

CHAPTER XIX.

“ WE will put them into the yard for the present ; I mean that Holdfast shall take charge o’ them by-and-by. I will soon teach him.”

“ Yes, he take charge of coat, or anything I tell him ; why not take charge of goats ? Clever dog, Holdfast. Massa Humphrey, you think Massa Edward take away both his dogs, Smoker and Watch ? I say better not take puppy. Take Smoker, and leave puppy.”

“ I agree with you, Pablo. We ought to have two dogs here. I will speak to my brother. Now run forward and open the gate of the yard, and throw them some hay, Pablo, while I go and call my sisters.”

The flock of goats were much admired, and the next morning were driven out into the forest to feed, attended by Pablo and Holdfast. When it was dinner-time Pablo drove the flock near to the cottage, telling the dog to mind them. The sensible animal remained at once with the goats until Pablo’s return from dinner ; and it may be as well to observe here that in a few days the dog took charge of them altogether, driving them home to the yard every evening ; and as soon as the goats were put into the vard the dog had his supper ; and the dog took care, therefore, not to be too late. To return to our narrative.

On Saturday Humphrey and Pablo went to Lymington to bring home Edward’s clothes, and Humphrey

made Pablo acquainted with all that he wanted to know, in case it might be necessary to send Pablo there alone.

Edward remained with his sisters, as he was to leave them on the Monday.

Sunday was passed as usual: they read the service at old Armitage's grave, and afterwards they walked in the forest; for Sunday was the only day on which Alice could find time to leave her duties in the cottage. They were more grave than usual at the idea of Edward's leaving them, but they kept up their spirits, as they were aware that it was for the advantage of all.

On Monday morning Edward, to please his sisters, put on his new clothes, and put his forester's dress in the bundle with his linen. Alice and Edith thought he looked very well in them, and said that it reminded them of the days of Arnwood. The fact was that Edward appeared as he was—a gentleman born; that could not well be concealed under a forester's dress, and in his present attire it was undeniable. After breakfast Billy was harnessed and brought to the cottage door. Edward's linen was put in the cart, and, as he had agreed with Humphrey, he took only Smoker with him, leaving the puppy at the cottage. Pablo went with him to bring back the cart. Edward kissed his sisters, who wept at the idea of his leaving them, and shaking hands with Humphrey, he set off to cross the forest.

"Who would ever have believed this," thought Edward, as he drove across the forest, "that I should put myself under the roof and under the protection of a Roundhead?—one in outward appearance, and in the opinion of the world at least, if he is not so altogether in opinions. There is surely some spell upon me, and I almost feel as if I were a traitor to my principles. Why I know not; I feel a regard for that man, and a confidence in him. And why should I not? He knows my

principles, my feelings against his party, and he respects them. Surely he cannot wish to gain me over to his party; that were indeed ridiculous—a young forester—a youth unknown. No, he would gain nothing by that, for I am nobody. It must be from good will, and no other feeling. I have obliged him in the service I rendered his daughter, and he is grateful." Perhaps, had Edward put the question to himself, "Should I have been on such friendly terms with the Intendant—should I have accepted his offer—if there had been no Patience Heatherstone?" he might then have discovered what was the "spell upon him" which had rendered him so tractable; but of that he had no idea. He only felt that his situation would be rendered more comfortable by the society of an amiable and handsome girl, and he inquired no further.

His reverie was broken by Pablo, who appeared tired of holding his tongue, and said, "Massa Edward, you not like leave home—you think very much. Why you go there?"

"I certainly do not like to leave home, Pablo, for I am very fond of my brother and sisters; but we cannot always do as we wish in this world, and it is for their sakes, more than from my own inclinations, that I have done so."

"Can't see what good you do Missy Alice and Missy Edith 'cause you go away. How it possible do good, and not with them? Suppose bad accident, and you away, how you do good? Suppose bad accident, and you at cottage, then you do good. I think, Massa Edward, you very foolish."

