

## CHAPTER XII.

## MR. JEFFERSON DAVIS.

IN neither of my two visits to the United States before, during, and after the War of Secession, was it my fortune to meet or hold any communication with Mr. Jefferson Davis, the brave but luckless President of the short-lived Southern Confederacy. But, on his arrival in London, in 1868, after his long imprisonment in a Federal fortress, awaiting trial for high treason, I left my card for him at his lodgings, in company with an English peer who, in common with nearly all the upper and well-to-do classes, had sympathised with the South.

On our way to the ex-President's lodgings, the peer expressed his wonder to me that the American Government had been so lenient as to abandon the prosecution, a leniency which he attributed to enlightened humanity. His Lordship, however, was wrong in his conclusion. The Government had

every desire to bring the great "rebel" to trial, and would have done so very shortly after the capture of Mr. Davis, when he was endeavouring to make his escape into Texas, had it not been for the fear that the prosecution would have been a failure.

The highest legal opinions were taken on the subject, including that of Mr. Chase, the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, the ablest and most eminent lawyer in the Union, and his legal opinions were entitled to, and received, the greatest deference from men of all parties.

His deliberate judgment was that to bring Mr. Davis to trial would be unwise and inopportune, inasmuch as his acquittal, if not certain, would be highly probable, on the ground that the first allegiance of an American citizen was due to his native State; that the State of Mississippi, which had elected Mr. Davis to the high position of Senator, having passed a decree of secession with all legal formalities, Mr. Davis would have been a rebel to that State if he had cast in his fortunes with the North during the war.

Whether this were correct law or not, the doubt whether he would not have been acquitted on the ground of prior and paramount allegiance was sufficiently strong in the mind of Mr. Chase to justify the Federal Government in declining to prosecute. Other eminent legal authorities agreed

with the Chief Justice, and President Johnson and his chief advisers, Mr. Seward and Mr. Stanton, judged it the safer and more expedient policy to abandon all thought of a prosecution, and set the prisoner at liberty.

Mr. Davis, therefore, came to England, the country of his ancestors, to recruit his health after the long and severe imprisonment, during which he was submitted to every possible ignominy and degradation, in the hope—more than once expressed by President Andrew Johnson—that death would relieve the Federal Government of the troublesome captive, whom it was alike inconvenient to pardon or to punish.

In the autumn of 1869, Mr. Davis, having heard that I was about to take a month's holiday, in travelling in Scotland, and visiting Edinburgh, Glasgow, Oban, the Hebrides and Inverness, sent a friend to me, stating that he had long had a desire to visit Scotland, and that it would be a great pleasure to him to be permitted to accompany me, and to share with me the expenses of the trip.

I was by no means loth, but highly flattered and pleased with the proposition; for, during my short but pleasant acquaintance with Mr. Davis, I had found him to be a most agreeable companion, with a well-stored mind, attractive manners, and rare conversational power. So we speedily came

to an agreement, and, as the weather was beautifully calm and sunny, resolved to travel by sea from St. Katherine's Wharf to Granton, and make the City of Edinburgh our first stopping place.

Mr. Davis had wished to travel incognito; but his name upon his trunk had betrayed his secret to the steward of the steamer, and from the steward it had made its way to the captain and his crew and passengers. Among the latter were a few soldiers of a Highland regiment, who honoured Mr. Davis and myself with particular attention or "stares" whenever we appeared on deck, apparently unable to convince themselves which of the two was the famous ex-President.

At last one of them, having received a hint from the steward, pointed to Mr. Davis, exclaiming at the same time to his companions in broad Scotch, "That's hum (him)!" and calling a moment afterwards for "three cheers for President Davis!" The cheers were lustily given, to the annoyance, apparently, of their object. Mr. Davis, however, acknowledged the compliment by raising his hat, and endeavoured to escape further recognition by taking a seat on the deck, and resorting to the companionship of a copy of the *Lady of the Lake* which he had in his pocket.

Mr. Davis was received in Scotland, wherever his arrival became known, not only with the sympathy to which misfortune has a claim, and

the respect due, though not always paid, to fallen greatness, but in many instances with an amount of enthusiasm which could not have been exceeded if he had been in the full plenitude of the power and authority of which the fortune of war had deprived him four years previously.

