

trophise. Nevertheless we loved terribly. Oh, what a time was that! I will just give the sample of a day.—We rose at seven (it was July), and wandered amongst moss-roses, velvet lawns, and sequestered summer-houses, till the lady-mother summoned us to the breakfast table. I know not how it was, but the footman on these occasions always found dear Barbara absent on a butterfly chase, gathering flowers, or feeding her nest robin, and Betty and myself on a sweet honeysuckle seat, just large enough to hold two, and hidden round a happy corner as snug as a bird's nest. The moment the villain came within hearing, I used to begin, in an audible voice, to discourse upon the beauties of nature, and Betty allowed me to be the best moral philosopher of the age. After breakfast we used to retire to the young ladies' study in which blest retreat I filled some hundred pages of their albums, whilst Betty looked over my shoulder, and Barbara hammered with all her might upon the grand piano, that we might not be afraid to talk. I was acknowledged to be the prince of poets and riddle-mongers, and in the graphic art I was a prodigy perfectly unrivalled. *Sans doute*, I was a little over-rated. My riddles were so plain, and my metaphors so puzzling, and then my trees were like mountains, and my men were like monkeys. But love had such penetrating optics! Lady Betty could perceive beauties to which the rest of the world was perfectly blind. Then followed our 'equestrian exercises'. Now Barbara was a good horsewoman, and Betty was a bad one; consequently, Barbara rode a pony, and Betty rode a donkey; consequently Barbara rode a mile before, and Betty rode a mile behind; and consequently, it was absolutely necessary for me to keep fast hold of Betty's hand for fear she would tumble off.

Thus did we journey through wood and through valley, by flood and by field, through the loneliest and most love-making scenes that ever figured in rhymes or in canvass. The trees never looked so green, the flowers never smelt so sweetly, and the exercise and the fears of her high mettled palfrey gave my companion a blush which is quite beyond the reach of a simile.