

IN BYGONE DAYS.

A STORY OF AN ADVENTURE IN LINLITHGOW.

"What are we to do with ourselves to-day, Love?" asked I of my husband, as, standing on tiptoe, I gave him his morning salute, before going downstairs to breakfast. We had come across the Atlantic on our wedding trip, and had been sightseeing in Edinburgh for the last week or so. Being "strangers and pilgrims" in Auld Reekie, we were left very much to ourselves, and, unhappily had arrived at that stage of existence where the sweets of our own society palled on us, and, let me confess it, by this time we were both longing in the innermost recesses of our hearts for a break in the monotony of our placid bliss. Indeed, I am sorry to say, there was a sound which might have been taken for fretfulness in my voice as I repeated my question, "What shall we do with ourselves to-day?"

"Whatsoever you like, my dear," said that tiresome Tom, stifling a yawn. "We've 'done' the castle, as our American cousins would say, have attended service at St. Giles, shopped in Princess street, investigated Rizzio's gore in Holyrood, have examined the pictures in the Scottish Acad—!"

"Oh, don't go on," cried I, putting my hand on his mouth, "think of something new, do!"

"New! Something new in Edinburgh! Ye Gods!" here my husband rolled his eyes heavenward, "listen to this sacrilegious speech! Why, Nell," bringing back his gaze from the ceiling and again condescending to converse with such an earthly being as his wife, "of what are you thinking. Something new in Auld Reekie, indeed!"

"Oh! Tom, don't tease," I cried, "let us get away, far from the madding crowd, and have a quiet day in the country."

"Very well," said Tom, tucking my arm through his as we wended our way to the dining-room. "But first let us have our breakfast and then decide what rural spot to favour with a visit—." Hullo! I say! he cried, as, turning a corridor, a tall young man rushed into his arms. "I beg your pardon!" ejaculated the new arrival, "I am very sorry." "Why, Hamilton, old boy, it's never you!" cried my husband, "Mr. Hamilton!" from me, and "Mrs. Lennox!" in tones of surprise from the tall young man.

"Why, Lennox, from what corner of the earth did you spring?"

"From York, where we have been staying with my brother, Colonel Lennox," answered Tom. "But come into the breakfast room, and while we are having something to sustain the inner man I'll give you an account of our trip. Oh, Hamilton, show me the country in which you can get such a meal as in Scotland," and a comfortable expression steals over Tom's mouth which makes me shudder when I think that perhaps in the years to come I may be the wife of a gourmand! My fears, however, are allayed when I see him sit down at a table and commence to eat that wholesome fare which Johnson defines as "Porridge, a mess for horses and Scotchmen!"

"What do you intend doing with yourselves to-day, Lennox?" asked Mr. Hamilton, after we had chatted for some time. "Suppose, if you are not going anywhere else, you and Mrs. Lennox come with me to Linlithgow?"

"Capital! charming!" I cried, "just the very place and the country, too!"

"Well, hardly!" answered Mr. Hamilton, "for Linlithgow is a little town of itself, called the Royal Borough of Linlithgow. It actually possesses a Provost who claims the right to walk immediately behind royalty."

"Oh!" I exclaimed. "Now my school-days fly back to my memory, and methinks I recollect learning that Mary Queen of Scots was born in the Palace of Linlithgow."

"You are right, as usual," said Tom, "and as we would like to investigate the ruins of this palace, suppose the three of us start for Linlithgow at eleven o'clock?"

Eleven o'clock arrived, and saw us comfortably ensconced in a railway carriage speeding out of Waverley Station. We were a merry party, and negated the old adage, "two company, three trumpery." How we talked of our dear Canada, and recalled to each other's memory different tobogganing reminiscences. For instance:

"Mrs. Lennox, do you remember the day Dick Carlyle asked you to go down Nenemoosha Hill on his toboggan? I'll never forget seeing him thrown immediately after starting, then pick himself up and, rushing madly down the hill, shriek wildly to the toboggan on which you still sat to 'stop! stop!'"

"When I think of it," I cried, "I imagine I can still hear the wind whistling about my ears! You know it was a very dangerous part of the slide, and I really expected my end would arrive before the end of the hill. Fancy, Tom," I said to my husband, "a toboggan without a steerer!"

Before I could get an answer, the train had slackened speed, and a few seconds after we had arrived at Linlithgow.

Mr. Hamilton seized a basket, in which the hotel people had put a *recherché* little lunch, while Tom, carrying a travelling rug and my shawl left me to act the useless but ornamental part of the procession and bring up the rear.

On coming to the foot of a hill, and seeing not far from me the ruins of the castle, I ran past the two men and had reached the gates when they had toiled half way up the incline.

