

THE FALLS OF TROLLHATTA.

A Story of Sweden's Struggle Against the Danes.

(Translated by Mrs. Waugh.)

"Thank heaven! it is my betrothed!" uttered Karin, breathlessly. There was a double sense of relief in the words; for herself as well as for her refugee, from whom she had reason to seek protection. But very different was the effect of her words upon him.

He staggered to the wall as though struck by lightning; then, springing like a tiger upon her, he cried, seizing her by the shoulder: "You are the affianced of another man, Karin Stenbock?"

The words were accompanied by the same sharp, cutting laugh which had interrupted Rosen's recital. The latter, pale as death, had sprung down the intervening stairs at the sound, the light he held in his trembling hand falling upon Folkung's face.

"Gustavus!" he screamed. In strong excitement he had torn his sword from its scabbard to cleave Folkung to the ground; but Karin had thrown herself into his arms, name, the fugitive's hand was on his lips.

"You are a dead man if you speak my name, Gustavus Rosen," said he, in a tone so authoritative, that the young man instinctively drew back from his flaming eyes. "You have brought me good news. The mower was bound to come to cut down the weeds with bloody scythe ere the seed of the future could take root. Do not forget Gustavus Folkung's words! Farewell, Rose of Trollhatta, I will keep my word."

Startled, Rosen looked up, the speaker had disappeared; only the creaking of the heavy, iron-bound door falling back into the lock close to where he was standing betrayed the way the stranger had taken.

Now other, louder footsteps stormed along the passage overhead. Karin took the light from the trembling hands of her betrothed; who, leaning speechless against the wall, had fixed upon her his blue eyes, from which every spark of light had faded. Two heavy tears rolled slowly from them down his cheeks.

"I am so glad you came, my own," said she, thankfully. Looking wildly at her, he repeated: "You are so glad—Oh, Karin, if only I had not come! If only I had never come, Karin!"

Without understanding him, she seized his hand.

The Danish captain, followed by his men, appeared on the stairs. "Did you not call, Herr Rosen?" he asked, courteously.

"It was nothing. Merely Bjorn scented a wolf, stealing around the house to seize a lamb," replied the young man, pointing to the dog, who had set up a low growl at sight of the soldiers.

"We, too, have discovered nothing," returned the officer, retreating. Then, turning back, he added, with respectful salutation:

"I beg you to make my apologies to the young lady of the house. As little as to you, did it occur to me to entertain any suspicion in connection with the apartment of your affianced bride. But you are aware, Herr Rosen, that duty—"

"I am aware; and I ought not to have hindered you from carrying out your duty yourself," returned the young man, bitterly. "Rather is it for me to apologize to you; and I give you my word that should it occur again, I will not repeat the offense. But, on the other hand, you might have been satisfied, and have spared me the task. I gave you my word as a nobleman that there was no man concealed in my betrothed's chamber."

Here Rosen uttered such a strange laugh that the Danish officer looked at him in amazement. Then, saluting, retreated.

Karin walked silently along the corridor by the side of her betrothed; her eyes inquiringly searching his face, as though expecting him to speak first.

"You are so strange this evening, Gustavus," she said, at last. "Strange?" he repeated, stopping abruptly. "It is not I; the world is strange. Give me your hand."

The girl did as he asked. He held the little hand in his, looking fixedly at it, until the tears again welled into his eyes.

"Two days ago I saw King Christian offer his hands to his guests," said he slowly; "and his was as calm, as white, as cool as this. Then, throwing his arm round the neck of each he kissed him—'The youth, impetuously clasping his golden-haired bride to him, kissing her willing lips. 'No, it is not the world that is strange, but the human heart,' he continued, in a low voice; 'for it will not believe what the eye has seen, and the ear heard. It will only believe what it wishes to believe.'"

And again clasping the golden head vehemently to his heart, he strode on.

CHAPTER II.

The whole land, from the German Ocean to the inhospitable Kjöls of Norbotten, lies under the iron hand of winter. From the summit of the Kinnakulle snow spreads its corpse-like covering around as far as the eye can reach; ice holds the unruly mountain torrents captive. Perhaps in the hollows here and there a stream might be flowing on with low murmur, but unperceived, unheard. Winter reigns around. And winter in Sweden is long; many yet alive will not live to see the return of spring. All save the Trollhatta lies under its stern sway. The Trollhatta owns no conquering power, neither that of winter nor of Christian of Denmark. Incessantly it

roars, as though seeking, with thundering voice of warning, to awake frozen Nature. Incessantly it despoils the icebergs hanging like an array of watchmen's swords from its hoary sides, which impotently strive to bridge over and confine it, and dashes them along with its rushing waters.

