

HER MAJESTY'S BOOK.

"More Leaves from the Journal of a Life in the Highlands" precisely resembles in every respect—as one extract will show—the volume to which it is a sequel. Everything that was said or thought about the first work will be equally applicable to the second. The belief that political sentiment would be betrayed proves to be unfounded. Nothing visibly denotes preference for Lord Beaconsfield over Mr. Gladstone. The only indications of sentiment on any subject that can be called in the slightest degree political are an expression of sympathy with the Stuarts, of whom Her Majesty rejoices to think that she is now the representative, while she "cannot bear the recollection of Culloden;" and a manifestation, rather than an expression, of sympathy with the Germans in the Franco-German war. In the latter case too, it is evident that Her Majesty's heart is with her German sons-in-law quite as much as with the German cause. She is strongly attached to the French Empress, and bitterly bewails the death of the Prince Imperial. John Brown receives special mention in the dedication, and there is a warm tribute to his memory at the end. He appears in almost every page as the trusted and constant attendant, devoted, as no doubt he was, to the personal safety and comfort of his mistress, but nothing is said about him which can give reasonable offence, hardly anything that can provoke a smile. He is always there, and so are the luncheon basket and the tea. The allusions to the death of the Prince Consort are frequent, unaffected and touching. The life depicted is one of simple pleasures, genial affections, kindly interests and pure Highland happiness. There is a good deal of religious feeling, and it is decidedly not Ritualistic, Her Majesty's favourite clergyman being evidently Norman McLeod. The reflection will sometimes obtrude itself that Royalty has its public, as well as its domestic, duties, and that had the Queen's time been shared between the Highlands and Ireland, as all her most loyal and honest councillors desired, she might, in the opinion of all who know the Irish people well, have made it impossible for her throne in the Irish heart to be usurped by demagogues, and thus have averted a long train of calamities, past and yet to come. If any other thought of a pensive cast arises as we turn the pages in which the commonest, the most minute, the most personal details of everyday life are presented to the public eye, it is that Royalty lives in a charmed circle of illusion with regard to its own relations with the world, and can hardly ever have its impressions corrected by the voice of an adviser who will venture to speak the truth.

A CARRIAGE ACCIDENT.

We started at about twenty minutes to seven from Altnaguthasach, Brown on the box next Smith, who was driving, little Willem behind. It was quite dark when we left, but all the lamps were lit as usual; from the first, however, Smith seemed to be quite confused, and got off the road several times, once in a very dangerous place, when Alice called out and Brown got off the box to show him the way. After that, however, though going very slowly, we seemed to be all right, but Alice was not at all reassured, and thought Brown's holding up the lantern all the time on the box indicated that Smith could not see where he was going, though the road was as broad and plain as possible. Suddenly, about two miles from Altnaguthasach, and about twenty minutes after we had started, the carriage began to turn up on one side; we called out: "What's the matter?" There was an awful pause, during which Alice said: "We are upsetting." In another moment—during which I had time to reflect whether we should be killed or not, and thought there were still things I had not settled and wanted to do—the carriage turned over on its side, and we were all precipitated to the ground! I came down very hard, with my face upon the ground, near the carriage, the horses both on the ground, and Brown calling out in despair, "The Lord Almighty have mercy on us! Who did ever see the like of this before! I thought you were all killed." Alice was soon helped up by means of tearing all her clothes to disentangle her; but Lenchen, who had also got caught in her dress, called out very piteously, which frightened me a good deal; but she was also got out with Brown's assistance, and neither she nor Alice was at all hurt. I reassured them that I was not hurt, and urged that we should make the best of it, as it was an inevitable misfortune. Smith, utterly confused and bewildered, at length came up to ask if I was hurt. Meantime the horses were lying on the ground as if dead, and it was absolutely necessary to get them up again. Alice, whose calmness and coolness were admirable, held one of the lamps while Brown cut the traces, to the horror of Smith, and the horses were speedily released and got up unhurt. There was now no means of getting home except by sending back Smith with the two horses to get another carriage. All this took some time, about half an hour, before we got off. By this time I felt my face was a good deal bruised and swollen, and, above all, my right thumb was excessively painful and much swollen; indeed I thought at first it was broken, till we began to move it. Alice advised then that we should sit down in the carriage—that is, with the bottom of the carriage as a back—which we did, covered with plaids, little Willem sitting in front, with the hood of his "bourne" over his head, holding a lantern, Brown holding another, and being indefatigable in his attention and care. He had hurt his knee a good deal in jumping off the carriage. A little claret was all we could get either to drink or wash my face and hand. Almost directly after the accident happened, I said to Alice it was terrible not to be able to tell it to my dearest Albert, to which she answered: "But he knows it all, and I am sure he watched over us." I am thankful that it was by no imprudence of mine, or the slightest deviation from what my beloved one and I had always been in the habit of doing, and what he sanctioned and approved.

