

a moment. Then she shook herself with an impatient sigh.

"I shall fill your vases, aunty," she said. "Did you ever see such honeysuckle? You don't know what it costs me to come indoors, and leave it wasting there! Oh, here is a dear old pitcher which will hold an immense quantity!"

The dear old pitcher was of brown glazed earthenware, and had two handles. It stood on a corner of the table, surrounded by pieces of delicate china, and had been pushed into the background as if it did not deserve much attention. Miss Bolt glanced at it abstractedly for a moment.

"I think that old thing belonged to grandfather," she said. "I've lost sight of it for a long while; but to-day I found it standing in a corner of the closet."

"I like it," said Penny, carrying it off to another table. "It's rather dusty, aunty. And there's something inside it."

"Not a mouse, is it?" Miss Bolt asked.

"No, only paper. Why, it's a letter!"

Aunt Esther went on wiping her cups, and did not see that Penny was growing red and white by turns. Her own unanswered letter—the letter that she had written to Bob—had been lying at the bottom of the pitcher ever since last June; and the envelope had never been broken.

"Aunty," she said at last in a husky voice. "Do you remember the morning when I went away?"

"Of course I do," replied Miss Bolt, taking up a cup as thin as an egg-shell. "I'm not likely to forget Ann's scream. It was a mercy I didn't smash something. You hadn't been gone five minutes when William was brought in senseless."

"I left you standing here," said Penny, "and I gave you a letter to send to Bob. Well, the letter was never sent. It was lying unopened at the bottom of this pitcher."

Miss Bolt stood and stared at her niece with the cup held carefully in one hand.

"I had forgotten all about that letter until this moment," she confessed at last. "I must have dropped it into the pitcher, not knowing what I did. Well, Penny, I'm very sorry."

"And I'm very glad," said Penny.

She put the letter into her pocket, filled the pitcher with water, and arranged a great bunch of honeysuckle. Then she ran upstairs to her room and shut the door.

Do we ever thank God for the prayers that are never answered? The girl who knelt by her bedside was speechless with gratitude and joy. Her fond, foolish words had never reached the man to whom they were written; they had been taken charge of by her good angel, and hidden away until she had seen life in a clearer light. There are blessings "which for our unworthiness we dare not, and for our blindness we cannot ask," and He, who is the Master of souls, will not give them to us until we have learnt "our ignorance in asking."

It was decided that Penny should remain with Aunt Esther all through the summer. Miss Bolt wanted to have her sister, and her sister's children with her as much as possible, and so all the Westalls came to spend their holidays, that year, at the farm. All but Tom, who took lodgings in a labourer's cottage, and was joined by George Wetherall.

When Penny and George met again there was not the faintest shadow of a barrier between them. One evening they stood alone on the waste land, just when the long grasses and brambles were touched with the gold of the sunset, and the scent of the earth was dewy and sweet. They had filled a basket with wild flowers; Penny, with some purple heather and bent grass in her hat, and her grey eyes shining in the low light, made a pretty picture. It was one of those rare hours in life when "the time and place, and the loved one, are all together."

"You are my true love, Penny," said George, looking deep into the shining eyes.

And her heart answered—"You are mine."

When they all went back to London, Penny astonished her aunt by making an odd request.

"Aunt Esther, will you give me your grandfather's old brown pitcher? I will take the greatest care of it."

"Yes, child, you may have it. But what charm it is that you see in that ugly old thing I cannot think!"

"I dote upon it," said Penny.

## THE GIRL-BRIDES OF HILD'S HAVEN.

### CHAPTER I.

FOR six generations a grey stone house had stood at the head of the Haven; the Haven itself taking its name from the owners of the house, who, from the first Gregory St. Hild down to his last and lately-buried descendant had lived and died within its walls.

Grey as the granite rocks that rose behind it, worn and battered with wind and weather, it was still beautiful and strong enough apparently to shelter generations yet to come, for what the first had built he had built well, and succeeding owners had added their part with equal care, while the thick clinging ivy had clothed the walls with a luxuriant growth.

Before the house the waters of the Haven spread, gradually widening out to the sea, while on the beach below fishing craft drew up into safe anchorage, and the fishers' cottages grouped themselves together wherever the shelving hills gave them space.

But at the back of the Haven, beyond the reach of the sea's long arm, protected from north and east by the towering rocks, lay the Glen, and in the sunniest part of the Glen the favoured cherished garden that Gregory St. Hild had planned and planted with his own hands, and which his descendants had watched and tended with equal care and more than equal skill. It was not very large this garden, and to southern eyes accustomed to seeing acres of cultivated ground producing a wealth of harvest, its stores would seem of little value, but the men, women and children who lived by the Haven regarded it as an earthly paradise; it was the pride of the Glen, and the pride of St. Hild also.

The men who worked in the garden loved it as their own, and to its real owner it could scarcely give more joy; it repaid well the care bestowed upon it too, for its fruits were renowned over the whole country-side, and no wealthier squire had finer root crops or choicer flowers than grew here.

And now that the last bearer of the name had been carried away from his home to rest with his forefathers, what was to become of their garden, what of the house, what of the men who gathered round the Haven and who had relied upon the laird as their protector and counsellor, and still more, what of the fair girl who sat alone the sole inheritor of this accumulated wealth, a wealth not of gold so much as of honour, love of loyal people, and the store that more than a century of toil had gathered together?

What was she to do with this? How was she, slender, inexperienced, comparatively untrained, to fill worthily and wisely the place that came to her by right of birth? There were plenty to ask the question in a variety of ways, but she of them all had wisdom enough to ask it in the only right way—on her knees.

The only child, to her father she had been both son and daughter, and when death had robbed them of the loved wife and mother, he drew still closer the bond that united the remaining two.

No good thing that education could give had been withheld from her, even the discipline that separation from home alone brings had not been held to be needless, and she had fought her way with others on common ground. She had not shown the brilliant cleverness that carries all before it as an only child is oft-times expected to do, but consciously or unconsciously, she had drawn in the breath of a fuller life, and a wider outlook over a larger world than was known in the confined limits of the Haven was hers, whereby her sympathies had become deepened and made to embrace people and things outside the fold, which to her forerunners had seemed amply large enough.

Even to the fond father his "bonnie maid"—dearer and more companionable because of her broader understanding—had ideas which ran somewhat antagonistic to his own at times, and though while he lived she was too

truly daughterly to give rein to them, now that the restraint of his presence was removed there was no one to forbid her use of the power that lay in her hands in whatever direction she chose to exercise it.

Although in experience of the world's ways Penelope St. Hild was but a child, in knowledge that holds good and renders the truest service to others she was rapidly growing to maturity. While her father had given her the same training that he would have given to a son so far as her sex made it possible for him to do so, the mother's care had been equally active to develop homely arts and make her fully acquainted with the practical side of house-management, "for," she would say, "a woman is not worthy of her name who is ignorant of a woman's special work."

So that if it was now her place to rule she was ready for it by right of fitness gained by obedience unto rule, and if she sought to teach others it was with such learning as she had had to acquire herself.

During the five years that had passed since her mother's death the entire charge of all household matters had lain in her hands; her father claimed her help in his outdoor pursuits and her sympathy in the doings of the Haven folk, but within-doors he had left her to use her own judgment, with the result that she had ripened into wholesome and complete womanhood.

And now that he was gone she asked herself what was to become of all the experience so gained; was she to live always unto herself, acting the part of lady bountiful to the poorer folk if they would allow her to do so, or was it possible that she might reach out to a wider circle, doing good with money and influence in ways that are but seldom thought of?

The "New Womanhood" was not yet heard of, nor were many of the startling phases which have since made young womanhood ridiculous sufficiently forward to attract attention, but the aimlessness and the purposeless

character of life with so great a number of her own class had often caused Penelope to think seriously of the future.

Books and papers brought the stirring problems of the hour even into the quiet peacefulness of the Haven, and in her lovely home she felt that though removed from disturbing contact with them she was not exempt from taking her responsible share in the solving of them.

The same thought had grown within her which has animated the nobler spirits among women of every time—that if the world is to be raised and purified it will be largely done by raising the standard of character amongst its women; for by women homes are made or marred, men are lifted up or dragged downwards, themselves helpless, and children's consciences are warped if the influences surrounding their cradles are ignoble ones.

The smallness of their lives, which is the rebellious plaint of so great a number of women, chiefly arises from among those who are most ignorant—ignorant of the simplest kind of knowledge, and especially ignorant of the knowledge that makes home happy and blessed.

And this last was just the kind of ignorance that Penelope felt most drawn to combat with—the knowledge she knew herself to possess in a good measure, thanks to a wise mother's care, and she longed to bless others with the blessing that had been so liberally poured upon her.

Had she been a few years older and less enthusiastic, she might have reflected that the true home-making talent is an inborn gift not given to all alike, but being still young and ardently hopeful she had faith to believe that by patient teaching great things might be accomplished.

And after all, those who aim high are always certain to achieve something; what Penelope achieved we shall see as our story progresses.

"I have a house of my own to keep," she said to herself. "Suppose that I try to teach housekeeping to others; but what others? It is useless to teach those who have no motive before them when they learn, and I will not have learners in my school who come there for the sake of a new sensation or in search of a new hobby, no; could it be possible, I wonder, to find girls who are really about to marry, who would be glad to learn the 'whole art of housekeeping' seriously and earnestly?

if there are any such it is these I should like to teach."

Once the purpose became firmly fixed in her mind it was not long in taking shape; the more that her loneliness pressed upon her heavily in these first months of bereavements.

To open up the still rooms in the great house, to fill it with life and sound, to have every day full of duty. This she seemed to crave, and such wholesome craving was not likely to remain long unsatisfied.

Of the servants who had served her father from his own boyhood there were but two whose service was really of any account; the others had been amply provided for by their master's care and could retire if they found their field invaded and the order changed; only Silas would remain as keeper of the garden that was dearer to him than even his own cottage home; and Margery, who had nursed her young mistress from her birth and first taught her to walk, would still keep her place as watchful guardian. To these two only did Penelope fully unfold the purpose that she had in mind, but even their objections were not strong enough to deter her carrying it out.

To themselves they said—by way of consolation perhaps—"Let her take her will now, but one of these days Miss Pen will marry, and then the old order will come back again."

Of friends there were few to take counsel, none whose opinion could have determining weight, so that whether she did well or ill she must rely upon her own judgment to decide her course.

The very novelty of her plan made it seem the more desirable, for ten years ago it certainly was novel, although in these days house-keeping schools are to be found in many places, yet "to be domesticated" is even now scarcely accounted an indispensable qualification when matrimonial responsibilities are undertaken, in spite of the increase of understanding.

