

THE HISTORY OF NED EVANS.

THE
HISTORY
OF
NED EVANS.

'O'erstep not the modesty of Nature!'¹

Shakespeare.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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THE HISTORY OF NED EVANS.

CHAP. I.

IN one of those beautiful and retired valleys which abound in the country once known by the general name of Snowdon, and which now forms a part of the country of Caernarvon, was seated the humble but hospitable dwelling of the reverend Evan Evans.² The high mountain of Penmanmawr defended this little mansion from the chilling blasts of the north east; whilst a stream purer/ than crystal ran murmuring among the rocks which time and the winter's torrents had separated from the neighbouring mountains, forming a series of successive water-falls before his windows, and clothing its banks with an eternal verdure. Thousands of sheep, whose fleeces might vie with snow in whiteness, were the happy tenants of this peaceful vale; whose innocent bleatings, being echoed by surrounding woods, and mixed with the songs of birds and the murmurs of the brook, formed a concert of natural and soothing music, which art can seldom equal, and never excel. Here Mr. Evans had resided for upwards of eighteen years, and exercised the pastoral office literally over his sheep, and figuratively over a numerous parish in a manner that won him the hearts of all his congregation.

The reader must not imagine however that Mr. Evans was a beneficed clergyman.³ He had indeed long fulfilled the/ duties of one with respectable abilities, and with conscientious and unceasing diligence; but the emoluments were reaped by a gentleman who had never seen the parish but once, when he quarrelled with the parishioners about his tythes,⁴ and had therefore resolved never to come among them again. It is possible however they had no great loss, for the trust was faithfully executed by the worthy Evans for the small salary of 201. a year, which, with the profits of a few acres round his little dwelling, and which could hardly be estimated at above 201. more, was all the income he possessed in the world. But though fortune had dealt thus hardly by him, nature had been more benignant; for from her he inherited an excellent constitution both of body and mind, and, what was still more valuable, a heart overflowing with kindness, and replete with every virtue that could ennoble and exalt a man.

Mr. Evans moreover was happy in an excellent wife, whom he had/ married in his youth from the uncommon motive of pure affection, without any view either to interest or fortune; and which was inspired by the equally uncommon quality of unalterable sweetness of temper, which gave her a look of benignity surpassing beauty, and which she now retained in full perfection at an age when beauty (if she ever had any) would have been considerably impaired. She had now lived with her husband upwards of thirty years in happy wedlock; and I heard her declare, that in all that time she had never differed with him but once, and that too was on a point about which it might be presumed he had no right to interfere. It was soon after he took her home to a little house he had in the neighbouring diocese of St. Asaph (where indeed he was born, and where he first served a cure,⁵ before he removed to his present dwelling) that the good woman was employed on her first brewing of ale; a matter of very considerable/ importance to a Welch housewife, and of no less moment to a Welch parson; and honest Evans, being an adept in the art, and a perfect connoisseur in the true smack of cwrw (as ale is called in his country), took the liberty to find fault with his wife's management; which it must be confessed was a tender point, and what no husband ought to presume to do. It is therefore not to be wondered at if the good lady for the first time in her life was a little off her guard, and defended her undoubted prerogative of managing her drink as she thought fit; it is much more to be admired, that this was the last time as well as the first that she ever differed from her husband. And indeed she had candour enough to declare, that it was the event of this quarrel which confirmed her in perfect submission ever after; for certain it is, the ale proved sour, which she wisely ascribing to the tartness of some speeches she chanced then to let fall, determined from/ that time forth that no ill humour of hers should ever again be the cause of a domestic calamity – a resolution which she has inviolably kept ever since, and which I should most heartily recommend to all those good wives who may chance to peruse this story.