In all Sweden there is but one man who is like the Trollhatta. His name is Gustavus Ericsson. From the bundle of sticks which figures in his coat-of-arms, in Swedish called "Vasa," the common people have given him the name of Gustavus Vasa. He is the son of a Swedish Senator, and a great-nephew of Sten-Sture the elder, the regent, who fell in battle against Christian II. It was in his house that Gustavus had been brought up, and although now but thirty years of age, he had met with many experiences.

As a lad, King John of Denmark had seen him in his uncle's house usurp among his playmates the role of a Cyrus. The Danish King, overbearing him, had been seized with sudden disgust, such as Astyages experienced at sight of his unknown grandson. In order to guard against the possibility of the lad's playing the part of Cyrus in later years, he decided to take him with him to Denmark, a determination, however, opposed by Sten Sture.

Gustavus Ericsson was sent to the High School in the ancient capital of Upsala, until, civil war again breaking out in Sweden, he fought under the flag of Sten Sture the younger, against the treacherous Archbishop Trolle. In the celebrated battle of Brannkirke he was standard-bearer. Yet what King John failed to do by open means his successor, Christian, succeeded in accomplishing by cunning. He, promising to come in person to Stockholm to arrange the terms of peace, demanded as hostages for the security of his royal person six of the leaders, among them Gustavus Vasa. In all good faith the regent consented to these conditions; but no sooner had the Danish king received the hostages than he stated that he would not go to Stockholm, and Gustavus Ericsson found himself a prisoner in Denmark.

For one year he remained as such in the fortress Castle Kallo, in Jutland, where he daily heard of the formidable preparations Denmark was making for the subjection of Sweden. In Jutland no one doubted as to the speedy attainment of the object, the consequence of her quarrels with her sedulous archbishop, Sweden was under the papal ban; and Christian's soldiers, in their drinking bouts, were throwing dice for Swedish maidens and feudal tenures.

One of the chronicles of that time says: "Over these indignities Herr Gustavus Ericsson waxed so furiously indignant and so chafed, that he could neither eat nor drink; nor could he have done so had his prison fare been more appetizing than it was. Nor was his sleep sound and refreshing; nor had he any other thought than how to find opportunity of escape from the imprisonment to which he had been so unjustly subjected."

And the opportunity presented itself. Disguised as a peasant, wisely and cautiously he soon made his way to the frontier of Jutland. To avoid detection he entered the service of a dealer in Flensburg, who drove cattle to Germany, and thus reached Lübeck. Here, recognized and warned to depart, he contrived, by the majesty of his presence, to compel the Senate to grant him a promise of its support did he succeed in stirring up a revolt against the Danish usurper.

In May of the year 1520, Gustavus Ericsson crossed from Lübeck to Calmar, the only Swedish town, excepting Stockholm, that still related the Danes. Stockholm was blockaded by sea and land, and powerless to reach it, he wandered through the surrounding districts of Småland and Sudermåland.

Then Stockholm surrendered, and Sweden lay at the mercy of Christian, who, with cunning friendliness, not as conqueror, but as Lord Protector of the vanquished kingdom, invited all its nobles to be present at his coronation.

In vain did Gustavus Ericsson endeavor to persuade his friends in vain did he try to influence his brother-in-law, Joachim Brahe, not to accept the invitation. Early in November of that year the nobles proceeded to Stockholm. Gustavus Ericsson stayed away.

Now winter's snow covered the earth, concealing the blood which had flowed into the Malar. But the Trollhatta raged in its foamy depths, and as long as it was not bound in the icy yoke, winter was not all-conqueror. As long as Gustavus Vasa could find one loyal Swedish heart which, braving danger, would give him shelter in some rocky cave of the north, Sweden was not in subjection, and sleep fled from the ancient royal bed of the Folkungs, in which Christian of Denmark nightly laid him down to rest. True, it was a murderous, yelping pack of hounds which hunted the prey from east to west, from north to south, of the broad kingdom. Sometimes here and there the most ferocious of the bloodhounds would track him and keenly follow up the trace he had discovered in the white snow. But it was quickly lost again, and none could tell where it had disappeared. Many a Danish leader tore his beard savagely afterward, when he learned how close he had passed to the fugitive's haunt; and that he had had but to stretch out a hand to secure the golden prize set by King Christian upon the rebel's head. Sometimes the pursuer's hand had even held him, and little wotting even it

