

A Ride up Snowdon.

I am sure I need not tell you that Snowdon is the highest mountain in Wales, for I expect you know all about it. But I am going to tell you how some years ago I rode up to the very top, and very wet and cold I was when I got there.

But I must begin at the bottom of the mountain, and tell you all about my ride.

We were a large party, and we had planned to make an ascent from Llanberis. But it was such a wild wet day that we were obliged to give it up, and went on to Bethgeiert, a name I am sure you know, from the interest that must always cling to that most touching story of the dog and the child—a story that never failed to bring tears to my eyes when I was a child; and I am not sure that even now I can read it without feeling a little uncomfortable—the “pity” of the whole story is so great.

Well, I must go back to our ride. We all started one morning very early, before the sun had really got up properly. But it seemed so mild and nice, that we went off in great spirits up the steep road, the beginning of the mountain.

You have no idea what a long ride it is up to the top of Snowdon! When we got about a quarter of the way up, the rain began to pour in such big heavy drops. Then we found ourselves enveloped in mist, and as far as scenery went, we might as well have stayed at home.

We rode strong little mountain ponies, which required no guiding at all, it being so much safer to let them go as they liked, as they are such clever climbers. There is one dangerous part which is called “saddle-back,” and it was perhaps well it was veiled in the fog, as our ponies stepped cautiously over the narrow bit of rock, with such a sudden steep descent on each side, down and down, into a valley far below!

However, we passed it all safely, and began the upward climb again. How cold it grew, it is difficult to describe. At last, when we were rapidly becoming icicles, we were cheered by seeing a little hut and a shed, and we realized the fact that we were on the top of Snowdon.

But alas, we saw nothing but clouds and fog, above us, below us, and around us, on every side. We were so cold, however, that I think we could hardly have enjoyed a view had there been one. We found shelter in the hut, and what a queer little hut it was! with a tiny stove, instead of a fire-place. The man who lived up there was impressed upon my memory as having no nose, or only a very little bit of a one; whether he one day slipped on the steep mountain-side and knocked the top off, history does not tell, but the fact was plain to see—he had lost the top of it.

We now discovered that, besides being frozen, we were starving! So we began to hunt for our noseless friend, to ascertain his powers of entertaining us, and a very quaint meal we had about eleven o'clock that morning, in that desolate-looking hut. We had bread and butter, toast and cheese, and milk, and were very thankful when our chilled frames gradually came to life again. I could not use my hands at first, they seemed so completely frozen. However, quaint as our meal was, we enjoyed it, up in the middle of the clouds as we were.

Soon our ponies were brought from their little shed where they always sheltered, and as the fog seemed less thick, and the rain had happily ceased, we began our homeward journey.

When we had descended about half-way, quite suddenly, like a fairy scene at a pantomime, the fog lifted like a curtain, and then, what a lovely peep we had of the world below us!

All seemed so small to us; from our height we could see lakes looking like ponds, forests like plantations, and white houses studded here and there amongst fields and woods and streams and hills. One longed to gaze and gaze for hours; but it was not to be, for, as suddenly as it had lifted, down came the fog curtain again.

We waited some time for it to clear, but in despair at last slowly wended our way downwards, perhaps feeling a little disappointed we had seen so little of the scenery, but also pleased with ourselves that we had really been up to the very “top of Snowdon.”

We had just time to take a hurried peep, with much pity in our hearts, at the grave of Bethgeiert, and then drove on to our next destination; and I hope, children dear, if you ever go up Snowdon, you will not have quite so much fog, but also that you will be as merry a party as we were.

THE COUNTESS OF HUNTINGDON.

Kate and Her Bird.

Kate went to the country to visit her cousin, and she was much pleased with all she saw. Some robins had built a nest on a small pear tree in the yard, and they used to watch the birds every day.

One day, Kate and her cousin Dick saw the robin come to the nest with a cherry in its mouth. Dick said there must be young birds in the nest, and the old bird had brought the cherry for them to eat. Dick climbed up to see, and he counted four young ones in the nest. He wanted to take them out, but Kate told him that would be wrong. They were too small for Kate to see them from the ground, but she came every day to see if they had grown big. In a short time they were so big that she could see them put their heads out of the nest.

One day there was a thunder storm. It rained very hard, and the wind blew so that Kate and Dick could not go out. After the storm they found one of the little birds on the ground. It had been blown out of the nest. They took it in the house, and fed it till it grew large. Dick gave it to Kate to take home with her. It became so tame that it would sit on her hand and sing.

Bessie's Horse.

When Bessie was a little girl, she asked her father for a horse.

“What would you do with a horse, my child?” asked her father.

“I would ride on his back,” said Bessie.

Her father told her she was too little to ride on a horse, but when she was old enough to ride, she should have a horse. So when Bessie was grown to be a young lady, her father bought her a nice horse. He was so big that she was afraid of him. He was afraid of Bessie, too, for he would not let her touch him. Then Bessie scolded him, and called him a bad horse. When her father heard her, he said:

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“If you want your horse to love you, you must be kind to him.”

Then Bessie went to the barn every day, and spoke kindly to him. She took him an apple one day, and he liked it so well, that he let her pat him on the neck. They soon became good friends.

—Never be discouraged because good things get on so slowly here; and never fail to do daily that good which lies next to your hand. Do not be in a hurry, but be diligent. Enter into the sublime patience of the Lord.—George MacDonald.

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