



THE SCOTTISH CASTLES AND RESIDENCES OF MARY, QUEEN OF SCOTS.

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A STRANGE fascination lingers around the name of Mary Stuart. The sadly romantic story which had its end with the executioner's axe on that fateful day at Fotheringay in the February of 1587, has kept the Scottish Queen on the borders of a living land through three centuries of time, and given her a place in the hearts of all those who can pity misfortune even if they cannot look upon it as altogether undeserved. As Mr. Swinburne has put it, there beats no heart in English-speaking lands that does not keep her memory aglow as a warder keeps his beacon fire. Nor is it a case of memory only. A widow at nineteen, one of the most beautiful women of her time and country, the pliant tool of gross and dissolute self-seekers, carrying in her person a grace and an affability that strangely unfitted her for the rough turbulent life into which she was cast—who would not spare a sigh for the wrongs and the wretchedness of Mary Stuart, notwithstanding that the faint suspicion of a crimson stain *may* lie dimly on her historic fame? Away back in 1563 Thomas Randolph declared her to be "the fynneste she that ever was," and the world has in the main agreed with him, inclining to believe that such errors as the Queen of Scots may have committed were more of the heart than of the head, and that the catastrophe which closed her career was as evidently unmerited as the vicissitudes

that have helped to lift her name into the regions of romance.

It was an unfortunate dynasty that Mary Stuart represented. With the single exception of her father, who died of a broken heart after the defeat of his army at the Solway Moss, not one of the Jameses had been privileged to end his life in bed. The first James, after spending many of his best years in prison, fell a victim to the dagger of an assassin in the old priory of the Dominicans at Perth; the second James was killed by the bursting of a cannon at the siege of Roxburgh Castle; the third James was slain at Bannockburn during a revolt of his subjects; and the fourth James, after leading his country to defeat and disgrace, died, with most of the Scottish nobility, on the field of Flodden. Nor, if we pursue the Stuart dynasty on to the time when it fell for ever in the defeat of the brave and heroic darling of the Jacobites on Culloden Moor, shall we find much mitigation of the adverse circumstances that thus surrounded its earlier history. The first Charles, like Mary herself, ended his life on the scaffold, the second Charles passed most of his years in flight or in exile; the seventh James abandoned the throne which no eighth James ever occupied; and Charles Edward passed the last of his dreary days in obscurity and dissipation, an exile in a foreign country, and all but forgotten by those he had hoped to govern.

In the very centre of this galaxy of woe stands the unhappy Queen of Scots, who was born at Linlithgow Palace on the

eighth of December, 1542, while her father lay dying at Falkland. To this same palace of Linlithgow James V. had several years before brought his bride, Mary of Lorraine, now the mother of her whose name was to be for ever associated with it while stone remained above stone.



MARY TUDOR.

AFTER THE PICTURE BY SIR ANTONIO MORE IN THE ESCURIAL.

In the first days of her wedded joy she had said of the already historic structure that it was the "most princely" place her eyes had ever beheld, and Sir Walter Scott, after the lapse of three centuries, echoed her words :—

"Of all the palaces so fair,
Built for the royal dwelling
In Scotland, far beyond compare
Linlithgow is excelling."

As early as the twelfth century it seems

to have been a royal residence, but it is not until its rebuilding and extension by Edward I. in the year 1300 that it begins to stand out prominently on the historian's canvas. The second Edward spent a whole winter of tranquillity in it, but when he fled thither after the defeat of Bannock-

burn, thinking to find in his old palace a safe retreat from the pursuing victors, he had the mortification to discover that Robert the Bruce had already so far demolished it as to render it defenceless, and he was obliged to quit as precipitately as he had come. Again the work of reconstruction began, and the completed palace became the residence of David II. In 1414 it was accidentally burnt, but it rose once more, and this time with far greater splendour than ever under the guiding hand of the Stuarts. The fourth and fifth Jameses founded its most magnificent portions, including the Chapel and the Parliament Hall; and the latter James is supposed to have erected the in-

teresting, richly carved but now very much weather-worn fountain in the centre of the courtyard. James IV. was living at Linlithgow when his Flodden invasion was taking shape in his brain, and it was to the old Church of St. Michael, just outside the palace gate, that he went to seek Divine guidance in his enterprise, with what result every reader of *Marmion* knows. During the period of the Stuarts the Scots Parliament often met in the Great Hall of the palace. The last sitting

was in 1646, and in connection therewith the following curious entry appears in the Town Council minutes :—

“The Counsall, upon the coming of the Comitie of Estattis, to sitt within this borough, fering that sundrie in the inhabitants, takens advantage of the thrang that will be by haime, will extort the leidges resorting heirto for their chambers and bedes; thairfor they have sett doune thir pryse following—viz., the pryse of a nobleman's chamber, cole and candle, with twa bedes, for 24 pounds 20 shillings; and of the gentlemen and commissioners of burrowes, the pryse 13 pounds 4 shillings; and the pryse of

themselves for their ignominious defeat at Falkirk by setting fire to its timbers. And yet it is withal a magnificent ruin. Standing on an eminence whose base is kissed by the waters of a beautiful lake, the ideal home of the curlew, its deserted halls and gaping portals, enclosed by weather-stained walls, stretching up here and there a gaunt arm to the skies, still show something of the fine taste and architectural beauty which characterise all the Scottish palaces erected by the Stuarts. The building is nearly square



LINLITHGOW PALACE.

