



CLASSIC LIVING BOOK

SCOTLAND'S  
STORY

---

H. E. Marshall

COMPLETE AND UNABRIDGED

# Scotland's Story

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H.E. MARSHALL

## CONTENTS

	WHY THIS BOOK WAS WRITTEN	1
1.	THE STORY OF PRINCE GATHELUS	2
2.	A FIGHT WITH THE ROMANS	5
3.	THE MARCH OF THE ROMANS	8
4.	THE STORY OF SAINT COLUMBA	11
5.	HOW THE FRENCH AND THE SCOTS BECAME FRIENDS	15
6.	THE LAST OF THE PICTS	18
7.	HOW A PLOUGHMAN WON A BATTLE	21
8.	MACBETH AND THE THREE WEIRD SISTERS	23
9.	MACBETH—THE MURDER OF BANQUO	26
10.	MACBETH—HOW THE THANE OF FIFE WENT TO ENGLAND	28
11.	MACBETH—HOW BIRNAM WOOD CAME TO DUNSINANE	32
12.	MALCOLM CANMORE—HOW THE KING OVERCAME A TRAITOR	35
13.	MALCOLM CANMORE—HOW SAINT MARGARET CAME TO SCOTLAND	38
14.	THE STORY OF PIERCE-EYE	42
15.	THE REIGNS OF DONALD BANE, DUNCAN II. AND EDGAR	45
16.	ALEXANDER I., THE FIERCE	47
17.	DAVID I., THE SORE SAINT—THE BATTLE OF THE STANDARD	49
18.	WILLIAM I., THE LION	54
19.	THE STORY OF ALEXANDER II.	57
20.	ALEXANDER III.—HOW THE LITTLE KING WAS CROWNED	59
21.	ALEXANDER III.—THE TAMING OF THE RAVENS	62
22.	ALEXANDER III.—A BEAUTIFUL LADY TOOK A BRAVE KNIGHT PRISONER	65
23.	ALEXANDER III.—HOMEWARD THROUGH THE DARK NIGHT	67
24.	THE MAID OF NORWAY	69
25.	JOHN BALIOL—THE SIEGE OF BERWICK	71
26.	JOHN BALIOL—THE LAST OF TOOM TABARD	74
27.	THE ADVENTURES OF SIR WILLIAM WALLACE	76
28.	WILLIAM WALLACE—THE BLACK PARLIAMENT OF AYR	79
29.	WILLIAM WALLACE—THE BATTLE OF STIRLING BRIDGE	81
30.	WILLIAM WALLACE—THE BATTLE OF FALKIRK	83
31.	WILLIAM WALLACE—THE TURNING OF A LOAF	87

32.	ROBERT THE BRUCE—HOW THE BRUCE RECEIVED A LETTER	90
33.	ROBERT THE BRUCE—HOW THE KING WAS CROWNED	93
34.	ROBERT THE BRUCE—IF AT FIRST YOU DON'T SUCCEED, TRY AGAIN	96
35.	ROBERT THE BRUCE—THE KING TRIES AGAIN	100
36.	ROBERT THE BRUCE—THE FIGHT AT THE FORD	104
37.	ROBERT THE BRUCE—HOW THE KING ESCAPED FROM TRAITORS	106
38.	ROBERT THE BRUCE—THE TAKING OF PERTH	110
39.	ROBERT THE BRUCE—HOW TWO CASTLES WERE WON	113
40.	ROBERT THE BRUCE—HOW THE CASTLE OF EDINBURGH WAS TAKEN	116
41.	ROBERT THE BRUCE—HOW SIR HENRY DE BOHUN MET HIS DEATH	119
42.	ROBERT THE BRUCE—THE STORY OF THE BATTLE OF BANNOCKBURN	123
43.	THE BRUCE—HOW THE SCOTS CARRIED THE WAR INTO ENGLAND	125
44.	ROBERT THE BRUCE—THE HEART OF THE KING	129
45.	DAVID II.—THE STORY OF BLACK AGNES	132
46.	DAVID II.—THE BATTLE OF NEVILLE'S CROSS	136
47.	ROBERT II.—THE FRENCH AND THE SCOTS MADE WAR ON ENGLAND	139
48.	ROBERT II.—THE STORY OF THE BATTLE OF OTTERBURN	142
49.	ROBERT III.—THE STORY OF A FEARFUL HIGHLAND TOURNAMENT	146
50.	ROBERT III.—THE STORY OF THE DUKE OF ROTHESAY	148
51.	REGENT ALBANY—THE STORY OF THE BATTLE OF HARLAW	151
52.	REGENT MURDOCH—THE SCOTS IN FRANCE	154
53.	JAMES I.—THE BEAUTIFUL LADY OF THE GARDEN	156
54.	JAMES I.—THE POET KING, HOW HE REIGNED, AND HOW HE DIED	161
55.	JAMES II. OF THE FIERY FACE—THE STORY OF THE BLACK DINNER	167
56.	JAMES II. OF THE FIERY FACE—THE FALL OF THE BLACK DOUGLASES	171
57.	JAMES III.—THE STORY OF THE BOYDS	175
58.	JAMES III.—HOW A MASON BECAME AN EARL	177
59.	JAMES III.—THE BATTLE OF SAUCHIEBURN	181
60.	JAMES IV.—THE STORY OF A GREAT SEA FIGHT	183
61.	JAMES IV.—THE THISTLE AND THE ROSE	187
62.	JAMES IV.—FLODDEN FIELD	192
63.	JAMES V. THE KING OF THE COMMONS—FALL OF THE RED DOUGLASES	195
64.	JAMES V. THE KING OF THE COMMONS—JOHNNIE ARMSTRONG	199
65.	JAMES V.—THE GOODMAN OF BALLENGIECH	203
66.	JAMES V. THE KING OF THE COMMONS—HIS LAST DAYS	205
67.	MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS—FRANCE	208
68.	MARY—DARNLEY AND RIZZIO	214
69.	MARY—BOTHWELL	219
70.	MARY—HOW THE QUEEN ESCAPED, AND WAS MADE PRISONER AGAIN	223
71.	JAMES VI.—KING'S MEN AND QUEEN'S MEN	227
72.	JAMES VI.—THE DEATH OF TWO QUEENS AND THE JOINING OF CROWNS	232
73.	JAMES VI.—NEW SCOTLAND	235
74.	CHARLES I.—THE KING AND THE COVENANT	237
75.	CHARLES I.—HOW THE SOLDIER POET HELPED THE KING	240
76.	CROMWELL—HOW THE SOLDIER POET DIED	243

