

as they sweat the hands. If you would avoid roughness and redness, never hold your hands to the fire. I may mention here, parenthetically, that all kinds of colds and troubles are caught, not out of doors in the open, fresh air, but in the hot rooms you enter after you come indoors. It is the most dangerous thing in the world to get warm too soon after being cold. It may sound paradoxical for me to say, "Get warm in a cold room," but this is really the only safe plan. Just listen. You may take two house-flies, and gradually freeze them—they may be even inside lumps of ice; they would in many instances come to life again if the thawing and warming process were done most gradually, but certainly not if done in a hurry. Now, if you please, take that as an example of the evil effects of thawing too quickly after you have been cold.

Standing about in cold rooms while in evening dress has a most injurious effect both on the complexion and hands. Always, if possible, throw a light, soft shawl around your shoulders. The condition of skin raised by cold, and called "goose-skin," really means temporary

paralysis of the cuticle, and is very detrimental if often repeated.

Drinking hot tea or hot drinks of any kind when very cold is also bad for hands and face. Such drinks produce a too early reaction, and mischief is done that it is difficult to get over.

Nails.—A soft nail-brush should be used in washing the hands. If any instrument be needed for the nails, it should be of ivory, not of steel; if you use a sharp steel instrument you roughen the under surface, and they soon get unsightly, and are more easily soiled.

About once a week is often enough to trim the nails. Do not cut them too much down at the sides, else you may have an in-growing nail. Trim them oval or filbert, whichever suits the shape of the fingers best. Do not, however, leave them too long, or they may easily be likened to claws by people who don't love you.

Wash in hot water, and the skin that grows up over the nail may then easily be kept in its proper place by the ivory trimmer.

The white spots called "gifts," that sometimes appear in the nails, are due to a deposit,

and point, not to gifts, but to more or less of the lithic acid diathesis.

The nails should be polished every day. This may be done with a trimmer covered with chamois leather, and a little levigated chalk mixed with lime juice; but polished nails look very pretty.

The liquor of boiled oatmeal groats will tend to whiten the skin; but it must be made fresh every day—it won't keep.

A cocoa-nut oil liniment is sometimes used to rub into the hands at night to whiten them. It is composed of half an ounce each of cocoa-nut oil, white wax, and almond oil, nicely scented.

Elder-flower water a pint, borax half an ounce, and lavender water an ounce. Mix. A cosmetic for face or hands.

I do not approve of always wearing gloves in bed. It is unhealthy, but occasionally it may do no harm.

In my next paper I shall touch further on the complexion, and give some hints about perspiration, which may be useful to many who are troubled therewith.

ROMANCE OF THE EARLDOM OF STIRLING.



is often remarked by travellers to the north of the Tweed, that whilst the Castle of Edinburgh answers

to the Royal Tower of London, that of Stirling is the very counterpart of Royal Windsor. And there is little doubt that when Scotland had a King and a Court, Stirling Castle was one of the proudest "homes and haunts" of royalty, since

even now, in its dismantled state, we can trace, in the "pleasaunce" which lies beneath its walls, the tilt-ground where many a tournament was held in the days when the Stuarts sat upon the Scottish throne. And since the fair city of Stirling seems never to have given its name as a title to any scion of the house of Stuart, it was only meet and fitting that its earldom, if bestowed at all, should have been bestowed on one of the noblest of the old Scottish houses.

The family of Alexander trace their descent from a very early period of Scottish history—namely, from Somerled, King of the Isles, who lived in the reign of Malcolm IV., and was killed in battle about the middle of the twelfth century. He left, by his wife Elfrica, daughter of Olaf, King of Man, a son Reginald, also King of Man, who in his turn became the ancestor of several noble houses, the ancient Earls of Ross and of Antrim, and the Lords Macdonald of the Isles. He was also, through the Alexanders of Menstrie, the forefather of the celebrated Sir William Alexander, one of the ornaments of the Courts of James V. and James VI., being at once a poet, a courtier, and a statesman.

