DECORATION OF THE PANELS.

Those who are not art workers could fill the panels with Japanese gilt leather paper. Remnants can often be bought very cheap, or a few yards can be purchased at some decorator's or house-furnisher's. The pieces should be cut just a trifle smaller than the panels, to allow of the paper stretching a little when pasted. The wood should be well sized a day or two before putting on the paper. Very strong paste is necessary; that known as cobbler's paste is the thing. It can be had at a shoemaker's warehouse, and may require thinning with a little boiling water. Put plenty on the Japanese paper, and even apply a second coat half an hour after the first, so that the paper is quite limp before it is laid down. It will then adhere firmly if well rubbed over to get out all air bubbles. The top of the box could also be covered with Japanese paper, especially if the wood is rough. It should be brought over the edges of the lid and carried a little way underneath.

GESSO.

This is a name given to ornamentation in slight relief. It was largely used by the Italians in the sixteenth century, and specimens of furniture and coffers so decorated can be seen in South Kensington Museum. The material composing gesso is plaster of Paris mixed with hot fish-glue, consequently it must be put on while warm, for if gesso becomes solid it cannot be used again. Only mix up, therefore, a little at a time.

The design must be transferred to the wood or other surface to be decorated, and then the gesso can be painted on with large camel-hair brushes, using the gesso in a "blobby" manner, *i.e.*, the gesso must be allowed almost to drop from the brush. Accidental qualities, which are very pleasant, are thus obtained, some portions of the design receiving more of the gesso than others. By going over the design a second time when the first coat is dry, further relief can be obtained, and it helps the effect to do this here and there.

When the gesso is hard, it can be painted in oil colours mixed with copal varnish. Some pleasant accidental effects can be obtained by putting the colour on and then partially rubbing it off with a soft rag. This gives a natural sort of light and shade. Designs can be stencilled in gesso and then coloured. Such a design as the one given could be treated as a stencil and afterwards touched up by hand.

The panels might be stained or coloured before putting on the gesso. Linoleum or canvas could be stuck on the wood with strong glue paste and then decorated with gesso. In addition to being painted, gesso looks well gilded. If Japanese paper be used, gesso could be used to give prominence to some portions of the pattern, afterwards colouring such portions to harmonise with the colours of the paper.

There is a material sold in tins called "Denoline," which is ready prepared, directions being printed on the tins. Some artists' colourmen and decorators sell it or can procure it. If very considerable relief is required, you soak tow or wool in gesso and stick this on, and when this is hard bring up the surface with another coat of gesso put on with a brush. It does not do to lump gesso on, as it cracks in drying.

In working on an old piece of furniture, see that the wood is well cleaned with soda and water to remove all grease, before commencing your decoration.

A GIRL'S RAMBLES THROUGH HAUNTED SCOTLAND.

BY JAMES AND NANETTE MASON.

PART I.

EDINBURGH LADIES OF BYGONE TIMES.

A DEEP attachment to their native land is the characteristic of most Scotchmen and Scotchwomen, and they are credited with being seldom backward in asserting it. To them there is no country like that which, with its Lowlands and Highlands, stretches north of the Tweed away to John o' Groat's, no air like its "caller air," no running water like its burns and streams, and no people like their "ain folk."

They may remove from Scotland—having their bread buttered on both sides, perhaps, in distant places—but in their heart of hearts it has a corner all to itself for ever. The skirl of an occasional bagpipe is to them the sweetest music, and they feel an emotion not to be put in words at the sight of a stray sprig of heather.

A typical Scot, they say, once in pursuit of fortune, emigrated to Canada. Nothing would satisfy him but to take as part of his baggage a handkerchief full of earth from the field of Bannockburn, and every New Year's night during his long stay in the backwoods of his colonial home he spread the earth on the floor, placed a chair on the earth, and, planting himself in the chair, ate a substantial meal of hotch-potch, haggis, and oatcake, washed down by the national beverage, after which he and his sang Scotch songs and danced reels and strathspeys till morning.

All may not express their devotion to the land of the mountain and the flood in the same manner, but the feeling is never absent, and comes oozing out in the conversation of our northern friends in unexpected ways and in all sorts of unexpected places.

And what wonder? The land is one to be proud of—remarkable for its history, remarkable for the strong character—fresh, original, cautious, level-headed, argumentative, sometimes pugnacious, and always persevering—of its people, remarkable for its literature, remarkable for the influence it has exerted in the world, an influence out of all proportion to its size and population.

About this land we are now going to write.

We may well call it haunted Scotland in the title. Every place on earth has its ghosts, and the more romantic the incidents that have happened in it, so much the more interesting the crowd of its phantom inhabitants. It goes then without saying that Scotland, with its stirring history, can boast of troops of ghosts of the first quality, to read about whom will furnish not only entertainment, but a good deal of instruction for such girls as have a mind that way.

We propose in this and the following papers to go on pilgrimage through at least a portion of the northern kingdom, speaking of days that are gone, and of people and things that have passed away; and of days and people and things, selecting particularly those that are interesting from a girl's point of view.

There will be no antiquarianism, certainly not. Girls rambling through a picturesque country are not inclined to leave the open air, so fresh and free, for the close atmosphere of an antiquarian museum. There is a place and use for everything, but to the young and bright spirits, who as a rule read the pages of THE GIRL'S OWN PAPER, dusty details, local interests, dry bones and old stones, would, we know well, prove only an unattractive rigmarole.

Our main object will be to speak of human life, and of all subjects in the world, the most fascinating is people. In the goodly company of our ghosts there will be queens and princesses, famous ladies and eccentric ladies, poetesses and story-writers, bright Scotch lassies, and dear, and sometimes queer, old maids—in fact quite a gallery of notables of all sorts and sizes to illustrate the lights and shadows of bygone days, and the share that women-folk have had in the making of Scottish life and history.

It is right that our wandering feet should make a start with the capital, so old recollections of Edinburgh will form our first subject. Even were it not the capital, it would deserve the first place on account of its beauty.

"The noblest city in the world," says the late William Black, the novelist. It is a city, too, where all, whether they have visited it or not, feel as if at home, for reading has made us familiar with its leading features—the old town, with the High Street and Canongate, where every step is in historic Scotland; the new town, so different in character, and such an admirable contrast; the castle, round which the city first sprang; Princes Street, with its gardens, the finest metropolitan thoroughfare ever planned; Arthur's Seat watching over everything, and the sail-dotted Forth and the coast of Fife away in the background.

Edinburgh is full of stories of royal personages, and the names of Queen Margaret and Queen Mary are now on the tip of our pen; but by way of a change let us speak first of humbler folk of more modern date quite as picturesque in their fashion and rather better fun. The Queens will come afterwards. Make way, then, for the old Scottish ladies who lived before intimate intercourse with England had revolutionised Scottish manners, and steam and electricity had upset the easy jog-trot habits of society in "Auld Reekie," and enlarged there the mental horizon of everybody.

Of all the picturesque characters who have had their headquarters in Edinburgh, the most entertaining to read about are these old ladies, of whose peculiarities we get an account in such books as Chambers's *Traditions of Edinburgh* and Lord Cockburn's *Memorials of His Time.*

The race has been for many years extinct, which, from one point of view, is a good thing, for it would be a quite impossible and not-to-be-tolerated race nowadays. But old times were not like ours, and the old ladies were certainly in harmony with their own surroundings. Some of them were singularly lovable, and all had an individuality that might well make most of us humble ourselves in the dust as poor, weak and insipid creatures.

"They were a delightful set," says Lord Cockburn—"strong-headed, warm-hearted, high-spirited; the fire of their tempers not always latent; merry, even in solitude; very resolute; indifferent about the modes and habits of the modern world; and adhering to their own ways so as to stand out like primitive rocks above ordinary society. Their prominent qualities of sense, humour, affection, and spirit were embodied in curious outsides, for they all dressed, and spoke, and did exactly as they chose; their language, like their habits, entirely Scotch, but without any other vulgarity than what perfect naturalness is sometimes mistaken for."

