

engaged in the pursuit. He was obliged to act in obedience to the chief of his clan, the laird of Sleat, which is the southern part of the island of Skye; but he secretly endeavoured to assist the fugitive, and was only too happy to afford silent consent to any plan which might be originated for his deliverance.

It was a beautiful June evening when Flora's wish to see the Prince was carried out. O'Neil joined her at the house of one of her brother's retainers, leaving his companion concealed, until he should engage Flora to consent to the plan he had in view. He proposed that she should disguise Charles as a female servant; and under pretext of travelling with her maid, conduct him in safety from Uist to the Isle of Skye; whence further measures could be taken to effect his escape.

This was a proposition that Flora's delicacy, as well as innate prudence, shrank from entertaining. She hesitated, avowing her distrust in the wildness of the scheme, and her fear of compromising her friends, Sir Alexander and Lady Margaret Macdonald, by taking the fugitive into their neighbourhood. O'Neil, however, with Irish tact, so worked upon the young lady's feelings, by leading forth his hapless Prince just at the right moment, that poor Flora's resolutions melted away before the sight of a figure so attenuated, and a countenance so filled by grief and despair, as those now presented to her gaze. She consented, after a brief interval.

When Flora first saw Charles all the brilliancy and promise of his first arrival had passed away, together with the charm of attractive exterior. Weeks of anxiety had taken the colour from his cheek and fire from his eye. Lack of food had made him emaciated. He was

no longer the bold aspirant for the throne of the Stuarts. He was the defeated, hunted scion of the ex-royal family, with a price upon his head.

Upon leaving the Prince, Miss Macdonald and her servant were seized by a band of militia; but difficulty was happily set aside by our heroine's discovery that the band was commanded by her stepfather. With little trouble she engaged his assistance, and obtained from him a pass for herself and her man-servant, Neil Mackechan, back to the Island of Skye, where her mother lived. Mention was also made in the passport, of a third person, an Irish domestic, named "Betty Burke," who was especially recommended by Captain Macdonald to his wife, as an "excellent spinner of flax, and a faithful servant." After getting this document, Flora's next care was to secure a boat, with a crew of six men, a supply of provisions, and last, but most important of all, the disguise intended to transform the elegant Prince Charles into a rough Irish maid-of-all-work, and which consisted of a printed linen gown, a white apron and head gear.

The morning of the 27th of June was chosen for their departure, and, accompanied by Lady Clanronald, Miss Macdonald set out towards the seashore. They found the Prince roasting the liver of a sheep for his dinner, a sight which brought the reverses of fortune forcibly to their minds, and moved one of his gentle visitors to tears. That night an alarm, which drew the ladies back to the house, prevented the boat from starting; but the next evening, all being in readiness, the Prince assumed his linen gown and apron and, exchanging his sword for a good-sized walking-stick, embarked with his fair ally, **her** servant Mackechan, and six boatmen, for Skye.

It was not one of pleasure, this voyage, to a young and delicate woman, considering the number of vessels lying all around, whose shots it would probably be difficult to avoid if suspicion were excited; the distance to be covered, thirty or forty miles, and the time, night. Soon rain began to fall; the skies and sea faded into one leaden expanse; the boatmen, wet and sulky, relapsed into perfect silence. The voice of the young Prince alone broke the stillness; and he, with a mixture of boyish vivacity and manly tact, told story after story, and sang snatches of song until he succeeded in dispelling the cloud of anxiety which oppressed his companion, less fearful for her own than for his safety. At length, overpowered by fatigue, Flora slept. Charles continued a long while singing, in the hope of lulling her to repose; and when, some time after, she awoke, she found him watching her with the greatest solicitude, endeavouring to screen her from the spray, and to protect her from contact with the sails and cordage.

It must have been an unspeakable relief to the occupants of that little boat when the first dim lines of light in the distant horizon announced the approach of morning. When clear enough to distinguish objects, they discovered that they were alone upon the ocean—no land in sight; but this gave little anxiety to the sailors, and after a short interval, during which the wind favoured their passage, the rocky coast of the mountainous Island of Skye appeared. As they were passing a headland called Vaternish, a party of the Macleod militia, espied them, and fired several shots. Happily, however, the tide was out, and before a boat would be got into deep water, pursuit was hopeless.

"Don't mind the villains, but pull for your lives,"

cried the Prince, and the boatmen, animated by his address and courage, replied cheerily that they would soon distance their assailants; adding, that if they cared at all, it was only for him.

"Oh, there's no fear for me!" was the response, while the Prince busied himself in taking care of Flora, whom he had persuaded to take shelter in the bottom of the boat, a retreat which, to satisfy her fears, he himself adopted shortly after.