Politics had no disturbing influence in the fervour of his reception. The great Conservative magnate, the Duke of Buccleuch, and John Blackwood, the able and fearless editor of *Blackwood's Magazine*, joined the Whig proprietors of the *Scotsman*—with the genial Alexander Russel, the prince of Scotch newspaper editors at their head—in cordial welcome and liberal hospitality to the historical personage who was of no more political importance than the humblest citizen of the United States—nothing but a venerable private gentleman of unblemished private character and high mental attainments, who had played a great part in a great manner, and fallen from a lofty position without loss of personal dignity.

Five years afterwards, at a public dinner of Scotsmen, and Americans of Scottish extraction, held at the city of Memphis, on the left bank of the Mississippi, descending that wearisome but renowned river from St. Louis to New Orleans, Mr. Davis delivered a speech in which he recounted the incidents of our journey from Edinburgh to Glasgow, Oban, and Inverness, and the impres-

sions that the grand scenery of Scotland and the nobly independent character of the people had made upon his mind. The speech was shortly afterwards republished in a pamphlet in Glasgow, under the title of *The Scottish People*.

Two little incidents that occurred, both relating to himself, are not recorded by Mr. Davis in his pleasant reminiscences of our journey. The one occurred at Invergarry, the Highland seat of Mr. Edward Ellice, Member for the St. Andrew's district of boroughs, son of the Right Hon. Edward Ellice—known in Parliamentary slang, in the days of Earl Grey's administration, as "Bear Ellice." At the house of this gentleman, on the romantic shore of Loch Oich, we passed several days, and thence proceeded to Inverlochy Castle, the seat of Lord Abinger, on our way to Inverness and Cul-loden, where the victory of the Duke of Cumberland sealed the fate of the Stuart dynasty, and fixed the Hanoverian family on the throne.

One morning, when we were seated at breakfast at Invergarry, Mr. Ellice noticed that his yacht on the lake was gaily decorated with flags in the usual manner when a welcome or rejoicing is intended in honour of a great personage.

"Ah!" said Mr. Ellice, "it is my birthday. It was very kind of the Captain to remember the fact which I myself had forgotten—very kind indeed!"

Later in the day, I met the Captain on the shore of the loch, and mentioned to him how pleased Mr. Ellice had been at the mark of attention which he had shown him in honour of his "birthday."

"Birthday!" said the Captain. "I did na ken it was his birthday. I did it in honour of Mr. Jefferson Davis!"

The next incident was of a totally different character.

"When I was in Inverness," said Mr. Davis, in the speech at Memphis already referred to, "Mr. Chambers, the founder of *Chambers' Journal* and the *Miscellany*, was still living, and it was under his guidance that I saw the field of Culloden, and learned where the clans were posted, and where they fought and fell. A shepherd sat by the well where the Duke of Cumberland's cavalry charged the Scots. The peace of the grave was there. The living accept the inevitable, but honour not the less the brave who died for their country."

In these sentences Mr. Davis fell into an error of commission and an error of omission. It was not Mr. Robert Chambers of Edinburgh, but Mr. Robert Carruthers, the editor of the *Inverness Courier*, my old and intimate friend, who acted as our guide on this occasion. The error of omission arose from Mr. Davis's ignorance of the fact that Mr. Carruthers had pointed him out to the

shepherd, who was reading a book while tending his flock, expecting that the shepherd would be interested in knowing that he was in the presence of so eminent a person. The shepherd took no notice, and Mr. Carruthers asked him if he had never heard of Mr. Jefferson Davis, the President of the Southern Confederacy?

“Never dud,” replied the man. “And what was the Southern Confederacy, as ye ca’ it? Was it in England? Or was it a Limited Liability Company?”

“It is evident,” I whispered aside to Mr. Carruthers, “that your friend the shepherd does not read the *Inverness Courier*.”

“I am ashamed of him,” replied the discomfited editor. “I dare say his reading is confined to the Bible.”