One of the most original of them was Miss Sophia Johnston, of the Hilton family, who flourished about the close of the eighteenth century. Many of her oddities were no doubt due to the fact that her father, out of pure whimsicality, resolved to see how it would turn out, and gave her no education whatever. Sophia, thrown thus on her own resources, took to carpentry and blacksmith work, and could lay floors and shoe horses in fine style.

She grew to womanhood ignorant both of reading and writing; then she taught herself both arts, and soon acquired an extensive familiarity with books. Literature, however, never became so prominent in her conversation as sound and powerful common-sense, very freely expressed.

In dress she never varied—"a man's hat when out of doors, and generally, when within them, a cloth covering exactly like a man's great-coat, buttoned closely from the chin to the ground, worsted stockings, strong shoes with large brass clasps. And in this raiment she sat in any drawing-room, and at any table, amidst all the fashion and aristocracy of the land, respected and liked."

The only companion she had in the flat in which she lived was a servant. When the maid went out, which she generally did for the whole of Sunday, Sophia made her lock the door and take the key with her. Sometimes people called, and she took stock of them through a spy-hole. If they were uninteresting, she made no sign; but if it suited her humour, she talked through the hole, and when tired of them told them to go away.

Another Edinburgh character—though she had more love for the fields than for the city—was Miss Minie Trotter, also of a good family. Her great delight lay in long country walks, ten miles at a stretch being nothing to her, even within a few years of her death. Through living much alone, she had acquired some entertaining habits, but they never interfered with her enjoyment of her friends whom she used to invite regularly to her cottage on Blackford Hill to partake of "a bit dinner." "She generally sacrificed," says Lord Cockburn, "an ox to hospitality every autumn, which, according to a system of her own, she ate regularly from nose to tail; and as she indulged in him only on Sundays, and with a chosen few, he feasted her half through the winter."

She looked a rough piece of granite, but within lay hid a well of deep feeling which would spring up at odd times and flow freely in some eccentric channel. Dr. John Brown, the famous author of "Rab and his Friends," has published some interesting details about her. She was penurious, he says, in small things, but her generosity could rise to circumstances, and though slenderly endowed she did unnoticed many extraordinary acts of liberality.

She had no belief in banks, but kept all her bills and bank-notes in a green silk bag that hung on her toilette glass. On each side of the table stood a large white bowl, one of them containing her silver and the other her copper money, the latter always full to the brim. They were accessible to Peggy, her handmaid, or to any other servant in the house, for the idea of stealing money never entered her brain. Indeed, she once sent a present to a niece of a fifty-pound note wrapped up in a cabbage-leaf, and entrusted it to the care of a woman who was going with a basket of butter to the Edinburgh market.

A touching example of her generosity is related by the niece to whom this present in a cabbage-leaf was sent. One day, in the course of conversation, her aunt said to her: "Do ye ken, Margaret, that Mrs. Thomas R—— is dead. I was gaun by the door this morning, and thought I wad just look in and speer (inquire) for her. She was very near her end, but quite sensible, and expressed her gratitude to God for what He had done for her and her fatherless bairns. She said, 'She was leaving a large small family with very small means, but she had that trust in Him that they would not be forsaken, and that He would provide for them.' Now, Margaret, ye'll tell Peggy to bring down the green silk bag that hangs on the corner of my looking-glass, and ye'll take twa thousand pounds out o' it, and gie it to ——" (naming a law agent) "for behoof of thae orphan bairns: it will fit out the laddies and be something to the lassies. I want to make good the words 'that God would provide for them'—for what else was I sent that way this morning but as a humble instrument in His hands?"

It does one good to read of an incident so calculated to make us look beyond an eccentric exterior to the kind heart and generous thought, and to encourage us to take advantage of Heaven-sent opportunities in a similar spirit. But some of these old ladies were not models to be followed, and of these we may mention two maiden sisters whose names have perished, but who have long had a place in the traditions of the Scottish metropolis.

They had come down in the world, and had at last arrived at keeping house in a single room. Here, says Mr. Robert Louis Stevenson, who gives the story a place in his "Picturesque Notes" on his native town, our two spinsters fell out, on what subject nobody knows, and "fell out so bitterly that there was never a word spoken between them, black or white, from that day forward. You would have thought they would separate: but no; whether from lack of means or the Scottish fear of scandal, they continued to keep house together where they were.

"A chalk line drawn upon the floor separated their two domains, it bisected the doorway and the fireplace, so that each could go out and in, and do her cooking, without violating the territory of the other. So, for years, they co-existed in a hateful silence; their meals, their ablutions, their friendly visitors, exposed to an unfriendly scrutiny; and at night, in the dark watches, each could hear the breathing of her enemy. Never did four walls look down upon an uglier spectacle than these sisters rivalling in unsisterliness."

(*To be continued.*)

A GIRL'S RAMBLES THROUGH HAUNTED SCOTLAND.

BY JAMES AND NANETTE MASON.

PART II.

A FEW MORE EDINBURGH LADIES.

THE language used by the old ladies of whom we were speaking in our first article was such genuine Scotch in every word and tone that an English girl would have been puzzled to make out even a half of what they said. They had a great store of choice pungent expressions, such as are now quite out of date, or perhaps only to be met with in a Kail-yard novel, whose scene is laid in some remote parish where words die hard and old ways survive for ever.

But it would be a mistake to think that with their primitive speech they did not possess the best of manners. Different from ours they were, no doubt, but the best manners of their time for all that. The ladies were real ladies.

The more formal of them observed a very rigid etiquette, of which a good example is given by Dean Ramsay, which we may quote, though the lady of whom he speaks was only an occasional visitor to Edinburgh and not a habitual resident. She was a Mrs. Helen Carnegy, of Craigo, who lived in Montrose, and died in 1818, at the advanced age of ninety-one.

In sending messages to her friends she preserved a nice distinction of address, carefully graduated according to their rank in society and their place in her estimation. She enjoyed company, and used to send out the servant every morning to invite the ladies required to make up the game, and her directions were arranged on this descending scale :—

"Nelly, ye'll gang to Lady Carnegy's, and mak' my compliments, and ask the *honour* of her ladyship's company, and that of the Miss Carnegys, to tea this evening; and if they canna come, gang to the Miss Mudies, and ask the *pleasure* of their company; and if they canna come, ye may gang to Miss Hunter and ask the *favour* of her company; and if she canna come, gang to Lucky Spark and *bid her come.*"

When these old worthies gave themselves airs every onlooker was impressed. There was Mrs. Rochead, of Inverleith, near Edinburgh, a dame of aristocratic breed, who had shone as a hooped beauty in her day, and as she grew old became formidable by cold and rather severe solemnity.

To see her sit down was something to be remembered—a performance of which a picture in words has been given by the graphic pen of Lord Cockburn. "She would sail in," he says, "like a ship from Tarshish, gorgeous in velvet or rustling in silk, and done up in all the accompaniments of fan, ear-rings, and finger-rings, falling sleeves, scent-bottle, embroidered bag, hoop and train—all superb, yet all in purest taste; and managing all this seemingly heavy rigging with as much ease as a full-blown swan does its plumage, she would take possession of the centre of a large sofa, and at the same moment, without the least visible exertion, would cover the whole of it with her bravery, the graceful folds seeming to lay themselves over it like summer waves."

In the speech of these old ladies there was neither affectation nor insincerity. What they thought they said, even though their observations might sometimes prove unpalatable. But there was no unkind feeling in it, and they were ready to take, without resentment, criticism and sarcasm as plain spoken as they gave.

Metaphysical they were by training, not to speak of inclination. They would not have been genuine Scotch otherwise. Even the young ladies of Edinburgh, Sydney Smith used to say, did their love-making in a metaphysical way. "I overheard," he remarks, "a young lady of my acquaintance, at a party in Edinburgh, exclaim in a sudden pause of the music, 'What you say, my lord, is very true of love in the abstract, but——' Here the fiddlers began fiddling furiously, and the rest was lost."

