



## Mary Queen of Scots.



The following exquisite piece of poetry describing the troubled life and sad death of Scotland's beautiful and ill-fated Queen, would be very suitable for recitation at Catholic entertainments. It was written by H. G. Bell, Esq.:

### THE CONVENT.

I looked far back in other years, and lo! in bright array,  
I saw, as in a dream, the forms of ages passed away.  
It was a stately convent, with its old and lofty walls  
And gardens, with their broad green walks, where soft the footstep falls;  
And o'er the antique dial-stones the creeping shadows passed,  
And all around the noon-day sun a drowsy radiance cast.  
No sound of busy life was heard, save from the cloister dim,  
The tinkling of the silver bell, or Sisters' holy hymn.  
And there five noble maidens sat, beneath the orchard trees,  
In that first budding spring of youth when all its prospects please;  
And little reck'd they when they sang, or knelt at Vesper prayers,  
That Scotland knew no prouder names—held none more dear than theirs;  
And little even the loveliest thought, before the Virgin's shrine,  
Of royal blood and high descent from the ancient Stuart line;  
Calmy her happy days flew on, uncounted in their flight;  
And as they flew they left behind a long continuing light.

### THE COURT.

The scene was changed. It was the court—the gay court of Bourbon,  
And 'neath a thousand silver lamps, a thousand courtesies throng;  
And proudly kindles Henry's eye, well pleased, I ween, to see  
The land assemble all its wealth of grace and chivalry:—  
Gray Montmorency, o'er whose head has passed a storm of years,  
Strong in himself and children stand, the first among his peers;  
And next the Guises, who so well fame's steepest heights assailed,  
And walked ambition's diamond ridge, where bravest hearts have failed;  
And higher yet their path shall be, stronger shall wax their might,  
Before them Montmorency's star shall pale its waning light.  
Bre Louis, Prince of Condé, wears his all-conquering sword,  
With great Coligni by his side—each name a household word!  
And there walks she the Medicis, that proud Italian line,  
The mother of a race of kings—the haughty Catherine!  
The forms that follow in her train, a glorious sunshine make—  
A milky way of stars that grace a comet's glittering wake:  
But fairer than all the rest, who bask on fortune's tide,  
Effulgent in the light of youth, is she, the new-made bride!  
The homage of a thousand hearts—the fond deep hope of one—  
The hopes that dance around a life whose charms are but begun—  
They lighten up her chestnut eye, they mantle o'er her cheek,  
They sparkle on her open brow, and high soul'd joy bespeak.  
Ah! who shall blame, if scarce that day, through all its brilliant hours,  
She thought of that quiet convent's calm, its sunshine and its flowers?

### THE VOYAGE.

The scene was changed. It was a bark that slowly held its way,  
And o'er its lee the coast of France in the light of evening lay,

And on its deck a lady sat, who gazed with tearful eyes  
Upon the fast receding hills, that dim and distant rise.  
No marvel that the lady wept; there was no land on earth  
She loved like that dear land, although she owed it not her birth;  
It was her mother's land, the land of childhood and of friends—  
It was the land where she had found for all her griefs amends—  
The land where her dead husband slept, the land where she had known  
The tranquil convent's hushed repose, and the splendours of a throne;  
No marvel that the lady wept—it was the land of France,  
The chosen home of chivalry—the garden of romance!  
The past was bright, like those dear hills so far behind her bark;  
The future, like the gathering night, was ominous and dark!  
One gaze again—one long, last gaze—"Adieu, fair France, to thee!"  
The breeze comes forth—she is alone on the unconscious sea.

### THE TROUBLED THRONE.

The scene was changed. It was an eve of raw and surly mood,  
And in a turret chamber high of ancient Holyrood  
Sat Mary, listening to the rain, and sighing with the winds  
That seemed to suit the stormy state of men's uncertain minds.  
The touch of care had blanched her cheek—her smile was sadder now,  
The weight of royalty had pressed too heavy on her brow;  
And traitors to her councils came, and rebels to the field;  
The Stuart sceptre well she swayed, but the sword she could not wield.  
She thought of all her blighted hopes—the dreams of youth's brief day,  
And summoned Rizzio with his lute, and bade the minstrel play  
The songs she loved in early years—the songs of gay Navarre,  
The songs, perchance, that erst were sung by gallant Chatelard;  
They half beguiled her of her cares, they soothed her into smiles,  
They won her thoughts from bigot's zeal, and fierce domestic broils;  
But hark! the tramp of armed men! the Douglas' battle-cry!  
They come, they come; and lo! the scowl of Ruthven's hollow eye!  
The swords are drawn, the daggers gleam, and tears and words are vain.  
The ruffian steel is in his heart—the faithful Rizzio's slain!  
Then Mary Stuart brushed aside the tears that trickling fell:  
"Now for my father's arm," she said, "my woman's heart 'farewell!'"