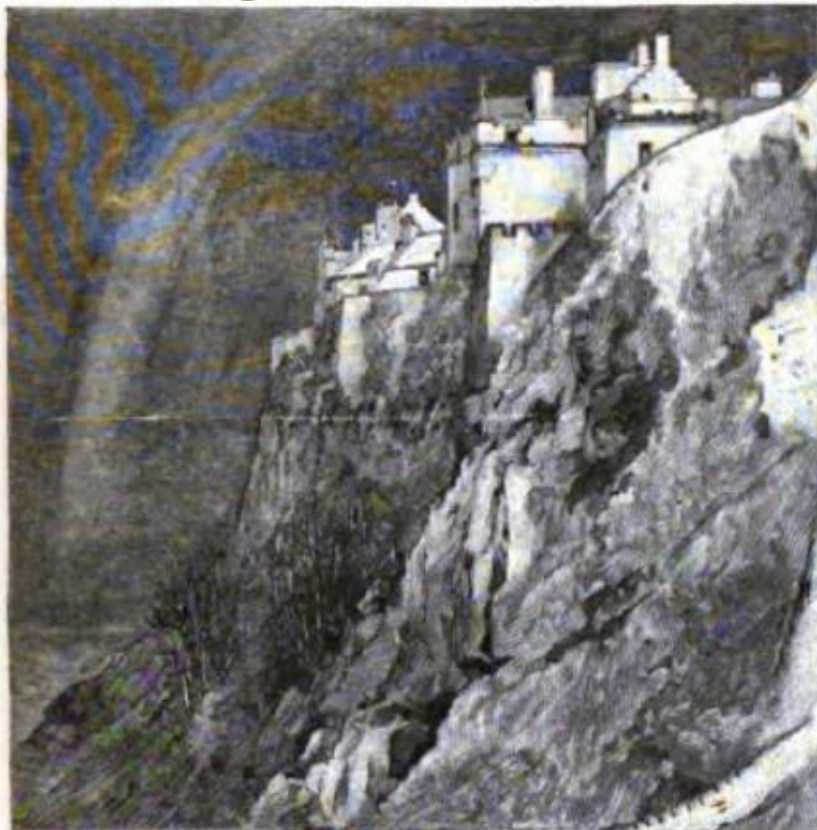
the rest of the leidges resorting to the said borough for cole, candle, and bede, 24 pounds 6 shillings and 8 pence; and the groomes and footmen are to pay for their bedes three shillings.”

In the interests of the summer tourist, it might very well be wished that the Scottish Town Councils of to-day were equally considerate with this old burgh!

When Scotland gave up her sceptre to England no one seems to have thought of any further use for the ancient royal dwelling at Linlithgow, and it was left to care for itself. As it stands to-day it is but a mere fragment of its old-time glory; for besides the moulding of its masonry by the rude hand of Time, it carries traces of the memorable days of '45, when General Hawley and his troops revenged

in plan, and measures about 150 feet on each of its four sides. The principal rooms are on the second floor, and include the Parliament Hall, a large banqueting hall, a chapel, and the room in which Mary Stuart was born. On the ground floor there is a labyrinth of vaults; and few of the features which go to make old buildings interesting with suggestions of old-world life are wanting. Unfortunately the remains are in a somewhat critical state, and very little that is effectual is being done to prevent their further internal decay through exposure to the elements. In Scotland there is a general opinion that ever since the Union it has been the policy of the Government to allow public buildings and royal palaces in the northern kingdom to go to ruin, with the view of

getting quickly rid of the burden of keeping them up. Whether this notion is well founded or not, it is certain that the £500 voted last year for repairs at Linlithgow is quite insufficient for anything more than a temporary restoration of the palace. The opinion of experienced architects is, that there is only one possible way by which the ruins can be preserved from ultimate destruction, and this is by roofing them. As the Government decline to go so far in the way of



STIRLING CASTLE.

restoration, it is more than probable that the birth-place of Scotland's unfortunate queen will, in the course of a few years, become nothing more than a heap of stones—a result which would assuredly be widely deplored.

According to the contemporary records, Mary was "the prettiest babe of royal blood in Europe." We may perhaps allow for some exaggeration here; but at any rate, the infant queen was not many days old when she became the most important figure on the whole chess-board of her country's politics. The Scottish nobles fought for the custody of her person as for a kingdom, and their schemes were frustrated only by the ever-watchful anxiety of mother and nurse. The Earl of Arran, whose claim upon the throne made him specially interested in

