



DEVOTED TO TEMPERANCE, SCIENCE, EDUCATION, AND AGRICULTURE

VOLUME XV., No. 19.

MONTREAL & NEW YORK, OCTOBER 1, 1880.

SEMI-MONTHLY, 30 CTS. per An., Post-Paid.

MARJORIE'S PERIL.

A True Story of the Bush of Tamashaki.

BY MARY LOCKWOOD.

In the latter part of August, a few years ago, one of Her Majesty's brave Highland regiments, fresh from England by sea, landed at Durban, the flourishing sea-port of the Province of Natal, on the south-east coast of the African continent, and several companies were immediately ordered up country to a frontier post, a little fort at Tamashaki, upon the confines of the Transvaal and Zululand.

The soldiers first went by rail and coach to Pietermaritzburg, the pretty little capital of Natal, fifty-five miles from Durban, and so far the journey was very pleasant; but the rest of the way, over bad roads, in waggons or afoot, was so rough and wearisome that many of the men left their wives and children at Pietermaritzburg; for it was rumored that their stay would not be long at Tamashaki, and, besides, it was a queer sort of a place for women and children. But Sergeant McLeod would not leave his one motherless bairn behind, for he never felt easy when Marjorie was away from him. His men were not sorry to have her come, either, the bonnie little Scottish lassie; for she was a great pet with them all, because she was so Scottish, and wholesome, and blithe, with her dimples and auburn curls, and merry gray eyes, and winsome ways. Then, too, she was a useful little lass, though only eight years old, and could darn the hose and sew buttons on, and sweep the room, and boil the porridge, as well as many an older person.

The fort at Tamashaki had been intended in the beginning for a Zulu village, and, perhaps, was the uncanniest spot a little Scottish girl ever called "home." It was just a collection of thatched mudhuts built around a large court-yard used for the parade-ground, inclosed by a circular fence of high bamboo canes, stuck upright into the ground very close to one another, and bound together with withes. There was no gate, but the circle was brought round so that the ends of the fence overlapped at the entrance, in such a way as to prevent passers-by from seeing into the court. There was a sentinel stationed at the first entrance, who paced the ground where the gate should have been day and night, and Captain Knobel meant to have a gate made just as soon as he could procure the necessary material from the nearest Dutch settlement in the Transvaal.

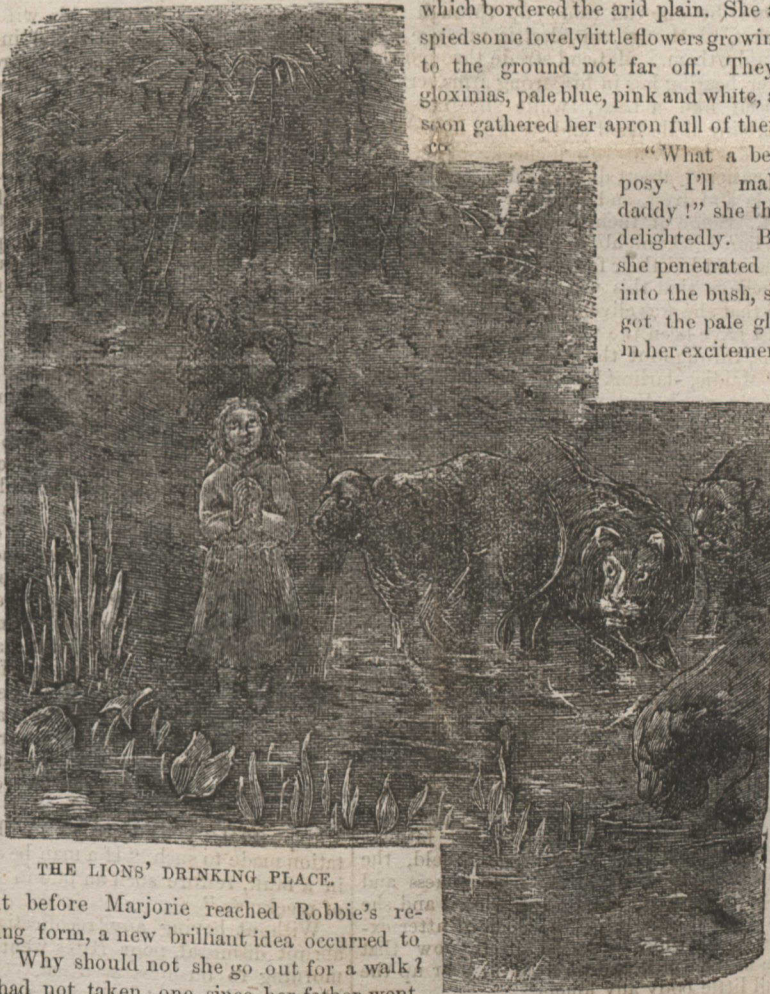
Four or five days after the arrival of the new troops at Tamashaki, Sergeant McLeod was ordered off with his men on an expedition to buy food, and lumber for the necessary repairs. This would take him one whole day, so he left his Maidie, as she called her, in the charge of Private Brown's wife. She was very kind to the child, and kept