"Laggards," cried I, mockingly, "what makes you so slow? Had I all your bundles to carry myself I would have been at our destination long ago."

"Come here, Madam Impudence," called my husband, "and we will make you verify your words!"

"Speak for yourself, sir," I answered. "Mr. Hamilton, I know, is very proud of the fact that although a man, still he has been of a little use this morning, and so will not willingly relinquish the basket even to me. Besides, were he to do so you both would fare badly for lunch, as I am getting ravenous. I talked too much at breakfast and neglected to eat."

"Lennox!" cried Hamilton, "your wife is the first woman I ever heard admit she talked too much. What a truthful treasure you have, man? Mrs. Lennox, as a reward for your veracity I think we ought to have luncheon at once; what do you say?"

"Yes, by all means," I answered; "but first let us go through this old chapel," pointing to an ancient ecclesiastical building which we rightly guessed to be the Church of St. Michael, where, it is said, an apparition of a man, clad as one sees in old pictures the disciples of Our Lord, appeared to King James the Fourth of Scotland as he knelt at prayers, and warned him not to advance on Flodden.

We entered the church, and were astonished to find it used as a Presbyterian place of worship, and could not help bemoaning the want of taste of the people who had whitewashed the stone walls, erected a commonplace organ loft, box pews and gallery, thus spoiling the appearance of one of Scotland's oldest churches.

After leaving the church we walked down to the Loch and admired from the distance the magnificent ruins of Linlithgow Palace. After strolling about for a little while we decided to have our luncheon before proceeding with our explorations, as the basket was considerably in Mr. Hamilton's way, and the clear atmosphere had given us all an appetite. So, in truly rural manner, we sat down on the grass and picnicked in a most unpretentious way. When we had satisfied the cravings of hunger we arose, refreshed, and ready to attack the castle.

Crossing the drawbridge, we found ourselves in the archway where the warders were formerly stationed. Passing through, we entered a large square enclosed by the great grim castle walls. In the middle of the square stood the remains of a beautiful fountain, and when we walked toward what had been the royal entrance we saw the scorched stones of the wall—a lasting remembrance of the manner in which this noble and historical edifice was demolished by Hawley's dragoons in 1746. Turning to the northwest corner, we entered a tower, and commenced to climb a spiral staircase which wound round and round to a great and dizzy height. At last we found ourselves in the turret room known as "Queen Margaret's Bower," where the wife of James the Fourth, waited and watched for the return of her foolhardy husband from Flodden.

Then we descended and passed through the remains of rooms till we came to the apartment where Mary Queen of Scots was born. Nothing but the Royal Coat of Arms carved in stone over the mantel-piece was left to attract our attention. Then we visited the banqueting hall and priests' apartments, and afterwards the dungeons—fearful places, void of light, with dark stone walls and ceilings so low that in some parts it was impossible for my husband and Mr. Hamilton to stand erect; I, being smaller, fared better. Returning through the dark passages, we came to the jailer's room, and off it a smaller room, which I was about to explore when a gentleman, who was sketching quite near, sprang forward crying, "Pardon me, Madam, that place is dangerous!" And, lighting a match, showed, to my horror, a large hole just inside the door. He then explained to us how, in former days, prisoners doomed to a lingering death, were lowered into this awful pit, and thus forever shut out from the light of Heaven and human sight. On my husband asking him if he would allow us to look at his sketch, he most good-naturedly exhibited it to us. It was a most finely executed, although only half finished, drawing of the jailer's room as it must have looked three hundred years ago. The principal character in the sketch was a prisoner, a young man, who stood bound hand and foot in the middle of the room; his melancholy face wore a look of dogged inflexibility, and, as he haughtily stared at his captors, who surrounded him, apparently making merry over their unfortunate victim's awful plight, not even the terrible death which stared him face to face seemed to have the power to break that proud spirit. An open door showed the loathsome pit, lit up by a torch held by one of the guards, while in the background a number of men with ropes seemed preparing to lower the prisoner to his living death. The picture called forth a great deal of praise from us, and we were not at all astonished to hear that the artist was a member of the Royal Scottish Academy.

By that time we were very tired. So, after saying good-bye to our new friend, we left the castle and wandered down to the loch, where Tom and Mr. Hamilton arranged the rugs and wraps so as to allow me to sit down and rest, while they strolled quite near smoking their cigarettes and chatting.

