must be brave, she must be brave. With trembling hands she put aside the slow tears which rose and dimmed her sight, and still kneeling she turned again to her God for help.

"I am so afraid, Lord, so afraid. Give me courage. Teach me to die."

And the never-failing help in time of need was with her then. Back to the white and quivering face came the old look of peace and calm. The waves might thunder now, she did not heed, for His strength was made perfect in weakness.

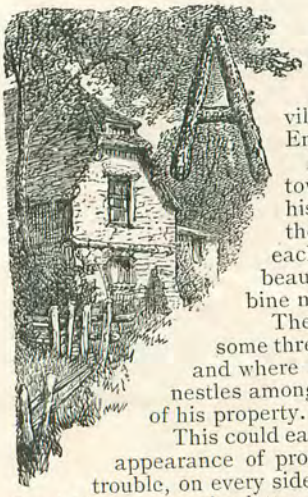
Once again, for the last time on earth, she uttered her simple prayer for her boy: "The Lord bless you, my dearie." As she whispered the words she rose instinctively from her cramped position. In doing so she slipped upon the wet rock and fell forward into the deep waters.

Next morning, in the early dawn, as Harold paced the beach, worn and heavy-eyed with grief, he caught sight of a quiet form lying among the rocks. Hastening towards it, he fell upon his knees, for the form was that of a little woman, with a look of solemn peace and tenderness upon her fair old face.

There Violet found him an hour later sobbing like a child.

AN AGRICULTURAL VILLAGE.

SUMMER AND WINTER.



BRIGHT sunny day in August dawned, and my anticipated pleasure of paying a visit to a friend living in a lovely village in the heart of agricultural England had come about.

Arrived at the little country town, my host drove me home to his house through lanes where the wayside flowers vied with each other in luxuriance and beauty, and the clustering woodbine made all the air sweet.

The village where my host lives, some three miles from the country town, and where his pretty modest little house nestles amongst the trees, lies in the middle of his property.

This could easily be discerned by the evident appearance of prosperity, the result of care and trouble, on every side, the well-kept hedges and the flourishing crops, the latter quickly turning from green to golden, and from gold to copper in the August sunshine.

There stands the church on a little knoll overlooking the lovely valley, backed in the distance by the Shropshire hills far away on the horizon.

Beyond the church stands the village school. This is where the Squire's best thoughts are concentrated, amongst the children of his labourers on the estate, and it is here he may generally be found on most mornings in the week giving an object lesson on some of the beauties of nature.

The children are at this moment running, jumping, and playing in the playground, and some of the elder boys vying with each other in a tug of war specially provided for them by the Squire, who believes in healthy exercise for all the muscles.

I cannot help remarking on the appearance of the children, as we stop at the school-house, where a general bobbing of curtsies and touching of caps shows that their manners have not been forgotten.

All of them happy and bonny-looking, many with bright flaxen hair, and most with round rosy cheeks, which compel one to believe that fresh air and wholesome living is the best specific for looking young and keeping healthy.

And I turn to the Squire and say so, and how I feel quite envious of these happy children, whom he has taught to know all the flowers of the hedgerows, and the names of the birds who are their constant companions in the lanes as they walk to and from school.

Ay, and such sweet companions with their constant twitter and chatter, that the children know their voices as they have been taught to, and love them, and though they may peep into their exquisitely-made little nests and count the tiny eggs inside, would never think of destroying them.

I quite envy the children, and say how I should like to be one of the merry romping band, with my school-time to come over again, and all the fun and frolic of the long walk through the lanes.

And then the Squire looks sad, and says, "Yes, this is summer, summer with its warmth, its sunshine, and its flowers; but try to look at the reverse side of the picture, and then try to help me, and tell me how to carry out my cherished project of a soup kitchen for these little ones, when summer is succeeded by autumn and winter, and sunshine and warmth by biting winds and storms of snow and rain."

And then he goes on to tell me how many of these little children have to walk in two and three miles through these same lovely lanes; but in winter lovely no longer, but inches deep in mud, which clings to the poor tired little feet, and often with the snow and rain falling fast and wetting the children to the skin—there is no help for this, as this is the nearest school—how they sit in the school-room with little pinched faces and eat the dinners which they have carried in their tiny baskets.

Their dinners must be cold as things are, and surely that in itself is bad enough for a little child every day, when we consider that a cold meal absorbs the heat of the body before it can be digested or return any nourishment to the system; how much worse then for a little child cold and debilitated already with its tiring walk through the mud, and the wind and rain and its morning's work in the school-room.

And what does the dinner consist of? The meal which is to feed the brain, build up the bones, muscles, and tissues, and keep the body warm.

Let us look into the baskets and see for ourselves.

All very clean, all that can be managed very likely, but what after all? Here beside the penny whistle or the spinning-top or the little piece of knitting wrapped in a piece of newspaper, we find what is supposed to nourish our future soldiers and sailors, and the future wives and mothers of our working men.