A REMINISCENCE.

At Aberfeldy, a pretty village opposite Castle Menzies, one or two people seemed to know us. Now we came in among fine, high-wooded hills, and here it was much clearer. We were in the Bredalbane property and approaching Taymouth. We passed, to the left, Bolfraz, where Lord Bredalbane's factor still lives, and to the right the principal lodge of Taymouth, which I so well remember going in by; but as we could not have driven through the grounds without asking permission and becoming known, which for various reasons we did not wish, we decided on not attempting it, and con-

tented ourselves with getting out at a gate, close to a small fort, into which we were admitted by a woman from the gardener's house, close to which we stopped, and who had no idea who we were. We got out and looked down from this height upon the house below, the mist having cleared away sufficiently to show us everything; and here unknown, quite in private, I gazed, not without deep inward emotion, on the scene of our reception, twenty-four years ago, by dear Lord Bredalbane in a princely style, not to be equalled for grandeur and poetic effect! Albert and I were only twenty-three, young and happy. How many are gone who were with us then! I was very thankful to have seen it again. It seemed unaltered. Everything was dripping from the mist. Taymouth is twenty-two miles from Dunkeld.

PICNICING.

At half-past two we five ladies lunched on 'a heathery knoll, just above Mr. Keir's wood, and were indeed glad to do so, as we were tired by the great heat. As soon as luncheon was over, we walked down through the wood a few hundred yards to where the carriage was. Here we took leave, with much regret, of the dear, kind Duchess and the amiable Miss MacGregor, and got into the carriage at half-past three, stopping for a moment near Kindrogan to wish Mrs. Keir and her family good-bye. We drove on by Kirkmichael, and then some little way until we got into the road from Blairgowrie. The evening was quite splendid, the sky yellow and pink, the distant hills coming out soft and blue, both behind and in front of us. We changed horses at Spital, and about two miles beyond it—at a place called Loch-na-Braig—we stopped, and while Grant ran back to get from a small house some hot water in the kettle, we three, with Brown's help scrambled over a low stone wall by the roadside, and lit a fire and prepared our tea. The kettle soon returned, and the hot tea was very welcome and refreshing. We then drove off again. The scenery was splendid till daylight gradually faded away, and then the hills looked grim and severe in the dusk. We cleared the Devil's Elbow well, however, before it was really dark, and then many stars came out, and we reached Balmoral in safety at half-past eight o'clock.

ABBOTSFORD.

Another twenty minutes or half-hour brought us to Abbotsford, the well-known residence of Sir Walter Scott. It lies low and looks rather gloomy. Mr. Hope Scott and Lady Victoria (my god-daughter and the sister of the present Duke of Norfolk) with their children, the young Duke of Norfolk, and some other relations, received us. Mr. Hope Scott married first Miss Lockhart, the last surviving grandchild of Sir Walter Scott, and she died leaving only one daughter, a pretty girl of eleven, to whom this place will go, and who is the only surviving descendant of Sir Walter. They showed us the part of the house in which Sir Walter lived, and all his rooms—his drawing-room with the same furniture and carpet, the Library where we saw his MS. of "Ivanhoe," and several others of his novels and poems in a beautiful handwriting with hardly any erasures, and other relics which Sir Walter had himself collected. Then his study, a small dark room, with a little turret in which is a bust in bronze, done from a cast taken after death, of Sir Walter. In the study we saw his journal, in which Mr. Hope Scott asked me to write my name (which I felt it to be a presumption in me to do), as also the others. We went through some passages into two or three rooms where were collected fine specimens of old armour, etc., and where in a glass case are Sir Walter's last clothes. We ended by going into the dining-room, in which Sir Walter Scott died, where we took tea.

