

MY CORNISH NEIGHBOURS

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My Cornish neighbours by Mrs. Havelock Ellis

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MRS. HAVELOCK ELLIS

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NEIGHBOURS**

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BY

MRS HAVELOCK ELLIS



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TRENWIN

"A DAY lent, sure enough," said Mrs Pengilly. "To see the sky blue like this 'ere and the sea bluer still, and to hear the birds singing, it do almost seem like a welcome to you now you've come to dwell amongst we."

Mrs Pengilly and I were sitting in her old-fashioned farm garden, and as I clasped my hands behind my head and drew the soft air into my lungs, I could say nothing. Mrs Pengilly heard my sigh of relief, and went on :

"We've paid for this weather, my dear, by dampin' and wind for months together, and we shall pay again in season and out for a spell of sunshine like this ; but let us make the best of it before it goes. The hay won't be cut just yet, and I'm ready and willing to help you to get your new house in order. A gran' little place you've chose, sure enough, but it'll need brains and money to make it snug and homely. Lor ! " she continued, as her eyes rested

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on a bee settling upon a spray of honeysuckle over her dairy window, "the very birds and insects do knaw a heavenly from a teasy day. Even the slugs do seem to have a bit of heart in them by now, and the late primroses be shabby and shamed, in a manner of speaking, afore the g'eat red roses as be bloomin' just to their time. June month do put even my newly-limed dairy into shade and greyness."

"How glad I am that I am going to live amongst you all!" I said. "From what I have seen in my short visits, the whole place is ideal and the people kind and charming in every way."

Mrs Pengilly's face grew thoughtful.

"There's good and bad and medium here as elsewhere," she said. "A crow don't never turn into a hen, even after it 'ave lived for weeks near our fowl-houses, and we folkse be much the same as our fathers and grandfathers before us. We 'ates new notions, and—" she hesitated, "most strangers too, for our motto be 'one and all,' and we don't lean to no new-fangled ways, even in butter-making and hay-cutting. Butter made wi' a churn isn't nowhere for flavour like that made by the cool hand, and uplong notions don't take hereabouts. A revival at times changes, seemly, the outer ways of some of we, but by lookin' upon my neighbours I've proved that no steadfast good comes of it except by chance now and then."

"Good mornin', missis," said a gentle voice by our sides, and Mrs Pengilly and I turned towards the wall from where the sound came. "Good speed to you, mam," said a man, turning towards