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LIFE OF
SIR WALTER SCOTT, BART.

THE LIFE
OF
SIR WALTER SCOTT, BART.
BY GEORGE GRANT.

Ah ! what avails with giant power
To wrest the trophies of an hour—
One moment write with flashing eye
Our name on castled turrets high,
And yield, the next, a broken trust,
To earth, to ashes, and to dust.

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MDCCKLIX.

LIFE OF SIR WALTER SCOTT, BART.

6 CHAPTER I.

WALTER SCOTT was born on the 15th of August, 1771, in a house belonging to his father, situated at the head of the College Wynd, which has since been removed to afford space to the University buildings. The two lower flats of this tenement were occupied by another family; the third, which was accessible by a stair from behind, was the dwelling of Mr. Walter Scott, the father of the poet, who was born in 1729.

This gentleman was connected with opulent and influential families, still it does not appear that any of these extended the hand of patronage to him in his outset in life. Walter, however, being of a clear-sighted, persevering disposition, having passed Writer to the Signet in the twenty-eighth year of his age, managed to procure for himself a considerable share of professional business, and to accumulate a handsome fortune. At the period when the son, who was afterwards to render his name so illustrious, was born, Mr. Scott was a handsome man, on the wrong side of forty, frugal and methodical in his habits, a rigid disciplinarian in his family, strict, sharp, and

honest in matters of business, and generally known as the *honest writer*—an appellation by no means proverbial amongst lawyers.* In his political senti-

* The following is an extract from a MS. entitled "A Scotch Law-suit:"—"An honest lawyer is a RARA AVIS IN SCOTIA. A more degenerate and rapacious set of unprincipled and untalented fellows do not exist than some of the low ragamuffin 'writers,' as they are termed, who practise in the inferior courts of Scotland; and the notoriety of this pitiless and destructive pettifogging practice cannot be better exemplified than in a recent case before the Sheriff-depute's court, Dumfries, in which a 'puir,' sneaking, crawling, cunning, ANIMALISED body of the name of George B—ll, of Ecclefechan, was (AVIL) doer for the pursuer; and the notour KIRSTY Sm—th, of whisky drinking celebrity, was the same (shuffler) for the defendant. The business lay, in sue, in a nut-shell; it related to the retention of some family property of minor consideration, which, nevertheless, the pursuer considered as illegally and unjustly withheld from him. To be brief, these two cormorants made a two years' job of the business, under the very nose of the present enlightened Sheriff-depute of the county of Dumfries. In what condition must the law of that country be, where a simple case of debtor and creditor can be so ruinously protracted by the infernal intrigues of two ravenous and designing harpies, till their costs amount to upwards of one hundred pounds each; and where the bone of contention, in the plurality of cases, as in this, might not amount in value to as many pence. If there be one berth warmer than another in a CERTAIN place, it must unquestionably be retained for such vultures as these: one of whom, we have just been informed, is (probably) gone THERE, to get no doubt, his bill taxed by his original employer. The other, according to the course of nature, if not off yet, cannot tarry behind much longer. If we may judge from ourselves, what a gratification would it not be, as a kind of set-off to the MALA PRAXIS of such reptiles, who thus insatiably prey on the vitals of those who venture to approach them in their tag-rag-and-bob-tail capacity, to see 'Auld Hornie' incessantly preparing them with (if with nothing worse) the bastinado, for a little more felicity, a hundred years hence. As a milder and more unchristian-like alternative, however, let us hope that, in the general reform now contemplated by every well-wisher of his country, the law departments of the United Kingdom—(the law of the Sheriff-depute's court in Dumfries, in particular)—and every other place where such farces are acted, of carrying on the pleadings by replication and rejoinder for an interminable period, to the ruin of both pursuer and defender, and the enriching a set of primitive beggars with the substance of both, will meet at length with the consideration which the still existing abuses have, for such a length of time, so imperiously craved;—protection of property, individual rights, justice, and humanity, everything dear to man in civil society, call aloud for such reform in these courts, as will secure her Majesty's lieges from the gripe of the ruthless vermin by whom they are infected. Then only can law have its true and proper influence—the oppressed then may stand a chance of having their red

ments he was a whig, such as whigs of those days were—jealous of the pretensions of the aristocracy, afraid even of the memory of the violent spirit of the Jacobites, attached to the existing order of things for the sake of a quiet and peaceful life. In his religious opinions—and he was nowise backward in professing them—he was a strict Calvinistic Presbyterian. He was withal a good man, and professed a great deal of good humour.

