with any family we came across; and on asking one of these how they managed in time of sickness with no doctor within twenty miles of them, they told me that in ordinary sicknesses they could manage by using plants, roots, and animals. On asking them to explain, they said for bad coughs and colds they boil the roots of nettles and reeds in water with the addition of a little yeast, or they use the fat found in the stomach of the solan goose in water gruel; and for sciatica they wear girdles of seal-skin. But they acknowledged that in case of accident they were "just dazed."

We enjoyed our Sunday at Thurso. The churches are good, and the service quiet and unpretending in the little Episcopalian church which we attended.

## AVERIL.

By ROSA NOUCHETTE CAREY, Author of "Nellie's Memories," etc.

### CHAPTER XXI.

JIM O'REILLY.



VERIL had just reached her own room when she remembered that she had not bidden Maud good-night.

It was very late, and just for a moment she hesitated; then she crossed the passage and tapped softly at her door. There was no response. She knocked again, and then gently turned the handle. For the instant she thought the room was empty, until a sound of a low smothered sob from the bed arrested her. The moon had retired behind a cloud, and in the dim uncertain light Averil could just discern a dark form stretched across the bed. A great pang of pity crossed her as she groped her way to it—it was Maud; she had thrown herself down fully dressed upon the quilt, with her face buried in the pillow, and was trying to choke down the hysterical sobs that were shaking her from head to foot. The strain of the last few hours had been too great, and she had broken down the moment she found herself alone. The overmastering passion made her deaf to everything; and as Averil stood beside her, the words, "Oh, Oliver, Oliver, cruel, cruel," reached her ears distinctly.

There were pitying tears in Averil's eyes, and then with a sudden impulse she stooped over her and drew Maud's head to her bosom and soothed her as one would soothe a broken-hearted child.

"Do not try to check it—you must give way at last. All this time you have borne it so bravely and alone. Why should you fear me, your sister Averil?"

Oh, my poor dear, I know how you have suffered. And then this last cruel blow!" Then, as bitter sobs only answered her, she went on tenderly, "You have been so good to-day—you have not thought of yourself, but only of your poor mother. Do you think I do not know how terribly hard it has been for you?"

"Don't praise me—don't say anything kind," returned Maud, hoarsely, as her strong will forced down another quivering sob. "Poor mamma! How gladly would I change places with her! She is unhappy, but she has not this weight"—putting her hands on her breast. "Averil, if anything has happened to Rodney I shall have been my brother's murderer. Mamma would have let him go, only—" She stopped, and Averil's sisterly arms only pressed her closer.

"You must not say such things," she returned, gently. "You have been selfish and thoughtless; you did not think of his good, but only of your own; but if you had realised all this mischief you would have been the first to bid him go."

"You say that to comfort me," she returned, in a broken voice. "But, Averil, you do not know—I shut my eyes wilfully—I sacrificed Rodney to my own interests. I thought of nothing but Oliver—and now I am punished, for he has left me. He taught me to love him; he made me believe that he cared only for me; and now, he is going to marry another woman," and the poor girl shuddered as she said this.

"Dear Maud, he was not worthy of you."

"Not worthy of me!" with the old scorn in her voice. Then she broke down again, and buried her face on Averil's shoulder. "What does it matter if he were not worthy when I loved him—I loved him. Oh, you are good to me; but you do not know—how can you know—all I have suffered."

"I know more than you think, dear," returned Averil, in a low thrilling voice. "I may not have suffered in the same way—for to me there is no pain like the pain of finding one we love unworthy of our affection—but if it will comfort you, Maud; if it will make you more sure of my sympathy with you in this bitter trial, I do not mind owning that I also have known trouble."

"You have cared for some one!" starting up in her surprise. "Oh, Averil, I am so sorry."

"Well, so am I"—with quaint simplicity. "It was very foolish, was it not?—a little crooked body like me. But it was my father's fault. Dear old father! how his heart was set on it. No, Maud, I am not going to tell you the story; it is not old enough. In one sense I was happier than you, for he was good, oh, so good, though he could never have cared for me. Well, it is past and over, and I am wiser and happier now—no one suffered but myself."

"Oh, Averil, how can you speak so calmly?"

