

superstitions. And forthwith he took the deck-chair and doubled it up, and threw it on the couch. "We want the young man Sutherland here, and not any ghost. I doubt not but that he has reached London by now."

After that a dead silence. Were there any calculations about time, or were we wondering whether, amid the roar and whirl and moving life of the great city, he was thinking of the small floating home far away, amid the solitude of the seas and the hills? The deck chair was put aside, it is true, for the Laird shrank from superstition; but the empty glass, and the plates and knives, and so forth, remained; and they seemed to say that our expected guest was drawing nearer and nearer.

"Well, John," said Queen Titania, getting on deck again, and looking round, "I think we have got into Fairyland at last."

John of Skye did not seem quite to understand, for his answer was—

"Oh, yes, mein, it is a fearful place for squalls."

"For squalls!" said she.

No wonder she was surprised. The sea around us was so smooth that the only motion visible on it was caused by an exhausted wasp that had fallen on the glassy surface and was making a series of small ripples in trying to get free again. And then could anything be more soft and beautiful than the scene around us—the great mountains clad to the summit with the light foliage of the birch; silver water-falls that made a vague murmur in the air; an island right ahead with picturesquely wooded rocks; an absolutely clouded sky above—altogether a wonder of sunlight and fair colours! Squalls? The strange thing was, not that we had ventured into a region of unruly winds, but that we had got enough wind to bring us in at all. There was now not even enough to bring us the scent of honeysuckle from the shore.

In the afternoon we set out on an expedition, nominally after wild ducks, but in reality in exploration of the upper reaches of the loch. We found a narrow channel between the island and the mainland, and penetrated into the calm and silent waters of Loch Houru Beg. And still less did this offshoot of the larger loch accord with that gloomy name—the Lake of Hell. Ever where the mountains were bare and forbidding, the warm evening light touched the granite with a soft rose-gray; and reflections of this beautiful colour were here and there visible amid the clear blue of the water. We followed the windings of the narrow and tortuous loch, but found no wild-duck at all. Here and there a seal stared at us as we passed. Then we found a crofter's cottage, and landed, to the consternation of one or two handsome wide-eyed children. A purchase of eggs ensued, after much voluble Gaelic. We returned to the yacht.

That evening, as we sat on deck, watching the first stars beginning to tremble in the blue, some one called attention to a singular light that was beginning to appear along the summits of the Mountains just over us—a silvery-gray light that showed us the soft foliage of the birches, while below the steep slopes grew more sombre as the night fell. And then we guessed that the moon was somewhere on the other side of the loch, as yet hidden from us by those black crags that pierced into the calm blue vault of the sky. This the Lake of Hell, indeed! By and by we saw the silver rim appear above the black line of the hills; and a pale glory was presently shining around us, particularly noticeable along the varnished spars. As the white moon sailed up, this solitary cup in the mountains was filled with the clear radiance, and the silence seemed to increase. We could hear more distinctly than ever the various waterfalls. The two women were walking up and down the deck; and each time that Mary Avon turned her profile to the light the dark eyebrows and dark eyelashes seemed darker than ever against the pale, sensitive, sweet face.

But after awhile she gently disengaged herself from her friend, and came and sat down by the Laird, quite mutely, and waiting for him to speak. It is not to be supposed that she had been in any way more demonstrative towards him since his great act of kindness; or that there was any need for him to have purchased her affection. That was of older date. Perhaps, if the truth were told, she was rather less demonstrative now; for we had all discovered that the Laird had a nervous horror of anything that seemed to imply a recognition of what he had done. It was merely, he had told us, a certain wrong thing he had put right; there was no more to be said about it.

However, her coming and sitting down by him was no unusual circumstance; and she meekly left him his own choice, to speak to her or not, as he pleased. And he did speak—after a time.

"I was thinking," said he, "what a strange feeling ye get in living on board a yacht in these wilds; it is just as if ye were the only creatures in the world. Would ye not think, now, that the moon there belonged to this circle of hills, and could not be seen by any one outside it? It looks as if it were coming close to the topmast; how can ye believe that it is shining over Trafalgar Square in London?"

"It seems very close to us on so clear a night," says Mary Avon.

"And in a short time now," continued the Laird, "this little world of ours—I mean the little company on board the yacht—must be dashed into fragments, as it were; and ye will be away in London, and I will be at Denny-mains; and who knows whether we may ever see each other again? We must not grumble.

It is the fate of the best friends. But there is one grand consolation—think what a consolation it must have been to many of the poor people who were driven away from these Highlands—to Canada, Australia, and elsewhere—that after all the partings and sorrows of this world there is the great meeting-place at last. I would just ask this favour frae ye, my lass, that when ye go back to London, ye would get a book of our Scotch psalm tunes, and learn the tune that is called 'Comfort.' It begins 'Take comfort, Christians, when your friends.' It is a grand tune that; I would like ye to learn it."