77.	CROMWELL.—FOR THE CROWN	247
78.	CHARLES II.—HOW THE KING CAME TO HIS OWN AGAIN	250
79.	CHARLES II.—THE CHURCH AMONG THE HILLS	253
80.	JAMES VII.—A FORLORN HOPE	258
81.	JAMES VII.—THE BATTLE OF KILLIECRANKIE	261
82.	WILLIAM III. AND MARY II.—THE GLEN OF WEEPING	263
83.	WILLIAM III.—FORTUNE'S GILDED SAILS	266
84.	ANNE.—HOW THE UNION JACK WAS MADE	271
85.	GEORGE I.—FOR THE KING OVER THE WATER	275
86.	GEORGE II.—A STORY OF SMUGGLERS	279
87.	GEORGE II.—HOW PRINCE CHARLIE CAME HOME	283
88.	GEORGE II.—THE WANDERINGS OF BONNIE PRINCE CHARLIE	288
89.	GEORGE III.—ABOUT A GREATER CONQUEROR THAN KINGS	292
90.	GEORGE IV.—GOD SAVE THE KING	294



## WHY THIS BOOK WAS WRITTEN

‘IT is very nice,’ said Caledonia, as she closed her book with a sigh; ‘but why did you not tell us stories of Scotland?’

‘Because there was no need. That has been done already by a great and clever man.’

‘Oh, but children sometimes like the stories which are written by the not great and clever people best,’ said Caledonia wisely. ‘Littler children do, anyhow. They are more simpler, you know.’

‘Oh indeed!’ said I.

‘I wish you would write Scotland’s Story for littler children like me,’ went on Caledonia, ‘and please put more battles in it than in Our Island Story. But you must not say that the Scots were defeated. I don’t like it at all when you say “The Scots and the Picts were driven back.”

‘But you know we were defeated sometimes, Caledonia.’

Caledonia looked grave. That was very serious. Presently her face brightened. ‘Well, if we were, you needn’t write about those times,’ she said.

So, because Caledonia asked me, I have written Scotland’s Story. I am afraid it will not please, her altogether, for I have had to say more than once or twice that ‘the Scots were defeated.’ But I would remind her that ‘defeated’ and ‘conquered’ are words with quite different meanings, and that perhaps it is no disgrace for a plucky little nation to have been defeated often, and yet never conquered by her great and splendid neighbour.

‘Fairy tales!’ I hear some wise people murmur as they turn the pages. Yes, there are fairy tales here, and I make no apology for them, for has not a grave and learned historian said that there ought to be two histories of Scotland one woven with the golden threads of romance and glittering with the rubies and sapphires of Fairyland? Such, surely, ought to be the children’s Scotland.

So I dedicate my book to the ‘littler children,’ as Caledonia calls them, who care for their country’s story. It is sent into the world in no vain spirit of rivalry, but rather as a humble tribute to the great Master of Romance, who wrote Tales for his little grandson, and I shall be well repaid, if my tales but form stepping-stones by which little feet may pass to his Enchanted Land.

H. E. MARSHALL.

## THE STORY OF PRINCE GATHELUS

ONCE upon a time there lived in Greece a king who had a son called Gathelus. Prince Gathelus was very handsome and brave, but he was wild, and gay, and wicked, and he caused his father much sorrow and trouble. Over and over again the King punished and imprisoned his son for his evil deeds. But in spite of all his father could do, Gathelus grew no better but rather worse. At last the King had no more patience with him, and banished him from the land.

When Gathelus knew that he was banished, he took a ship, and gathering as many of his friends as would come with him, he sailed away to a far country called Egypt.

When they arrived in Egypt, Pharaoh, the ruler of the land, received them very kindly, for he was at that time fighting great battles, and he hoped that these gay young knights would help him against his enemies.

This, Gathelus and his friends did, and when Pharaoh had, with their aid, defeated his enemies, he rewarded them richly and gave them a city in which they could live together. Gathelus alone was not content with the rewards, for he had seen Pharaoh's beautiful daughter Scotas, and he longed to marry her. And as Pharaoh could refuse nothing to the gallant Prince who had freed him from his enemies, he gave his consent, and Scotas and Gathelus were married.

For many years Gathelus lived in Egypt, growing rich and great, and ruling over his people, who became more and more numerous as the years went by. And Gathelus loved his wife so much that he commanded that in honour of her name Scotas, all his people should be called Scots.

But when Pharaoh began to be unkind to the Children of Israel, and terrible plagues fell upon the land, Gathelus wished to live there no longer. So he gathered a great fleet of ships, and with his wife and children, and all his soldiers and servants, and a great company of people, he went on board and sailed far away across the sea in search of another country.

After many storms and adventures Gathelus and his company arrived at last on the shores of Spain. They had been tossed and buffeted about by winds and waves for many days. They had eaten all the food which they had brought with them, and they were nearly starving. So they were very glad to be safe on land once more.

But the people of Spain were not glad to see these strangers, and they made ready to fight them. Gathelus too made ready to fight, and a fierce battle followed in which the Spaniards were beaten.



But Gathelus and his Scots wished to live at peace with the people of the land, and although neither could speak the language of the other, the Scots found means to make the Spaniards understand that they did not wish to fight against them or to hurt them in any way. So the two nations became friends, and the Spaniards gave a part of their country to the Scots, where for many years they lived in peace.

As the years went on, the Scots grew to be still richer and greater than they had been in Egypt, and Gathelus, who had been so wild and wicked when he was young, became a wise and good King. But when the Spaniards saw that the Scots had become a powerful nation, they were once more afraid of them, and they resolved to drive them out of the country.

Then both the Scots and the Spaniards gathered their mighty men, and there was a great and terrible battle, with awful slaughter on both sides. But in the end the Scots won the victory. Then once more peace was made, and the two nations agreed again to live side by side as friends.

But when Gathelus saw how the Scots still went on growing richer and greater day by day, he feared that the Spaniards would again become angry and want to fight. So he began to think how this might be avoided. At last, hearing of a Green Island which lay in the sea not far distant, he resolved to send some of his people there.

Gathering a great number of ships, he filled them with soldiers, and making his two sons, who were called Hiberus and Himecus, captains, he sent them away to seek for the Green Island.

For some days the ships sailed upon the sea seeking the Green Island in vain. But at last they came to it and landed there. The Scots soon found out that there were very few people on the Green Island, and those who were there were gentle and kindly, and had no wish to fight.

