

## Poetry.

## THE FORSAKEN NEST.

BY LOUISE A. WORTHEN.

There is a straw-built nest,  
Upon yon leafless bough,  
Browlike 'twas filled with young delight,  
But 'tis forsaken now.

I saw the birdies weave this nest,  
By joyous song beguiled,  
And then I thought of hopes I'd wove,  
And sadly, sadly smiled.

For oh, too oft I've woven them  
For autumn winds to blight,  
And watched, as might the birdies watch  
This home of past delight.

That little nest, forsaken now,  
The sport of every wind,  
Is like the heart forsaken of  
The hopes that once entwined.

'Tis safest not to build too high;  
The soaring mind must fall—  
The lark that builds upon the ground,  
Sings sweetest of them all.

But robin sought security  
Upon the topmost bough,  
So far removed from present ill,  
No power might o'erthrow.

He recked not of an unseen power,  
That lays the highest low;  
See—while the tree is stripped above,  
Bright verdure clings below.

## Select Tale.

## THE CAVE OF EIGG.

## A LEGEND OF THE HEBRIDES.

BY MRS. CAROLINE H. BUTLER.

"A tale of the times of old! The deeds of days of other years."—*Ossian*.

PART III.

It was now the month of November.

Cold and cheerless dawned the marriage day.—The sky was overcast with gloomy clouds, and the wild winds roared and shrieked dismally around the walls of Duntulm; but Earl Ranald aroused himself betimes, and hurried on board his galley to prepare it for the reception of its beauteous freight.

The hour of noon was that appointed for the nuptials, as the priest who was sent for to perform the ceremony from Iona (one of the neighboring isles, celebrated for its religion and its learning so early as the sixth century, when the rest of the kingdom was buried in barbarism,) could not be expected to arrive sooner.

In the meantime, a scene of reckless hilarity was presented both within and without the castle. In the open area in front large fires were kindled, around which the Eiggmen and the merry Orkney sailors danced and shouted with noisy merriment, while in the rude stone hall were assembled the kinsmen and friends of the chief in their holiday garb, together with those of Earl Ranald, who had accompanied him from Kirkwall, while, above the roaring of the wind and the shout of the revellers without, sounded the shrill pibroch of the clan.

The board was spread—the entertainment intended to comprise both the morning meal and dinner.

According to the custom of the times at a marriage feast, Earl Ranald himself ascended the turret stair, and craved admittance at the fair hands of his bride.

Radiant in her beauty, Ulla herself opened the door. There was an unusual brilliancy in her eyes, and a brighter glow on her cheeks than was wont to rest on her complexion, so dazzling fair; and as she stood there in her pure white garments, with her golden tresses floating loosely over her fair shoulders, the earl almost expected she would vanish like some beautiful spirit from his sight.—Taking the hand she passively extended to him, the happy exulting bridegroom conducted her to the hall, where her presence was greeted by a loud murmur of applause.

As she entered, Ulla cast one quick, eager glance around, and then suffered the Earl to seat her by his side, although she trembled violently, and the rich bloom on her cheeks was fast yielding to a mortal paleness. Had Malcolm's plan then failed? Was she indeed doomed to become the bride of Earl Ranald? Was there, alas, no hope? Such were the dreadful thoughts which agitated her bosom.

At this moment a band of strangers craved shelter at the castle from the approaching storm, stating themselves to be voyagers from the main land of Scotland, upon an expedition through the islands, and, having heard much of the famed caverns of

Eigg, had come thither for the purpose of exploring them.

In unwonted good humour, the chief bade them welcome, and told them to sit down and make merry with the rest; for that his daughter, the fairest maiden of the isles, was that day to wed with the noble Earl of Kirkwall. At this announcement, one of the strangers, whose dress and bearing seemed somewhat superior to those of his companions, gracefully saluted Ulla, and lifting a flagon from the well-spread board, first quaffed to the health of the fair bride, and then courteously bowed around the assembly.

It was well, that the attention, not only of the earl, but of the chief, was so much drawn to these unexpected guests for the moment, or the agitation of Ulla would certainly have led to suspicion, if not betrayal; and when at length Earl Ranald, in right of his situation ventured somewhat familiarly to address the now blushing maiden, the hand of Malcolm (whom we must recognize in the gallant stranger,) involuntarily sought the hilt of his dagger, and but for a well-timed ruse on the part of his companions, would assuredly have rendered discovery unavoidable.

A shout without now announced the arrival of the priest. A quick glance was exchanged between the lovers; and then Ulla, in a low voice, addressing the earl, urged some necessary preparations as an excuse for a short absence. The earl seemed greatly disposed to accompany her; but earnestly entreating him not to do so, she softly glided from the hall. In a few moments Malcolm also disappeared, his exit unobserved in the general confusion, or if noticed, not considered at all singular.

And now the noise and merriment increased, and none were louder in the revels than the stranger guests. Stories were told, jests were passed, the music sounded its merriest notes, and laugh and song mingled in one wild scene of gaiety. Even the Earl was unconscious of the rapid flight of time. Nearly an hour had passed since Ulla left the hall, yet he could have sworn that she had not been gone fifteen minutes, when suddenly a kinsman of the chieftain rushed in, breathless with speed, exclaiming—

"Haste, haste! Earl Ranald your bride is stolen away! The bark of the ravishers is already passing the *Skerry-vohr!* Haste!"

