

## "THE HILL OF THE HEADS."

The Scene of a Tragedy in Real Life.

### A Grim Historical Story of the Scotch Highlands.

Before the guide-book compiler throws the glamour of his genius over the topography of the wild mountainous district which the new branch of the Highland Railway between Avimore and Inverness will penetrate there is one spot—Tom-na-Cean, "the hill of the heads," the scene of as grim a tragedy as was ever presented on theatrical stage or enacted in real life.

The picturesque and thriving village of Carrbridge, which will form the principal depot on the new railway, is located in the north of a wide glen stretching westwards for miles till it fringes the match line of the braes of Lochaber. The Dulnain intersects the extensive glen through which in the good old days, when cattle-stealing was regarded as a legitimate vocation among the Delts, the Lochaber thieves drove their reughs to their wild mountain fastnesses. To-day the "Thieves' Road" which skirts the Dulnain remains as indisputable evidence against the Lochaber men.

Some years anterior to that "red year when Charles' brought Scotland muckle wae," there lived in Lochaber a noted freebooter named Padrig Mac-an-Sagaert—the English equivalent of which is "Peter the Priest's son." The verbal portrait preserved by tradition of this ex-priest's offspring is that of a shaggy, red-haired man of ferocious aspect. He had not a single redeeming trait in his character, and his priestly sire would not give him even shelter. Driven from pillar to post, Peter began a career of robbery and theft which for

#### DARING AND CRUELTY

so parallel can be found even in the rude, semi-savage period in which he lived. He became the leader of a gang known in the Central Highlands, and particularly Strathspey, as "the Lochaber Murderers." Peter and his gang invaded the rich domains of Aird, in the occupancy at the time of one of the scions of the powerful house of Lovat, and under cover of night took possession and drove away a large herd of cattle. To thwart their pursuers the thieves, instead of proceeding across the hills to Lochaber took a circuitous route through the wilds of Strathdearn, reaching in slow stages the western confines of Strathspey. Simon Lord Lovat (who was subsequently executed) discovered the road the thieves had taken, and at once got aid from the laird of Grant to assist him in recovering the cattle of his kinsman, and if possible, arresting the robbers.

It so happened that at this time there lived in the neighbourhood of Carrbridge a man named Fraser, noted for great muscular strength and dexterity in the use of the rude weapons of warfare—the dirk and the claymore—common to the age. He was known by the Gaelic cognomen of Mugach More, and his six sons and stepson were as brave and valorous as himself. To this family the laird of Grant entrusted the commission of recovering the stolen cattle and punishing, if possible, the reivers. Peter and his gang were overtaken some distance from the village of Kingussie, and knowing something of the

CHARACTER OF THEIR PURSUERS, they reluctantly abandoned the cragh without showing fight, but Peter vowed that before the year closed the Mugach More and his brood would have cause to regret their interference. The cattle were duly restored to their owner, and Fraser and his sons resumed work on their farm, which they tilled between them. For months the farmers of Strathspey were not troubled with the Lochaber men, and the Mugach More had almost forgotten the threat of Peter-the-Priest's-son.

One dark December "the murderers" paid a visit to Carrbridge, bent on dire and bloody vengeance. First of all they surrounded the dwelling houses of Fraser's two married sons. The doors were burst in and the two brothers speedily dispatched. Mugach More's dwelling was next besieged, and when admittance was demanded, the old man heard the voice of Peter amongst those who stood round the door. He did not expect mercy at their hands, and he and his four sons and stepson at once set about to offer the best resistance they could. The door was of tough pine, and could withstand a prolonged siege. The reivers, after a fruitless attack on the door, assailed the undressed stone wall, and were making headway. The house was in darkness, and unobserved the stepson, in order the more effectively to attack the besiegers, endeavoured to make his way through the rafters and divot roof. He was halfway out when the Mugach More saw him scrambling and writhing in the aperture he had made. He believed in the darkness that it was one of the thieves, and, leaping on a table