Edward laughed at this blunt observation of Pablo's, and replied, "It is very true, Pablo, that I cannot watch over my sisters and protect them in person when I am away; but there are reasons why I should go, never-

theless, and I may be more useful to them by going than by remaining with them. If I did not think so I would not leave them. They know nobody, and have no friends in the world. Suppose anything was to happen to me. Suppose both Humphrey and I were to die—for you know that we never know how soon that event may take place—who would there be to protect my poor sisters, and what would become of them? Is it not, therefore, wise that I should procure friends for them, in case of accident, who would look after them and protect them? And it is my hope that by leaving them now I shall make powerful and kind friends for them. Do you understand me?"

"Yes, I see now: you think more than me, Massa Edward. I say just now, you foolish; I say now, Pablo great fool."

"Besides, Pablo, recollect that I never would have left them as long as there were only Humphrey and I to look after them, because an accident might have happened to one of us; but when you came to live with us, and I found what a good, clever boy you were, and that you were fond of us all, I then said, 'Now I can leave my sisters, for Pablo shall take my place, and assist Humphrey to do what is required, and to take care of them.' Am I right, Pablo?"

"Yes, Massa Edward," replied Pablo, taking hold of Edward's wrist, "you quite right. Pablo does love Missy Alice, Missy Edith, Massa Humphrey, and you, Massa Edward; he love you all very much indeed—he love you so much that he die for you! Can do no more."

"That is what I really thought of you, Pablo, and yet I am glad to hear it from your own mouth. If you had not come to live with us, and had not proved so faithful, I could not have left to benefit my sisters;

but you have induced me to leave, and they have to thank you if I am able to be of any service to them."

"Well, Massa Edward, you go. Never mind us—we make plenty of work; do everything all the same as you."

"I think you will, Pablo, and that is the reason why I have agreed to go away. But, Pablo, Billy is growing old, and you will want some more ponies."

"Yes, Massa Edward; Massa Humphrey talk to me about ponies last night, and say, plenty in the forest. Ask me if I think us able catch them. I say yes, catch one, two, twenty, suppose want them."

"Ah! how will you do that, Pablo?"

"Massa Edward, you tell Massa Humphrey no possible, so I no tell you how," replied Pablo, laughing. "Some day you come see us, see five ponies in the stable. Massa Humphrey and I, we talk about, find out how; you see."

"Well, then, I shall ask no more questions, Pablo; and when I see the ponies in the stable, then I'll believe it, and not before."

"Suppose you want big horse for ride, catch big horse, Massa Edward, you see. Massa Humphrey very clever—he catch cow."

"Catch gipsy," said Edward.

"Yes," said Pablo, laughing; "catch cow, catch gipsy, and by-and-by catch horse."

When Edward arrived at the Intendant's house he was very kindly received by the Intendant and the two girls. Having deposited his wardrobe in his bedroom, he went out to Oswald and put Smoker in the kennel, and on his return found Pablo sitting on the carpet in the sitting-room, talking to Patience and Clara, and they all three appeared much amused. When Pablo and Billy had both had something to eat, the cart was

filled with pots of flowers, and several other little things as presents from Patience Heatherstone, and Pablo set off on his return.

"Well, Edward, you do look like a——" said Clara, stopping.

"Like a secretary, I hope," added Edward.

"Well, you don't look like a forester.—Does he, Patience?" continued Clara.

"You must not judge of people by their clothes, Clara."

"Nor do I," replied Clara. "Those clothes would not look well upon Oswald or the other men, for they would not suit them; but they do suit you.—Don't they, Patience?"

Patience Heatherstone, however, did not make any answer to this second appeal made by Clara.

"Why don't you answer me, Patience?" said Clara.

"My dear Clara, it's not the custom for young maidens to make remarks upon people's attire. Little girls like you may do so."

"Why, did you not tell Pablo that he looked well in his new clothes?"

"Yes, but Pablo is not Mr. Armitage, Clara. That is very different."