In this little basket two slices of bread and dripping and a pickled onion, in this two slices of bread and jam, and in another a slice of bread and cheese and an apple, and these are "the pick of the baskets."

And after this dinner we expect the children to set to work again, and then face the muddy, dark dank lanes, with the wind howling a melancholy dirge overhead.

"Yes," goes on the Squire, "I often think of the little cold tired children, and I am determined to make things better for them if I can."

And then we set to work and tried to think the whole thing out.

There were many difficulties already in the way, and I regret to say many were thrown in the way; but, after all, nothing is worth having without striving for it, and the health and happiness of the children is very close to the Squire's heart.

And it may interest others to hear what we worked out.

First and foremost, the soup must be nourishing, and secondly, it must pay for itself.

There must be no feeling of pauperising hard-working, honest, respectable people.

Sixty children each paying a halfpenny a day should obtain a basin of good warm nourishing soup, and they can easily bring a slice of sweet home-made bread in their baskets to supplement it.

Then we decided that the soup kitchen should only exist through the cold months of the year, say from the beginning of November till the end of February.

We decided on this because the children really only require the hot meal when the weather is very cold, and also we thought they would appreciate it more if they did not always have it.

And then we worked out what soup we could make fifteen or sixteen quarts of for 2s. 6d., and allow say a magin of a pint or so in case any of the villagers cared to come with a can and buy some for themselves, or in case any might be required for the aged or sick in the village; but the soup was to be primarily for the children, to be their mid-day meal eaten at school, and not as a public soup-kitchen where the first who came had the first right, and the children might fare badly in the competition.

Our object is economy. By this I mean our endeavour is to provide a good nourishing meal at very little cost, either of material, fuel, or labour, and also we are most anxious that the ingredients used should be easily obtained in the village, and as many as possible the products of the farms and gardens around.

Then we would like to give the children a change, so that one day their meal may contain the necessary nourishment for brain and nerves, and another day for muscle, bone, etc., and that each day the little bodies may be kept warm, and the little hearts made bright and happy.

The Squire was willing to pay the expense of fuel and pay a woman to make the soup each day, and also he would buy the basins and spoons for the childrens, which would be kept at the school. Thus we had only the cost of the soup to consider.

The school-house is divided into two class-rooms, one for the elder children and the other for the infants, and adjoining the latter is the school-mistress's house, a pretty cottage with its windows and garden bright with sunshine and flowers. The school-mistress quite enters into the spirit of the scheme, and allows the use of her scullery for storing the vegetables, and her copper in the scullery for making the soup.

So we set about it by getting in the coal and firewood, and buying the vegetables from the farmers and cottagers on the estate.

We decided that two days in the week the children should have lentil soup, and the other three days bone soup.

On Saturdays, of course, the children have their dinners at home.

Sixty children each paying one halfpenny will give us thirty pence, so we have half-a-crown to spend, and the following are the recipes we use.

Lentil Soup.

	s.	d.
4 lb. of red lentils at 2d.		8
½ lb. of dripping at 6d.		3
8 turnips, 8 carrots, 8 onions		6
1 tablespoonful of pepper, 2 tablespoonfuls of salt		½
12½ quarts of cold water.		
3½ quarts of milk at 3d.		10½
½ lb. of flour at 2d.		1
et-ceteras		1
	2	6

Our method is as follows.—Scrape and peel the carrots and turnips and cut them into thin slices, wash the lentils, remove the skin from the onions and slice them also.

Put the fat into the copper, and when it is melted, fry all the vegetables and lentils in it for five minutes, stirring the whole to prevent it burning, then add the cold water and the pepper and salt. Allow it all to simmer gently till the vegetables are quite tender—this will take about three hours.

Now put the flour into a basin and add the milk to it gradually, making the mixture quite smooth, add this to the soup and boil the whole for ten minutes.

Mash up the vegetables with a wooden potato masher or large wooden spoon in the soup, and serve the soup in the basins to the children as hot as possible.

Our other recipe is for bone soup, and here it is. It is a little more trouble to make in the first instance, but it makes a nice change for the children.

BONE SOUP.

	s.	d.
1s. 3d. worth of raw bones	1	3
¾ lb. of bacon at 5d.		3¾
¾ lb. of Scotch barley at 2d.		1½
¾ lb. of oatmeal at 2d.		1½
¾ lb. of onions (sliced), say		2
Pepper and salt		½
Sundries and vegetables for stock		4
	2	4¼

We must begin making the bone soup the day before it is required, as we must extract all the goodness from the bones to make our stock, so we have the lentil soup for the children on Monday morning, and in the afternoon make our stock as follows:—

Break up the bones as small as you conveniently can with a meat hatchet, say into lengths of three inches or so, then slice up some vegetables, such as carrots, turnips, and in fact put in any vegetable that you can procure easily; the outside stalks of celery and cabbage are excellent.