The picture that sketched itself out in Penelope's mind was this. The girls whom she would undertake to teach must be those who, with the near prospect of having homes of their own to rule, found it difficult, if not impossible, to learn the whole art of ruling in their father's house because of their social position; and when these girls were found, as she had little doubt but that they would be, she intended that they should, with their own

hands, perform every kind of household duty; the "menial" as well as the more dignified, for only by doing everything themselves could they really ever know how anything ought to be done, how long its doing should take and how it should look when done.

Then too, housekeeping as she understood it herself, embraced much more than the cooking of meals and the cleaning and dusting of rooms; it meant the management and proportioning of income and expenditure, the understanding of right methods of ventilation and sanitation, the keeping and repairing of linen, as well as the washing and dressing of the same; the work of garden and greenhouse as far as it had to do with producing food and fruit for the house and flowers for its beautifying; the care of poultry and birds, simple dairy work, bread-making, and perhaps also they might include some of the forgotten arts that belonged to housewifery in the olden days; but above all there were the rules of right living to lay hold of, the sympathy of strong for weak, of rich toward poor, of well to sick, to cultivate, and for this few places could have been chosen so well suited for their teaching as the Haven and St. Hild.

Indeed, the more she thought about her plan the more attractive it grew, and she went from room to room in the house preparing it—in imagination at least—for its coming inmates, making the few alterations that might be necessary, adding the needful furniture to make each room ready for its separate occupant, and seeing the great drawing-room filled with a throng of bright faces and figures.

No wonder the imaginary picture charmed her, and if the actual realisation of it proved more difficult than she had anticipated, still the ideal was always kept in view and was a wonderful help.

The first step towards its realisation was to make her plan public, and this she did through various channels, and to her delight it was taken up in the spirit she had wished it to be, proof enough that the need existed and must be met.

She had said to herself that she would begin slowly, but within a month six earnest students had entered their names and given their bond for a six months' course, and Penelope found her scheme fairly started ere she had fully grasped the fact for herself.

(To be continued.)

## THE GIRL'S OWN GUILD OF SCRIPTURE-READING AND STUDY.

### RULES.

Half-an-hour's study and reading each day.

A course of Biblical study will occupy three years and three months.

Ten questions to be published each month in the "G. O. P."

Answers to be sent in by the first week of the following month by readers in Great Britain; by readers in Greater Britain answers to be sent within a month later.

Books required for the present year's study:—*The Bible Handbook* (Dr. Angus, R. T. S., 5s.); *Bible Cyclopadia* (Dr. Eadie, R. T. S.); Oxford (or Queen's Printers') *Aids to the Study of the Bible*, 1s. or 3s. 6d.; the *Revised Version of the Bible*.

Prizes will be given at the close of each year (not of the course).

First Prizes will be given to each student who has obtained the necessary number of marks. Also a certain number of Second Prizes, according to the number of the students, will be given to the best of those who have reached the required standard. Handwriting and neatness in the MSS. will be considered.

First Prizes to consist of books to the value

of One Guinea. Second Prizes to the value of Half-a-Guinea. Students who are prepared to make-up the answers to the questions that have gone before may join at any time during the first six months of the "G. O. P." year, i.e. from November to April inclusive. But in all cases the subscription will be 1s. per annum, payable always in advance, and sent by postal note to the Editor of THE GIRL'S OWN PAPER, 56, Paternoster Row, London. Each letter in connection with this work to have written upon the envelope "The Girl's Own Guild." A card of membership will be sent to each member, signed by the Editor.

### QUESTIONS.

241. Before entering upon this division of the Old Testament, state what you understand by the term "prophet," and in what part of the Bible is the descriptive title first employed?

242. Dating from the beginning of the eighth century B.C., how many prophets, named in the Old Testament, were there

whose writings remain; and into what divisions are they generally arranged?

243. Give the several names of the prophets in chronological order.

244. Name the four prophets whose writings have to do chiefly with the Gentiles. Give the names of the nations to whom these prophets severally refer.

245. What do we know respecting the personal history of Isaiah? In the reigns of what Kings of Judah did he live?

246. Under what special name does Isaiah speak of God, and by which He is rarely designated in other writings? What was his principal theme?

247. Where is it mentioned twice in the New Testament of persons reading Isaiah's prophecies?

248. What are the two divisions of the writings of this prophet? and to what subjects do the two historical chapters that divide them relate?

249. Quote the prophecy relating to John the Baptist as the "Forerunner," and its application.

250. Quote four distinct prophecies relating to our Lord in Isaiah's writings.

## "LET HER REST ON."

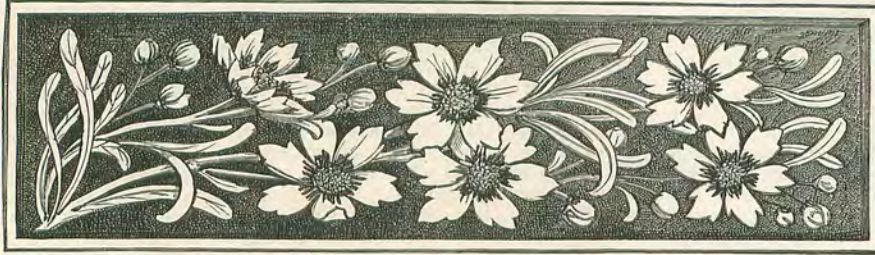
By AUGUSTA HANCOCK.

Let her rest on—  
 She was often very weary;  
 Life's hours were long,  
 And the days were dark and dreary.  
 Let her rest on.

Let her rest on—  
 No night-time finds her weeping;  
 For night is gone,  
 And flowers are round her sleeping.  
 Let her rest on.

Let her rest on,  
 The earth's green pillow pressing—  
 Let her rest on.  
 Who knows what hands caressing  
 Bring slumber long?

Let her rest on,  
 Her calm soul gone 'mid sleeping,  
 Where time is none,  
 Passed into God's safe keeping—  
 She shall rest on.



## THE GIRL-BRIDES OF HILD'S HAVEN.

## CHAPTER II.

ONE early evening in May, Penelope St. Hild stood in the porch of her house, shading her eyes from the sun's last rays, and watching for the vehicle coming which was to bring the first two of her new pupils to her.

There was a light of expectancy in her eyes, and although her heart beat a little higher than its wont, because she felt herself fairly launched upon a venture that was still to be proved, yet it was with no nervous foreboding.

A new chapter in life was beginning—how would it disclose itself?

Though it is a wise Hand that draws a veil over the future, it does not necessarily follow that there are shadows to fear.

In spite of her five-and-twenty years, she looked young to be the head of a household such as this promised to be; but there was dauntless courage and firm control visible in the line of lips and chin; and though the quick-changing colour showed a keen sensitiveness to every influence, the whole cast of face and figure bespoke a reasonable, yet a strongly-marked determination that impressed its owner and would have singled her out for notice anywhere.

The sound of wheels drawing nearer and finally stopping made her leave her post and hasten towards the gate; she must show herself the hospitable hostess as well as leader and teacher.

Two girls descended from the somewhat antiquated fly; they looked at Penelope with hardly-disguised curiosity, and she returned their gaze, but with kindly judgment thrown in.

"Miss St. Hild?" queried the elder of the two coming forward. "I am Madeleine Trevor, and this is my cousin Alice Bryant."

Penelope bid them a gracious welcome.

"I think we shall be good friends," she said, an instinctive liking springing up as she took the hand of the younger girl, who hung back a little shyly; "you look rather tired. Has your journey been a long one?" she asked her.

"No, not so very long," was the answer; "but I am rather easily tired, I think."

"I have tea awaiting you, and I daresay you will be glad of it; but let us first carry these boxes into the hall, then you can dismiss Saundieson. Will you take the other end of this one with me?"—this to the elder girl.

"Yes, but—excuse me, is there no man who can carry them for us?" asked the one spoken to, looking about her in some amazement, not unmingled with dismay.

"There is one, but he is old, and not so well able to carry them as either you or I," Penelope answered calmly; so there was nothing for it but for Madeleine to bear a hand with the best grace she could.

A few journeys back and forth saw everything safely housed; then Penelope led them to the cosy drawing-room, where, although the day had been warm and sunny, the bright fire blazing there proved a welcome sight. Drawing up two luxurious chairs for them to rest in, she busied herself in making and serving the tea, which Janet brought in at her call, and a plate of hot scones, looking very tempting to hungry appetites.

"We Yorkshire people have great faith in tea," she said merrily, "and we think a deal of our cakes and scones. Janet is a queen among scone-makers; you will have to coax her into showing you the mystery of their manufacture."

The magic of the fragrant cup soon loosed their tongues, and they were chatting freely together—so freely that timid Alice ventured to say—

"You are not a bit like what I imagined you would be, Miss St. Hild. I think it will be delightful to be here!"

Penelope did not ask what the imaginary picture had been, but she said warmly—

"I am hoping that you will find that it really is delightful to do work of any kind that has to do with home-making; I am quite sure that it will be a delight to me to teach you what I know; and, consciously or not, there is no doubt that you will teach me many things in return."

They begged her to tell them what had given her the inspiration for the starting of the "school" to which they would belong; and, though she could not reveal her inner thoughts

and hopes until she knew them better, she did not hesitate to give the broad outline of her plan, hoping to gain enough of their confidence in return to enable her to adapt her teaching to each character.

"I have often thought it was nothing short of cruelty to set a girl as mistress over a home and servants, when she had had no opportunity of acquiring the necessary knowledge for the ruling of either," she said; "but also I know that, in ninety out of a hundred cases, it is most difficult for the girl to acquire this experience in her father's house, especially where there are several servants."

"That is precisely how it is with me," said Madeleine Trevor quickly; "I cannot go into the kitchen at home because I should be 'hindering' the cook, and be blamed if she neglected her duties to attend to me. If I tried to do the housemaid's work, I must either seem to imply that she is leaving it undone or else provoke her amusement at my clumsy attempts; and yet I am too honest to like the thought of being at the mercy of my own servants when I have them."

"And too honest not to be anxious to fulfil your part of the matrimonial contract, to spend rightly what is given you to spend when your times comes, I think," Penelope said, drawn now, in spite of herself, to the outspoken girl.

"You will perhaps wonder," she went on, "why I stipulate that only those who are brides in prospective should be eligible for admittance here. Well, it is partly because I think that only love is motive-power strong enough to make any service happy, also partly because I do not wish to have any learners here who are drawn either from curiosity or in search of a new craze. I am not minded to 'cast my pearls before swine,' you see," she added laughingly.

