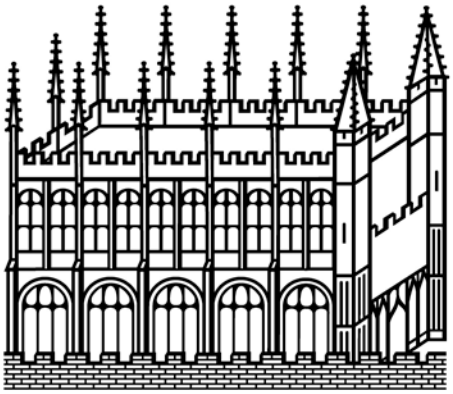

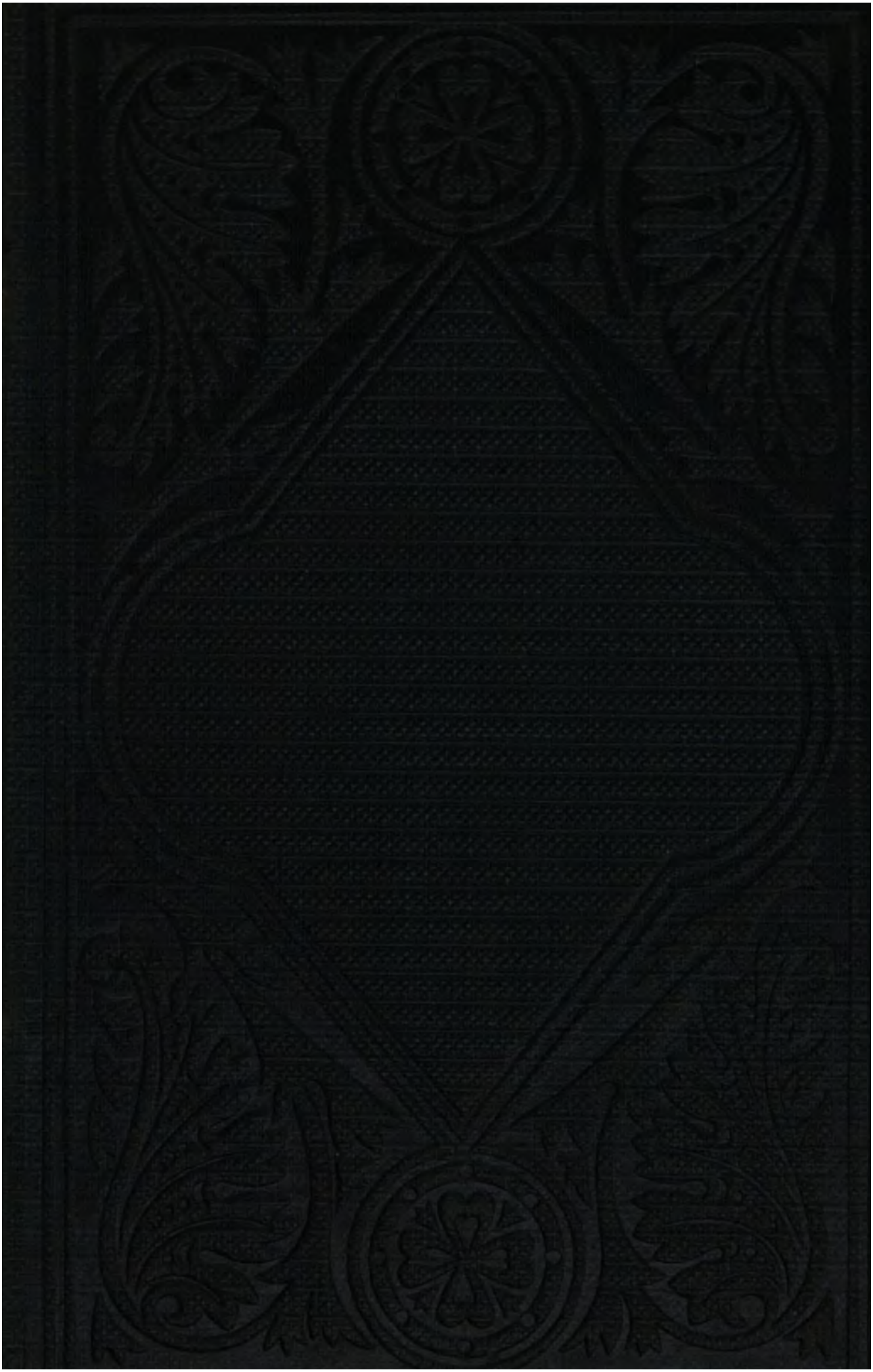

1489 à 1504

Lilian opened The Book, and read.—Page 39

BEATRICE

OF

ST. MAWSE.

A STORY FOR GIRLS.

"He setteth the solitary in families."

JOHN MORGAN.
10 Paternoster Row
LONDON

BEATRICE OF ST. MAWSE.

CHAPTER I.

"A being, breathing thoughtful breath;
A traveller, betwixt life and death."

It was upon a stormy, blustering night in early spring that a ship was gallantly breasting the waves off the coast of Cornwall.

She had passed Land's End and the Lizard Point, and was vainly endeavouring to put in until daybreak in one of the numerous bays that indent the Cornish coast.

Signals of distress were fired, and the boats lowered; but what boat could live in such a sea?

The little fishing village of St. Mawse was all astir. Lights were soon seen in all the cottage windows, and on the beach knots of sailors were collecting in all directions.

The waves seemed rising higher every moment, the rain pelting down, and the wind howling drearily. Straining their eyes through the darkness, the men on shore could see nothing of the unfortunate vessel and its crew, and yet, now and then, it seemed as though cries and shrieks for help could be distinguished amidst the storm.

It was a fearful risk of life, and yet it seemed that two or three brave fishermen were bent upon manning a boat and endeavouring to reach the vessel.

"It's a cruel thing to let fellow-creatures go down like this wi'out deigning to lend a helpin' han', Hugh;" shouted one brave old fellow. "Let's try, any way, and God be wi' us."

So saying they pushed off from shore upon what seemed a hopeless errand.

Several of the wives and mothers were by this time issuing from the cottages, and rushing to the beach, mingling their sobs and prayers with the quieter but intense anxiety of the male watchers.

An hour passed, and still no signs of the boat, only darkness which seemed more intense, and a raging storm which seemed to be howling forth a requiem over the many victims of the treacherous sea. At last, by the dim light of the lanterns, the keenest

eyes among them discerned a dark object not far from land, and the next surging wave brought the boat within a yard of them. They had weathered the storm, and, though almost exhausted, they were alive, and had brought with them one other little life which they had found.

The whole crew had perished, and all the passengers save this one, a child of six years old. She lay in Hugh the sailor boy's arms, seemingly lifeless, her long black hair shrouding her pale face, the deep black lashes making the little thin cheeks more deathly still.

Poor little stranger! her alone had they been able to save, and it seemed doubtful whether even she would live or die. They carried her up into the nearest cottage, where she was warmed and rubbed, and presently opened a pair of large, wondering black eyes, but closed them again, and fell heavily asleep in one of the children's beds, where they laid her until morning.

When she awoke the following day the kind motherly fisher-wives tried to talk to the little stranger, and learn who she was, and where she came from, but discovered, to their dismay, that they could not comprehend each other. The little girl talked fast enough, and seemed sadly distressed at getting

no answer she could understand, and she wept long and bitterly, refusing to be comforted.

"Poor little soul, she's sure to be from furrin pairts," said one of the mothers: "we mun send for Mr. Herbert, he'll knaw, maybe."

So for the clergyman they sent, and he soon returned with Hugh, who had taken great interest in the whole affair, as he had helped to drag the old spar and its treasure into the boat. He was a fine fellow too, was Hugh Burns, though he had rough hands and a sunburnt cheek; he was the "only son of his mother," and she a widow with four little children, and Hugh worked for her and them, and they were right proud of him in return.

However, to go back to our story. The good clergyman, Mr. Herbert, took great interest in the little stranger whom Providence had thus so singularly cast upon his kindness. He persuaded her to talk to him, and felt pretty sure she was from Spain.

She was richly dressed, and her clothes were marked "Beatrice da Castro;" she was a pale, delicate-looking child, with wondrous eyes, fringed mournfully with long dark lashes, and jet black hair fell in wavy profusion below her waist.

She looked more like some sad sea-spirit, who had lived within sound of ocean moanings and far-off voices, than a little girl of six years old, who had been used to play in green fields and listen to the song of happy birds.

Mr. Herbert thought so as he looked at her standing before him, her small pale hands clasped tightly together, and the heavy tears dropping from her downcast eyes.

He thought of his own sunny little Lilian at home, and though all conversation was hopeless for the present, yet the little Spanish girl could understand the universal language of kindness which good Mr. Herbert knew so well how to use; and she read in his kind eyes, and the tone of his voice, as plainly as though he could have told her in her own native tongue, that she had found a good friend who would not desert her.

CHAPTER II.

"Then by a sunbeam I will climb to Thee."

THE sun rose fair and bright the morning after that storm. On the brow of that hill to the left leading away from the sea-beach, stands the village church of St. Mawse, with its simple grave-yard, and down a slight descent, in a glen behind the church, is the rectory, the home of Mr. and Mrs. Herbert, and their one child Lilian, or Lillie as she was generally called.

It was a most pleasant little bedroom in that same rectory into which the early sunbeams looked that spring morning after the storm. Would you like to know what they saw there with their bright golden eyes?

Well, first of all, they strayed across a picture over the mantelpiece, and there they found something so like themselves that they lingered some time to find out what relationship they could claim.

It was the picture of a little girl; she was dressed in white, and had her arm thrown round the neck of a soft, snowy-looking lamb.

Her sunny hair fell in long curls about her shoulders; but the charm of the picture, and what made the sunbeams like it so much, was that the dear little face looked so good and happy, the blue eyes so loving and truthful, that the pure sunlight coming straight from God's heaven, seemed to recognise the child as one of those "little ones" of whom it is said, "of such is the kingdom of Heaven." By-and-by, after they had played about among the bright curls of the little girl in the picture, and kissed her rosy lips by way of good morning, the early sunbeams streamed across a very white, peaceful little bed. The little face that lay in it upon the pillow might have been the original of the picture; and the sunbeams seemed to think so too, for they lighted up the soft, fair locks with a brilliant gleam, and danced about the fair, open brow with a very dainty grace, and such energy and warmth that the little sleeping, smiling face screwed itself up into very funny wrinkles indeed, and presently a pair of very blue eyes half opened to greet the intruding sunshine.

Presently they opened still wider, and then meeting somebody else's eyes very unexpectedly, the little girl started up in bed, exclaiming,—

"Why, mamma, am I so late, then, that you are up and dressed?"

"You have been sleeping unusually long, Lillie, this morning, so I came to see what had become of you."

"The sunshine woke me at last, I think, it is so very bright this morning."

Then springing up, Lillie threw her arms round her mother's neck and gave her a morning kiss.

Mrs. Herbert looked very earnestly at her little girl for a minute, and taking both her hands in hers, sat down on the bedside.

"Mamma, dear, what has happened?" asked Lillie. "I am sure something has, by your face. Has anything vexed you?"

"I have something to tell you, Lillie, which will interest you very much. There was a terrible storm last night, and brave old Jem, with Hugh Burns and one or two others, put out in the boat to save some shipwrecked people. They brought home one little girl, a little girl younger than you are, but all the rest perished."

"O mamma, how dreadful! and such a sunny morning too! I wonder it *can* shine so; it hardly seems right, mamma dear, that it should look so bright to-day after such a dreadful thing—all those poor people!"

"Lillie dear, we must remember, God is all

love in everything; whatever He does, even those 'dreadful things,' are manifestations of His love, somehow and in some way, just as much as these beautiful sunbeams are. We are too dark and blind to see how, but the sunshine of His love would gild everything, and make it beautiful to us, if we could but see; and as we cannot see, we must believe."

"Where is the little girl, mamma?"

"She is at Widow Burns's cottage, and papa is gone down to see her. I wanted to talk to you about her, Lillie. Papa and I have a plan about her, and we should like to know what you say to it."

"O mamma," said Lillie, eagerly, "let her come here, and be my sister; I have always wanted a sister so, you know; let me dress now, and go to see her directly."

"You shall see her, Lillie. Papa intends to bring her back with him. But there are several things I wanted to say about it to you. This poor little girl is a foreigner, and cannot understand one word that is said to her, and very likely she will need a great deal of patience in many ways; and she will want a very good example set her of gentleness and obedience and love. She will have everything to learn, most likely, and for some time will try your patience and

love not a little. Will my Lillie be able to give this self-forgetting love and patience to the little stranger, and set her the example of a good little elder sister, for I believe she is two or three years younger than my little Lillie?"

"I will try, mamma," said Lilian, gravely; and the tears came into her eyes as she thought of the poor little forlorn girl, younger than herself, cast upon a foreign shore.

"I will indeed try, dear mamma; and I will pray to be very gentle and loving to the poor little girl always, if she may come."

"Make haste and dress, then, and come down to breakfast, as I expect papa back very soon." And Mrs. Herbert kissed her little girl and left her; for Lilian Herbert was nine years old, and needed no help in the matter of dressing.

She made the greatest possible haste, and was soon ready; but, before going down-stairs, Lillie did not forget to look for the morning's verse in the little red text-book her papa had given her on her last birthday. The one for the day was this: "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ."

The little girl smiled as she read it; it seemed just made for that day's life, for was

she not going to try to lighten the sorrow of the poor little desolate heart her mother had been telling her about, by that very love which is the fulfilling of Christ's law? Lillie ran down-stairs with a very happy heart, and looking as though one of the stray sunbeams had taken up its abode within her.

faint notions about any sort of religion, and to Lilian it began to be a subject of speculation on Saturday night, whether she would be induced to sit still in church on the following Sunday, and not try to come out whenever she grew tired.

However, they resolved to make the attempt, and Beatrice being dressed in some of Lilian's things, which the kind mother had altered to fit the little stranger, the two children went together into the pew, with Nannie, Lillie's faithful nurse.

