

Literature, &c.

THE SPIRIT OF THE MAGAZINES
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From Graham's Philadelphia Magazine.
THE FATE OF JAMES I.
A ROMANCE OF SCOTTISH HISTORY.

It was the night of the 20th of February 1438. The king and queen of Scotland held their court in the Abbey of Black Friars at Perth. The apartment was filled with the noble and fair, among whom James I. and his lovely consort, were distinguished by their personal beauty and grace of manner, as well as by their rank.

In the recess of one of the lofty windows stood Robert Stuart, the grandson and heir of the Earl of Athol, a kinsman of the king, and his betrothed bride, the young and beautiful Lady Ida Randolph. The young man had a fine figure and handsome features, but there was an expression about the eyes and mouth that indicated at times, that his prepossessing exterior concealed a bad heart and a cruel disposition. His eyes were fixed on the king with so fierce a gaze, that the Lady Ida started as she beheld it.

'Robert,' said she, 'of what are you dreaming? You look at the king as fiercely as though you were Sir Robert Graham himself.'

'It was of him I was thinking, Ida,' replied Stuart. 'My unhappy kinsman, condemned to wander an outlaw among the mountain fastnesses, through the injustice and tyrannical severity of James.'

'Not so, Robert,' said Ida; 'the king was not unjust.'

'He refused to bestow upon him the earldom of Strathern, to which he laid claim,' answered he; 'and he condemned him to prison for a crime that he might have committed with impunity in the reign of his father and during the regency of Albany. I marvel not, that on being freed from such ignominious bondage, a man of so fiery and haughty a spirit should seek to be revenged on his oppressor.'

'He had no right to the earldom of Strathern,' said Ida; 'and as for his imprisonment, the crime for which he suffered well deserved such punishment. I know that many of the nobles blame the king because he metes out the same justice to all classes; because he does not deem that noble blood should entitle its possessor to commit every dark and evil deed with impunity. But surely you cannot excuse him for seeking the life of the king, for sending him a defiance, renouncing his allegiance to him, and threatening to destroy him with his own hand?'

'He has many good qualities,' answered Stuart evasively.

'Robert! Robert!' said Ida, her voice trembling with the earnestness with which she spoke, 'speak not thus! Let me not hear you say aught in praise of a traitor and a murderer! The king has ever been a warm friend and an affectionate kinsman to you, why should you speak harshly of him, and kindly of his enemy?'

'Nay, nay, you mistake me, Ida,' replied the young man. 'I wished not to speak harshly of the king; I know that he has ever treated me with great kindness, and that he has honored me with the greatest confidence on every occasion; but Graham was one of my dearest friends; I pity his fate, my friendship for him leads me to find excuses for his conduct, and I cannot help thinking that James has acted toward him with great severity.'

'Yet speak not thus,' said Ida; 'it is most imprudent—should your words be repeated, to the king—'

'I would probably have to share Graham's disgrace and exile,' interrupted he. 'But fear not, I will not do aught to expose myself to danger, and as for what I have said this night, no one has heard me but you, and I think not that my Ida will betray me.'

The Lady Ida looked up into his face with a smile, but before she could answer, an attendant came to inform him that the king desired his presence. Ida remained standing for a few moments by the window after he had left her, musing over his words. He had never spoken either of the king or Graham in the same manner before, and dark and undefined fears passed through her mind, but she quickly dismissed them, deeming herself unkind and unjust toward her affianced husband in harboring them for a moment.

It was late ere the company dispersed. The king remained for some time after all had retired, conversing cheerfully with the queen and her ladies. Suddenly, however, a shade passed over his face, and he remained for some time in deep thought; at length, turning to the queen, he said—'Do you not remember, that when on my way here a few weeks since, I was met by an old Highland woman, who told me if I came to Perth I would never leave it alive? She was here this evening, and sought an interview with me, but she was informed that she could not be admitted to my presence at so late an hour. I regret that I did not see her. I know not why, but within the last few hours I have felt a strange presentiment of impending evil. There is an old prophecy that predicts that in this year a king will be killed in Scotland.'

'And what, or whom do you fear, my lord?' asked the queen.

'Robert Graham has sworn to destroy me, as you know,' replied James. 'And I

have cause to believe that there are many others in league with him to take my life, and there could not be a more favorable opportunity for him to make the attempt than the present.'