Hiberus and Himecus therefore, instead of fighting, tried to make friends with the people. This they easily did, for the inhabitants of the Green Island, seeing that the Scots meant them no harm, welcomed them gladly.

So the Scots settled in the Green Island and taught the people many useful things. They showed them how to sow and plough and reap, how to build houses, how to spin, and in many ways how to live more comfortably. Then presently, in honour of Hiberus, who was their Prince, they changed the name of the island to Hibernia. The island is still sometimes called by that name, although we generally call it Ireland.

For many years the Scots lived in Hibernia. Gathelus died, and Hiberus died, and after them ruled many kings. At last, when many hundreds of years had passed, a prince called Rothsay sailed over to the islands which lay opposite Hibernia, and took possession of them. The island upon which he first landed he called Rothsay, and to this day there is a town on the island of Bute called by that name.

The Scots, finding that these islands were fertile, and good for breeding

cattle, sailed over from Hibernia in greater and greater numbers, bringing their wives and children with them. At last they filled all the little islands, and some of them landed in the north of the big island, which was then called Albion.

After many, many years, the north part of Albion came to be called the land of Scots, or Scotland, just as the south part was called the land of Angles, or England.

Some people think that this story of Prince Gathelus is a fairy tale. But this at least is true, that in far off days when people spoke of Scotia, they meant Ireland, and when they spoke of Scots, they meant the people who lived in Ireland, and Scotland took its name from the people who came from Ireland and settled in Scotland.

## CHAPTER 2.

### A FIGHT WITH THE ROMANS

**W**HEN the Scots first came to Albion, they found it already peopled by the Britons, and by another race called the Picts. It is not certain from where these Picts came, but they were a very wild and fierce people. It is supposed that they were called Picts, from the Latin word *pictus*, which means painted, because they painted their bodies instead of wearing clothes.

So there were three races living in Scotland, and these were divided into many tribes who often fought with each other. There were kings of Scots, kings of Picts, and kings of Britons, all ruling in Albion. Sometimes the kings and their peoples all fought against each other; sometimes the Picts and the Scots joined together against the Britons. Those were fierce and wild times, and they were all fierce and wild peoples. They lived in caves, or in holes dug in the ground and covered over with turf and with branches of trees. They wore few clothes except those made from the skins of animals, although the Scots knew how to weave and make cloth in bright coloured checks and stripes.

A great part of the country was covered with forests. In these forests wild beasts prowled about. Bears, wolves, wild boars, bison, and a kind of tiger, were the fiercest, but there were also several kinds of deer, beavers, and many other animals which are no longer to be found in Scotland.

The people hunted these animals and killed them for food, and also for their skins, of which they made clothes. In hunting they used bows and arrows. Bows and arrows were used too in war, as well as a long, blunt, heavy spear. And in hunting and fighting the men spent nearly all their time.

Years went on. Many kings, good and bad, lived, and ruled, and died, and at last a great and clever people called the Romans heard of the island of Britain, and came sailing over the sea to conquer it. They landed first in the south of the island and tried to conquer the people there, and it was not until the year 80 A.D., more than a hundred years after the Romans first came to Britain, that a general called Agricola marched into Scotland against the Caledonians, as the Romans called all the tribes who lived in the north part of the island.

Agricola took some of his soldiers into Scotland by land. Others sailed there in great galleys, as the Roman ships were called. The Caledonians did not fear the Roman soldiers. They had already fought against them many times, for they had often marched into the south of the island to help the

Britons against the Romans. 'They were willing,' says an old writer, 'to help towards the delivery of the land from the bondage of the Romans, whose nestling so near their noses they were loth to see or hear of.'

But if the Caledonians did not fear the soldiers, the great galleys of the Romans filled them with awe and dread. Never before had they seen so many nor such great ships. 'The very ocean is given over to our enemies,' they said. 'How shall we save ourselves from these mighty conquerors who thus surround us on every side?'

But although the Caledonians were filled with dread, they fought bravely. As Agricola marched northward by the coast, his galleys followed him on the sea. Sometimes the galleys would come close to the shore, and the sailors would land and join the soldiers in the camp. There they would tell stories to each other of the battles and dangers, of the storms and adventures, through which they had passed, each trying to make the others believe that their adventures had been the most exciting, their dangers the greatest.

The Caledonians fought fiercely, but Agricola's soldiers were far better trained, and gradually he drove the islanders before him into the mountains beyond the rivers Forth and Clyde. There he built a line of forts. He knew that he had neither conquered nor subdued the fierce Caledonians. So he built this line of forts in order to cut them off from the south, and shut them, as it were, into another island.

Having built this line of forts, Agricola marched still farther north. But the Caledonians fought so fiercely that some of the Roman leaders begged Agricola to turn back. Agricola would not go back, but as the winter was near, and the roads were so bad as to be almost impassable, he encamped and waited for the spring before fighting any more.

The Caledonians spent the winter in making preparations for battle. All the various tribes forgot their quarrels and joined together under a leader called Galgacus. Sending their wives and children to a safe place, the men, young and old, from far and near, flocked to Galgacus eager to fight for their country.

When spring came and the roads were once more passable, the Romans left their camp and marched northward, seeking the Caledonians. They met, it is thought, somewhere upon the slopes of the Grampian hills, but no one is sure of the exact spot.

The Caledonians were little more than savages, yet they were ready to fight to the last for their country. They were almost naked. They wore no armour and carried only small shields. For weapons they had bows and arrows, blunt iron swords and heavy spears. Those in the centre of the army were mounted upon rough little horses, and there too were gathered the war chariots with swords upon the wheels ready to dash among the enemy and cut them down.

Against these savage warriors came the splendid soldiers of the Roman Empire, clad in glittering coats of mail, armed with swords and spears of sharpened steel, every man among them trained to obey, to fight, and to die.

As the Caledonians stood ready for battle, Galgacus made a speech to them. 'Fight to day,' he said, 'for the liberty of Albion. We have never been slaves, and if we would not now become the slaves of these proud Romans there is nothing left to us but to fight and die. We are at the farthest limits of land and liberty. There is no land behind us to which we may flee. There is nothing but the waves and rocks and the Romans in their ships. These plunderers of the world having taken all the land, now claim the seas, so that even if we fly to the sea there is no safety from them. They kill and slay, and take what is not theirs, and call it Empire. They make a desert and call it Peace. Our children, our wives, and all who are dear to us, are torn from us, our lands and goods are destroyed. Let this day decide if such things we are to suffer for ever or revenge instantly. March then to battle. Think of your children and of the freedom which was your fathers', and win it again, or die.'