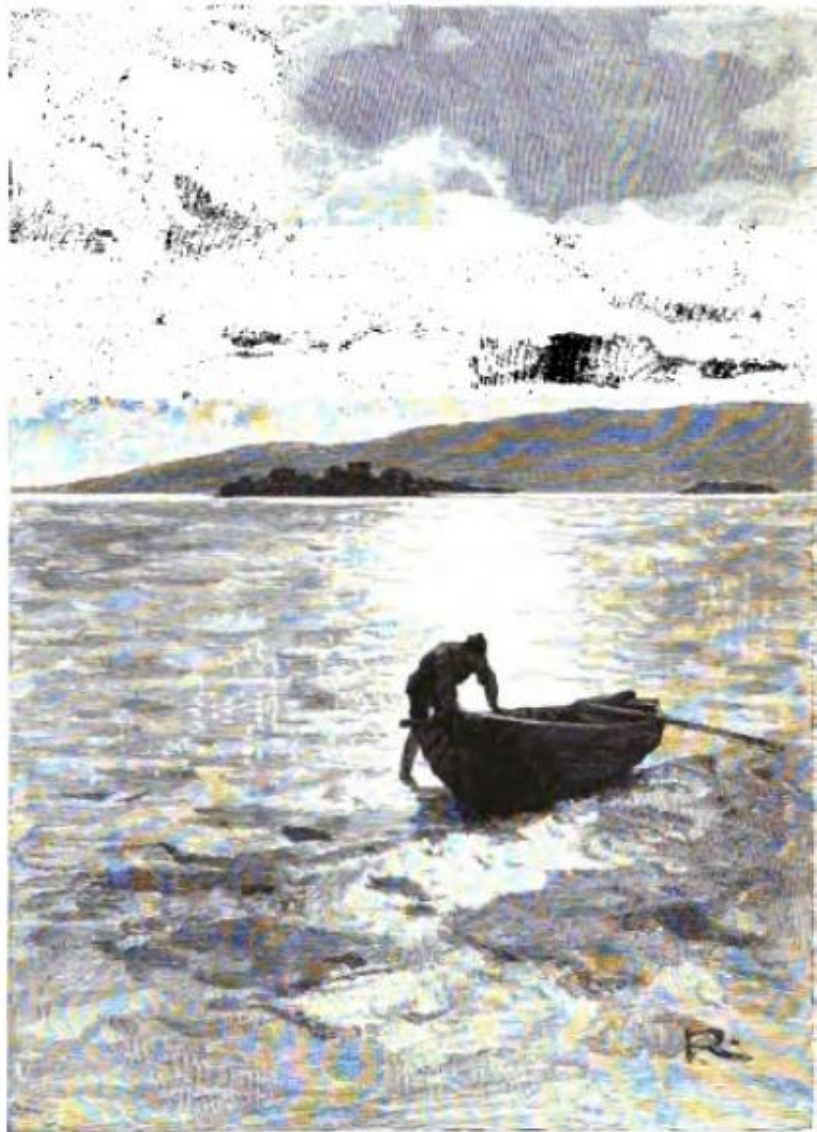
the person of the royal infant, conceived it to be to his interest to circulate a report that Mary was "sickly, and not like to live." The calumny stung the queen-mother to the quick, and she lost no time in getting from Sir Ralph Sadler, the emissary of Henry VIII., the oft quoted certificate, "It is as goodly a child as I have ever seen at her age, and as likely to live with the blessing of God." No doubt this account of the infant Mary would not be altogether to the mind of the truculent and unscrupulous Henry, who saw that the Scottish queen would stand in the way of his obtaining possession of the northern kingdom; and his next move was to seek the queen in marriage for his son, the future Edward VI., hoping thereby to get both her person and her country under his own control. But this subterfuge only made the guardians of the young queen more watchful than ever; and the safety of the royal babe was further secured by her surreptitious removal to Stirling Castle. Thus did the romantic adventures of Mary Stuart have their beginning.

The Castle of Stirling, with its memories of Wallace and Bruce and Bannockburn, had already been closely associated with the fortunes of the Stuart dynasty. Within its walls the second James first saw the light; the third James met his death in its immediate neighbourhood; the fifth James, who was born and crowned under its roof, chose it as his refuge when seeking to free himself of the Douglas faction; and now his daughter found in it a safe retreat from the intriguing lords who would fain have sought their own interests at the expense of hers. The castle bears a striking resemblance to that of Edinburgh in aspect and natural situation; and historically, too, the one is certainly quite as interesting as the other. Though the precipitous rock at Stirling does not appear to have been crowned by artificial masonry at so remote a period as that of the

capital, there is no doubt it was early occupied as a Roman fort, and Agricola is said to have given it his special attention prior to his crossing the Forth, bent on the invasion of Caledonia. In the twelfth century the fortress assumed a more imposing aspect, and when we reach the time of William the Lion we find him holding his Parliament within its walls, and even asking to be taken there to die. Burned by Wallace after the battle of Falkirk in 1298, the castle rose again under the care of Edward I., and it had been for ten years in the hands of the English, when Bannockburn declared in favour of a change of occupants. The first James, who erected the oldest part of the present fortress, exhibited an early prepossession in favour of Stirling as a royal residence; and the fourth James found on the plain beneath more delight in his archery and bows, than he perhaps found elsewhere in his dominions. The third James built the Chapel Royal and the once magnificent Parliament Hall, for ages the chief ornament of the castle; and the fifth James completed the palace, which, architecturally at least, is still perhaps the leading feature of the whole structure. In the castle the infant Mary was crowned

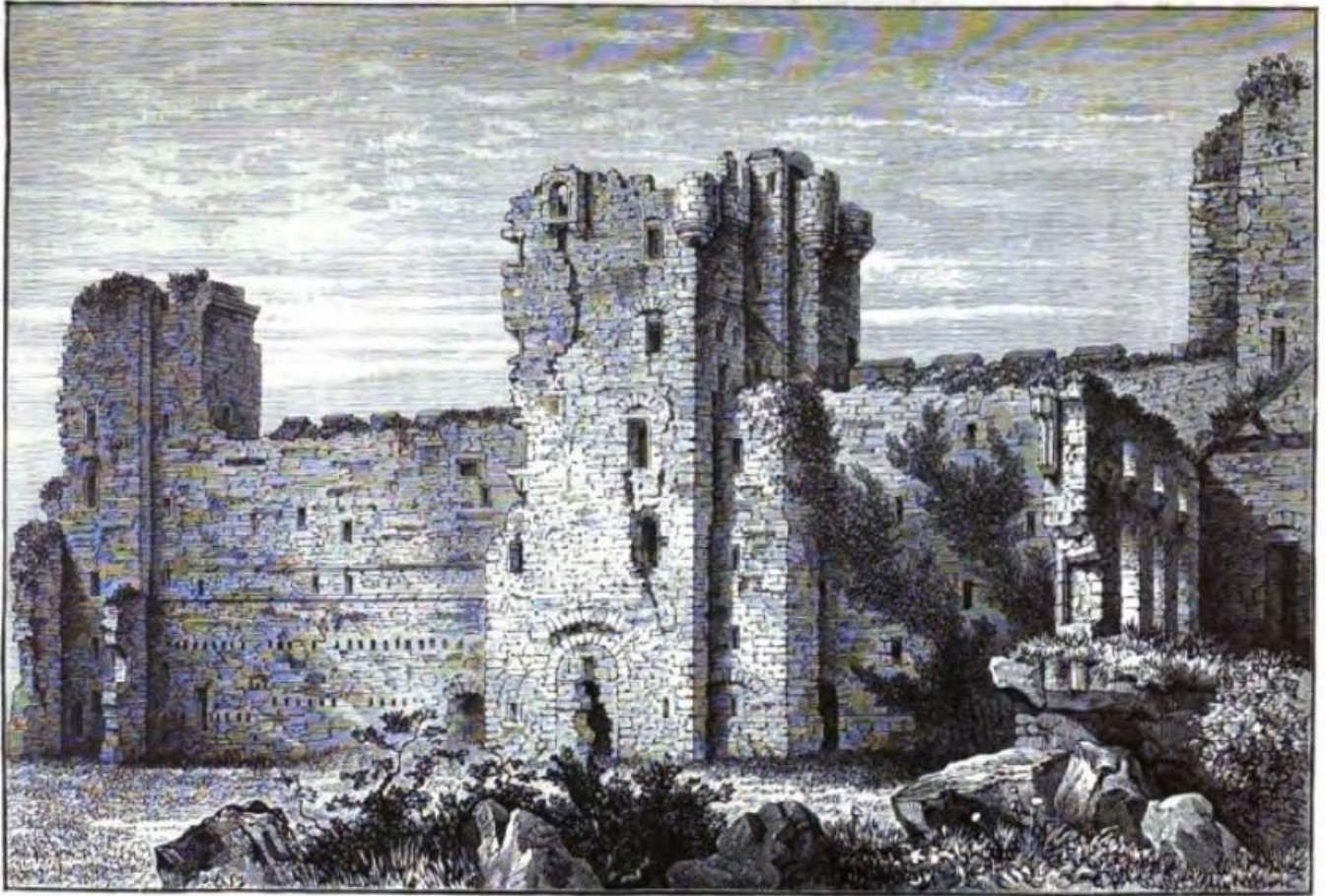
Queen of Scots; and there, too, in after years, while she lay a prisoner in the picturesque solitude of Lochleven, her son was officially raised to the throne as James VI. And so the rough but stately fortress stands on its hoary diadem of pendant rocks to-day, reminding us by many a seamy scar of batties that have been fought around its walls; and conventions and conspiracies without number; of the pomp and pageantry of monarchs whose names live, some in hearts, others only in history. On the accession of James to the English Crown