United to this metaphysical turn they had a pronounced dislike to anything which they thought, rightly or wrongly, savoured of cant. One of them, to give an example, had asked a gentleman to dinner, and he had accepted with the reservation "If I am spared." "Weel, weel," said the lady, "if ye're dead I'll no expect ye."

Even in their last hour they preserved their coolness and philosophy. When a Miss Johnstone of Hawkhill, who died near Edinburgh in the close of the eighteenth century, was near her end, "a tremendous storm of thunder, lightning and rain came on, so as to shake the house. In her own quaint, eccentric spirit, and with no thought of profane or light allusions, she looked up, and, listening to the storm, quietly remarked, in reference to her departure—

"'Ech, sirs! what a night for me to be fleein' through the air!'"

Such are some of the characters whose ghosts haunt and make memorable the stairways and streets and closes of the old town of Edinburgh. But besides these there are other ghosts not to be overlooked by a girl on pilgrimage who keeps her eyes about her. There are those of the poetesses, a tuneful race of whom Scotland may well be proud, women, it has been truly said, whose songs are known wherever the Scotch foot treads or the Scotch language lingers.

Lady Nairne, the authoress of the "Land o' the Leal," "The Laird o' Cockpen," and many other well-known songs, was one of the most illustrious as well as the most gifted of them. She resided in a cottage in the suburbs of Edinburgh after her marriage, living there in great retirement, arising partly from a natural standoffishness and partly from the fact that she and her husband were rigid Jacobites. They belonged to a family described as Jacobites of the Jacobites, who after the '45 rebellion had sighed till they grew old for Bonnie Charlie coming back again, and in the interval cherished as one of their most valued possessions a lock of the Prince's hair. To see the best of the lady one must go behind her partisanship and exclusiveness and get acquainted with the kindly spirit of her songs.

That she wrote songs—and it was her ambition to write what people would grow better by singing—she long kept concealed even from her relations and friends. Authorship was not considered ladylike by grand folk in those days. "We dwell under a different *régime* now," says Miss Sarah Tytler, writing during Queen Victoria's reign, "and the bluest blood runs warm and kind: for the Queen of the land does not fear to put her private journal, with her name attached to it, into her people's hands in right royal frankness and simplicity."

Lady Nairne carried the art of mystification in regard to her work to such an extent that when she wrote to her publisher she did so in a feigned hand, and employed other feigned hands to transcribe her manuscript, whilst the manuscript was signed by initials not her own. She sometimes even ventured, under an assumed name, on personal interviews with him, and on these occasions she was carefully got up as an old country lady of a former generation. Imagine authors masquerading in such a fashion nowadays, and a contributor, say, to THE GIRL'S OWN PAPER calling on the Editor elaborately disguised so as to represent her own great-grandmother!

She encountered many troubles in the course of her long life—it extended from 1766 to 1845—and troubles are held

to be a necessary outfit if one is to attain success as poet for the people. Her songs cover a wide range, and contrive in a wonderful way "to idealise at some distance the gladness and the sadness of the masses, or of the typical representatives of parties and classes among her countrymen." Many a girl who is not Scotch has found delight in singing her "Caller Herrin'," "The Rowan Tree," "The Auld House," and the Jacobite ditties "Wha'll be King but Charlie?" "Charlie is my darling," and "He's ower the hills that I lo'e weel," though the real flavour of these charming productions can only, we fear, be relished by those who hail from "the north countree."

Another Edinburgh songstress was Lady Anne Lindsay, the authoress of the ever-popular "Auld Robin Gray," who was born in the Scotch metropolis in 1750, and spent there a considerable portion of her youth; she was of an ancient Fifeshire family, however—"the daughter of a hundred earls."

She was an interesting, pretty, and agreeable woman, of whom it is said that though she had wit she never said ill-natured things to show it, and gave herself no airs either as a person of quality or as the authoress of "Auld Robin Gray." In her we have a good example of a single song songstress, for though she wrote other verses, "Auld Robin Gray" is the only composition to which her name is now attached.

Its origin has been often told. Lady Anne had a great liking for an old tune to which words were united, not in the best taste. So she thought of trying to make new words, and on setting about it produced a ballad of some eight or nine stanzas. This simple composition was received with rapture in her own land, and, passing beyond its limits, was quickly translated into almost every European tongue, whilst both at home and abroad it was made the subject of dramas and paintings innumerable. On one occasion Lady Anne had the gratification of seeing her rustic story rehearsed under the window by a company of performing dogs.

It is worth mentioning that the old tune to which "Auld Robin Gray" was originally sung is no longer in use. The tender and appropriate melody to which we always hear it wedded nowadays is not Scotch. It was written by the Rev. Mr. Leeves, a Church of England rector in Somersetshire.

A third Edinburgh poetess, famous also for a single song, was Miss Jean Elliot, who wrote the well-known "Flowers of the Forest." She lived in one of the squares on the south side of the town, and was long conspicuous as "the chief ornament of her circle through her talents, intelligence, and common-sense." Her father was Sir Gilbert Elliot of Minto, Lord Justice-clerk of Scotland.

The "forest" mentioned in the title of the song was a district in the south of Scotland once noted for its fine archers. These were almost to a man slain at the Battle of Flodden in 1513, and upon that disastrous event Jean Elliot's song is founded.

Miss Elliot in her youth took part in one or two stirring events. When she was a young woman of nineteen—it was in the year of the '45 Rebellion—she had a chance of showing that she was a good sort, full of dexterity, discretion, and self-control. A party of Jacobites came to Minto House in Teviotdale, where her father Sir Gilbert lived, in order to arrest him as an influential and dangerous Whig. He got warning in time, and concealed himself amongst the rocks and broom of the neighbouring hillside.

"Down at the house, in the commotion and excitement of the trying moment, Jean either put herself forward to receive and entertain the unwelcome company, or else she was thrust into this difficult position by the other women, for she was neither house-dame nor eldest daughter. But she did it so well, with such simple courtesy and composure, that the enemy retired, under the impression that Sir Gilbert could not be within reach when the young lady, his daughter, was able to behave with perfect calmness and propriety."

She died in 1805 at the age of seventy-eight, and over and above her claims as a poetess is remarkable in the history of the manners and customs of Edinburgh as the last woman in that city who, after cabs and suchlike vehicles came in, kept standing in her "lobby" a private sedan-chair, in which she was borne abroad when she wanted to take an airing or to make a call.

Contemporary with Miss Elliot there lived in Edinburgh another lady of family—a Mrs. Cockburn—who distinguished herself as a writer of verses, and who also wrote a song, often sung, known as the "Flowers of the Forest." It begins, "I've seen the smiling of Fortune beguiling," whereas the first line of Miss Elliot's song is, "I've heard the lilting at our yew-milking." There is a resemblance between the two songs and a difference, the resemblance no doubt to be accounted for by their referring to the same event and having for their key-note a line or two of an old ballad long since forgotten.

More might be said of Edinburgh poetesses, but the ghosts of Scottish queens complain that all this while we have been neglecting them in favour of old ladies and word-spinners. Of queens, then, and their doings and belongings in our next article.

(*To be continued.*)

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

STUDY AND STUDIO.

MABEL F. LUSCOMBE (Ontario).—Your story, considering that you are only thirteen, is very good indeed. You have sufficient material in it to make a very much longer and a very interesting story, describing in detail how all the circumstances came about which are only enumerated, such as the seizure of Veretta, the introduction of Alphonso into the place where she is imprisoned, and so forth. If we made any criticism, it would be that the heroine scarcely seems to rise equal to the tragic and thrilling *dénouement*. "That will be nice," is scarcely an appropriate remark, and she is not grateful enough to her rescuer, who has dared his life for her, the prominent impression conveyed by your words being that she is tired and hungry. You are describing a situation of supreme emotion, charged with possibilities of life and death. But we repeat that it is a most creditable attempt.

AUNT CHLOE.—The author of "Paradise and the Peri" (not "The Peri and Paradise") is Thomas Moore. The poem begins—

> "One morn a Peri at the gate
> Of Eden stood disconsolate."