All these vegetables contain valuable mineral matter, and are good for the children. You will see I have allowed fourpence for this, and that is an ample allowance. Put the bones and vegetables into the copper and add one tablespoonful of salt.

Then add seventeen quarts of cold water and allow this to come to the boil slowly, and then boil the whole gently all the afternoon.

We boil bones because we wish to extract the gelatine from them, and that requires greater heat than extracting juices from vegetables or meat. Another reason for applying greater heat in cooking bones is that gelatine becomes liquid when heat is applied to it, whereas albumen, which we extract from meat, hardens under the influence of heat.

When the stock is made, strain the liquor from the bones and vegetables, and put the liquor into an earthenware vessel till next day.

Now to make the soup.

Wash the barley well, and leave it soaking while you are heating the stock; put the stock into the copper, and when it is hot, add to it the barley; slice the onions thinly and add these also; allow the whole to simmer one and a half hours. Cut up the bacon into small dice, roll them in the oatmeal and then scatter them into the soup, add a little pepper and salt to taste. You will not require as much salt as for lentil soup as the bacon is salt. Allow the soup thus made to simmer one hour longer, then stir up well and serve hot to the children.

This is our village soup kitchen, how it originated and how it was carried out. There may be found people to say, Is it worth the trouble? The children have done without it, why should they require it now?

To all such I would answer, How do we know that it has not been merely the survival of the fittest who have lived and done without it? And even if this is not so, can we be quite sure that through our ignorance or want of thought for those dependent on us we have not starved the brain or warped the ideas of some grand mind who might have in its turn helped the struggling mass of humanity to live better, purer, nobler lives, and so make this world a fairer place?

MARY SKENE.

Anne Beale.

GOVERNESS AND WRITER.

EXTRACTS FROM HER DIARY.

PART IV.

April 10, 1836.—I have finished reading another nice book of Abbot's called *His Fireside*, and a delightful thing it is. Just in the style of the other, and equally impressive. He is certainly a most delightful writer, and I never read any works bringing truth more home to one's mind. I have not yet heard from Bessey in answer to a letter written to her respecting her visiting us here. Mrs. Hardy has asked her, and dear, kind Mr. H. has offered to pay her expenses. They are most good-natured indeed, and, oh! how I hope she will come. I heard from Mr. B. Armitage how much she was admired and how praiseworthy she was considered. I have not yet received an account of the concert either, which I am longing to get. Mr. A. said Mr. Hopton left the Hereford Assizes early expressly to drive them all to Worcester. I have read a newspaper account of the *soirée musicale*, and will copy it in here.

"A very delightful entertainment was given by Mr. Sapio at the residence of Mrs. Hopton, Lansdowne Place, who on this occasion in the kindest manner acceded to the adoption of a plan which has of late years been pretty general in the fashionable circles of the metropolis. At an early hour the drawing-rooms, set apart for the concert, were crowded by personages of fashion and distinction, and the performances were throughout of a very high order of excellence. The principal attraction, 'the bright peculiar star' of the evening, was Mr. Sapio's highly-gifted pupil, Miss Beale, who evinced the successful progress of that cultivation of her vocal powers which is alone required to place her in a station of the highest professional eminence, should that indeed be her ambition. The selection of the compositions admirably executed by this lady was most judicious, and in every respect calculated to put those powers to every varied test of excellence. They were, 'The Lay of Feeling—a scena from Der Freischütz,' Haydn's sweetly simple air, 'With Verdure Clad,' Rossini's duet (with Sapio), 'Ricciardo che veggo?' and Bishop's exquisite ballad, 'And Ye shall Walk in Silk Attire.' In each and all of these Miss Beale more than justified the warm but sincere tribute of praise which it afforded us so much pleasure to be enabled to pay to the almost unprecedented effect of her *début* some few months since. But in the ballad, we must own, she more than ever delighted and surprised us. With the sweetest utterance of pure and unadorned melody was combined a natural tenderness of feeling sustained by the noble pride of womanly constancy that gave a charm to the whole air that we have never heard surpassed. We know not the professional singer at this moment who could give the same effect to the same strain; and her auditors evinced their own good taste and their appreciation of the purest gratification that music can impart by the enthusiasm with which they induced its repetition."

April 12.—I have received a letter from Bessie, March 16, in which she declines coming here on account of the near approach of the time for her departure, and her wishing to be as long as possible with Mrs. Hopton. The latter kindly asked me to spend a day or two at Canon Frome instead, which I have declined, feeling sure that it would greatly inconvenience Mrs. Hopton, and that she would not have thought such a step necessary, had not the idea of our disappointment been forced upon her by Mrs. Hardy's invitation. Bess says that the concert at Worcester went off very well, that she got "much fame, and £1 1s. 6d. clear when all was paid." Poor dear girl, it was very little