#### PLUNGED HIS DIRK

in the body of the youth. The latter fell dead on the earthen floor, and when the Mugach More discovered the terrible mistake he had made his grief was uncontrollable, and his fierce impulsive nature blazed out in a torrent of mad fury. Peter heard sufficient through the keyhole to enable him to realise the grim tragedy that had taken place within. He appealed to the Mugach More's wife to open the door, and that he would speedily avenge the foul murder of her son. The mother, swayed with excitement, actually believed that her husband had intentionally killed her illegitimate son, rushed to the door and undid the bolt. The "murderers" crowded in, and in the darkness a terrible struggle ensued. Peter and the Mugach More assailed each other with the ferocity of wild beasts. For a moment the latter succeeded in holding at arm's length his formidable foe, and a second more and his dirk would have been plunged deep in the reiver's breast. The upraised hand before it could deal the fatal blow was checked. The faithless and excited wife threw over the dirk a canvas sheet, and before her husband could extricate his weapon from the folds Peter's skein dirk was stained with Fraser's life blood. The curtain did not fall on the weird tragedy until every member of the household was murdered, the woman, despite her appeals, being trampled to death.

The reivers completed their fiendish work by decapitating the murdered, and when the natives rose next morning a shepherd brought them the intelligence that on an oblong hill within a stone's throw of the village

#### NINE HUMAN HEADS,

with the faces turned westwards, monu-

mented the summit. Since then the hill has been known as Tom-na-Cean—the hill of the heads.

To escape his pursuers, Peter crossed over to Ireland, remaining there for seven years. When the tragedy of Tom-na-Cean had been almost forgotten, a man named Grant had his cattle stolen. Obtaining traces of the thieves, he followed them up, and, aided by friends, overtook them in the forest of Badenoch. They succeeded in recovering the cattle, and on the return journey foregathered with a man who was recognised as Peter disguised as a peasant. He was seized by the Strathspey men, and at Lag-na-Caillich—i.e., "the Old Woman's Hollow"—a mile west from the present railway station at Avimore, an attempt was made to rescue the murderer. Grant threatened to kill Peter on the spot in the event of any of his friends interfering. The threat produced the desired effect, and the Strathspey men were permitted to continue the journey unmolested. Peter was taken before the laird of Grant, who at this period was supreme criminal and civil authority in Strathspey, but for some reason which tradition has not preserved, he refused to mete out justice to the reiver. Grant and his friends then determined to hand him over to the authorities at Inverness, but on the way to Carrbridge they had to pass Tom-na-Cean, and the recollection which the hill revived altered their plans for disposing of Peter. A huge pine tree on

#### THE FACE OF THE HILL,

with a strong horizontal bow, was within a few yards of them, and it was decided there and then to hang the arch reiver and murderer. A halter of birch withes was made and before the sun went down Peter's lifeless body swayed backward and forwards beneath the branches of the great pine.

For a twelvemonth it swung like the pendulum of a clock. No matter how calm the day and breathless the wind the raven pecked body swung in never ending monotony until men became frightened of the weird spectacle. No one could muster courage to cut it down, and mothers awed their children to silence by whispering in their ears merely the ominous name of Padrig Mac-an-Sagaert. When the spring came round it was said the fowls of the air used the reiver's red shaggy hair to line their nests, and that the "viewless wren" made a fruitless attempt to build its house within the capacious jaws of the robber.

Then, as now the public school of the district was situated at Duthie, a couple of miles east from Carrbridge. The scholars with their satchels over their shoulders and a peat under their arm for the school fire, to which all had to contribute then, were in the habit of pitching stones at the withered corpse. One bolder than the others went so near the suspended body and struck the birchen withes with so much force that he broke it, and the fleshless skeleton wavering for a moment fell, sinking into itself like a puff of smoke. The boy rushed away and became so alarmed that he burst a blood vessel and died. The scanty remains of the reiver were interred near where they fell, but when the Highland Road was being constructed some eighty years ago they were resurrected and reinterred where they are now within a couple of hundred yards north of the present Carrbridge Hotel.