When Galgacus had finished speaking, the Caledonians answered with great shouts and songs, then with their chariots and horsemen they rushed upon the Romans. Fiercely the battle began, fiercely it raged. The Caledonians fought with splendid courage, but what could half naked savages do against the steel clad warriors of Rome? When night fell, ten thousand Caledonians lay dead upon the field. The Romans had won the victory.

All through the night could be heard the desolate cries of sorrow and despair, as women moved over the battle field seeking their dead, and helping the wounded. All through the night the sky was red with the light of fires. But in the morning the country far and near was empty and silent, and the villages were smoking ruins. Not a Caledonian was to be seen. They had burned their homes and fled away to hide among the mountains.

Agricola, knowing that it would be useless to try to follow them through the dark forest and hills, turned and marched southward again beyond his line of forts. A few months later he was called back to Rome.

Agricola had been four years in Scotland, and when he left it the people were still unconquered.

## THE MARCH OF THE ROMANS

**A**LTHOUGH the Caledonians had been defeated, they were not subdued, and they continued to fight so fiercely that the Romans gave up trying to keep the forts which Agricola had built.

Later on a Roman Emperor called Hadrian came to Britain, and he built a wall from the Tyne to the Solway. This wall ran straight across the country from sea to sea over hills and valleys, and it was so strong, and so well built, that although hundreds of years have passed since then it may still be seen to this day.

But even this great wall did not keep back the Caledonians. They broke through it or sailed round the ends of it in their little boats made of wickerwork covered with the skins of animals. Some years later another Roman Emperor called Antonine came to Britain. He drove the Caledonians back again beyond Agricola's forts, and there he built a wall which is still called by his name.

But the Caledonians broke through or climbed over this wall too. The first man who leaped over the wall was called Graham, and the ruins of that part of the wall are called Graham's Dyke to this day. Dyke is a Scottish word for wall.

Many years passed. The Romans called Britain a Roman province, but the wild people of the north not only remained unconquered but they became ever more and more bold. They over-leaped the wall more and more often, coming farther and farther south, fighting and plundering as they went.

At last an Emperor called Severus, hearing of the deeds of the wild Caledonians, resolved to conquer them. This Emperor was old and ill. He was so ill that he could not walk, and had to be carried in a kind of bed called a litter. But he was full of courage and determination, and gathering a great army of soldiers he invaded Scotland.

Scotland at this time was covered in many parts with pathless forest, and even where there were roads they were not fit for a great army, such as Severus now brought with him, to pass over.

So Severus as he marched his army through Scotland cut down trees, drained marshes, made roads and built bridges. Slowly but with fierce determination, led by a sick man who was carried about in a bed, the Romans marched through Scotland. From south to north they marched, yet they never fought a battle or came face to face with an enemy.

The Caledonians followed their march, dashing out upon them un-

awares, swooping down upon and killing those who lagged behind or who strayed too far ahead. In this way many were killed, many too died of cold, hunger, and weariness; still on and on, over hill and valley, swept the mighty host, to the very north of Scotland. There they turned and marched back again, and at last they reached the border and crossed beyond the wall, leaving fifty thousand of their number dead in the hills and valleys of the north.

No wonder that brave old Severus gave up the task as hopeless, and instead of trying to fight any more, he strengthened and repaired the wall which Hadrian had built so many years before.

And so it went on year by year, the Caledonians always attacking, the Romans always trying to drive them back again. At last, nearly five hundred years after they first came to Britain, the Romans went away altogether.

When the Romans had gone, the Caledonians found the south of Britain more easy to attack than ever. For as the Romans took away not only their own soldiers, but the best of the British whom they had trained to fight, there was now no one to guard the walls.

So the Caledonians threw down and destroyed the wall between the Forth and the Clyde. They broke and ruined great parts of Hadrian's wall too, and overran the south of Britain as far as London.

At last the Britons were in such dread and fear of the Caledonians that they sent to their old enemies the Romans for help. But the Romans would not help them. The Britons then sent to the Saxons, and the Saxons came to their aid.

When the King of the Picts heard that the Saxons had come to help the Britons, he sent to the King of the Scots begging him to join in fighting them. So the Picts and the Scots joined together against the Britons and the Saxons. But when the Picts and Scots saw the great army of Britons and the strange fierce Saxon warriors, some of them were afraid and stole away to hide themselves in the woods near. The two kings when they heard of this were very angry. They sent to seek these cowards, brought them back, and hanged them every one in sight of the whole army, so that none might be tempted to follow their example.

Then Dougall the Scottish King and Galanus the Pictish King spoke to their people and encouraged them with brave words.

When the battle began, arrows flew thick and fast, and it seemed as if neither side would give way. But when they came near to each other, the Picts and Scots charged so fiercely that the Britons fled before them. Then a fearful storm arose. The sky grew black with clouds and the air dark with rain and hail, which dashed on friend and foe alike. In the darkness the Picts and the Scots lost their rank and order, and when the storm passed over, the Saxons and the Britons had won the battle.

It was a sorrowful day for the Picts and the Scots. They fled away,

leaving the Britons to rejoice over the thousands of their enemies who lay dead upon the field.

But the Britons had no great cause for rejoicing, for the Saxons rid south Britain of the Picts and the Scots only to conquer it for themselves. And soon the Britons were glad to ask the Picts and Scots to help them to drive the Saxons out of their land. This they were never able to do, and the Saxons took all the south of Britain and made it their own. But Scotland they could never conquer.



## THE STORY OF SAINT COLUMBA

**I**N Ireland there lived a priest called Columba. He was very tall and strong and beautiful. He was the son of a king and might himself have been a king, but he did not care to sit upon a throne nor to wear a crown and royal robes. He did not long to fight and kill, as kings in these fierce days did. He was gentle and loving, and he longed rather to make people happy. So he was called Columba, which means a dove.

When a little boy, Columba had heard the story of Christ, and he had become a Christian. When he grew up, he spent his time teaching other people to be Christian too. For at that time nearly all the people in the world were heathen.

The Picts were heathen. Some of the Scots may have heard the story of Christ before they left Ireland, but if they had, they very soon forgot it amid the fierce wars and rough, wild life they led.