in 1603, the castle ceased to be a royal residence, and thus, where the Stuarts once reigned in glory, the tourist and the sight-seer are now found to be the dominating factors. The view from the battlements is really one of the finest in the country. On the west there spreads out before the eye the beautiful vale of



LOCHLEVEN.

Menteith, bounded by the "lofty Ben Lomond" and other peaks of the Grampian range; the Ochils stretch away towards Perth on the north and east, the view in the latter direction being greatly enhanced by the serpent windings of the Forth; away to the south is the Field of Bannockburn, and Bannockburn itself; and on the north-east side there is the pass of Ballangeich, which furnished James V. with the name of "The Gudeman o' Ballangeich," which it was his humour to adopt during his frequent wanderings. No wonder that Scott declared the town



COURTYARD, TANTALLON CASTLE.

and its castle to be "An epitome of Edinburgh," both as to its picturesque surroundings and its romantic interest.

The rivalry for the tiny hand of the newly-crowned queen received a check for a time on the field of Pinkie, where more than ten thousand Scotsmen bit the dust. Such a disastrous result had not been anticipated at Stirling, but now it was seen that the castle was no longer a safe retreat, and the young Queen was carried northward to an inaccessible isle in the lake of Menteith. Shortly before this the proposal had been made to bear her away to Tantallon Castle to be delivered to the Warden of the English Marches, but the idea was abandoned. The old fortress, standing on its rocky precipice within sight of the Bass Rock and the May Island, would certainly have been a safe retreat, for it had long mocked every military enterprise for its conquest. Even now it exhibits in its naked ruins a labyrinth of dismal subterranean dungeons

which in former days were perhaps the prison holds of miserable captives, and in later times were certainly the haunts of smugglers and the unsuspected depositories of their contrabands. Very different both as to construction and situation was the ancient building on Menteith's Isle. Long before the general erection of ecclesiastical structures in the country the "island of rest" had been, like Iona, a resort of the primitive Christians; and the Priory of Inchmahome, in which Mary was now lodged, is supposed to have taken the place of a Culdee Cell some time during the early years of the thirteenth century. It flourished as a religious house up to the time of the Reformation, when it shared the fate which Knox's desperadoes meted out to institutions of its kind. Time has done the rest, and now the Priory rears its ivied head in its wood-crowned solitude, one of the most romantic and picturesque of all the ruins connected with the name of Mary Stuart. The decay of ages has in some parts

affected the grooving, but large portions still retain their old-time beauty. The grey roofless walls are richly decked with verdant growth, and trees which no human hand ever set in the soil have spread their branches to fill the room which in these now far-away days Scotland's Queen called her own. The garden and bower walled off and popularly known as Mary's probably existed long before her time, but the name carries no doubt the indication of a special fondness on the part of the



HOLYROOD.

young Queen. A large boxwood tree stands in the centre of the garden to tell, through the tradition of centuries, of its planting by Mary in remembrance of the years of unalloyed tranquillity which she spent in this paradise of picturesque Perthshire.

Inaccessible to those whose presence might mean danger, the "island of rest" was yet not out of the reach of diplomacy, and it was here that the prospective betrothal of Mary and the youthful Dauphin of France was arranged. The match with Edward was still being spoken of; but although to many of the Scottish people the prospect of a Romish king could hardly be welcome, it was felt that even religious intolerance would be preferable to civil aggrandisement, and so the proposed union with France was tardily agreed to. And now came for Mary

the most important of all the changes her young life had hitherto experienced. It was provided that she should be sent to France to complete her education, and to make some acquaintance with the people over whom she could now look forward to rule as queen; and thus, at six years of age, we find her at the castle of Dumbarton, ready to embark at the Firth of Clyde on the galleys which had been sent from France for her transport. It was here that she was attacked by small-pox, but the disorder does not seem to have

her character had time to unfold itself—had her talents been “as precocious as her beauty,” it is impossible to conjecture. As it was, the reins of the Government of France, on account of her extreme youth, fell into the hands of her mother-in-law, Catherine de Medici; and the death of the Queen Dowager of Scotland in 1560 having left the country without a ruler, Mary, with tears in her eyes and evil foreboding in her heart, bade adieu to the home of her girlhood's happy years, and set sail for her ancestral realm, where

she was by and by to learn that “sorrow's crown of sorrow is remembering happier things.”

