LITTLE THINGS.

[illegible]

SLAIN MAN'S LEE.

"This is the 'Slain Man's Lee,'" said my friend, casting himself down on a grassy hillock which reared near to the center of the little plain to which we stood.

"Therefore so strange a name?" I inquired.

"Beneath this grassy covering rest the remains of hundreds of brave men."

"But then, has been the scene of battle in this olden time?"

"I has. I brought you from Selkirk on purpose to show it to you," answered my friend, Harry Ogilvie, "and I'll tell you a story about it, if you like."

Instantly appreciative my friend of the gratification it would afford me to listen to him, and took a seat beside him on the "Slain Man's Lee." It was not without a shudder, however, that I seated my frame upon the sod that covered the remains of those who had once been living and breathing like myself.

On this little plain, which is called Edinburgh, on the 12th of September, in the year 1547, if my memory serves me aright," began Ogilvie, "the Regent of Montrose received a last defeat in the war he had undertaken for the king. Here his various forces received a terrible and almost irremediable check. There are several causes which led to this end.

"The marquis encamped here late a night with only half his usual force. The rest of Athole had turned to their native hills. Two of his trusted officers were absent; Lester McGill was waging an old feud and the Stuarts and glens of Argyre; and Lord George Gordon had been slain at Alford. On this night the marquis, who had never rejected it before, intrusted the posting of the picket guard to other hands. It seemed as if fate had determined to inflict a defeat upon the brave Marquis.

"I relate this story in the words of my ancestor, Lord Lionel Ogilvie, who was one of Montrose's officers at the time, and whose wonderful preservation from death will, I think, interest you.

"We were sitting in our tent, Montrose and his captains, wearied by a long ride, leisurely sipping their wine and never dreaming of the close proximity of the enemy, when they were suddenly charged upon by three squadrons of the lowlands horse.

"The rout was instant and decisive. Foot on every side the Royalists were cut down like in slaughter. Upon the spot did Montrose succeed in rallying a portion of his army, and now the fight became desperate and really, and the slain of either side lay as thickly top-lier after the battle that it was found impossible to take such soldier separately, as a very pitiful was slay, friend and foe were cast into a indiscriminately and the turf lightly heaped above their mortal remains. From that time this spot has been called the 'Slain Man's Lee.'

"But I have something more entertaining to tell you than these funeral details.

"Montrose succeeded in effecting his escape with most of his officers and cavalry, retreating step by step, but maintaining a determined front to the foe, and repeatedly charging them with great skill and valor. It was on this occasion that the Lord Ogilvie, who was but a stripling at the time, was taken prisoner.

"He was conveyed in close custody to Selkirk. The Covenanters entertained the most unrelenting rigor against all Royalists who were so unfortunate as to fall into their hands. Sentence of death was instantly pronounced against Lord Ogilvie, and the day of execution was fixed at an early date.

"His mother, the Countess Airlie, and Lady Flora Lenlanrie, his sister, hastened to Selkirk to make their supplications in mitigation of his doom. Tears, prayers, the offer of princely bribes for his escape, were unavailing—the judges were incorruptible.

"The fatal day drew rapidly near, and the night preceding that morning which was to be Lord Ogilvie's last upon earth his mother and sister visited him in his dungeon to bid him a last farewell.

"I will not linger over the agony of that meeting. For awhile they folded each other in a sad embrace, mingling their tears together.

"Must you die, my brother?" exclaimed Flora with choked utterance. "Do you—do you leave time enough to be cut off—oh, it is dreadful!"

"I expected death,' answered Ogilvie with sad composure. 'I took the common chance of all when I entered in this strife, and what most lies in it? I meet death by the act in some of the accepted.

"'The act is for fidelity,' said the Countess of Airlie with asperity. 'You are noble—an Ogilvie; at least they might have granted you a soldier's death.'

"'You shall not die, my brother!' said Flora, with sudden energy. 'There is one chance for your escape. I shrink from disclosing it to you lest, for I know your noble nature would scorn to accept the alternative. But I will accept it for you. I had rather make any sacrifice than see you die.'

"'What sacrifice?' asked Ogilvie.

"'Explain this mystery,' demanded the countess.

"'Listen. You know Colonel Roche, your jailer, and commandant of this town?

"'An unprincipled libertine and reckless adventurer. A soldier of the German wars, hired by the ruling Covenant to fight its battles.'

"'Yet still he holds your life in his hands and possesses the power to set you free.'

"'Undoubtedly.'

"'Then you shall be free.'

"'Oh dear Flora, you speak in riddles.'

"'My riddle is really solved. Know that I have made a conquest of this libertine. He has confessed his love for me and made a proffer of his hand.'

"'And you!' questioned the countess sternly and boiling with suppressed wrath.

"'Laughed in his face.'

"'You did—well,' answered the countess, mollified. 'What presumption! An unknown soldier asking for the hand of Lady Lenlanrie! That sense of your correspondence—a mistake on it!'

"'It is not so much the hand of my sister, mother, that he desires,' returned Ogilvie, 'but the broad lands and title that hand bestows. We have indeed fallen upon sad times when such as he dare to hope for such alliances. Many a brave name and noble have already fallen beneath the axe, while their estates have been bestowed upon these newly adventurers. He offered you some inducement to become his wife—did he not, my sister?—and I can almost guess what it was.'

"'He did—the condition was a precious one—your liberty, if I consented.'

"'Never!' said Ogilvie, emphatically; 'never would I accept my liberty at such a price.'

"'I care not—I would wed a fiend, if that would save you,' cried Flora, with energy. 'Mother, he is your youngest born—you will not see him die—urge him to consent!'

"'Flora, you are mad to think of such an act,' replied the countess coldly. 'Death is but an instantaneous pang—disgrace, shrieval. The ancestors of the Ogilvies has never been stained by a moral blame. Think of it a no more.'

"Flora burst into tears and fell upon her brother's neck.

"'Oh,' she cried piteously, 'I can save you and you will not let me.'

"'There may be another method of escape,' said the countess, musingly. 'You may risk death for him, but not disgrace. A plan has this instant suggested itself to me. You are nearly of the same height—the color of your hair and eyes the same, why not change clothes with him? He could leave the dungeon with me, undiscovered.'

"'And leave my sister here to suffer malignity at the hands of my captors! Never!' cried Ogilvie passionately.

"'Tut, boy,' returned the countess impatiently. 'They will allow her no indignity—they can but keep her a prisoner a short time and then release her.'

"'Consent, dear Lionel,' exclaimed Flora eagerly. 'I care not what becomes of me so that you escape.'

"Ogilvie required but little urging; the hope of life springing in his heart he said was slay, friend and foe were cast into a indiscriminately and the turf lightly heaped above their mortal remains. From that time this spot has been called the 'Slain Man's Lee.'

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