Often Columba turned his kind grey eyes across the blue waters to the islands where his fellow-countrymen had gone, and he longed to sail over the sea to tell his story there, and to teach the wild people of these islands to be kind and gentle.

At last he had his wish. He found twelve friends who were willing to go with him, and together they sailed across the sea in a little boat.

The boat, which was called the *Dewy-Red*, was small and frail. It was made of wickerwork covered with the skins of animals, and seemed hardly fit for so long a journey.

But these thirteen men were not afraid, and taking with them bread and water and a little milk, enough to serve them for a few days, they set sail. They were dressed in long white robes, their feet were bare except for sandals, and although they were going among fierce, wild people they took no weapons. God would guard them, they said.

The sun shone brightly and a soft wind blew as the *Dewy-Red* slid out upon the waters. Columba sat at the stern, steering straight for Albion. But as the shores of Ireland faded in the distance he looked back with tear-dimmed eyes. The rowers bent to the oars, and their eyes too were dim. These men loved their country dearly, but they were leaving it for love of others.

At last they reached the islands of Albion, and they landed upon one of them. But looking back across the sea they still faintly saw the shores of Ireland. 'We must go further,' they said, 'if day by day we see our dear country in the distance, our hearts will for ever return to it. Let us go where

we cannot see it, so that we may be content to live among strangers, in a strange land.'

So once more Columba and his friends entered their boat. They sailed on till they came to an island then called Hy, but which is now called Iona.

The sun was setting as the frail little boat touched the rocky shore. Once more Columba looked back. The sea shone golden in the evening light, but across the sparkling waves no glimmer of the Irish shore was to be seen.

Columba and his white-robed followers landed, and climbing to the highest point in the island again turned their eyes westward. Still no faintest outline of the Irish shore was to be seen. They had found what they sought, and kneeling on the rocky shore they gave God thanks who had brought them in safety over the sea. The dove and his message of peace had found a resting-place.

Upon this spot a cairn or pile of stones was raised which is called *Carn cul ri Erin*. That means 'The back turned upon Ireland.'

For two years Columba remained in Iona. During that time, besides teaching the people, he and his men built houses to live in, and also a church. Most of the people who lived in Iona and the islands round were Scots. Many of them became Christian; then Columba made up his mind to go to the Picts to teach them too about Christ.

The King of the Picts lived then at Inverness, and from Iona to Inverness the journey was long and difficult. But Columba had no fear. Through the dark forests where wild animals roared and prowled, by pathless mountain sides, among fierce heathen people he travelled on until he reached the palace of the King.

But the King and his heathen priests had heard of the coming of Columba, and the gates of the palace were barred against him and guarded by warriors.

Still Columba had no fear. Right up to the gates he marched, and raising his hand he made the sign of the cross upon them. Immediately the bolts and bars flew back. Slowly and silently the great gates turned upon their hinges and opened wide of their own accord. At the sight, the guards fled in terror to tell the King, who sat among his lords and priests.

When the King heard the wonderful story, he rose up from his throne, and crying out, 'This is a holy man,' he hurried to meet Columba.

Dressed in beautiful robes, Columba came slowly through the palace followed by his white-clad monks. As soon as the King saw him he knelt before him, praying for his blessing and protection. So the King became Columba's friend, and helped him in every way.

But not so the heathen priests. They hated Columba, they hated his teaching, and they did everything they could to keep him from speaking to the people.



ST. COLUMBA MADE THE SIGN OF THE CROSS,  
AND THE GREAT GATES OPENED WIDE.

One day when Columba's followers were singing hymns, the heathen priests tried to stop them, lest the people should hear. But instead of being silent, Columba himself began to sing, and his voice was so wonderful that it was heard for miles and miles around. It was heard by the King in his palace and by the peasant in his hut. And yet although it was heard so far away it sounded sweet and low to those who were near. The sound struck terror to the hearts of the heathen priests, so that they too were silent, and listened to the beautiful music.

For four-and-thirty years Columba lived among the people of Scotland. He travelled over all the land telling to the fierce heathen the story of Christ.

Many wonderful tales are told of Columba, and although we cannot believe them all, they help us to know that in those far-off times there lived a man whose heart was large and tender, who loved the helpless and the ignorant, and who gave his life to bring them happiness.

Besides preaching and teaching, Columba spent much of his time in writing. In those days all books were written by hand, and Columba copied the Psalms and other parts of the Bible. One night as he worked he grew very weary. He wrote the words 'They who seek the Lord shall want no manner of thing that is good,' then he said to those around him, 'Here I must rest. Some one else must finish my work.'

Then sitting upon the hard stones which served him for bed and pillow he spoke to his followers. 'Dear children, this is what I command with my last words—Let peace and charity be among you always. If you do this, following the example of the saints, God who gives strength to the just will help you. And I who shall be near Him will pray Him to give you all that is needful to you in this life, and to greatly reward you in the life that is to come.'

These were his last words.

At midnight Columba rose, and, going into the dark church, knelt before the altar. His servant followed him, but in the darkness could not find him. So in distress he called out, 'Where art thou, my father?' There was no answer.

At last groping about the church the man came upon Columba lying upon the steps of the altar. He raised his head and rested it against his knees, calling aloud for help.

Soon all the monks were roused, and lights were brought. With cries and tears they crowded round their dying master. Columba could not speak, but he smiled upon them, and raising his hand seemed to bless them. Then with a long sigh he closed his eyes and was at rest for ever.

## HOW THE FRENCH AND THE SCOTS BECAME FRIENDS

**Y**EARS passed on and many kings ruled in Scotland. They were years of war and bloodshed, for the country was still divided into different kingdoms, and besides the Picts and Scots and Britons, there were Saxons, who, although they could not succeed in conquering Scotland as they had conquered England, had settled in the part south of the Forth. Sometimes the Picts and Scots fought against each other; sometimes they joined and fought against the Britons; or again they would join with the Britons and fight against the Saxons. But always and always the story is of war.

At last there arose a good and wise king called Achaius. He tried to rule well and bring peace to his land.

In the time of Achaius the greatest ruler in Europe was Charlemagne, King of France and Roman Emperor. He was very powerful, but even he dreaded the wild Saxons, for they invaded France as they invaded Britain, and did many wicked and cruel deeds.

When Charlemagne heard how the Picts and the Scots resisted the Saxons and remained free, he resolved to make a league with them against their common enemy. He wanted too, to make his people love learning, and in all the world he could hear of no people so learned as the Scots. He resolved therefore to send to them and ask them to come to teach his people. So he called some of his greatest nobles and sent them with a message to Achaius, King of Scots.