The queen shuddered. She felt that there was every reason to fear that Graham would endeavour to fulfil his oath ere long, for owing to the small size of the abbey, the guards of the king were quartered among the citizens of Perth, and a few only of the personal attendants of the king and queen were able to lodge in the monastery, so that James was much more exposed to danger while there than any of the other royal residences. Her eyes filled with tears.

'Nay, nay my fair queen, calm thyself,' said James soothingly. 'I was wrong to say anything that could alarm you. There cannot be aught to fear—I bade my trusty kinsman and gentleman of the bed-chamber, Robert Stuart, ere he retired for the night, to go over the abbey and look to bolt and bar. Should danger approach, the sentinels will give timely warning, and we will dispatch messengers to the city to summon our guard. So fear not, we can bid defiance to Robert Graham and his troop of assassins.'

As he spoke, a strong light, apparently from the court-yard, flashed across the windows of the room. The king sprang to the casement. The court-yard was filled with men, and by the light of the torches they carried, he could see that they were armed, and among them he beheld his deadly foe.

'It is Graham, he has come to perform his oath,' said James calmly, turning from the window.

'Oh! fly then, fly while there is yet time!' exclaimed the queen, almost wild with terror.

'And whither shall I fly?' said the king. 'It would be madness to attempt it, they must even now be in the abbey. Had I any place of concealment—but I know of none, and I must even defend myself until aid arrives, or until my strength fails me.'

'Not so, my lord,' exclaimed the Lady Catharine Douglas, one of the ladies of honor of the queen. 'I have heard there is a vault beneath this apartment that communicates with the court-yard and I had been shown the plank in the floor which it is necessary to raise in order to descend into it. Once there, my lord, you can easily escape.'

'You are right, fair lady,' said the king. 'I had forgotten the vault. I will descend into it, it may conceal me from my enemies, but unhappily I cannot escape from it, as the entrance into the court-yard was walled up a few days ago by my order, because when I played at ball, the ball frequently rolled down through the opening.'

The plank was hastily raised, and the king descended. But before the plank was again lowered, the voices and footsteps of the assassins were heard in the corridor, approaching the apartment. The Lady Catharine Douglas flew to fasten the door, but the bar had been removed. Without a moment's hesitation she thrust her arm through the staples. But so frail an obstacle could not long keep out the intruders. The door was soon burst open, but not until the arm of the heroic lady was broken.

The assassins rushed into the room. The plank had been lowered, and the terrified queen and her ladies were standing together in a corner of the room. Graham saw at a glance that his victim was not there, and was about ordering his followers to go with him to seek the king in the other apartments of the abbey, when one of the ruffians seized the queen, and was about to plunge his dagger to her heart, when a son of Graham interposed and saved her life.

At this moment the Lady Ida Randolph beheld among the conspirators her affianced husband, and with a wild shriek she pronounced his name.

'What, fair lady,' said Graham with a fierce smile. 'Knew ye not that your betrothed was in league with us? Had it not been for his care in removing bolt, bar, and sentinel, we had not gained entrance here to-night?'

Ida covered her face with her hands, and turned away.

'Let us be gone, Graham, and seek for the king,' exclaimed Stuart, crimsoning with anger and shame. 'Know you not, that notwithstanding our precautions some of the attendants have escaped? They will alarm the city, and the royal guard will be upon us ere long.'

'You are right,' said Graham, 'and I should be loath to leave the abbey without accomplishing that for which I came. Yet hear me, Lady Ida, you will think less harshly of the deeds of this night, when you see the crown of Scotland on the brow of the heir of Athol, for it is my intention, and that of the nobles leagued with me, to place Robert Stuart on the throne of the tyrant whose reign will end to-night. So saying, he left the apartment, followed by the rest of the conspirators.'

Ida uncovered her face, gazed at them wildly, and then uttering a low cry, fell insensible on the floor.

After having sought their victim in vain through every part of the building, Robert Stuart recollected the vault, and suggested that he might be concealed there. They immediately returned to the apartment where the queen and her ladies had passed the time of their absence in the most agonizing anxiety and suspense, and tearing up the plank, beheld the unfortunate monarch standing below. A demoniac yell burst from the conspirators at the sight, and two of the ruffians sprang down and threw themselves upon him. James was unarmed, but wrenching a dagger

from one of his assailants he dealt him a blow that laid him dead at his feet, and then turning to the other assassin, he defended himself gallantly against him, when Graham descended and stabbed him. Weakened by loss of blood, and unable to make any further resistance, the king sank on the floor of the vault, calling on his enemy to have mercy on him.