Mrs. Evans, while she resided at St. Asaph, had borne to her husband one daughter, whom they named Winifrid, from a lady of illustrious beauty and virtue in those parts, whose name has long since been enrolled amongst the martyrs and saints in heaven; and indeed the cherub countenance and the opening virtues of the little terrestrial Winifrid⁶ filled her parents hearts with the fond and pleasing hope that she would one day rival the saint in every excellence both of body and mind; but Providence thought fit to determine otherwise, and took her to himself in the seventh year of her age. The afflicted parents sustained their loss with that meekness and resignation/ which true wisdom, and a just sense of religion never fail to inspire. They were however so far infected with human weakness that their home became disagreeable to them. They could not bear the walks in which they no longer saw their little darling; and the neat bit of garden

before the house in which she used to play, and where with transport they so often beheld her tying up the flowers, and with artless innocence displaying taste even in her most careless diversions, for ever recalled her to their mind, and filled their eyes with a fountain of perpetual sorrow, too tender and too distressing for hearts so susceptible as theirs to endure. It was this melancholy event which first determined them to quit St. Asaph; and the cure in Caernarvonshire soon after offering, they gladly removed to it; but not before Heaven had assuaged their sorrow by sending them a son, who at the opening of this history was in the nineteenth year of his age. This/ darling boy, whose name was Edward, and in whom all their cares and all their hopes were now centered, was every way worthy of their tenderest affection. His beauty was of that manly kind where robust strength is united to perfect elegance: the blushes of the morning seemed to be lighted up in his cheeks, which glowed with health, and which were shaded by his thick and glossy hair, that played about his neck in natural curls; whilst wit tempered with good nature beamed from his dark eyes, whose fire was softened without being concealed by a pair of long eye-lashes of the deepest brown. There was, besides, a grace and majesty in his figure that would have bestowed dignity upon a clown, and which was far surpassing any thing that could be expected from the son of a Welch curate.

Nor was the mind of this amiable youth any way inferior to his person. It had been the delightful task of Mr./ Evans to form his heart from the first dawn of opening reason, and nature had been so kind as to give him a heart, than which a worthier was never planted in a human breast. Under the care of this kind instructor he had acquired a competent knowledge of the Latin and Greek languages; and having an elegant turn for music and painting, which indeed the scenes about him had naturally inspired, he had improved those talents merely by the dint of industry and genius in a wonderful manner, and had acquired many accomplishments that adorn the gentleman, to a degree infinitely beyond what could be expected from the humility of his station and the lowness of his finances.⁷ For this he was indebted to a happy disposition of nature, which drank instruction more greedily than it could be offered; and as the excellent character of Mr. Evans made every thing that belonged to him an object of regard, young Edward found no difficulty in being admitted/ to the best companies in the neighbourhood, where his own good qualities were soon known and admired, and every where established him a general favourite. In these societies his good sense soon taught him to distinguish what was most estimable; and though he never remembered to have been fifty miles from the sequestered habitation in which he dwelt, yet neither his figure nor his manners would have been reckoned awkward in any drawing room in Europe.

Such was Ned Evans, the subject of the following memoirs; for whose welfare and success the author confesses himself deeply interested, and to whom

he trusts the reader is already not wholly indifferent; and he hopes that, in the course of his future history, he will never be found to act unbecoming his character, nor give occasion to forfeit that good opinion which his first appearance generally inspired./

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CHAP. II.

It was one night in the month of November in the year 1779,⁸ that our good curate and his amiable wife had sat down to regale themselves over a mug of ale and a plate of toasted cheese; when they were suddenly startled by a bright flash of lightning, which was instantly followed by a tremendous clap of thunder. Mrs. Evans was naturally timorous, and more afraid of thunder than of any thing else in the world; and though her husband was not subject to this weakness, yet the uncommon loudness of the peal, and the season of the year when thunder is but a rare phenomenon, hindered him to be altogether at ease; especially as it was not long before that a house in the neighbourhood had been set on fire by lightning, and much mischief done, though the family had the good fortune to escape. But it was not for his house, nor for himself, that his fears were alarmed on this occasion; the morning had been uncommonly fine, and he had taken advantage of it to send Ned as far as Bangor, about nine miles off, on some business he had with the register of the diocese; and Ned, being stout, and unwilling to tire his father's only horse, had taken an oaken staff in his hand, and trusted to his own legs for the journey; in which indeed his wisdom was as conspicuous as his humanity; for it is certain that his own two were much better and safer to be relied on than the other's four. Be that as it may, he was not yet come back, though it was long past the hour he had been expected; and as he was not accustomed to stay on any errands, and the night was now set in with all its horrors of storm and of darkness, we may forgive our worthy curate, if he began to be disturbed by some rising fears; which however he endeavoured to suppress out of compassion to his wife, who was now in such an agony of terror as could not support itself under any addition. Long did they listen with attentive and expecting ears, hoping to hear the welcome tread of Ned's active and nimble feet; the ale and the cheese (now cold) were suffered to stand neglected on the table; whilst the good man holding his wife's left hand in his right, while her head rested on his bosom, spoke not to her, but looked unutterable tenderness and affection. He was supporting her in this tender attitude, and endeavouring to soothe her fears, when Towser,⁹ who was Ned's favorite dog, and was lying on the hearth, set up a loud and melancholy howl; which was presently followed by the