It was an old-fashioned church, with very antique carvings and mouldering tombstones of lords and ladies, who lay in effigy, as though awaiting the resurrection call to start afresh into life. There were heads of angels, too, fashioned in stone, looking out of many curious niches; but Lilian's delight was the coloured window above the altar. It was quite a fine one, and gave a richness to the whole building. Beatrice seemed much interested, and made numerous excursions with her eyes hither and thither. A look came into them now and then, as though some familiar objects were recalled to her mind; upon the richly-stained window she gazed fixedly, and the tomb of an old Crusader to the left of the altar received her very earnest attention.

from a sort of yearning for home and mother, which she could express in no other way, were utterly incomprehensible to Lilian's calmer and less-tried nature.

Every inquiry was made among the neighbouring hamlets for any trace of the lost crew, in hopes of obtaining some information relative to Beatrice, but in vain. One or two bodies had been washed ashore a mile or two down the coast, but nothing occurred which threw any light upon her history.

The first week passed on. By every sweet device her love could think of, Lilian strove to soothe her little friend's sorrow. Words were doubly ineffectual, since they could not be understood by the stranger child. She shared with Lillie in everything, as far as she could be prevailed upon to do so; but her passionate temper, utterly uncontrolled as it had hitherto evidently been, made her a daily trial to Mrs. Herbert, and a source of real sorrow and perplexity to the good clergyman.

They could but trust that, since God had so plainly put the work into their hands, He would Himself teach them how He would that it should be performed, for surely the work would not be given without the needful wisdom for doing it.

The little girl seemed to have but very

whilst others hear as though they heard not.

Sunday was Lillie's very happiest day. Before church in the morning she spent an hour with her papa, either in the garden or his study, when he read and talked with her, and explained the collect for the day. In the afternoon she had a class of the fishermen's children, to whom she repeated, in her own simple way, what her papa had been teaching her, and this little class was a great pleasure to Lilian. She took great pains to prepare for it in the week, with her mamma's help, and the children amply repaid her by their love and obedience. After tea she went again to church, or sat by the fire in her low chair with her favourite books, and Muff, her pet terrier, curled up on the rug at her feet.

On this first Sunday of Beatrice's being there, they both went to church again in the evening, and the child's delight seemed unbounded as the organ-notes again sounded forth. She did not cry this time, but sat with burning cheeks and hands tightly clasped together, as though determined to control herself.

The singing, though somewhat rough, had a peculiar character of its own, that seemed in unison with the sad, surging waves that

were ever breaking against the shore beneath. As she was being undressed that night, Beatrice poured forth excited, impassioned sentences in her native tongue, and finally sobbed herself to sleep in Lilian's arms.

Mrs. Herbert had always taught her little girl herself, and gave her regular lessons every morning. These Beatrice was to share, as she did everything else; and, seeing her love for music, Mrs. Herbert determined to use that as an incentive to industry and obedience.

The little Spanish lassie was quick and intelligent to a surprising degree, and soon learned to make known her wants and intentions, so that they could not be mistaken. Indeed, as old Nannie observed, she "bid fair to be missus over 'em a'!"

However, that could not be allowed, of course; and, after one very violent display of temper during morning lessons, Mr. Herbert interfered, and shut her up in a room alone for some hours.

When the bell rung for dinner, he opened the door and went in, hoping to find her subdued, and willing to do as she was desired. What was his dismay to find the room empty!

The open window showed which way she

had escaped; the lawn was just below—a tolerable spring for a child, but quite a possible one. The alarm was soon given, and every part of the garden and surrounding cliff searched in vain, as it seemed.

Lilian's distress was very great, and Hugh Burns, who had been passing at the time, joined in the search with great eagerness. It was a cold spring day, and the snow fell fast and thick—so fast that it covered the footsteps of the seekers as soon as they were made; yet Lilian could not be prevailed upon to stay indoors. "I *must* go, papa, please; I *must* find Beatrice," she pleaded. So, muffled up in an enormous plaid, Lilian joined the rest, and ran hither and thither, loudly calling,—

"Beatrice, Beatrice!"

But no Beatrice replied.

All at once a thought struck her; and, calling Hugh to follow, Lilian made for the church as fast as the snow would let her.

Presently the searchers in different directions heard a shout of "Found! found!"

Yes, Beatrice was found; but where? When Hugh and Lilian entered the church, they looked all round, vainly at first; but, glancing up towards the gallery, there sat poor Beatrice on the stool in the organ-loft, vainly endeavouring to produce sounds like

those which had charmed her so on the previous Sabbath; but, of course, failing for want of wind.

She had felt lonely and miserable, and the church, with its old monuments and painted window, but more than all, the sounds of harmony from the organ-pipes, had seemed to her the most friendly and comforting things to turn to in a foreign land amid strangers.

She seemed dreadfully frightened and distressed at being found, and allowed Hugh to carry her down without a struggle. He took her to the Rectory, followed closely by Lilian, who, when she saw her papa's grave face, laid her hand entreatingly on his arm, and whispered, "Please forgive her, dear papa!"

Mr. Herbert took Beatrice straight into his study, and, seating her on his knee, spoke to her in a kind, grave tone, using such words as she could best comprehend; pointing to the sky with the word, "God," and then to herself, trying to make her understand that she had displeased her Maker by behaving as she had done in the morning.

Beatrice cried a great deal, and kissed them all round by way of promise to do better; and so ended that day's troubles.

CHAPTER IV.

"All common things, each day's events,
That with the hour begin and end,
Our pleasures and our discontents,
Are rounds by which we may ascend."

By the time summer visited the Cornish hills, Beatrice could understand and express herself pretty correctly. Her remembrance of her Spanish home, or at least her account of it, was very indistinct and imperfect, and she seemed to grow more and more satisfied to live in the present and forget the past. It seemed as though the want of the old well-known language took away in great measure the power of reproducing old associations and recollections.

Mrs. Herbert soon began to give her regular lessons on the organ, and these were the child's happiest hours.

Many an evening would she linger in the old church far into the twilight, Hugh, her faithful friend and ally, blowing for her delightedly, while her tiny fingers, in some incomprehensible way, drew forth long wail-

ing chords; while Lillie stood by in silent wonder and admiration, or wandered out into the churchyard to a certain favourite green mound, from whence she could watch the waves beating against the cliff, and see the boats coming and going, hearing bits of the harmony inside the while.

Beatrice would have forgotten time and everything else in her passionate love for her beloved organ, but for Hugh's watchful good sense and care.

"Now, Miss Beatrice," he would say, "the spirits must sleep now;" for he and Lilian often likened her playing to what one might imagine going on in spirit-land; and Beatrice would say coaxingly, "Just one little more, Hugh, please," in her pretty foreign intonation; but Hugh was firm, having received orders from Mrs. Herbert, and, lifting Beatrice laughingly on his broad shoulders, would carry her off to the green mound where Lilian would most likely be waiting for them; then, respectfully saying "Good-night," Hugh would bound off down the cliff to the sea-beach, trim his boat for the night's fishing, and put off from shore, waving his cap merrily to the eager children who were still on the watch to see him depart.

Then the little girls would hasten home.

They were great friends by this time, and that chiefly owing to Lilian's thoroughly unselfish nature, which seemed to find its greatest happiness in ministering to the pleasure and comfort of her "sister," as she called Beatrice, whose exacting, imperious temper would have rendered her an object of dislike to one less truly loving than Lilian Herbert.

On the whole, they were very happy together, and never really quarrelled; still Mrs. Herbert feared sometimes whether Lillie's too gentle, yielding disposition would not be the means of spoiling her friend and sister Beatrice, who never gave up to any one unless compelled. She was improving, however, and was so loving and winning in her ways, that it would have been a wonder if she had *not* been spoiled by every one in the house. She had begun, too, to strive against her passionate temper, and had certainly gained one or two victories over it ately, to Mrs. Herbert's great joy.

The family at the Rectory were surrounded by poor families; below the cliff, along the sea-shore, lay the fishers' cottages, teeming with children, some cleanly and well kept, others dirty and ill-conditioned, partly according to the different mothers who presided over the respective homes, and partly depen-

dent upon the amount of work each week brought to the fathers of the families.

Lilian and Beatrice often came amongst them on errands from the Rectory, and were always hailed with pleasure as bearers of something good,—broth or puddings for the sick, garments for the children (these last their own work on pleasant afternoons), or orders for fish to be attended to. Lillie's sweet, loving smile, and the interest she took in everybody's well-doing, were not among the least prized gifts. Children hardly know how much they may do towards making people better and happier by their kind words and looks. We all like sunshine and music; and though there is plenty about in the world, some folks seem sadly out of the way of it; and to such, the sunshine of smiles, and the music of kind, loving words, go for a great deal. At all events, it was so in Hugh's cottage, and the two little girls were often found there. Hugh's poor old mother was bed-ridden, and her eldest daughter a helpless cripple. The three little ones could not do much to help; so that Hugh often found it as much as he could do to "make two ends meet."

Beatrice was always specially ready to work if it was for Hugh's little sisters, her warm grateful nature never forgetting what

she owed to him and his comrades on that fearful night, while he, on his part, seemed to regard "Miss Beatrice" as his peculiar property, seeing he had been the one to drag her by her streaming hair into the boat which brought her safely to shore.

One fine August morning, the two girls had finished their lessons rather earlier than usual, and taken their way to the beach, carrying a light pudding for Widow Burns, and a little frock which Beatrice had just finished making for Hugh's youngest sister. There seemed to be an unusual stir in the cottage, and several of the neighbours grouped round the door.

"Let us run quick, Lillie," cried Beatrice, "and see what is the matter!"

"I can't come much quicker," answered Lilian, "or this custard will all be spilled, and Widow Burns will lose her dinner."

Beatrice waited to hear no more, but, darting off alone, soon disappeared within the cottage door. Before Lillie could reach it, however, out rushed Beatrice again, crying and looking deadly pale.

"O Lillie, Lillie!" she almost screamed, "Hugh has broken his leg! O dear, dear!" Lillie turned very pale too then, but she did not cry, nor did she drop the dish, which poor Beatrice certainly would have done;

she only said, "Let us go in, Beatrice," and would have taken her sister's hand, but the child would not be persuaded to venture in again; she had yet to learn to bear the sight of suffering, however painful to her sensitive nature, for the sake of the love she bore to the sufferer. Her two years with Lillie had taught her much, but this lesson was yet to learn. She sank down in a sort of heap on some sand close by, buried her head in her hands, and left Lilian to go in alone.

There indeed was poor Hugh, lying on a board, which was stretched upon the only two chairs the house could boast. He was perfectly white, and his eyes were closed as though in death. His old mother was crying in bed, and the children, quieted for once, were cowering together in a corner, eyeing with awe-struck glances the grave face of Mr. Bruce, the village doctor, who was by Hugh's side.

Lillie went up timidly. Hugh opened his eyes, and tried to smile faintly.

"Poor Hugh!" she said kindly, "we are so sorry for you."

"We will soon set him up again, Miss Lilian," said the doctor's cheerful voice; "he will soon be better, if he keeps quiet and obeys me."

"You will, Hugh," said Lillie, "I know;" and then she turned to Widow Burns, delivered the pudding, and promising to "come again soon," ran out of the cottage, unable longer to keep back her tears. Beatrice joined her, and the two walked on together then, sobbing in company, for Hugh was a great favourite with them both. They sat down half-way up the cliff, Beatrice laying her head in Lillie's lap, as she often did, and so they stayed awhile, looking out towards the sea, watching the little fishing-smacks, that looked like specks in the horizon.

"I don't want Hugh to die," said Beatrice, after they had been silent a long while; "I don't want him to die and go to Heaven. I wonder if *he* would like to, though?" she added.

"No, pet," said Lillie, "I don't think he would, unless it was God's will; as dear papa says, every one has his own special work in the world, and Hugh's work is very clear to take care of his mother and sisters. He might like to go and see our Saviour, for I know Hugh loves Him very much, but I think he would rather stay and do his work here first, if God will let him. I *think* so."

"I *hope* he will," said Beatrice earnestly. "Next to you, and papa, and mamma, Hugh has been more good to me than anybody;

and he *saved* me, Lilian, you know—and—oh, I *hope* he won't die," sobbed poor Beatrice. "I will ask God not to let him."

"So will I, pet," said Lilian; "and that will be a great comfort."

"Lillie," said Beatrice presently, "do you know, I so often look up into that blue sky, and wonder if my own mamma is in that Heaven your papa has taught me about. I so often wonder! Do you think she is?"

"Dear Beatrice," answered Lillie, "we cannot know that; you never seem quite sure whether she was with you on that terrible night, and we cannot tell at all. If she is not still living, we will hope she *is* safe with God in Heaven. My darling little sister, won't you try and be quite my own little sister, and have papa and mamma for your own papa and mamma? You know they want it to be so," and Lillie kissed her little adopted sister, and folded her in her arms very lovingly.

"Yes, Lillie, dear. You know I love you all, and you are all so good and kind to me, I can never love you half enough for it all; but sometimes such a longing comes to know where my very own mamma is, and I try to remember about her, and cannot. That dreadful night seems to have washed it all out."

"Dear pet, it must seem very hard, I know, sometimes," said Lilian soothingly, "but it is God's will, dear Beatrice, and you *must* agree to that."

"Oh, I wish I was good!" was poor Beatrice's next lament. "I know my naughty tempers vex you all. It is *so* hard to be good, Lillie; I don't believe you know half how hard it is; you seem born to be good, and I—I know I was born to be naughty."

"Rather a sad necessity for a little girl, certainly!" said a voice behind them. Both the children started, and turning round, met a face as pleasant as the voice they had just heard. It was one of those faces one rarely meets, where sweet content seemed to have her dwelling-place. Its owner was young, almost boyish-looking; and yet there was a sweet gravity about the lips and in the clear, earnest eyes, that made one feel he was one to be trusted in and reverenced. He stood looking at his young companions for a moment, then, sitting down by Beatrice, who had risen from her place in Lillie's lap, and taking the little girl's hand in his, he said,—

"And what makes it so very hard to be good?"

"I don't know, sir," said Beatrice shyly, "but I *feel* naughty most days, and then I do naughty things."