"My dear, there was a time when I could not have spoken so; when I thought life looked just like one long dull blank; when I did not know how I was to go on living in such a dreary world. I remember I was in this heavy mood one day when the words came into my mind—'In the world ye shall have tribulation;' and then I said to myself, What if this be my special cross—the one that my Lord meant me to bear?—shall I refuse it, because it is so painful when He carried His for me? I had been bearing it all alone, much as you have done; but it came upon me then that I must just kneel down and tell Him all—the disappointment, and the human shame, and the misery, and all that was making me feel so faint and sick with pain. And when I



public the full sense of what a speaker has said without giving all his superfluous words. This is an art which is not universally acquired by reporters. They have learned to depend so much upon their notes that they do not learn to exercise their brains." As regards work in Parliament, it is even said in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, that "cases occur in which the reporter enters the gallery without being able to write shorthand at all." It was also said of shorthand by another authority some years ago, "Some of the best reporters never use it." Thus shorthand is not only not everything; it very far from equals in importance that other art which skilfully compresses by seizing the main points of what a speaker says. The greatest reporter in this respect of whom England can boast was James Boswell, the shadow of Dr. Johnson, and whom Macaulay was bold enough to characterise as a mere fool. Whatever he was, his summaries of the nightly conversations, in which he himself took part, are perfect models of their kind, and even incomparable in our literature.

But supposing the young woman to be mistress of all necessary accomplishments, she will still have to decide whether it would be quite seemly for an unprotected girl to travel about London or a great town in the evening until after midnight. The work also has to be done in all kinds of weather. We have seen such a girl at her work, and one who was apparently well fitted for what she was about; but we sympathised with her in regard to the hardships of her lot while we could not but admire her courage. As things are at present, the girl reporter has to assume a bold mien when, with her notebook, she takes her place at a table among perhaps a dozen men, on whose province she is encroaching. It is not an occupation which tends to the development of feminine graces; and this will be as fully realised by the girl herself as by those with whom she comes in contact.

But an aspiring and talented young woman need not turn her back on journalism because she does not choose to compete with ordinary reporters. Reporting is only one branch of the profession, and, as a rule, it is in this service many who have afterwards distinguished themselves serve their apprenticeship. It is not indispensable that such an apprenticeship should be served, however, for many accomplished journalists have never been reporters. Hence, provided she can do the work, journalism, as a profession, is as open to a young woman as it is to a youth of the other sex. A great deal of the most effective work on our newspapers has been done by women; and, could it be told, the public would to-day be surprised to learn how much of the total is still done by them.

There are numbers of girls who, being desirous of entering this profession, somewhat innocently ask a number of questions respecting it which no one could possibly answer. They would like to be told whether they could readily find the openings they covet; how long they would be in perfecting themselves at their work; and, more important still, how many pounds sterling a year they would be able to count upon. These are things which time alone can answer. All would depend, first, on the quality of the work turned out; and, secondly, on the worker's industry. The gains of journalism vary as greatly as those of ordinary authorship. It has also to be borne in mind that, quite apart from reporting, journalism has many departments; and, as she cannot expect to excel in all, even the duly qualified candidate must decide whether she will chiefly direct attention to political matters, to social, ecclesiastical, or literary topics. Some of the most successful writers mainly confine their efforts to one or two departments, although some specially-endowed geniuses may manage to excel in all.

As regards success and methods of procedure, several misapprehensions need to be

corrected. There is a widespread notion that the only indispensable things are genius and "introductions." While, however, genius is always to be coveted, and its possessor always to be congratulated, there is perhaps no calling in which hard, persevering toil in face of difficulties and frequent disappointments is so necessary as it is in journalism. Then, in the matter of competent contributors, what common-sense editor cares a pin about introductions in the conventional sense? All the introduction he requires is that of effective work, good articles being far more weighty arguments with him than the most persuasive words of interested friends. Ask the most successful journalists of the day who "introduced" them, and they will tell you that they introduced themselves. New writers of merit are always cordially welcomed into the ranks; but then they must really possess abilities, and not be mere ambitious aspirants, of whom there are great numbers.