Then, more seriously again, "But there is such a high ideal before all who have home-creating in their hands; if we could only keep it always before us how much more we might attain to. If you will allow me, I should like to read you some words of Ruskin's that have always been as an inspiration to me," and, rising, she went to a cabinet and took down one of the well-worn green volumes, then,

returning to her seat, found the place and read—

"He says, *à propos* of marriage, first, 'Do you not feel that marriage—when it is marriage at all—is only the seal which marks the vowed transition of temporary into untiring service, of fitful into unchanging or eternal love?' Then again—'The man in his rough work in the open world must encounter all peril and trial; to him, therefore, must be the failure, the offence, the inevitable error; often he must be wounded or subdued, often misled, and always hardened. But he guards the woman from all this; within his house, unless she herself has sought it, need enter no danger, no temptation, no cause of offence. This is the true nature of home—the place of peace; the shelter, not only from all injury but from all terror, doubt and division. In so far as it is not this it is not home.'

"Then he gives us a lovely picture—'And wherever a true wife comes this home is always round her. The stars only may be over her head, the glow-worm in the night cold grass be the only fire at her foot, but home is yet wherever she is, and for a noble woman it stretches far round her, shedding its quiet light for those who else were homeless. This, then, I believe to be the woman's true place and power. But do you not see that, to fulfil this, she must—in so far as one can use such terms of a human creature—be incapable of error? So far as she rules, all must be right, or nothing is wise, infinitely variable, because infinitely applicable.'

"There, that is my inspiration, will you make it yours?" Penelope said wistfully as she closed the book.

Timid Alice slipped a hand into one of hers, and said—

"How pleased my John would be if he could hear you; he is so wise himself, I fear he will leave me far behind."

Penelope gave the little hand a reassuring pressure.

"I think 'John' has had wisdom enough to see 'possibilities,'" she said, nodding her head sagely. Love was evidently the powerful factor prompting this gentle soul, as *amour propre* appeared to actuate the stronger character of Madeleine Trevor; but of the latter it was not a short acquaintance that would reveal the best side.

"Now if you have finished tea," she said presently, "I will show you your rooms, and after you have unpacked a little you shall see over the house; this first evening we must devote to making acquaintance with each other and with everything."

In the hall their boxes stood waiting to be carried up. Madeleine wondered whether she was also expected to "give a hand" here. She was not long left in doubt.

"We will take these up with us, it is not very far," Penelope said, and put her hand to the heaviest one; so there was nothing for it but for Madeleine to do likewise, and Alice carried the smaller boxes.

Truly it was not far, and the flight of broad, low stairs made easy passage, but Madeleine's colour came and went, and only pride kept her from panting with the unaccustomed exertion; to Penelope it was apparently quite a matter of course that she should thus wait upon herself.

Arrived upstairs, however, the charm of the quaint old dwelling, the square, low landing which looked over oaken balustrades into the hall below, the many doors all opening on to this landing, and at the farther end of it the lovely stained window showing the noble knights of St. Hild receiving their royal commission, the beauty of the whole provoked them to outspoken admiration at once.

Though little of the original furnishing had been altered, Penelope had put fresh, dainty hangings in each room, and made them as homelike as possible; every window looked out over the broad bay, and the glorious prospect, ever changing, never quite the same, was of itself a delight and a study to town-bred souls.

"Oh, I shall love this place!" Alice exclaimed impulsively; and Madeleine, who had walked straight to the window after setting down her burden, turned to Penelope a face that shone with quite another look, the momentary irritation forgotten in the sublime breadth of nature, whose largeness always shames our human littleness.

"That is education enough for me!" she said.

Penelope smiled.

"But the higher includes the lower as surely as the greater includes the less," she answered; then pointing out a few of the arrangements made for their comfort she left them together to unpack and arrange their belongings and themselves.

"What do you think of her?" Alice asked, more pointedly than grammatically; she looked up to Madeleine, accounting her a better judge of character than herself, although in reality she was not. But Madeleine's heart had been captured this time in spite of the boxes.

"She reminds me of Wordsworth's lines, you know them—

"A countenance in which did meet  
Sweet records, promises as sweet,"

and all the rest too. I wish I might grow like her."

Then she laughed as she wrestled with the refractory luggage-straps.

"That is the first time I have felt the weight of my own box," she said; "if I had known I should have to carry it myself I might have made it lighter."

"Don't you think though that that was purposely planned, part of the 'training'?" Alice asked.

"You're a sharp little thing; I do believe you are right, and if so I was nicely caught," was the answer; but evidently the lesson was to be taken in good part.

Hearing them descend the stairs soon afterwards, Penelope met them, ready to act as cicerone.

"First, come and see the kitchen," she said; "I always say that the kitchen is the heart of the house, so it is the right place to start from."

Truly in this case it was not undeserving of the title; broad, low-ceiled, stored with many cupboards and shelves, narrow casesments shrouded in greenery, giving refreshing glimpses of sea beyond, the old-fashioned dresser and table, vying with one another for

whiteness, a grandmotherly rug, covering the stone-flags near the hearth, and, crowning touch of all, the sweetest grandmotherly figure knitting in the "ingle-nook," she whom Penelope introduced as "My nurse, Janet, and our guardian angel."

Certain modern improvements had been added to the old-fashioned fittings, notably an oil cooking-stove, as being a most likely instrument to find its way into the newer homes by-and-by, and certain newer makes of pots and pans, equally effective in operation, but less laborious to keep in good condition than the solid copper vessels that ornamented the walls.

This department duly criticised, they visited pantry and larder, store-room, both "dry" and "cool," then on to the dairy, the wash-house, tool-house, greenhouse, poultry-pen, even the piggery!

Everything was new and delightful to the town-bred girls, as everything was indeed worthy of their praise; but when it came to exploring the lovely old garden—the pride of the Haven and of its owners—their delight was beyond expression. To Penelope herself, lover of it as she was, their admiration touched and pleased her very soul; and when they came upon the bent figure of old Silas, striving to make the most of the fast-fading daylight, she introduced her two friends to him without hesitation. Although Silas resented the thought that amateurs' hands were to touch his beloved garden, even but a little, he could not but moderate his gruff voice when answering their respectful questions.

"Silas wears a rough coat, but has a warm heart beneath it," Penelope said, after they had bidden him good-night; "he will not mind your working with him, if you defer to all his theories; and really, whether his theories are 'sound' according to science or no, they invariably turn out successfully, for he is a veritable son of the soil."

The evening was fast merging into mellow moonlight, and the temptation to linger long in this sheltered garden was strong; but the housekeeper had the care of her dwelling on her mind, so they somewhat reluctantly returned indoors. When lamps had been lighted everywhere, a fresh log thrown on to the fire, the suggestion that supper might be acceptable did not seem out of place; sea-borne air had quickened their appetites, although, till now, they had not given heed to them.

The first lesson of self-helpfulness had taken sufficient hold to cause them eagerly to offer their aid, and a supper-table was soon laid in the dining-room, over which they lingered somewhat long this first evening, for Penelope unfolded to them some of the details of her plan of work, and showed herself ready also to accept any suggestions they might make with regard to it, though it must be owned the latter were few.

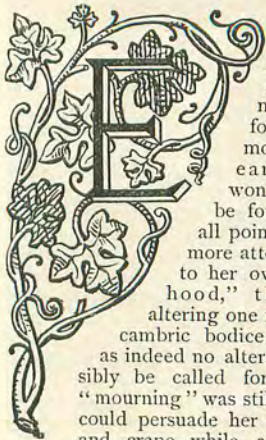
"We will start fresh to-morrow morning, then," she said, when bidding them good-night at the door of their rooms; "to-morrows are always full of possibilities, but I think ours will seem doubly so."

L. H. YATES.

*To be continued.*)



## THE GIRL-BRIDES OF HILD'S HAVEN.



## CHAPTER III.

EARLY as she generally was, the next morning found Penelope moving about even earlier than her wont; she wished to be found prepared at all points, so had given more attention than usual to her own "outer ladyhood," though without altering one item in the fresh cambric bodice and trim skirt, as indeed no alteration could possibly be called for. Though her "mourning" was still heavy, nothing could persuade her to wear woollen and crape while about household tasks; the father, who had found in her the very light of his eyes, would have been the first to grieve had he seen her in such sad garb, and, feeling this, she had worn white whenever possible to do so.

It pleased her greatly when the girls came down to find them also attired in the same simple, cleanly fashion; and, though she made no remark then, it was a very reassuring beginning. Breakfast was laid in the morning-room—so called because its window, facing towards the rising sun, was always brightened whenever the east was illumined, and this was the room where much of the household work was done, where the linen and fine china were kept, and where work-baskets and account-books found their right place.

The breakfast had been prepared by Penelope's own hands, with Janet's help, this morning, but in the future this also would be the duty of whosoever should be responsible for the commissariat.

"Until there are more of us, I think it will be as well for us to go through most of the housework all together; when we are more numerous it might be better to separate it into departments, making those who have been learning the longer time, aids in teaching the newer comers," she said; then added, "Do you wish me to assume that you are quite ignorant of all household work, and wishful of learning it *à fond*, or am I to act as reviser and corrector of your mistakes, if you make them, when left to do as you think well?"

Alice said quickly, "Believe me to be utterly and entirely ignorant. I should like it much better, and indeed I think the little I do know will need to be learnt right over again." And Madeleine, though less outspoken, confessed frankly that what knowledge she might have acquired, had "been picked up" at random, so was little likely to be trustworthy.

Penelope smiled. "I want to start fair, you see," she said, "so it is best to make sure of the ground. So now that we have finished breakfast, the first thing will be to clear it away; we will put away all food first, please—the bread into its pan in the larder, butter into the dish that holds the rest, so with marmalade, etc., that these fancy dishes may be washed."

"What will you do with this boiled egg that has not been touched?" asked one of the girls.

"If re-boiled, it can be used to-morrow as it is, and be the same as if freshly done, or I could boil it hard, supposing I wanted it for use in a salad, or to make over," she was answered.

"Soiled things we will carry on to the

kitchen-table, and wash them up at once," Penelope directed.

"How funny it seems to do these things for oneself! One is so used to ringing the bell, and seeing things disappear or come at a call; but still I think it will be great fun," said Alice merrily, and, though she went about the "fun" in a rather helpless and bewildered fashion, it was plain that womanly instincts were strong within her, and that, with training, "John" would find he had a devoted helpmeet.

The teacher brought out a large enamelled bowl, and set it on the kitchen-table. "Plenty of really hot water, a little—a very little—soda, a tiny bit of soap, a fine tea-cloth, and a coarser rubber for saucapans and knives, etc., quick washing, and no standing to drain," she said briskly, herself proceeding to wash the china, leaving them to use the towels.

"Are you not afraid of spoiling your hands?" Madeleine asked. She shrank inwardly at the thought of putting her own hands into that bowl, although determined to shirk no part of any task.

"A little care is of course needed, but with due precautions, there need be no fear; the soda softens the water which, without it, is certainly apt to be hard and roughening; then for dishes that need rubbing with a dishcloth, I have this dear little mop with a wooden handle, so that you see I am not obliged to put my whole hand into the water, as servants think it needful to do."