'Thou never hadst mercy on those of thine own blood, or any one else, therefore thou shalt find no mercy here,' replied Graham, plunging his sword into the body of his sovereign.

The vault was now filled with conspirators, and the unhappy queen, throwing herself on the senseless form of her husband, sought to shield him from the blows with which his brutal enemies gratified their hatred by inflicting. It was not until she had been twice wounded, and had become insensible from terror, pain and distress, that she could be removed from the body.

The approach of the guard alarmed the conspirators, who sought safety in flight; but Graham had fulfilled his oath—the king was dead.

This horrible deed excited the utmost indignation against its perpetrators among all classes in Scotland. The king had been blamed by many, although without cause, for being unnecessarily strict and severe in the administration of justice, but his dreadful death caused all his faults to be forgotten. So universal was the popular feeling against the conspirators, and so unceasing and energetic were the efforts made to capture them, that in less than a month every man connected with the conspiracy was a prisoner.

They were all put to death, after undergoing the most horrible tortures. Graham protested, with his last breath, that he had only done his duty, in freeing his country from the yoke of a tyrant.

Robert Stuart died deeply penitent for his crime. When his dreams of ambition had faded away, and he found that his treachery had conducted him to a murderer's cell instead of placing him on a kingly throne, his conscience awoke, and he bitterly regretted the fearful deed that had brought upon him so terrible a punishment.

He wrote to Ida, telling her of his penitence and remorse, and beseeching her to forgive him. Poor Lady Ida! the shock of finding that he she loved was capable of so fearful a crime, added to her anxiety lest he should be captured; and her agony at his dreadful death, was more than she could bear. She did not long survive him, but sank into an early grave, a victim to his wild ambition and demonic treachery.

From Godey's Philadelphia Lady's Magazine.

A FEW WORDS ON GEOLOGY.

BY MARIA NORRIS.

'Sermons in stones, and good in everything.'
—SHAKESPEARE.

PART I.

In approaching this subject, we shall do well to remember that the Scriptures were never intended to be a scientific manual; that they speak of the phenomena of nature in language which, although not scientifically correct, is understood, and received among us without misleading any one; and that in them the Deity has not anticipated any of the remarkable discoveries which perchance He destined as the dowry of our latter ages.

All that can be fairly required of science is that she should not contradict Scripture. There is a science, 'falsely so called,' which has unhappily misled many well-meaning persons, and has almost persuaded them that Christianity and Philosophy are often at variance; but let us be certain that all truth spring from one origin, and when two truths are irreconcilable, the defect is ours; for there is in reality but one truth, an emanation from infinite perfection; and while it is clear that a thing cannot differ from itself, it is a proposition equally simple that perfection does not produce imperfection.

We, who are students in the outer court of the Temple of Nature, may fancy dissonances in the music, as the solemn anthem from within peals upon our ear; we may fancy incongruities as we catch a glimpse now and then of the inner glory by a half opened door or a raised curtain; but what are our fancies? The thoughts of short-lived mortals are so far from intangible that the wisest steps are often those which we would undo and amend. Can we lead forth the army of the stars? Can we marshal the hosts of the planets, bidding each sustain his part in the silent and lovely dance which weaves chains of light around the earth, a dance which, with energy yet as fresh as when 'the morning stars sang together' on the birthday of creation, has kept on in unbroken flow for six thousand years?

Since regularity is the rule of Nature, eccentricity the exception, surely it is but reasonable to conclude, when we meet with insuperable difficulties, and apparent antagonisms, that we 'see but in a glass, darkly,' and need a clearer light ere we successfully investigate the wonderful works of Providence. And since, in criticizing here, we are dealing with the works of Almighty Power and Benevolence, the greatest modesty ought to characterize our method of expressing our opinions.