trampling of horses, and the sound of many voices at the gate. Poor Mrs. Evans, who had long been wound up to the highest pitch of terror, could not support this new alarm, and immediately/ fainted in her husband's arms; who was himself in a condition not much better, bawling in vain to their only maid to come to her mistress's assistance; but she had long since crept into her bed, terrified at the thunder, where she lay smothering under the clothes, incapable of hearing, and afraid even to draw her breath. The noise now grew louder, and approached the house, when Mr. Evans distinctly heard Ned's voice calling for assistance, and begging him to open the door. The agitation the poor man was in is not to be described; his wife still senseless in his arms, and his boy, for aught he knew, about to be murdered at the gate. He had presence of mind however to lay her gently in an arm chair which happily stood by him, and then endeavouring to spring to the door, he unluckily overthrew the table, with his ale and his cheese, and, what was far more unfortunate, the candle, which was extinguished in the fall. All was now darkness and/ confusion, Ned still thundering at the door, and calling on his father. 'What, in the name of God, has happened to you?' said he, as he endeavoured to unbolt the lock; 'Nothing to myself,' cried Ned, 'but every thing that is disastrous to two unhappy ladies, one of whom is in my arms.' 'Thank God! Thank God!' replied the honest curate, not considering what he said, but rejoiced to find that Ned at least was safe; when continuing to fumble about the lock, the youth's patience was exhausted, and driving his foot against the door with all his force, he burst it open with such violence, that it laid the old gentleman sprawling on the floor. Ned then came in, supporting the lady, who was altogether senseless; and finding his father on the ground, 'My dear Sir,' said he, 'I hope I have not hurt you: I heartily beg your pardon; for, on my soul! I meant you no disrespect, but the situation of this unhappy lady must excuse me.' 'It does, it does, my dear/ boy, were it ten times worse; I am not hurt, and if I was, the joy of seeing you safe would cure me.' He now rose from the floor, and groping into the kitchen, discovered Molly in her covert,¹⁰ whom he quickly unlodged, and set about endeavouring to recover a light. A candle at length was brought, and discovered a spectacle of sorrow, the extent of which was not known before; Ned, wet to the skin, supporting in his arms a beautiful creature of about seventeen, dressed in a travelling habit of the most elegant fashion: her hair dark as the wing of the raven, was floating all dishevelled, over her lovely bosom, which just heaved with breath; and her cheek all pale as ashes, lay reclined upon his neck; her eyes seemed closed in death; and she was wholly unconscious where she was, or how there, or what had happened. Behind were two postillions bearing in the body of another female, dressed with the same elegance, but advanced in/ years; whilst blood was streaming from a wound which she had received in her breast. Poor Evans stood motionless with horror and astonishment; wholly regardless of his wife, who was now come to herself, but equally entranced with terror and