"It is a pleasure to use saucapans like these, as clean outside as they are in," Alice said, handling them.

"A little common sand, or, what is still better, powdered pumice-stone, will keep every saucapan smooth and clean, and it is easy to keep a little box handy containing that, and a morsel of flannel ready for use," Penelope said; then—"There, that is soon done, you see, and I see nothing of which to make a bugbear, as 'washing up' is generally thought to be; but when these things are put back into their places, we will go upstairs and set our bedrooms straight for the day. Janet, you dear old soul, there is nothing for you to do to-day but watch over the fire that it does not go down, and knit as long as you please—you are to be the 'lady' among us now!"

"Faix then, Miss Pen, it goes agen the grain of me to see you and these leddies doin' of common work," Janet said, a little shade of a grumble at the new order distinctly shown in her tone.

"But we believe there is no such thing as 'common work,' Janet, therefore we do not feel degraded by anything; we will come to you for advice though sometimes, so you need not feel you are quite dethroned,"—this in the coaxing way which always won over poor old Janet's objections. Then to the girls—

"Now let us away upstairs; I think it is a good plan to get bedrooms done first, then to finish off with stairs, hall, and lower rooms afterwards, except it may be on the days when a special cleaning of any room is intended, then of course one would see that the downstairs rooms were straight first.

"I always make a practice of putting my bed to air, separating and spreading out sheets and bedding in the sun, and throwing up both windows before leaving the room in the morning. It is quite two or three hours before I am ready to come back to it again, and then I can make the bed, dust, and put away all things, leaving it right for the day. One reason why the work in bedrooms is disagreeable is the want of thought on the part of those who have slept in them in these sort of

ways, if you understand me. I don't think anyone has any right to leave to a servant the airing of their sleeping-room; it is such a simple matter to open a window, and the sooner bad air escapes from a house, the better for all in it."

Her hearers agreed, and Madeleine inwardly blessed the good fairy who had given her the hint to turn back to her room and do these things this morning; she had been accustomed to leaving her maid to perform such offices, counting them as part of her "duty."

"Many hands make light work," and the saying seemed to hold true, as each one doing her own share, the rooms were soon restored to their wonted freshness and order. By one consent they paused on the landing to look out at the lovely view of the Haven, its waters sparkling in the morning sun.

"See," said Penelope, "the boats are setting out, they are off for a three days' 'catch.' I love to watch them go, one by one, round the bend. See how the north wind fills out the sails, and how the sun brightens up the brown ones to a lovely russet shade. If your eyes are as keen as mine, you can see how some of the women are gathered at the far end of the quay; it is an every day occurrence, this going out of the boats, but it never loses its interest to them. There is always the possibility that some may never return, and though such-like griefs have been comparatively few in the Haven, still they have been known. I always feel to hear and echo old Mollie's prayer—she is standing now at the far point, to the right—'God speed the brave lads, and bring them safe home!'"

"Do you know much of the fisher-people?" asked Madeleine of Penelope.

"Know them? Why, every one, to be sure; haven't I been in and out among them ever since I was born? Oh, yes, and I mean that you shall know them too; I believe they are taking a keen interest in this plan of mine, and will be eager to see 'the new ladies,' as I overheard the children calling you. Yes, and if it doesn't succeed, they will know all about it too," she added more soberly. "And now to work again."

There were fires to be relaid in drawing- and dining-rooms, and a thorough dusting—"a taking-up of the dust, not a dispersing of it," as she laughingly explained was too often the case with unskilled workers.

"I think that it is quite sufficient to sweep well once a week in every room, taking them in rotation, and cleansing them thoroughly, furniture and all then; to sweep oftener means raising dust which, though you may not see it, rises into the air and settles again on walls and furniture, and in all but smoky town-houses the dirt that gathers day by day is not great enough to necessitate such vigorous treatment."

"Fires make a deal of dust though, don't they?" Alice asked.

"Undoubtedly, but there is more than one way of laying a fire, and the right and careful way will prevent all unnecessary dust. As I have to stoop down and get close to it, I like to protect my hair, and you will soon be glad to follow my example in this, I think," and she drew out from a drawer a cunning little Dutch cap which completely covered her hair when it was put on. With the cap there lay also a pair of old driving gloves and a "pinafore."

"Quite an equipment!" Madeleine said merrily, but taking note to pursue the same plan herself for the future.

This first morning they watched Penelope's operations rather than did much themselves, as indeed she desired they should.

Holding a sheet of newspaper before the grate in order that the draught it made might cause the dust to be taken up the chimney, she gently cleared the ashes out, then with her gloved hand picked out the larger cinders to be put back again—"as they light much more easily than fresh coal," she said. The paper placed at the bottom was lightly squeezed together, then the sticks crossed and re-crossed above it, the cinders with a few fresh "cobblestones" over them.

"It would be a very sulky fire that would refuse to burn after that," said Alice.

The hearth-brush and shovel next came into requisition, and then a soft black rag gave a final rubbing and polishing to the grate and fire-irons, while a damp washleather made the tiles shine again.

"There, you see, that is not such a formidable affair after all, is it?" said the demonstrator, rising and drawing off her gloves. "Now I will leave you to finish this room while I do the same in the next."

Half-an-hour's work saw these rooms and the hall done for the day, then they were free to consider "the main work of the day," as Penelope called it; "these are only the preliminaries, you see."

"Now as neither laundry nor bakery claim our attention, and we have nothing in the dairy to do yet awhile, I propose that the remaining two hours before lunch be filled up in the garden; shall we seek out Silas and ask whereabouts we may begin, for I want us to have at least two hours' garden-work every day?"

"If I were only a boy I should say hurrah!" said Alice delightedly. "What a joy to be allowed to do anything in that lovely garden!"

"But don't forget that it is to be not merely play-work," said Penelope warningly; "that is why it will be well that we should keep to those parts which are likely to be of real use to you when you have suburban or town gardens of your own to manage. The whole

subject of gardening is so fascinating, but if one attempts it all it means—and deserves to mean—the devotion of all one's time and energy. The branches that will chiefly concern us now, I think, will be potting and planting, seed sowing, training and pruning of bushes and small trees, weeding and trimming, and a little general greenhouse work."

"And what about fruit-picking?" suggested Alice, a little mischievously.

"Ah, well, that is of course understood without saying, only I think it belongs more truly to our housewifery department than to the gardening."

Old Silas, though gruff as ever, proved to be in an amiable mood this morning, and he willingly allowed them to sow the peas and beans in the drills he was busy making; then when those had been raked over, there were carnations to stake and tie up, and some borders to prepare for the planting out of geraniums and foliage plants a little later on.

Penelope pointed to the onion bed, already thick with weeds.

"If either of you wish for a sun-bath, try the effect of weeding that for half a day; it is most wholesome I can assure you! Silas, why is it that weeds grow thicker where onions are than anywhere else?"

Silas scratched his head, but he did not "rise" to the point.

"I dunno as they do, missie," he said. "I find the weeds—I call 'em tares—has a special faculty of growing everywhere. I conclude as it's a dispensation o' Providence, so I don't grumble, though it's true they aire trying at times."

"You don't give them much chance of trying you, however, Silas," Alice said sweetly, giving an appreciative glance around at the exquisite order of the beds.

"Silas never allowed grass to grow under his feet," Penelope explained. She loved to give this bristling old hedgehog a poke now and then.

"I could imagine Sir Walter Scott delighting in that old man," said Madeleine when their work took them out of earshot. "Is he a specimen of your Haven folk?"

"Scarcely a specimen so much as a type," Penelope replied; "every single soul among them has its own individuality, it seems to me, though perhaps I accentuate their peculiarities because I love them all the more for possessing them; but at any rate human nature has few conventional trappings here."

"You quite excite my interest in them, for I, too, have a *penchant* for 'characters,' perhaps because my world has been bounded and governed entirely by conventionality," said Madeleine.

"Then I think you will find my poorer friends—though they are apt to appear rough at first—prove to you as helpful and bracing mentally as the Haven breezes will be to you physically; we will go down this afternoon and make acquaintance with some of them."

Time passed quickly as they chatted and worked, and ere the two hours had passed their sharpened appetites caused them to think it might be well to investigate the larder with a view to luncheon. But old Janet had forestalled them; she was not minded to sit in a chair all day, she said, so had laid a white cloth on the dining-table and spread out cold meat and fruit, adding baked potatoes and some clotted cream of her own turning. It had evidently pleased her soul to do this, and they were all heartily pleased to recompense her by doing justice to the tempting fare.

When lunch had been cleared away an hour's quiet rest for the writing of letters or reading was prescribed; after that they might exercise their faculties of curiosity or sympathy both, if so disposed; there was no hard-and-fast rule to bind them, this "school" having a variety of purposes to fulfil in its teaching.

(To be continued.)



MAN AND WOMAN.

MAN.

GOD gave the man the titles of chief, of governor and defender of the family. It was in order to enable him to render his family happy, both by the product of his labour and the activity of his protection, that He has given him a tall, proper shape, a majestic countenance, a robust constitution, and a vivacity that cannot endure being idle. It is for the same reason that the amusements of his infancy have been tumultuous and noisy. When manhood has matured his desires, and conveyed order into his ideas he assumes a sedate look. But pray take note of him in his apparent state of inaction. A secret fire devours him. He is hatching some project, I'll warrant him, if he is not even already about the execution of it. He must needs be active without; he will look after everything, see what passes, and how everyone behaves about him; and is resolved to preserve plenty and security in his abode, if he can. He sometimes repairs the disorders of seasons, and sometimes remedies the decay of his buildings. If he happens to interrupt his works by any diversions, the most sedentary are seldom to his liking. He will prefer

running or coursing, playing at quoits or tennis, hunting or fishing. His pleasures are so many exercises. Nothing but action can strengthen and make him alive. He resembles those vigorous plants that perish in the shade and never thrive but in the open air. All his inclinations and his whole character, by their keeping him in this wholesome state of agility, enable him to make his estate and his family prosper, either by the means of lawful defence or the perseverance of a profitable labour.—*From the French, 1748.*

WOMAN.

