

"Rum and milk are, I believe, the proper correctives to this atmosphere," laughed Harry, who was with Wynne upon the box. "Shall I offer you some, Miss Ryder?"

The young lady looked rather indignant, and replied, "I'll have the milk without the rum; fancy spoiling the fragrance of all this," spreading out her hands expressively, "with such horrors. You're not going to do it yourself, are you?"

"Not if I know it," said he, preparing to descend from his perch. "Milk, then, for two."

"And oh, if there were only some cake!" sighed Wynne, whose tastes had by no means changed within the last few days.

"They'll have girdle-cake here if you ask for it," sang out Mary. "Let Walter negotiate. Stella, this is the kind of spot in which I should like to be buried. Just look at the side of that hill now, and compare it with a crowded city churchyard."

"What an odd girl you are, Mary!" was her sister's comment. "For me, I think I'd rather enjoy the beauties while life lasts. But I suppose nobody can help believing that they'll *know*," more thoughtfully.

"I wonder if we shall," said Mary. "I think so; because, you see, we are to have these same bodies, only a little changed, by-and-by. And surely we ourselves will take an interest in them until the time comes for soul and body to meet again."

Her voice had sunk almost to a whisper. Stella, who had seldom seen her in that mood, stared, whilst Wynne, the irrepressible, broke promptly in upon her meditations.

"Pray don't be dismal. Ah! here come the men. Walter's blandishments appear to have done their work. I've always wanted to eat girdle-cakes—a first-rate thing for the nerves, Dr. Jaxon."

"Is it?" looking up at the bright, quizzical face. "I'll remember in future to recommend it to my patients."

"And take some yourself now. I declare," the girl went on, "it's enough to make one lose all one's faith in the profession to hear of a nerve specialist broken down and come here to recruit his own nerves."

"How grand to be called a specialist!" was the response, though indeed his was a growing fame in that particular line. "Do they teach you how to flatter at

Shingleby? Now try if you can reach this glass of milk."

Of course she succeeded, and drained the creamy contents of the tumbler with a sigh of satisfaction.

Once more the horses were put in motion. Nor was it long before they reached the bend of the road whence they gained the first glimpse of Lazenby, nestling almost at the foot of Thorpe Hill.

It was a peaceful, beautiful scene, holding out promises, even in its rural calm, of rest and refreshment. But alas for the notions of tea that were already occupying most minds as the drag drew up! The one inn of the place, famed for its comforts both for the inner and outer man, was already occupied. A party of some hundred or more Sunday School teachers from Soderham had chosen this as their festival day, and were just sitting down to a substantial meal. Wynne's face betrayed some anxiety.

"I'm so abominably hungry," she confided to Harry. "And now we shall have to wait until these clear off."

Which indeed proved to be the case.

"I haven't a spare corner, sir. Very sorry, sir," the civil landlord remarked to Walter. "In an hour, now——"

"We shall just have to climb Thorpe Hill then," Mary observed. "The expedition takes exactly an hour, I believe. You'll be sure, Mr. Harbottle, to have our food quite ready by the time we return? And, after all, we shall get a better light now for the view than by-and-by."

Whereupon they started, and were rewarded by a sunset scene from the pointed peak which Walter declared to be worth many teas. This was an opinion, however, which he found no one to endorse, not even Mary, who was just as ravenous as Wynne by that time.

"As for me, I don't intend going down by the zigzag path," Wynne said. "I'm certain there's a short cut. Anyway, I mean to explore."

"You'll certainly get lost if you do," Stella warned her. But with a nod the girl started, followed promptly by the doctor.

"To bind up broken limbs," he assured the adventuress when he reached her side.

"Nonsense! It's as smooth and easy as possible, if it were not for the heather," she returned.

And as that same purple heather, thick