surprise. At length he found utterance; and clasping his hands together, 'Oh! Ned,' he cried, 'who is this angel you have brought here, and what has befallen her?' 'Alas! Sir,' said he, 'I cannot tell – all I know, I shall relate. As I was coming home from Bangor (where, as it now turns out, I was fortunately detained), about a hundred yards beyond the turning to the house, I met a post chaise and four on the turnpike road: it had globes with lights in them, by the glimmering of which I saw it suddenly attacked by two highwaymen on horseback; one of whom stopped the foremost postillion, whilst the other went to the window of the chaise. I soon after heard a female shriek, when springing/ forward to give them what assistance I could afford, I was lucky enough to knock the scoundrel at the window down with the oak stick I had in my hand; which the other fellow seeing, immediately quitted the postillion, and discharged a loaded blunderbuss, as I believe, into the chaise. The unfortunate lady whom you see killed, said, 'Oh God!' and instantly expired. This angel, whom you now see senseless in my arms, fell into them in this condition. The wicked perpetrators of this horrible act took advantage of the darkness and confusion, and have escaped. The postillions are no way to blame; they behaved as well as lads in their situation could do: they have preserved the trunks and the effects; and the wretched authors of all this mischief have no other prey but the life of this innocent and unfortunate lady. I trust that the lovely object in my arms has no other hurt but fright, and I rejoice that Providence has so ordered it/ as to bring me to her assistance, and that the misfortune has happened so near the house which can afford her an asylum in her present comfortless and forlorn situation.' 'And I rejoice, too,' said honest Evans, 'and I bless my God, who has inspired you with courage and resolution to fear no danger in succouring the distressed, and who has given me this humble habitation to be a comfort and refuge to this fair unfortunate. Go, my dear,' said he, turning to his wife, who was now wholly recovered, 'go and see what cordial, or other thing you can find, that can help to restore her to her senses.' He now turned to the postillions, who were standing all this time, bearing the body of the murdered lady between them; and having assisted them to dispose it decently on chairs set for the purpose, he desired them to tell him all they knew of the matter. They said they were wholly ignorant who the ladies were, but they certainly were people of condition – /that they had come from London, and had crossed the ferry at Conway, about four o'clock – that they were on their way to Ireland, of which country they believed they were natives, and wishing to overtake the packet, which sails tomorrow from the Head, they were in haste to get on to Bangor this night; and had therefore, late as it was, taken a chaise and four at Conway for that purpose; that they had come on very well notwithstanding the storm till the highwaymen stopped them – and that all the rest was just as Mr. Edward had described it.

Mrs. Evans now returned, with the remains of a bottle of Hungary water,¹¹ which was the only thing she had in the house that was like a cordial (for she was not one of those good women, who, under the pretence of weak nerves and windy stomachs, are for ever taking drams disguised with the name of cordial waters); and with this she bathed the/ lady's temples, while her husband held a bottle of salts to her nose, Ned Evans still supporting her in his arms. In a little time she fetched a deep sigh; and soon after raising her languid eyes, which still shone, though with diminished lustre, 'Where am I?' said she, 'and into what hands am I fallen?' – 'You are fallen into honourable hands,' replied Evans; 'into hands that shall be exerted to the utmost to administer to you every comfort and consolation they can procure, and which your appearance and situation so justly demand.' 'Whoever you are, Sir,' said she, 'I thank you; greatly, greatly do I thank you.' 'Dear lady,' said Ned, 'let me support you to this arm chair; sit down a little and endeavour to be composed, till we can get you some refreshment.' She now raised herself upon her feet, when turning to be led, and beholding the body of her companion where Evans and the postillions had laid it out, she sprang to it with renewed strength,/ and throwing herself on her knees and embracing it in her arms, 'Oh! Mrs. Melville,' said she, 'my dear, my faithful, my parental friend, have I lost you for ever!' She kissed the corpse with an intense fervor, and turning up her eyes to Heaven, she burst into a violent flood of tears.

Mrs. Evans and Ned would have gone to her and endeavoured to force her to the chair; but Mr. Evans forbade them. 'Let her alone awhile,' said he; 'her heart is agitated to the last degree, and tears will be the speediest and most effectual relief.' They suffered her then to remain unmolested; and she continued in the same posture, and with the same unceasing flow of sorrow, for about a quarter of an hour: at length she stopped, and rising from the body, 'It is enough,' said she; 'you are gone, and you are a blessed inhabitant of heaven. I am left on earth to deplore the best and most beloved of friends.' Ned now stepped/ forward, and offering her his hand, she suffered herself to be led to the arm chair, and composedly sat down. A deep silence was kept for some minutes. At length Mr. Evans ventured to speak: 'I lament, Madam,' said he, 'with the deepest and most unfeigned sorrow, the fatal event which has procured me the honour of seeing you in this house: nevertheless, it is a consolation to me, that my son here has been the means of affording you some relief, and of conducting you to this humble habitation; and I promise you, both for my wife and for myself, that you cannot oblige us more than by considering yourself at home, and making use of such accommodation as it affords, as long as it may be necessary or agreeable to you to stay.' 'Yes, indeed, Madam,' said Mrs. Evans, 'both my husband and I will think it the happiest incident in our lives to accomodate you on this melancholy occasion; and we only lament that our entertainment cannot be equal/ to what, from your appearance, you have certainly been accustomed to: but, such as it