It will be remembered that Dr. Johnson said in his time that literary success was harder to secure than it used to be, and that it was daily becoming harder. If that was true of the last century, it is more emphatically so of this more restless age of eager competition. Hence, in making her calculations, the girl who aspires to journalism should realise that the profession is already very much overcrowded. While so much depends upon temperament and outward circumstances, we should always hesitate before recommending any girl, whose livelihood depended upon her own efforts, to risk embarking on what, in the majority of cases, would be likely to prove a very precarious enterprise. Journalism is a field in which prizes are to be won; it is one in which a moderate but still sufficient income may sometimes be won even when other sources have failed; but, at the same time, the prizes are necessarily much less numerous than the blanks.

G. H. P

## OUR HIGHLAND HOLIDAY.

By EMMA BREWER.

### CHAPTER V.

#### CONCLUSION.

"Caledonia's outermost rim,  
Kissing the ocean grim."



NEXT to visiting John o' Groat's and the Stacks of Duncansby we had looked forward to being in Wick\* during the time of the herring fishery, and fortunately we were able to accomplish this. Wick is only

twenty-two miles from Thurso, and the journey by rail only an hour and a half; but a greater contrast to it can scarcely be imagined. There was no grass growing in the streets of Wick;

\* "Wick" signifies bay. Some say it gave the name "Vikings," or Baymen, to the northern pirates who lurked in the wics or bays.

the town was simply teeming with the elements of success, viz., plenty of people, an ever-increasing number of new houses, and an abundance of work of all kinds.

Naturally this state of things is in a great measure the result of the herring fishery, the origin of which was the starting and fitting-out of two small sloops in 1767, at a time when there was no harbour at Wick save that at the mouth of the river. The venture did not meet with much success until it became incorporated into the British Fishery Society. In 1808 this society commenced the establishment of Pulteney Town by making a harbour and granting fees in perpetuity for building on liberal terms.

In 1810 the inner, and in 1831 the outer, harbours were completed, and by this time the quantity of herrings caught during the season was enormous, and the number of people employed, such as fishermen, packers, coopers, etc., was over ten thousand.

As soon as we arrived in Wick we made our way to the Station Hotel, which, notwithstanding that it is the principal one in the town, did not please us, it was so unlike those comfortable ones in the north we had grown accustomed to. We did not trouble ourselves about the new and upper part of the town known as Pulteney, which, being built of the blue Caithness flag-stone, looked sombre and uninteresting, but picked our way, ankle deep

in mud, to the harbour, and were rewarded by a sight unparalleled in any other town, be it where it may.

About four or five hundred boats, filled to overflowing with silvery fish, and each having a crew of five or six swarthy men, were making their way into the harbour, while hundreds of sea-gulls were sailing over them, darkening the air, and making it resound with their cries. Each of these boats, with nets and appliances, is worth from a hundred and fifty to two hundred pounds, and it is said that if the netting of the whole fleet were laid in a line it would reach from the Pentland Firth to the English Channel.

Well, to go on with what we saw. The quay was alive with every kind of industry, and the number of barrels alone was worth seeing; there were miles of them as they stood in rows filled with salt from Lisbon, cotton from Liverpool, and cured fish for the Baltic, where all herrings are sent which are neither large nor oily enough for bloaters.

There were several large shallow pits on the quay, into which basket after basket of fish was emptied from the sides of the boats. At each pit stood a clerk, with pencil and note-book in hand, to mark the number of baskets emptied in; for the fish is paid for by the *cran*, which is a measure of four baskets.

Each layer of fish is sprinkled with salt until the pit is full. The labour is divided, for



the men catch, unload, and salt, while the women and good-looking lasses cut and pack the fish. The amount of work being done on all sides was enormous, but every department was so well organised that there was not the slightest confusion nor ill-temper anywhere. The quantity of herrings caught and the number of persons engaged vary greatly each year. As a rule about twelve thousand people are employed, a hundred thousand crans of fish are caught, and about a hundred and fifty thousand pounds worth exported (£150,000).

Our attention was drawn off for a few minutes by a poor woman with a baby in her arms, and four little children holding by her skirts, who came up to us and asked which way she was to go to the Aberdeen boat. We went about enquiring for her till we got the required information; and on our asking the superintendent how it came to be so difficult to reach the boat, he told us that both harbours have sanded up to such an extent that the Aberdeen steamer is never able to enter owing to the insufficient depth of water.