was, had let him go again, scot free. Innumerable legends and amusing adventures are still recounted by the country folk of Dalecarlia, as to how Gustavus Vasa, over and over again, evading his pursuers, managed to escape them. Once he was lying in the bottom of a wagon covered with straw, and the constables, getting in, prodded it with their pikes, thereby giving him a deep wound in the thigh; which he betrayed by no sound, but the blood flowing through the bottom of the wagon left a red streak in the snow. Seeing which the faithful wagoner cut his horse a deep gash in the fetlock, thus removing all suspicion from the concealed occupant. Another time Ericsson had engaged himself as a peasant, hard by the frontier of Norway, and was standing carelessly by the hearth one day, when a party of Danish constables, bursting in, questioned him as to Gustavus Vasa's whereabouts. In this critical moment he was saved by the presence of mind of the peasant's wife, who, belying him smartly with a broom, turned him out of the kitchen, scolding him roundly for a lazy hind, who would do no work, but stood gossiping by the hearth. In forest depths, and among rocky wastes, he passed many a day in cold and hunger—but whichever way Gustavus Vasa took, he left his trace behind.

Winter and Christian of Denmark still kept their iron hand upon Sweden; yet, as one single ray of sunlight has more power to thaw than a whole sharp night has power to freeze, so the Danish prisoners were powerless to exterminate traces of Ericsson's presence. Like a secret dropping of water, the whisper passed from mouth to mouth, and threatening, flashing eyes followed the pursuing soldiers. Many a rusty weapon glittered in dark nights by lamplight as their owners cautiously cleaned and tried the land.

Springtime had not yet come to them. The seed of that bloody harvest in Stockholm, scattered by the indefatigable sower, Gustavus Ericsson, began to spring up throughout Sweden, but a low breeze stirred the fire upon the mountains, betokening its approach. The Castle of Torpa lay still buried in deep, winter snow. The frozen surface of the Lake of Wener stretched far away north under its monotonous covering. In the sixteenth century Sweden possessed few means of communication—or, at least, what would be looked upon as such nowadays—than its waterways, and the few that were, were so snowed up that they were impassable even to horsemen.

Even had the road to and from Torpa been open, there was no one to tell himself of it. The ban of the Danish ruler lay upon its inmates, keeping all guests away. The only sign of communication with Gustavus Stenbock's house and the outer world was made by the fitful incursions of parties of Danish soldiers, who unexpectedly, from time to time, usually at night, would surround the castle, as on the former occasion, search it from attic to cellar—as then, fruitlessly—and gallop away.

Only in one thing did there seem a change. The lord of the castle and his blind consort, growing weary of such a lonely and cheerless life, had given in to circumstances, and each fresh party of the King's searchers had, to their surprise, to tell of a more friendly reception than the foregoing one. This betokened a change of feeling on the part of one of Denmark's most deadly adversaries which long was unnoted at Stockholm. Gustavus Stenbock's standing was great throughout the country; his name would be an important support to a throne acquired at the point of the sword. The King therefore took pains that the tidings were spread wherever his troops went, and earned with joy how a low murmuring against the traitor was gaining ground over the southern and midland districts of Sweden. He knew that every denunciation of his countrymen must serve to blind Stenbock more closely to him, at the same time that it loosened his hold more and more upon his oppressed countrymen and former brothers-in-arms. And what principally conducted to allay all mistrust of the suspicious King was the presence of Gustavus Rosen and the relationship in which he stood to the House of Stenbock.

Gustavus Rosen was the son of Brita Stenbock's brother and a Danish noblewoman who had brought her husband large possessions in Denmark. His father dying early, his mother returned with her boy to her own country. He had scarce attained his tenth year when she also died, and having no relative in Denmark who cared to trouble himself about his education he was transferred to the care of his aunt, Brita Stenbock.

Gustavus Rosen had dearly loved his mother. He looked upon her as the incarnation of everything that was beautiful—as quite another being from the people among whom he now was; and a golden halo was thrown round her memory and that of the home of his boyhood where he had lived with her. In his dreams he would feel the softer breezes of Zealand gently blowing upon him, and would wake with tears in his eyes. In his ears would ring the sweet voice of his mother, who had been wont to sing him to sleep with wondrous old folk-songs of the praise of Waldemar Seier and the lovely Dagmar, while the tops of the green birch trees, gently waving, murmured in the evening sun. Then Gerda Rosen would kiss him, and smile upon him so tenderly, mysteriously, a shudder would run through the boy when thinking thus.