These nobles stepped into a beautiful ship with purple sails and gilded prow and sailed away to Scotland. As soon as they landed they were led to the court of King Achaius, who greeted them kindly and treated them with great honour.

'Noble King,' said the messengers, bowing low before Achaius, 'our master, the most Christian Prince Charlemagne, sends you greeting. The fame of your good name and of the love you bear to the Christian faith has come to him. He has heard too of the learning and the bravery of your people, and of how they have resisted the heathen Saxons who have invaded Britain and done many evil and cruel deeds there. Our noble King desires therefore to be in fellowship with you and with your people, so that Scotsmen shall help Frenchmen and Frenchmen shall help Scotsmen. To this end let it be sworn between us that whenever the Saxons come with an army to France the Scots shall invade England. And if the Saxons come with an army to Scotland then the French shall take their ships and invade England.'

When the messengers had made this long speech they again bowed low and waited for King Achaius to answer.

'I thank your noble King for the love he shows towards me,' he replied, 'and when I have taken counsel with my lords and nobles you shall have my answer to carry back to him.'

Then the messengers were led to splendid rooms in the King's palace. Everything was done to please and amuse them. There were great banquets and hunting parties in which some of the nobles took part, but the greatest and wisest gathered round the King to give advice.

Long they talked, for the lords and nobles could not agree. 'Why should we make friends with a people from over the sea?' said one noble. 'Would it not be far more sensible to make friends with the Saxons who live in the same island as we do?'

'No,' said another, 'we can never be sure of the Saxons, they are full of falseness and treason. What misery and trouble have fallen upon the Britons through the deceit of the Saxons. Do not mistake, they do not wish to be our friends. They have conquered Britain, they also desire to conquer our land. Therefore if we intend to avoid the hatred of our most fearful enemies; if we intend to honour the faith of Christ for whose defence the French now bear arms; if we have more respect for truth than falsehood; if we labour for the fame and honour of our nation; if we will defend our country and bring it to peace; if we will defend our liberty and our lives, which are most dear to man, let us join with France, and let this bond be a defence to our country in all times to come.'

Then all the lords and nobles shouted, 'It is well said. Let it be done.'

King Achaius then sent to the messengers, commanding them to come to court the next day to hear his answer. That night there was great feasting and rejoicing in the palace, and next day the King in his royal robes, surrounded by his nobles, waited to receive the messengers of the French King.

'My lords,' said the King, 'I desire you to take to your master, the most Christian King Charlemagne, my greeting and thanks. Say to him that my people and I desire above all things to enter into a bond with him, which shall last for all time, and be for ever a joy to both nations. To make the bond more sure, I send back with you my own brother, who is a true and trusty knight, and with him shall go a company of soldiers and four wise men. The soldiers shall fight for the Emperor whenever he goes against the enemy, and the wise men shall teach his people.'

Then the messengers rejoiced greatly, and thanking the King they departed to their own land. The Scottish soldiers who went with them formed the beginning of a French Scots guard which afterwards became famous, and the four wise men founded schools and colleges in France, and so added honour to the name of Scotsman.

King Achaius had taken for his standard a red lion rampant (that is,

standing upon his hind legs) upon a yellow ground. Now, in order that the nobles might never forget his bond with France, he surrounded the red lion with a double row of fleurs-de-lis, the emblem of France. This was meant to show that the fierce lion of Scotland was armed with the gentleness of the lilies of France, and that the two peoples were friends for ever.

Wise people say that the story of Achaius and Charlemagne can only be a fairy tale, for that at the time when Charlemagne ruled, the people of Scotland were still a poor, half-savage, ignorant people, and that a great king like Charlemagne could have learned nothing from them, and that he would not have wished to make a bond with them.

However that may be, you will find as this story goes on that the French and the Scots were friends through many ages, and if you look at the Scottish Standard you will see that the lion is surrounded by the lilies of France.

It is said that King Achaius founded the Order of the Knights of the Thistle. This is the great order of knighthood in Scotland, just as the order of the Garter is the great order of England.

When King Achaius founded the Order of the Thistle, he made only thirteen knights—himself and twelve others. This was in imitation of Christ and his twelve apostles. So it was considered a very great honour to be made a Knight of the Thistle. There were never more than thirteen Knights of the Thistle until hundreds of years later, when King George IV. made a law that there should be more.

The ornament worn by the Knights of the Thistle is a picture of St. Andrew with his cross surrounded by thistles and rue. The thistle was the badge of the Scots. Rue was the badge of the Picts. Thistles prick and hurt you if you do not touch them carefully; rue soothes and heals, and was supposed to cure people who had been poisoned.

Some people say, however, that this Order was not founded in the time of King Achaius but in the time of King James V., a King who lived many, many years later.

## CHAPTER 6.

### THE LAST OF THE PICTS

**K**ING Achaius married the daughter of the King of the Picts, and long after his death his grandson, Kenneth Macalpine, claimed the Pictish crown, as well as that of the Scots, because his grandmother had been a Pictish Princess. The Picts, however, did not want a Scottish king, so there was war between the two nations.

But the Scottish lords at this time did not desire to fight against the Picts, so for some years, although the war went on, there was no great battle, but only little fights every now and again.

Kenneth Macalpine, however, did not give up his determination to win the crown of the Picts, and at last he called all his lords together to a council, and tried to persuade them to gather for a great battle. He talked to them very earnestly, but, say what he might, he could not move them. They did not want to fight, and they would not fight.

Seeing he could not persuade them to do as he wished, the King brought the meeting to an end, but commanded them all to come together again next day to talk once more about the matter.

Now King Kenneth Macalpine had made up his mind that, as he could not persuade the lords by talking to them, he must try some other plan.

That night he made a very grand supper, and invited all the lords to come to it. They came, and it was such a grand supper, with so many courses, that it lasted far into the night. At length it was over, and all the lords went to bed. They were so tired with the long day that they fell asleep at once.

But while the lords feasted, the King's servants had been busy. No sooner were the lords asleep, than there appeared at each bedside a man dressed in fish-skins, covered with shining scales. In one hand he held a torch and in the other an ox-horn. The night was very dark, and the light from the torches shone on the fish-scales, making a soft and silvery light. When each man was in his place, they all raised their horns, and speaking through them as through a trumpet they cried, 'Awake.'

At the sound of that great shout each lord started wide awake, and seeing the strange being at his bedside, lay trembling and wondering what it might mean.