When she landed at Holyrood in the August of 1561 the country was convulsed with the throes of the Reformation, and therein lay the cause for much of the after trouble of her life. What the new faith of the people meant to one who had been



MARY STUART'S BEDCHAMBER, HOLYROOD.

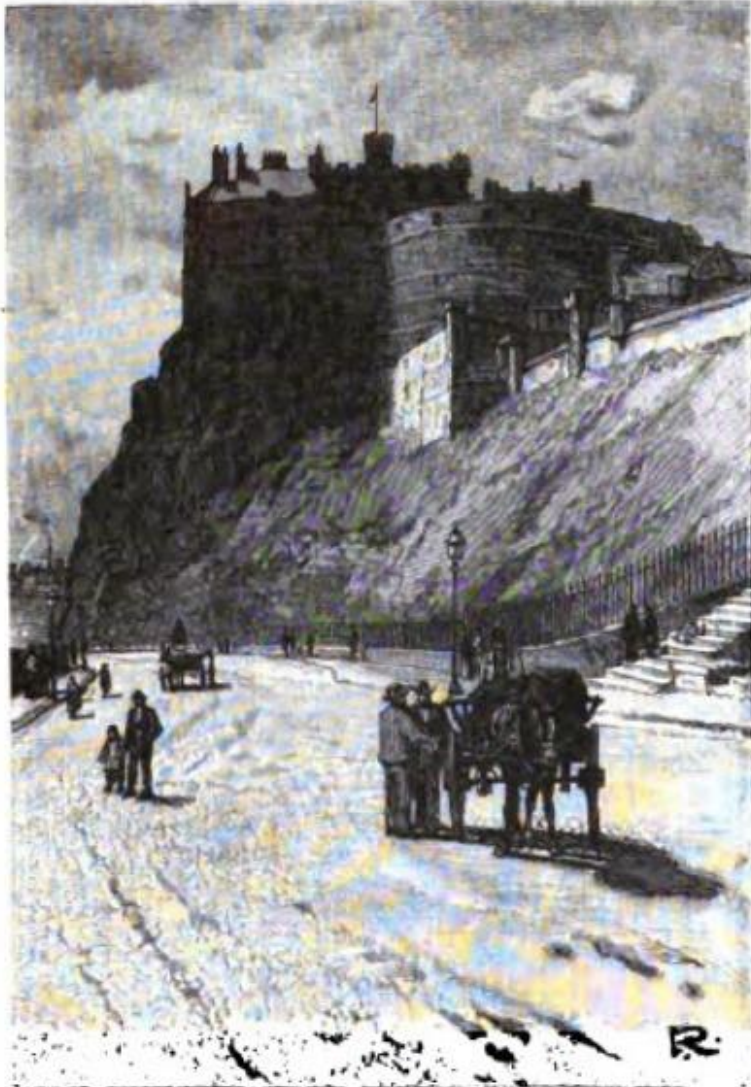
impaired her beauty in the least, otherwise we should certainly have heard of it in the descriptions of her person which so many contemporary admirers have left to us.

At the French Court Mary soon became a favourite, partly for her charming manner and partly for her beauty. One who met her shortly after her landing wrote: “The young Queen was at that time one of the most perfect creatures that the God of Nature ever formed, for that her equal was nowhere to be found; nor had the world another child of her fortune and hopes.” Alas! for the fortune and the hopes! Her marriage with the Dauphin proved to be but the prelude of her troubles. The union lasted less than three years, and Mary was left a widow while yet in her teens. What she would have done had

led to look upon the Roman Catholic religion with a kind of holy reverence and fear may be easily imagined. Mary could not in reason be expected to forget her family traditions and give up a creed which, for aught she knew, might form as sure a pathway to heaven as that of the new Evangel. Yet this was what Knox expected her, nay, demanded, her to do; and much as one would like to forget the ecclesiastical wrangles of that early time, it is impossible to dissociate from the walls of Holyrood the memory of those rude and uncourtly interviews with the girlish Queen which have made the name of Knox so much less honourable to those who would otherwise have been inclined to regard the Reformer with feelings of gratitude and esteem. The vindictive intolerance of Knox prevented him from

realising that it was no part of a queen's duty to change her religion because her subjects had changed theirs, and whatever was the end in view, the means by which he sought to gain that end were altogether intolerable. Why should the Queen of Scots abandon the faith of her fathers at the bidding of a rude commoner, who, by

plated marriage with a Papist had to be denounced in language as fierce as it was uncalled for, notwithstanding that Knox himself, an austere, grey-bearded widower of sixty, was about to be united to a girl just escaping from her teens! One might have thought better of it all had the Reformer's own name been unsullied.



EDINBURGH CASTLE FROM THE SOUTH-WEST.

his own showing, was more fitted to preach repentance in the wilderness than to seek for converts under the shadow of the throne? Nothing but the unconditional surrender of soul and conscience would satisfy this erstwhile priest; and so little did he think of the regard and consideration which were due to his Queen that he could stand calmly at her feet unmoved by her tears and afterwards make a jest of her grief by telling of the number of handkerchiefs which his unmannerly language had called into use! Nor was it with religious matters only that he must needs interfere. A contem-

plated marriage with a Papist had to be denounced in language as fierce as it was uncalled for, notwithstanding that Knox himself, an austere, grey-bearded widower of sixty, was about to be united to a girl just escaping from her teens! One might have thought better of it all had the Reformer's own name been unsullied. But while he was using the liberty of the pulpit to compare his Queen to all the harlots, murderers and idolators in the sacred writings, he was himself not free of the suspicion of being privy to the conspiracy which led to the butchering of David Rizzio. "It was a most just act," said he, "and worthy of all praise." The conscience which had no toleration for an alleged heterodox belief could yet smile at the murder of a fellow mortal!