It was mainly through his poetical talents that this Sir William first became a favourite at the Scottish Court; and when James VI. travelled southwards, and was crowned as James I. of England, Sir William, like a canny Scot, to seek his fortunes travelled southwards with the King. Soon after this, in 1604, he printed and published a quarto volume of poems and plays, which he followed up by

other works, all inspired by the Muse of poetry. The King, who liked to be thought a worshipper of the Muses, made him one of the gentleman ushers in attendance on Prince Charles (afterwards Charles I.), and also knighted him. From this time forth we lose sight of him as a poet, but find him busily engaged in various worldly projects and schemes of a more profitable nature than verse-writing.

The chief project to which Sir William devoted his talents was that of founding and settling a colony on the shores of North America, in a part which the Council of New England seemed anxious to surrender back to the King. Sir William Alexander saw his opportunity, and being a man of action, at once seized it. At all events, in September, 1621, he obtained from the King at Windsor a royal grant bestowing on him the said tract of country for himself and his heirs, to hold as his Majesty's Lieutenants, the country itself being styled Nova Scotia. The full list of his dignities is rather long, including the offices of Hereditary Lieutenant-General of the Dominion of Nova Scotia, Justice-General, Lord High Admiral, Lord of Regality, and Hereditary Steward within the said country. After the death of James, this grant was confirmed by a charter from Charles I., dated from Oatlands in July, 1625, giving to Sir William precedence over the newly created Baronets of Nova Scotia, making him also Grand Master of that Order, and investing him with the right and power of creating additional Baronets of Nova Scotia. Some of these grants, signed by Sir William as the King's Lieutenant, are still in existence; and all the Baronets, even those who received their titles direct from the Crown, held their *broad acres* from Sir William, under his sign and seal.

In the following year this powerful servant of the Crown was made Chief Secretary of State for Scotland, and in 1628 he obtained from Charles yet another charter, under the Great Seal of Scotland, in which he is described as "the King's Hereditary Lieutenant of Nova Scotia," and by which he was made Lieutenant also of what is styled "the Lordship of Canada." This colony, as well as that of Nova Scotia, was founded and established at the sole expense of Sir William, and both

grants were confirmed to him under the broad seal of the Scottish King and Parliament. About the same time he was raised to the Peerage as Viscount, and subsequently Earl of Stirling, Viscount of Canada, Earl of Dovan, and Baron Alexander—a long list of titles, sufficient to gratify his highest ambition—with an extension of the grant in favour of his female descendants, in event of the failure of his male line.

It may be thought fortunate for this extension to have been made, for his male line held the Earldoms and other honours for little more than a century, when they passed to the last Earl's sister, Lady Mary, who died unmarried, handing on the titles to her younger sister, the wife of a Warwickshire gentleman named Humphrys. These ladies, however, seem never to have actually assumed the title, probably because they were not rich; and when the second countess died—a year before the battle of Waterloo—her son, having been a prisoner in France, and inheriting a barren title without broad lands to maintain it, found it difficult and, indeed, impossible, to make good his claim to it. It is true that he assumed the title, and that on one occasion he voted at some elections of Scotch Representative Peers at Holyrood. But Kings George IV. and William IV., acting doubtless on the advice of their ministers, refused to receive him at Court as an earl. This refusal, joined to the want of means to prosecute his claim before the House of Lords, fairly broke his heart; and though he left no less than eight children, all born between 1812 and 1829, none of them have attempted to revive it. In all probability means would have been found to enable them to perpetuate the noble and illustrious Earldom of Stirling if it had not been weighted with the Vice-royalty of Canada, which, if admitted and allowed, would have clashed with the traditions of Downing Street and the regulations of the Colonial Office. But still, however handicapped by such awkward conditions, a claim is a claim, and a right is a right; and if any of the children abovementioned is still living, and if the various links in his or her pedigree can be proved, it is difficult to say with truth that the Earldom of Stirling is extinct.