is, we hope you will accept it.' 'Yes, Madam,' replied the lady, 'I will gladly and thankfully accept it; and I think myself happy that when so sudden and so dreadful a calamity came upon me, Providence has graciously conducted me to such hospitable and benevolent minds as yours.' Then, turning to Ned, she said, 'I find it is to you, young gentleman, I am indebted for this generous deliverance. I beg your pardon, I ought indeed to have recollected it before; but the sad confusion of my thoughts and hurry of my spirits must plead my excuse. I am glad, however, that I now know you for my protector and deliverer; and you may assure yourself that my gratitude shall cease only with my life.'

Ned's face was covered with blushes; but presently recollecting himself, 'Dear lady,' he said, 'your condescension overwhelms me; you owe me no gratitude: I did nothing but my duty, and what was the duty of every man on the like occasion; and had my life been the forfeit of it, I should gladly have given it to rescue yours.' 'That you have ventured it indeed,' said the lady, 'is abundantly apparent, and I should be unworthy of the protection you have afforded me, if I should ever forget it.' She now asked for a glass of water, which being brought her, Mr. Evans told her that he was extremely sorry it was out of his power, at that time, to ask her to qualify it with any better liquor. 'I have indeed,' said he, 'some excellent ale of my own brewing, which, if you ever taste that liquor, I can venture to recommend: but as for wine, Madam, I am but a poor curate, and never was master of a dozen in all my life; though, could I have foreseen the honour of having you for my guest, I should have taken care not to have been wholly unprovided.' She thanked him with an obliging smile, and told him that at that time no liquor whatever was so agreeable to her as pure spring water. 'I am sorry, indeed,' said she, 'for your own sake, that fortune has not bestowed on you whatever is thought comfortable in life: but for myself, I entreat you will not give yourself the smallest uneasiness. I trust that in a few days I shall be able to continue my journey to Ireland, where my friends live, and where I am extremely anxious to be; in the mean time I must be indebted to you for the protection of your house, which is all I stand in need of at present, and shall cheerfully and thankfully put up with your own fare, whatever it may be.'

Mrs. Evans then asked her if she could not be prevailed on to eat a bit of something; 'there is very good butter and cheese in the house,' said she, 'and if you could fancy it, I could get you a Welsh rabbit¹² in a few minutes:' the lady assured her that she could not taste any thing, but would be obliged to her, if, as soon as was convenient, she would shew her to her chamber. The good woman replied, that she believed her room was by that time ready; that she would go and see; and when it was, would immediately come back and conduct her to it. In a short time she returned with a candle; and the lady rising, curtsied to the two gentlemen, and wished them a good night. As she passed the body of her departed friend, she stopped for about a minute, and contemplated it in silence;

she then took one of the hands, and, stooping down, kissed it with impassioned tenderness; her eyes swimming in tears were raised to heaven, and her lips seemed to say something, though her voice was not heard. She then rose, and wiping her tears with a cambrick handkerchief, withdrew.

The two gentlemen who were standing followed her with their eyes, and bowing as she went out of the room, remained fixed in thought for some time afterwards. Evans at length broke silence – ‘Go, my dear boy,’ said he to Ned, ‘into the/ kitchen, and see that all the baggage of these unfortunate ladies be brought into the house: let the horses be taken care of as well as they can, and let the poor lads have a good fire, and plenty of ale to comfort them after this sad adventure.’