#### Queen Victoria's Dogs.

Her Majesty, as is well known, is fond of dogs, and Mr. G. B. Krehl, in a supplement to "The Stockkeeper," gives some interesting particulars, ascertained on a visit to the kennels at Windsor, respecting the Royal canine pets. It goes without saying that the animals receive every attention and are admirably housed. Their sleeping apartments are carefully ventilated, and hot-water pipes run through the length of the building.

In the kennels are dogs of nearly every breed. For collies the Queen has always shown a preference, and this accounts for the number kept at Windsor. The Princess Beatrice's "fancy" lies in the direction of fox-terriers, which are also well represented. We are glad to note, by the way, that the fox-terriers in the Royal kennels are not docked. It would be a good thing if the Royal example in this respect were generally followed. How any one can imagine that mutilating a dog adds to its beauty, we fail to understand.

Some of the Royal fox-terriers are certainly game enough. One of them—Jack by name—who when a store was recently cleared out had a chance of distinguishing himself, killed twenty-two rats in a quarter of an hour. Her Majesty, it should be said, frequently inspects the kennels, "inquiring into everything affecting the health and comfort of the inmates and giving each animal a caressing pat and kindly word of recognition.

When the Royal dogs die they are laid to rest "beneath the turf where they gambled as puppies and were exercised when they grew up. Each little grave is marked by a stone tablet about a foot long and eight inches across, whereon a few words are engraved, giving the name and date of death." Among the inscriptions on the tombstones of the dogs are the following: "Maurice, favorite Mount St. Bernard of H. R. H. the Prince Consort, died November, 1864." A little further away lies "Prince, Scotch Terrier. Brought from Balmoral June 14, 1865. Died February 6, 1874"; and in the shade of a small fir rests "Nellie (collie), mother to Bess, Flora and Sailor. Died October 12, 1886."

#### The Best Things.

Remember, my boy, the good things in the world are always cheapest. Spring water costs less than whiskey; a box of cigars will buy two or three Bibles; a State election costs more than a revival of religion; you can sleep in church every Sabbath morning for nothing, but a nap in a Pullman car costs you \$2 every time; the circus takes fifty cents, the theater \$1, but the missionary box is grateful for a penny; the race horse scoops in \$2,000 the first day, while the church bazaar lasts a week, works twenty-five or thirty of the best women in America nearly to death, and comes out \$40 in debt.—[R. J. Burdette.

#### A Mexican Duel.

A desperate duel took place at Cordoba on Saturday in the presence of a great crowd. The encounter was between Antonio Gomez, son of the proprietor of the Plaza, in which the bull fights take place, and a rival whose name is unknown. A Dalziel telegram says that the men met in front of the cathedral, and drawing their knives fought for some time. Gomez was stabbed to the heart. His opponent was fearfully cut, and after lingering several days, died from the effects of his wounds.

## A PILOT'S STIRRING STORY.

### Run Down by A Steamer.

A disastrous collision occurred on Saturday night off the Wielingen Lightship, thirteen miles from Flushing, when the barque Childwell, of Liverpool, 1286 tons register, was sunk and fifteen hands were drowned. The Childwell was on a passage from Iquique to Antwerp, and when off the lightship was run into a steamer unknown, outward bound. The barque was struck amidships and cut into pieces, the mainmast and foremast knocked overboard, the mizzenmast alone being left standing. The vessel immediately sank, and a portion of the crew at that part of the vessel took to the mast-head. Their comrades in the other part of the ship gave a cry for help, but went under and were drowned. Fortunately another steamer came towards the sinking vessel, and she proved to be the Great Eastern Company's Continental steamer Ipswich, Captain Robinson, with passengers from Antwerp to Parkeston. Captain Robinson at once launched a lifeboat, which was manned by the chief mate, the second mate and two seamen and a fireman. They succeeded in rescuing Captain Richardson, first mate Fellows, second mate Grimley two apprentices, and able seaman Richardson Laming, the pilot, gave the following graphic narrative of his terrible experience. He said:—"I was shipped on Tuesday last on board the Childwell by some Dover boatmen. When we left the Downs the wind was blowing northwest by west, but we made