And a small copy of the New Testament it turned out to be which the shepherd held in his hand. We neither of us told Mr. Davis of the incident, lest his high estimate of the intelligence of the Scottish peasantry should have suffered diminution.

The following notice of Mr. Davis's voyage down the Estuary of the Clyde and up Loch Fyne to Ardrishaig appeared in the *Glasgow Daily Mail*, two or three days after his departure from Glasgow, written by an eminent clergyman of the city, who had recently travelled in the United States. I



should mention that, during our stay in Glasgow, Mr. Davis and I had been guests in the hospitable house of Mr. James Smith, of Dowan Hill, a worthy Scot, who had resided for some years in the State of Mississippi, and had been well acquainted with the Confederate chief before he had either achieved greatness or had it thrust upon him.

“On the 12th of August, or thereabout,” said the *Mail*, “I left the banks of Clyde for the West Highlands, to have a breath of my native air. I got on board the *Iona* at Rothesay. The papers had announced, the morning before, that Mr. Jefferson Davis was to sail that day for Oban ; so there was an unusual crowd on Rothesay Pier to get a glimpse of the fallen chief. When the beautiful steamer came gliding, with her crowded decks, to the pier, hundreds of the more eager struggled to the front or piled themselves upon carts and lamp-posts to get a better sight. The *Iona* was so crowded that it was some time before the eager eyes of the multitude could discover the man ; but just as we were moving off the people began to cheer, and, the passengers on one part of the saloon-deck drawing apart, there stepped forth from amongst them the once powerful chief of the Southern Confederacy, and took off his hat and bowed. It was the face that his likeness had made familiar to everybody—the thin features, the prominent nose, the cold yet not unkindly

eyes, the beautiful lips, thin and resolute, the sharp chin, the calm and somewhat careworn smile wrinkling the hollow cheek.

“He looked old for his years, walked with a stoop which lowered him to middle height, and had a somewhat broken-down appearance, as if he had personally collapsed along with the Confederacy. He was very plainly dressed in a dusty black hat and dark clothes, that seemed rather heavy and large for him. And yet withal there was a dignity about him that told of grander days; and his quiet bearing and unostentatious kindliness of manner won the hearts of all. He must have been very much bored that day; so many people spoke to him and shook hands, or followed about and watched his every motion; but his good nature never flagged. At every pier a little crowd was waiting to see him; and at Ardrishaig it was amusing to observe, when he passed up the crowded pier, how all eyes followed him, and how people who had been nudging each other eagerly when he was near said, with bated breath when he had passed: ‘That’s him! that’s Jeff Davis!’ The Ardrishaig fishermen were as eager as the rest, and swarmed on the ridge where their nets hung drying, to see him pass to the track-boat. The very children ran excitedly after the crowd of passengers, pointing him out to one another. How much some of the people knew about the ex-President it would be

curious to ascertain. In one shop into which a friend stepped to buy something, the woman behind the counter, seeing the unusual throng and excitement, asked a man: 'Who is 't that's come wi' the steamer the day?' To which he replied sagaciously: 'It's a man they ca' Davison!''

I should mention that Mr. Donald MacGregor, the somewhat rough but warm-hearted landlord of the "Royal Hotel," in Princes Street, Edinburgh—where we remained for upwards of a week—treated the ex-President and myself as if we had been princes. When I asked for the bill, he said: "Bill? There's no bill, an' if ye say another word about it, ye'll offend me. I'm more than paid by the honour ye have done me!" And the worthy man refused all recompense except our thanks.

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## MEDORA LEIGH.

In the autumn of 1869, immediately after my return from my trip in Scotland with Mr. Jefferson Davis, as just recorded, I received a letter from Mr. Thomas Smith, of the firm of Barron and Smith, army agents—whom I had known from boyhood as the agents of my father for receiving his military pension as a half-pay officer—requesting me to call upon them at my earliest convenience, as they had something very particular and, as they thought, highly important to submit to my notice.