A few miles further, the boat was put into a creek, for the purpose of affording a little rest to the rowers, by this time greatly fatigued. They were soon, however, obliged to put off again, in consequence of being watched from the shore and, proceeding about twelve miles from Vaternish, they reached in safety, Mugstat, the residence of Sir Alexander Macdonald, formerly a staunch Jacobite, or follower of the Stuarts, though now in actual attendance upon the Duke of Cumberland at Fort Augustus.

When the boat containing the fugitive Prince had landed, Flora, attended by Mackechan, proceeded to the house, leaving Charles, in his female dress, sitting on her trunk on the beach. On arriving at the dwelling, she desired a servant to inform Lady Margaret that she had called on her way home from Uist. She was immediately introduced to the family apartment, where she found, besides Mrs. Macdonald of Kirkibost, a Lieutenant Macleod, the commander of militia stationed near, three or four members of which were also in the house. There was also present, Mr. Alexander Macdonald of Kingsburgh, an elderly gentleman of the neighbourhood, who acted as factor to Sir Alexander, and who was, she knew, a sound Jacobite.

Flora entered easily into conversation with the officer, who asked her a number of questions; where she had come from, where she was going, and so forth; all of which she answered without manifesting the least trace of confusion which might have been expected from a young lady under such circumstances. The same man had been in the custom of examining every boat which landed from Long Island; that, for instance, in which Mrs. Macdonald of Kirkibost arrived had been so examined, and we can only account for his allowing that of Miss Flora to pass by the circumstance of his meeting her under the courtesies of the drawing-room of a lady.

Miss Macdonald, with the same self-possession, dined in Lieutenant Macleod's company. Seizing a proper opportunity, she apprised Kingsburgh of the circumstances of the Prince, and he immediately proceeded to another room, and sent for Lady Margaret, that he might break the intelligence to her in private. Notwithstanding the previous warning, she was much alarmed at the idea of the wanderer being so near her house, and immediately sent for a certain Donald Roy Macdonald, to consult as to what should be done. Donald had been wounded in the Prince's army at Culloden, and was as obnoxious to the Government as he could be. He came and joined the lady and her friends in the garden, when it was arranged that Kingsburgh should take the Prince along with him to his own house, some miles distant, and thence pass him through the island to Portree, where Donald Roy should take him up, and provide for his further safety.

No time was lost in dispatching Kingsburgh to communicate these arrangements to the Prince, and to carry

him some refreshment. The poor refugee, seeing some one approaching him, started up, and discovering the heavy stick he carried, put himself in an attitude of defiance.

"I am Macdonald of Kingsburgh, come to serve Your Highness," said the old man; and he proceeded to explain how this might be effected.

While these two set off toward Kingsburgh, Miss Macdonald quietly seated with Lady Margaret and the officer before named, endeavoured to secure to them a good start upon their journey. Presently she bade farewell to her hostess, who pretended to be extremely averse to parting with her so soon, and invited her warmly to remain; reminding her that she had promised to pay her a lengthened visit. Flora excused herself, upon the plea that her mother was ill, and needed her presence at home. After dinner, therefore, she departed, leaving young Macleod quite unsuspecting of the real nature of her visit to Mugstat. In after years Flora often rallied this gentleman upon having so completely deceived him.

Mrs. Macdonald of Kirkibost, her servants, and Mackechan, accompanied Flora, whose object was to come up with the pedestrians and, joining them, to proceed all together to Kingsburgh. They soon appeared in sight; but as the servants of her companion were unacquainted with the secret, it was necessary to put them off the scent by passing the travellers, as if unknown to them, at a trot. Charles is represented as being very awkward in his feminine attire: Kingsburgh laughed and said to him.

"Your enemies call you a Pretender; but if you be, I can tell you, you are the worst at the trade I ever saw."

He held up his petticoats in a very undignified manner; and when remonstrated with, improved upon matters by permitting the skirts of his dress to draggle in the water, when a brook again had to be passed. His height was so remarkable, and his strides so immense, that the maid-servant at Flora's side exclaimed to her:

"That must be an Irishwoman, or else a man in woman's clothes; see what steps the creature takes!"

Flora replied that she was doubtless an Irishwoman. Shortly after they parted company, and Flora rejoined the travellers, who had been somewhat annoyed on their side by the inquiries and remarks as to the uncommon height of the pretended Betty Burke. About eleven o'clock at night, the little party arrived in safety at Kingsburgh House, where Mrs. Macdonald received them.

Supper followed, Charles, still in gown and coif, presiding, with his hostess on his left hand, and Flora in the place of honour. After supper the ladies withdrew to discuss past perils and future plans.