"Ha! there is treachery here then! Vile dog, I expected this!" exclaimed Earl Ranald, drawing his sword, and rushing blindly upon the Chief of Eigg.

With a blow from his heavy broadsword, the enraged chieftain struck the weapon of the Earl from his hand.

"Would you stop to bandy words with me, instead of pursuing your bride! Ho, men of Eigg! haste, man the boats, pursue, lose not a moment! You'll sail sweep around the point of Mull, you, Alick, Ross to Rum, steer for the eastern shore; and you, Earl Ranald, if you would win your bride again, bear all sail for the main land. And ah! now I bethink me, where are our guests? Now, by St. Colomba, we are betrayed!"

The rage of the chief was terrible as, rushing from the hall, in tones of thunder, he bade his men pursue and bring back the strangers, alive or dead.

All was now confusion. While the men flew hither and thither, in obedience to the orders of McDonald, the women tossed their arms wildly, uttering loud wails for the stolen bride. Some hastened to cast off the boats in pursuit of the fugitives, while foremost the galley of Earl Ranald, bending to the sweeping blast, the black seas rushing over her deck, dashed like a mad thing before the gale, which was now every moment increasing.

In the *melée*, the companions of Malcolm thought to secure their escape to their boat, rocking among the dangerous shoals of sunken rocks shelving down from the *Scur-Eigg*. Already they had scaled the precipitous ridge, and were rapidly making their dangerous descent, now hanging from some jutting rock, now leaping over deep chasms, the spray of the billows almost blinding them, and the roar of the maddened waves thundering in their ears. The last descent was accomplished, and, breasting the boiling surf, they had nearly reached the boat, when their escape was suddenly cut off by a band of Eigg men, who rushed upon them. They fought like lions; but, at length, overpowered by numbers, stunned by brutal blows, the blood streaming from many wounds, they were bound hand and foot and conveyed to the castle, where they were thrown down into the corner of the court-yard like brute beasts packed, for the butcher's shambles, to wait the return of the chief.

Far out upon the raging sea, like a thing instinct with life, bearing the fate of two human beings, the little bark of Malcolm held bravely on, now riding on the top of the mountain waves, now plunging down the huge black gulfs, as it were, into the very depths of the ocean; on, on trembling and reeling, dashes the little boat. Once round the

rocky headland, and they are safe; for there rides a stranger ship from England, waiting to bear the lovers to her own beautiful land.

Alas! that headland they were not destined to reach! For now the boats of the pursuers are fast gaining upon them; and first the galley of Earl Ranald plunges past them, half buried in the foaming waves, then, quickly changing her course, bears down like some huge bird of prey upon the little bark; while the boats of the Eigg men, with their chief standing bare-headed at the prow of the foremost, his gray locks sweeping to the wind, follow close behind. A wild shout, which echoes even above the roaring of the blast, proclaims the fate of the unhappy fugitives.

They are taken, and, loaded with curses and bitter taunts, borne back to the castle.

No language can do justice to the fury of McDonald, when, in the abductor of his daughter, he discovered the son of his bitterest foe, McLeod, of Skye. Even his kinsmen and followers shrunk appalled as they listened to such terrible oaths, and witnessed the storm of passions.

No ray of pity shed its softening light o'er his savage soul, as, seizing the wretched Ulla, the paleness of death upon her marble brow, her garments wet with the spray of the ocean clinging to her delicate limbs, and her mournful gaze still fastened upon her lover, he dragged her to the side of Earl Ranald, and bade the priest perform his office. It was, indeed, a refinement of cruelty, even in the presence of Malcolm, thus to make his Ulla the bride of another! Fate could have nought in store to equal the bitter anguish of that moment; neither torture or death itself could now appal his soul.

No sooner was this unhallowed rite consummated, than, bearing off his insensible bride, Earl Ranald immediately set sail for the Orkneys. Then McDonald, bidding his myrmidons seize the young chieftain, they bore him with savage yells to immediate death. In a few moments, all that remained of that brave and noble youth was a lifeless, mutilated corpse!

This done, the chief of Eigg hastened to complete his vengeance upon the unfortunate kinsmen of Malcolm; who, young and ardent like himself, had so generously volunteered to share in the adventure fraught with so much danger, and which was destined to terminate so fatally. First stripping them of their clothing, and shockingly maltreating their persons, their tongues were slit with red-hot knives, and then, chained to the dead body of the young chief, they were cast into a worthless boat and set adrift upon the stormy ocean.

"Go now," cried the chief—"go find your master, and bid him see how Skymen are entertained by the chief of Eigg!"

As if guided by an unseen hand, the boat with its appalling freight kept steadily and safely on over the storm-tossed billows towards the coast of Skye. Some fishermen, overtaken by the storm, were just nearing the shore, when their attention was attracted by the drifting boat, and steering for it, they were struck with horror at the spectacle it presented. They recognized at once the body of their beloved young chieftain, and, although so cruelly mutilated, they also discovered in those other bleeding, helpless beings, who still breathed, the near kinsmen of McLeod.