The kindness of the various officers, clerks, and fishermen in answering our many questions put us in possession of a number of interesting facts about the herring. It appears that when caught in the nets they squeal like mice, and the strange thing is, that they cannot endure blood—for example, if by any chance a quarrel take place on a coast frequented by them, and blood flow, the fish leave at once, and do not return the whole season.

Herrings make no pilgrimages without a leader, and this leader is always one double the size of the ordinary fish, and known to the fisherman as king herring. If they are unfortunate enough to catch the king in their net they always, if possible, drop it into the sea

again. There is not a single fish that swims that is not an enemy to the herring.

A quarter of a century ago over eleven hundred boats were employed in the herring fishery at Wick, while now quite as much fish is caught with only half the number. This is owing to the improvements in the size and seaworthiness of the boats, which carry double the length of netting, and are more than double the amount of tonnage.

Of late years there has been an important winter catch of herrings, which are as a rule sold by auction, and despatched in a fresh state, or kippered, to our English markets. This trade is becoming so successful that it is likely in time to rival the summer fishing.

From the busy quay we made our way to the streets leading from it; and if there were several public-houses, and many inducements for young and old to turn aside from the right path, the inducements and helps to resist the temptations were equally many in number. There were temperance society meetings and concerts announced, the Fishermen's Association, the Benefit Society, reading rooms and library, templars' lodges, Salvation Army, band of hope, and boys' brigade all doing their best to amuse and elevate the busy folk, whom Satan is so eager to entrap. We saw also good cafés, where well-cooked, cheap food, together with non-intoxicating drinks, could be had. There was no idleness anywhere. We should have liked to visit all these institutions, and seen their working and results, but we had only time to glance at them and wish them God-speed.

Very tired and hungry we made our way back to the hotel, and tried to eat the food set before us. We then started off to the lighthouse at Noss Head, the tower of which is

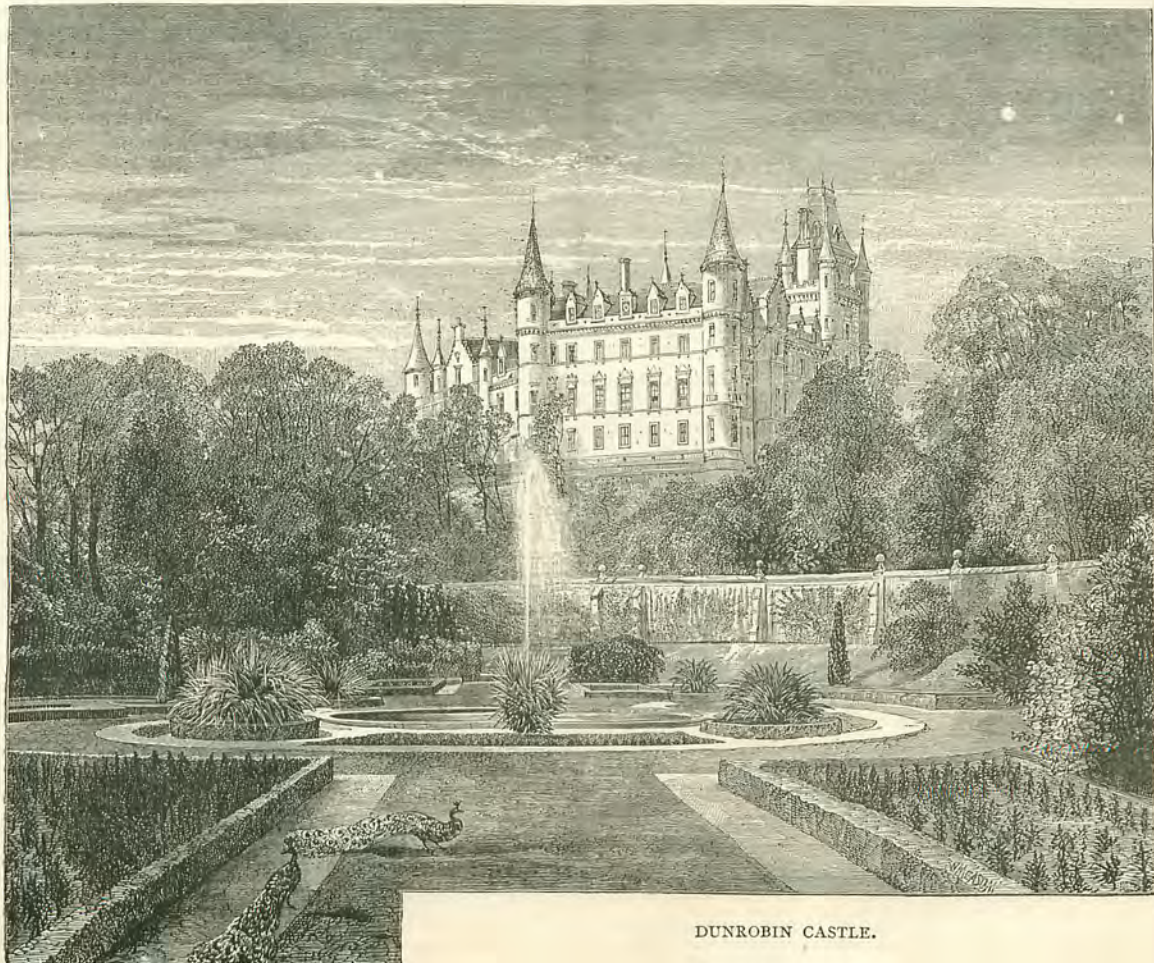
seventy feet high. Previous to its erection there were many shipwrecks in Sinclair Bay, and even after many accidents occurred until the light became well known.