A stormy gust of wind moaning through the gloomy fir-trees of Trollhatta would abruptly startle him out of his fond dreams. Cold and colorless as a greeting from the air over the Lake of Wener, the waters of Trollhatta roared and raged with such angry din that the boy's heart sank more and more. Terrified, he would flee from Nature's wild ravings back to the house; where, instead of his lovely mother, he would be greeted by the stern face of Aunt Brita, who had

never forgiven her brother for having married a Dane. Brita Stenbock's voice, at no time soft or lovable, was harder and sterner to her nephew than to any one else. Awed and lonely, the boy would slip off to his dark room in the vast gloomy building and sob until he fell asleep, and friendly dreams would come to him, and every chill, weird, gloomy dream was Sweden, and every warm, bright, smiling one was Denmark.

There was only one bright thing which did not belong to Denmark—only one. The little child with the sunny, golden hair, who, sometimes of a night, would steal into his room, sit on the side of the bed and wipe away the tears from his lashes with her soft little hand. "Do not cry, Gustavus," she would say, comfortingly. "When I am big I will go to Denmark with you."

Then his face would brighten; and, wide awake, he would tell her over and over again of all he had needs had to keep to himself by day. And as, lost in thought, he would gaze at Karin, it was to him as though her sweet child's face grew larger, lovelier, more expressive, until it grew into his mother's sad, loving face, and Sweden possessed no single thing belonging to it to commend it, not even Karin. Smiling through his tears, the boy would throw his arms round her neck and hide his face on her breast, as he had so often hidden it on his Gerda Rosen's breast; and Karin, becoming sorrowful through sympathy, would entreat, with sobbing voice:

"Do not cry, Gustavus. Indeed, I will be your wife and mother, too, and we will go together to Denmark."

Sometimes Brita Stenbock would find the children next morning fast asleep, cheek to cheek. Then a heavy punishment would befall Karin for disobedience in having again tried to console her obstinate Danish cousin, who deserved far worse than to be made to sleep alone. And Stenbock would be called upon to chastise the boy for his crime, in having suffered himself to be thus comforted. But he, having far more weighty thoughts to occupy him in public events, would usually reply:

"Let the children be, Brita, until their time comes."

Perhaps it was not displeasing to him to observe the growing attachment between his daughter and her wealthy cousin. The name of Stenbock was more weighty than the money its estates represented; for, like most property in mid Sweden, it had suffered considerably by the almost incessant wars of the past century. Concerning the education of his nephew, Gustavus Stenbock troubled himself not in the slightest, partly from the influence of the times; but, partly from his own want of culture. All that it behooved a Swedish nobleman to learn could be best taught by the priest, whose patron was the lord of the castle.

Gentle and dreamy as was Rosen's nature, and averse to associate with other boys of his own age and rank, he was yet an adept at athletic exercises. To Karin's alarm he would ride the wildest horses, and throw the javelin with the most expert of his uncle's serving men. For miles round the Trollhatta there was no rock so steep or dangerous but that he would climb it to gather Karin some rare flower; no matter what the wind he would swim out in Lake Wener until he was lost to the eyes of the watcher, who would wait long and anxiously until his fair head was once more describable among the white breakers. Then, reclining on the sunny slope at Karin's feet, he would look mysteriously into her blue eyes and tell of all the wondrous things he had seen out in the dark expanse, or had heard in its depths. While she would tell him old legends of her country, to which he would listen attentively.

There was a similarity in the two children which seemed almost to do away with difference of sex, a delicate, thoughtful tendency which rose above the level and mental capacities of those surrounding them, presenting as great a contrast to them as did their rosy cheeks, extorted by the wild, rocky wilderness of the Trollhatta. In one respect alone they were unlike each other; and this difference imperceptibly grew day by day. The days had long gone by since Karin, in childish eagerness, had comforted her cousin by telling him she would go with him to Denmark when she was grown up and was his wife. As the flower silently develops its characteristics according to the climate whence it comes, so in that respect was Karin the child of her country. Her eyes would brighten when she spoke of Sweden's victories over Denmark; she would tell the inspiring nation with child-like fury. Gustavus Rosen, smilingly shaking his head, would answer that men were men, whichever side of the Sound they might happen to be; and that there was no need for them to hate and fight each other; they should love one another, as he loved Karin. Then the little girl, clenching her small fist, would declare never, never could Dane and Swede love one another, they were deadly enemies from their birth. And then throwing her arms round her playfellow's neck, grown so strangely and looking, she would draw him to her; and he would tell her once more of the lovely Dagmar, and of how King Waldemar wept at her death, until the tears, too, flowed to her eyes; she never thinking that it was a Danish queen at whose loss she was sobbing.

