

great interest to me, and much comfort, to have watched and cared for him all through his illness. It began with his catching cold when he went with me to Garden River on the 27th October, and we all got drenched to the skin. He took to his bed on the 18th November, with severe headache. About eight days after the pain moved to the back of his neck and spine; we did not, however, think seriously of him, until the evening of the 22nd. When I went my rounds about 10:30 p.m., I found him in great agony with his head thrown back and could not put it forward, with signs of delirium coming on. I woke up two boys and sent them for the doctor, who arrived about 2.30 a.m. He pronounced it to be, cerebro spinal meningitis, and gave slender hopes of his recovery. By this time he was quite unconscious and continued so with occasional gleams of consciousness until his death at 10 p.m. on Wednesday, 28th ult.

The night before he died when he was evidently sinking, I had all the boys in to bid him farewell; he was lying in a sort of stupor (active delirium having ceased.) When the last dormitory boys gathered round his bed, we had singing and prayer. We sang "The Sweet-by-and-by," "Safe in the arms of Jesus," "Over there," and "There is a fountain filled with blood." Esquimaux, William, and Adam, besides myself offered prayer. It is indeed a comfort at such times to feel that there are some among the boys who will join with me, and in whom I can feel confidence, that they are treading in the Saviour's footsteps. I was sitting beside him on the bed, holding his hand and felt the last beat of his pulse as his spirit quietly fled. Riley and Adolphus were in the room attending on me but did not know he was dead until I had closed his eyes.

On Thursday evening he was laid out in his coffin, his hands folded over his breast holding a geranium, and all the boys came in to take a last look at their comrade, and some of them kissed him. Then we again sang the same hymns we had sung at his dying bed two nights before.

The following day (Friday) was the funeral at 3 p.m. Esquimaux Adam, William, Joseph, James, and Pedahjewan were the pall-bearers, each with a white sash crossing the breast; his younger brother Pilate was chief mourner; the rest of the boys with white badges on their arms followed. I was glad we had had our little cemetery done up a little while ago; it looks so nice now, with its grass, gravel walks, and flower-beds, and though so late in the season there was only the barest sprinkling of snow on the ground; and so we committed John's body to the ground: "Earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust," in sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life. I shall place a neat slab at the head of the grave, with his name, age, place of abode, etc., and the verse: "Them also which sleep in Jesus shall God bring with Him." E. F. WILSON.

Family Reading.

THE PENNANT FAMILY.

CHAPTER XII.—ON THE ESGAIR.

One evening in autumn a figure stood at the extremity of the Esgair, on the point familiarly called *Twyryn y Witch*, or the "Witch's Nose." The signs both of sea and sky indicated a stormy night, and the wreckers were preparing their false lights for their diabolical work. The Esgair, as has been said, was the ledge of rocks that ran the farthest into the sea of any on that coast—farther even than the promontory on which Craigavon Castle stood. It was difficult and even dangerous of access, on account of the slippery nature of the rock in some parts, and irregularity in others; still it was not unapproachable, though shunned by the superstitious on account of its name and the legends that appertained to it. Its highest point was a cone, surmounted by a sort of shelf of overhanging rock, which looked towards the sea, and was called *Cader y Witch*, or the "Witch's Chair." The back or concave of this chair alone was dimly visible from the land; the hollow or front from the sea. Latterly, the country-folk and fishermen declared that witches, fairies, corpse candles, and all sorts of strange sights were visible on the Esgair. As the fairies were universally believed

in, most people imagined they had taken compassion on the mariners, and were struggling with evil, in order to save them from destruction. The "little men in green" were supposed to be the souls of such human beings as were not good enough for heaven, nor bad enough for the other place, so had their purgatory here, while permitted to aid in saving life and doing good. But their haunts were never invaded, though many a dweller amongst the vales and hills was said to have frequently seen them.

The fairy, or witch, as may be, that stood on the Esgair, was clad neither in green nor black, the fabled colours of the species, but wore the Welsh costume. She—for it was a woman—was dressed in the striped woolen of the country manufacture. The short petticoat and looped-up gown not only enabled their wearer to climb the rocks like a roe, but displayed a beautifully-shaped foot and ankle, while the short-hooded scarlet cloak and high black beaver hat protected her both from sun and shower. The figure beneath was tall, lithe, and graceful; the face—oh, what a face it was!—"beautiful exceedingly." Bands of sun-brown hair lay below the full lace border of the cap, and dark straight eyebrows between the high white forehead and drooped eyelids. The cheeks were pink and round as health and youth could make them, while the line of features was straight and regular. The eyes were not visible, for she was bending over some object with which her hands were engaged. These ungloved hands were sunburnt, and, though delicately shaped, seemed not unused to labour.