ALTHOUGH woman has, in her quality of a rational creature, a right to the domain of the earth equal to that of her husband, she is nevertheless second in rank in the family. She is submitted to her husband, she is his help-mate but it is a help like himself. She is dignified in her family both by her personal right and by the power she holds from her husband. But she has not received the same measure of strength and activity. This is a wise precaution of Providence who aimed at confining her within the circle of lesser cares and at making her choose for her portion domestic operations, whilst the husband should

watch and be active without doors. It was in order to render her assistance, always lovely to the husband, and her presence ever desirable to the whole family that God has endowed her with graces and a mild disposition. She is obeyed because she pleases and because she is so much loved and esteemed. The husband has a more commanding tone, but the authority of the wife is neither less beneficial nor less efficacious. Beauty and a tender constitution, which renders the wife naturally fond of retirement and sedentary yet excuse her from none of the hardest labours. She would think herself dishonoured by charms that should make her an idol deprived of the use of arms and legs, or an insipid divinity always nestling in her shrine and waiting for the incense and homage of her adorers. Although the good order and the neatness and peace causes to reign all her house over be blessings very desirable in themselves, yet she desires above all things, that after the labours of the day he shall find rest and happiness at home. She is resolved that he shall always find tranquillity and mirth as well as order in their habitation. She knows no surer means to make him fond of his own home.—*From the French, 1748.*

## MY BROTHER CHARLIE.

YES, I can see my brother now,  
The bonny lad with eyes of grey,  
Where kindness did ever play;  
How broad and high his studious brow!

His thoughts of this and heavenly life  
Together blent, for he could see  
Where everything was dark to me;  
I fretted in a selfish strife.

At twenty-one his spirit grew  
So radiant with the warmth of love  
That jealous angel-fingers wove  
A shroud that was of heavenly hue.

But ere they bore him hence away  
From the fair land where he sojourned,  
On mother's brow and mine were burned  
Such kisses as remain for aye!

Had he but lived he might be dead  
On barren wealth this world supplies;  
But Charlie—he was spirit-wise,  
And followed where his kindred led!



## THE GIRL-BRIDES OF HILD'S HAVEN.

## CHAPTER IV.

THE first "soft" day—as north-country people term the rainy mist that enwraps the hills and shuts in the valleys, soaking and drenching the wanderer abroad—the girls gladly agreed to Penelope's suggestion that they should devote its morning hours to kitchen work, and the after-

noon to the making-up of the fine table-linen which Madeleine had brought with her.

The "setting" and baking of bread, and the mixing and baking of cakes was the programme in her mind, and if time permitted they were to try their 'prentice hands on the polishing of tins and utensils; no chance for *ennui* to claim them as its prey in spite of depressing weather. So to the kitchen they repaired as soon as bed-rooms had been put in order; the bright fire in the range looked welcome and inviting now that all without was so chilly.

Penelope directed them where to find the bags of flour and other "dry" stores, and herself brought out the white wooden kneading-trough, the bowls and pastry-board. Big white aprons were donned, and deep linen cuffs; altogether the "preparations betokened very serious business," Alice laughingly declared.

"You are right, there is nothing more serious than bread-baking," the teacher averred. "The first thing we have to do is to 'set' the sponge, when we have weighed the right quantity of flour; to-day we will make up a stone."

"That is fourteen pounds, isn't it?"

"If we remember our tables aright it is; I want you to notice the difference between these two qualities of flour; this one which I

keep for pastry and cakes you will see is whiter and drier, also lighter than this other quality called 'households'; that has a slightly yellow tinge and is heavier, also if I lightly squeeze a handful together it keeps its shape a moment, as you see."

"Can you tell by its appearance whether flour is good or indifferent? I don't say bad, because I suppose one could soon detect bad flour," Madeleine asked.

"Appearances go a great way, but one must also judge by the feel of the flour, and not a little by its odour. Stale flour, or that which has been kept in a damp place will smell mouldy or fusty, and it will also be damp to the touch and hold together if pressed at all; but the whitest and driest is not necessarily the best and wholesomest, indeed 'households' is far more nutritious than fine pastry flour, and by its nature it is better adapted for bread-making. New flour, too, never bakes so well as that which has been kept in store awhile, provided that the store cupboard is dry and the bags are kept from the air. But now give me your attention while I set this sponge."

While they watched, Penelope emptied the contents of one bag of flour into the trough, then worked a hollow place in the middle with her fist. The fresh frothing yeast which had been brought in that morning stood near, and taking a breakfastcupful of it she poured this into the hollow place, and with a wooden spoon mixed that with about half as much lukewarm milk and a little flour until a soft batter was formed, then the sponge was pronounced finished, and lightly covered over it was left to work its will for half-an-hour.

"While that is rising let us prepare the mixture for a cake, as that can be both made and baked while the bread is in operation. What kind of cake do you wish to make first? though allow me to suggest that you should choose a simple one for a beginning."

"Something that is not procurable in shops," Alice said quickly, "one gets so tired of the same round of baker's and confectioner's articles."

"Well, I think we can hardly do better for a beginning than take the simple mixture

which makes either a plain light cake of the Madeira type, or when baked in shallow tins, small fancy shapes, or rings, may be variously ornamented, filled with creams or preserves, and yield quite a choice for an afternoon tea-table."

The pupils agreed to this with alacrity.

"Supposing then this time we bake our mixture after we have made it in these two round shallow tins, then make a 'jelly-cake' of it: if you will pass me those two white bowls, Madeleine, I will weigh into one six ounces of the finest flour, two ounces of rice-flour, and half an ounce of baking-powder, rubbing these all together. Into the other basin I put two ounces of fresh butter, with three ounces of sugar, and a small pinch of salt, also a drop or two of almond or vanilla flavouring, and then beat until a cream is formed. To the butter I shall add the beaten yolks of these two eggs, and a little milk, then, having the whites beaten to a froth in a separate basin, I shall add them alternately with handfuls of the flour, beating all the time until the whole is mixed in."

Working together, one beating the eggs while another rubbed the flour, and Penelope herself took the butter in hand and mixed the other parts together, the cake rapidly developed; it was poured into the two tins which, previously buttered, stood ready at hand, then the oven received it for its baking and it was time to turn back for the bread.

Penelope was greatly pleased to find the sponge was well-risen and quite ready for use. "I was afraid I had left it rather too long," she said.

"Is it possible, then, for it to rise too much?"

"Most certainly. If either the sponge or the dough are left beyond a certain stage, the fermentation which is engendered by their continued 'rising' turns the dough sour after it is baked. You know what causes the fermentation, do you not?"

"The presence of carbonic acid gas, is it not?"

"Yes; and this up to the right moment serves a useful purpose, past that time it degenerates and the bread is unfit for food,

although its very light appearance deceives many people.

"And now comes the most serious part of our operation, the kneading of the dough. Will you fill me that quart jug with water, Alice, please? As it must be lukewarm you had better add a little boiling water from the kettle to the cold, and I think it is well to mix the salt with the water instead of rubbing it into the flour, one is more sure of having it well incorporated; so I will get you to stir in a teaspoonful. Thank you, that will be about the right quantity of water as nearly as I can judge at present, but it is easy to add a little more if it seems to be required; now I will proceed to make the dough.

"My way, you see, is to stir up the sponge, the water, and as much flour as I can until I feel it is firm enough to take hold of with my hand, then I begin to knead, using both hands, at the same time drawing the dough from the bottom of the pan on the further side towards me, first on the right, then on the left. You see it gradually becomes a ball and begins to look spongy, indeed you can almost see air-bubbles. Only practice will show you exactly the right consistency, as if the dough is too soft the bread will be spongy and full of holes; if, on the contrary, it is too stiff the bread will be dry and will not rise as much as it ought to do."

"Isn't it very tiring?" one of them asked; she admired the vigorous play of Penelope's white wrists and arms, for the latter never paused in her occupation though her tongue was going at the same time.

She smiled for answer.

"It is rather tiring at first, but it is capital exercise, and one knows it must be done; the reward comes when the loaves turn out shapely, well-risen, and cut firm right through. Will one of you look how our cake is behaving in the oven, please?"

Madeleine did so and found it almost ready to be withdrawn, but a few moments more were prescribed by the head-cook, so she returned to the congenial task of watching the kneading.

"There, now I think that will be very unamiable dough if it refuses to rise to-day," she said at last, straightening her back, and rubbing her hands through flour, sprinkling a little lightly over the surface of the springy ball of dough, then covering it with a cloth and setting the pan in a warm corner of the hearth.

"How long will it take to rise? Well, between two and three hours I daresay. When the dough is set in the morning I expect to bake in the early afternoon; but bakers who set their dough overnight would give it longer time, and a rather cooler temperature. But now I am sure that cake is done."

"Done to a turn," Janet said as she drew aside to let them take it out of the oven; "that's one of your own pet teacakes, eh, Miss Pen?"

"And one of yours too, Janet," Penelope answered slyly. "I wonder if you'll allow me to use your apricot jelly for its 'filling'; yes? Ah, now we shall have a lovely cake for our tea, girls! I am going to split this in half, and then I shall spread the lower half with jelly a quarter of an inch thick—oh yes, it doesn't do to stint yourself when you are having a good thing, so don't look so shocked Janet! When I have replaced the upper half I shall spread that with jelly also, only very sparingly, then I beat up the white of an egg and icing sugar enough to make a thick cream, and cover the surface of the cake with that, sprinkling the top with shred angelica, sliced candied peel, or any candied fruit I happen to have at hand, then set the cake at the oven door until the icing is firm. This same cake is delicious if filled with the mixture we used for lemon

cheese-cakes, then iced and sprinkled with cocoanut or chopped pistachio nuts; but as I said before, it is capable of infinite variations, and your fancy may suggest many to you which I should not think of."

They were about to consider the mysteries of a soup that was to be compounded with vegetable marrows for chief ingredients, having the cake satisfactorily finished, and the bread "off their minds" for the present, when a knock at the door claimed attention.

Opening it, a little fisher-lad with cap in hand came into view; the rain clung to his jersey and matted his curly head, but the face, which was rosy with the stiff uphill climbing against wind and wet, had a sad look about mouth and eyes.

"In trouble, Robbie?" Penelope asked; "is it mother again?"

"Yes, and she be main bad this time, an' Polly too; yer see the boats hev'n't come in yet, and she don't sleep o' night watchin' for 'em, and she don't eat nothin', and then this mornin' she fell doon, ah thought she were dead sure, and Polly too, but she come round after a while, an' she went to bed cos' Bibby Flower said she was to, but she kep' wishing Miss Pen would pass by, so I up an' said I'd fetch her. Yer'll come?"

"Of course I will come, Robbie; but you must have something to eat while I get a few things together that I know your mother and Polly will like, and these ladies will perhaps come with me, so between us we will cheer up the poor mother."

Robbie's eyes brightened when a plate of buns was set before him and he was bidden to help himself. Halfway through one he stopped—

"The little 'uns be hungrier nor me. Guess I might leave some for 'em," he said tentatively.

"Eat as many as you want, Robbie. I shall not forget the little ones," Penelope said with a knowing smile. She was used to Robbie's mode of begging, but the basket she had reached down was being rapidly filled with many good things. Janet, at her bidding, took a key and trotted off, returning after a while with a dark dusty bottle, and this was stowed away also, but not before the boy's sharp eyes had seen it.