You will find it in *Moore's Poems* or in *A Thousand and One Gems of Poetry* (Mackay), published by Routledge. "Tom Moore's Poems" are issued for a penny in the "Penny Poet" series (Masterpiece Library).

DEN ENK (Holland).—We do not know a volume of birthday poems suitable for young children; but we have inserted an inquiry in "Our Open Letter Box," and thank you for your pleasant note. There is Lear's *Nonsense Birthday Book* (2s. 7½d. net), but we doubt if it would meet your requirements.

G. J. C.—The beautiful lines you quote—

> "It happened on a solemn eventide
> Soon after He that was our Surety died"—

are not, as you suppose, the beginning of a poem, but are an extract from one. In Cowper's "Conversation," a poem of many pages, this episode, describing in reverent language the visit to Emmaus, occurs. You will find the passage at about the middle of the poem. It is, of course, complete in itself, and comprises some thirty-two lines. We hope this information may be useful to your friend in whose memory the words have lingered so long.

OUR OPEN LETTER BOX.

MUSHROOM inquires for the name of the publishers of *The Use and Abuse of the World*, six sermons preached on the Sundays after Easter, 1873, in St. James's, Piccadilly, by the Rev. Canon Barry.

Can anyone tell DEN ENK, Holland, whether there is a volume of birthday poems in English suitable for young children?

L. N. H. kindly informs DENZIL that "The Matron's Story" is by G. R. Sims, in "Ballads of Babylon."

light did not enable her to know whether the moon would cast a reflection or not, from the opposite side of the bay.

"Now let's go and brave the gipsies," came Kate's voice, brisk and decided as usual. She liked the moonlight and the night breeze, but they did not make her feel poetical. The age when every beautiful scene in nature suggests undefinedly the romance of life, was past for her, and she had never been a sentimentalist.

The caravan stood by the roadside, but it was hermetically sealed. Only the embers of the wood fire smouldering among the grass and the camp dog, which gave a sleepy growl at their approach, showed signs of any near humanity.

"That's just like the perilous adventures we look forward to in life," remarked Kate. "In the distance they look so dangerous and exciting. When one gets up to them they turn out to be not in the least degree dangerous — only stupidly, disappointingly commonplace."

(*To be continued.*)

A GIRL'S RAMBLES THROUGH HAUNTED SCOTLAND.

BY JAMES AND NANETTE MASON.

PART III.

A CHAPTER FILLED WITH QUEENS.

WHEREVER you go in the outskirts of Edinburgh, whatever else may be hidden from view, you never lose sight of the Castle. It is the one feature of the city which strangers longest remember, and which natives, however far they may roam, never forget. A look as if it were made for fighting impresses it on the recollection; a pugnacious, Scottish-thistle, touch-me-if-you-dare look that inspires respect and renders it unnecessary to turn to history-books for proof that in fighting days Edinburgh Castle stood no nonsense.

If tradition speaks truly—which sometimes happens, though she is a jade notoriously given to mis-statements and misunderstandings—this commanding fortress might be called the Girl's Own Castle. By the ancient Britons it is said to have been known by an unpronounceable name meaning the Maidens' Castle, because certain young maidens of the royal blood at one time found a safe home within its walls.

We give this statement for what it is worth. What is certain is that it formed the abode of a queen who will ever be held in affectionate remembrance by Scotch people—St. Margaret, the wife of Malcolm Canmore, or Malcolm with the Big Head. Here she lived, and here on the 16th of November, 1093, she breathed her last, leaving behind such pleasant memories that her Christian name became what it still is, one of the most common names in Scotland.

She was an English princess who, in troublous times succeeding the Norman Conquest of 1066, had taken refuge in the Northern Kingdom, where her beauty and amiable character captivated King Malcolm. It was quite a love match and a desirable match, too, in other respects, for the bride was no "penniless lass with a long pedigree," but rich in treasure which she had brought from England.

There was ability in her, as well as sweetness and gentleness. She contrived to manage her husband, who needed a good deal of management, for he was a man of strife, given to periodical rages when he was "neither to haud nor to bind." He was sufficiently fond of her, admiring in her the self-control he himself lacked, and proud of her learning, in which also she was his superior, for he could neither read nor write. A touching picture has been handed down of his carrying about her books and kissing those she loved most.

After he died—slain during the course of an invasion of England—she survived him only a few days.

She is much better known to posterity than her husband, which shows the advantage of enlisting the services of a friend as a biographer. No contemporary took Malcolm with the Big Head in hand, but St. Margaret had her life written by a monk who had been her confessor.

No doubt a good deal of this old monk's narrative must be taken with the proverbial grain of salt, the rule being that writers of the lives of saints dip their pens pretty frequently in the ink of a vivid imagination. But, all allowances made, the impression is left on the mind of St. Margaret being a woman who tried to cultivate her highest gifts, and greatly advanced the cause of goodness at a time when civilising influences were much required. Her religion was genuine and intense, and let those who think lightly of it, because of its ostentatious works of piety, remember that she lived between eight hundred and nine hundred years ago, when such things were the natural expression of earnest devotion.

"She wore herself away," we are told, "by the excess of her self-mortification. Each morning during the forty days of Lent and the forty days before Christmas, she went through a round of pious acts which only a devout mind could have converted into a custom. Assisted by the King, she first washed the feet of six poor persons; nine little orphans were next brought to be fed by her own hand; again with the aid of the King she served food and drink to three hundred poor people, specially gathered for the purpose; and lastly, she did unassisted a similar service to twenty-four others, whom she supported during the rest of the year. Traits of more rational piety were her liberal almsgiving and her efforts to mend the lot of her own countrymen who had been brought as captives into Scotland."

A proof of her high moral excellence survives in the testimony that "in her presence nothing unseemly was ever done or uttered," and if we all make a pause here and resolve that in this we shall strive to imitate her, our reading of this little notice of St. Margaret will not have been thrown away.

Since Queen Margaret's time the streets of Edinburgh have witnessed many royal progresses and the coming and going of many queens whose names are familiar to readers of history. They never rang with more enthusiastic shouts than one day in the spring of 1424, when James I. returned

from a long captivity in England, bringing with him his lovely bride, Joanna Beaufort, whom he had wooed and won in the South.

It was an incident in a royal romance, and hardly ever was such an odd trick played by capricious Fortune. Here had she carried off a monarch prisoner into a strange land and confined him there for eighteen years, that she might provide him with a queen, the most worthy, the most beautiful, and the best suited to him in the whole world.

Joanna Beaufort was the "milk-white dove" of "The King's Quhair," or "The King's Book," a poem which—he being a poet—James himself wrote under the spell of love with the Lady Joanna for its leading theme. The beginning of the romance appears to have been his catching a glimpse of the lady as she walked in a garden at Windsor Castle, and he fell in love at first sight, worshipping from that hour even the bush from which he had seen her pluck a rosebud.

The two had been married at the famous church of St. Mary Overy in Southwark with amazing pomp and ceremony, and, when they passed through Edinburgh, were on their way to Scone, where the King was to take up the crown of his ancestors. They were accompanied by a stately train, not only composed of the barons and gentry of Scotland, but containing many members of the English nobility, for the personal qualities of the King had secured for him a host of friends during the years of his exile.

No wonder the two were received with rapture by the good people of Edinburgh as they rode up the High Street. Romance had found the very match which policy would have dictated. "It was," remarks a Scotch historian, "a destiny uncommon among kings—to fall in love with a fair unknown damsel, casually seen, and to wed her as the one whose descent marked her to the politicians as the proper queen to bring with him to his kingdom; not to speak of his telling the story of his love in sweet verse worthy of a true poet."

Another royal procession was seen in Edinburgh about the middle of the reign of James I.'s successor, when his bride, Mary of Gueldres, came to the country. She landed at Leith, and was married to James II. on the 3rd of July, 1449. With her as escort came a distinguished body of knights, who appear to have made unfavourable comments on the poverty of the land in which their young mistress was to dwell. And, no doubt, Scotland then was poor, especially compared with the Netherlands, from which they came, at that time the richest part of Europe.