Then speaking through their horns, which made their voices sound terrible and unearthly, and quite unlike the voice of any human being, the dressed-up men said, 'We are the messengers of Almighty God to the Scottish nobles. We are sent to command you to obey your King, for his request is just. The Pictish kingdom is due to him as his rightful heritage.'



Therefore, you must fight for him and win it. That is the will of the Lord of All.'

Having so spoken, these pretended messengers from heaven put out their torches. The glimmer of the silver scales vanished, and in the darkness the men stole quietly away.

In fear and trembling each lord lay in his bed, and could sleep no more that night. Was it a dream? each asked himself. Was it a vision? Had any other seen or heard it?

When the grey morning light streamed in through the windows, and the darkness was no longer terrible around them, the lords arose. Quickly they gathered to the great Council Chamber. With pale faces and questioning eyes they looked at each other. 'You too have heard? You too have seen? Then it was no dream. A message has indeed been sent from heaven; a message which we must obey.'

So they spoke to each other, and after some hurried consultation, they went quickly to the King.

'Great King,' they said, 'this night we have seen strange signs and visions. The Lord of Heaven himself hath sent a message to us, and we are ready to fight as you command us.'

Then they told the King of the vision which each one had seen in the night.

'I too have seen a vision,' said the King, 'but I said naught of it, fearing lest you should think I boasted. But now I tell you as you have all seen the like.'

This of course was not true, and the King knew very well that what the lords had seen was no vision, but only his own servants dressed up.

So in this manner the King had his own way, and his lords gathered all their soldiers together, till there was such a great army as had never before been seen in the land of Scots.

When the King of Picts heard of the great preparations which the Scots were making, he too gathered all his soldiers together. But finding that his army was not large enough to withstand so great a host, he sent to England and asked the Saxons to help him. And the Saxons, because he promised them great gain and plunder, came.

Very early one morning, when it was just beginning to grow light, the battle began. Without a shout or sound of a trumpet, the Scots rushed upon the Picts, and when the Saxons saw this silent host moving through the dim morning light like ghosts, they were dreadfully afraid. So afraid were they, that they took to their heels, and fled away to the mountains near. The noise and clattering made by these fleeing Saxons startled the Picts, and threw them into great confusion. Their King tried in vain to encourage them, and bring order again into the ranks. It was of no use. The Scots fought so fiercely, that in a very short time the Picts were utterly

defeated, and following the example of the Saxons, they too fled away. Their King himself, seeing that all was lost, turned his horse, and rode fast from the field, he and all his army pursued by the victorious Scots.

After this battle the King of Picts sent messengers to Kenneth Macalpine desiring peace. 'Tell your master,' replied Kenneth, 'that he shall have peace when he gives the crown of Picts to me. It is mine by just right and title.'

When the messengers went back to the King of Picts with this answer, he was very angry. 'I will never give up the crown,' he said, so the war continued.

Battle after battle was fought, sometimes one side, sometimes the other, winning. But at last in a great and terrible battle the King of Picts and nearly all his nobles were slain.

Then Kenneth marched through Pictland, killing men, women, and children in the most cruel manner, till those who were left fled away to England to escape from his cruelty.

Thus the kingdom of Scots and the kingdom of Picts were united, and Kenneth Macalpine ruled over both. He took all the land belonging to the Pictish nobles and gave it to the Scottish nobles who had fought for him and helped him to conquer the Picts. He changed the names of all those lands and gave them Scottish names, so that the memory of the Picts might utterly perish.

Some people say that the story of the great slaughter of the Picts is a fairy tale. Perhaps it is. But this is true, that about this time the Picts did vanish away out of the story of Albion, and we hear no more of them, but only of Scots.

The Picts vanished away so completely that even very wise people cannot find out what kind of language they spoke. And so these wise people cannot agree as to what race the Picts belonged to.

Kenneth Macalpine was a wise king and made good laws, and after the battles with the Picts were over he ruled his people in peace. He reigned for twenty-three years, seven years over the Scots alone, and sixteen years over the whole land. He died in 859 A.D., and was buried in the island of Iona, which, ever since St. Columba had built his church and monastery there, had been used as a burying-place for the Scottish kings. If you ever go there, you may still see the graves of some of these ancient rulers of Scotland.

## CHAPTER 7.

### HOW A PLOUGHMAN WON A BATTLE

**Y**EARS passed on, king following king, and still the land was filled with fighting and strife. But out of the confusion and war of these stormy times Scotland grew.

There was war with the Saxons; there was war with the fierce sea kings who came sailing over from Norway and Denmark. Wild heathen men were these, tall and strong, with long fair hair and blue eyes. Fearless, and brave, and cruel, they landed in the islands to the north of Scotland, burning, destroying, conquering, and carrying off both men and women as slaves.

Fiercely the kings of Scotland struggled and fought against these wild invaders. Again and again they were driven out. Again and again they returned. They swept round the island; they wrecked the monastery of St. Columba on the island of Iona. Everywhere they carried fire and sword, leaving death and desolation behind them.

In the reign of a king named Kenneth III., these Danes were defeated in a battle called the battle of Luncarty. The fight had been sharp and cruel, and the Danes fought with such desperate bravery that at last they drove the Scots backward. In confusion they fled from the field. Down a long lane fenced on either side with high walls they fled, hotly pursued by the victorious Danes.

But in one of the fields near, a ploughman and his two sons were quietly at work. When the old man saw how the Scots were fleeing, he seized the yoke from the neck of his oxen, and calling to his sons to do the same he sprang into the lane. Side by side the three men stood barring the way. They were armed only with their wooden ox-yokes, and with them they beat back all those who fled.

‘Would ye flee and become the slaves of heathen kings?’ cried the old man, whose name was Hay. ‘Nay, nay, turn back, turn back, and die rather as free men.’

So stoutly did he speak, such blows did he deal, that the Scots took heart again. They turned, and led by Hay, they once more attacked the on-coming Danes. And the Danes, thinking that a fresh army had come to help the Scots, were seized with fear and fled. Then the Scots, who had been so nearly defeated, now filled with new hope and courage, chased them from the field. Many were killed in the battle, many more fell in the chase, and the victory of the Scots was great. But all the honour was given to the ploughman and his two sons, who had won the day after it seemed lost.

The King then commanded that these three brave men should be dressed

in splendid robes, and brought before him. But they did not care for fine clothes, so they refused the robes of silk and satin which were offered to them, and they went before the King wearing their old shabby clothes, covered with dust and mud, in which they had fought.