"For Poll?" he asked eagerly, and nodded with satisfaction when reassured; evidently it was not the first of its kind that Polly had received.

Then they all donned waterproofs, and stoutly shod, trooped off with laden hands, Robbie, warmed and fed, leading the van.

On the way down to the Haven, Madeleine, who had her suspicions, questioned Penelope as to the genuineness of this case.

"It is quite genuine," was the reply; "it is no uncommon thing for many of these families to reach actual starvation if the boats are delayed much beyond the usual time. In this particular cottage you will find there is a sickly girl; they are devoted to her, and she is the last to feel actual want, but sometimes the wolf at the door has no mercy even for her; but they know they need never really lack if they will but let me hear. I have not been so much among them of late, you see."

The cottage which they were bound for was one of the farthest removed; it stood by itself among its patches of potatoes and maize, but though clean, it bore unmistakable signs of the depredations made by the wolf.

The cry of delight from the squad of little children about the door was somewhat subdued by the sight of strangers, but the shrill voice of the invalid inside was all the more pathetic.

"'Tis Miss Pen, mother; I said as she was sure to come!"

The mother took a few steps forward to

greet the new-comers, but weakness almost caused her to fall again. Penelope gently led her by the arm and took her back to her chair.

"You've been worrying again, Nancy, and you ought to have sent me word long before," she said, chiding her gently, then poured out some of the wine she had brought and bade her drink. When the cup was emptied, it was refilled, and Alice carried it with some food to the sick girl, who ate and drank ravenously, feasting her eyes the while upon the face and figure of the bearer. Madeleine had set herself to satisfy the wants of the younger band, and very soon the baskets were emptied of their contents, but gladness was showing its face among them again.

"Ah allus said Miss Pen 'ud make it all right," Robbie was heard to say in an undertone, watching while she fanned the fire into life again, and then running at her bidding to fetch in more wood from the stores. Various other things he was to bring with him also that the bare cupboards might be furnished before they left.

"We are baking to-day," she said to Nancy, "so be sure you send Robbie up this evening and he shall bring some loaves back with him;" then with a sly look at Madeleine and Alice she added laughingly, "That will give you the opportunity to put my lesson to a practical test sooner than you thought for, as one or both of you will have to make another baking to-morrow."

Mindful that the bread they had left would be requiring their attention they did not linger in the cottage, nor did they stay on the cliff although the look out to sea was enticing enough in spite of the rain-clouds.

"I could fancy I saw the boats just coming over the horizon line, but these days are deceptive, I won't rouse Nancy's hopes until I am sure," Penelope said, hesitating a little. Turning her head just before they left the last hill, however, her eyes were convinced this time, the specks on the horizon had grown to be substantial enough.

She sent a ringing shout down the cliff which brought not Nancy only but her children and neighbours to the cottage doors; they understood in a moment, and in an incredibly short time the cliff-top was alive with eager faces.

The girls ran on, feeling glad themselves to leave gladness and rejoicing behind; from the windows of the Grey House they could watch the incoming of the boats, themselves unseen. The touch that had brought their kinship with the sorrows and anxieties of real poverty for the first time to these two to whom such kinship had before meant only a name, made them quite enthusiastic for once, and as they chatted over their luncheon Penelope enlightened them on many points.

But she brought them down from the clouds at last with the observation that if their bread went sour this day it would be a calamity for certain folk in the Haven, and so they repaired to the kitchen to find that Janet had not been induced to forget her part of the contract but, on the contrary, had a bright fire and a hot oven ready waiting for them.

Not until the neatly-shaped loaves in their tins were lining the oven shelf did Penelope allow them to attend to aught else, but when the door was closed and the kitchen made straight they went to their sewing and talking, busy tongues keeping time to busy fingers.

When Robbie returned at sunset his basket was supplied with crisp brown loaves, "creditable alike to teacher and scholars," Penelope smilingly declared, but the "scholars" had the grace to disclaim any credit being laid to their door, although they both prophesied that to-morrow's results would alter the case.

L. H. YATES.

(To be continued.)



flush upon her face, "a doctor who is what Norah calls 'a good man'—and we know what she means—is I think generally a *very* good one. For it's awfully hard to go through all that we have to do, and keep our faith pure and unshaken. It means a lot of hard fighting to keep it at all; but if one does get through that—I don't think one would ever lose it again!"

Her sisters looked at her, but made no direct reply. Some intuition told them that Gipsy spoke with a personal meaning, and they half understood her; but it was not a matter to be openly dis-

cussed between them now. Nobody could have lived in that house through the winter without being aware that some struggle had been going on in Gipsy's mind. She was so much graver, more thoughtful, more abstracted than of old, and her bright flashes of merriment were fewer and less ready. Hard work and examinations might account for much; but there had been more than could be altogether set down to that score. So they could read between the lines when she spoke now.

Freda broke the silence by saying with a smile and a sigh—

"I shall make a fine thing out of 'A marriage in high life' or 'The wedding of Viscountess Woodmayne'—only I suppose she won't be Viscountess Woodmayne till she *is* married! how's that, umpire? But somehow I don't quite like the notion of it. I suppose one ought to be glad, and if she likes it we shall. But it seems unnatural somehow. I'd rather have seen her plain Mrs. Salisbury—only I suppose Guinivere could never under any circumstances be accounted plain!" and Freda ended her sentence with a laugh.

(To be continued.)

## THE GIRL-BRIDES OF HILD'S HAVEN.

### CHAPTER V.



UT in the orchard this bright summer-morning there is a flutter of dazzling white linen, for the laundry department is in full swing, and the girls are busy carry-

ing to and fro their armfuls of sweet-scented garments. Washing-day has no terrors here, it is plain to see; rather they look as though they enjoyed it. Let us take a peep at them, following on the heels of Alice, who has just gathered up a heap of small articles which have been spread

out on the grass to whiten.

"Already dry, you see," she says, "oh, how hot it is in the sun this morning, it makes this place seem quite dark in comparison. Is that machine ready for me to turn, Miss Pen?"

"It is ready, but not for you; you must be content to fold and sprinkle your own share first; you would take all the heavy work and leave all the play part to us, you naughty child, go and sit down awhile;" this from the teacher in playful chiding.

The "machine" referred to is a fine specimen of the combined washer and wringer type, and its barrel-tub has been freshly-packed with a quota of the soiled linen, which by magical result of turning a handle for a few minutes' space causes them to come out spotless as new.

It had been Penelope's original intent to hire a boy for the turning of this, but after a first trial both her pupils scouted the notion, so eager were they to master every branch and every detail; and really with the will to do, there is no difficulty that is insurmountable.

Two windows in this brick-paved room stand wide open, overlooking the paddock where the cows are feeding; the steam from the boiling copper is carried out by the draught, and in spite of the inevitably vaporous atmosphere and the odour of soap, it is undeniably a pleasant place to linger in.

In the tub there are some things which need a little hand-rubbing to ensure their thorough cleansing; a woman stands there

whose acquaintance we have still to make; she is the latest recruit to the company, but not the least important of the number.

Margaret Ferrars is perhaps not exactly a "girl-bride," for she will not see thirty again, but a bride in prospective she certainly is, and it is as a humble learner that she has come to stay for a spell under the roof of the Grey House. Though for many years past she has been a teacher of others, she has come here to learn the simplest domestic arts, with an earnestness and a modest humility that does her infinite credit.

With her Penelope has been a firm friend from the start, and when her own rôle as teacher can be dropped, she looks up to Margaret as to an elder and wiser sister, there is perfect understanding between them. Also she has received confidence which very few other people have won from this quiet soul, and the connection thus formed between them is one that passing years will not be likely to weaken.

It is inevitable that with a common bond, and a common purpose to unite them together, their own personal affairs should sometimes form the topics of conversation as they work; indeed it is never for long that the name of "John" is absent from sweet Alice's lips, and "Percy" and "Robert" loom largely important on the horizon before the other two.

Sometimes they come very near to asking Penelope whether their speculations and fancies concerning her have any foundation, but though she takes the keenest interest in all that concerns them, she does not invite the same for herself, and her own reticence holds curiosity in check. Either there is a hidden sore to keep from view, or else the chords have not yet been touched.

It was characteristic of the type of woman Margaret Ferrars represented that in her own particular case she ran counter to most things which would have been naturally expected of her; highly cultivated on the intellectual side, it was plainly a hardship to her to do the manual labour which part of their training required, yet, though it was easy to see how almost repugnant many things were which to one accustomed to domestic life would be accounted trifles and taken as a matter of course, still it was never by a look or word of complaint that such was shown; indeed, only Penelope was keen-sighted enough to detect the difference of shade, but she ascribed to its right source the motive-power that ennobled every duty. All the same, she said to herself, he must be an exceptional man who had attracted such a woman, and drawn her from the path which she had so plainly marked out for herself, and for which she seemed pre-eminently fitted. Something of the same thought was expressed by Alice

one day when Margaret had mentioned the name of "Robert."

"Is he a professor?" she asked.

"Oh dear no, only a very ordinary man, with the ordinary man's failings and faults, but"—and a low ripple of satisfaction broke out here, "he needs me, and I am glad of it." Yet she did not quite convince her hearers.

About the middle of the morning Janet comes in bearing a tray; she is greeted with acclamations.

"Lemonade, hurrah! oh, and buttered biscuit! Janet, you are a dear soul; I am sure washing does give one an appetite."

"Or a thirst. I could drink all that lemonade myself, Janet; have you any more in reserve? I don't wonder laundry people have a reputation for beer!"

"Oh, Madeleine!" in a chorus of pretended horror.

"Well, I assure you I have been sympathising with Coleridge's 'Ancient Mariner' for the last hour; 'water, water everywhere, but not a drop to drink.' Janet, you have my best thanks."

Janet departed, her face rippling over with smiles and cap-ribbons nodding; this was just one of the little offices which she delighted to perform; she owned to herself, though not to her young mistress, that she had quite "taken to" the young ladies, they had brought a new and vital interest into her quiet life.

After the break, work is resumed again with added vigour; it is a point of honour to get all the actual washing done by lunch-time, and the lines are left filled with the heavier things, that can dry while something else occupies the attention of the workers.

The heaviest part comes at the last undoubtedly, when coppers and tubs have to be emptied and cleaned out, for it is a rule that no place is to be left until it has been put into perfect order, and all tools cleaned and restored to their places; a good rule too, but one which only the lady's mind fully appreciates.

Pipes have been laid to carry off the waste water wherever it was possible to lay them, but no pipe has yet been invented that can scrub down a floor, so it is no use grumbling at the inevitable, and indeed no one attempts it, but dividing the labour among them it is not long before the brick floor shows a spotless surface, tubs are reared up on end to dry, the coppers shine again, and the breeze blows in over a cleared and ordered space, the quondam washerwomen having departed to change their dresses, and rest and refresh themselves.