We know little about this Queen Mary, except that she was a woman of high spirit and energetic character, slightly wanting in discretion, as might be inferred from her conduct after the death of her husband, when she played a part in public affairs. In Edinburgh her name was long held in respect, for to her the city owed the erection of the magnificent Trinity College Church and Hospital, which stood on the present site of the North British Railway Station.

Nearly four hundred years after she died she was had out of her tomb by a zealous group of antiquaries, who have put it on record that they found "a skull of great delicacy, a well-formed chin, teeth small and regular, forehead broad but not high," and so on. It is one of the penalties of being something and somebody that even discarded bones are not allowed to rest in peace.

Another Margaret was Queen Consort in James IV.'s reign, and had a great reception in Edinburgh when she arrived for the wedding. She being the daughter of Henry VII. of England, it was thought that her marrying the King of Scotland would be the means of securing peace at once and for ever between the two kingdoms. Many hard knocks, however, were afterwards exchanged, but the match ultimately led to that happy union which now exists between England and Scotland.

Margaret came North in August, 1503, escorted by the Earl of Surrey and a long train of knights and nobles. She was met a few miles out of Edinburgh by King James, and the whole company entered the city in fine style. On the 7th of August the wedding took place at the Abbey Church of Holyrood, the event being marked by a succession of shows of every sort, such as had never before been seen in Scotland. The chief poet of the time, William Dunbar, wrote an allegorical poem in honour of the marriage—"The Thistle and the Rose"—whose title is worth noticing, for it contains the first authentic allusion to the thistle as the badge of Scotland.

A beautiful home-coming was that of Magdalene, the French princess who married James V. She was far from strong but one of the most lovable women that ever lived. James had met her in France, whither he had gone to make a match with another young woman who had been strongly recommended and with whose folks indeed he had entered into a marriage-treaty. But she turned out to be not what he had pictured to himself at all; he found her "bossue et contrefaicte," and, shocked and displeased at having been taken in, he at once set himself to break off the engagement and to project another.

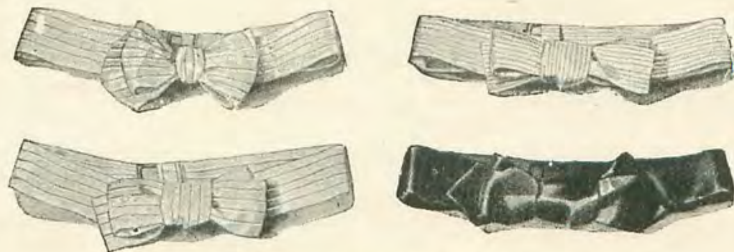
At this point he fell in with the Princess Magdalene, and an ardent affection at once sprang up between them. Notwithstanding the ill-health of the Princess, so the contemporary Scottish historian Lindsay tells us, "from the time she saw the King of Scotland and spake with him she became so enamoured of him, and loved him so well, that she would have no man alive to her husband but he only."

The two were married at Notre Dame on the opening day of 1537, and soon after set sail for Scotland. They landed at Leith, the port of Edinburgh, on Whitsunday, and there the young queen, full of love for her husband and his country, knelt on the shore, took up a handful of sand and kissed it, invoking God's blessing on Scotland.

She was received in Edinburgh, we are informed, with triumphs and shows of unexampled grandeur, and what was far better, the affectionate reverence of the entire people. But the doom had already been passed upon her. She withered like an uprooted flower, and only forty days from her arrival lay a corpse in her husband's palace.

The death of the beautiful young creature in such interesting circumstances made a deep impression on the national heart, and it is understood to have been the first occasion of a general mourning being assumed in Scotland.

(*To be continued.*)



EVENING CRAVATS OF WHITE LINEN AND BLACK SATIN.

there still when the *tête-à-tête* was interrupted by the return of the men of the house-party, who had been absent fishing.

Dinner that night was a brilliant affair, and Mary listened with intelligent interest throughout it to the Under Secretary for War, who was her partner. Afterwards Lady Stannerleigh led the way to the gold drawing-room.

Then Mary made her way diffidently across the room to Miss Arnold.

"Ah, my dear!" exclaimed that sweet lady, welcoming her, "I have wanted a quiet chat with you ever since you arrived! Now is our time, I believe. Where shall we go?"

"That wide-open window looks rather inviting, does it not?" suggested Mary, pleased at the anticipation of a private talk. For the old reverence and adoration remained in Miss Arnold's pupils throughout life, and it still seemed a great privilege to be sought of her, and to be alone with her.

"Let us take a stroll across the lawn," agreed Miss Arnold, stepping out through the French window into the moonlit garden. "And now tell me all about yourself, dear child. How has life gone with you?" she continued, slipping her arm into her old pupil's.

There was little to tell. Mary's life had been uneventful. It had been gladdened by a happy love, saddened by the early death of her lover. She had been left in very delicate health, but with slender means which just enabled her to provide a home for her youngest step-sister, who was still unmarried, and had been dependent on her since the mother's death.

Mary told the little life-story modestly and uncomplainingly, and the reason of the shadow which crept now and again over her face remained unaccounted for when she had concluded speaking.

"I see. I see it all, child," mused Miss Arnold. Then she remained silent while she turned to look back at the stately house in the moonlight. Presently she added quietly: "Life does not seem worth while—worth going on with, does it? Everything is so oppressively monotonous: moderate health, moderate means, moderate happiness, moderate sorrow, and a perspective of dead level. There is no stimulus, no incentive, no inspiration in such a lot."

"That is just it," cried Mary in agitation, under her breath. "It is all stagnation—and it is intolerable!"

"The man with the two talents," continued Miss Arnold, speaking slowly, with frequent pauses, "must have found just such difficulty. Mediocrity is a paralysing possession. The five talents stimulate to great things. Sybil may be said to have had five talents. One rises with grand opportunities to grand heights. The one-talent people—those who have to face life with great disadvantage, with constant difficulty—have an impetus also, though of quite different kind. The hopelessness of their lot may make them determine desperately to defy circumstances and overcome. Mine was an apparently hopelessly hard lot. I was left an orphan at nine years old without a penny or a relative in the world—and only one friend."

Mary burned with interest, but dared not interrupt. Miss Arnold was speaking almost absently, as though she were deep in thought, which she uttered aloud unconsciously.

She continued in the same even, quiet way—

"It is the 'ghastly smoothness' of which Browning wrote that makes mediocrity so oppressive at first sight. Life, to be worth living, need include some difficult and heroic task which shall last our life-time, calling out all our latent power, ennobling each day's least heroic action with a large lofty aim and purpose, and finally leaving us fully developed by our endeavour."

"Oh, if only I had something hard to do! I could bear life then!" cried Mary tensely.

"Yours is the hardest task of all, my child!" responded Miss Arnold earnestly, putting her hand affectionately on Mary's shoulder. "Your two talents are your life-trial. To be able to show the millions of others who share your average common lot how to be content with mediocrity—to show them how to live faithfully, bravely and cheerfully, with chances no greater than their own—to show how merely commonplace powers, monotonous circumstances, may become a noble inspiration—what soul can desire a greater chance than that? It is, I affirm again, the hardest task of all. Go on serenely and bravely with your hard task then, dear. Do your part in serving God faithfully to the end, on earth, and then pass on to the Master's praise and reward in heaven. It is written: 'He that had received two talents, he also gained other two.' The trust reposed in you here will be doubled in the joyous service of heaven."

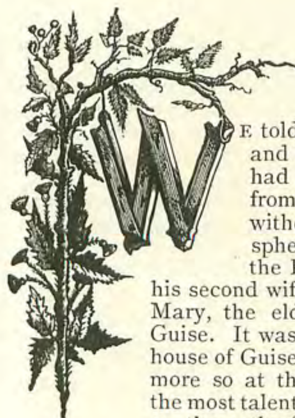
Mary was deeply thoughtful when she re-entered the drawing-room, but the shadow of discouragement had gone from her face—and crept over it again no more. She looked at Sybil with a new smile; and always blessed the day of her visit to Heron Court.