### THE PRISON.

The scene was changed. It was a lake with one small, lonely isle,  
And there, within the prison walls of that baronial pile,  
Stern men stood menacing their queen—till she should stoop to sign  
The traitorous scroll that snatched the crown from her ancestral line;  
"My lords! my lords," the captive said, "were I but once more free,  
With ten good knights on yonder shore to aid my cause and me,  
That parchment would I scatter wide to every breeze that blows,  
And once more reign a Stuart Queen o'er my remorseless foes!"  
A red spot burned upon her cheek, streamed her rich tresses down,  
She wrote the words. She stood erect—a queen without a crown.

### THE DEFEAT.

The scene was changed. A royal host a royal banner bore,  
And the faithful of the land stood



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round their smiling queen once more;  
She stayed her steed upon a hill—she saw them marching by—  
She heard their shouts, she read success in every flashing eye;  
The tumult of the strife begins—it roars—it dies away;  
And Mary's troops and banners now, and couriers, where are they?  
Scattered and strewn, and flying far, defenceless and undone—  
Oh! God; to see what she has lost, and think that guilt has won!  
Away! away! thy gallant steed must avenge his speed, for thou dost bear the arrow in thy heart.

### THE SCAFFOLD.

The scene was changed. Beside the block a sullen headman stood,  
And gleamed the broadaxe in his hand that soon must drip with blood.  
With slow and steady step there came a lady through the hall,  
And breathless silence chained the lips, and touched the hearts of all.  
Rich were the sable robes she wore—her white veil round her fell,  
And from her neck there hung a cross—the cross she loved so well.  
I knew that queenly form again, though blighted was its bloom;  
I saw that grief had decked it out, an offering for the tomb!  
I knew the eye, though faint its light, that once so brilliant shone;  
I knew the voice, though feeble now, that thrilled with every tone;  
I knew the ringlets, almost gray, once threads of living gold;  
I knew that bounding grace of step—that symmetry of mould.  
Even now I see her far away in that calm convent aisle,  
I hear her chant her Vesper hymn, I mark her holy smile.  
Even now I see her bursting forth upon her bridal morn,  
A new star in the firmament, to light and glory born.  
Alas! the change; she placed her foot upon a triple throne,  
And on the scaffold now she stands, beside the block ALONE!  
The little dog that licks her hand, the last of all the crowd  
Who sunned themselves beneath her glance and round her footsteps bowed.  
Her neck is bared—the blow is struck—the soul is passed away—  
The bright—the beautiful is now a bleeding piece of clay!  
The dog is mourning piteously, and as it gurgles o'er  
Laps the warm blood that trickling runs unheeded to the floor!  
The blood of beauty, wealth and power—the heart's blood of a queen—  
The noblest of the Stuart race—the fairest earth has seen—  
Lapped by a dog! Go, think of it in silence and alone;  
Then weigh against a grain of sand the glories of a throne.

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## The Old Soutane.

(Continued from Page 7.)

agreeable exterior and attractive conversation, laboring with zeal and prudence to reanimate the faith and charity of their fellowmen, by rendering religion sweet and easy to them. To act in any other spirit, M. le Cure, to deter them from the service of religion by exhibiting a spectacle of severity and privation, is to display a degree of incapacity or of singularity alike deplorable."

"My lord, my slender means alone," and the cure stopped, for he remembered that there was some other cause besides his poverty, and he could not continue his justification. "I know the whole; I know that your improvidence and ill-regulated charity compromise the respect necessary for a minister of religion, and I strongly condemn a conduct so inconsiderate. Go, Monsieur le Cure, and learn that by sacrificing what we owe to ourselves, we incur the risk of failing in the respect which we owe to others."