Ned immediately went, and found things already taken care of in the manner prescribed. There was a lad at the house, one David Morgan, the son of a man who had lived as a farm-servant with Mr. Evans ever since he had come to that part of the country; this lad was much about Ned’s age and size, a sturdy well-looking fellow as any of his station in the country; and as they had been brought up boys together, there subsisted a friendship and attachment between them, which made David a frequent inmate of the house, though he was not a regular servant in it. This lad was entertaining the two postillions, after having helped them with their horses, and trunks, &c. and extolling his young master’s prowess and his own. ‘Ah!’ says he, ‘if I had/ been there with young maister,¹³ those scoundrel robbers should not have escaped.’ ‘Why, what would you have done?’ said one of the postillions. ‘We would have lent them such a flick,’ said David, ‘as they would never have been cured of but by the gallows.’ ‘Mayhap you would have found yourselves mistaken,’ said the other; ‘why they had fire arms with them, and what could you have done then?’ ‘Why the same as maister did with one of them,’ said David. ‘Damn them and their firearms together! if the Devil had been with them, with a pistol as big as Bangor steeple, I would na ha fear’d ‘un, provided I had a prayer-book in my pocket, and young maister at my back.’ ‘Hut you fool you,’ said Ned just then entering, ‘hold your tongue, and drink your ale: it is not a week since I saw you frightened almost to death by farmer Watkins’ white horse.’ ‘True, maister,’ said the other, ‘but then I took him for a ghost! I own I’s woundily¹⁴ afraid of dead men, but I do/ not fear any living man that ever wore a head.’ ‘Then,’ said Ned, ‘you are just the reverse of me; for I do not fear any dead man; but I will not be so vain as to assert that no living man could alarm me. But that is neither here nor there – are all the things brought safe out of the carriage, and are the horses fed?’ Being answered in the affirmative, he told them they might sit on then and drink their ale, but charged them to make no noise, left they should disturb the poor lady who had gone to her repose; and so saying, he returned to the parlour.

It was now growing late, and as there were but two beds in the house, one of which the lady occupied, Ned asked his father if he would not come and sleep with him; for, as for Mrs. Evans, she slept upon a pallet¹⁵ in the same chamber with the lady. Mr. Evans replied, that the sad adventure of the evening had driven all sleep out of his head. 'Besides, my dear,' said he, 'you know decency requires that some person/ should sit up with the corpse. Go, then, my dear boy, go you to your bed; you cannot be otherwise than fatigued; but as for me, I shall sit here until the morning.'

Ned then retired to rest; where we will leave him to that sound and refreshing sleep which innocence of mind, and health of body, never fail to bestow. Mr. Evans spent the greatest part of the night in prayer, as was his custom when any unusual accident beset him; and when he was not on his knees, he relieved himself by reading 'Sherlock upon Death,'¹⁶ a book which he extremely admired, and which of all others seems best calculated to give comfort and consolation to an afflicted heart./

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EDITORIAL NOTES

Volume I

1. *O'erstep not the modesty of Nature*: Hervey takes her motto from the scene in Shakespeare's *Hamlet, Prince of Denmark* where Hamlet addresses the players;

Be not too tame neither, but let your own discretion be your tutor. Suit the action to the word, the word to the action, with this special observance – that you o'erstep not the modesty of nature. For anything so ov'rdone is from the purpose of playing whose end, both at the first and now, was and is to hold as 'twere the mirror up to Nature to show Virtue her feature, Scorn her own image, and the very age and body of the time his form and pressure. Now this overdone, or come tardy off, though it make the unskilful laugh, cannot but make the judicious grieve, the censure of the which one must in your allowance o'erweigh a whole theatre of others. O, there be players that I have seen play, and heard others praised – and that highly – not to speak it profanely, that neither having th' accent of Christians, nor the gait of Christian, pagan, nor man, have so strutted and bellowed that I have thought some of Nature's journeymen had made men, and not made them well, they imitated humanity so abominably.'

(*Hamlet* III.ii.16–34).