I waited upon Mr. Smith accordingly, with expectations somewhat highly raised of a legacy or inheritance which had descended to my deceased father, and of which I was the heir. I was speedily undeceived, however, when Mr. Smith explained the business upon which he had sent for me, and had placed in my hands a bundle of letters and documents which he had received some years previously from a lady named Medora Leigh, since deceased. The name was not familiar to me, although I imagined that I had seen it in connection with the foul charge brought by Lady Byron against the character of the great poet, her husband, which

she had communicated to Mrs. Beecher Stowe, the popular authoress of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, and which the latter had shamefully—or shamelessly—(*tous les deux peuvent se dire*) divulged to the world, with her own censorious commentary. Medora Leigh had represented herself to Messrs. Barron and Smith as the daughter of the Hon. Mrs. Leigh, the sister of Lord Byron. She undoubtedly stood in that tender relationship to Mrs. Leigh, and was consequently the niece of Lord Byron.

Mr. Smith wished me to take the documents home with me and peruse them carefully, with the view of publishing a supplement to Mrs. Beecher Stowe's revelations, given to the world at Lady Byron's instigation. He thought that the truth on the unhappy matter, whether favourable or unfavourable to the character of Lord Byron, should be made known, on the principle of the old Latin saying, *Magna est veritas et prevalebit*; but, doubting his own literary skill and experience to do full justice to the delicate inquiry, and mistrusting his own ability at his age—he had then passed or nearly approached his eightieth year—he had thought a younger man, and one of some literary standing, ought to be entrusted with the task, and had, therefore, sent for me.

I took the letters away with me, devoted my best and most anxious attention to their perusal, and

reluctantly came to the conclusion that the best thing to do with them would be to burn them. I reported my opinion to Mr. Smith, who would by no means consent to their destruction, and scarcely listened with patience to the proposal, expressing his determination, in case of my refusal to edit them, to place them in other hands.

Mr. Smith leaned to the opinion that Lord Byron was really guilty of the charge brought against him by the jealous widow, and supported by the zealous advocacy of Mrs. Beecher Stowe. I, on the contrary, believed that the charge was unfounded, though Medora Leigh herself had been taught by Lady Byron to believe in its truth, and had ended by accepting it. Mr. Smith had thought of another editor for Medora Leigh's correspondence, in case I should refuse to undertake the task, and had fixed upon a gentleman who had publicly expressed his belief in the truth of Mrs. Beecher Stowe's and Lady Byron's revelations. Mr. Smith expressed his determination to place the documents in that gentleman's hands, to make what public use of them he pleased in case of my refusal.

Under these circumstances, with the conviction strong in my mind that Lord Byron was innocent, and that I could prove him to be so out of the very documents which Mr. Smith had put into my hands, I, with much reluctance, accepted the task

which seemed to be thrust upon me. Mr. Smith, though with a prejudice against Lord Byron—as a man, though not as a poet—had the fullest reliance upon my judgment, and left me to deal with the documents as I pleased, with the sole stipulation that I should neither destroy them, suppress them, or part with them.

I accepted the conditions, but thought it best, before beginning to work upon them, to show them to Mr. John Murray, the eminent publisher of Byron's works, with whom I was slightly acquainted. Mr. Murray read them, and offered a liberal price for the manuscripts in order that he might either destroy or suppress them. To this I could not consent, after the understanding I had come to with Mr. Smith, and the positive promise I had made to him.

I, therefore, set to work upon the materials at my command, placed a *resumé* of the whole case before the public as presented by Mrs. Beecher Stowe, with the autobiography of the luckless, erring, grossly deceived and credulous Medora Leigh, with her letters to Lady Byron and the noble and influential friends and relatives of the poet. I completed a volume, which was published in December 1869, by the eminent house of Richard Bentley and Son, New Burlington Street, entitled *Medora Leigh; a History and an Autobiography, with an Introduction and a Commentary*

*on the Charges brought against Lord Byron by Mrs. Beecher Stowe.*

In that volume, as I observed in the preface, I carefully compared the statements made by Medora Leigh with those made by Mrs. Stowe, and came to the conclusion that they disproved all the allegations of the authoress of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* as to the separation of Lord and Lady Byron in 1816, and that the odious charge—not brought against the Hon. Augusta Leigh until 1831, seven years after Lord Byron's death, or publicly mentioned against the poet himself until 1840—and gave my reasons for believing, and calling upon all the world to believe, that the charge against brother and sister was not only unproved and unprovable, but untrue, and the result of a conspiracy of which Lady Byron was the dupe and the victim.