(To be Continued.)

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THE DOCTORS PUZZLED.

The Peculiar Case of a Nova Scotian Lady.

The Trouble Began in a Swelling of the Big Toe Which Spread to all Parts of the Body—Doctors Could Not Account for the Trouble, and Their Treatment Did Her No Good.

(From the New Glasgow Enterprise.)

Loch Broom is a picturesque farming hamlet situated about three miles from the town of Pictou, N. S. In this hamlet, in a cosy farmhouse live Mr. and Mrs. Hector McKinnon. A few years ago Mrs. McKinnon was taken with a disease that puzzled several doctors who attended her. It was generally known that Mrs. McKinnon owed her ultimate recovery to good health to the use of Dr. Williams' Pink Pills for Pale People, and a reporter of the Enterprise being in the neighborhood called upon the lady and asked her if she had any objections to relating the particulars of her illness and cure.

"Indeed I have not," replied Mrs. McKinnon, "I think that those who are cured owe it to the medicine that brings them back to health, always to say a good word for it. My trouble apparently had an insignificant starting point. It came on with a swelling in the big toe, accompanied by intense pain. Gradually the swelling extended to my limbs and then to my whole body, accompanied by pain which made my life a burden. A doctor was called in but he did not help me. Then another and another until I had four different medical men to see me, one of them the most skilled physician in the province. Yet my case seemed to puzzle every one of them, and none of them gave me more than the merest temporary relief. One doctor said the trouble was inflammation of the bone. Another said it was aggravated sciatia and gout. The other two called it by other names, but whatever it was 'one of them helped me. By this time I had got so low and weak that I could not lift hand or foot if it would save my life, and no one expected to see me get better. In fact the doctor said I sank any lower I could not live. And yet here I am to-day as well as ever I was in my life. While I was at the lowest a minister called to see me and asked why I did not try Dr. Williams' Pink Pills. I had tried so many remedies and had spent so many dollars in medicine that I hardly thought it worth while to experiment any more. However, I was persuaded to try them and after using a few boxes there was some improvement. By the time I had used a dozen boxes I had left my bed and was able to move around, and after a few more boxes I was again perfectly well, and able to do all the work that falls to the lot of a farmer's wife. All this I owe to Dr. Williams' Pink Pills and I think that after what they have done for me I am justified in recommending them to others."

Dr. Williams' Pink Pills give new life and richness to the blood and rebuild shattered nerves, thus driving out disease due to either of these two causes, and this means that they effect a cure in a large percentage of the troubles which afflict mankind. Some unscrupulous dealers impose on the public imitations of this great medicine. The genuine Dr. Williams' Pink Pills are never sold in bulk or by the hundred or ounce, or in any form except in the company's boxes, the wrapper around which bears the full trade mark, "Dr. Williams' Pink Pills for Pale People." No matter what the color of any pill offered in any other shape, it is bogus. These pills cure when other medicines fail.

Keeping Up an Old Custom.

A curious custom in connection with the birth of an heir to the earldom of Carnarvon was recently observed at Highclere castle, England. The traditions of the family require that on such occasions 500 gallons of beer should be brewed, and that the cask remain unopened until the heir attains his majority. From oak grown on the Highclere estate, a Newbury cooper has made a huge cask hooped with brass and bearing a coronet and inscription plate of the same metal. The inscription runs: "May Highclere flourish. This cask of ale, containing 500 gallons, was brewed in commemoration of the birth of Lord Portchester, born Nov. 7th, 1898. Albert Streetfield, butler, Highclere Castle, 1899."

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Influenza and Ventilation.

Atmospheric impurity, says the Lancet, was largely responsible for the recent epidemic of influenza. "If the proper ventilation of private houses, and especially of places of business, were insisted upon by their owners," it says, "we should hear much less of the disease." The imperfect provision of ventilation in churches and chapels is referred to in the same connection by the Hospital, which "considers such buildings as hotbeds for influenza on this account, and on account of the gathering together of persons whose power of resistance has been diminished by recent illness or by other circumstances."

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"I wonder why Quigley never brings that pretty girl to the theatre any more—have they quarrelled?"

"Nepe. Married."