I put the Scottish Reformer thus boldly to the front, because to him and to the rapacious faction for whom he was responsible—men who, for the most part, had no religion, no morals, no honour, no good faith, were due not a few of the unhappy hours of Mary's life at the palace of her ancient capital. Of Holyrood itself so much has been written that it would be unwise to go over the ground again in detail. The history of the palace stretches away back to the time of David I., and on through all these centuries, first as monastic establishment, afterwards as royal residence, and latterly as a relic of ancient glory, it has

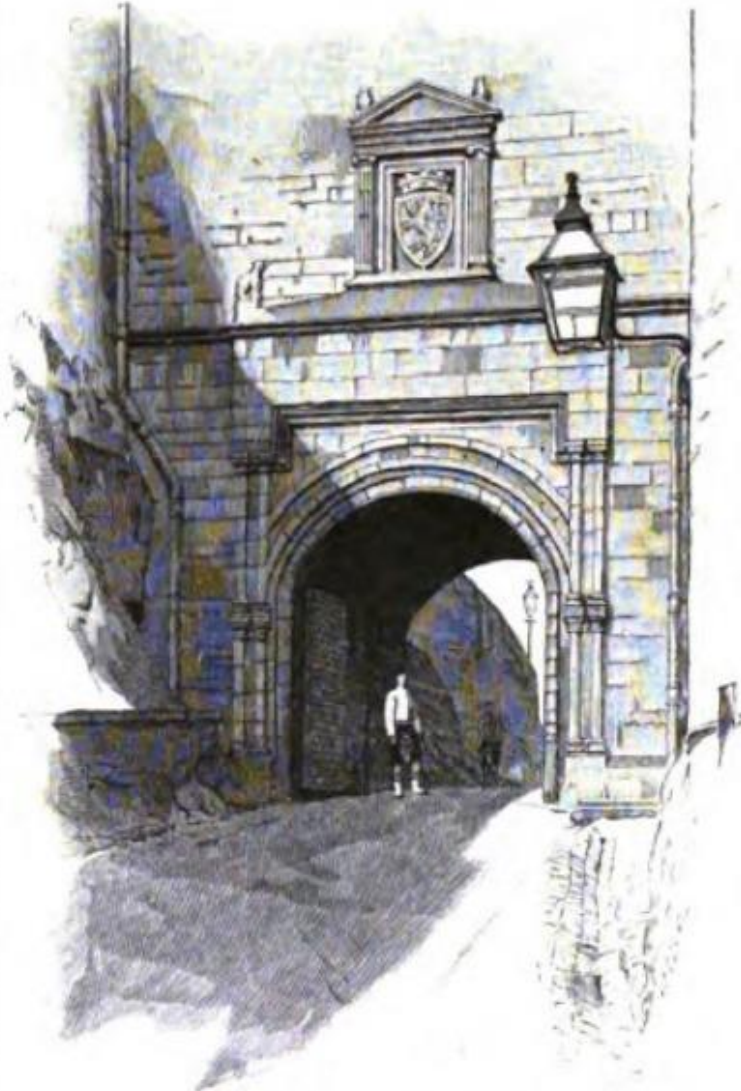
been an object of interest and of veneration, not only to Scottish men and women but to wanderers from all the corners of the earth. The poets, the historians, and the novelists, have combined to make the apartments of the Queen of Scots perhaps the most interesting suite of rooms in Europe. There is the audience chamber, with its memories of distressing interviews with the fiery and uncompromising leaders of the Reformation; there is the dressing room of the lovely Queen, a little chamber whose decayed tapestry brings back in a touching way the melancholy tale of a life's

sorrow ; and there is the private supping-room so famous in Scottish story, as the scene of that dastardly assault by a mob of fierce and impetuous conspirators upon the unfortunate Rizzio in the presence of Mary herself. The sleeping apartment of the Stuart Queen still holds the bed which on many an anxious night must have afforded but scant repose to that uneasy head that wore the crown. The walls are hung with tapestry, illustrative of the mythological tale of the Fall of Phaeton, who lost his life in rashly attempting to drive the chariot of his father, the god of the sun ; and the ceiling is divided into panelled compartments adorned with the emblems and initials of Scottish sovereigns. On the north side of the room is the little door, half hidden by the tapestry, opening on the secret stair by which Rizzio's murderers made their way to the royal apartment.

The chapel, sole remaining portion of the great church of the monastery of Holyrood, is now little more than a roofless ruin, having of course fallen a prey to the religious "zeal" of the Reformation ; but its historic and romantic associations make what has survived a deeply interesting relic of an eventful past. Here many of Scotland's kings and queens were crowned ; here the second and third Jameses took their matrimonial vows ; here Mary—a beauty in black velvet—in an evil hour plighted her troth to the insolent and dissipated Darnley ; and here too, in an equally evil hour, she gave her hand to the treacherous, self-seeking and depraved Bothwell. Around the events which were enacted within these royal enclosures while Mary Stuart held the reins of Government, most of the controversy over her life and character has raged—a controversy with which happily we are not now directly concerned, and which in any case the *genius loci* of the place would suggest that we leave for others to discuss.

