

retrograded towards savagry. You may travel where you please and you will find men and women the queerest and most absurd of all the animals wandering in the wilderness of creation. The men who composed the followers of La Salle were a lawless and turbulent set, who gave their leader endless trouble, and who more than once plotted his destruction. However, by his indomitable courage and perseverance, he overcame all opposition, and pushed his explorations from the head of the waters of the Mississippi, to where it pours its mighty flood into the bosom of the Gulf of Mexico. In this voyage he had to fight or beg his way through the territories of many hostile and friendly nations, and when at last he reached the dreary delta of the great river, he celebrated the event with all the circumstance he could command, and suspended a shield, bearing the arms of France, from the top of a lofty tree, claiming the country for, and naming it after, his sovereign, who has won the affix of Great from the magnitude of the misery which marked his career. Retracing his way, La Salle ascended the Father of Waters, and after many perilous adventures, arrived in Quebec, from whence he set sail for France, where he was received with the honor and consideration due to his great merits. The king, justly appreciating his eminent services, created him governor of all the vast country lying between the great lakes and the Gulf of Mexico, and fitted out a squadron of four ships and 280 men, which, under his command, was to form a settlement at the mouth of the Mississippi, and thence open communication with Canada.

Filled with an overmastering ambition, La Salle beheld a path of renown opening before him, which might well dazzle the perceptions of a better balanced mind; and he turned coldly from the fair girl whose love he had won in the days of his obscurity, to pursue a loftier but less happy purpose; but hers was not a nature easily thwarted, and she determined to accompany her lover to the strange wilderness, whereon were fixed the hopes of his ambitious spirit. For this purpose she assumed the garb of a boy, and was permitted to join the expedition by La Salle, who did not recognize her in that strange disguise. After a prosperous voyage they arrived on the coast of Florida, but through ignorance of the correct longitude, they passed the mouth of the river, and at length stopped at St. Bernard's, where they built a fort and prepared to establish their settlement.

La Salle had many difficulties to encounter, not the least of which was the perversity of those under his command, who seemed to take an insane delight in obstructing his intentions. The chief of these obstructionists was one Jolette, who commanded a ship which formed part of the expedition, and, through his treachery or incapacity, he let it run on shore and fall into the hands of the savages. La Salle, by

violent means, wrested the plunder of the wreck from the red men, and thereby kindled a resentment as deep as it was lasting. The Clamcoets, a most warlike and haughty tribe, took every means to annoy the settlers, while his turbulent followers raised every obstacle in their power to thwart him. At last, driven to desperation, by the difficulties that surrounded him, La Salle determined to make further explorations, and find a spot more suitable for the establishment of his colony. For this purpose he selected some twenty men and his nephew, a proud overbearing youth, and departed in search of the remote waters of the Missouri. The fond and foolish girl who had followed the fortunes of her neglectful lover, was one of this party. There was a dreary and perilous voyage. Difficulties rose before them at every step, until, upon the eighth day, having failed to find the Mississippi, they broke into open mutiny and refused to follow their leader any further. At night, in the depths of the unknown forest, this girl heard her villainous associates plot the murder of La Salle and his nephew. Awaiting opportunity she stole to where the doomed man was sleeping, but in her anxiety to warn him of his danger, she betrayed her own secret, and La Salle beheld, in the poor boy who had followed his fortunes so faithfully, the forgotten love of his youth. But, alas! human love that night was powerless, for scarcely had he awakened to a true sense of his position, when his murderers were about him. Vainly striving to protect him, she shared his wounds, and the blows that cruelly destroyed his life, released her fair spirit to bear him company to a better world. So perished the most gifted of Canadian pioneers, by the hand of his own countrymen, in the depths of an unknown wilderness; and another name was added to the long list of truly wonderful men, to whose enterprise and daring the continent of America owes its present greatness and prosperity.

VICTORIA AT BALMORAL.

(Translated from Robt. Keonig's Sketch Book.)

Far in the North of Scotland, on a green peninsula on the southern bank of the river Dee, lies the ancient Castle of Balmoral, which was built many centuries ago. The imposing Craig Gowan protects it toward the south; toward the north, a wide, majestic wreath of wild mountains shields it from the storms blowing from that quarter. On the northern bank of the rapid river, opposite the castle, sat a plainly dressed lady on a field chair, of a fine summer day, about sixteen years ago. On her lap lay a drawing portfolio. She was engaged in sketching the castle in front of her. Suddenly a peasant boy with his flock of sheep, came along the same path, and intended to pass by the lady. The sheep got frightened by her unwonted appearance, and would not

move from the spot. The boy, became impatient at the lady and shouted;—

"Get out of the way, madam, and let my sheep pass." The lady smiled, rose, and stepped aside. It was of no avail. The sheep would not advance. thereupon the boy shouted angrily, "Stand back, will you, and let my sheep pass? Stand back!" At this moment a footman went to the boy, and said to him:

"But, young fellow, do you know whom you are talking to?"

"I dinna ken, and dinna care," replied the boy, in his Scottish dialect; "this is the road for the sheep, and she has no right to sit there."

"But, boy, it is her Majesty, the Queen!" added the footman.

"The Queen?" asked the boy in surprise. "Is it the Queen? Weel, but why dinna she put on claes that folk would ken her?"

Yes it was Victoria, the popular Queen on whose kingdom the sun does not set, and to whom this naive compliment was paid by the young shepherd. She walked aside far enough to let the sheep pass.

Since 1848 the Queen and Prince Albert had selected Castle Balmoral, so rich in historical and legendary traditions, in the mountainous County of Aberdeen, as their summer residence.

Since the court resided at Balmoral, the Highland clans met their once a year to celebrate their national games and sports. The most splendid of these Highland festivals was the torchlight dance, which transferred the beholders entirely back into ancient times.

It is after nightfall. A platform hewn out of the flank of the precipitous mountain is the scene; one side of this platform is floored and fenced in with a wooden railing on three sides; on the fourth side is a canopy under which the members of the Court take their seats. Four strong Highlanders, with torches in their hands step to the four corners of the square platform, six bagpipers are stationed in front of the throne and twenty-four Highlanders, likewise with torches in their hands, now commence a wild and curious dance to the notes of the bagpipes, which they accompany with the shrill battlecry of the ancient clans. And the torches shed their weird glare through the night, into the gorge yawning far below them on the brilliant court party. The dancing Highlanders, the living witnesses of a half barbarous time, living only in the patriotic songs of Scotland.

In the meantime the ancient castle, which was entirely too small for its royal guests, had to give way to a new building. A small colony of framers, erected for the English masons, carpenters, and laborers, rose at no great distance from the palace, and the splendid granite structure made rapid progress from day to day. In the summer of 1853 one of these frame structures was discovered to be on fire, and the whole row burned down in the course of half an hour. It was an interesting sight on this occasion to see Prince Albert standing in the chain of laborers, extending from the conflagration to the river bank, and handing one bucketful of water after another to his next neighbor, until the flames were entirely extinguished. Nor was the Queen an idle spectator on this occasion. Not only did she, by her presence, encourage the laborers engaged in extinguishing the flame, but she issued the necessary orders to her servants with the calmness and prudence peculiar to her. The royal couple indemnified the working men for everything they lost by this conflagration.