

shores of one of the nine tiny connecting lakes of the same name. Prince Robert told me the name was Gaelic and meant lake of the fair women; and when I asked him how he came to know a Gaelic signification, he said with a shrug of his fine, ruffianly shoulders, "Oh, I ken'd it fra t' *ceillidh*," which means auld wives' gossiping. But "the white clear lake" is nearer the true Gaelic. The silence of decay is upon ancient lochmaben burgh. Two long, straggling, silent streets intersect each other at a huge, plain, crumbling market cross. It is a burgh of quaint old granite homes, with thatched roofs, inhabited by quaint old granite-faced Scotch folk. Great square houses, great square doors, and great square windows with great, square blanched faces in them, tell the story of olden opulence, older border prowess, and present indolence and decay. The place was once full of hand looms and thrift. Today so deserted and lifeless seems the burgh that your own foot-fall on its ragged and uneven stones impels you onward with an almost startled sense of fear.

About a mile from the ancient town, on a tongue shaped peninsula which extends into the lake called the Castle-loch, we found the ruins of the grandest fortress the Border ever knew. The lake upon the shores of which the ruins stand, as well as all others of the pretty group, have low, sedgy shores. In these are found the vendace fishes, from five to six inches in length, nowhere else discoverable in Great Britain, of a brilliant silvery appearance, and in anatomy and flavor much resembling those famous American ciscoes, which in June attract such hosts of angler to the shores of Lake Geneva, in Wisconsin. They are the most delicate fish known to the British gourmand. Their hands are extraordinarily marked, in a puce-colored transparent substance, with the perfectly defined figure of a heart, through which, when freshly caught, the brain may easily be seen. Prince Robert disclosed a curious bit of superstitious folk-lore concerning this heart-shaped figure in the head of the vendace. Every one remembers the pious pilgrimage of James Douglas with the heart of the dead king, in an effort to reach Jerusalem that the precious relic might be buried in the Holy City; and that after the tragic death of Douglas and his friends, Sinclair and Logan, the silver casket containing the king's heart was recovered and given sepulture in Melrose Abbey. There is a lingering belief with the superstitious among the Annandale peasantry that the figure of the heart in the head of the vendace fish of Lochmaben is of miraculous origin, to perpetuate the pious act of King Robert the Bruce and the heroism of his loyal friends.

Along the haughs and moss-banks of the lochs the deadly adder lurks; and the peasantry will tell you that these dreadful reptiles are kept down by their implacable foes and herons, which are certainly continually seen dodging in and out among, and hovering over, the surrounding reeds and mosses. Whether or not it was the original residence of the Bruces, granted by David I. in 1124, or an enlarged successor built in the thirteenth century, it covered sixteen acres of ground, and is known to have been absolutely impregnable before the invention of gunpowder. It was a stupen-

dous and magnificent pile, and the care and perfection with which it was built attested in the immense walls still traceable, and in the fact that though its masonry has been exposed to the elements for 600 years, one will to-day as often break the stone itself as separate by strokes of sledge-hammer the stone and mortar with which the walls were constructed.

A mighty host of reflections and historic memories crowd upon the onlooker here. For not only has the fiercest of border battles raged round about the castle's once mighty walls, but it was on this very spot the compact between the two claimants for the Scottish crown, which led to Scotland's eventual greatness, was made. It was to this spot Bruce came in his flight for his life from Edward's court. And it was from here, after Red Comyn's perfidy was discovered that he sped to Dumfries to avenge that treachery with Comyn's life, before the very altar of ancient Gray Friars Church. Then came his coronation at Scone; his first defeats; almost the extinction of his family; his own wanderings and skulkings like a beast of the forest; his brilliant recovery of his patrimonial castle here; and then all the glorious victories from Glenesk past Bannockburn to Inverary, and Scotland's long time splendor, power and peace.

It seems unfortunate that so noble a ruin could not have been given better care and preservation. One half of the structures of Lochmaben have been built from the material in the majestic stone pile. Cow-houses and bare walls for half a dozen miles in every direction disclose the source from which their material was ravaged in protruding moulding, splendid ashlar work or grinning gargoyles. It is said that a citizen of the burgh warms his shins at the identical pair of jambs which once rested on the paternal hearth of Bruce, and the old key to the outer gate of the splendid pile, in which had been nurtured the proudest line of Scottish patriot kings, on being discovered a half century since by the leaden-headed hinds of the district, was regarded as such an antiquarian prize, as it weighed several pounds, that it was at once turned over to the Lochmaben blacksmith for conversion into a pair of utilitarian turf spades!

EDGAR L. WAKEMAN.

THE FAR NORTH

SWEDEN.

The Landskrona-Kjöevlinge ra road was opened for traffic.

Miss Charlotta Bjork, of Kalmar, near Upsala, celebrated her fortieth birthday.

Thirty thousand letters a day are sent out from the central postoffice of Stockholm.

The masons of Gothenburg, who struck some time ago for higher wages, have been victorious.

At the election for congressman, in the Western Goinge district, Mr. O. B. Olson of Mallehult, was re-elected.

A terrible epidemic of small pox is raging in the parishes of Kyrkefalla, Væring and Hjerpas.

John Ulrik Strat, a prominent citizen of Asaryd, the parish of Asa, committed suicide because of financial troubles.

A new paper named "*Kalmar*" has

appeared in the city of Kalmar. The editor and publisher is Mr. J. A. Johanson.

Baron I. Von Knorring has been elected congressman from the congressional district represented by the parish of Villattinge.

Stockholm was visited by a cyclone the eighteenth day of August. No lives were lost, but several buildings collapsed.

No successor to W.W. Thomas has as yet been appointed, and the popular American minister will probably stay in Stockholm forever.

In the neighborhood of Omberg the cattle is dying on account of a water famine which has existed for the last three weeks.

Their golden wedding was celebrated by the eighty-year-old Bishop Beckman, of the Skara diocese, and his wife, nee Grenander.

The famous singing choir "*Par Bricole*" took a steamer for Visby, where they held a concert and were received with the greatest enthusiasm.

Mr. Nils Danielson, of Boeta died at the age of nearly 100 years. Until a few days before his death he had been able to read without using eye-glasses.

A large sugar factory will be built at either Gärnæs or Tomelilla. A stock company with a capital of two million crowns has been organized for the purpose.

NORWAY.

The Jews of Christiania have organized a society for their mutual benefit.

It is reported that the Left is losing followers both in Bergen and in Trondhjem.

Chr. Anker, of Fredrikshald, has sold all his establishments at Gloenefos to an English firm for \$230,000.

On account of the Czar's present stay at Copenhagen, many Russian detectives have arrived here.

The princess of Wales, accompanied by the princesses, Victoria and Maud, visited the Stavanger cathedral.

The Norwegian artist Stephan Sinding has made the baptismal font for the marble church at Copenhagen.

The area of the lillable land destroyed by the Værdalen land slide is estimated at being 8,200 acres.

The Kongsberg silver mines have been run at an increasing loss since 1889, and in view of this fact the government may soon have to close up the mines.

Smoked fish sausage is a new article of export to Germany. In case the German palate takes a liking to it, large quantities will soon be exported to that country.

The Keeley cure seems to enjoy a good reputation in Christiania, which is chiefly due to the fact that the local institute is in charge of a physician who is well known and whose reputation is fire-proof.

DENMARK.

Herman Bang, the great author, is ill, and the worst is feared.

The crown prince during his recent travels in Germany went by the name of the "Count of Kronborg."

A large ocean tortoise has been imported from India, and will be served at the dinner of the Czar some day.