

“A word here and a word there, my deary, like water dropping on a stone,” said Granny Morgan; “he’ll take to counting his clothes when they comes home from the wash, as he grows older, but the best of men is careless about such things. Just mix up a warning-like in all the news you sends him, like a powder in jam, and some of it will come home to him when he least expects it.”

Jeanne herself hardly knew the meaning of extravagance or self-indulgence.

She grew up hardworking and simple, red-cheeked and bright-eyed; an adept in bee-keeping and fruit-preserving and butter-making; though, being the farmer’s niece, she naturally left the milking of the cows to the herdsmen; nor would old Mrs. Morgan permit her to put her hand to any of the rougher work of the house, but prided herself on bringing up Jeanne “like a lady,” to sew her seam, and look after the dairy.

Nevertheless, Jeanne had her troubles, for though the rector and his wife were kind and homely, she was of little account in their eyes compared with their own over-indulged daughter.

Cecilia, in consequence, gave herself airs, and being older and bolder than her humble playmate, constantly asserted and maintained her superiority, until she electrified her little world by marrying, at eighteen, a celebrated scientist and archæologist, who had come to this out-of-the-way corner of Wales in order to examine the ruins for which it was famous.

The professor’s spectacled middle-aged eyes lit upon the rector’s daughter, and her apple-cheeked, fair-haired, buxom comeliness inclined him to wed Cecilia.

Her parents never dreamt of her accepting his proposal, but she did so; and it turned out that he was rich, and she became very superior and prosperous on the spot.

Thus she passed out of Jeanne’s life, and very nearly out of her parents’ lives also, who had existed since her birth only for her; and who were equally pained and bewildered by this unforeseen result of her promotion.