her close by her all the morning. But after dinner Mrs. Brown was summoned to see a sick woman, and Maidie, left to her own devices, got tired of darning her father's socks, and thought she would go look for Victoria Albertina, the solemn white cat one of the soldiers had given her at Durban. So she strayed into the parade-ground, before the hut, but the Queen's namesake had gone on a scout after some African mouse, and was nowhere to be seen. The inclosure was very quiet; the hot afternoon sun had driven every one under shelter except the man on guard, who, in his white havelock, was cuddling the shade, and just creeping along up and down the narrow passage between the fences. But Marjorie did not mind the sun; children seldom do.

She took her brown hat down from its peg, and tied it over her tawny curls, when it suddenly occurred to her that her daddy might be home before her, so, like the thoughtful little house-wife that she was, she spread the table and set out the bowl of "parritch," in readiness for him, with great care, then danced out past the sleepy guard—who happened to be at the far end of his beat.

Marjorie made her way as fast as her little feet could carry her across the stretch of scorching sand that lay between the fort and the inviting shade of the bush. The afternoon sun still rode high in the cloudless heavens, and not a sound was heard but the whirring of insects in the sand, as Maidie sprang with a cry of delight into an opening in the thicket of acacia, or white thorn trees, which bordered the arid plain. She already spied some lovely little flowers growing close to the ground not far off. They were gloxinias, pale blue, pink and white, and she soon gathered her apron full of them.

"What a beautiful posy I'll mak' my daddy!" she thought, delightedly. But, as she penetrated deeper into the bush, she forgot the pale gloxinias in her excitement over



THE LIONS' DRINKING PLACE.

But before Marjorie reached Robbie's retreat, a new brilliant idea occurred to her: Why should not she go out for a walk? She had not taken one since her father went

with her to hear the band play in the public garden at Pietermaritzburg; and, strange to say, Sergeant McLeod had never thought to forbid her venturing beyond the post alone, the possibility of her doing it probably never having occurred to him.

"I'll jist gang fetch my hat," she quickly decided, "and try to find a pretty brook, and some floors for my daddy, to gie him the night. Then full of her fine plans, she skipped into McLeod's hut, and reached her

the treasures that opened to her view, and dropped half of them as she made her way along, marking her path through the wood by flowers, as Hop-o'-my-Thumb did by pebbles in the nursery tale. She felt so happy in the woods, it seemed to her as if she could do anything, as she sprang from stone to stone or pressed her rosy cheek against the soft, thick moss, or buried her eager little nose in the white corolla of a lily.

On and on she strayed, playing she was a

fairy and singing, loudly: "Up the airy mountain, down the rushy glen," until she fairly set a monkey, far above her in an ebony-tree, chattering back; but she was too busy to hear him. Presently, she came to a rock, some few hundred paces from the river, projecting over a pool of clear, but very dark-looking water. On the rock grew some beautiful air-plants with scarlet flowers, the inside of their gay cups lined with lemon-color. In the soft sand, near this pool, were many great foot-prints—the lions had been there to drink at night.

Maidie, in reaching over to get one of the brilliant flowers, dropped her hat in the pool, and, do what she might, could not reach it again. She could have cried to see her pretty brown basket, piled full of lilies and ferns, floating off from her; for she suddenly became conscious that it was growing darker in the woods, and that she ought to be finding her way home, as Daddy would be scared about her. So she grasped the remainder of her treasures more firmly, and turned her resolute little face homeward, or in what she thought to be the homeward direction. Somehow, it was a great deal harder picking her way over the stones as she went back; there were so many slippery places and so many vines and thorny bushes in the way, and Marjorie wondered why the woods seemed so much darker almost immediately.

At last it grew so dark, and the way seemed so strange, that she just sat down to think. How tired she was; how glad she would be to get home again! At last she determined to go straight back to the pool and wait there for her Daddy. She was so sure in her perfect faith that he would, of course, come for her, and he would see her more easily in that open place. She was not afraid. Her father had told her that God's good angels watch over children who try to do right, and she had never meant to be naughty. So she bravely turned, and painfully picked her way along until presently she came right to the edge of a sheet of black water; it seemed to her the same she had left, but it was, in reality, quite a different pool. There was the rock close to her; she would climb up and sit on the ledge, it was all so wet where she was standing. After trying to step over the stones, unsuccessfully, she finally pulled off her shoes and waded in the pool to the rock, but found the sides were so high and slippery that she could not climb them, neither could she see to get back; all that was left for her to do was to plant her little shoeless feet in the water and brace herself firmly against the steep, rough rock and wait patiently for Daddy. The shoes were gone—dropped in trying to climb the rock—the pinafore was torn and soiled, and the gay vines and flowers dragged and drooped.

"It's verra dark; I'll say my prayers, any