"Ah," said the stranger thoughtfully, "we are all very apt to think and do naughty things." Then, as he looked out over all the beauty round, he added, "See how beautiful and how *good* nature is! The waves go on ebbing and flowing year after year, never tired of duty and work; never weary of bearing the ships upon their bosoms; never tired of giving a home to the thousands of creatures that shelter in their depths; never failing to yield up to the glorious sun of their fulness, to fall again in fresh showers upon the thirsty earth, which in its turn obeys and works. But our hearts want bringing into harmony with this love and obedience of nature to its God, and there is only one thing that can do this. Do you know what that is, dear little girls?"

"I think," answered Lilian reverently, "I think you mean the love of the Lord Jesus Christ in our hearts."

"Yes, just that. He obeyed and loved perfectly, and whenever His Holy Spirit comes into a heart, that heart learns to obey and love too, and does not *want* to do 'naughty things.' Do you understand, little one?" he continued, looking at Beatrice.

Her large, mournful eyes were full of tears.

"You look very sorry about something," added their new friend, compassionately;

"am I too new a friend to ask what is the matter?"

Beatrice's tears fairly overflowed now, and Lillie had to answer. She told as well as she could how their friend poor Hugh had met with a sad accident, and how he had been specially Beatrice's friend, having aided in saving her life; and as she told the story of that dreadful night, the tears came into poor Lillie's eyes too, and she was fain to leave the rest untold.

"And I cannot bear to think of Hugh dying," sobbed Beatrice, as Lillie ended. "I should miss him so."

"We will hope that he will not die, dear child," said the stranger. "You can do one very good thing for him, any way, you know. Let me tell you an old legend I once read. It was written by the old Rabbins in the Jewish Talmud. It tells how, outside the gates of glory, with his feet upon a ladder of light reaching from earth to heaven, stands a wondrous angel named Sandalphon. There he stands, in the great silence, ever listening to sounds that are always ascending from this earth; and every prayer, uttered ever so faintly, ever so wearily and weakly, he hears in that great silence, and gathering up every prayer as it falls upon his ear, changes each into a gloriously radiant,

fragrant garland, which, handed to those angels within the gates, sheds its sweetness through all the heavenly city, as it is cast down before the throne of the great King. He, in His infinite condescension, breathes upon it the breath of life, and it returns through angelic hands, down the ladder of light, to the poor earthly suppliant, no longer a poor heart-broken sigh, but an immortal wreath straight from Heaven's own King. Do you see, little girl, what you can do for your poor friend?" asked the stranger.

"Yes," answered Beatrice, "I can pray for him."

"And then *wait* for the answer. But who are my new little friends?" continued the gentleman, looking at Lilian.

"I am Lilian Herbert," she replied, "and this is my sister, Beatrice da Castro."

"And would you not like to know who *your* new friend may be, if you will allow me that title?" said he smiling. My name is Charles Irwin, and I am come to live about five miles from here, at Allerton Rectory, with my sister Grace. I came over this morning to call on your papa—at least, I suppose Mr. Herbert, of St. Mawse, *is* your papa?"

"Yes," said Lilian smiling.

"Well, I hope we shall soon be very good

friends," said Charles Irwin kindly; "but good-bye now, I must hasten home;" and shaking hands very warmly with both the little girls, he left them, and soon disappeared behind the cliffs.

"I like him very much; don't you, Lillie?" said Beatrice.

"Yes, very much; but we must make haste home too now, or we shall be late for dinner; besides, we should tell papa about Hugh."

And away they went as fast as possible.

CHAPTER V.

"All joys go less
To the one joy of doing kindnesses."

At dinner that day the children heard something of their new acquaintance from their papa. His father had been a college friend of Mr. Herbert's; and Charles Irwin upon coming to his first curacy, had lost no time in renewing his early friendship, hoping to enjoy and profit by Mr. Herbert's society in the secluded spot which was now to be his home. He had brought his sister Grace to live with him at Allerton, and Mr. Herbert assured the girls she would prove a most pleasant companion for them, if she in any way resembled either of her parents.

The good clergyman brought home rather a sad account of Hugh, when he returned from the cottage. The leg was badly broken. It had happened among the rocks, and for some time no one heard his cries for help. However, the doctor gave hopes that if he rested for some time, and gave the setting a fair chance, he would be all right yet.

"But how can they all live until then?" exclaimed Lillie. "Even now, it is as much as Hugh could manage to get bread for them all."

"It is very distressing," said Mr. Herbert; "we must help them as much as possible."

"I have a plan, papa!" cried Beatrice earnestly, clapping her hands. "Let us do without something, like that brave family we were reading about yesterday—may we? Let us do without sugar and butter. Do! Will you, Lillie?"

"O yes, that I will!" said Lillie warmly, "with all my heart. May we have the money our sugar and butter would cost, mamma, and give it to Hugh?"

"Certainly, my dear," answered Mrs. Herbert, "and I shall be very happy to join in your self-denial for such a good cause."

"Well!" exclaimed papa, "I'm sure I am not going to make myself conspicuous by eating sugar and butter alone, so I here signify my intention of joining your club, Beatrice."

"Oh, how rich we shall be!" cried both the children, fairly dancing about with delight.

"How much shall we get weekly, mamma, do you think?" said Lilian.

"Let me see," said mamma. "I pay Mrs.

Crewe half-a-crown every week for butter' and I think if we say a shilling for sugar, it will be tolerably correct; so that will make —how much, Beatrice? Can you manage such a sum in addition?"

"I should think so, mamma, after all those dreadful things I did on my slate to-day. Let me see," she continued slowly, "two shillings and sixpence, and then one shilling, that would make three shillings and sixpence!"

"Wonderful, Beatrice!" said Mr. Herbert.

It was rather a joke against poor Beatrice. that she was singularly stupid at figures, and seemed to have the greatest difficulty in getting through a very simple sum. Indeed, papa had threatened several times lately to have the organ closed for a month on week days, as he was afraid all the little girl's energies and senses went out at her fingers' ends into the organ-pipes!

But Beatrice would plead so eloquently, even with tears, and promise so faithfully to "do her addition better to-morrow," that somehow the organ still sounded under her touch in the twilight, and the tears still trickled down the slate on sunny mornings, washing out the unfortunate figures that "wouldn't come right anyhow."

The plan for helping Hugh worked fa-

mously. At first, the bread tasted "rather dry," and the tea "rather sour," as Beatrice observed; but they got used to it, as people may to most things of the sort; and then the idea of carrying the money on Saturday to the cottage helped it down, and they did not "grow weary in well-doing."

Saturday morning came, and they set off very delightedly to the beach.

Hugh was feeling better, and very glad to see his friends. He seemed almost overwhelmed when Lilian produced the little purse, and giving him the money from herself and Beatrice, told him it would come every week until he was able to work again.

"And Hugh," added Beatrice, "you must be sure and rest as long as ever the doctor wishes, that you may not be lame all your life, and Lillie or I will come and read to you most days."

"Bless you, Miss Beatrice and Miss Lillie too," exclaimed Hugh, with tears in his eyes, "this seems almost like a reproof to me; here have I been just fretting as I lay here, wondering where the meals were to come from now for mother and the rest of them. I hope it will teach me to trust God to take care when He lays by those who have been able to provide. You are too good and kind," he added, looking gratefully at his little friends.

"Lillie likes to; and *I* never can be good enough to you, Hugh," said Beatrice softly; "you helped to save my life, you know."

"I am right glad and proud to have done it, Miss Beatrice," he said, adding, as he sorrowfully looked at his bandaged limb, "I could not do as much now."

"No, now you must lie still and be read to," said Beatrice.

"*Bear* God's will instead of *do* it," said Hugh, "as that good young Mr. Irwin told me yesterday."

"Oh, did he come to you?" asked Lillie, "I am very glad; we liked him so much the other day when he met us on the cliff."

"He is very kind," said Hugh. "And now, Miss Lillie, please read to me, if you will."

Lilian opened The Book, and read that chapter of great and everlasting comfort, the fourteenth of St. John. She read very well, with clearness and feeling; and every word of the precious truth seemed to come right home to the heart of the fisher-boy, as he lay there with closed eyes and pale face. He knew something of the feeling of that peace which nothing can touch, and it satisfied him.

When Lillie had finished, Beatrice pulled her favourite hymn-book out of her pocket, and asked Hugh whether he would like to hear some hymns.

"Yes, Miss Beatrice, dearly I should," he replied. "I like your un-English way of saying the words, though, maybe, Miss Lillie reads best after all."

And truly Hugh was right, for there was something peculiarly sweet and thrilling in the half-foreign intonation and accent with which Beatrice read.

Taught by a good reader, and endowed with a quick ear, she neither hurried nor drawled her words.

So Beatrice read several of her favourite hymns, and listened to Hugh's remarks upon them, after which they said good-bye to Hugh and his mother; having made the children happy with some pears from the Rectory garden, and returned home very glad they had determined to do without their sugar and butter.

CHAPTER VI.

"A little chamber in the house,
As green as any privet-hedge a bird
Might choose to build in."

On Saturday afternoons the children did pretty much as they liked, and were mostly alone. It was Mr. Herbert's specially quiet time in his study, and he could not be coaxed into any rides with Nelly the pony, nor any long pleasant walks, as on other days. Mrs. Herbert, too, was usually engaged on these afternoons, so that Lilian and Beatrice were left entirely to their own devices.

Sometimes they wandered about among the hills, getting different sorts of wild flowers, and sometimes, when any one could be found to blow for her, Beatrice found her way to the old organ-loft, but that was very seldom, specially since Hugh's accident; and latterly the two girls had usually spent the afternoon in a very pleasant place, with books or work. This favourite nook was their own little bedroom, that same room into which the sunbeams looked that morning we spoke of after

the storm. It was little changed since then; there was the same sweet picture of Lilian's mother when a child, and the same sweet happy face near it, and so like; a little older and graver perhaps, and yet not much, for Lilian Herbert was still a very child at heart, for all her fourteen summers. It was a very snug little room, as I said, papered with green, Lilian's own choice, and carpeted with a very pretty green and white pattern. The girls had each their little bookcases, and each a small dressing-table, covered with white muslin. The window was low, and completely embowered in roses and honeysuckle, and here the two ensconced themselves on stools, with their stockings and darning-needles, intending to please Mrs. Herbert by being unusually industrious.

This window looked just through an opening in the cliffs, out over the sea, and the fresh breezes came in quite pleasantly, catching a breath of the roses and honeysuckle as they came.

The talk between the two touched upon various matters—Mr. Irwin, and his hitherto unknown sister, Grace; Hugh and his misfortune, and how patiently he bore it; and then Beatrice fell to making very grand castles in the air (which she was rather fond

of doing), for helping several of the poor families on the beach.

"I wonder God lets good people like Robin and Hugh be poor," she said presently, "don't you, Lillie?"

"I often have wondered," answered Lillie, "and I asked papa once about it, and he said that he thought God kept special blessings for His poor people, that quite made up to them for the want of earthly riches, filling their hearts with such a feeling of His love and care over them, and then giving them all those beautiful promises in the Bible, made specially for the poor; and then, as papa said, "Our dear Saviour Himself was a *poor* man, that the feeling of poverty, and even of hunger and thirst, may be softened, and made almost sacred to all those who should come after Him, and suffer all these things as He did."

"Well, it must be very dreadful to be poor —*really* poor, I mean," said Beatrice; "only, of course, it is much worse for those who don't think about Jesus Christ, and Heaven, and good things. Poor, *contented* people are so nice to go and see," continued she. "I like even to watch the smoke curling out of that dear old Robin's chimney now, because I can fancy him sitting so happily in the settle, weaving his baskets. I always fancy his

smoke looks whiter, and curls up more prettily, than that cross old Jenkyns's next door."

Lillie laughed. "Hugh and Robin are such friends of yours, Pet," she said, "that I don't wonder you admire every thing that belongs to them—even their chimney-smoke! But poor Jenkyns is very savage, certainly. He told Nannie yesterday, he was sure that mamma sent him all the bones, and Robin all the meat, on Saturdays."

"Ungrateful old wretch!" cried Beatrice, "I think I really would, if I were mamma."

The "Old Robin," who shared with Hugh in Beatrice's supreme regard, was a very old man, who had been scarcely able to move from his settle in the chimney-corner for sixteen years, owing to an accident he had met with while working in the mines. He had the very cheeriest smile and tone in spite of his daily trial, and sat there, crooning away bits of old tunes to himself, weaving his baskets, which found a tolerable sale among the fishermen and few neighbouring farmers.

"The top o' the mornin' to ye, young ladies!" was his usual greeting to Lilian and Beatrice; and though he acknowledged it was "a bit weist" (lonely) now and then, sitting always in-doors, or at most getting just out in front, yet he always wound up with a

cheery smile, and a "Bless ye're dear hearts, lassies, there's niver a dark day but has some sun somewhere, though we don't allays see it!"

He could not read, a fact he always sorely regretted, and now his sight was too far gone, so it was an almost daily duty and pleasure with the girls that one of them should look in upon Robin, and "gie him a bit o' the 'Book,'" as he phrased it.

"Look here, Lillie!" exclaimed Beatrice presently, "won't mamma see I have improved in my darning? Look at that long Jacob's ladder I have mended."

"Yes, indeed, pet, that is quite splendid," answered Lilian. "I think, do you know, that darning is rather nice work, after all."

"So do I, Lillie; it looks so well when it is done—nicely, at least."

"You may well add that, Pet," said Lillie, pointing to a former perpetration on Beatrice's part in the toe of her stocking.

Just then the girls heard a voice from the garden, saying, "Good afternoon, young ladies," and looking out, saw their stranger friend Charles Irwin smiling and bowing to them beneath the window. They nodded and smiled in return, and presently heard him talking in the study.

After a little while Mrs. Herbert came up

to tell them that Mr. Irwin had kindly come to fetch them to Allerton for the afternoon and evening, if they could manage the distance.

"And papa thinks you may, by riding Nelly in turn, so make haste and get ready:" which the little girls most delightedly did, and were soon ready to set off.

Nelly, the white pony, was brought round ready saddled, and the three (or rather four!) started on their pleasant expedition.

CHAPTER VII.

"And so we wandered gladly on,
And talked of all things fair and good,
Too wondrous to be understood,
Yet things we loved to think upon."

It was a glorious August afternoon as they set out, Lillie on Nelly's back, and Mr. Irwin and Beatrice walking by the side. Everything looked lovely; the sunshine danced upon the glittering waves, which rippled joyously, as though life were to them some fairy thing, and the happy birds and insects filled the air with pleasant sounds.