The reception of this book, with which I had so unwillingly connected my name, was the reverse of gratifying. The press, with scarcely a single exception, either sneered, condemned, or manifested a kind of contemptuous pity for the editor, reminding me painfully of the truth so coarsely expressed in *Hudibras*,

They who in quarrels interpose  
Will often wipe a bloody nose;

and of the more modern saying, that those who interfere in the personal conflicts between hus-



band and wife will likely incur the wrath of both parties. The friends and partizans of Lady Byron and Mrs. Beecher Stowe were indignant against me—as was, perhaps, natural, after I had proved them to be guilty of cruel slander against an innocent brother and sister—while the friends and partizans of Lord Byron were scarcely less indignant against me for having taken up the subject at all, and for not having suppressed or destroyed the miserable revelations of poor Medora.

*Fiat justitia ruat cælum* was the adage that had strengthened me to vindicate Lord Byron; but, in having rendered what I conscientiously believed to be impartial justice, I was certainly not prepared for the thunder-crash in the critical heavens that ensued. Neither the one side nor the other knew or reflected that suppression was beyond my power—though, of course, both knew that no moral or physical necessity compelled me to disseminate, even for the purpose of confutation, the sad details of Medora Leigh's story of her life; though I knew to a certainty that the task undertaken by my friendly hand would have been undertaken only too willingly by an unfriendly one.

I was consoled for the faint praise of some and the by no means faint obloquy of other English journals by the impartial, just, and discriminating favour extended to me by the most eminent critics

of Germany. They all considered that I had successfully vindicated the character of Lord Byron and his sister, and silenced for the future the calumnious tongues of Mrs. Beecher Stowe and the believers in the guilt of the great poet.

The charge brought against the great poet had an enormous sale in Europe and America. The defence—mainly owing to the cold water thrown upon it by the London newspapers—had scarcely a sale sufficient to pay the expenses of publication! Perhaps the public was tired of the subject, or perhaps it enjoyed the scandal far more than the refutation! As I cannot undertake to solve the question, I leave it to the charitable judgment of posterity.

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## THE EMPRESS EUGENIE IN SKYE.

LATE in the summer of 1872, I spent a month in the pleasant little town of Oban, in Argyllshire, in the midst of some of the most beautiful scenery of the West Highlands. Oban had been my favourite resort during many years for health, rest, recreation, and long walks through the glens and over the mountains of a land which, at every turn which the traveller or the pedestrian may take, offers some new scene of grandeur or beauty for his admiration and delight.

While at Oban I received a communication from my highly-esteemed friend, Mr. Thomas Fraser, the Sheriff of Skye, requesting me to visit him at his house near Portree, in that island. I gladly accepted the invitation, for, though I had previously been in Skye, I had not had time to explore the manifold beauties of the wild and gloomy Loch Coruisk, the awful Cuchullin hills, and the very remarkable amphitheatre of rocks, high upon the mountain side, beyond Uig, known as Quiraing. The desire to ascend the latter was strong upon me; and I hoped to gratify it in the genial companionship of the Sheriff, the attached friend of my early manhood.

My wife and young daughter accompanied me on the occasion, and, as the Sheriff's cottage was small, I sought accommodation at the principal—almost the only—hotel of Portree, to the good offices of whose proprietor we had been specially recommended by another most excellent friend, to whom I had been particularly attached from early years, the late David Hutcheson of Glasgow and Oban. Mr. Hutcheson was the founder and proprietor of the fleet of steam-ships, by the agency of which he had opened up the West Highlands to trade and travel, and, by the successful and popular management of which great enterprise, he had done more than any man of his day and generation to develop the resources and extend the civilization of the Highlands.

