

inherit Coed-Ithel, he never talked of making any provision for Jeanne.

If her great-aunt left her a legacy, however, so much the better for her. Whether she did or no, Jeanne was a pretty girl, and would probably get married some day. Uncle Roberts did not pause to consider that Jeanne had scarcely seen, much less spoken to, a marriageable young man in her life. If she did not marry it would be her brother's obvious duty to keep her.

He did not trouble himself overmuch concerning Jeanne, though he liked, in a vague way, to know she was "about the place"; a timid, bright-eyed, dimpled little thing, always happy, and occupied, it seemed to him, with her own harmless concerns, into which he had no wish to pry. He left her entirely to the care and under the orders of old Granny Morgan, the woman who kept house for him, and who still looked upon Jeanne as a little girl, though she was five and twenty years old.

Nor did Jeanne receive over much consideration at the Rectory, whither she was perpetually invited or sent for to play with the solitary daughter of the house, some two years her senior, because Cecilia required a playmate, and Jeanne was gentle, good-tempered and refined in speech and manner, being quick to observe and imitate all that appealed to her natural taste and to discard what did not.

She learnt her first lessons in the village school, which was more than two miles distant from Coed-Ithel, and a long tramp for a little maid in bad weather. Here she got on so fast that her uncle was minded to send her to a genteel boarding school, being well-to-do; but he was happily deterred from this course by the rector's wife, who was not, and who saw her way to halve the salary of a governess and obtain a companion for her child at one and the same time.

Louis privately rejoiced over this arrangement, whilst pretending to scorn Jeanne's studies and her friendship for the spoilt Cecilia.