We were shown over the lighthouse by a very intelligent man; and this made all the difference to us, as there were so many things impossible to understand except minutely explained. As we mounted the steep stairs the wind moaned gruesomely, and the man remarked that it was not a nice sound to hear on a winter's night. Stepping out on to the tiny balcony, we had a magnificent view of land and sea, such as those who have not visited the north of Scotland can form no idea of. The light, as it is technically termed, can be seen fifteen miles off, and is of the greatest use to vessels making their way from the south to Pentland Firth, especially when the Skerries' lights are a little obscure. It acts by clock-work, a little bell striking all the hours, and the lantern moves on castors.

The light takes eight minutes to revolve, and gives a flash every thirty seconds. The centre fixed lamp consumes seventeen hundred gallons of oil a year, and has five wicks, the largest of which is four and a half inches in diameter. It is filled with a gill of paraffin oil every five minutes. The red glass fixed in the lantern here means danger—just contrary to that in Scrabster, where it signifies safety.

From the balcony of the lighthouse we saw a wounded solan goose floating on the water, and this led us to ask if many birds were injured by the light. The man said yes; and that where he had been previously stationed, he had known as many as five hundred killed in a night by dashing against the lantern.

The lighthouse keeper admitted that he had plenty of time for thought, but not, as many



DUNROBIN CASTLE.



people supposed, plenty for study, for the light required constant attention, and it would be disastrous to get absorbed in a book, for the flame must always be a certain height: and then the Northern Light authorities often visit the various lighthouses at night, to ascertain if all is as it should be; and the men pride themselves on not being found wanting on these occasions.

We went down into the cellar under the lighthouse, where the immense oil tanks are kept, and it looked for all the world like Ali Baba's cavern, where the slave girl killed the robbers who were hidden in the oil-jars.

From this man, who was most observant, we learned that the solan geese are very particular about their quarters, and send out an advance guard to spy out the land, and if the report be satisfactory, the whole flock come pouring in from the far north-west.

He told us that he had watched them making up their nests daily during the summer months on the shelves of the high rocks close by, and had often been highly amused at the material they collected for the purpose. Nothing came amiss to them, whether it were part of an old red coat, or grass, or arrows, or beans, and they seized upon anything they saw floating on the water. A solan goose can preserve five or six herrings entire in its gorge, and it is no uncommon thing for them to do this, and so carry them to their young in the nest.