AWKWARD.

We waited and waited till dinner-time, but nothing came. So we ladies had to go to dinner in our riding-skirts, and just as we were. I, having no cap, had to put on a black lace veil of Emilie's which she arranged as a coiffure. The Duke and Sir Thomas dined with us ladies. None of the maids or servants had any change of clothing. Dinner over, I went with Louise and Jane to the drawing-room, which was given me as my sitting-room, and Jane read. While at dinner at half-past nine, Ross told us that Blake, the footman, had arrived with some of the smaller things, but none of the most necessary—no clothes, etc. The break with the luggage had finally broken down at Tomintoul: from thence Blake had gone with a cart to Dufftown, where he had got a small break, and brought the light things on, but the heavier luggage was coming in a cart, and they hoped would be here by twelve o'clock. Louise and Jane Churchill left me at near eleven o'clock. I sat up writing and waiting for this luggage. A man was sent out on a pony with a lantern in search of it. At one, he came back, saying that nothing was to be seen or heard of this luckless luggage, and urged my going to bed. My maids had unfortunately not thought of bringing anything with them, and I disliked the idea of going to bed without any of the necessary toilette. However some arrangements were made which were very uncomfortable; and after two I got into bed, but had very little sleep at first; finally fatigue got the better of discomfort, and after three I fell asleep.

A HOUSE-WARMING.

We dined at about half-past eight in the small dining-room. This over, after waiting for a little while in my sitting-room, Brown came to say all the servants were ready for the house-warming, and at twenty minutes to ten we went into the little dining-room, which had been cleared, and where all the servants were assembled. We made nineteen altogether. Five animated reels were danced, in which all (but myself) joined. After the first reel "whiskey-toddy" was brought round for every one, and Brown begged I would drink to the "fire-kindling." Then Grant made a little speech, with an allusion to the wild place we were in, and concluding with a wish "that our Royal Mistress, our good Queen, should 'live long.'" This was followed by cheers given out by Ross in regular Highland style, and all drank my health. The merry, pretty little ball ended at a quarter-past eleven. The men, however, went on singing in the steward's room for some time.

Sad thoughts filled my heart both before dinner and when I was alone and retired to rest. I thought of the happy past and my darling husband whom I fancied I must see, and who always wished to build here, in this favourite wild spot, quite in amidst the hills. At Altnaguthasach I could not have lived again now—alone. It is far better to have built a totally new house; but then the sad thought struck me that it was the first *Widow's house*, not built by him or hallowed by his memory. But I am sure his blessing does rest on it, and those who live in it.

A COMMUNION SERVICE.

A very bright morning with deep snow. At twelve o'clock I went to the kirk with my two ladies (the Duchess of Roxburgh and Lady Ely), Lord Bridport being also in attendance. At the end of the sermon began the service of the Communion, which is most touching and beautiful, and impressed and moved me more than I can express.

The prayer after the sermon was very short, after which Dr. Taylor delivered an address from the pulpit, in which he very beautifully invited all true penitents to receive the communion, the hardened sinner alone to abstain. It was done in a very kind and encouraging tone. Dr. Taylor adopted part of one of the English prayers, only shortened and simplified. . . . After this address—"the Fencing of the Tables," as it is called—the minister came down to the small table in front of the pulpit, where he stood with the assistant minister, and the elders on either side, and while the 35th Psalm was being sung the elders brought in the elements, and placed them on the table, viz., the bread cut into small pieces, and two large plates lined with napkins, and the wine in four large silver cups. The minister then read the words of the institution of the Lord's Supper, from 1 Corinthians xi. 23, and this was followed by a short but very impressive prayer of consecration.

This done, he handed the bread first, and then the wine, right and left to the elders, Francis Lays (Brown's uncle), Symon "the merchant," Hunter, and Dr. Robertson, to dispense; himself giving both to one or two people nearest to him. The bread