The dreadful tidings soon spread; and a long procession of the islanders, men, women, and children, with shrieks of woe and loud lamentations, bore the remains of their young chief to Dunvegan.

The grief of the aged McLeod at first stunned even the desire for vengeance on the murderers of his son. But the more terrible was the revulsion from this overwhelming sorrow. His own, his brave, his noble boy, the hope of his aged years, thus foully slain! With deep and bitter oaths, he vowed he would exterminate the race of McDonald, sparing neither sex nor age; and with a numerous force did the chief of Skye now bear down upon Eigg.

But McDonald had already anticipated the approach of the foe; and, knowing it was vain to compete with numbers more than double the whole population of the island, had recourse to stratagem.

Among the numerous caverns with which Eigg abounds, there was one which was known only to the chief himself, and this cavern he had long determined upon as a means of escape in an emergency like the present. It was situated about midway of the island, its mouth or entrance being hidden by an impetuous fall of water plunging down the overhanging mass of rocks. This entrance was so very narrow that but one person could at one time pass through; but this effected, it soon opened into an area of some two hundred feet.

To this cave, then, did the chief of Eigg, with every living soul upon the island, hastily betake himself. The boats of the enemy swiftly approach-

ed; and, like blood-hounds scenting their prey, the Skymen spring upon the shore, headed by McLeod.

But they found no one. Not a human being met their unfurled search. Again and again they explored every part of the island; but in vain. It was evident that, fearing the vengeance of McLeod, the inhabitants with their chief, had left the island. Setting fire to the castle, therefore, and the surrounding dwellings, McLeod and his followers retreated to their boats. But it was now near night, and, in the mean time, so dense a fog had arisen that it was impossible to steer with any safety from the shore, through the dangerous rocks and shoals with which they were surrounded. They, therefore, resolved to remain where they were until the morning.

During the night, there was a fall of snow, and, with the dawn of day, the island appeared shrouded as with a wedding-sheet, while the smoke of the smouldering ruins hung like a funeral-pall above it.

The chief of Skye, unwilling to lose his prey, resolved upon making another search through the island, and landed accordingly with his men.—They had not proceeded far, when, upon the surface of the pure white snow, they found the fresh track of a man's foot! This discovery was hailed with a shout; for it proved the foe were yet upon the island. Eagerly now did they pursue the track until it was lost in the foam of the torrent.

The entrance to the cave was soon discovered, while the shouts of the invaders were answered by the yell of defiance from within.

To make egress through the narrow opening would be certain death, as but one person could at the same time pass through. McLeod, therefore, called upon the chief of Eigg to surrender himself and followers into his hands. This demand was met with shouts of derision. He then dared McDonald to an equal combat; this was also received with defiance.

Then did McLeod determine upon a horrible vengeance; although to effect it would require a labor Herculean. To turn that powerful stream from its natural channel was the first thing to be accomplished; and the chief himself, with his men, began eagerly the stupendous undertaking with such rude implements as they could procure either from their boats or amid the ruins of the castle.—Strengthened by revenge and hatred, in less time than could be deemed possible the work was accomplished, and the stream which for ages on ages had leaped over that cavern's mouth, now spread itself out into a small lake, overflowing the pleasant green holm, through which it had wound its way to the rocky precipice.

Once more did McLeod call upon McDonald to surrender. It was answered by the same burst of defiance, and such bitter, insulting taunts as well nigh maddened the chief of Skye. Then, bidding his men bring thither everything of a combustible nature which could be procured, he set fire to them at the mouth of the cavern.

Unmoved by the shrieks of the females, or the cries of helpless infancy, the greedy flames were fast fed, until the deep silence of the grave assured McLeod the deed was done and his revenge completed!

Thus did the whole population of Eigg meet their dreadful fate within that dark cavern, which is still visited by the traveller.

Sir Walter Scott, in his "Diary of a Voyage to the Hebrides and the Orkney Islands," says:—

"The rude and stony bottom of this cave is strewn with the bones of men, women, and children, being the sad relics of the ancient inhabitants of the island, two hundred in number, who were slain on the following occasion." Sir Walter then relates a portion of the legend from which this sketch is drawn.

No further record seems to have been made of the fate of the unfortunate Ulla.—*Anglo American Magazine*.

**BANKRUPT CITIES.**—San Francisco is barded with a debt she cannot pay, and her treasury is empty; New Orleans has disposed of the use of her public wharves for the term of three years, so as to raise money sufficient to pay the salaries of her school teachers; Philadelphia has not a dollar in her treasury; Chicago is in a sorry financial condition—her treasury is entirely empty, and those in the employ of the city go begging for the wages due them.

A shallow headed coxcomb, having received a peremptory nay in answer from a young lady to whom in spite of the most significant hints that his attention was not agreeable, he had popped the question, declared that he wouldn't live—he would blow his brains out. 'Twill be a glorious shot if you hit them, said she, and turning upon her heel, contemptuously left the room.