The dramatic scenes in the life of the Queen which followed her marriage with Darnley and the murder of her secretary

move with impetuous haste in the panorama of the historian. The band which had done the Italian to death, immediately thereafter decided to keep Mary and her husband in durance within the walls of Holyrood, but the pair effected their escape at midnight, like a couple of moonstruck lovers, and returned from the Castle of Dunbar with an army that

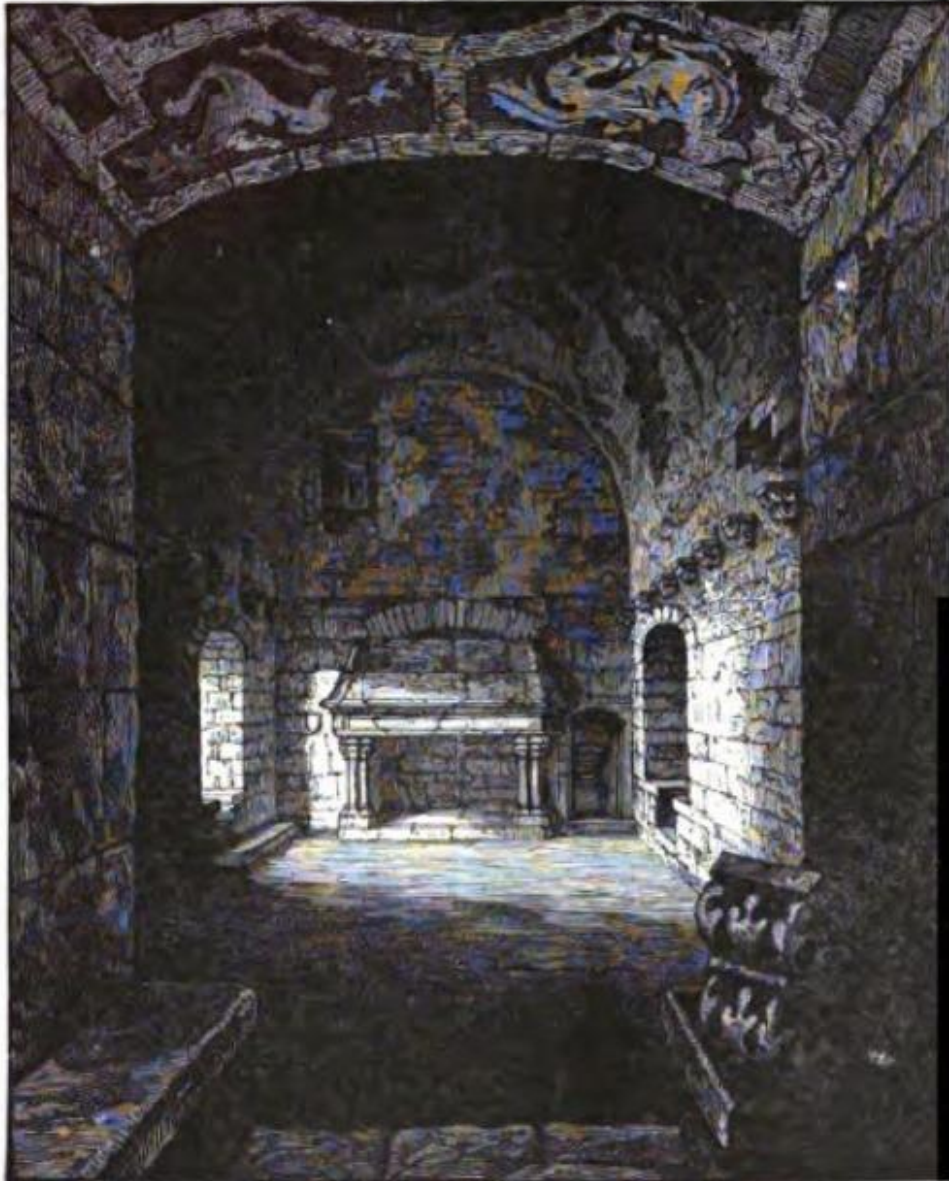


INNER BARRIER, EDINBURGH CASTLE.

effectually put an end, for a time at least, to the machinations of the traitors. The Castle of Edinburgh had become the occasional residence of the Queen since the murder of Rizzio, and she had just taken refuge in it from the conspiracies of her irascible nobles when she gave birth, in 1566, to the future James VI. of Scotland, and I. of England. The room in which the interesting event happened is a small apartment adjoining the Crown Room on the ground floor. The original ceiling remains, and the initials I. R. and M. R., surmounted by

the royal crown, are wrought in the alternate compartments of the panels. Over the doorway are the initials H. and M. and the date 1566, and on the wall is the following inscription:—

“Lord Jesu Chryst, that crounit was with
Thornse,
Preserve the Birth, quhais Badgie heir is borne,



CRAIGMILLAR CASTLE. INTERIOR OF KEEP.

And send her Sonne successione, to
riegne stille,
Lang in this Realme, if that it be Thy will,
Als grant, O Lord, quhat ever of Hir pro-
ceed,
Be to Thy Honer, and Praise, sobied.”
19th, IVNII 1566.

The birth of the royal infant was regarded as an auspicious event by the Scottish national party, but it did little to heal the breach that had gradually opened up between Mary and Darnley. Presently

the Queen moved to Craigmillar, some three miles from Edinburgh, where, as we learn from a letter of the French ambassador, she was “in the hands of the physicians and not at all well.” The Castle of Craigmillar is said to have been Mary’s favourite dwelling. Little wonder if it were, for the situation com-

mands one of the most extensive and diversified prospects of shining sea and shadowy moorland that the eye could wish to rest upon. Facing Arthur’s seat, flanked by the Pentlands—from whose heath-crowned heights the breezes blow fresh and keen—it occupies a commanding position on the ridge that lies between the two; and though close to the capital, it is as much in the open country as if it lay “Far from the madding crowd,” in the bosom of some Sleepy Hollow. The date of the original structure has never been determined, and probably the greater part of the present remains

date from the burning and plundering of the building by the English in 1554. The castle consists of a square tower several stories high, encompassed by what Grose terms a “machicolated wall, flanked by four circular towers.” The apartment shown as Queen Mary’s is in one of the upper turrets. It measures only some seven feet by five, which leads the aforesaid Grose to remark upon the fact that most of the unfortunate lady’s rooms were “such as a servant would now almost