On coming down from the lighthouse the keeper took us into his living-room, which contained a large collection of eggs, a very good library, and a portrait of Mr. Gladstone: the short curtain at the window had the appropriate pattern of the sea, a lighthouse, and some boats.

I am always interested in the lighthouse men, and the way they pass their time, for the life they lead is so very solitary. As a class I notice that they are religious and thoughtful, great readers, and keen observers, and nearly always have a hobby.

We wished the man good-bye, and turned westward to a bold peninsula rock, on which stand the ruins of Girnigoe Castle, the original

key of which has been handed down through the descendants of the last warder, until now it finds a resting-place in the very interesting museum at Wick. It is a foot in length, and very elaborately carved.

"Goe" means an inlet, and it is a large one sheltered by this rock which gave the castle its name of Girnigoe. It has been said that this stronghold was turned into a heap of ruins by a righteous God on account of the amount of sin and cruelty alleged to have been committed within its walls.

The ruins, which are very picturesque, seem to be of different ages, the larger portion being of very remote antiquity, and the more modern dating probably from the 16th century. On the extreme point of the rock is a chamber with a trap-door in the centre of the floor, leading down through the rock into the sea. If these crumbling ruins could speak, what horrible tales they would reveal! The master of Caithness was fettered and cast down into one of the dark and noisome dungeons under the castle, and remained there for years. At the end of this long period the most inhuman plan was adopted for getting rid of him. Food was withheld from him for five days, and then a piece of very salt beef was set before him, of which he ate ravenously, and when, a short time after, he asked for water, the keepers refused it, and he died of raging thirst. This occurred in 1576.

From this spot, with all its cruel memories, we drove to the remains of the castle of Auldwick, about two miles south of the town, and known to mariners as the Auld man o' Wick. It is the most ancient of all the ruins in Caithness, but quite devoid of picturesqueness. They are, in fact, only the grim remains of a strong tower of extremely rude masonry, with just a few slits for windows; but such as they are they form an excellent landmark to sailors, who are well acquainted with them. The tower is roofless, and there is a deep broad moat which defends it on the land side. We found the whole scene very wild, but failed to see any beauty in it, and quite agreed with Calder, that "it is an old keep, gray and weather-beaten, scowling amid the storm like

an angry demon." We were told that during a gale the inlet or "Goe" below is a perfect "hell of waters." All visitors are told of the wonderful leap across the chasm taken by Lord Oliphant when pursued hotly by the Earl of Caithness. As we drove back to the hotel, we could not help comparing the well-built houses of the poorer classes with the habitations of former times, which were wretched hovels of turf and stone. The fire used to be in the middle of the floor, and the smoke got out when and where it could, and the people liked it because it kept them warm. Instead of the decayed fir which was formerly made use of for lights because of its resinous matter, the town is now well lighted.

And here we say adieu to Caithness, and proceed on our journey to Golspie, in Sutherlandshire, a charming place with a quaint village street, and where the cottages are hemmed in by brilliant and sweet flowers, which fill the air with their perfume.

The walks by the sea are beautiful, and visitors are permitted to walk in the grounds and gardens of Dunrobin Castle on certain hours of each day. The grounds are well worth visiting, where white-tailed rabbits take refuge in the ferns, and glimpses of purple hills, sombre woods, and blue sea add to the beauty of the scene.

The Castle Dunrobin is very interesting—part of it dates back to the year 1225. The walls are six feet thick, and it would be easier to bore through the stones than through the lime, so hard is it.

The hotel is one of those quaint comfortable ones met with sometimes in the far north. It is well looked after, and is a delightful home for ladies while their husbands are fishing in out-of-the-way places. North Golspie is a centre for the Shetland shawl industry. We went to the house of Miss Smith, who is a great knitter of the very fine shawls, one of which we bought.

The time spent in Golspie was, I think, the pleasantest part of a very pleasant holiday, and we came back to London better in health, and the happier for it.

[THE END.]

## ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

### EDUCATIONAL.

QUEEN BESS.—It is quite possible to study shorthand without a master; the small manuals are to be found at nearly every stationer's.

ALINE might obtain the engagement she needs by an advertisement or an agent, but should be careful in going abroad unless to people she knows.—2. We should think the "Iron Gates of Europe" were the Rock of Gibraltar, formerly known as one of the pillars of Hercules. Perhaps the *Leisure Hour* would answer the purpose.