She had learnt the meaning of her life, and she embraced the lesson and thanked God for having set her the hardest task of all.

[THE END.]

A GIRL'S RAMBLES THROUGH HAUNTED SCOTLAND.

BY JAMES AND NANETTE MASON.



PART IV.

MORE ROYAL RECOLLECTIONS OF EDINBURGH.

WE told in our last article of the young and beautiful bride whom James V. had brought to Edinburgh in 1537 from France, and who had so soon withered away in the chilly atmosphere of Scotland. A year later the King married again, taking for his second wife another daughter of France, Mary, the eldest daughter of the Duke of Guise. It was a memorable alliance, for the house of Guise was an illustrious house—none more so at that time—and Mary was one of the most talented of its members. She landed on the 10th of June, 1538, at Crail in Fife—perhaps it would have been thought ominous had she got on shore like the Princess Magdalene at Leith—and was married to the King at St. Andrews.

Edinburgh, however, was to be the scene of her activity, and a pretty active time she had of it. Four years later the King died, and, as queen-mother, she had to act as best she could in the interests of her infant daughter, afterwards known to the world as Mary Queen of Scots. These were Reformation times, and it was no ordinary woman's hand that could hold the reins of government in the mid-career of a Scottish religious revolution, headed by powerful men of the stamp of the famous John Knox.

That, as a Catholic, she had to play a leading part in such times was her misfortune. She meant well; indeed was sincerely anxious for the good of her adopted country, and we must remember to her credit that "in her Court she maintained a decent gravity, nor would she tolerate any licentious practices therein. Her maids of honour were always busied in commendable exercises, she herself being an example to them in virtue, piety and modesty."

With all her good qualities, however, it has to be acknowledged that she possessed the hereditary insincerity of the house from which she sprang—"the brood of false Lorraine." The Scotch folk, amongst whom she came at

last to play the part of Regent, were not of that sort. They detested double-dealing in every form, and were not slow to show resentment, and express their minds about it either. Her grandson, James VI. of Scotland and I. of England, in one of his speeches says, "I remember the story of my grandmother, the Queen Regent, that after she was induced to break her promise to some mutineers at a Perth meeting, she never saw a good day, but from thence, being much beloved before, was despised by her people."

She died in Edinburgh Castle in 1560, showing on her death-bed "that air of magnanimity and high generous feeling which her remarkable race could assume on all fitting occasions, insomuch that she left a profound impression even on the hard minds of the sturdiest of the Reformers."

The Castle Hill Palace of Mary of Guise was long one of the interesting features of Edinburgh. For two centuries and a half after her death it was in the occupation of wealthy tenants, then it came down in the world and was divided into small houses, and at last in 1845 the whole was levelled to the ground for the erection of the Assembly Hall and College of the then youthful Free Church of Scotland. The internal decorations of the palace are said to have been extraordinarily fine, and as regards beauty of prospect it is doubtful if there is a royal residence existing anywhere which could show anything equal to that which this old building possessed to the seaward side—Ben Lomond, Ben Ledi, and Ben Voirlich, seen in the far north-west; the broad Firth of Forth brightening up the landscape, bounded by the busy coast of Fife; Inchkeith near at hand, and the Bass Rock far in the distance.

We come now to the famous name of Mary Stuart, of many of the leading acts in whose tragic drama Edinburgh was the scene. The story of this unhappy queen is one of those historical questions which seem likely to awaken interest to the end of time. Her character is a puzzle. As champions of her innocence some people are ready to go to the death, whilst many others are in the opposite extreme, and will have it that Mary was as bad a women as ever was made.

Probably, as in most discussions of the sort, the truth lies between. Her beauty, her suffering, and her sad end may well excite our sympathy, and our examination of the evidence may induce us to entertain doubts as to the degree of her guilt, but that Mary Stuart came spotlessly or even creditably out of her circumstances and temptations, is highly improbable.

Mary had passed her youth in France, and had been Queen Consort in that country for about a year and a half, that is to say, till the death of her husband Francis II. in 1560. She had lived there, in fact, from the time of her being a little girl of six years old.

In August of 1561, when she was about nineteen, she returned to Edinburgh to take up the Scottish sceptre. It was a great change from living amongst a polite and refined people to making her home with those who were rough, fierce, and not over-courteous. No wonder that on the voyage she watched with regret the receding coast of France, and gave utterance to the often-quoted "Oh, dear France, farewell. I shall never, never see thee more!"

She landed at Leith on the nineteenth of the month, and her first experiences in the land over which she was to rule did little to raise her drooping spirits. In those days of sailing ships times of arrival were uncertain, and the preparations for her coming were not complete. No better means of conducting her to Holyrood Palace could be found than mounting her on a rough Highland pony, at which, one who was present records, she burst into tears, remembering the well-trained palfreys, adorned with gold lace, which she rode in France.

When she got to Holyrood, anxious, no doubt, to have a sound sleep after the fatigues of the voyage, she was serenaded, the musicians neither playing well, nor possessing good instruments, nor having a pleasing selection of tunes. It was well meant, no doubt, but not judicious.

A fortnight after, the citizens of Edinburgh tried to show goodwill by presenting the young queen with a cupboard "double overgilt," which had cost two thousand merks. The giving of it was made the occasion of a pageant which saluted her in a progress through the city. Verses were recited in her honour, and the Reformers used it as an opportunity for trying to influence Mary against the popish religion to which she was ardently attached. A Bible was presented to her, and the children, made up as angels, who handed over the cupboard, "made some speech concerning the putting away of the Mass, and thereafter sang a psalm."

She had her difficulties with the Reformers and they with her. It was in Holyrood that John Knox interviewed her on several occasions. These were no interviews after the modern pattern. The stern Reformer used very unwelcome words, and if Mary, as is likely, hoped to fascinate him as she had done others, she found herself greatly mistaken. At one of their conversations Mary is said to have been moved to violent weeping by the vehemence of Knox's exhortations. The comment by a Scottish writer on this incident may be quoted. "Mary," he says, "wept for anger, the sign of a weak woman. She was a bold fool."

It was an exciting day in Edinburgh when Mary was brought back to the city in shame after the affair of Carberry Hill. The High Street was filled with a deeply-excited mob, who hooted her and charged her with the murder of her husband Darnley. A banner was waved before her—and they took good care that it met her eyes whichever way she turned—on one side of which was painted Darnley lying dead with the motto, "Judge and avenge my cause, O Lord," whilst on the other was a representation of the young prince, afterwards James VI., on his knees as if praying for vengeance on those who had killed his father.

With this street scene Mary disappeared from Edinburgh history. She passed away to Lochleven, to the fatal field of Langside, to captivity in England, to the headsman's axe at Fotheringay.

After the days of Queen Mary Edinburgh knew queens only at a distance, till one day in the autumn of 1842 our late Sovereign Queen Victoria paid her first visit to the north.

Accompanied by the Prince Consort, she sailed to Scotland in the *Royal George* yacht. A tedious voyage it was, with the sea very rough for part of the time. The landing was effected, not at Leith, as had been the case with many of her predecessors, but at Granton, a little further up the Forth. The Queen set foot on Scottish soil on the 1st of September, and drove at once to Edinburgh where she was received with an outburst of loyal enthusiasm.

There was a great crowd and a great crush. "More regularity would have been preserved," says her Majesty mildly in her Journal, "had there not been some mistake on the part of the Provost about giving due notice of our approach."

Writing on the day of her arrival, the Queen records the impression which the beauty of the Scottish capital had made upon her. "It is quite beautiful," she says, "totally unlike anything else I have seen: and what is even more, Albert, who has seen so much, says it is unlike anything *he* ever saw."

The royal visitors made their headquarters at the Duke of Buccleuch's palace at Dalkeith, about six miles out of town, and there the Queen tasted oatmeal porridge for the first time—"which I think very good," she says—and also enjoyed the novelty of "Finnan haddies."

