

"Is it I who am driving you away?"

"No, no," she answered. "I shall write to you. I shall write to you. I cannot trust myself to speak. If I began, I——"

It was she who broke off this time.

"I have so much I want to say to you," she went on. "Up at Peer Gynt's stue, when I turned towards you, I——"

She broke off again. . . .

The news spread about that the Englishwoman was returning to England the very next morning. It caused general dissatisfaction.

"Going away!" said Bedstemor. "Why doesn't she stay in Norway? That is the only place to live in."

"Going to leave the Gaard!" said Solli reproachfully; "before the harvest is gathered in, too."

"Going to England!" said the Sorenskriver sulkily; "to that barbarous country, which scarcely exists on the map."

"Going away!" exclaimed old Kari, "and before the cows come down from the mountains."

"Going away!" said Gerda, "before my Ejnar brings us 'the ranunculus glacialis.'"

"Going to England!" said Knutty, "leaving us all in the lurch here, alone, without you. Leaving me, my icebergs and my botanists—and for the sake of a brother and a sick friend: people whom you've known all your life! I never heard of anything so inhuman. Brothers indeed; sick friends indeed! Let them take care of themselves. Bah, these relations! They always choose the wrong time for crises; and as for friends, they are