Charles Irwin's was one of those glad happy natures that seem always in tune; and being very fond of children, he invariably won their hearts. He had heard all about Beatrice from Hugh, and felt greatly interested in the little girl.

"Have you thought any more about our chat on the cliff?" he said presently, "and of the only way to cure naughty feelings?"

"Yes, often," answered Beatrice.

"You see," he continued, "if our hearts are filled with good thoughts, like a garden carefully sown with sweet flowers, there will not be so much room for the weeds of passion, and idleness, and wrong feelings to spring up, though they will still often sprout up between while we live in this world. By the way, there is a splendid bladder campion over yonder. Let us get it." And he and Beatrice were soon deep in furze bushes, bringing back with them a fine specimen of a beautiful crimson colour; and, walking by pony's side, Mr. Irwin explained the different parts of the flower to his companions, teaching them their names. Then they gathered others of a different kind, and compared them one with the other, learning how the different orders had a different number of petals forming the corolla or flower, and sepals, forming the calyx or cup. Then they examined the little hair-like stamens, and the beautiful little seed-vessels at the base of the flower.

"And what causes the different colours of flowers, Mr. Irwin?" asked Lillie.

"That is rather a puzzling question, Miss Lillie," he replied; "but I will tell you as clearly as I can what philosophers have stated to be the cause. If it sounds dry and unintelligible you must say so, and we will

find something more interesting to talk about."

"Oh, I want to know so much," said Lillie; "I shall try very much to understand, and be sure not to think it dull or dry."

"Very well. You know, of course, that it is the rays from the sun that give colour at all, and darkness is the absence of colour. Each of those rays of light that come from the sun, and make the world radiant with beauty, is made up of all the colours that you see in a rainbow; and some of the things that these rays fall upon have the power to reflect one of these colours, and some another, and this is because the surface of things is differently constructed. Perhaps you will understand this if we think of what is much the same thing in the cords or strings of musical notes. The thicker the cord is, the deeper and stronger will be the tone produced; so, in the same way, the thickness or thinness of a lamina (or skin) affects its colour. There is an analogy between light and sound—those two wonderful things in God's universe. Do you know what I mean by 'an analogy,' Miss Beatrice?" asked the young clergyman, turning to his quiet little listener.

"Yes; papa told me last Sunday that it meant the likeness between things when

compared with other things, and that these things need not be alike exactly. I cannot quite explain," said Beatrice, "but I think I understand. Papa said it was like the feathers of my canary and the hair of Nelly the pony, which, though not alike, had an analogy."

"Famously remembered, Miss Beatrice; and now to go on. Thin, tight cords or strings produce shrill, sharp sounds; and thin-skinned substances reflect blue and violet colours. Thick cords produce deep, bass sounds; and thick laminæ reflect red colours. I remember hearing of a blind man, who, when he was asked what he imagined the colour of scarlet to resemble, answered, 'It is like the deep blast of a trumpet.' He *felt* this analogy we were speaking about."

"How is black produced?" asked Lilian.

"Black is caused by the surface of a substance being so composed that it refuses to reflect any of those undulations of light which touch it, and therefore they cease. These surfaces are to light what those substances we call insonorous are to sound. Do you think, Miss Lillie, you understand something more about colour than you did?"

"O yes, thank you, Mr. Irwin. I am so much obliged to you. I think I understand

the facts, but *how* it so happens seems a great mystery."

"It does. Nature keeps her secrets well; and God's ways are 'past finding out.'"

"I always love white flowers best," said Beatrice presently; "they look so pure and good."

"Yes; and I suppose they are the most perfect in construction," said Mr. Irwin; "for the white of a lily, and other purely white objects in nature, is caused by the surface being so formed as to reflect perfectly all the different colours in a ray of light, and present them to the eye, pure, and perfect, and equal in proportion, like harmonious tones in a full chord of music."

"I shall think of pure white to-morrow when I hear those beautiful chords on the organ," cried Beatrice.

Mr. Irwin smiled, and said musingly, half to himself, "They shall walk with me *in white*, for they are worthy."

"I often think of that verse," said Lilian, "when I look at white flowers."

"They are beautiful emblems, I have often thought," said Mr. Irwin, "of what a Christian life should be, and may be, upon earth; even the life of a child, in great measure, may be reflecting the love, and obedience, and patience, and unselfishness

which shone in the life of Christ, the Sun of Righteousness."

They went on silently for a few minutes.

"Now Beatrice," said Lillie presently, "it is quite your turn to ride, and I am sure you must be tired."

"No, indeed," she answered; "I feel fresher even than when we set out."

However, as they were about half-way to Allerton, Mr. Irwin lifted Lilian off, and put Beatrice upon Nelly's back.

"Now I am off for a canter," she cried gaily; and, nodding merrily to them, she soon left her companions at some distance behind; then in a little while they saw her come galloping to meet them, and, having had her fling, she walked Nelly quietly along for the next mile.

The country here was very fine, as, indeed, it is all along the Cornish coast. They were upon a breezy heathy common, at a considerable height above the sea, which foamed and dashed against sharp jutting rocks beneath. The sky was of an intense blue just overhead, and then gradually faded into a paler shade as it neared the horizon where sky and water seemed to meet.

The three enjoyed it very much, and looked thoroughly happy. Lillie had yet one more question to ask.

"Mr. Irwin, what is it makes all the leaves and stems of plants so green in summer, and then change to brown or red in autumn?"

"Just what I was wondering myself, Lil," exclaimed Beatrice.

"They are so on account of a peculiar chemical substance called chlorophyle, which is formed within their cells. The green is light and delicate in spring-time, because the chlorophyle is not fully formed; and it gets brown in autumn, because then this substance is undergoing decay."

"Thank you," said Lillie.

"One more question," said Beatrice, looking up with a saucy laugh in her dark eyes. "Mr. Irwin, do you know everything?"

"No, Miss Beatrice," he replied, laughing. "You must remember you have not drawn very long or largely yet upon my knowledge. I have had such famous listeners though, that I fear it has been a temptation to talk rather learnedly. Have I tired you?"

"O no, indeed!" exclaimed both the girls, eagerly.

"It has been very nice to listen," added Lilian. "I like being with people who can answer questions, and who are so kind as not to mind the trouble."

"That last would be too bad," said their

friend; "like shutting up a well's mouth, when thirsty people come to draw water."

They were now coming near Allerton, and the road led off the common they had been traversing the past three miles, and wound through shady lanes, leaving the sea to the left. They passed several very cosy-looking farm-houses and pretty cottages, with fields of barley ripe for harvest, gay here and there with patches of poppies in their scarlet coats.

Turning off from the main road, Charles Irwin led Nelly and her mistresses up to a little gate, and taking off his hat, said, with a very profound bow and grave face, "Ladies, welcome to Allerton Rectory!"

CHAPTER VIII.

"A shady freshness, chafers whirring,
A little piping of leaf-hid birds;
A flutter of wings, a fitful stirring,
A memory—too indistinct for words."

THE Rectory was a very picture of a home; a low thatched cottage with gable ends and projecting roof, a deep porch, and latticed windows. A splendid passion-flower wreathed itself round the casements, and added its beauty to the sweet scent of jessamine and honeysuckle.

A smooth green lawn extended round the house, with pretty shrubs here and there, and flower-beds, bright with scarlet geraniums and deep blue lobelias.

Lillie and Beatrice drew quite a deep breath of satisfaction as they looked.

"O Mr. Irwin," said Beatrice, "is this your home? What a lovely place!"

Just then the door opened, and a young girl, about Lilian's own age, came out. It was Grace Irwin. She was not actually pretty, but her face was very pure and

sweet,—a face one would love, and trust, and like to look at, almost without knowing why. As Beatrice remarked afterwards to Lilian, "she looked like one of those white flowers we talked about on the way."

"This is my sister Gracie," said Charles Irwin, as he led his visitors forward to meet her.

She welcomed them very warmly, and led them in through the pretty porch, up the broad oaken staircase, to a long, low, old-fashioned room, that had a pleasant old-fashioned smell of lavender about it, and then she helped her guests to take off their things.

"I have been hoping to see you ever so long," she said; "it will be so pleasant to have some friends near my own age. We are not very far apart, I suppose?" she added, turning to Lilian.

"I am nearly fifteen," said Lillie, "and Beatrice is just eleven."

"I am just seventeen," said Grace, "and yet not any taller than you," she added laughingly.

Lillie was tall for her age, and her sweet refined manner and extreme gentleness made her appear older than she really was sometimes.

"Now you must be very tired, and want

to rest, I am sure," said Grace; and taking her new friends down-stairs into a pretty shady sitting-room, she made Lilian nestle down in one corner of the low sofa, and sitting down herself in the other, drew Beatrice into her lap.

"I know partly why Charles takes so to you, little Pet," she said presently, looking at Beatrice; "you are so like a little sister of ours who died many years ago. Dear little Effie! She had just such merry dark eyes and curling hair, and we so grieved after her. She was Charles's special pet. But here is Charles, he has been looking after the pony."

He came in as she spoke.

"Are you quite tired out?" he asked, looking at his visitors.

"O no!" answered Lillie, "only just enough so to make resting very pleasant; but Miss Irwin has made us look very lazy, I am afraid."

"I am Grace here," she said, "not Miss Irwin. When people intend to be friends, I think Christian names are much nicer and pleasanter."

"So they are," said Lillie. "Papa was talking about names the other day, and telling us the meaning of a great many."

"The worst of it is," said Charles Irwin,

"a great many people who get nice names never fulfil their meanings. What is your favourite name, Miss Lillie, if one may ask?"

"Well, I hardly know, but I think we decided the other day that there was scarcely a finer one for meaning than 'Margaret.' Papa says it comes from the Persian originally, and means 'child of the light.'"

"That is nice!" said Grace.

"Yes, it makes one think of 'walking in white' again," said Charles Irwin. "By the way, your own name is something akin to it, Miss Lilian."

Lilian's colour rose; perhaps she felt how difficult it was to be truly *pure in heart*, and how impossible to bear the *light* of God's glory and perfect purity.

"Miss Beatrice," continued Charles Irwin, "yours will be a very happy life if you make it correspond with your name."

"Yes," said the little girl, "papa told me I must try and be a blessing, and so get blessed myself."

"Now," said Grace, "I think our tea is ready for us. I thought it would be pleasant under the ash-tree on the lawn this lovely evening."

"Just the thing, Gracie!" said her brother; "you always manage to think of pleasant things."

So the four adjourned from the cool shady parlour to the still shadier tea-bower under the foliage of the weeping ash. The round table was most delicately laid, and two cosy-looking settles, comfortably cushioned, were arranged for seats.

On a snowy white cloth, and the whitest of china, reposed rich-looking strawberries, and dainty little rolls, with a tiny pat of butter upon each plate.

There seemed to be about this brother and sister a very atmosphere of love and peace, that Lillie and Beatrice felt the enjoyment of completely, and more than once Lilian thought of the pure white flowers, and how the lives of these two embodied their teachings.

After tea, they wandered about the garden, visited the bee-hives, and the pretty shaded nooks that Charles Irwin said often made famous studies to make sermons in. At the back of the house were two splendid flowering limes, that "sent messages" of sweet odours all about the garden, and through the open windows into the cottage; and under these trees Charles Irwin proposed to put up a swing, if Beatrice would promise to come over often and use it. She was no way unwilling to do that, of course.

Then he introduced them to his real

study, with its famous library of books. They enjoyed looking at some engravings of halls and country seats in ancient and modern styles of architecture, but most of all they were delighted with a portfolio which Grace produced, containing some sketches of her brother's, which he had made while travelling on the continent.

They were in water colours, and greatly delighted Lilian, who had some talent that way herself; but she thought she had never seen anything so beautiful as one or two of these Rhine views, with their lovely skies, and picturesque old ruins.

"You shall try and copy some of them, if you like," said her friend; "and you must let me give you a little help in the matter, if I can."

Lilian looked most gladly grateful as she thanked him.

Presently they came to some studies of heads and figures, and among them was one that seemed to have entirely fixed Beatrice's attention. It was a dark, oval face, with lustrous, melancholy eyes, and a profusion of black hair, half concealed by a Spanish mantilla of rich lace. The whole figure was exceedingly striking and graceful: it was a lady leaning over a marble balustrade, and a fountain played near her; she held a kind

or lute in her hand, and seemed to be enjoying the quiet evening retirement, and the groves of orange-blossom just below the balcony.

Lillie was too busy among the landscapes to notice Beatrice, but Charles Irwin saw the child's colour flush over cheeks and brow, and her lips quiver, and the large eyes fill with great tears. He went round, and looked over her shoulder, to find out the cause.

"What is it, my child?" he said presently, as she continued to stand and hold the picture.

"Oh! it—it is like mamma!—like mamma and our home!" she sobbed out convulsively; and she hid her face on Mr. Irwin's shoulder, as he took her on his knee, where she wept a passion of tears, refusing every attempt to be consoled, even Lilian's.

When she was a little calmer, she asked to see it again; and when Grace brought it to her, she kissed it passionately, and wept again with joy when Charles Irwin told her she should have it for her own.

"My own pretty mamma!" she kept on sobbing to herself, and again and again kissed it fervently. She could give no clear account at all about it, only that she was sure it was her mamma, and she seemed to remember

a place like that. The picture had stirred up some memory within her heart that had hitherto slept in forgetfulness.

Charles Irwin soothed the excited little girl tenderly, and at last succeeded in quieting her with his pleasant talk; and then Lillie thought they must see about returning, as they had some distance to go.

"You had better take Blackbird to-night, Charles," said Grace, "and let Beatrice ride with you, and then Lillie can ride Nelly all the way."

"Yes, I intended doing so," said her brother; so, after they had wished Grace a very loving "good-night," and she had begged them to come again soon, Lillie mounted the white pony, and Beatrice, her precious treasure in her hand, carefully packed up, was lifted up before Charles Irwin on Blackbird, and the three rode home together in the still light of the summer evening.

"We have had a most pleasant time, Mr. Irwin," said Lilian, as her friend helped her to dismount at the gate. "Thank you very much."

"It has been a great pleasure to us to have you," he replied, "and I hope you will prove your words by coming again. Good-night;" and, gently setting Beatrice down,

he remounted Blackbird, and the two girls hastened in to give an account of their afternoon.

