

Wild Wales, by George Borrow

Chapter 75

Inn at Mallwyd — A Dialogue — The Cumro.

I ENTERED the inn, and seeing a comely-looking damsel at the bar, I told her that I was in need of supper and a bed. She conducted me into a neat sanded parlour, where a good fire was blazing, and asked me what I would have for supper. "Whatever you can most readily provide," said I; "I am not particular." The maid retired, and taking off my hat, and disencumbering myself of my satchel, I sat down before the fire and fell into a doze, in which I dreamed of some of the wild scenes through which I had lately passed.

I dozed and dozed till I was roused by the maid touching me on the shoulder and telling me that supper was ready. I got up and perceived that during my doze she had laid the cloth and put supper upon the table. It consisted of bacon and eggs. During supper I had some conversation with the maid.

MYSELF. — Are you a native of this place?

MAID. — I am not, sir; I come from Dinas.

MYSELF. — Are your parents alive?

MAID. — My mother is alive, sir, but my father is dead.

MYSELF. — Where does your mother live?

MAID. — At Dinas, sir.

MYSELF. — How does she support herself?

MAID. — By letting lodgings to miners, sir.

MYSELF. — Are the miners quiet lodgers?

MAID. — Not always, sir; sometimes they get up at night and fight with each other.

MYSELF. — What does your mother do on those occasions?

MAID. — She draws the quilt over her head, and says her prayers, sir.

MYSELF. — Why doesn't she get up and part them?

MAID. — Lest she should get a punch or a thwack for her trouble, sir.

MYSELF. — Of what religion are the miners?

MAID. — They are Methodists, if they are anything; but they don't trouble their heads much about religion.

MYSELF. — Of what religion are you?

MAID. — I am of the Church, sir.

MYSELF. — Did you always belong to the Church?

MAID. — Not always. When I was at Dinas I used to hear the preacher, but since I have been here I have listened to the clergyman.

MYSELF. — Is the clergyman here a good man?

MAID. — A very good man indeed, sir. He lives close by. Shall I go and tell him you want to speak to him?

MYSELF. — Oh dear me, no! He can employ his time much more usefully than in waiting upon me.

After supper I sat quiet for about an hour. Then ringing the bell, I inquired of the maid whether there was a newspaper in the house. She told me there was not, but that she thought she could procure me one. In a little time she brought me a newspaper, which she said she had borrowed at the parsonage. It was the CUMRO, an excellent Welsh journal written in the interest of the Church. In perusing its columns I passed a couple of hours very agreeably, and then went to bed.