

little Ishbel's home was in Guisachan in Invernesshire. It was a wild and romantic spot. The country seat nestled at the head of a lovely mountain strath twenty-three miles from the nearest railroad station or telegraph office. In this mountain solitude the young girl grew up a strong and sturdy Scotch lassie, passionately fond of reading and of the vigorous outdoor life of the mountain child.

Her father, the son of the well-known Mr. Edward Marjoribanks (who up to the age of ninety-four transacted all the heavy duties falling to the lot of the senior partner of such a bank as Coutts'), combined with his hereditary business instincts strong literary and artistic tastes and a passion for everything that pertained to sport and natural history. It was this which led him in early manhood to settle himself in the wilds of Invernesshire, and there to create a very paradise, in the midst of which he lives the life of an ancient patriarch amongst his retainers and his ghillies, to the great benefit of all the glen.

Lady Tweedmouth, a woman of great beauty and talent, was the daughter of Sir James Hogg, one of the mainstays of the old East India Council, and many members of her family can boast in recent years of having maintained in the service of their country in India the high traditions of their combined Scottish and Irish ancestry.

With such a host and hostess and in such surroundings "Guisachan" became renowned in all the North of Scotland for its wide hospitality, and every autumn found gathered beneath its roof prominent politicians of both parties, artists, literary men, sportsmen. Thus it naturally came about that between the annual six months' Parliamentary season in London and the circle of friends visiting her Highland home the little Ishbel was brought into contact with most of the leading men of the day, riding and walking in their company, listening to their stories and mutual reminiscences, and imbibing all unconsciously a strong Liberal bias, which presently blossomed into full force under the friendly influences of Mr. Gladstone.

Another result of her youthful surroundings was to accustom her to free intercourse with persons of



LADY ISHBEL.

very various religious creeds. In her native glen the great majority of the people were Celtic, Roman Catholics, whilst the minority consisted of strong Free Church folk, with a sprinkling of adherents of the Auld Kirk, amongst which were her own family. She and her white pony were at home amongst them all, and many were the stories she heard and the sympathies that were evoked as she learned to spin or bake "cakes" by the side of the old Highland "wives," or to watch for the deer and the grouse with her father's gamekeepers. It is curious to note how these early experiences trained the young girl for her future connection with the Roman Catholic and Presbyterian populations of Ireland, and it is a strange coincidence that circumstances should have accustomed both Lord and Lady Aberdeen from childhood to follow the example of the Queen in being mem-