Mr. and Mrs. Herbert were very much interested in the picture and their little adopted daughter's excitement about it, and Mr. Herbert produced a frame from the study which seemed to fit it nicely; so Beatrice was made happy by having it hung up in their little bedroom that very night.

"I am *so* glad we went to Allerton to-day," whispered Beatrice, when she and Lillie were alone together; "so very glad! It seems as though I knew my own mamma now. That must be like her; it seemed to bring her right back to me."

"I am very glad you have the picture, dear Pet," said Lilian, fondly kissing her little adopted sister, "though at first I was afraid it would make you too sad."

"O no, Lil, it won't do that; it will be a great comfort to me. It seems like the first news of her I have had, and perhaps some day I shall really see her."

"Perhaps so, darling; and if not here on earth, we can pray and believe that you will in heaven."

That night, long after Lilian slept, Beatrice lay awake; and when at last she too slept, it was to dream that she had found her mother.

CHAPTER IX.

"Yet, for what reason not children? Of such is the kingdom of Heaven.
Strong as a man, and pure as a child, is the sum of the doctrine."

THAT first pleasant visit to Allerton was followed by many such. Lilian's drawing lessons commenced in earnest, and such was the skill of her teacher and her own perseverance, that she made good progress. Blackbird and Nelly had to make frequent excursions over the common, even on frosty winter days, and in the early spring which followed.

Grace Irwin was a frequent visitor at St. Mawse, and the three girls spent many pleasant hours together on the cliff; or Grace and Lilian sat on the high mound in the churchyard overlooking the sea, whilst Beatrice revelled in masses and overtures on her beloved organ.

She made rapid progress in music; it seemed as though, to that child, the very soul of harmony lay open; but, what was

better still, she tried, and succeeded in great measure, in controlling and subduing the unlovable things in her nature, which had made her at first so great a source of anxiety to her kind friends. The eye still flashed, and the crimson still flushed over cheek and brow at small provocations, but the angry word and burst of passion were checked, and this was no small victory.

To Beatrice's great delight, Hugh had recovered his strength nicely. That quiet time of suffering had been of immense service to him in many ways, and when he arose from it, all noticed with pleasure and almost wonder the difference. It seemed as though that other life had gained for him a real and intense interest, from his having so nearly passed its portals; but he seemed to have risen from his sick bed with some elevating, ennobling influence, which left its mark upon all his daily life.

That summer there was to be a Confirmation at the little church of St. Mawse; and Lilian Herbert, Hugh Burns, with several other of the young parishioners, were looking forward earnestly to its approach, when they should, by their own act, renew the promise once made for them, "to keep God's holy will and commandments, and walk in the same all the days of their lives."

Beatrice had often thought anxiously within her own mind whether she too might not join with her two dearest friends in this public act of self-consecration. She was much younger, she knew, that summer would complete her twelfth year; but then, as she said to herself, she could do all that was required outwardly, and she felt as though it would be a help to her in her daily struggle against sin.

"My dear sister," she said one day to Lilian, "I should like to tell you what I was thinking, if you won't laugh or think me foolish."

"I need hardly promise that, surely," was the reply.

"Well, do you know, I have been thinking for a long time, wishing I might do as you and others are going to do next August."

She stopped.

"Well, dear, and why not?"

"Why, you know, I am so young, and you know, too," she added mournfully, "I am so often naughty and passionate, and do so many wrong things, that I am afraid almost to ask papa even to let me promise so much; I have been afraid to tell even you of my wish. Do tell me what you think about it," pleaded the little girl.

They had walked on into the churchyard, and were standing by the old wall that overlooked the sea.

"I don't think being young has anything to do with it," said Lillie, "at least, not if you are old enough to know what you promise, and to whom you must look for help to keep that promise. I think the great thing is to feel that you love the Lord Jesus Christ, and that your first earnest desire is to please Him and live for Him. I think that is the sort of feeling we should have when we give ourselves to Him publicly."

Beatrice was thoughtfully silent.

"And as to doing naughty things," continued Lillie, "the best and oldest of God's children will go on doing them so long as they are in the body; the difference is, that those who love Christ, grieve over their wrong-doings, and strive earnestly to conquer sin in their own hearts, while those who do not love Him, *let* sin reign over them willingly. I think, too, such a giving up of oneself, as it were, to God by a solemn promise, is often a help, and we know Christ has said, 'Them that honour Me, I will honour.' Dear Beatrice, I should indeed be glad, if it should so be that you come with us in August."

"Thank you," said Beatrice, "I am so glad I asked you about it. I think I will speak to papa to-morrow."

"Yes, he will be sure to advise you wisely and kindly."

The next day Beatrice was in Mr. Herbert's study, and timidly told her wish to him.

"Dear child," he said, drawing her to him kindly, "I am glad God has put this wish into your heart, and I would not discourage it; still I would have you weigh very seriously all the solemn responsibility such a giving up of yourself involves. You promise your Heavenly Father Himself, before the world, from that day, to give up your own desires and self-seeking, for His holy will and service; to strive daily and hourly against sins of *thought*, as well as of word and deed, and to make it the one object of your life to please and serve Him who gave His life that you might not die eternally. Is my Beatrice ready to promise this from her very heart?" asked Mr. Herbert gently.

"I think so, dear papa," said Beatrice, with tears in her eyes. "I will try; I should like to try."

"I believe you *have* tried lately, Beatrice, and that makes me willing to consent to what you wish."

He kissed the little girl fondly, and then, her hand in his, they knelt down together, while Mr. Herbert prayed that the good and gentle Shepherd would lead this little lamb into His own fold, and give her grace and strength to keep there, and never wander away from His love and care. That day was long remembered by Beatrice. It seemed as though a new impulse had been sent into her life. Lilian and Grace Irwin helped greatly to strengthen this influence by example and advice, and Beatrice seemed to grow daily in gentleness and obedience.

No longer a stranger, but like a child of the house, she still fondly cherished the picture that had first given a definite form to her vague remembrances of home and childhood; and she still often wondered whether she had yet a mother somewhere on earth, or if she was indeed an orphan. She was soon to know.

CHAPTER X.

"'Bonnie boat, bonnie boat, what have ye there?"
'Tidings I bring, O maiden fair!'
'Bonnie boat, prithee, what tidings rise?'
'Some are for smiles, and some for sighs.'"

ONE beautiful summer morning, about a fortnight after Beatrice's wish had been made known concerning the Confirmation, Lillie had been down to the beach on some errand of kindness, while Beatrice remained at home to help Mrs. Herbert.

Lilian was returning slowly up the cliff, when she heard footsteps behind her, and turning round, saw Hugh running full speed to overtake her, and looking as though he had some important news.

He hardly waited to say "Good morning," but rushed at once to the subject uppermost in his thoughts.

"Miss Lillie, they say a vessel bound from Spain has put into Veryan harbour, and that a Spanish gentleman has landed! Do you not think he may possibly know something about Miss Beatrice's home and friends? Would it not be worth trying?"

Lilian thought a moment, and then begging Hugh to wait there, she ran to fetch her father, before saying a word to her little adopted sister.

Fortunately, Mr. Herbert was just coming out for his usual walk as Lillie reached the top of the cliff. She told him what Hugh had said, and they returned together.

Lillie hardly knew in her own heart what she wished. Glad as she would have been of anything that could bring joy to Beatrice, she yet dreaded exceedingly anything that might possibly take her from them.

After talking the matter over with Hugh, Mr. Herbert decided to go to Veryan with him, and see what chance there seemed of any news that could be of interest to Beatrice before exciting her hopes uselessly. Lillie was to return home and say that her papa would not be back until evening; and as he sometimes went out with Hugh when any unusually interesting cruise was on hand, this would cause no surprise at all.

Lilian would hardly have believed a day could be so long. She had no quiet opportunity in which to tell her mamma the truth, and both Mrs. Herbert and Beatrice were quite at a loss to account for their usually calm, gentle Lilian being so restless, and even irritable. She could settle to nothing.

"Come, Lil," said Beatrice at last, "I shall saddle Nelly, and take you over to Allerton. Perhaps Grace may be able to calm your disturbed spirits; you are far beyond mamma's power, and even mine. The ride will do you good, at all events; so come along."

But no; Lilian could not be prevailed on to leave the house by any amount of persuasion, until, towards evening, feeling as though she could bear herself no longer, she put on her hat and begged Beatrice to come on the cliff, or, "No, Pet, better still," she said, "go and dream on the organ, and I will sit on the churchyard mound and listen."

"Really, I don't think it will be safe, Lillie," laughed Beatrice, "with your present appearance. The bogies will surely come out and mistake you for a wandering sister of their own, and be claiming acquaintance!"

So she tried to laugh away her sister's grave looks, but it would not do.

"Never mind, dear," she answered; "only please do as I ask you just this once—go and play to me."

So Beatrice ran off, declaring that Lilian was getting "like other people;" went into the old church, and, leaving the porch-door open, ran up into the organ-loft, Lillie having sent a boy she found in the yard to blow for her.

Then Lilian sat down on the highest point she could find, and began watching for the little boat which should bring back her father and Hugh. What *else* it may bring she almost dreaded to think.

Then her thoughts went back over all the past years: the time when Beatrice had first come there, a little homeless foreigner; the day when she had found her at the organ, trying to make audible the only language she could take home to her heart; then all the pleasant hours they had had together of sisterly love and confidence; and then the sad possibility of her being suddenly bereft of the little warm, loving companion who filled so large a place to her; that this very night news might come which should blot out all this as a reality, and make it only like a pleasant dream to be remembered;—and thinking all this, Lilian fairly gave way, and wept as passionately as Beatrice herself could have done.

Meanwhile the unconscious object of all these tears played on, in happy ignorance of any particular joy or sorrow awaiting her.

Presently Lilian felt a hand laid kindly on her shoulder, and turning round startled, met Mr. Irwin's face looking very grave and concerned

"My dear Miss Lillie, what can possibly have happened?"

Lilian quieted herself by a violent effort sooner than she could have thought possible, and then gave him a tolerably clear account of what was the matter.

"I will go down to the beach presently," he said, "and get the very earliest news; but, Miss Lillie, you must try and bear this quietly. You know—do you not?—who rules this matter, and you know He will send just what is best—best for you, and best for her."

But now Lillie is sure she sees Hugh's boat, and hurries Mr. Irwin to the beach. Then she stands up, and leans eagerly over the old wall, and strains her eyes to see if they have any one with them. Yes! surely even at that distance her eager glance catches sight of a third figure in the boat! But who or what it may be she cannot yet tell. It comes nearer and nearer. Yes! there is her father, and there is Hugh; and now she sees a tall-looking figure, wrapped in a long dark cloak, and wearing an odd-looking sort of hat.

Oh, what has he to do, that stranger man, with her darling Beatrice? Within the little church, still the little fingers go on in the gathering twilight, drawing forth

sweet dreamy sounds from the organ, Beatrice little imagining that tidings of home and friends are waiting even at the door! And now Charles Irwin sees the boat and those who are in it—and now he is hurrying down to the very edge of the shore—and now the last stroke of the sculls has brought them in, and they are landing.

First Mr. Herbert, then the stranger,—who looks to Lilian's excited imagination like the black phantom of evil, standing between her and her little sister — and now Hugh is on the beach, Charles Irwin has joined them, and they are coming, coming!

Lilian can bear it no longer. She rushes through the churchyard-gate, down the valley, right home to her mother, and pours out the whole story to her wondering ears.

"Are they coming *now*, do you say, Lillie?" asks Mrs. Herbert, quite bewildered by the strange and sudden news. "I wish you could have told me all this before," she added, kissing her daughter's flushed cheek. "Well, as it is so, we must wait, love, and hope the best, both for our dear Beatrice and ourselves." Her voice trembled as she added, "Let the dear child remain where she is until I have seen the stranger."

But Beatrice was even now running down

the little valley, through the garden-gate, and into the house with, "Mamma! mamma! Lillie! mamma! here are papa and Mr. Irwin, and such an odd-looking man with them, and they are coming here. But you look pale, mamma; and Lillie, you have been crying! O what does it all mean? What *is* going to happen? Tell me!

Just then the stranger stood upon the threshold.

CHAPTER XI.

"I wait for my story—the birds cannot sing it,
Not one, as he sits on the tree;
The bells cannot ring it, but long years will bring it,
Is it such as I wish it to be?"

BEATRICE stood pale and trembling with excitement, Lilian flushed and anxious, and Mrs. Herbert vainly endeavouring to conceal her own emotion.

Mr. Herbert introduced the stranger as Dr. Antonio. He was a very handsome man, though evidently past the prime of life. The grey beard and hair softened somewhat the stern expression of his face, which was intellectual and deeply interesting.

He bowed low to Mrs. Herbert, and, in a deep musical voice and slightly foreign accent, wished her "Good evening." Then glancing at the two girls who stood near her, his eye seemed to light up strangely as he looked at Beatrice, and approaching her, he held out his hand.

"And so you do not remember me, dear child?" he asked. "I should have known you anywhere, you are so like your mother."

Beatrice had taken the offered hand, and the stranger pressed hers to his lips, and at the mention of her mother's name, she felt a sort of yearning towards this old new friend.

"I do not remember you," she said timidly, "and yet it seems as though I had heard your voice before."

He smiled pleasantly, and took the seat Mrs. Herbert offered him.

"And now, Dr. Antonio," said Mr. Herbert, "we shall be very glad to hear all you can tell us about this little girl of ours," and he drew Beatrice to a seat on his knee as he spoke. Lilian was already on a low stool at her mother's feet, and all eyes were turned anxiously on the stranger.

