

Round - the - World Pictures

THE OLDEST INHABITED HOUSE IN GREAT BRITAIN.

The most ancient of inhabited buildings in Great Britain is Dunvegan castle, in the Isle of Skye. Older castles there may be, but they are in ruins.

Dunvegan is to this day a beautiful home—more beautiful than two hundred years ago, when the Hanging Wood Hill at the back was in full swing, The MacLeod of MacLeod doing rough justice on marauder or tiresome retainer alike. More beautiful than when for The MacLeod to meet The Macdonald, the other Lord of the Isle, meant bloodshed. That such meetings were frequent the innumerable heaps of commemorative stones scattered over the island attest. Some changes have, of course, taken place. The castle once stood on an island; now a causeway joins it to the main land, the water has receded, and the water-gate is high and dry. Its oubliette dungeon in which prisoners were confined and forgotten, still remains, but untenanted; the nine feet thick walls conceal many a secret recess. Yet these massive walls have proved unequal to the pacific requirements of the day. So crannied and riddled is the old mortar with age that an outer coating of dashing has been found necessary to exclude the mountain mists.

Outwardly, the castle is stubbornly rectangular. There is an outer court round which runs a rampart. It is in this outer court that the St. Kilda sheen—a member of that mysterious breed which comes by its brown wool no one knows how—is shown knee-deep in the snow. Contrast this picture with that of the waterfall. Of course, the one is of summer, the other of winter. But even so, the contrast is remarkable, for the waterfall is within four minutes' walk of the castle, and its song lulls the inmates of the castle to sleep. The first of the MacLeod line to take up his abode at Dunvegan was Leod, son of Olave the Red, King of Man and the Isles. The present chief is the 23rd of this line. Between the first chief and the 23rd have intervened some chiefs of interest: two were of gigantic stature, a third fell in fair fight, a fourth fell in foul. The eighth, Alexander, known as Crotach or the Hunchback, died in 1553. He was an alchemist, and built the Fairy Tower, which he is said still to haunt that he may practise his art. With the 20th chief the line became more domesticated. He ended to enter Parliament. The 22nd saved Skye to his own hurt. There was in 1847 a failure of the potato crop, which meant starvation to the whole of the population. The current MacLeod rose to the occasion. He unfurled again the "Fairy Flag," an ancient relic still carefully preserved, to be unfurled only in moments of direst distress; but it should use its power for good. Unfortunately for himself he also unfurled his banknotes, to the extent of many thousands, to provide the crofters with new seed and other necessities, and to facilitate their migration. He also planted the isles with trees. In these ways he so

impoverished himself that it was feared that he would have to bring his ancestral possessions under the hammer. That calamity was averted. The place was let, and The MacLeod accepted a post in the Science and Art Department of the South Kensington Museum. He was also appointed Sergeant-at-Arms in Queen Victoria's household. Queen Victoria, who made a tour of Scotland in 1847, the year of famine, though she did not land at Skye, was greatly touched by his self-sacrifice, and remarked that if all lairds behaved like him distress in the Highlands would be unknown. Fortunately such a state of things cannot now recur. Many of the crofters still live in low little cabins of stones roofed with reeds, with a hole at one end for them to creep in and out by, and another hole at the other for the smoke to go out. But

served in the 74th Highlanders from 1858 to 1872, and from 1863 to 1865 was A.D.C. to General Sir Hope Grant, Commander-in-Chief at Madras. In 173 he accompanied the British expedition sent out to South Africa to crush Cetewayo, and in 1879, having raised 2000 Swazis, he conducted the attack on Sekukuni. He retired from the service some years previous to his succeeding his father in 1893, and has travelled much, having explored and shot big game in India, Africa, and America. He married in 1881 Emily, daughter of Sir Charles Isham, Bart. He has two daughters, the heir presumptive being the son of his youngest brother.

Heroines in Fiction.

(By Frisilla Wakefield.)

Novels, if well chosen, may be very useful reading, for they show life as it is. The characters need not be models. Much may be learned of

must be based on judgment or selection. The novels which crowd the shelves of a circulating library confuse you unless you learn to reject and to choose. It is a mistake to be always in search of new novels, new sensations, or to think you must be in the tide of new excitements in reading.

In your favourite books you learn to love persons. A girl whose face lights up with intelligent pleasure when she talks of her favourite heroines and her reasons for liking them is one who will learn much from novels by good writers.

A knowledge of characters in fiction is necessary in general conversation. You need to understand allusions to them, or you will be voted ignorant.

But you must go deeper than this if you wish to find pleasure and benefit in reading fiction. The author who helps to quicken your sympathies, to make you love what is noble, pure and good, to pity what is weak, to despise what is false and bad, who helps you to wish to do what is right, will point the way to a rich, sweet life.



THE WATERFALL, DUNVEGAN, IN SUMMER.

THE ALCHEMIST'S TOWER.

they are no longer wholly dependent on the potato crop, since they can earn a living by stocking-knitting, handloom weaving, and fish curing. Indeed, their rent is commonly taken in cloth.

Mention of the "Fairy Flag" reminds us of other heir-looms. By the side of the glass case in which lies the flag, stands a most ancient Irish cup of silver, the workmanship of which is exceedingly rare and fine. Tradition has it that the cup was brought into the family when a MacLeod married a fairy in very ancient days. And the family portraits include a very fine Raeburn, now reproduced, we believe, for the first time. It may be discerned hanging on the wall in the picture of the dining-room. The lady is the grand-mother of the present chief, Norman Magnus MacLeod, C.M.G. He was born in 1839 and

what to avoid in life or conduct by the very faults you discover in the characters in a book. Motives of conduct, results of actions, may teach a strong lesson. Novels should be chosen, says an eminent critic, "not for their freedom from evil, but for their possession of good. The chance and scattered evil that may here and there haunt, or hide itself in a powerful book, never does any harm to a noble girl; but the emptiness of the author oppresses her, and his amiable folly degrades her."

Novels which are sensational, overstrained, unreal are dangerous. By their excitement they lead you to be discontented with ordinary life, or to form false impressions of life.

Indiscriminate novel reading is an injury to good taste, for all reading

"It seems to me," said a girl friend of mine, "that the ideals of this world are low enough, without an author filling the minds of young readers with thoughts that raise questions in their minds and tend to rob them of their innocence. Rather let an author write pure, healthful books that create high ideals in the reader and foster the growth of those one has. This Louisa May Alcott has done. What book could be better for a young girl to form her ideals by than "Rose in Bloom"? Who that has read "Little Women" does not love the picture of the home, the abiding place of Meg, Jo, Beth, and Amy?"

Coming from a real girl these thoughts are well worth quoting. And just because in "Rose in Bloom" there is no moral intended in the story, the



DUNVEGAN CASTLE.



DUNVEGAN IN WINTER.