ALICE.—Perhaps Bryce's *American Commonwealth* would suit you. Your letter and little English tale are both very well and correctly written for a foreigner. We were glad to hear from you again.

VIOLET GRAHAM.—A manual of coins is published by Gill, Bazaar Office, 170, Strand, W.C.

FARMARINGO.—1. Many governesses do not play well, though they teach music, singing, and harmony; so you had better keep up your knowledge of it, and perfect yourself, especially in the theory of music.—2. Your knowledge of Italian should be useful. Write the stories, and wait till you return to England to dispose of them.

FIDO.—We should advise you to study at a school of art. There are always evening classes, we believe.

MISS M. GIBB.—We have pleasure in reminding our girls that the session of your Utopian Reading Society commenced on the 6th of October, at Glenlyon, The Avenue, Beckenham, Kent.

EVELYN GRACE.—We should think the standard pretty nearly the same anywhere.

MONA does not say whether she has the "G. O. P." volumes. If she has the *Girl's Year*, vol. ix. will show her what to read for a year, and help her in every way.

J. C. must enquire of a bookseller. The book would be issued by an educational publisher.

### WORK.

AYERIL AND GREYFRIARS.—See our illustrated articles on "Work."

POPPLE.—The screen might be covered with Christmas cards if you like to take the trouble of putting them on, or with chintz, crêtonne, or some coloured material to match the room in which it is to stand.

ECONOMY, AND ANXIOUS TO IMPROVE.—The feathers on a hat can be re-curved without difficulty by passing each filament between the thumb and a blunt knife. It must be done gently, so as not to break them.

G. M. T.—1. You should find out what the boy himself would like for a present—a cricket or lawn-tennis bat, or something of that sort, would answer.—2. Wash the gloves carefully, making a lather first.

ALICE.—We are very sorry to hear of your difficulties in service; but if you be "slow" you would not be likely to get on in anything else until you have conquered that fault. So you had better begin at once, as you are already twenty-one. But the first thing to do is to ask help from God; the next, to avoid day-dreaming, and thinking of other things than your work; and cultivate an attentive habit of mind, fixing your thoughts on your business, and remembering that we have the joy of knowing that "we serve the Lord Christ," even if we only sweep a floor. This makes our work sacred.

JESSIE.—"Wood carving" is the cutting of designs and patterns in wood for the ornamentation of furniture, houses, etc. Wood engraving means pictures first drawn and then cut out on wooden blocks (usually of box-wood) for pictorial illustrations and pictures.

CURLER.—The frame for a screen must be made by a carpenter, and then covered with cotton or paper so that pictures can be pasted on it.

### HOUSEKEEPING.

CALCRYSICCA.—All animals should be able to get at water, and a basin of clean drinking water should be supplied where it can be easily got at for them in every house where animals are kept.

TRIXIE.—Gum arabic should be put in a bottle with cold water and left, with an occasional shaking, till dissolved.

L. F. G. R.—Any ordinary recipes in use for cooking could be used for cookery by an oil stove. It would make no difference.

A. B. Z.—The cheapest method of staining floors is to put on a few coats of kerosene oil with a brush. After each coat, when quite dry, at some days' interval, the floor should be well polished with a woollen cloth. This makes an excellent floor, and is cheaper than boiled oil used for the same purpose.

A. F. S.—1. A small amount of thin glue would be used to make the plush adhere to the wood. It would not show through if carefully managed.—2. Brasses should be cleaned with rotten-stone and oil, which is far better than bath-brick. A penny's-worth of rotten-stone and the same of vitriol put into an ordinary black bottle with soft water is an excellent mixture, and will last a long while.

NELLIE.—Potato peelings, tea-leaves, and shot are all of them good for cleaning the insides of water-bottles.

NANCY BELL.—1. We should not know how to keep the mince-meat in that manner. The jar should be very well covered.—2. Try scrubbing the cocoanut-matting with cold soap and water.

GOOD FIGURES.—There are several kinds of extracts of meat, and they are to be got at a chemist's or grocer's, and directions how to use them are supplied with them.