A letter from him to any inn-keeper on the west coast of Scotland was almost equivalent to a royal command, and I made no doubt that I and mine would receive every attention from Mr. Ross, the worthy landlord of the "Royal." But, on arrival at Portree, we found that Mr. Ross could not accommodate us, inasmuch as all the available rooms were pre-occupied by the Empress Eugenie, her son the Prince Imperial, and their suite, among whom was Count Clary. The Empress, however, was to leave Skye on the following morning, when the rooms which she had vacated would be at our disposal.

For one night we had to make shift as best we could, which we resolved to do, acting, like true philosophers, on the wise old adage which tells the unhappy as well as the disappointed that "what can't be cured should be endured." We could have remained on board of the steamer, if it had not been for the fact that she had started for Stornoway, in the Long Island—as the island of Lewis is called—after half-an-hour's delay at Portree; so we passed the night as comfortably as we could on chairs in the dining-room.

In the morning I paid my respects to the Empress, to whom and to whose unfortunate husband I had been introduced some years previously. I was honoured by a long and friendly conversation with her. Having inquired of Her Majesty whether she had yet visited the wondrous cave of Staffa, and the sacred Isle of Iona, she informed me that she had not yet had the time to do so. I took the liberty of reminding her, now that she was in such near proximity to those renowned spots—to which no traveller in the West Highlands should omit to make a pilgrimage—that she ought to stretch a point and take advantage of the favourable opportunity.

She replied that she had often heard of Staffa and its sublimities, and had a great desire to visit it, but that she was reluctantly compelled to defer this pleasure until she made another visit to Scotland. It was now the 10th or 11th of August,

and the *fête* day of the Emperor was on the 15th. She would not and could not for any consideration be absent from his side on such an occasion, and therefore felt herself compelled to hurry home to Chislehurst as fast as steam could carry her.

On bidding farewell to the Empress at the porch of the Royal Hotel, as she took her departure for the steamer that was to convey her to Oban, *en route* for Glasgow, a little crowd—great for small Portree—had assembled to give her a parting cheer. She said to me, loudly enough to be heard by the bystanders, that she had highly enjoyed her visit to Scotland, and was greatly pleased both with the country and the people. I remarked to Her Majesty that the Scotch believed that she also was of Scottish extraction, through the Kirk-patricks.

“Yes,” she replied; “I have Scottish blood in my veins, and I am proud of it.”

A ringing cheer, that burst spontaneously from the bystanders, was the echo to this short speech, spoken with a slightly foreign accent—*it* being pronounced *ee*—but, in all other respects, unexceptionable English; in the midst of which she courteously extended her hand to me, and proceeded, accompanied by her son, Count Clary, and her suite, to the little pier of Portree, and the steamer that had waited about five minutes for her cleared the harbour, amid the cheers of a

second small crowd that had assembled to witness her embarkation.

The next day being fine—and fine days are scarce in the “misty moisty” island of Skye—our little party, accompanied by Sheriff Fraser, hired a carriage and pair, not showy but serviceable, and proceeded to Quiraing. The distance from Portree is twenty-three miles, over a good road, through a district crowded with historical memories of Flora MacDonald, the Young Chevalier, the Rebellion of 1745, and the devoted attachment of the brave Highlanders to a lost cause, so sacred to their hearts that not even the magnificent bribe of £30,000 offered by the Hanoverian Government tempted one of the thousand and more of poor peasants who were in the “Pretender’s” secret to betray to the cruel mercies of his enemies the unfortunate fugitive, whom they considered to be their rightful King.

The Sheriff informed me, during his ride, that the first few months which he passed in Skye, after receiving his appointment and removing from Inverness, where he had previously resided, were the most desolate and dreary of his life. He had nobody with whom he could exchange ideas, except the ministers of the Established and the Free Churches and the local medical practitioner, with neither of whom had he much or any community of sentiment.

“Had it not been for my books,” he said, “I believe I should have gone melancholy mad.”

He added that, fortunately, after six or seven months, he made the acquaintance of a little old Frenchman, who lodged in a small room in the house of the watchmaker in Portree, who spoke tolerably good and fluent English, and with whom he became in a short time very intimate. He was a scholar, a philosopher, and a man of the world, who had evidently had a large experience of life and society, and whose conversation was in a high degree instructive and entertaining.