When the cure was gone, the bishop turned with a smile to the witnesses of this little extemporé drama. "The lesson has been a harsh one," said he, "but, it was necessary. I fancy our worthy cure's excessive liberality is checked for some time. However, M. l'Abbe," added he, addressing one of his vicars, "you will take care to send promptly to my excellent penitent a new soutane and 300 francs, as a reserve to meet the requirements of his devoted charity."

Before returning to the presbytery, the cure, deeply affected by the rebuke of his superior, prayed a long time in the church, and strove earnestly to reconcile in his mind the due claims of his several duties. The mental struggle was long and painful, a cold sweat bedewed his brow; returning home he had the fever. Margaret scolded him more gently than usual, and made him go to bed.

Some days after this a physician was standing with a look of sorrow beside the sick bed of the cure. Margaret, with her face hidden in her hands, was weeping bitterly. A stranger entered; he carried on his arm a handsome soutane of the finest black, and in his hand a well-filled purse.

"From my lord bishop," said he. The sick man smiled sadly. "I pray you," said he, raising his voice, "to thank his grace heartily in the name of my successor and recommend to his goodness an ardent preacher whose precepts I have too often slighted," he pointed towards Margaret. "My God," he added, in a lower tone, clasping his hands, "I have, I fear, desired too earnestly one earthly good; but since I cannot in this world accomplish my desires so as to assist Thy suffering creatures and live without reproach, I go to Thy kingdom where there are none poor, and where those who have loved Thy law shall be clothed with Thy glory for ever and ever."

He closed his eyes, a tranquil smile shone upon his worn features and ere it had faded from his lips, and pure spirit was in the presence of its Creator—The Guidon.

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## THE OLD SOUTANE

### A True Story

Some years ago there was a poor village in Auvergne, the poorest missioners had penetrated the defiles of the mountains, searching the bowels of the earth for antimony and tin, not have envied the humblest of the end of a little church surmounted by a steeple, it might have been taken for one of the most beautiful places, far from the busy world, to guide and soothe the wandering. From which it was situated, upon the fertile basin of the Allier, traversed in its long by the Allier, shining like a ribbon. Behind the church, the slope of the mountain was steep, rising one above the other, at a distance reminding of a caravan ascending a steep. At this point the sight ran to rock along the chain to the Puy de Dome, the Cantal and the Mont d'Auvergne. Such was the kind of the habited for more than a century, the venerable priest of the reader will easily understand the scruple that hinders us from here the name of the village as our reluctance to alter the name of the least detail of the narrative by adopting a commonplace expedient of name. He was a man sixty, with a spare act, and a countenance beaming with benevolence. His entire heart did not exclude either the elevation of intellect, nor did the his own life dimmish in an indulgent consideration for the necessities of others. His father, a priest, and his zeal for the people committed to his charge no other bounds than those that had imposed on his strength, so that his character made him almost a miracle. The winter had so rigorous, no snow so mountain had no ravine, nor had any night a darkness found as to deter him from his arduous and pious. And all this was done simply, without the emotion of vanity, and with of sincere interest and which removed the very personal sacrifice.

One evening in summer, to eight o'clock, the cure, having finished the reading of the Mass, was seated in a low window which looked towards the village. Return, fatigued from a long journey, healed with a sense of enjoyment, refreshing air that breathed from his arduous and pious. Margaret, his old servant, was arranging on the an open dresser, the simple that had been used master's frugal supper, for frequent excursions to the various localities under his ministry, other than from home to an advantage had adopted, of necessity by choice, the primitive of the country people. A piece of furniture we have noticed, the room contained a table, which also served for table during the long winters, when the good cure and then gravely dispute the of a game of piquet or of front was an old walnut-tree and at the end of the chamber a small door, the principal all, the cure's bed, arrayed most patriarchal simplicity, a magnificent ivory crucifix, the noble and pious lady, was above a prie-dieu of plain wood. In one of the angles formed by the projection of a vast chimney, one of those long boxes, with squares of different much like the case of an mummy, over which appeared a dial of a rustic-looking chairs of coarse straw composition, on the description which we have dwelt thus because the entire household perfect and severe type of a dwelling, the greater number of dwellings of the provincial poor and remote districts. Margaret, a respectable woman, with a short round face, an important air, who had the service of the cure several before, was the real sovereign of this little realm. The ruler had by degrees abdicated the entire executive and saving an occasional power, or a fit of grumbling

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