After a time my thoughts began to wander to other days, and with vivid imagination I pictured the arrival of King James the Fourth and his bride at the gates of Linlithgow Palace, which was part of the dowry of Margaret of England; then I thought of the beautiful and unfortunate Mary Queen of Scots as a little innocent child playing about the grounds of the castle, all unwitting her future tragic life and death. Suddenly I was awakened from my reverie by the blowing of trumpets, and looking toward the palace I saw, to my astonishment, numbers of men, clad in armour, running toward me. I called to my husband and Mr. Hamilton, who stood as though paralyzed gazing at the

fast approaching crowd who swarmed down the hills and gathered about the luckless men before they could answer my cry. For a minute or two the mob hid them from me, and when I again saw them their arms had been tightly strapped together with stout thongs of leather, and they were being dragged past me up the hill toward the castle. At this sight I, forgetting my fears, ran up to their captors and demanded haughtily "By what right they dared behave in this outrageous manner? That I would have them understand they were insulting Canadians, travelling for pleasure, who had come to Linlithgow sight-seeing!"

My only answer was a guttural laugh as they seized me and endeavoured to fasten my arms behind my back, and, in the attempt, nearly dislocating my shoulder. Of course I bit and tried to scratch, but to no avail, for on the leader of the party giving the order to "march" we were hurried toward the castle, which, no longer a ruin, but, in magnificent splendour, appeared the palatial building of long ago. From the tower floated the royal flag of Scotland, and as we neared the gates we were challenged by a sentinel, who, on the password being given, allowed us to enter.

Hustled through passage after passage, we at length reached the jailer's room, where our captors were overwhelmed with questions by numbers of strangely dressed men, who crowded round, shoving us about and making merry over our rage in most savage and strange language. Suddenly the babel ceased, as the door opened, and a tall man appeared who ordered us to be brought before "the King."

"What King?" demanded my husband, in furious tones, of him.

"Questionest thou the right of our liege sovereign James to be King of Scotland?" cried the tall man. "Then, minion, it is as we thought—thou art a traitor and a spy!"

"Don't talk nonsense," Tom replies, in quick, angry tones. "It is about time some explanation was made; for, as sure as there is law in Scotland, so surely shall you and these men suffer for this day's work!"

"Hold thy prate, knave! Thinkest thou by thy brazen talk to outwit me?" the tall man retorted. "To the King!"

Obedying his orders, we were again seized, and I, for attempting to administer another bite, received a sharp box on the ear, at the sight of which Mr. Hamilton and Tom both struggled to get free, and used very strong and emphatic language. We were then dragged along, offering resistance all the way, until we reached the room we remembered to have had pointed out to us in the morning as the Presence Room. Into this we were brought, and saw, to our astonishment, a magnificent throne, and seated on it a tall man of reddish complexion, surrounded by crowds of brilliantly dressed courtiers. As we entered, a laugh of ridicule from the gay assembly greeted us. My husband, enraged at this last indignity, freed himself with a mighty effort from the detaining arms of our captors and sprang towards the enthroned one, shouting:

"What does this tomfoolery mean. Answer, man?" and rushed up the steps of the throne, but was immediately seized and dragged back by the tall man who had summoned us from the jailer's room, and two young courtiers, one of whom struck my poor Tom a terrible blow on the mouth, saying:

"Take that, thou prating fool!"

A herald then jumped forward and blew a loud blast on a trumpet, and after the sound had died away called with a stentorian voice:

"Know ye, all men, that whereas these two men and yonder dame have been found prowling about our liege Lord, King James, his fair palace, and grounds of Linlithgow, and whereas suspicious instruments, suggestive of witchcraft, have been found upon them, it doth please our gracious Sovereign to examine the prisoners and mete out such punishment as shall be their due."

He then retired, and the enthroned personage, fixing an accusing eye upon my husband, asked in sepulchral tones:

"Thy name, minion?"

"Lennox," Tom answered, laconically.

"Ha! A good name! From whence cam'st thou?"

"From Canada," said Tom, and then added, "America."

"America! Methinks thou hast given it a new name when thou didst call it Canada. 'Tis but a few years since I heard of one Christopher Columbus having discovered a land teeming with gold, silver and precious stones, which he took possession of in the name of Ferdinand of Spain. But how got ye to Scotland?"

Here Tom's face really brightened; for, having enjoyed the ocean voyage very much, he never seemed to tire talking of it.

"Oh, we came across the Atlantic in the Cunard steamer 'Aurania,' and had a magnificent run of eight days," said he.

"Caitiff!" roared his examiner. "Thou hast never crossed the ocean in eight days! 'Tis a three months' voyage, at the least, and ye could'na sail sae fast, for where got ye the wins to blow the ship at that rate?"

"But we came by steamer," Tom answered, coldly. "The arch fiend tak' ye himsel' if I ken what ye mean!" shouted the regal personage, stamping his foot with rage.

Tom, after a fruitless attempt to free his arms, said with a voice choking with passion:

"May I ask where you have been living that you have never heard of the wonderful Clyde-built steamers that have astonished the world by their speed, and gained the name of 'The Greyhounds of the Atlantic?'"