#### A FINE PASSAGE

across the North Sea, and all went well until about seven P. M. of the same day. We were then about half a mile from the Wielingen Lightship, which is thirteen miles from Flushing. It was beautifully clear, although it was a dark night and blowing rather heavily. It was so clear that we could see lights a long way off. Quite a quarter of an hour before the collision took place the red light of the steamer which collided with us was reported on our port bow. We watched it, and saw the vessel approaching, but thought she was going all clear of us. We kept on our course, but all at once the steamer starboarded her helm, thinking, apparently, to cross our bows. At that time she was right on top of us. We were sailing six or seven knots, and the steamer was going full speed. She was a very large vessel, apparently a passenger steamer, as she had a double row of cabin lights. We supposed she was one of the Red Star liners or German boats which sail from Flushing. She was coming out from there. Directly I saw her green light I said, "There will be a collision." I could see it was inevitable, and within a second or so she was right into us. We shouted to those of our crew who were in the berths. "Look out, all hands!" but before they could get up she had struck us. It was

#### AN AWFUL CRASH,

and a fearful sight to witness. The steamer struck us between the mainmast and foremast on the port side. It was a loud, fearful crash like the report of a gun, only much more terrible, and the pieces of iron plating were thrown about as the bows of the steamer ploughed through us. She cut right through the vessel to within five or six feet of the starboard side, the force of the blow causing us to heel over to starboard. Our foremast and mainmast fell, with a lot of the rigging, on to the steamer's decks. She backed astern at once, carrying the masts with her. As soon as the steamer backed out we filled, and in less than two minutes the ship had sunk. We had no chance to get out the boats, and the sea was running very high when the steamer backed out. She showed three red lights, signifying that she was disabled. Our vessel settled on the ground, the water being somewhat shallow there. The water closed over the ship, although it was low tide. All that stood above water was part of the mizzenmast and the end of the bowsprit. Nine of us who were on the after-part of the ship climbed into the mizzen rigging. Of the fifteen men who were drowned we believe that twelve of them went down in the ship. They could hardly have had time to get up from below. Three poor fellows were out on the end of the bowsprit. We heard their cries for help, but we could not get at them or offer any assistance. It was an awful thing to be so near them and unable to help them. They appeared to hold on to the bowsprit until the water rose and reached them, about two hours after the vessel sank, and then were washed off and drowned.

#### THE NIGHT WAS BITTERLY COLD,

and we felt the effects of the exposure very much. The mate cut away some of the halyards, and we lashed ourselves all together round the mizzenmast. We remained there four hours. It is not true that the colliding steamer did not attempt to assist us. She stood by us for about an hour. They lowered two boats, but they could not reach us. It was very rough, and there was a very broken sea caused by the tide running out. It must have been heart-rending to the poor fellows who were hanging on to the bowsprit to see the boats put back to the steamer and leave them to perish. It might have been very difficult to reach us, but I think the men on the bowsprit might have been picked off. When we saw the steamer steam away we had very little hope of being saved, for we knew that in a few hours time the water would rise and cover us. Our hearts beat with joy when we saw the lights of a steamer approaching between half-past ten and eleven o'clock. The Flushing pilot recognized her to be one of the Harwich boats, which proved to be true, as she turned out to be the Ipswich. We all shouted together at the top of our voices, and to our great joy we were heard, for the steamer came within speaking distance, so that her lights shone on us, and the captain shouted "Hold on; I will lower my boat." The steamer's lifeboat was lowered, as we afterwards learned, in charge of the chief mate and rowed towards us. We were all very grateful for the kindness we received on the Ipswich. I shall never forget the experience of that night. None of us expected to see our homes again."

#### The Household Prize.

135 Adelaide St., W. Toronto, Ont.: "Your reliable preparation, St. Jacobs Oil, has proved a benefit to me in more ways than one. I have used it for quinsy (outward application) with very beneficial results, and for a case of rheumatism, where its action was swift and sure, and a perfect cure was performed. I consider it a remedy to be prized in every household." Thos. PIERDON, with Johnson & Brown.