He discovered after a while that his name was Neckar, the son of Neckar, the Minister of Finance in the days of Louis XVI., just previous to the outbreak of the great French Revolution of 1789, and the brother of the famous Madame de Stæel. M. Neckar was poor—very poor; but his wants were few, and he had enough to live upon in his humble and contented manner, and, finding his way accidentally to Skye, and discovering that the climate agreed with his health, and that he could live far more cheaply in Portree than in any other place he had ever visited, he had resolved to make it his home for the remainder of his life. He seemed to be as pleased with the Sheriff as the Sheriff was with him, and they became almost inseparable, until the death of M. Neckar at a



venerable age deprived Mr. Fraser of one of the most intelligent friends he ever had.

The Sheriff went on to inform me that, during the summer months, he had no lack of society, as the influx of tourists was great, and yearly increasing, in consequence of the facilities of travelling afforded by the steamers of Mr. Hutcheson. He often received visits from old friends, legal and other, from Inverness, Glasgow, and Edinburgh, as well as from London; and had, besides, learned to accommodate himself to his secluded life, and to find enjoyment in it.

On arrival at Quiraing, we found that the ascent to the summit had been rendered easier of accomplishment than it had been a week previously, or than it had ever been before, in consequence of the gallant forethought of the landlord of the hotel at Portree. Mr. Ross had gone to the trouble and expense of employing labourers to cut steps in the most difficult portions of the very steep ascent, so as to render it less fatiguing to the delicate and illustrious lady—once a powerful Empress, but an Empress no more except in name, though still exercising a quasi-Imperial influence, by her grace and beauty, over the hearts and minds of all with whom she was brought into personal contact.

The name of Quiraing has never been explained to the satisfaction of Gaelic philologists—a race who are more inclined to disagree than to agree

upon the origin of the Keltic names of places in the British Islands. One set holds that the first syllable is derived from *coir*, "a court or circle," and the second from *fraing* or *fhraing*, pronounced *raing*, "French"; while another, agreeing in the derivation of the first syllable, maintains that the second is to be traced to *reang*, "a rib or spar," which the pillar-like perpendicular and detached rocks by which the singular circle is enclosed very closely resemble.

The Sheriff agreed with me in thinking that the second derivation was preferable to the first, more especially from the fact that neither history nor tradition has any record of the connection between the singular and striking circle that forms the *coir* or *corrie* and any thing, person, or story connected with France. Quiraing resembles the crater of an extinct volcano in the side or heart of a hill upwards of a thousand feet in height, and is surrounded by huge rocks that shoot up into detached and pyramidal masses of varied shapes and altitudes.

Between the intervening chasms of these columns noble views of the country and of the German Ocean are obtainable. The wild sublimity of Quiraing is unique in Scotland, and possibly in Europe—unless in Norway, of which I cannot speak, as I have never visited that country. There is a very comfortable inn at Uig, seven miles distant on the road

to Portree, where travellers, either in large or small parties, may find all needful refreshment, especially grouse and salmon in their season, and at all times mutton, oat-cake, Highland butter, and cream, as well as ale and whisky. The attendance is adequate and obliging, and the charges at the time of my visit, had not reached half-way to the exorbitant demands so common in Highland hotels, and for which the only possible excuse is that they are kept open all the year, and that their only chance of custom is for a short season of three months at the utmost.

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## A VERY SUCCESSFUL MONEY-LENDER.

IN the autumn of 1875, while walking on the breezy Esplanade of Brighton, an elderly gentleman in a bath-chair suddenly accosted me, and inquired after my health. I had known him many years previously; but, in the interval, time, sorrow and sickness had made such changes in his appearance that I scarcely recognised him. He had acquired a large fortune and retired from the exercise of his profession, to enjoy in peace—if enjoyment were possible—the short remainder of his days. He had, however, found what is sometimes called the *dolce far niente* the reverse of *dolce*; a heavy load, weary, monotonous, objectless, and oppressive to a mind that was far stronger than his body.