"Well, it may be, but still you might answer a question, if put to you, Patience; and I ask again, Does not Edward look much better in the dress he has on than in that he generally has worn?"

"I think it a becoming dress, Clara, since you will have an answer."

"Fine feathers make fine birds, Clara," said Edward, laughing; "and so that is all we can say about it."

Edward then changed the conversation. Soon afterwards dinner was announced, and Clara again observed to Edward,—

“Why do you always call Patience *Mistress Heatherstone*?—Ought he not to call her *Patience*, sir?” said Clara, appealing to the Intendant.

“That must depend upon his own feelings, my dear Clara,” replied Mr. Heatherstone. “It is my intention to waive ceremony as much as possible. Edward Armitage has come to live with us as one of the family, and he will find himself treated by me as one of us. I shall, therefore, in future address him as Edward, and he has my full permission, and I may say it is my wish, that he should be on the same familiar terms with us all. When Edward feels inclined to address my daughter as he does you, by her name of baptism, he will, I dare say, now that he has heard my opinion, do so, and reserve ‘*Mistress Heatherstone*’ for the time when they have a quarrel.”

“Then I hope he will never again address me that way,” observed Patience; “for I am under too great obligations to him to bear even the idea of being on bad terms with him.”

“Do you hear that, Edward?” said Clara.

“Yes, I do, Clara; and after such a remark you may be sure that I shall never address her in that way again.”

In a few days Edward became quite at home. In the forenoon Mr. Heatherstone dictated one or two letters to him, which he wrote, and after that his time was at his own disposal, and was chiefly passed in the company of Patience and Clara. With the first he had now become on the most intimate and brotherly footing; and when they addressed each other, Patience and Edward were the only appellations made use of. Once Mr. Heatherstone asked Edward whether he would not like to go out with Oswald to kill a deer, which he did; but the venison was hardly yet in season. There was a fine horse in the stable at Edward’s order, and he often

rode out with Patience and Clara. Indeed, his time passed so agreeably that he could hardly think it possible that a fortnight had passed away when he asked permission to go over to the cottage and see his sisters.

With the Intendant's permission, Patience and Clara accompanied him; and the joy of Alice and Edith was great when they made their appearance. Oswald had, by Edward's request, gone over a day or two before to tell them that they were coming, that they might be prepared; and the consequence was that it was a holiday at the cottage. Alice had cooked her best dinner, and Humphrey and Pablo were at home to receive them.

"How pleasant it will be if we are to see you and Clara whenever we see Edward!" said Alice to Patience. "So far from being sorry that Edward is with you, I shall be quite glad of it."

"I water the flowers every day," said Edith, "and they make the garden look so gay."

"I will bring you plenty more in the autumn, Edith; but this is not the right time for transplanting flowers yet," replied Patience.—"And now, Alice, you must take me to see your farm, for when I was here last I had no time. Let us come now, and show me everything."

"But my dinner, Patience; I cannot leave it, or it will be spoiled, and that will never do. You must either go with Edith now or wait till after dinner, when I can get away."

"Well, then, we will stay till after dinner, Alice, and we will help you to serve it up."

"Thank you; Pablo generally does that, for Edith cannot reach down the things I don't know where he is."

"He went away with Edward and Humphrey, I think," said Edith. "I'll scold him when he comes back for being out of the way."

“Never mind, Edith; I can reach the dishes,” said Patience; “and you and Clara can then take them, and the platters, and put them on the table for Alice.”

And Patience did as she proposed, and the dinner was soon afterwards on the table. There were a ham, and two boiled fowls, and a piece of salted beef, and some roasted kid, besides potatoes and green peas; and when it is considered that such a dinner was set on the table by such young people, left entirely to their own exertions and industry, it must be admitted that it did them and their farm great credit.

In the meantime Edward and Humphrey, after the first greetings were over, had walked out to converse, while Pablo had taken the horses into the stable.