"And what," said Lady Kingsburgh, "has been done with the boatmen who brought you to the island?"

"They have been sent back to South Uist," replied the young lady.

"That was an oversight. These men ought to have been detained a short time. I fear that if they meet with Government officers, they may incautiously, or for money, betray our poor wanderer's retreat."

Lady Kingsburgh's surmise, which had even at that early period proved correct, seemed so alarming, that Flora decided upon persuading the Prince to assume as soon as possible, the dress of his own sex.

The hunted Prince had now been several days without taking off his clothes or enjoying the luxury of a bed. He was only too happy to retire to the one provided for him, and it was now far into the night. He slept until late the following morning, so late, indeed, that Miss Macdonald went into Kingsburgh's room, and urged him to rouse the Prince, and depart with him, lest a party of militia should arrive, and make it impossible to leave the house.

Kingsburgh, however, would by no means consent to disturb the weary outcast he had so generously sheltered. "Let the poor boy sleep after his fatigues," he said. "As for me, I care little if they rake off this old gray head, ten or eleven years sooner than I should die in the course of nature." Saying these words, he turned again to his pillow, and was asleep in a moment.

Toward afternoon the party again set forward, but previously Kingsburgh had provided the Prince with a new pair of shoes, his own being completely worn out. "Look," said this enthusiastic Jacobite, holding up the old ones, "I shall faithfully keep these shoes until you are comfortably settled at St. James. I will then introduce myself by shaking them at you, and thus put you in mind of your night's entertainment and protection under this roof."

"Be as good as your word, my friend," replied the Prince: "whenever that time arrives I shall expect to see you."

It was judged better that, as Flora had come with a female servant, she should take one away with her; so Charles waited to alter his dress until they reached a little wood upon the road to Portree, when he again assumed his male attire, exchanging his petticoat and

apron for a tartan coat and waistcoat, a philibeg and short hose, plaid and bonnet. Kingsburgh here bade adieu to the Prince, who, with Mackeckan, was to walk a distance of fourteen miles to Portree, while to avoid suspicion, Flora proceeded thither by another road. Arriving at Portree, Flora detained him no longer than to bid him an earnest, though agitated, farewell. Charles thanked her, in the most animated terms, for all the heroism she had shown in his cause.

"Ah! madam," he said, with emotion, "for all that has happened, I hope we shall meet in St. James's yet."

This was the last time Charles ever saw his generous protectress. They hurried him away to the vessel, while Flora, with a heavy heart, turned her steps toward the house of her mother at Sleat. She had effected all in her power, she had used her best exertions to secure the safety of this, the last unfortunate scion of the old Stuart line, and to Heaven she commended the rest. What vicissitudes the wretched Charles encountered, how he lay, pinched with hunger, and failing in health, in cowsheds, in caves and among bushes and underwood until, three months after, he was able to embark from Lochnanuagh, the very spot where he had landed, and to effect his escape to France, is well known in history. It is probable that, after the part she had taken, after the dangers she had boldly confronted in the endeavour to secure his escape, Flora Macdonald's thoughts were with the fugitive constantly; nor is it to be supposed she ever enjoyed a moment of actual peace of mind until the news of his safe arrival in Brittany reached her.

Flora Macdonald, after quitting the Prince, pro-

ceeded to the house of her mother. Upon her arrival, she checked the confidence which she would otherwise have gladly made, relative to her late employment, fearing to involve others in the danger she herself had incurred. She considered it better, if inquiries were made, that they should be able to declare nothing had been known to them of the Prince's escape. That such inquiries would arise, Flora felt assured; and the result proved how correct was her anticipation. It was only a day or two before she heard that the boatmen, on reaching the island whence they had conveyed the fugitives, had been intimidated into revealing the place where they had left her. A Captain Ferguson, a Government emissary, obtaining the description of "Betty Burke's" appearance, sailed at once for Skye, and finding no "tall female" had been seen there with Miss Macdonald, followed upon the latter's track to Kingsburgh, where he soon discovered from the servants, that the supposed Irish domestic had reappeared, and been accommodated with the best bedchamber in the house. The good old Kingsburgh refusing to give further information, was laid in durance, and threatened with no punishment short of death; while the attendance of Miss Macdonald was commanded without loss of time. In opposition to the advice of her family, Flora wisely determined to obey the summons. On her way she met her stepfather, but was almost immediately after seized by a party of soldiers, and taken to the vessel of the Captain Ferguson named above. Meeting on board General Campbell, she frankly confessed to him the truth of the statement made by her boatmen, and quietly resigned herself prisoner.

It will be remembered that Charles's friend and