She stood near the Witch's Chair, on what would have appeared to most people a dangerous ledge of rock, but was to her evidently a place of security. Here and there patches of soil dotted the Esgair, and she had reached one of these; so that whatever the danger of her scramble, she considered herself safe. She was stooping over some sort of hole, from the opening of which she removed a flat stone, and whence she drew carefully what looked like an enormous lantern. Placing it within the Witch's Chair, she took from a large pocket, that lay beneath her short tucked-up gown, two packages: one containing a flask of oil and a wick, the other a tinder-box. From these she supplied and trimmed her monster lantern, and with much difficulty struck a light to kindle her wick. In days when there were no lucifer-matches or such-like appliances, some skill was needed to strike the flint with the steel so as to let the sparks fall on the tinder beneath, and produce the desired flame. It was, however, done successfully on this occasion, and a powerful light soon blazed within the big lantern. Happily there was no wind with the brooding storm. Had there been, so fragile a figure could not have stood on the Esgair, and the tinder would not have kept alight. As it was, however, our young witch managed not only to keep her footing, but to hang her giant lantern beneath the stone canopy of her chair.

When this was done, she knelt down, and, clasping her hands and uplifting her eyes to the darkening sky, said aloud, "Bless this beacon, O Lord, and save yonder ships from destruction; for His sake who stilled the tempest. Amen."

The upturned eyes were deeply blue and lustrous, and gave expression to a face of singular loveliness.

Rising, she examined the fastenings of her lantern, and muttered, "Once more, Carad bach."

Apertures were chiselled in the rock, both above and at the back, to receive the iron holders of the lantern, which were so inserted into them as to steady it, and which, being cast with the girders, were capable of resisting the winds. It was a wonderful contrivance, and must have cost the inventor much time and pains. Under no circumstances could the simple machinery have been seen from a distance without a telescope, and in the twilight that would not serve. That the light was at least dimly visible from afar was certain, because of the reputation the spot had suddenly again acquired for supernatural appearances. Will o' the wisps, or, as the Welsh call them, corpse candles, are common enough in all damp mountainous districts; so the sensible may have attributed this and similar lights to natural causes, but the ignorant to supernatural.

The sea raged below and the sky darkened above, when the young lamplighter turned from

her work, and fearlessly re-crossed the Esgair. She was sure of foot as a mountain sheep, and seemed to dare the precipices as if they were common field-paths. She evidently knew every step she had best take, and in less than ten minutes was beyond the steep slippery rocks, and safe on the hill at the back. Then she ran up the rough mountain-road, between serried ranks of prickly yellow gorse and heather, across a sheep-path on the down where, like Scott's Ellen, she scarcely crushed the harebell which rose "elastic from her airy tread"—and finally reached the road to Brynhafof.

"Good evening, miss; I know you by your whistle. Make you haste, or the storm will be upon you," said a cheery voice. "We're looking for a wreck to-night, and master has told us to be ready."

"Good night, Moses; I didn't know I was whistling so loud," was the reply.

Our witch had been whistling a Welsh air, softly as a sleepy blackbird, and now turned it into a song. *Ar hyd y Nos* suddenly pierced the heavy air in a sweet clear treble voice. No sooner had it begun, however, than it was interrupted by a joyful bark, and a big dog was upon her.

"Gwylfa! bad Gwylfa. Where have you been? Suppose I had fallen into the sea? Ah, I understand; you have been down to help. No wreck to night, Gwylfa. Here comes the rain!"

"Where have you been, Daisy?" interrupted a voice, and a young man stood beside her. "You should not be out so late. I have been seeking you ever since I came in from the field. We have been obliged to stack the corn again, because of the threatening weather, and I worked till sunset, or I should have been after you before."

"I have been looking for the fairies again, Michael, as Mr. Ap Adam says," laughed Daisy. "They keep me from harm. Oh, if I could but see them, and catch one, and bring her home, and put her in—in—a lantern! But how it pours!"

"Take my arm, Daisy, and let us run."

"Oh Michael, you know you must not run. And now you will catch cold again, and it will be my fault. Mother, told me not to let you be out in the rain. If you have another of those horrible blisters, and have to be bled, I shall never, never forgive myself."

Michael and Daisy hurried through the rain, arm-in-arm, and finally reached Brynhafof, followed by Gwylfa. They were met in the passage by Mrs. Pennant and Marget.

"What have you been about, Daisy?" asked the one.

"I'll tell you what it is, Miss Daisy?" began the other, "if you get wet you shall be drying your own clothes."

"Oh, mother, I was only caught in the rain just in the road. Now, don't scold, Marget, I will dry them all myself—but look to Michael," replied Daisy, whispering the last part of the sentence aside to Marget.

She ran up to her room, while Marget got possession of Michael.

Doubtless the reader knew, from the first, despite the cunning of the writer, that the witch on the Esgair was Daisy.

And the maiden was assuredly a witch, and a daisy in one—the witch in the scarlet cloak and conical hat; the daisy when they were removed. Her delicate cheeks were pink and white, her pretty lace cap had pink ribbons in it, and her muslin apron was white as daisy petals. The furniture of her little room was also of white dimity; while a pink patchwork quilt of a most elaborate pattern covered the bed.

"It will be a horrible night," she said, glancing out of the window that faced the sea. "Shall Carad or the wreckers have the best of it? Why will the earl keep that light in his tower? He can't be dressing for dinner, or undressing for bed."

She ran down to the hall, where she was greeted by old Farmer Pennant, who had been ruminating in the chimney-corner, with—"Ah, my Eye of day, thou hast been much backbitten by thy elders! Why dost stop out in rain?"

"I am not very wet, grandfather," she cried, as she kissed the old man.

He was still hale as ever, though perhaps his hair was whiter than of old. There was a loud