"I will tell you with pleasure all I know," he replied, "and am only too glad that Providence has directed my steps hither for your sakes and my own. It is now many years ago that I became tutor in the family of Signor Da Castro. His name ranked high among the Spanish nobility, and his two sons were as high-spirited and handsome as their name was noble. They had no sister, but a ward of their father's, the Lady Beatrice da Castro, had been brought up with them from childhood as a daughter of the house. That was your dear mother,

Miss Beatrice." The stranger paused a moment, as he turned to look at the little girl, whose dark eyes were full of tears. Something seemed glistening in the stranger's eyes too, but he went on. "She was of a most sweet and lovely disposition, and beloved wherever she was known; when about eighteen she married my eldest pupil, who had purchased a commission in the army when he became of age. He was rather a headstrong, passionate young man, who would brook no control. Soon after his marriage, he went out with his regiment on an African expedition, and never returned. He fell fighting bravely, covered with wounds. The Lady Beatrice mourned his loss deeply, and we feared for her life; but shortly afterwards you were born, little girl, and it seemed to comfort your poor mother's heart somewhat. After my office as tutor had expired, I still remained in the family as private secretary, and during that time of sorrow spent many hours with my dear lady, who sought in the consolations of religion comfort under her affliction. She was a true Christian, and instead of repining uselessly over her early widowhood, she devoted herself to those around her, and specially to training her little girl as she grew older. This seemed her chief pleasure, for she

never entered much into society after her husband's death. One morning she sent for me, and astonished me by saying she intended to sail for England. I knew she had one brother (her only living relative), who had left Castile some years before for the south of England, and now she told me she had determined to go to him. She thought the change of scene and the voyage would do her good and be pleasant for her little girl. I entreated to be allowed to come too, but she was unwilling to let me leave her guardian, who was declining in years, and depended upon my help in many things. It was a sad morning (I remember it well), when I watched her depart, with her child, and two of the old servants of the family. The light seemed gone from the old house, and I had no heart left for my work. Little did we imagine, though, how sadly her voyage would terminate. And yet why do I say 'sadly?'" repeated the stranger; "sadly for us, truly, but not so to her; she has but anchored safely where no storms can ever reach her more: she has gained the heavenly port, and desires not to set sail again."

He paused. Beatrice was sobbing on Mr. Herbert's shoulder, and there were many tears besides hers.

"We often wondered," continued the

stranger, "why she never wrote; but not knowing her brother's address, were unable to make the inquiries we often longed to make about her. I had determined to use every means during my present visit here to discover something of her fate, and I have. God's will be done!" he murmured, and was silent for some time.

"We are truly glad to have met with you, sir," said Mr. Herbert warmly. "You must sojourn with us awhile, and give this little girl a chance of renewing one of her early friendships at least. Look up, dear Beatrice, and tell your kind friend how welcome he is."

The little girl did look up, and, meeting the kind dark eyes of her own mother's earliest friend, her warm nature was moved, and leaving Mr. Herbert, she came over to him, and put her hand in his.

He seemed very gratified, and lifted her on his knee, stroking her hair gently again and again, as though the sight of the child recalled pleasant memories to his heart.

"I seem half to remember you," she said again, presently; "and yet it seems more like remembering a dream; but I am so glad you are come here, so very glad!"

"Thank you, dear child; I, too, am very glad," he replied.

"Do you think you can at all aid us in finding out this uncle of Beatrice's who is in England?" asked Mrs. Herbert.

"All I know, madam, is this,—that his name was Da Castro, and that being disinherited by his father for some unforgiven offence, he left Castile for England. I believe he was residing in London at the time of his sister's departure; but where he may be now it is impossible to say. I shall use every endeavour to find him out now I am here."

Dr. Antonio willingly accepted his host's kind and pressing invitation to remain with them for a few days. He was a most pleasant companion; intelligent, refined, and amiable, he was soon a favourite with them all. Beatrice became very fond of him, and he lavished upon her all the warmth and devotion a child could engross.

"I loved your mother, Beatrice," he once said to her, "and I can never do too much for her child."

Many little things he told her of during that pleasant week connected with her childish days, and that dear mother whose sole joy and comfort she had been. Among other things, he asked her if she remembered the little family chapel, where she had spent many hours, listening to her mamma as she played on the organ.

"O yes," replied Beatrice; "I seemed to hear it all again on that first Sunday here; and were there not old tombstones and monuments in the chapel at home?"

"Yes," replied her friend, "monuments to generations of the Da Castros, of many preceding centuries."

"That fearful voyage seemed almost to wash away my memory," said Beatrice, "and I never could recollect clearly what went before; but you seem to have brought it back to me."

Greatly was Beatrice's friend delighted with her music, and many a pleasant hour did they spend over the organ in the old church.

Every one regretted when the time came to say farewell, and Beatrice herself sobbed aloud as they watched their friend down the cliff, on his way to the boat in which Hugh and Mr. Herbert were to escort him to Veryan. He promised her, however, to pay her another visit ere he quitted England, and a mutual correspondence was agreed upon.

"You are doubly our child now, Beatrice, my darling," said Mrs. Herbert, as they stood watching the little skiff. "Now no other mother claims you on earth, you are doubly mine," and she clasped her fondly in her

arms, where Beatrice was glad to weep away her sorrow and excitement.

"Dear Pet," said Lilian, "you can't think how thankful I am you are still left to us. What should I have done if you had found heaps of relations, who would not have let us keep you?"

"I am very glad, too, for that, Lillie; but yet, somehow, it feels sad to think that nobody wants me in the whole world—none of my own friends, I mean."

"Don't talk so, darling," cried Lillie, putting Beatrice's head in its old place on her lap; "we all want you so here, and Mr. Irwin and Grace; and Hugh and Old Robin, and all the beach-people; we could never have been happy without our own bright, merry pet. You must not think those sort of things, darling, but try and feel grateful, as we do, that you are still left to us."

"I do, Lillie, feel very, very thankful for my home, and all you dear kind friends; but yet I did want to feel what it would be to have an *own* papa and mamma. And yet," she said, brushing away a few tears that were gathering again in spite of herself, "yet I am very thankful not to have to leave you all; it would have been dreadful."

"It would, indeed," whispered Lillie.

"Do you know what I am most thankful

for of all, Lil?" said Beatrice, looking up into Lilian's face earnestly. "I am most thankful of all to be quite sure that my own dear mamma was a Christian, and that I may think of her as safe and happy. It has made me so glad—so thankful. O Lillie! I must try so hard to be a good child now, more than ever it seems to me, that I may meet her *there*. How I shall think of *her* when I go to be confirmed; it will seem as though she were looking at me. I wonder if she—if those up in Heaven do look down upon those they love and have left on earth?"

"I think it may be so, dear Pet; but we cannot know."

Beatrice seemed in danger of being spoiled that week; every one treated her like a precious treasure which they had been in danger of losing. There were one or two pleasant trips to Allerton, nice rides and chats with her friends there, and pleasant tea round the table under the weeping ash.

Grace was not very strong that summer, and the two girls were more frequently at the pretty Rectory, now that she found the journey to St. Mawse too much for her strength.

Lillie often said to Beatrice that Grace Irwin grew more sweet and lovable every

time they saw her, and that the peaceful feeling at the Rectory increased with every visit. In after days they often looked back on the happy hours spent there, feeling as though they had not half valued them whilst they could be enjoyed. So it is in this life of ours; we live so little in the present. Memories of past joys, which look tenfold brighter for the distance, or hopes of something which may be waiting for us in the future—we seem to live in these unreal things, and forget the *present* good which God deals out to us moment by moment.

CHAPTER XII.

"There are, in this loud stunning tide
Of human care and crime,
With whom the melodies abide
Of the everlasting chime."

TOWARDS the close of that same summer, when the August days were ended, the weather became intensely hot and sultry. The atmosphere seemed like one vast unwholesome vapour-bath, and sea and sky assumed a heavy, leaden appearance. A terrible fever broke out among many of the very poor and thickly-populated parts of the country.

The poor simple people at St. Mawse were quite terror-stricken at its approach, and the fearful number of deaths it caused; and on the Sunday, in the little church, very earnest was the "Amen" responsive to the prayer, "That it may please Thee to withdraw from us this grievous plague and sickness, through Jesus Christ our Lord." How instinctively does the human heart turn in times of overwhelming mortal terror to the one great Father of Spirits!

Mr. and Mrs. Herbert were indefatigable in their visits among the poor during the following week, endeavouring to impress upon them the necessity of keeping their homes well aired and clean, and also of feeding as much as possible upon good fresh meat, instead of the salt pork and fish which formed their usual meals.

Lilian, too, went about from cottage to cottage, like a good fairy, cheering the downcast hearts of the fisher-wives with her hopeful words and smile, and then comforting her own heart by a look at the cheery old basket-weaver, who still sung in his settle in the chimney-corner.

"Ah well, Miss Lillie," he would say, "we must hope the best, and e'en trust where we dunnot see; and as for ould Robin, why the sunner he've a done weaving and crooning down here, the longer he'll ha' to sing above. But tak' a care o' yersel', dear Miss Lillie," he would add, "for sich as ye are wanted in a weary warld o' tired women-folk."

Truly, Lillie Herbert was the one for her work. With the "dew of her youth" upon her, fresh and pure-hearted, calm and unfearing, she went about her daily work, unselfishly and successfully. Drawing from a hidden source her supplies of needful strength, each day found her equal to its

requirements. And what of Beatrice? Did the memory of that self-consecration which had been solemnized in the past month still abide with her, and bring forth fruit in daily life? In great measure it did.

Just at the commencement of this trying time Grace had sent over from Allerton, asking if her little favourite could be spared awhile to keep her company, as she did not feel very strong, and her brother was often away on parish business. Beatrice had been delighted to go, and there she now was.

It was very good for Beatrice to be with Grace Irwin, teaching her many a lesson of patience and self-forgetfulness that the child needed to learn, and which she never forgot in after days.

"Gracie," said she one evening, when they were sitting together on the lawn, awaiting Mr. Irwin's return from a visit to one of his parishioners, "Gracie, do you never feel afraid of this dreadful fever they talk so much about?"

"No, love," she answered, "I cannot see why a Christian need *fear* anything but sin. All these evils that are about in the world are, after all, perfectly under the control of the Heavenly Father, who, we believe, loves and cares for us far too well to let any *real* evil happen to us."

"I don't feel exactly afraid of having it myself," said Beatrice, "though I would much rather not; but I cannot help being afraid of losing any one I love. O dear! what *should* I do if Lillie were to die, or papa or mamma, or—any one I care for!"

"My darling Beatrice," said Grace Irwin, "you will have to learn to bear sorrow if you live long enough. We must not be so anxious to be saved from sorrow in this life. Every grief God sends has its hidden lesson; and no character ever yet became Christ-like and beautiful that was not first baptized in suffering of some sort. I feel sure every trial is sent to bring us something we want —either more patience, or submission, or trust; or, still better, to teach us to rest in God's love more than in any human one. Grief is very hard to bear, little Pet," continued Grace; "but when it comes we must take it up bravely, remembering that it is 'but for a moment,' after all, though it seems very long to us. We will hope, however, dearest, that the trial may not come to you now, if it please God.

"There is Mr. Irwin's step," cried Beatrice, and she ran to open the gate. He kissed her as usual, but she saw he looked grave and troubled.

"Grace, dear," he said, as he saw her on

the lawn, "the dews are beginning to fall; you must not be here longer;" and, passing her arm in his, he led her into the house.

"Are you very tired to-night, Mr. Irwin?" asked Beatrice gently, when they were seated on the sofa.

"No, Beatrice," he answered, "only a little anxious, perhaps, though there is no need to be that, if we had more trust. I have been visiting some one who is very ill, and who will not, I fear, live to see the morning. He paused, then sending Beatrice to tell Janet to hasten supper, he told Grace that three of the children in Widow Burns's cottage had been taken that day, and no hope given of their recovery.

"I met Mr. Herbert," he continued, "and he would wish Beatrice to remain here as long as we can prevail upon her to do so."

Beatrice now returned, and they sat quietly for a while in the twilight.

Presently Grace said, "Could not you and Beatrice sing something? It would be so nice to hear something good, and I like to hear you two sing."

"What shall it be, dear Grace?" asked Beatrice. "That favourite night-song of mine I should like best."

So they began. The little girl's voice, rather

unsteady at first, but gathering strength as she went on.

These were the words:—

"When the world is sleeping,
And the moon is keeping
Her watch above,
Then I fain would seek the skies,
For my soul doth upward rise
In silent love.

"When my spirit pineth,
Every star that shineth
Seems thus to say,—
'Mortal sorrows last a night;
Endless is the happy light
Of Heaven's pure day.'

"Nought below can harm us,
Not e'en death alarm us,
With Heaven in view.
Smiling hope forbiddeth tears,
Perfect love expelleth fears—
For God is true!"

It sounded very sweetly in the quiet evening light, as though it may have been an echo of the "everlasting chime" from Bunyan's Heavenly City.

"One more," Grace said.

And then they sang parts of the good old Monk of Cluny's "Rhythm," ending with those lines,—

"Thou hast no shore, fair ocean!
Thou hast no time, bright day!
Pure fountain of refreshment
To pilgrims far away!

There Christ, our King and Portion,
In fulness of His grace,
We shall behold for ever,
And worship face to face."

"Those words of Bernard de Morlaix have cheered many a fainting heart," said Mr. Irwin, when they had ended; "his was a brave, fine old spirit, or rather, a spirit that could never grow old at all, being so singularly independent of the frail body. But I think supper is ready; we shall scarcely need a light, and it seems a pity to shut the window."

The air came in deliciously, laden with clematis scent, and the "messages" from those same limes, under which Beatrice's swing had been erected long ago, and well used too.

After supper and family worship, which Mr. Irwin conducted with greater earnestness than usual, the family at Allerton Rectory retired to rest.

Beatrice had always a fashion of going to the window when the light was out, and having a look at the moon, if she was up, counting how many stars were to be seen.

To-night there was a splendid array, wrapt in the soft uncertain look of a summer sky. The moon shone calmly and peacefully down,

as though such things as sorrow and bereavement were not.

The little girl sat in the deep window-seat, according to her old childish fashion, looking out some minutes, thinking of many things, wondering about some, as most of us must ever do in this dim twilight of earthly life; then she jumped into the neat little white bed that looked so inviting.

Then she said her favourite verse to herself—a verse she almost always said "to go to sleep with." This was it,—

"Oh, little child, lie still and sleep,
Jesus is near,
Thou needst not fear.
No one need fear whom God doth keep
By day or night.
Rest, little child, in slumber deep,
Till morning light."

And then Beatrice fell asleep.

CHAPTER XIII.

"Ease after care, porte after stormie seas,
Reste after toile, deathe after life,
Heaven after earthe, doth greatlie please."