"Oh, certainly I will," said the girl. "And I have been thinking," continued the Laird, "that I would get Tom Galbraith to make ye a bit sketch of Denny-mains, that ye might hang up in London, if ye were so minded. It would show ye what the place was like; and after some years ye might begin to believe that ye really had been there, and that ye were familiar with it, as the home of an old friend of yours."

"But I hope to see Denny-mains for myself, sir," said she, with some surprise.

A quick, strange look appeared for the moment on the old Laird's face. But presently he said—

"No, no, lass, ye will have other interests and other duties. That is but proper and natural. How would the world get on at all if we were not to be dragged here and there by diverse occupations?"

Then the girl spoke, proudly and bravely—

"And if I have any duties in the world, I think I know to whom I owe them. And it is not a duty at all, but a great pleasure; and you promised me, sir, that I was to see Denny-mains; and I wish to pay you a long, long, long visit."

"A long, long, long visit?" said the Laird, cheerfully. "No, no, lass, I just couldna be bothered with ye. Ye would be in my way. What interest could ye take in our parish meetings, and the church soirees, and the like? No, no. But if ye like to pay me a short, short, short visit—at your own convenience—at your own convenience, mind—I will get Tom Galbraith through from Edinburgh, and I will get out some of the younger Glasgow men; and if we do not, you and me, show them something in the way of landscape-sketching that will just frighten them out of their very wits, why then I will give ye leave to say that my name is not Mary Avon."

He rose then and took her hand, and began to walk with her up and down the moonlit deck. We heard something about the Haughs of Cromdale. The Laird was obviously not ill-pleased that she had boldly claimed that promised visit to Denny-mains.

(To be continued.)

THE CAT AS A SPORTSMAN'S COMPANION.

The cat, it has been discovered in America, has great skill as a hunting animal, and is in many respects more useful for that purpose than the dog. Dogs cannot climb trees to hunt birds, whereas cats find no difficulty in following game from branch to branch. The New York Times mentions that there is a hunter in Maine who employs a cat only for sporting purposes. He goes forth with nothing but a game-bag and with his faithful and accomplished cat trotting by his side. When he reaches a forest where the squirrels abound the cat hunts eagerly, with its nose on the ground, until it scents a squirrel. Following it to the tree where the squirrel makes his home, the cat nimbly climbs the tree and catches the game. Sometimes there is a brisk chase. The squirrel leaps from tree to tree, followed closely by the cat; but in a short time is overtaken and seized. Sometimes the squirrel takes refuge in a hole, in which case the cat sits by the hole until the squirrel, thinking the danger is past, puts his head out and is caught. The cat also acts as a retriever, bringing the captured game to its master; and in the course of a day's hunting, if the sky is overcast and the squirrels rise freely, the hunter usually fills his game-bag with fifty or sixty fine grey squirrels. No dog could rival the success of this cat, and in fact it is a very rare thing for a dog to catch even a single squirrel. The New York Times thinks that the cat will ultimately supersede the dog as an assistant to sportsmen. A correspondent writing on the subject to the Standard says: "In a village where I formerly resided I had an aged cottager for a neighbour, whose garden was separated from my orchard by a lower wall than I approved of during the fruit season. I frequently heard, when in my garden, the discharge of firearms in the direction of the orchard; but I attached no importance to the circumstance, thinking it was my neighbour's way of preventing the depredations of small birds on his crops. In the course of time it became known to me that the old man had little or no regular employment. Generally, when I entered the orchard, if he happened to be in his garden, he was to be seen hanging about the low boundary wall. I also became aware that he expended his ammunition in the destruction of blackbirds and thrushes that resorted to the cover the orchard afforded; and I concluded that the birds that fell to his gun found their way into the possession of the sportsman. There appeared to be no doubt that to possess himself of them he must commit a trespass. Accordingly I looked for, but could never find, evidence of trespass; and I failed to under-

stand how in the long grass, which was more luxuriant than is usual in orchards where stock is kept, he contrived to secure his quarry. It may be also mentioned that I never found a dead bird, although I made frequent search, and this circumstance caused further mystification. The old man's manner of proceeding was discovered by my son. He had trained a cat to perform the duties of a retriever. Puss would spring from her sheltered position on the wall, and in a series of bounds approach the spot where she had seen the bird fall, seize it, and bring it to her master."

SOCIAL PLAQUES.