A royal progress of a formal sort, when she was presented with the keys of the city, was made through Edinburgh on the 3rd of the month. After passing Holyrood Chapel—"very old and full of interest"—and Holyrood Palace—"a royal-looking old place"—"the procession," her Majesty records, "moved through the old town up the High Street, which is a most extraordinary street from the immense height of the houses, most of them being eleven storeys high and different families living in each storey. Every window was crammed full of people."

Then she visited the castle, to the top of which she and the Prince walked. There they saw the Regalia, "which are very old and curious—(they were lost for one hundred years)—and also the room in which James VI. of Scotland

and the First of England was born—such a very, very small room, with an old prayer written on the wall."

Thus was the first visit paid by Queen Victoria to the home of her Scottish ancestors. It was wonderfully successful—a source of great pleasure to her Majesty as well as to the crowds of subjects who assembled from far and near to make her welcome.

Such are some of the royal recollections belonging to the steep streets and grey buildings of the Northern Metropolis, making, as we have said before, every step a pleasure to a girl who rambles here and there with her bright glances taking in Auld Reekie as it is, and with her active mind trying, out of her historical and biographical reading, to picture to herself Auld Reekie as it was.

And have we exhausted the topics, royal and otherwise, that might be written about before leaving Edinburgh? By no means. But we must be moving on, and our wandering feet will take us next to the Border land and the land of Scott, as rich a country as ever was in excitement and romance.

(*To be continued.*)

THE ANCHORESS OF STE. MAXIME.

By M. H. CORNWALL LEGH, Author of "Gold in the Furnace," "An Incorrigible Girl," "At the Foot of the Rainbow," etc.

CHAPTER XIII.

And thus this marvellous thing came to pass that Mrs. Woodward's nerve disease was cured!

At the end of twenty-four hours she had not broken down, nor yet at the end of forty-eight. When the third day was over there was beginning to be a touch of colour in her cheeks and her appetite had decidedly improved. It began to be clear to Dr. Le Brun that his prophecy was being fulfilled. A shock had had the effect of dispersing the invalid's long-cherished imaginary malady. To Alison herself there was another solution—love, her mother's love to her, long overborne by self-absorption, asserting itself at last, had brought her back to life, and in the long hours when she lay silent because she had been ordered to keep quiet, and felt indeed small strength for conversation, she had much food for her thoughts.

The threatened "hired hospital woman," as Mrs. Woodward termed the professional nurse, was never called in; there proved no need for her. All that Alison required to have done for her was done, and quite admirably done, by her mother. Good nurses, it is always said, make bad patients, but no one expected that the converse of the proposition would hold good as it did in this case. Mrs. Woodward's strong will, concentration of mind between the four walls of a sick room, and habit of minute attention to details, were as valuable in her nursing of another as they had been disastrous in her nursing of herself.

But the question was, would it last? Would the next great step ever be taken of Mrs. Woodward detaching herself from the place—from the house even? A great fear lay in Alison's heart that, with her own recovery, her mother would sink back into her former state of invalidism. The custom of three years and more was hardly to be broken at one blow.

At length the day came when Dr. Le Brun pronounced it safe for Alison to leave her room and sit out for an hour or so in an easy-chair in the garden.

It was with a beating heart that she turned to her mother and put the question, on the answer to which it seemed to her the whole future hung.

"When I go down this afternoon, you will come down with me, will you not?"

"There is no need for that," Mrs. Woodward answered. "Dr. Le Brun says he will be here himself, and I shall watch you from the window."

"Ah, no, that will not be the same! If you knew how I want to have you!" And Alison pleaded with an earnestness that moved her mother to agitation bordering on tears. Still Mrs. Woodward trembled, hesitated.

"I shall not go out at all unless you come with me," Alison said at length, with that new attitude of determination her mother had noticed during her illness; only the determination till now had been exercised in the bearing of her pain with patience, in a perfect submission to the doctor's orders, and her mother's wishes, never to assert a desire of her own.

"You will come, won't you, mother? It is the first thing I have asked of you since——"

"Since you saved my life." Mrs. Woodward completed the sentence slowly. "Yes, Alison, you have the right to ask this of me. I will come."

So, that afternoon, with the sympathetic interest of the whole Sardou family, of Euphrosyne, of Hortense, of Antoine, of all the guests who were about—for everyone in the house had heard of Alison's heroism—and last, but not least, of Chico, the two invalids descended the stairs together and went out into the sunlit air.

"It was so dear of you to come," said Alison, turning two very tender eyes upon her mother, when they were left alone, their chairs side by side in a sheltered spot. "And how good you have been to me all through my illness!"

"Not more good than you have been to me, child, and for years instead of days. Any inferior daughter would have struck long ago—run away, perhaps."

"Mother, there's something I want to tell you. I am afraid it will alter your feeling of my having been a good daughter, but I would rather you knew the truth. I very nearly did run away from you, with Kate."

"I know. Kate's letter was given to me the day

A GIRL'S RAMBLES THROUGH HAUNTED SCOTLAND.

By JAMES AND NANETTE MASON.

PART V.

IN THE BORDER-LAND.

THERE is no more fascinating district than the Border-land in all Scotland; indeed, everything considered, we might say in the whole kingdom.

Think of its beauty, of its green hills and dales, its clear and musical streams, the fresh breezes of its mountain and moorland, the quiet simple healthy life of its cottage homes, with the lark soaring high overhead and the purple heather and the golden furze blooming at one's very door. And add to these charms that it is a region rich in poetical associations and historic interest. According to Sir Walter Scott, who knew more about it than anybody else, "a continuous flow of romantic and poetical tradition has been one distinguishing characteristic of the Scottish Border-land."

A fact much in favour of the intellectual interest of this remarkable tract of country is that it was for long the scene of conflict between the rival kingdoms of England and Scotland. It was a constant fighting ground, for the two kingdoms were habitually hostile, and the exciting and desolating wars only terminated after centuries had elapsed by the union of the two crowns on the accession of James VI. of Scotland to the throne of England in 1603.

The wild romance of history has always proved the best possible material for forming the soul and inspiration of poetry. In the old songs, ballads and traditions, of which the Border can show such remarkable examples, we have a mixture of the shadow world of fancy and the actual world of grim fact. In them history and poetry are inextricably interwoven, every phrase suggesting that we are in the presence of circumstances well calculated to fire the imagination and melt the heart.

The inhabitants of this region during the days when fighting was ever in the wind, were a rough and sturdy race not troubled much with scruples about mine and thine. They became thieves in spite of themselves, and the rapine by which they subsisted was even looked upon as lawful and honourable. No doubt it was often a case of thieving or starving. How they lived on the Border sometimes is a mystery, or how any man could have the heart to plough and sow when there were odds against his ever reaping.

The most conspicuous figure in the history of this famous district is that of the great enchanter whom we have just named, Sir Walter Scott. In the midst of it, for the greater part of his life, he had his home, and it was by the exercise of his magic pen that the fame of its romance was spread abroad throughout the world.

The residence of Scott, as everyone knows, was at Abbotsford, in a beautiful situation on the banks of the Tweed, about two miles above Melrose. The mansion and grounds were entirely his own creation; they formed the joy and ambition of his life and were also, alas, the cause of the financial disaster which clouded his later days. Here he breathed his last on September 21st, 1832, within sight and sound of the ripple of the Tweed.

But Abbotsford was not his first home in the neighbourhood. At Ashestiel, a house charmingly situated at the top of a steep bank overlooking the Tweed and surrounded by rich woods, he lived for eight years—from 1804 to 1812—among the happiest years of his life. There he was surrounded by his young family, and there he first freely gave the rein to his muse.

The neighbouring town of Selkirk—a good specimen of a Border burgh—is proud to this day of the fact that Sir Walter Scott presided as Sheriff in its county-court house. In the principal street is a statue to Scott, and on its pedestal are inscribed those lines of his which form a touching embodiment of his attachment to the Border region:

> "By Yarrow's stream still let me stray,
> Though one should guide my feeble way,
> Still feel the breeze down Ettrick break,
> Although it chill my withered cheek."