He had made most of his money by usury, and as the agent of the impecunious heirs to large estates, in raising funds for the gratification of their passions, and the satisfaction of their gambling or racing debts. His best customers were young men, who did not know that they were purchasing “a minute’s mirth to wail a week” in having transactions with such as he, and discounting the wealth that might be theirs in the future, for a mean modicum of ready money to purchase present enjoyment.

After less than twenty years of this lucrative business, he was reported to have retired with more than a quarter of a million sterling, won from the sons of rich men, and in many instances from the fathers themselves, who happened to be involved as deeply as their sons in the miry pits in which bygone follies had plunged them. Post obits, reversions, and interest of eighty, a hundred, and a hundred and fifty per cent. were the fountains whence came the streams that filled up the wide-spreading reservoir of this poor man's riches.

He invited me to walk by the side of his chair down the Esplanade to the West Pier. I consented willingly, for the sake of a talk with an old acquaintance who seemed to be in want of companionship. The confidences he gave me made a painful impression on my mind, and have haunted me ever since, forming as they did a sadly realistic homily on the old, old text, that, for seemingly prosperous as well as for really unprosperous people, "all is vanity and vexation of spirit."

He confessed that he was rich, very rich, though not quite so rich as he was commonly reported to be, and that his wealth, great as it was, did him no other good and served no other purpose than to keep him alive, in a state of miserable suffering.

"I have," said he, "one of the finest and largest houses in London, in which I inhabit only one room on the ground floor, not having the

power to mount the stairs. The house is filled with fine pictures, noble statuary, and *bric-à-brac*, which I never see, and could not enjoy if I did. It is surrounded by a beautiful park-like garden full of the choicest and rarest flowers, a garden in which I cannot dig, as I should like to be able to do for my amusement, and in which I cannot walk on account of chronic rheumatism, which makes me a cripple, and forces me to have recourse to a bath-chair or perambulator for the sole means of locomotion that fate allows me. I have a magnificent library, full of valuable books, which I cannot consult, on account of my failing eye-sight, and for want of the power of fixing my attention, and which I cannot have read to me without being sent to sleep by the monotonous voice of the reader. I have a cellar full of the most expensive wines—Romanée Conti, Chambertin, Clos Vougeot, Château Margaux, Château Lafitte, Château Yquem, Sillery, Roederer, Tokay, Rudesheimer, Marcobruner—all the most delicious vintages of Germany and Hungary, not one glass of which can I drink with impunity or pleasure. I have many acquaintances, and few or no friends, except, perhaps, in my own family, to whom I cannot help thinking the miserable state of my health and my daily increasing infirmities render me a nuisance and an incumbrance, and who probably, in their secret hearts, wish that I were dead, that they might share my wealth among

them. I cannot enjoy refreshing sleep or sink into oblivion for more than one restless hour at a time. I suffer agony from gout and rheumatism. I am growing deaf as well as blind, and, worse than all, I cannot perform the most ordinary functions of nature without surgical and mechanical assistance, accompanied by pain as well as degradation. And yet people think I must be happy because I am rich! Idiots! I would give every shilling of my money could I be again a boy, sweeping a lawyer's office, or running errands for a wage of ten shillings a week, eating with an appetite, drinking with a relish, able to walk, run, leap, jump, and swim, and sleeping every night without waking in the middle of it, and arising every morning refreshed for the day's work. Now I never rise from my bed in the morning, and look at my pale face in the glass, without an insane desire to cut my throat. Do not be surprised if you read some day in the newspapers that I have done so, and that the Coroner has held an inquest upon my miserable carcass."

I drew the obvious moral at the time from the mournful story of this poor rich man, and leave the reader to do the same if he be so disposed. Perhaps the poor as well as the rich may say that, after all, his money was a benefit, and that he might have suffered quite as many bodily ills if he had been a pauper. Perhaps so. But there is a possibility that his miserable life would have ended sooner in the

workhouse than in his lordly palace, and that he would have escaped the lingering agony and the daily death that he was doomed by his wealth to suffer, unrelieved and unrelievable, except by the final death that so long refused to come. As a pauper he would have found resignation to that truest refuge for the weary, the workhouse appointed for all living, "where the weary are at ease from troubling and the weary are at rest."

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