The next order for them is truly to "rest," by reading, writing, or sewing if they choose,

and after lunch is over each retires to her own sanctum for awhile; the extra labour will do no one harm, if a couple of hours be wisely spent in this way. Afterwards there will be clothes to sprinkle and fold away; the "higher branches of laundry work," as Madeleine terms the clear-starching and ironing processes, come to-morrow.

But this done, and the ever-welcome cup of tea despatched, the company divides; two go to finish the thinning-out of the lettuce-beds while Margaret and Penelope set off to the Haven partly to purchase a few household necessities from the store and partly to investigate a case that calls for the help of the latter at this time. Let us go with them.

Mistress Kirstie Fay gives a solemn nod of recognition to Penelope as the ladies enter her store, and she gravely tenders her hand over the counter; following Penelope's suit Margaret offers her own to be grasped by the other toil-hardened palm, and bears with what composure she can the keen scrutiny of the curious eyes. She has been warned that to make a favourable conquest of Kirstie was to ensure her reception among the Haven folk, for Kirstie rules with a high hand here.

"This is another new face, eh, Miss Pen?" she asks slowly, and one might fancy there is almost a grudge implied in her tone, so zealous a conservative is she.

But Penelope is not disconcerted. "Yes," she says, "Miss Ferrars is a new friend as yet, but one we are all learning to prize very highly, and that is why I have brought her to you, Kirstie; all the Haven must know when a new star shines upon it, and I assure you this is a very bright particular one."

Margaret may smile, but her disclaimers are not listened to; Kirstie lays down the law and with the true touch of grace which no aristocrat could better.

"We aire no' ower-quick at taking in new faces as ye ken, Miss Pen, but gin' it be a frien' ye think muckle o' she maun be frien' o' us too"; then she gave her mind to business.

"Have the herrin' done well for us? No that bad, maybe, but there be many that don't pay their dues, good take or bad; they ken that Kirstie won't hold back when it's the childer that go short, but they ain't so keen to mind if Kirstie goes short hersel' at times."

"Will you tell me, Kirstie, if the Ryans have really tried their best while the 'take' was on; it is useless to go on helping people who will not help themselves, but I know of a good chance for Molly Ryan and perhaps for Katie too, if they could be relied on to use it well."

"Well, Miss Pen, I'll no be saying aught agin the Ryans; Peter did bring me the first bit o' gold as he got in the hairst, but it's true he were not long afore he cam' borrowing it agin, still they hev all the good heart to them, and Molly be right slav'd to do for 'em all; as to Katie I'll no say."

Penelope smiled; the reservation as to Katie Ryan she quite understood, the pretty wayward girl was no favourite here.

Taking leave of Kirstie after relieving her of some of her stock and depositing its equivalent in the coin which the old woman knew how to value, they went on their way to visit the Ryan household.

Peter lounged in the doorway smoking his pipe; he did not see the necessity of removing that though he saluted the ladies respectfully enough and doffed his cap.

"The mither's as usual, mem, an' she'll be main glad to see yer," he replied in response to Penelope's kind query, and led the way into the cottage, which was truly Irish in its lack of order, but a welcome as truly Irish was given to the intruders.

Mistress Ryan sat in the chimney-corner ostensibly occupied in knitting stockings which she said the "childer could never have enough o'"; in truth, to judge by the bare feet of the youngsters that ran about, the supply by no means satisfied the demand.

Molly left her wash-tub in the far corner to greet the visitors, but she quickly returned to it again on the plea that there was "no end" still to do.

"Well now, we have got on faster than you, Molly, for all our washing is done, dried and folded," Penelope said merrily; "and we didn't start at six in the morning either," she added, touching what she knew was the point on which Molly prided herself.

"To think now that leddies like you should do washing at all, at all," the older woman put in; "you shouldna', Miss Pen dear, it's no' fit!"

"And wherefore not?" Miss Pen asked quickly; "is it I that am disgraced by washing or that my washing is a disgrace to me?" but this point they passed over.

"It's all very well for Molly there, she expects to do common work if she be at home or if she be in sarvice, but no' the likes o' you;" and again the head was shaken disapprovingly.

"Now, Mistress Ryan, and you too, Molly, listen to me; I want to tell you once and for all that to me and to the ladies who are with me, there is no such thing as 'common work'; we do everything that has to be done, both in and outside of our house, but we do not look upon any single duty as being of greater honour than another, nor do we feel ourselves less truly ladies after we have done them. I say it is the manner in which a thing is done, not the thing itself which makes it mean or no."

She was listened to attentively enough, but it was evident that they found it difficult to credit her with a practical application of her theory.

Then she turned to Molly particularly.

"Molly, my friend, Miss Ferrars knows of a place which you could fill well if you like, and if you did well it might open the way for

Katie also," then she proceeded to give explanations.

Her listeners gravely weighed the matter, looking from one to the other; they did not think it necessary to thank Miss Pen for her offer, but that she did not expect.

"It sounds as if it might suit yer, Molly," the mother said tentatively.

The girl herself was a little more decided.

"I guess it might suit me for a spell, at any rate I'll try it," she said, "it is though the words sounded ungracious enough, they were not really meant to be so, and after a little talk and a few arrangements settled, the ladies took their leave.

A few yards from the cottage they came upon Katie, but after a swift keen glance of scrutiny she passed them by with a nod.

Margaret Ferrars laughed.

"Really," she said, "it is good for one's pride to come here, I think; do you know I feel I have been so condescended to this afternoon, I am quite humble."

Penelope joined in the laugh, but she said—

"The Haven folk are aristocrats, if pedigree counts for anything, and they are Conservative to an absurd degree, but all the same, they are grand material for a reformer to work upon. I have no fear but that Molly will do us credit, that is if the place 'suits' her, as she says."

"It is well to try and take large views of humanity, I know, but one would hardly expect to learn to do so in a housekeeping-school, yet I believe I have learnt not a little in that way all the same, since being here."

Penelope looked pleased.

"I can show you more yet," she said; "as you yourself say, it is 'learning ever' as long as we live. It would interest you to come with me some afternoon, and listen to old Jamie's criticisms. Jamie depends upon me for his weekly budget of politics and general news, but his way of digesting it is most instructive, you would enjoy it keenly."

Talking together they are not long in climbing the hill, and, as usual, pause for the long backward look over the fair scene below.

"Is it that those few cottages really contain unique specimens of quaint humanity, or is it that we are too blind to the interests of human nature generally that we grow to think most places are so much alike, and people so much the same wherever they live?" Margaret Ferrars said musingly.

"I think I understand what you mean, for it seems to me that it rests with ourselves to find the key if we would unlock any human heart," Penelope replied.

A call from the other girls warned them they must quicken their steps if they would not be late for dinner, and presently the closing door hides them all from our view.

L. H. YATES.

(To be continued.)

## THE GIRL'S OWN GUILD OF SCRIPTURE-READING AND STUDY.

### QUESTIONS FOR THE MONTH.

281. What is the meaning of the name Obadiah, and when is he supposed to have prophesied? What other Obadiah is mentioned in Old Testament history?

282. Into what two parts is the prophecy of Obadiah divided?

283. Where was Jonah born, and what saying in the Gospel history makes the place of importance?

284. Who was Jonah's father? What does the prophet's name mean? When does Jonah first appear as a prophet?

285. Why did Jonah flee to Tarshish when God commanded him to go to Nineveh? and where was Tarshish?

286. Give the references to Jonah made by our Lord.

287. Who was Micah, and of what place was he a native? To whom was he sent?

288. In what words does Micah begin his prophecy? On what occasion and by whom were similar words spoken 150 years previously?

289. How did one of Micah's predictions save the life of Jeremiah?

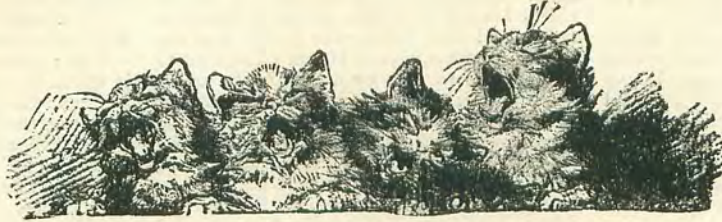
290. Where does Micah prophecy the birth of the Christ? What epithet does he employ in reference to the place of the Nativity? In what form was this epithet afterwards quoted, and by whom?

## THE BLIND GIRL.

By WILLIAM T. SAWARD.

MOTHER! whose memory sweet my dark life fills,  
 I cannot see the autumn's dying shade  
 Above the grassy mound where thou art laid,  
 Nor mark the sunset linger on the hills.  
 One day, a light will fall  
 Around the fir-trees tall,  
 That whisper now their dirges to the wandering wind;  
 My God has promised me  
 One day your face to see;  
 In His great heaven above He knows that I am blind.

O mother, dear! I long to see the birds  
 That sang so sweetly when you died last spring;  
 I can but picture every living thing,  
 And oft my sorrow is too deep for words.  
 One day, a light will break,  
 And I shall then awake  
 And see the glorious landscape, and the birds, and thee,  
 I know it will be true,  
 For He is keeping you  
 Till we all meet together in Eternity.



## THE GIRL-BRIDES OF HILD'S HAVEN.

## CHAPTER VI.



sheep, met the eye for miles. Cornfields and crops they thought little about save as they affected the cost of meal and flour. Visitors making their annual pilgrimage in search of health came but rarely to this spot; there was no friendly hostel inviting them to stay, and beyond a few stray artists in quest of the picturesque, its beauties had few worshippers.

But with the autumn and the ingathering of the fruits, when the days themselves seemed to acquire a mellow softness, the wish to share their pleasures came to teacher and pupils alike. With winter their number was to be increased, but while the home character of the place was still their own, each longed that the one she loved best might know and see it.

Madeleine dropped the first hint; "Percy" was going north for the shooting, it was not far out of his road if he might be permitted to call, and she readily obtained the desired permission. After that it became only kind to inquire if the others wished the same invitation to be given, and finding that such was the case Penelope planned a house-party, whose entertainment was to afford a week's holiday from routine work.

Two friends of her father's, ladies whose opinion she valued highly, she invited also, that their presence might afford the balance-weight which so great a preponderance of youth and happiness might necessitate, also that the finger of worldly criticism might find nothing to point at, although of that she usually took little heed.

Naturally the entertainment of so many

guests gave rise to serious councils in the commissariat department.

To stock the larders as far as possible that no unnecessary time need be spent upon cooking would be but wise, especially so in this somewhat out-of-the-world place where things were not always to be procured at short notice.