Selkirk is situated on the River Ettrick a little below its junction with the Yarrow. Of these two streams, the more famous, at any rate in literature, is the last named. It is one to which great attention has been paid by the poetic brotherhood. The vale through which it flows forms the subject of three well-known poems by Wordsworth: "Yarrow unvisited," "Yarrow visited," and "Yarrow re-visited," the last being a memorial of a day passed with Sir Walter Scott and other friends in visiting the banks of the Yarrow under Scott's guidance immediately before his departure from Abbotsford for Naples.

Of other poems the scene of which is laid in this enchanted region, girls may be referred to the old ballad "The Dowie Dens of Yarrow," and to what Wordsworth calls the "exquisite ballad," by William Hamilton of Bangour, beginning:

> "Busk ye, busk ye, my bonnie, bonnie bride,
> Busk ye, busk ye, my winsome marrow."

A young woman of this district famed for her beauty was Mary Scott, who came to be known in song as "The Flower of Yarrow." She was the daughter of Philip Scott of Dryhope in Selkirkshire, and was married to Walter Scott of Harden, a noted Border freebooter in the reign of Queen Mary. The ruins of Dryhope Tower, which was her birthplace, are still to be seen—at least they were to be seen not so long ago—near the lower extremity of St. Mary's Loch.

Wat of Harden, her husband, may be taken as a type of the lawless spirits of his day. He was in the habit of levying blackmail on all "weaker" than himself; in the words of the old poet he said: "All that cowards have is mine." Not only did he take the cattle of his natural enemies on the other side of the Border, but with strict impartiality,

> "He sought the beeves that made the broth,
> From England and from Scotland both."

He generally managed to keep his byres full, but this was not always the case. On one occasion he heard a servant calling to another: "Jock, bring out the cow."

"Preserve us!" said Wat. "Is it come down to one cow? By my faith, it will be kye (cows) before night."

And saddling his horse and calling out his men, he soon brought the cow plenty of company. Whence they came we need not too curiously inquire; but of this we may be sure, they were not bought at any market, nor was any price paid if we except a few blows given and received.

The father of this Walter Scott of Harden had been in the same line of freebooting and plundering business. Of him, a very handsome young man it is said, a good story is told. He had made a foray on the lands of the Murrays of Ellibank, and being seized in the act was about

to be hanged. The wife of the enraged Murray, however, represented to her husband that it was a pity to take the life of a fine young fellow who was well connected and possessed of a good estate, while they had a daughter whose extreme homeliness made it unlikely that she would ever be solicited in marriage. Scott was offered the alternative of being hanged in a quarter of an hour or of being wedded to the damsel, who from the extent of her mouth was called Muckle-mou'd Meg, and he chose the latter. It is a pleasure to add that the story represents her, in conclusion, as having proved a very amiable and exemplary wife.

The Douglas Glen opening out of the Vale of Yarrow, a gloomy hollow about two miles long, shut in by steep hills, is the scene of the Douglas tragedy, the hero and heroine of which, Lord William and Fair Margaret, were buried in the forest kirk of St. Mary near the Loch.

It forms the subject of one of the most popular of the old Border ballads. Lord William stealing away Lady Margaret Douglas is pursued by her father and seven brothers, with whom he fights and leaves them either lying dead or sore wounded. The lady, after vainly trying to staunch the wounds of her expiring parent, sadly gets up on the pillion behind her lover. The two then rode slowly across the hills between the Yarrow and the Tweed amid a quiet sheen of moonlight all over the vague, wierd-like moorland. But the lover carried with him a wound—in fact, his death-wound—from the conflict. At last—

"They lighted down to take a drink
Of the stream that ran so clear,
But down the stream ran his good heart's blood,
And sair she 'gan to fear."

Game to the end, he protests in answer to her exclamation—

"'Tis but the shadow of my scarlet cloak
That shines in the water so plain."

They mounted again and rode on till they reached his mother's door, but it was the last effort of a dying man.

"Lord William was dead long ere midnight,
Lady Margaret long ere day.
May all true lovers that go together
Have more good luck than they!"

The Yarrow in its course down the Vale flows through two lochs, separated one from the other by a narrow neck of land. The loch higher up the stream is known as the Loch o' the Lowes, the other as St. Mary's Loch.

In the glen of Meggat water, about a mile from St. Mary's Loch, are the ruins of Hinderland Tower, the scene of the "Lament of the Border Widow," whose husband, Percy Cockburn, a noted freebooter, was hanged by King James V. The King, who was on an expedition directed against such lawless characters, surprised Cockburn whilst he was sitting at dinner, and had him executed without delay or ceremony, hanging him over the gateway to his own tower.

Near the Tower is a mountain torrent rushing impetuously through a rocky chasm. Here the wife of Cockburn retreated during her husband's execution; and a place called The Lady's Seat is still shown where she is said to have striven to drown, amid the roar of the foaming water, the tumultuous noise which announced the close of his existence.

It was during this expedition that Johnnie Armstrong, another and still more renowned freebooter, came to his end. His evil genius had prompted Johnnie to present himself before James at the head of thirty-six horse, arrayed in all the pomp of border chivalry. It was at a place called Carlenrig chapel, about ten miles from Hawick.

The King ordered him and his followers to instant execution. Johnnie Armstrong used all his eloquence to save their necks, but the King was not to be moved. At last, seeing there was no hope of favour, he—to quote the old ballad—said very proudly—

"To seek hot water beneath cold ice
I trow it is great folly.
I have sought grace at a graceless face
And there is none for my men and me!"

And hanged they were—the whole thirty-seven of them—on trees growing on the neighbouring hillside.

Not far from St. Mary's Loch—between it and Moffat—was the haunt of a brownie, the last ever heard of in that neighbourhood—known as the Brownie of Bodsbeck. Brownies formed a class of supernatural beings, believed in long ago; a class remarkable for industry, and distinct, we are told, in habit and disposition from the freakish and mischievous elves, who were, however, their near relations.

They were meagre, shaggy and wild in appearance. In the daytime they lurked in remote recesses of the old houses which they delighted to haunt; and in the night sedulously employed themselves in discharging any laborious task which they thought might be acceptable to the family to whose service they had devoted themselves.

This last of the Ettrick Forest brownies, according to Sir Walter Scott, resided in Bodsbeck, a wild and solitary spot, where he exercised his functions undisturbed, till the scrupulous devotion of an old lady induced her to "hire him away," as it was termed, by placing in his haunt a porringer of milk and a piece of money. It was a great offence, for so delicate was the attachment of brownies to the human race, that the offer of reward, but particularly of food, infallibly occasioned their disappearance for ever.

After receiving this hint to depart, the Brownie of Bodsbeck was heard to howl and cry "Farewell to bonnie Bodsbeck," and from that day to this neither he nor any of his race have been ever there seen.

Not far from this is the source of the River Tweed, a conspicuous and famous feature of the Scottish Borderland. We seem never to get far out of sight of its rapid waters. "Historically," says Professor Veitch, "the river has been ever the heart of this Lowland country, so far at least as strong bold action, the gradual growth of history, tradition, legend, the continuous flow of song, ballad and music, wholly native, have moved the feeling and moulded the imagination, not only of the people of the district, but of the whole land of Scotland."

The Tweed has its source in a mass of mountain ground occupying the upper parts of the counties of Peebles, Lanark, and Dumfries. Almost in the same place—though they flow in quite different directions—two other leading rivers of the South of Scotland have their origin. This fact has been made the subject of an often-quoted rhyme—

"Annan, Tweed and Clyde
Rise a' out o' ae hillside.
Tweed ran, Annan wan,
Clyde fell and brake its neck o'er Corra Linn."

The Annan having the shortest course is supposed to win the race, whilst popular fancy represents the Clyde as breaking its neck at the picturesque Corra Fall near Lanark.