2. *Evan Evans*: a stereotypically Welsh name, but also that of a real-life clergyman residing near Snowdon in the 1760s and 1770s. The *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, which notes his 'bardic' name of Ieuan Fardd and his dates (1731–88), describes him as a scholar and poet who, like the figure in Hervey's novel, never progressed further than curacies and who resented the imposition of English clergymen on Welsh parishes. He may have been the author of two books, *Some Specimens of the Poetry of the Antient Welsh Bards* (1764) and *The Love of our Country, a Poem, with Historical Notes* (1772). The name of Ned Evans suggests the figure of Edward Evan or Evans (1716–98), a nonconformist minister, poet and harpist who together with Iolo Morganwg (Edward Williams) was deemed to be one of two true heirs to the 'Ancient British Bards' (see the *Gentleman's Magazine*, November 1789). The poems of Edward Evans were first published only in 1803, but he was a popular and well-known figure in Glamorgan and may have served as a partial inspiration for the harp-playing, poetical Ned.
3. *a beneficed clergyman*: that is, one who holds a church living himself rather than simply fulfilling the duties of the incumbent for a tiny stipend as Evans does.
4. *quarrelled with the parishoners about his tythes*: in parishes which had not been reorganized under parliamentary enclosure, clergymen were entitled to one-tenth of everything

- produced (including crops, livestock and even, in some cases, bricks and tiles) but their attempts to claim it often resulted in disputes and litigation with their parishioners. In Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* the rebarbative Mr. Collins talks of the difficulty of making 'an agreement for tythes as may be beneficial to himself and not offensive to his patron', J. Austen, *The Novels of Jane Austen*, ed. R. W. Chapman. 3rd edn (London: Oxford University Press, 1980–2), vol. 2, *Pride and Prejudice*, p. 101.
5. *a cure*: the spiritual charge or oversight of parishioners or lay people; the office or function of a curate.
 6. *Winifrid*: St Winifred or Winefride is patron saint of North Wales. The daughter of a Welsh chieftain, she was roughly wooed by Prince Caradoc. Finding his attentions unwelcome, she sought sanctuary in a church to which Caradoc followed her, striking off her head. St Beuno replaced her head, bringing her back to enjoy a long and successful life. The spring at Holywell marks the place where her head came to rest. The name perhaps foreshadows the number of doublings which feature in the novel.
 7. *lowness of his finances*: Ned's 'wonderful' accomplishments are similar to those spontaneously attained by another character raised in rural isolation in Wales, Emmeline in Charlotte Smith's *Emmeline, or, the Orphan of the Castle* (1788), and mocked by Austen at the beginning of *Northanger Abbey*. Smith's heroine is eventually revealed as the rightful owner of the family property and comes close to marrying her first cousin, who has long been considered heir to it. These motifs, of course, also appear, somewhat modified, in *Ned Evans*.
 8. *the month of November in the year 1779*: this gives us a starting point for the main narrative, which ends around Christmas 1783. Hervey's dating is consistent, to the extent that in Volume 4 she gives an exact date for the abandonment and discovery of the infant Ned.
 9. *Towser*: a common name for large dogs.
 10. *covert*: a hiding place.
 11. *Hungary water*: rosemary flowers infused in wine or some other alcohol.
 12. *Welsh rabbit*: not simply, as nowadays, cheese on toast, but a far richer dish consisting of cheese and butter melted together, mixed with ale, then poured over buttered toast.
 13. *if I had been there with young maister*: an attempt at rendering a Welsh lower-class accent, though some characters – notably the harper Price and his daughter Molly – are spared this.
 14. *woundily*: excessively, extremely, dreadfully.
 15. *pallet*: a straw bed or mattress, generally a temporary or inferior place to sleep.
 16. *Sherlock upon Death*: presumably *Practical Meditations upon the Four Last Things* by Richard Sherlock (1612–89), published posthumously in 1692.
 17. *not a regular physician*: that is, he is not one of the elite, who studied for a degree at Oxford, Cambridge or one of the Scottish universities, but like the majority of medical practitioners combines the roles of surgeon and apothecary, providing drugs and carrying out treatment and surgeries.
 18. *wine whey*: 'whey' is a general term for any drink taken medicinally, wine whey generally being a mixture of wine and milk.
 19. *Oh! ye great ones of the earth*: Hervey numbered several bishops among her acquaintance, including the Bishop of Salisbury, at whose house she often stayed.
 20. *without enthusiasm*: in the eighteenth century 'enthusiasm' was used to denote misdirected or excessive religious display, often in the context of nonconformist religion.
 21. *answerable*: equivalent, corresponding.