## THE RUSSIAN CZAR.

### He Looks Upon War With Horror—Not a Great Monarch, but a Model Ruler.

It is an interesting sketch of Alexander III. which is contributed by Mr. W. T. Stead to the January number of the Review of Reviews. This tribute of respect is the more weighty because Mr. Stead is the only Englishman who has had the opportunity of interviewing the Czar in the interest of a newspaper. It is thus first-hand impressions, and not borrowed or speculative opinions, which he sets before us. What especially concerns the world to know is the Czar's personal feeling in regard to war. Does he wish to hasten or to postpone as long as possible the seemingly inevitable convulsion of Europe? It is Mr. Stead's conviction that the Emperor looks upon war with horror. In the last Russo-Turkish conflict he saw enough of the realities of campaigning to recoil from the thought of causing such calamities. Unlike Kaiser William II., the Russian sovereign desires, we are told, not to be reputed a great monarch, but to be the ruler of a great people, whose welfare and progress are safeguarded by peace. Mr. Stead, indeed, would not affirm that the Czar is for peace at any price; but he believes him to be for peace at almost any price compatible with national honor and the defence of Russian interests. This view of the Czar's wishes seems at first sight irreconcilable with his present friendliness to France and his former attitude toward Prince Alexander of Battenberg, when the latter was reigning at Sofia. Mr. Stead insists, however, that the inconsistency is apparent rather than real. At the very beginning of his reign, Alexander III. met the German Emperor at Skiernewitz to renew the ties which had long bound Germany and Russia. To that traditional understanding he adhered until he was alienated by what seemed to be proofs of Bismarck's duplicity in the forged despatches to Bulgaria. When the forgery was exposed, the Czar showed a willingness and even an eagerness to renew friendly relations with the Berlin Government; and there is but little doubt that had Bismarck remained Chancellor, the former state of things would have been restored. Even as things are, Mr. Stead thinks that the Russian sovereign's motive in entering into a species of agreement with France is generally misunderstood. The Czar still distrusts the French republic, not only because in the past it has given an asylum and sympathy to Poles and Nihilists, but on account of the incessant change of Ministers. If he has publicly testified good will to a Government in which he has no great confidence, it was in order to acquire an inside veto upon French designs of war. The Czar has desired, in other words, to put France under bonds to keep the peace. By the way of confirming this construction of the Czar's purposes, Mr. Stead asserts that when the French Ambassador to St. Petersburg suggested that the Empress Frederick's visit to Paris might be made the occasion of war, he went away with a flea in his ear.

Then, again, the course pursued by the Russian Emperor toward Prince Alexander of Battenberg was due, according to Mr. Stead, to the finest points in his character, namely, his detestation of mendacity and his determination to keep faith even to his own hurt. It appears that when he detects any of his Ministers in deceit, no proofs of ability can keep the man in office. Having become convinced that Prince Alexander had deliberately lied to him, the Czar thenceforth refused to have anything to do with him. Moreover, the Czar considered we are told, that his own honor had been clouded by the Prince's availing himself of, if he did not also instigate, the revolution at Philippopolis which brought about the union of Eastern Roumelia to Bulgaria. Having reluctantly assented to the restoration of Eastern Roumelia to Turkey by the Berlin Congress, the Russian sovereign held himself bound in honor to sustain that decision. The charges of bad faith, which rained upon him from Pesth and Vienna, cut him to the quick. Prince Alexander's behavior in accepting the fusion of the two Bulgarias gave color to the doubt cast on the Czar's word, and to the distrust of his fidelity to treaties. It was to clear himself from this reproach that the Czar inflexibly opposed the political consummation which had been contemplated at San Stefano, and broke irrevocably with the Prince who had exposed the honesty of his patron's intentions to suspicion. Mr. Stead believes that as the Russian Emperor acted in that question so he will act in others; that he will go on sacrificing his interests to his honor, and abandoning a cherished aim to Russian policy rather than attain it at the price of a stain on his fair fame. It is the judgment of this English observer that there has never been a more disinterested, conscientious, sober-minded ruler than is the present autocrat of all the Russias. If he is not a political reformer, it is because, like the English rulers of India, he does not believe his subjects ripe for profound political changes. If he is not a statesman of the first class, he is a vigilant, painstaking, upright, anxious administrator. If he is not a great man, he is at least a sound and good one. Mr. Stead would describe him as a strong man who takes short views. He aims to deal daily with the work which his hands find to do, believing that sufficient to the day is the evil thereof. From day to day he strives with all the insight at his command to discern his duty; and then he loes it to the best of his ability. He takes his position seriously, even solemnly, and he means to use his unlimited powers for the wellbeing of his people instead of for his personal aggrandizement and renown. The target of Nihilist plots, he stands, according to Mr. Stead, erect and steadfast cheerful without bravado, turning to danger the simple, open-face of a man who has preserved amid the cares of State the heart of a child. To confront the machinery of ter-