All the people were eager to see the men who, by such bravery, had saved their King and country from the terrible Danes. So they crowded along the road to see them pass, and with cheering and shouting a great throng of people accompanied them, doing them as much honour as if they had been kings and princes.

Thus, followed and surrounded by a rejoicing crowd, they came to the King's palace. All the courtiers wore their most splendid robes. The King sat upon his throne, his golden crown upon his head. Before him stood Hay and his sons in their old shabby clothes, carrying their wooden ox-yokes upon their shoulders.

'What can I do for you? What can I give to you,' asked the King, 'as a reward for your great services?'

'Give me, sire,' replied Hay, 'as much land as a falcon will fly over without alighting.'

'That is but modest asking,' said the King. 'Let it be done.'

Then the King and all his courtiers went out into the fields near the palace, and watched as a falcon was let loose. As soon as the bird was free it rose high in the air, then spreading its wings it flew away and away.

On and on it flew, on and on till, to those who watched, it seemed but a speck in the distance. Then it disappeared. The horsemen, who followed its flight, rode fast and they too were lost to sight. On and on the falcon flew, till at last it alighted upon a stone.

It had flown six miles without stopping, and all that six miles of land was given to Hay and his sons to be theirs for ever.

The King then made Hay and his sons knights. As you know, knights always had something painted upon their shields in memory of the great deeds which they had done. So King Kenneth commanded that Hay should have a shield of silver, and that upon it three red shields should be painted. That was to show that the ox-yokes of Hay and his sons had been as shields to the King and country. On either side was painted a ploughman carrying an ox-yoke, and over all was a falcon.

I must tell you that some people say that this story too is a fairy tale, but there is still a great family whose name is Hay, and who bear these same arms with the motto, *Serva jugum*, which is Latin and means 'Keep the yoke.'

## CHAPTER 8.

### MACBETH AND THE THREE WEIRD SISTERS

**A**FTER King Kenneth III. died, several other kings reigned, of whom there is not much to tell. At last a king called Duncan came to the throne. He was so kind and gentle that he was called Duncan the Gracious.

He was too kind and gentle for those rough times. The beginning of Duncan's reign was quiet and peaceful, but when the people saw how kind he was, and how little he punished evil-doers, they grew unruly and rebellious, thinking they might do as they wished, because of the weak rule of this mild King.

Some of the people rose in rebellion under a leader called Macdowald, and Duncan, who did not like fighting, hardly knew what to do. But he had a cousin called Macbeth who was a great and powerful man, very fierce and stern, and a splendid soldier.

Macbeth was impatient of the King's softness. He was eager to fight, so Duncan gave the command of his army to this cousin and to another noble called Banquo.

When the rebels heard that Macbeth was coming against them, they were so afraid that many of them left their leader Macdowald. Some of them stole away to hide. Others joined Macbeth. Macdowald was left with very few soldiers, but he was obliged to fight, for he could not escape from Macbeth. In the battle which followed, the rebels were utterly defeated and their leader was killed.

No sooner had Macbeth put down this rebellion than the Danes once more invaded Scotland. But he defeated them too, and they fled away, promising never again to return.

One day, soon after the war with the Danes, Macbeth was walking over a lonely moor with Banquo, when they were met by three old women. These three old women were very ugly and dreadful to look upon. They were called the Weird Sisters and were supposed to be witches. Nowadays no one believes in witches, but in those far-off times every one did.

These three old women stopped in front of Macbeth, and pointing at him with their skinny fingers, spoke.

'Hail, Macbeth! hail to thee! Thane of Glamis,' said the first.

'Hail, Macbeth! hail to thee! Thane of Cawdor,' said the second.

'Hail, Macbeth! hail to thee! King of Scotland,' said the third.

Both Macbeth and Banquo were very much astonished, and wondered what this might mean, for Macbeth was certainly not King of Scotland, nor was he either Thane of Glamis or Cawdor.

Thane was an old Scottish title meaning very much the same as the Saxon title earl which came to be used later.

'You say fine things to Macbeth,' said Banquo, when the old women had ceased speaking; 'have you nothing to say to me?'

'Yes,' said the first witch, 'we promise greater things to you than to him. He indeed shall be King of Scotland, but his end shall be unhappy. His children shall not follow him on the throne. You shall never reign, but your children shall sit upon the throne of Scotland for many generations.'

Then the old women vanished, leaving Macbeth and Banquo full of astonishment.

They were still wondering what it all might mean when a horseman came spurting towards them. When he came near he threw himself from his horse and kneeling at Macbeth's feet, 'Hail, Macbeth,' he cried, 'thy father Sinell is dead, and thou art Thane of Glamis.'

What the first Weird Sister had said had come true.

More full of astonishment than ever, Macbeth went on his way. But he had gone very little farther when a second messenger came hurrying towards him.

'Hail, Thane of Cawdor,' cried this second messenger, kneeling at his feet.

'Why do you call me that?' asked Macbeth. 'The Thane of Cawdor is alive. I have no right to the title.'

'He who was the Thane of Cawdor is alive,' said the messenger, 'but because he has rebelled against the King his thaneship has been taken from him. The King has made you Thane in his place as a reward for all your great deeds.'

What the second Weird Sister had said had come true.

Now that two things had come true, Macbeth began to think more and more of what the Weird Sisters had said, and he longed for the third thing to come true too. But unless Duncan should die there seemed no hope of that. Macbeth despised Duncan because of his gentleness, and he wished he would die. Sometimes the wicked thought came to him that he would kill Duncan. Yet he could not quite make up his mind to do the evil deed.

Macbeth had a wife, who was a very proud and beautiful lady. She longed to be queen, and when she heard of what the Weird Sisters had said she kept urging Macbeth to murder Duncan and make himself King.

But Macbeth could not so easily forget that King Duncan was his cousin, that he had always loved and trusted him, that he had made him general of his army and Thane of Cawdor and had heaped upon him many honours and rewards. So when Lady Macbeth tried to make her husband murder the King, he reminded her of all this.

But Lady Macbeth cared for none of these things. She hated Duncan and all his family, because his grandfather had killed her brother. She longed to avenge his death, and she longed to be queen. She kept on tell-

ing Macbeth that he was weak and cowardly not to murder Duncan. So at last Macbeth listened to his wife, and giving way to his own evil wishes and to her persuasions, he killed the good King Duncan.