refuse to lodge in." The architectural beauties of the ruins are not marked, but the grey turrets rising above the foliage, silent, lonely, and sublime, give them at least a picturesque appearance, and the romance of days that are dead for ever throws a halo around the ivy-covered walls and breezy battlements that no artist in stone and lime could ever have imparted to them. It was what is known as the Craigmillar bond—a compact entered into by five of the conspirators—that brought about the assassination of Darnley. The latter was just recovering from small-pox in his ancestral home at Crookston Castle, when Mary suggested his removal to Craigmillar. Darnley, however, would have none of Craigmillar, choosing to believe that the Queen had some sinister motive in taking him elsewhere than to Holyrood; and in the end he landed at Kirk-of-Field, a long-since-demolished structure which stood on the site of the University. It was another of the conspirators' plots, for the vaults had already been filled with gunpowder, and in a few days Darnley was a corpse. The Earl of Bothwell was apprehended and tried for the murder. But the trial was a shameless farce, for the Council Chamber was filled with the Earl's accomplices, who, of course, acquitted him. Thus "judicially" relieved of the stain of a hideous crime, Bothwell began to sue for the hand of the now twice-widowed Queen, notwithstanding that he was at the time a married man. His advances were coldly received, but a tyrant like Bothwell was not easily discomfited either in love or war, and Mary now found herself a weeping prisoner in the Castle of Dunbar, where the Earl kept her in close durance for ten days. The old castle, situated on a bold projecting reef of the sea, is now reduced to a heap of ruins, but in those days it was simply invulnerable as a place of strength. With a history running down, according to Hollinshed, from the ninth century it had already made the town of Dunbar the theatre of many warlike exploits—so much so indeed, that in 1488 an Act of Parliament was passed, directing it to be cast down and utterly destroyed in such manner as to render it incapable of repair in time to come, "because it has done great skaith in time bygone, and it were great danger to the realm if it were negligently kept in future." This was an order that re-

mained in abeyance until 1567, but the work was then so effectually done that nothing now remains of the once important place of strength but the vestige of its former greatness.

Bothwell planned well for himself when he carried his Queen to Dunbar. His



EDINBURGH CASTLE FROM THE VENNEL

conquest was only a matter of days and duplicity. Freed from the fetters of matrimony by a Papal Dispensation he next brought the captive Mary to Edinburgh, where he placed her under an armed guard in the castle. Whilst she was here he succeeded in getting a document signed by the Scottish nobles to the effect that his marriage with the Queen was "most meet"; and so the wedding ceremony was performed at Holyrood in

the May of 1567. But Bothwell soon discovered that his matrimonial venture was only to bring trouble to himself. The Associate Lords professed to believe that the Queen was under undue restraint, and they accordingly marched on Edinburgh, Bothwell meanwhile having again taken the Queen to Dunbar Castle. By and by, his forces, some two thousand strong, were on Carberry Hill, ready to descend on Edinburgh, but Morton was there to oppose him with a superior force, and the bloodless engagement resulted in Mary surrendering herself a prisoner to the Confederate Lords. A day or two later and the heart-broken Queen was safely under lock and key in the lake-moated castle of Lochleven, which had already been the guardian of more than one prisoner of State.

This sequestered, water-girt fortress, lying at the feet of the verdant Lomonds, is now represented by little more than its ancient square tower :

“ Naked stand the melancholy walls,
Lashed by the wintry tempests, cold and bleak,
That whistle mournful through the empty
halls,
And piecemeal crumble down the tow'rs to
dust.”

Looking out upon the fertile plains of Kinross, and with their historical associations running down to us from the time of Alexander III., the ruins have an air of grandeur and seclusion which it would not be easy to surpass. To some their chief title to fame lies in the trout of the surrounding loch ; but to the majority their associations will always be what they were to Sir Walter Scott, when he so picturesquely re-set them for all time in *The Abbot*. The building is described as having consisted of a rectangular wall, enclosing a small area flanked by towers, some of them round, with the ruined walls of a chapel and an apartment where Mary is said to have been confined. The large “keep” or square tower stands in the north-east angle of the area ; in it there is a dungeon with a vaulted room above. Here Mary was kept under the sternest restraint, and messages to the outside

world could only be written while her jailors dined or slept. The misery she endured would have entirely subdued a less buoyant spirit, but she had her books and her needle-work, and the time passed perhaps more quickly and pleasantly than she could ever have anticipated.

Meanwhile, in every coterie in the kingdom, the future fortunes of the Queen were being hotly debated. Some proposed that she should be divorced from Bothwell and restored to the throne ; some suggested that she should immure herself in a convent for the rest of her days ; some advanced the opinion that she should be deprived of the government and imprisoned for life ; some, among whom was Knox, argued that the shortest and simplest plan was to put her to death. What really happened was that Mary, with death before her eyes in case of refusal, put her signature to an instrument resigning the crown to her infant son, after which she was left to pine in her solitary prison. Several attempts had been made towards a rescue which the vigilance of her keepers rendered abortive. But Mary had captivated the heart of the keeper's brother, a youth of eighteen, and on the second of May, 1568, he succeeded in getting her to the shore, an accomplice having found means to steal the keys and open the gates. In a few days Mary was at Hamilton surrounded by most of the nobility of her realm, who were anxious for her restoration to the throne. But the Regent, Moray, proved himself equal to the occasion ; and the disastrous result of Langside left the Queen with no other resource than to seek shelter in England and throw herself at the feet of Elizabeth. What followed after this all the world knows. Accused of the murder of her husband by her own brother ; detained for eighteen long weary years in captivity ; finally brought to the block, Mary Stuart “went from the world leaving behind her a name not altogether unsullied by suspicion, but which still moves every heart to pity her misfortunes and almost to forget her errors.”