THERE were many watchers in many anxious homes that night, and in not a few was heard the summons, "The Master is come and calleth for *thee!*" Happy those who could arise quickly and willingly to meet their Lord. The doctor had little rest that night. In Hugh's cottage the light was still burning as the earliest streaks of daylight appeared.

His old mother was a widow no longer. The poor old lifeless clay indeed lay there still, but the freed spirit had entered upon its eternal youth.

Three of the children, too, had done with hunger and poverty, and had had the first sight of that "Happy Land" they had so often sung about in Lilian's little Sunday class.

Hugh was trying to comfort his sister Mary, and raising the poor weary head of

another little sufferer who was moaning with pain.

In many of the beach cottages there were mothers weeping over lost little ones, and children bewailing dead parents. The disease had come with mighty power among them, and those whom it had not yet visited seemed in hourly dread of its approach. Mr. Herbert came down the cliff very early, though it had been nigh morning when he left the beach. As he passed Old Robin's door, he knocked, and, receiving no answer, opened it gently, and looked in.

There lay the old man quietly upon the pallet which served for his bed. At first Mr. Herbert thought he must be asleep, but something in the look told him it was that sleep from which the awaking had been glorious. The cheery, brave old face looked glad and smiling as ever; more so, for it wore a look of infinite peace. Dear old man! his time for "singing up yonder" had come even earlier than he had hoped. He had passed away quietly, even as a little child might fall asleep on its mother's bosom—not of the fever, but of disease of the heart, from which he had long suffered.

The doctor was summoned immediately, but to no purpose; so they covered the venerable Christian countenance gently and

reverently, and turned away quite unwillingly from so much rest and peace to the daily work outside, where so much misery and unrest awaited them.

The minister of Christ seemed needed everywhere those next few days; either to bury those who had ended the struggle, to give last words of consolation and hope to dying sufferers, or to strengthen and cheer the timid hearts of those who lived in dread of what the next hour might bring upon them; and when at last, on Saturday evening, weary and heart-sick, he toiled slowly up the cliff, and reached his quiet, peaceful home, he met Lillie on the threshold, pale, and terror-stricken, with the sad news that the tender, loving wife and mother was ill.

Mr. Herbert hastened to her. She welcomed him with a cheerful smile as usual, and bid him hope it might not be so serious after all, and made him sit down by her side, and tell her about the beach people, cheering him with her hopeful words, even as she had done all the life they had passed together.

It needs not to tell of all the fears, and watchings, and disappointed hopes of the next few days. Suffice it to say they were all fruitless. Love and care did their utmost, but a higher love and deeper care called

her away; and she went, to her infinite gain, but their irreparable loss, where "there is neither sorrow nor crying, neither any more pain."

I cannot tell you of the desolate grief in the household at the Rectory. There are some things you know that cannot be told. Beatrice was not allowed to come home to mingle her tears with Lilian's over their best earthly friend, and she felt this deeply, for Mrs. Herbert had been quite as a mother to her, and there is no friend like a mother, save God; and until children learn to know how tender and loving *He* is, and that their mother's heart is but as one throb of His infinitely motherly heart, they cannot rest upon Him as they can upon her. Lillie knew something about that strong, pitying love of God; she had *felt* it, and it helped her to bear her great burden; but poor Beatrice gave full vent to the passion of her grief; and feeling a second time motherless, her heart rebelled sorely, and she felt even angry with her Heavenly Father. Long and earnestly did her kind friends Charles and Grace Irwin talk with her, and endeavour to teach her to say from the heart as well as with the lips, "Thy will be done."

It is not an easy prayer, that, for any of us to say with all our hearts, and it is of no

use to say anything to God unless we *do* say it with our hearts, as He reads them so perfectly.

It was a very sad Sabbath that week at St. Mawse. Many voices that had joined in the responses but two Sabbaths since—some even the Sabbath before—were now hushed for ever on earth. Charles Irwin came over to do duty for Mr. Herbert one part of the day. He spent an hour or two after with his poor bereaved friend, trying to soothe and comfort him, and promised Lillie to return early on Monday morning.

It was now that the true beauty of Lilian's character came out. She nobly tried to put away her own great sorrow, or at least the undue manifestation of it, that no duty might remain unfulfilled. All the household cares now devolved on her, besides many parish duties her mother had engaged in. In this time of general sickness and death the labour was of course increased, and Lillie set about her daily business right earnestly.

Beatrice returned after a short time, and the meeting between the two was characteristic—the one passionate, almost selfishly so, in her grief, the other stifling her own to soothe her adopted sister's.

Old Robin was deeply lamented by both, and many tears did both Lillie and Beatrice

shed over the desolate little cottage, from which, as Beatrice said, "the pretty white smoke would never wreathe again quite as it had been used to do," because they could never seem to see his dear happy face at the fireside as they watched it curling up.

Hugh's cottage, too, looked very empty —only himself and Mary left, with Ben, the next eldest boy.

One evening, when Lillie had finished her household duties, and seen her papa set off on his visits across the hill, and had watched his slow step and downcast head with a very heavy heart, she asked Beatrice to come to their favourite seat in the churchyard overlooking the sea.

The mother's grave was just at the foot of the mound, and Lillie had planted one or two little rose-trees and some lily-roots during the day.

The two girls sat down together for some time quite silently.

"Beatrice," said Lillie, presently, "you have not forgotten our mother's message, have you, love?"

"No, Lillie, you know I never can," answered Beatrice. "Why do you ask me?"

"What was it she said, Pet? Tell me, that we may think it over together."

Beatrice looked wonderingly at Lillie;

the tones of her sister's voice were so grave and gentle, and yet firm and earnest.

"Why, Lillie, you know, she sent her love, her dear love to Beatrice; and she must, for her two mothers' sakes, try to do her work in the world, and in her own heart, patiently and cheerfully, and meet them both in heaven.'"

The last words were almost sobbed out. "Yes, dear," said Lillie, soothing her little sister. "And now, darling, part of your work will be to bear this great sorrow that has come upon us patiently and rightly. We must not be angry and fretful, and shut ourselves up with our grief selfishly, but by patiently bearing it, and seeking to do our daily duty in life, prove that we are God's children, and are willing to *bear* His will, as well as *do* it. Dear Pet, don't think me unkind for a moment, but I cannot bear to see you day after day refusing to eat, and sitting down grieving as you do, and letting no one comfort you. Our dear mother would be pained if she were here, and we shall best show a loving remembrance of her by seeking to do what would please her. Is it not so, Beatrice?"

"Dear Lillie, I know I have been wrong," whispered Beatrice; "I will do better in future;" and she threw her arms round

Lilian, who kissed her lovingly, and they cried together a little while.

"There are not many of the beach people I care for now, except Hugh," said Beatrice, after a pause, "now Robin and Widow Burns and the children are gone."

"There are plenty that want our help, Pet," replied Lillie; "I have thought sometimes we pleased ourselves too much in our visiting down there. Now we must visit for duty's sake, and then we shall soon find enough to interest us."

"You always seem to feel *good,* Lillie," said Beatrice, half sadly.

"No, dear; indeed, I feel anything but 'good' often; but we must try and fill dear mamma's place, in some measure, to these poor people, though it will be badly filled, indeed;" and, feeling overpowered as she remembered all her loss involved, Lillie gave way, and cried very bitterly. It was now Beatrice's turn to comfort. She tried her best, assuring Lillie she would do all she could. And then the two went home together, "not to be out when poor papa came home."

CHAPTER XIV.

"A Dieu!—to God!—if not below, above.
While here on earth, how wide soe'er we roam,
High in an atmosphere of peace and love,
Our souls may meet in Christ, the wanderer's Home."

THE weeks passed on, and the healthy autumn breezes swept away all trace of the desolating fever from the Cornish hills. Time, too, softened the first bitterness of the sorrows it had brought to so many hearts. Lilian had settled quietly down to her work as mistress in the Rectory, and Beatrice even had gathered courage to touch her beloved organ again; indeed, she now took Mrs. Herbert's place among the singers in the choir.

Upon Mr. Herbert his wife's death told very painfully. He seemed hardly able to continue his duties, and the doctor recommended him to give up for at least three months his charge at St. Mawse, and get rest and change. For some time he refused to think of it; but finding his health and strength daily leaving him, he at last con-

sented, and engaged a friend to supply his place for a time.

It was decided that he should go with Lillie and Beatrice to the South of France, and the two girls were soon busily engaged in packing, preparatory to setting off.

"I am half sorry to go, after all," said Lilian, while they were resting after packing one great hamper. "I am really half sorry, Beatrice; do you know I often think we shall not see Grace when we return?"

"O Lillie, you surely don't think her so ill!" cried Beatrice. "Why she had a lovely colour yesterday, and talked quite cheerfully."

"That may be; but papa proposed her going with us, you know, and Mr. Bruce said she had not strength to take the journey, and it must not be thought about; that just made me think she must be much worse than any of us imagined. However, we will not meet troubles," added Lillie, "they come soon enough of themselves. We must go down to the beach to-morrow, and say good-bye to all the people; and to-morrow evening, you know, we are all to be at Allerton, to say good-bye there—it won't be nice at all!"

"No, indeed," said Beatrice. "I begin to think that what Nannie says is true, 'Every pleasure has its own pain.' How *nice* it

would be to have one delicious little joy without one little pain in it even ! I wonder how it would taste !" said she, smiling.

"Very unearthly indeed," said Lillie, "and altogether too ethereal for mortal lips to take in."

The partings of the next day proved indeed "not at all nice," as Lillie had foretold ; and when the evening came, and the quiet little party assembled in the shady sitting-room at Allerton Rectory, they felt unusually inclined to seriousness. Even Beatrice, generally the merriest of the house, was still, and sat on a low stool near Grace. There lay the chief doubt which seemed to weigh upon all save its object.

She was looking so fragile and so delicate, that all who loved her could hardly fail to see her beauty was not of this world, and it seemed more than doubtful whether they should ever all meet again on earth. She herself was by far the brightest of the group, rallying Beatrice upon her loss of spirit, and suggesting a thousand points of interest they would most likely meet with.

"You must leave Nelly to fraternize with Blackbird until your return," said Mr. Irwin ; "Hugh can keep her exercised now and then."

So that plan was agreed upon.

The farewells were at last spoken, and Mr. Herbert and Lilian, Hugh and Beatrice, returned home in the pleasant September light.

And now the morning has come, and Mr. Herbert is standing on the deck of the vessel that is to carry them away, with Lillie and Beatrice by his side, and they are waving their handkerchiefs and trying to catch a last glimpse of friends on shore, out of rather misty eyes. The tears would come somehow, and prevent their seeing them as clearly as they wanted to the very last.

Most of the passengers were very ill during the voyage, and poor Beatrice was among the worst. Many times she wished most heartily she had "never, never come this dreadful journey." And they were all truly thankful to land at Brest, from whence they intended to proceed southwards, stopping at different towns in their route, and visiting the various cathedrals and public buildings.

We cannot follow them through all their wanderings.

The picture-galleries greatly pleased both the girls, and Mr. Herbert took them about as much as his strength would allow. The splendid churches, too, they admired very much; and Lillie made many nice sketches during the long warm mornings, sometimes

choosing as a subject the dimly-lighted Gothic arches, with a fine altar-piece at the end, or the ruins of an old monastery, surrounded by vine-covered hills; and sometimes it would be a group of picturesque-looking peasant girls, drawing water from some well renowned for some wondrous healing virtues. Beatrice's love of music was gratified to the full. Never had she heard such strains of harmony as reverberated through the churches of France, and the deep-toned voices of the monks seemed to sound like the echoes of some distant chorus. They were both very much astonished to find how very little they knew of the French language, after studying it very carefully at home, and at first made many amusing blunders; however, by a little attention and practice, they found every day taught them something, and by the time they reached Moissac they were making rapid progress.

At Moissac, a pretty little place, Mr. Herbert intended remaining some time. They found lodgings in a cottage kept by a poor French widow, in a lovely valley, watered by a silver stream; and here the three spent a very pleasant holiday together.

They were within walking distance of the town, and about once or twice a week went in

to fetch any letters that might be waiting at the post-office.

Some weeks after their arrival, they were much saddened by a letter from Mr. Irwin, in which he said, "It will, I know, give you pain to hear of the sorrow I have had: my dear sister has left me, and I am very lonely. For her we cannot grieve; she passed away willingly and peacefully, on Sabbath evening last—literally 'slept in Jesus.' Dear Grace! It is very selfish to mourn her departure—such a good exchange of suffering for rest, of death for life; and yet one *must* mourn, after all. It is such a loss as you, dear friends, will understand. She sent her fond love to you all. I shall be thankful to hear of your welfare, and when possible, of your home-coming."

"Poor Mr. Irwin," cried Beatrice, "how lonely and sad he will be now dear Gracie is gone!"

"He will, indeed; but for Grace we cannot grieve," said Mr. Herbert. "Hers always seemed a peculiarly pure unspotted life, and she often struck me as prepared for early glory."

"Yes, I always felt that," said Lillie, "she always looked so entirely at peace, so *rested*, as it were; we often remarked it after being with her."

"So have I," said Mr. Herbert. "Most of the faces one meets have such a look of earth about them, either its care, or sorrow, or weariness; but dear Grace's face spoke of a heart lifted up and 'set upon a Rock.'"

This letter very much sobered the almost wild enjoyment of the two girls; yet they still enjoyed the many lovely walks about Moissac, and climbed its hills, from the top of which they could get a glimpse of the distant Pyrenees, and, as Beatrice said, "could fancy themselves in Spain." But they spoke continually of Grace and of their mother, and of that other unknown but still beloved mamma, lying somewhere in the ocean depths, and who seemed even nearer to Beatrice as she gazed upon the hills that overlooked her native land.

Dr. Antonio had not been able to return to St. Mawse as he had intended, and one day as the two girls were coming home from a walk they were talking about him, and wondering if they should ever see him again.

When they went into the little sitting-room, Mr. Herbert was there, and had a letter open before him. It was a foreign one, and he was reading it very attentively.

As Beatrice entered, he looked up, and, smiling at her, said,—

"My child, this is from Dr. Antonio."

"'Talk of an angel,'" said Beatrice, "'and you hear his wings rustle,' as the saying is. We were just now speaking of him."