“Well, Humphrey, how do you get on?”

“Very well,” replied Humphrey. “I have just finished a very tough job. I have dug out the sawpit, and have sawed the slabs for the sides of the pit, and made it quite secure. The large fir tree that was blown down is now at the pit, ready for sawing up into planks, and Pablo and I are to commence to-morrow. At first we made but a bad hand of sawing off the slabs, but before we had cut them all we got on pretty well. Pablo don’t much like it, and indeed no more do I much—it is such mechanical work and so tiring; but he does not complain. I do not intend that he shall saw more than two days in a week; that will be sufficient—we shall get on fast enough.”

“You are right, Humphrey; it is an old saying that you must not work a willing horse to death. Pablo is very willing, but hard work he is not accustomed to.”

“Well, now you must come and look at my flock of goats, Edward: they are not far off. I have taught Holdfast to take care of them, and he never leaves them now, and brings them home at night. Watch always

remains with me, and is an excellent dog, and very intelligent."

"You have indeed a fine flock, Humphrey!" said Edward.

"Yes, and they are improved in appearance already since they have been here. Alice has got her geese and ducks, and I have made a place large enough for them to wash in until I have time to dig them out a pond."

"I thought we had gathered more hay than you required; but with this addition I think you will find none to spare before the spring."

"So far from it that I have been mowing down a great deal more, Edward, and it is almost ready to carry away. Poor Billy has had hard work of it, I assure you, since he came back, with one thing and another."

"Poor fellow! But it won't last long, Humphrey," said Edward, smiling; "the other horses will soon take his place."

"I trust they will," said Humphrey; "at all events by next spring. Before that I do not expect that they will."

"By-the-bye, Humphrey, you recollect what I said to you that the robber I shot told me just before he died?"

"Yes, I do recollect it now," replied Humphrey; "but I had quite forgot all about it till you mentioned it now, although I wrote it down that we might not forget it."

"Well, I have been thinking all about it, Humphrey. The robber told me that the money was mine, taking me for another person; therefore I do not consider it was given to me, nor do I consider that it was his to give. I hardly know what to do about it, nor to whom the money can be said to belong."

"Well, I think I can answer that question. The

property of all malefactors belongs to the King, and therefore this money belongs to the King; and we may retain it for the King, or use it for his service."

"Yes, it would have belonged to the King had the man been condemned and hung on the gallows as he deserved; but he was not, and therefore I think that it does not belong to the King."

"Then it belongs to whoever finds it, and who keeps it till it is claimed—which will never be."

"I think I must speak to the Intendant about it," replied Edward. "I should feel more comfortable."

"Then do so," replied Humphrey. "I think you are right to have no concealments from him."

"But, Humphrey," replied Edward, laughing, "what silly fellows we are! We do not yet know whether we shall find anything. We must first see if there is anything buried there; and when we have done so, then we will decide how to act. I shall, if it please God, be over again in a fortnight, and in the meantime do you find out the place, and ascertain if what the fellow said is true."

"I will," replied Humphrey. "I will go to-morrow, with Billy and the cart, and take a spade and pickaxe with me. It may be a fool's errand, but still they say, and one would credit, for the honour of human nature, that the words of a dying man are those of truth. We had better go back now, for I think dinner must be ready."

Now that they had become so intimate with Patience Heatherstone—and, I may add, so fond of her—there was no longer any restraint, and they had a very merry dinner-party; and after dinner Patience went out with Alice and Edith and looked over the garden and farm. She wished very much to ascertain if there was anything that they required, but she could discover but few

things, and those only trifles ; but she recollected them all, and sent them to the cottage a few days afterwards. But the hour of parting arrived ; for it was a long ride back, and they could not stay any longer if they wished to get home before dark, as Mr. Heatherstone had requested Edward that they should do. So the horses were brought out ; and wishing good-bye, they set off again, little Edith crying after them, " Come again soon ! —Patience, you must come again soon ! "