



THE
Banner of Faith.

APRIL 1886.

Hope: the Story of a Loving Heart.

CHAPTER IV.

IT was not very long before Harold Westall occupied a recognised position as assistant in the English shop.

'And quite time, too, they got some one to help,' said the Abermawr people, 'for Mr. Halliwell looks ill, and Hope can't do everything.'

Custom flowed in to the little shop now. Harold seemed to fascinate people, so Hope told her father, laughing over the announcement. Such a boy as he was, too! Hope could not fancy him her own age yet. She petted him as she would have done a young brother; kept breakfast hot for him if he happened to oversleep the fixed hour, mended his clothes, took tedious jobs, such as weighing out beforehand half and quarter pounds of tea for customers, into her own hands, and constantly made errands for him into Conway. The town was cheerful for young people. No wonder Harold did not care to continue his journey—was satisfied quietly and without much formality to take up Jonas Halliwell's work.

He was a clever young fellow, and in these early days it was not very evident that he was somewhat inclined to self-indulgence, contriving easily and without apparent design to leave the dull part of shop-keeping to Hope or Mari. What did

appear to the outside world was that the young man at the English shop was pleasant to talk to and to deal with. The youths looked up to him as a model of fashion and intelligence, and the girls, the plain ones as well as the fair, always left his company better pleased with themselves. He had smooth words for all.

Hope laughed at him openly for his 'compliments,' as she called them. 'Where did he learn them?' she asked him.

'It's the best way,' said Harold, his long legs dangling from the counter. 'Don't you think so?' He raised his grey eyes, shaded by dark lashes, to meet Hope's clear gaze. Those eyes always won people over to his opinion. They had a certain influence over Hope, too.

'But you sent poor ugly little Nesta away really thinking herself a beauty,' she protested.

'Well, just see if she won't patronise our shop now, instead of taking her goods of that meddling pedlar who has begun to come round,' replied Harold. 'Oh, I know what I am about, I tell you. Hope, have you seen Ruth Evans lately? I made her buy a blue silk ribbon because I said it suited her fair skin. Fair, indeed! She looks like a yellow rigger now. I can't pass her in the street without laughing.'

'Oh, Harold, how mischievous of you,'