"Well, here is news for you, Beatrice. Not what you would like best," he added, as he saw her cheek flush, and her eye kindle; "still it is pleasant enough, I suppose. What do you say to a nice country-seat in Devonshire, with a tolerable sum of money every year left to a young lady named Beatrice da Castro?"

"Papa, what do you mean?" exclaimed Beatrice, looking fairly bewildered.

"Just that," he answered. "Here is the letter; or stay, let me read it to you to help your comprehension of such unexpected intelligence."

And Mr. Herbert read how the uncle of whom Dr. Antonio had spoken had come to England, been successful in business, died a widower and childless, and had left all his property to his favourite sister Beatrice or her heirs, having none else he cared for in the world.

The good doctor ended by sending his blessing to Beatrice, and he hoped yet to see her at some future day.

At first Beatrice seemed neither glad nor sorry, only utterly amazed: *she*, the little friendless, dependent orphan, owing all she

was and had to the goodness of strangers! It seemed incredible at first; then, recovering herself, she threw her arms round Mr. Herbert and cried,

"Dear papa, I am so glad! It is all yours, all yours, for taking care of me ever since I was a poor little child! And I am so glad! You need not work or study any more, but we will all live together and be so happy! Why, it's just like a fairy story!" cried she, clapping her hands in her old childish way; "just, isn't it, Lillie?"

"It *does* seem strange," said Lillie; "this is almost your 'piece of joy without one little pain,' isn't it, Pet?"

"No," answered Beatrice, quieting down suddenly; "no, I am sorry mamma is not here to be glad, and there will be no Grace at home to tell it to."

"This will make a reason for our earlier return to England," interrupted Mr. Herbert. "I shall not be sorry on many accounts, and my health is fairly established; we will go by the very next vessel."

Beatrice, in spite of her fourteen-year-old wisdom, made many wonderful plans for the future during the few days that followed. Some of them were confided to Lillie, and some seemed too good to talk about at all, and were reserved for private speculation.

It was but a sad greeting the travellers gave and received from Charles Irwin, as they met him on their return to St. Mawse; but he seemed very thankful to have them back again; and the one street was lined with the villagers waiting to welcome their pastor and his children. It was truly a good home-coming.

"Well, if Miss Beatrice hain't growd out o' knowledge!" exclaimed several of the old fisher-wives.

"Bless their dear 'arts! It's good to clap eyes on 'em again," murmured another, using at the same time the unfailing apron-corner.

Nannie, too, was right glad to welcome them home; and once more they assembled round the tea-table in the dear old home parlour; and all declared it was "good to be at home again."

At first, thoughts of the one who had last met with them, and who never would again on earth, seemed to sober and quiet them; but there was much to be told, and a quiet gladness soon spread itself.

Beatrice's good fortune was of course talked over, and she was, as she said, "quite a heroine for the time."

"Indeed, I think you have had your share of romance all through, Beatrice," said Lillie; in which decision all agreed.

They soon settled down to quiet daily life, the only event of importance for some time being that Mr. Herbert went in a few weeks' time into Devonshire to see the solicitor to whom Dr. Antonio had referred him respecting the property, and brought back a description of the place which fairly bewitched Beatrice, and made her very anxious to make its acquaintance as soon as possible.

CHAPTER XV.

"O perfect love, that 'dureth long!
Dear growth, that shaded by the palms,
And breath'd on by the angel's song,
Blooms on in Heaven's eternal calms!"

THERE was no little stir early one fine spring morning in the little Rectory of St. Mawse about a year and a-half after the return of its inmates from the continent.

It was Lilian Herbert's wedding-day!

From being the loving, useful, devoted daughter in one Rectory, she was now to fulfil the duties of a wife in another not very far off—no further than Allerton.

It was a very fair spring morning, as we said, and Lilian looked very sweet and pure in her simple bridal-dress of white muslin, which Beatrice had arranged very tastefully, and decorated with knots of white violets and lilies of the valley, fit emblems of the namesake they adorned.

The bridesmaid herself made scarcely a less interesting personage than the bride. She was growing into a tall slim girl now,

and the expression of her face was much more subdued and feminine than of old. The lessons of life had not been lost upon Beatrice.

The words were soon said that gave Lilian into the keeping of her husband, Charles Irwin; and no one who looked upon his calm intelligent face and gentle dignity of manner could doubt whether her future would be a happy one. There were a few tears shed as she bid adieu to her father and Beatrice and old Nannie, who followed her young mistress with her eyes as long as a trace could be seen of the carriage that bore her away; but, on the whole, it was a happy day to Lilian, and but the prelude to a happier life.

Her class of Sunday-scholars had strewn the pathway from the Rectory to the church with early spring flowers—primroses, violets, bluebells, and sweet-smelling hawthorn—and at the end of the village the whole school had assembled, with many of the beach people, to scatter fresh tributes of their love, and bid her "God-speed" with all their hearts.

"Blessed is *she* that considereth the poor," said Charles Irwin softly, as they heard the last echo of the young loving voices cheering their faithful friend and teacher; and Lilian was truly "blessed" that day.

So Beatrice was left alone now, in great measure, at least. Upon her now devolved the duties in the house and parish which had been so well fulfilled by her sister since Mrs. Herbert's death. Now had come the day when she might prove, by a loving, devoted usefulness, how truly grateful she was to those dear friends who had been everything to her all her life long nearly; and, above all, how grateful to God for raising up such friends to her in her time of need.

And Beatrice did prove this nobly. She did not sit weakly down and bemoan her youth and inability to take up the work given her to do. No, she had grown wiser; and yet, knowing she was but young and inexperienced after all, she did not go forth in her own strength, for this she had proved to be perfect weakness. On that wedding-day, when the farewells had all been said, and the bustle was over, and the house felt desolate and quiet, Beatrice went up to the little room she had always shared with Lilian, and there she prayed long and earnestly that from that day forth she might have grace given her to live for others, strength to take up her daily work, and wisdom to do it; and that prayer in the quiet little room was answered.

Daily did Beatrice labour and strive to cheer and comfort her dear friend and father,

Mr. Herbert. She sat with him, read to him, walked with him, that he might not feel the change made by Lilian's absence. She directed the little household, and kept it in order; looked after the sick, that they might not miss the necessaries and little niceties that Lilian's care had always provided for them; and still found time now and then for the evening's practice on the old church organ. And so Beatrice grew happier and stronger in all good things day by day.

When the little maiden had become so suddenly possessed of such unexpected wealth, her naturally warm, grateful heart longed to make return in some way to all those who had made her life so different from what it might otherwise have been, and of course Hugh Burns, the fisher-lad, was not forgotten.

One morning when he went down to the beach to trim his old boat, and put off for the fishing, he found two men, strangers to him, dragging her up under the shelter of the cliff, while in her place there was drawn up on the sand a handsome new vessel, double the size of the old one, and bearing his own name in gilded letters on the stern. While he stood gazing at her in a half-bewildered state, and not knowing how to receive the congratulations of his comrades as they

crowded round him, Mr. Herbert came forward.

"Well, Hugh," said he, "what do you think of the new craft?"

"She is a capital sea-boat, sir. But what means my name on the stern, and H. B. on the sails?"

"It means that Hugh Burns is captain and owner, my lad; so as you answer to that name, you had better get her afloat, and see what you can do with her. You will make a good use of her, I know, and I expect you will find her all you could wish."

"She is a perfect beauty, sir. But how have I deserved this from you?"

"Not from me, my boy, but from Miss Beatrice. She is rich now, as perhaps you have heard, and her first care is to reward those who risked their lives for her when she was at the mercy of the stormy sea. She gives you a new boat. Your comrades will be as well rewarded. Now you are not to ask any more questions. Get your crew aboard, and let me see you off, that I may judge of your seamanship, and make a good report of it."

No more was said. In a few minutes the nets and creels were aboard. Hugh, with his brother Ben and two young lads, leaped into the craft as she slid down the glistening sand;

the sail caught the full breeze, and rising on the breast of an advancing billow, away glided the boat, Hugh waving his hat, and cheering lustily to the answering cheers of the beach-folk, who followed him with their hearty good wishes, and watched the white sails until diminished to a speck in the distance.

And now the day has come when Lillie is expected home, and Mr. Herbert, Hugh, and Beatrice are all at Allerton to welcome them. The little garden looks beautiful, with its early roses in their first bloom, and the rooms are faultlessly neat and pretty.

They have been listening anxiously, often running to the gate, and lingering about the garden walks. At last they come! Lilian looking sweeter and happier than ever, and Charles Irwin proud and glad to bring his new treasure to the old home.

Lilian thinks it looks fairer and prettier than ever; everything is so nicely arranged, and so beautifully sweet and fresh. "I have but one wish," she said to her husband, when their friends had gone home, and left them quietly. "I seem to have but one wish unfulfilled,—that mamma and dear Gracie could see us, and know how happy we are."

"Perhaps it is not an *unfulfilled* wish after all, Lillie," he replied. "Heaven may not be so very far away; nay, it feels very

near, and we will thankfully believe it is so even now, and that those who will may dwell in heaven whilst they are on earth."

And so ended Lilian Irwin's first home-coming.

CHAPTER XVI.

"A brave old house! a garden full of bees,
Large dropping poppies and green hollyhocks,
With butterflies for crowns—tree peonies,
And pinks, and goldylocks."

SOME years had elapsed after the marriage of Lilian with Mr. Irwin, before Beatrice considered herself of sufficient consequence to enter into possession of the old-fashioned and substantial manor-house and grounds which had been left her by her uncle. The property had in the mean time been well taken care of by a worthy family who had held it as tenants ever since the demise of the late owner. When at length Beatrice removed to Hollingwood, she did not go alone, but with Mr. Herbert, whose declining health no longer allowed him to discharge efficiently the duties of his sacred calling, and who was consequently constrained to delegate them to others. Doctor Antonio, also, who had survived his friends and patrons in his native land, at Beatrice's earnest request consented to become her

guest ; and with these two, her oldest and truest friends, she commenced her housekeeping. Let us look in upon her after she has been for twelve months mistress of Hollingwood Manor, and see how she is getting on.

The house is approached through one of the long flowery lanes for which Devonshire is famous. After many turnings and windings in the lane, we come to a broader road that leads on continuously, and pursuing this for a short distance, are presently in front of some large iron gates. Sounds of merriment and laughter meet the ear as we open the gate and enter the shrubbery.

It is rather an extensive one: rhododendrons and azaleas are in full bloom, and blend their rich and varied colouring with the sober evergreens. Tall stately elms and beeches grow there too, giving delicious shade.

The voices sound nearer, and through an opening amidst the shrubs we can now see the house itself, the smooth green lawn in front, and the merry group whose voices have just reached us.

The house itself is large and old-fashioned, built in the Elizabethan style, with pointed fronts and deeply mullioned windows. The portico is festooned with honeysuckle and sweet jessamine.

The garden is of the old-fashioned sort too. Tall white lilies rear their stately heads, and large, inimitable cabbage-roses scent the air; pansies of every hue, sweet-smelling stocks, and wall-flowers, grow together lovingly in profusion, while white and crimson hollyhocks range themselves like sentinels behind. The eye glancing round takes in all this, and much more of the nameless charm of such a garden lighted up by the warm rays of an evening sun; but the chief attraction lies in the smooth green lawn and the group upon it.

A handsome bright-eyed boy of some three or four summers is kneeling on the grass, endeavouring to initiate a pretty little terrier into the mysteries of "giving paw," "begging" on his hind legs, &c. Muff is very good-tempered over the proceedings, though he seems rather at a loss to understand them.

Sitting near these playmates, on a garden-seat, are three gentlemen, one of venerable age, with the snows of many winters resting upon him; the second, a younger man, who has yet passed the prime of life; the third is young and active, with a frank, pleasant face, and gentlemanly air. He has been having a game, and professes himself fairly beaten by Muff and Rodney.

One other figure completes the group—a tall, slight, girlish one, though with something of matronly dignity and grace mingling with the girlishness. She has been making up a nosegay, for in-door adornment most likely, and now comes up to her husband, her hands full of flower treasures—roses, pinks, honeysuckle, jessamine, and all sorts.

"There, Charles, isn't that sweet?" she cries, burying his face in an immense specimen of the afore-mentioned cabbage-roses; "isn't that delicious, now?"

"Me too, ma dear," lisped a small voice at her side; and then Master Rodney is picked up in motherly fashion, and something sweeter than the sweetest scent is imprinted on his rosy lips.

The reader recognises in the party on the lawn Dr. Antonio, Mr. Herbert, and Mr. Irwin, with his wife Lilian and their infant son, the young clergyman and his family having lately arrived from Allerton to spend a brief summer sojourn at Hollingwood. But where is Beatrice? Had we timed our visit only a few minutes earlier we should have found her on the lawn with her friends, and seen her vying with Lilian in petting little Rodney and spoiling him by indulgence. But ten minutes since the postman arrived with letters, one of which bore a foreign postmark,

and Beatrice has withdrawn to peruse them. Following her to her boudoir in the west-front, which overlooks an extensive bright-green landscape, bounded by the far-distant sea, we can watch her as she reclines at the open window and peruses the letter with the foreign postmark. She is not much changed since we saw her last, but her slight frame is more fully developed, and her clear skin is a shade warmer and browner, as though her Spanish blood were asserting itself, spite of her English training. That long letter tells of fresh accessions of wealth to which she has become entitled by the death of relations in Castile, whom she had never seen in her life, and of whom she now hears for the first time; and it calls on her to make speedy election whether she will return to her native land and inherit them, or forfeit them by remaining in England. The wealth thus offered to her acceptance is most considerable in amount, and would secure her a high social position were she to grasp it; but it has no temptations for Beatrice, who would shrink from purchasing it by the sacrifice of her English home. That other letter, which lies on the table unopened, would dissipate all such temptations even if they did exist. It is from Irwin's younger brother Max, who for the last four years has filled Mr. Herbert's

place at St. Mawse. Beatrice takes it up and opens it; but, before she reads it, she tears that Spanish letter to shreds, which go flying like a snow-fall out at the window; from which very emphatic and decisive demonstration the reader may conclude, if he think proper, that Lilian's presentiment, which she has long entertained, and which is to the effect that her brother-in-law Max will ere long be master of Hollingwood, is the true one.

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