## Out of Sorts

Describes a feeling peculiar to persons of dyspeptic tendency, or caused by change of climate, season or life. The stomach is out of order, the head aches or does not feel right.

### The Nerves

seem strained to their utmost, the mind is confused and irritable. This condition finds an excellent corrective in Hood's Sarsaparilla, which, by its regulating and toning powers, soon

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ror by which he is environed, and to perform with composure what he conceives to be his duty, he regards as all in the day's work. He cannot be shaken by the fear of dynamite. He will die at his post. It is an impressive and in many ways a winning portrait which Mr. Stead draws of the Czar. But it is impossible, it may be asked, for such a man to reconcile with his conception of his people's welfare the bestowal on them of such political privileges as might educate them for the functions of self-government? Mr. Stead is an English Radical, but he does not take for granted that all European countries present the same conditions and require the same institutions. He is convinced that, if all Russians were to go to the ballot box tomorrow, they would vote for a change the precise reverse of that which is advocated by the Nihilists. They would by an immense majority insist upon giving the Czar more power instead of less. Such being the case, is not the Czar right in trying to do the duty which lies nearest to his hands, and in leaving to the future the problems thereof?

## "German Syrup"

"We are six in family. We live in a place where we are subject to violent Colds and Lung Troubles. I have

used German Syrup for six years successfully for Sore Throat, Cough, Cold, Hoarseness, Pains in the Chest and Lungs, and spitting-up of Blood. I have tried many different kinds of cough Syrups in my time, but let me say to anyone wanting such a medicine—German Syrup is the best. That has been my experience. If you use it once, you will go back to it whenever you need it. It gives total relief and is a quick cure. My advice to everyone suffering with Lung Troubles is—Try it. You will soon be convinced. In all the families where your German Syrup is used we have no trouble with the Lungs at all. It is the medicine for this country."  
John Franklin Jones.

G. G. GREEN, Sole Man'fr, Woodbury, N.J.

### 38 Hours' Terrible Anxiety

The Umberto I., of the Italian General Navigation Company, has just reached Genoa, and brings the following story:—She was a day out from St. Vincent, with a crew of 88, and 366 passengers, when one night, the sea being perfectly calm, a cry was heard—"We are going to the bottom! We are sinking!" The boats were lowered, signals of distress were hoisted, and part of the crew kept the passengers quiet, for they were wild with fear. The water by this time had risen almost to six feet. Some officers and sailors dived and found that the damage must have happened when the coal had been put in at St. Vincent; one of the "hulbuts" had been broken. The leak was stopped as well as possible, and then all hands set to work at the pumps. The steamer's course was changed, and she put back to St. Vincent, which she reached after thirty-eight hours of anxiety.

Dr. Keeley's unwillingness to reveal the secret of his drink cure to the medical profession of the world, on the plea that in experienced hands it might miscarry, can now be measured precisely. So far as it was limited to the State of Connecticut it was equal to just \$80,000. For that sum Keeley has suppressed his fears of malpractice on the part of physicians and given his secret to a doctor in New Haven with the right to use it exclusively in his State. All that is now needed for Dr. Keeley to appear with the air of ordinary decency is to throw overboard his pretence of keeping his cure secret from motives of philanthropy and confess himself a money maker in medication, pure and simple. He will then acquire the distinctive character of the quack, but he will still be a quack of amazing success.

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