Quite recently I revisited a haunt of twenty years ago in search of retreat from the hubbub and strife of elections, presbyteries, councils, and conclaves of various verbosity, and entered a lodging on an upland slope as a likely hermitage. For the nonce, quiet reigned, and to every interrogation and appeal, searching, or pathetic, or severe, the well-bred dame who was my doom had one unvarying response, "*Monsieur, la tranquillite est admirable*;" till I yielded to her winning ways, engaged her seductive rooms, and imported my baggage and my books. "Ah, who the melodies of morn can tell!" I had pitched my tent on the very "bank and shoal" of discord. On one side of the house the foundations of a new building were being laid, the earth and stones being slowly carted by solemn-eyed bullocks goaded by Gascons, who seemed alternately transported with rage and convulsed by garrulity. A remaining strip of the same plot was hired out for carpets brought at an atrocious hour by asses incessantly braying for their breakfasts. On the other side there were—a carpenter's shed, in which the saw seldom ceased, a playground, a dog kennel, an omnibus station, a recognized stand for itinerant minstrels, and three poultry-yards, in each as many cocks, with hens to match. Within this eligible mansion for a nervous patient or poetaster, the landlady was, in her sixtieth year, beginning to take lessons in music, which she touchingly declared to be her passion. We came presently to an arrangement and separation; but my next adventure was equally disastrous. Over-persuaded to settle in the attractive and reputedly quiet hotel of a watering-place hopefully out of season, I found that the fascinating hostess had concealed the fact that my "*appartement*" was edged between the "Place" and the market. In the former there were the daily rattle of *voitures* with their bells, and the inevitable "hoops" of the *visiteres*; and, weekly, in the latter a scene indescribable, almost unearthly. The French, unlike Ariel, cannot do either their "spiriting," or their work, or their bargaining gently. They rise abominably soon, and from 4 a.m. bibble-babble, jabber, and shriek till vespers. Later on they gather in squads on the squares, and intermittently break into such explosions of mutual abuse that one rushes to the window, fearing to be the spectator of some murderous violence; it is but a matter of the price of a bunch of cherries, or the hire of a vehicle, and gesticulations like those of a mad-dened Rociens end in beer and laughter. The turmoil of a Pyrenean mart surpasses all pre-conceptions of the storming of the Bastille; it is a thing never to be forgotten nor again endured. Sounds of labour are among the least offensive, because they are continuous, and do not take the ear by surprise, and partly because the sense of their utility doth add to them a reasonableness that breeds content. They are the throbs of the world's great heart, and seldom intrude on our hours or resorts of privacy. The chipping of stones for masonry is a natural accompaniment to the reading of Ruskin; to the cutting of wood, if it be not for political purposes, and a few yards off, we can be habituated or reconciled; the hammering of a duck suggests the flag that "braves the battle and the breeze;" "Week in, week out" you can hear the smith's bellows blow with patience, as long as it is with measured beat; so on Sundays we condone or approve the sexton according to the quality of the village bell. Noises of removal, on the other hand, are irregular, suggestive of change of government, and vexatious. The rumbling of vans, as of trains, might be indifferent were it not for the shouting in the one case and the whistling in the other. But the limit to our endurance of cabs and omnibuses is over-stepped in the experience of some Paris streets and Liverpool squares, where vehicle after vehicle rattles with steed after steed—

"His four feet making the clatter of six,
Like a devil's tattoo played with iron sticks,
And kettle-drum of granite."

The master nuisance of household affairs is the unhalloed practice of carpet-beating, which in late April, early May, and November makes the suburbs of half our cities wholly untenable. The one advertisement exempt from all tax should be, "Don't beat your carpets, send them to be cleaned." Otherwise they should be conveyed like convicts to some far corner among the hills. To fling men, and women, too, with the fury of soldiers leading a forlorn hope, on your filthy rag, to flaunt your brow-beaters in front of your neighbour's house, to cannonade his slumbers and thunder through his day, is an outrage on human nature that links us to the chimpanzee and makes pale the wildest dreams of Bulgarian atrocity. Finally, there is no spheroid or phase of life in which there is so clamant a call for a Bismarckian rule as in that of heedless, ruthless noise. If the noblest of our senses is to be the source of "pleasure and exaltation," instead of distraction and despair; if we are to be

rescued from the creed of "Ecclesiasticus" and "Candide," of Schopenhauer and Hartmann; if our aspirations are to exceed the everlasting rest of Nirvana, these perpetual and growing assaults on our most sacred rights must be brought to a close. The lacerated ear of the world, despite the shade of Cobden and the body of Bright, demands Protection.

HISTORY OF THE WEEK.