On occasions during her father's lifetime when the Grey House had been filled with guests, a basket of freshly-caught fish had made its appearance from the Haven almost daily, and Penelope had but to speak the word to ensure the same continuance this time: for butcher's meat, however, they must make a special expedition to the nearest market town, as also for other stores, and these shopping excursions proved not the least delightful part of their anticipatory labours.

According to merry Alice's pronouncement everything might be judged delightful, but to each one as she herself chose, was allocated the part she elected to do; this especially in the commissariat, for the preparing and garnishing of the old house from garret to cellar was so essentially delightful that all must needs have a hand in it.

And truly, when even the most critical eye could search without finding speck or flaw anywhere, when fresh muslins hung at every sparkling window and the ancient furniture shone again with its polish, and at the last, when Silas had been prevailed upon to snip some of his choice blooms, with the faint fragrance and rich colour of flowers scattered here and there, we may trow there were few, if indeed any, pleasanter spots to be found in all England's land than the old house that crowned the Hild.

Margaret, who was the possessor of the coolest hand, had chosen to take charge of the dairy, and to her management was left the butter, cream, milk and eggs that would be required. If the supply failed, she was laughingly told she would be expected to make it up somehow.

Madeleine had bread and cakes in her special care, while to Alice, who had the lightest touch of all, was given over the making of the pastry, which this time would have to be a genuine "batch."

"It must be our very best, of course?" she queried. The query had reference to the

variety which they had learned to know came under the one category.

"Certainly, the very best 'puff' paste, and made with butter, not only because the occasion merits it but because we require the pastry to last us the week through, and as you know 'short' or 'flaky' pastry, and that made from dripping or other fats, though excellent enough within twenty-four hours of its making, quickly becomes stale and tasteless, but that made from fresh butter will keep good and be capable of resuscitation with very little trouble. Also, as I think I told you once before, part of your puff-paste may be left in the bowl if covered over with a cloth and set in a cool place, and it will not deteriorate, but rather prove the lighter for keeping thus, and it will supply crusts for fruit tarts later on, and be a double advantage, as freshly-cooked fruit is infinitely preferable to that done several days ago."

"A pound of butter to a pound of flour, or is that too rich?"

"It is decidedly too rich for fruit tarts for which you will need the greater part of your paste; I should advise three-quarters of a pound of butter to one of flour, and the yolk of an egg to be added to the water used to make the ball of 'dough.' If you were making mince-pies or rich cheesecakes it would be another matter."

"And after I have made the flour and water into a rather stiff ball of dough I am to roll it out to half an inch thick, then spread the butter evenly over, fold it up, roll again and wait ten minutes, and so on for six separate times, is that so?"

"Yes, only don't forget that you first lightly rub about two ounces of butter into the flour before you make the dough, also that on the first rolled-out sheet you should squeeze the juice of half a lemon."

"Ah, and that reminds me, I wanted to ask you what it is confectioners use to give the crisp outside to their pastry, I shall be so extra anxious to have mine look well as well as taste good?"

"If when your pastry has almost finished baking you draw it from the oven and brush it quickly over with water and white of egg mixed together, then sprinkle with castor sugar and return it to the oven for a few moments longer, I think you will see the

desired effect, but personally I prefer the look of home-made pastry myself."

Left to herself Alice set to work hard and fast, and when her task was achieved it was really a splendid show. Six tempting fruit tarts lay in a row on the larder shelf, while of open tartlets there were three dishes laden, each varied as to their interior composition.

Questioned as to what fruits they might expect to find below the covering crusts, she made their "mouths water," as they said, by her announcement of "peaches, apricots, apples, apple and blackberry, damsons, etc.," but more than this she would not say; what the smaller ones contained they were to guess when the time for testing them arrived.

Madeleine proudly exhibited her loaves white and brown, "crisp, light and truly wholesome," as her teacher pronounced them. As to her cakes they were truly most professional to look at, of their flavour they would be called upon to judge later, but that that also would prove excellent the sniffing noses seemed to warrant.

Penelope herself had given her special attention to a varied production of "home-brewed" concoctions; there was a small store of choice wine down below, but she rightly concluded it was hardly likely to be much drawn upon, therefore she must be ready to show hospitality in milder forms. As a choice little secret of her own she kept two bottles of elderberry wine of Janet's brewing three years past, this would come out when evening hilarity might make its appearance suitable; besides this she had "mild October" for those whose palates might welcome it, but genuine home-brewed cider, and liqueurs manufactured from fruits grown on her own trees would be, she rightly judged, the most generally called for.

Penelope's own guests were the first arrivals; not until evening had fallen and dinner was in progress was "Percy's" knock heard.

A neat little maiden from one of the cottages had been installed as temporary waitress in hall and at table, and in expectation of extra work Janet was happy in knowing that the need of her services would be unquestioned.

Madeleine received her lover in the smaller library, and in their first brief half-hour together he was not backward in noticing that domesticity had by no means made her less attractive, rather that with the development of womanly attributes a softening and mellowing had been added to her other qualities.

As neither of the other two gentlemen were due until the following morning, "Percy," or Mr. Aldis, to use the correct name by which he was introduced to his hostess and company, had a double share of scrutiny given him, as he in turn had greater opportunity of making his own observations.

Well for him he was able to bear the investigation of clear and keen eyes, for though not what a superficial observer would have called physically handsome, there was unmistakable power of brain and will shown in the massive dark head and finely-cut nose.

"A man who will be more generally esteemed than loved, but whose love, once gained, will be a rock of strength to whosoever trusts to it," was Penelope's first judgment in regard to him; after closer acquaintance she added a rider to the effect that his friendship was itself a prize worth gaining. In this opinion Margaret seconded her; needless to say that both of these women proved to be types of their sex entirely strange and foreign to Percy Aldis's hitherto limited range; they did not bear out

the characters he had previously assigned to them, because women of such an unusual stamp had not belonged to his world, therefore Madeleine's word-portraits had failed to make them real; now however he was able to satisfy even her exactions with respect to both, for he did not take long to bestow the meed of praise and admiration he felt to be merited.

Alice's "John," or John Brinsley Herschel as his card named him, though of a distinctly homelier type than Madeleine's chosen one, bore in his face the qualities that won for him esteem and affection at first sight; the kind brown eyes, and the strong, well-knit figure gave assurance that timid, gentle Alice, girlish and young even for her years, would have a partner well able to bear the brunt of life's burdens and smooth its path for her tread.

But if curiosity was active to learn and be satisfied regarding these two, it need hardly be said that it betrayed itself doubly when Robert Haldane's turn came to pass under the fire of criticism. In spite of Margaret's protests and assurances that only disappointment awaited them if they expected aught but the most ordinary type, they did look for an individual of a decidedly extraordinary cast.

As she foretold at the first introduction he proved to be distinctly commonplace, there were not even the professorial eyeglasses to give dignity to the nervous face, with its mobile lips and broad forehead. But a closer acquaintance showed that the head, which surmounted a somewhat slight though wiry frame, belonged to one whose intellectual attainments and capacities were indeed far away beyond the ordinary.

If in the commoner subjects belonging to daily life he showed up but badly beside the brilliant "Percy" or even matter-of-fact "John," when it came to an argument or discussion, a question of ethics or a point of philosophy, his views and the graceful eloquence he showed in the expression of them, set him apart and above his fellows at once.

Margaret had never led them to expect this indeed all her attempts at portraiture, on the rare occasions when she could be induced to make any, had been it seemed purposely underdrawn, if not caricatured; but now she took her revenge in enjoyment of their undisguised surprise and admiration. Penelope's opinion was the only one she really cared about; what that was, however, was told in the privacy of strict confidence, and we are not permitted a revelation:

Eager lovers, confident from what they could see that perfection had been already attained, were all anxious that wedding-bells might sound speedily, but only in one case did they prevail and obtain a shortening of the six months' term, which had been the primary agreement. This was the one that concerned Madeleine, and the hastening had a valid excuse in the fact of a diplomatic mission which, if undertaken by Percy Aldis, would mean an exile from England of at least three years' duration; impossible, of course, that such a term could be passed in unrelieved bachelorhood.

Margaret had resolutely set herself to carry out her bond to its last moment, and no consideration could be advanced sufficiently strong to turn her from her purpose, while for youthful Alice even a lengthening out of the natural term might prove more than desirable.

To Madeleine's wedding they were all bidden as honoured guests, and a brief visit was to be made to the Grey House by the bridal pair ere they left England for their new

sphere of life; but Margaret, yielding to Penelope's own persuasion, was to be married from the Grey House itself; no near kith or kin had greater claim upon her inmost heart than this friend, who was kin to her very soul, and the Haven folk had given to Margaret Ferrars a place in their regard only second to their own dear Miss Pen.

October would see Madeleine's departure, but Margaret declared she would wait for snowdrops ere she made her bridal posy.

Congratulations and thanks not a few fell to Penelope's portion as a reward for her pains during this bright holiday-week, but I question whether any of them fell with such a truly grateful effect as some spontaneous words dropped by Percy Aldis, when he met her alone the first evening after his arrival.

She had strayed out on to the terrace to watch the play of faint lightning in the sky, and he had followed her. After the exchange of a commonplace remark with regard to it, he said suddenly—

"Miss St. Hild, what have you done to Madeleine?"

The question so unexpectedly put might have implied anything, from reproach to dismay, and Penelope looked her surprise.

"What do you mean?" she asked.

"I mean that she is not the woman I knew before—clever and capable, one to do honour to, and grace any circle I always knew her to be, but that she could sympathise with and make noble the failings and frailties we cannot help showing sometimes, I never looked for; she used to be a little hard on us men, I thought; what has worked the change?"

Penelope smiled; she understood what he meant.

"I think Madeleine will herself furnish you with an answer to that query, if you give her time," she said.

Shortly afterwards he went indoors again, but to himself he acknowledged that the answer was found without his seeking to know more.

"It was contact, I suspect," he said, for he felt the spell in a dimmer sense in his own mind. But behind him he left a glow, a delicious sense of recompense that made Penelope send forth a thanksgiving to Heaven for the thought that had come to her in the foundation of her school, and for the daily blessing that had crowned its development.

"It has been well worth doing," she said.

And that glow and the glad thankfulness with it remained with her through all the varying shades and circumstances of the years that followed.

Some five years later, the eve of her own wedding, put *finis* to this chapter of her life, but ere she turned the page for the new sheet lying blank before her, she recorded once more her devout thankfulness that in the full tide of her youth and strength she had been able to influence and help onwards a band of women, who, if not great in numbers, had each at least great potentiality in their own sphere and life. Emphatically she had not

"... given for nought her priceless gift, Nor spoiled the bread, or spill'd the wine," either for herself or these others, but indeed it could be said that

"... spent with due respective thrift,"

they

"Had made brutes men, and men divine;" or at least had secured the power of doing so.

LUCY H. YATES.