So far a very superficial knowledge of Geology—if indeed that can be called a knowledge which includes only a strong interest and a theoretical acquaintance—so far as such a knowledge may give the writer any right to hazard an opinion, she can honestly say that to her own mind certain truths of Scripture

have received from geological facts confirmation strong almost as mathematical demonstration. She trusts that the prejudices against Geology are fast dying away; very certain she feels that far from being at variance with Revelation, this science will be found to interpret the hieroglyphics in which Eternal Wisdom has been writing for countless ages on the rocks, a chain of circumstances, a volume of illustrations to the Book of Revelation.

To the thoughtful mind, it does seem that the present age is right in the discovery of such illustrations of the Scripture. Infidels had doubted whether Nineveh in reality ever existed, or whether, if it existed, the prophet had not exaggerated its size; but Dr. Layard discovers the remains of the city, and finds the measurement of the walls to correspond with the account of Jonah.

So, too, unbelievers, both scoffers and doubters—let not the writer be supposed harshly to judge the latter class—had ridiculed or tried to disprove the Scripture chronology. Some asserted that the world, as it is, existed from eternity; others that the origin of man was far anterior to the period fixed in the Mosaic cosmogony; and such objections were not easily overruled, for, six what point one may, an antagonist can always suppose a preceding race or races. It would seem, indeed, an unanswerable objection; 'but,' says Professor Hitchcock, 'although Geology can rarely give chronological dates, but only a succession of events, she is able to say, from the monuments she has deciphered, that man cannot have existed on the globe more than six thousand years.'

Nor is this a position assumed without reasons more than plausible.

'That man,' says Hitchcock, 'was among the very last of the animals created, is made certain by the fact that his remains are found only in the very highest part of alluvium. This is rarely more than one hundred feet in thickness, while the other fossiliferous strata lying beneath the alluvium are six miles thick.'

Hence man was not in existence during all the period in which these six miles of strata were in a course of deposition, and he has existed only during the comparatively short period in which the one hundred feet of alluvium have been formed; nay, during only a small part of the alluvial period. His bones, having the same chemical composition as the bones of other animals, are no more liable to decay; and, therefore had he lived and died in any of the periods preceding the alluvial, his bones must have been mixed with those of other animals belonging to those periods. But they are not thus found in a single well-authenticated instance, and, therefore, his existence has been limited to the alluvial period. Hence he must have been created and placed upon the globe (such is the testimony of Geology) during the latter part of the alluvial period.'

That human remains are capable of fossilization is proved by the fact that the process is now actually going on in many parts of the world.

'On the coasts of the Antilles,' says the learned Humboldt in his *Cosmos*, 'these formations of the present ocean contain articles of pottery, and other objects of human industry and in Guadeloupe even human skeletons of the Carib tribe.' There is a large slab of limestone rock in the British Museum, containing a large portion of a female skeleton—a specimen familiar no doubt to many of our readers; we believe it was dug up at Guadeloupe; in any case, a sight of it must convince the most sceptical that human bones are as capable of being thus preserved as any remains which have been discovered.

To our mind, the view of the earth as the laboratory of the Deity, is which for thousands of years. He carried on operations, preparing it gradually for higher and higher developments of organic life, is a sublime and awful retrospect. Were it possible for the panorama of Creation to be unrolled in successive scenes before us, the word Creator would be fraught with ideas of magnitude and power, of foresight and benevolence, infinitely surpassing our present conceptions. We should see how exactly the successive races of creatures were suited to the condition of the earth which prevailed during their life, and how their existence, while it lasted, was one of pleasure and enjoyment.

Incongruous and unsightly in our eyes do many of the fossil creatures appear; but we should perceive, on a study of the subject, that creatures with organizations so delicate as our existing races could not have lived in the world's then condition. Never, say the geologists, was so filled with high forms of organic life as now, and never was it in a state so adapted to their comfort and preservation.

WOMAN'S INTELLECT.

MR HUME, in his 'History of England,' speaking of the unfortunate Lady Jand Grey, has this memorable passage: 'She had received all her education with King Edward VI., and seemed to possess even a greater facility in acquiring every part of manly and classical literature.' In the conduct of her education, the prejudices against the intellectual character of the sex seem to have been forgotten; and history, as it records the moral worth of this unfortunate lady, at the same time bears high testimony of her intellectual attainments.

In speaking also of Queen Elizabeth, a sovereign whose principal fault was her personal vanity—and great men are not always devoid of this weakness of vanity—the same historian uses the following language: 'Her vigor, her constancy, her vigilance, penetra-