MONDAY, Nov. 1.—The Pondos, another native tribe, have joined the insurgents in Basutoland. Latest news from Cabul throws some doubt on the reported murder of the Ameer. General Garibaldi met with a most enthusiastic reception on his return to Milan. Great Britain's policy on the Greek question is disapproved of by Austria and Germany. An unfounded rumour of Bismarck's resignation created a scare in the Prussian Diet yesterday. Fifteen hundred of the leading merchants of Marseilles have signed a protest against the expulsion of the religious bodies. News from Sitka indicates that the Indians are exhibiting a disposition to behave peaceably, and affairs in Alaska are becoming more settled. Mr. Parnell, speaking at a banquet in Limerick last night, was considered to hope that a revolution would not be necessary to obtain reform.

TUESDAY, Nov. 2.—The Albanians are again assuming a threatening demeanour. Laycock beat Homer easily yesterday over the Thames championship course, for £200. The Porte has granted a concession for the building of a line of railway through Syria to India. Rangoon despatches state that shots have been exchanged between the British and the Burmese rebels. The Pope has written a letter to the Archbishop of Paris protesting against the execution of the March decrees. The German Government has decided that the treaty of 1863 with the United States is not to affect Alsace and Lorraine. Naturalized American citizens, therefore, residing in these provinces will be subject to military duty, and to fine and imprisonment for non-service. Despatches from Cape Town state that the volunteers and yeomanry are so disheartened at what they consider the apathy of the Home Government regarding the position of affairs in the colony, that they have determined to allow all the whites to be massacred without assistance.

WEDNESDAY, Nov. 3.—Greece is obtaining a loan of £1,000,000 *sterling*, from a Paris syndicate. The Albanians are gathering at Duleigno. A collision is looked for shortly. Ayoub Khan has appealed to the Shah of Persia for aid against the British. The commemoration of the battle of Mentana was celebrated at Milan yesterday with great éclat. Navigation of the Baltic is being rapidly closed by ice. An early and severe winter is anticipated. It is rumoured that Sir Wm. Harcourt, Home Secretary, is to be made Speaker, in place of Right Hon. Mr. Brand, who will be made a peer. The enforcement of the March decrees against the Capuchins, Dominicans and other religious bodies in France, was continued yesterday.

THURSDAY, Nov. 4.—General Garibaldi is utterly proscribed with his recent journey to Milan. News from Cape Town reports a successful raid on Maseru by the Colonial troops. Great preparations are being made by the Land League for the defence of the indicted members. The English Government has declined to consider the question of imposing countervailing duties on sugar. The French Tribunal of Conflicts has rejected the application to declare the Minister of Justice disqualified from presiding at its sittings.

FRIDAY, Nov. 5.—The Serbian Assembly has been dissolved. Fears are entertained that the present illness of General Garibaldi may prove fatal. Trouble occurred in executing the religious decrees upon a Jesuit house in Paris yesterday. The Greek Minister of War has asked for an extraordinary credit of thirty-six millions of drachmas for war expenses. A meeting of 3,000 tenant farmers held at Portadown yesterday called on the Government to repress outrages and sedition.

SATURDAY, Nov. 6.—Negotiations are to be resumed between Germany and the Vatican. Large numbers of Chinese are returning to their native land from California. It is denied that the Powers contemplate withdrawing the allied fleet from the Adriatic. The recent typhoon in Japan destroyed thousands of houses, hundreds of lives also being lost. The German Government is preparing more stringent regulations against the Socialists. Rowell won the Astley belt match, concluding on Saturday with a score of 567 miles, 96 miles ahead of Littlewood. Latest advices from Pekin say there is no probability of war between Russia and China, the latter being utterly unprepared for such an eventuality. News is alleged to have been received from natives at Petropavlovski of the loss of the Arctic exploring vessel, the *Jeannette*, and all hands, by being crushed in the ice. Despatches from Cape Town record the storming of the mountain strongholds of the Basuto Chief Moleisane. While this was going on, however, a large force of Basutos attacked and drove out the colonial forces holding Chief Lerobotli's village. Another tribe, the Tembus, has revolted, and all important points are being rapidly reinforced by the colonial troops.

The most touching story connected with Annie Laurie is that told in Bayard Taylor's "Crimean Incident":—

They lay along the battery's side,
Below the smoking cannon,
Brave hearts from Severn and from Clyde,
And from the banks of Shannon.

And there, in sight of the Redan and the Malakoff, with to-morrow's battle coming, some one called for a song, and

They sang of love and not of fame,
Forgot was Britain's glory,
Each heart recalled a different name,
But all sang Annie Laurie.

Dear girl, her name he dared not speak,
But as the song grew louder,
Something upon the soldier's cheek
Washed off the stains of powder.

LADY BEAUTIFIERS.

Ladies, you cannot make fair skin, rosy cheeks and sparkling eyes with all the cosmetics of France, or beautifiers of the world, while in poor health, and nothing will give you such good health, strength and beauty as Hop Bitters. A trial is certain proof. See another column.