The wife of this gentleman, and mother of the future poet, was Anne Rutherford. Her father, Dr. John Rutherford, was one of the founders of the medical school of Edinburgh, and a physician in extensive practice. Her mother was a daughter of Swinton of Swinton, the representative of one of the most ancient and opulent families in Berwickshire. Mrs. Scott was of small stature, and plain features; and, previous to the birth of her first child, extremely delicate in her health. Her father took great pains with her education, placing her at Mrs. Euphemia Sinclair's school for young ladies, which was attended by many of the female nobility and gentry of Scotland. Respecting the head of this seminary, Sir Walter once expressed himself thus:—"To judge by the proficiency of her scholars, although much of what is now called accomplishment might then be left untaught, she must have been possessed of uncommon talents for education; for all the ladies attending her school had well cultivated minds, were fond of reading, wrote and spelled admirably, were well acquainted with history and with the belles lettres, without neglecting the more homely duties of

grievances redressed in proper time, without the risk of being ruined—and then only will the wanton and most unprincipled pettifoggers, the Oliveri, the Belles, the Smiths, and all our law trash, here, there, and everywhere, be legally muzzled; and consequently, prevented from entangling the unwary into their reckless lures, under false and base representations, detestable advice, and ultimate robbery."

the needle and account book ; all of them were perfectly well bred in society." Sir Walter continued—"That his mother and many others of Mrs. Sinclair's pupils were sent, according to a fashion then prevalent in good society, to be *finished off* by the Honourable Mrs. Ogilvie, a lady who trained her young friends to a style of manners which would now be considered intolerably stiff. For instance, no young lady in sitting was permitted ever to touch the back of her chair. Such was the effect of this early training upon the mind of Mrs. Scott, that even when she approached her eightieth year, she took as much care to avoid touching her chair with her back, as if she had been still under the stern eye of Mrs. Ogilvie." She was a person of much shrewdness, possessed of a large fund of anecdote ; like her husband she was strictly pious, and much in the habit of reading books of devotion ; she was frugal in her household economy, but without meanness, and in her charities she was unbounded ; her servants were often engaged in errands of mercy.

The fruit of this union was a family of ten children. Of these, Sir Walter Scott, the subject of our narrative, was the third. None of the others attained to any distinction ; and with the exception of his younger brother, Thomas, none of them ever were so intertwined with the after-events of his life, as to render their appearance in this volume necessary. We therefore in a few words dispose of them here. Robert, the eldest born, died captain of a vessel in the East India Company's service. John, the second, who, after suffering many years of bad health, died in his father's house in Edinburgh, held the commission of major in the 78th regiment of foot. Anne died unmarried, of a brain-fever, and another daughter was still-born. Daniel, the youngest son, served in Holland under Sir Ralph Abercromby,

as a lieutenant in the 5th regiment of foot. He subsequently left the army, and commenced business in Leith, as a merchant. Having suffered many severe losses, he went abroad, where he remained some time, but returned in bad health to his father's house, where he died. Anne Scott is said to have been extremely handsome, of a mild and amiable disposition, and a great favourite with her brothers. If Mr. and Mrs. Scott had any more children, their names have not survived. In their boyhood, the brothers were remarkable for nothing but good health and untameable spirits; while in manhood they performed, with more or less ability, the duties of their station, and dedicated their leisure hours to the pursuit of such pleasures as they were capable of enjoying. With this short notice, we leave them to turn to the immediate subject of our narrative.

Sir Walter, according to the accounts given of him by his nurse, was "as fine sonsy a bairn as ever a woman held in her arms." He had attained his twenty-second month, and could already walk pretty well for a child of his age, when the girl was awakened by his screams one morning, between one and two o'clock. She lifted him from the bed, and set him on his feet, but he fell to the floor. Mrs. Scott was immediately alarmed, and a messenger sent off in haste for her father, Dr. Rutherford, every effort of whose skill was tried in vain. Walter's right leg was cold as marble. The cause of his lameness was, in all probability, a paralytic affection, superinduced, or at least aggravated, by a scrofulous habit of body.—This account of Scott's lameness is more probable than that which represents it as having been caused by a fall. The nurse related the whole of the circumstances, many years afterwards, with so much simplicity, and with such minuteness of detail, as fully showed how deeply the events of that night had

been imprinted on her memory. Her statement was corroborated by another female domestic, who resided in the family at the time of the unfortunate occurrence, which cleared the nurse from the imputation of carelessness.

Be the cause of his lameness, however, what it might, it is certain that his general health suffered severely. The "sonsy bairn" continued for upwards of two years a pining child; and it was only at the end of that period that he became able to move about a little upon crutches. After recovering thus far, however, he continued slowly but steadily to gain strength; until in his fifth year, he was so far recovered, that his anxious parents could venture to trust him out of their sight.

In the meantime, Mr. Scott removed his dwelling from the head of the College Wynd, which must then have been much more confined, and equally dirty as now, to a new and more commodious house in George's Square, at that period the most fashionable quarter of the city. The infant eye was here allowed to dwell upon a less confined and more cheerful scene. The neighbouring meadows allowed him to enjoy the pure country air in the arms of his nurse. It is impossible to say how far the scenes and persons immediately around him might, even at this early period of his life, have left lasting impressions upon his mind; but, in all probability, it is to some adventure in this neighbourhood that we are indebted for the following passage in "My Aunt Margaret's Mirror,"—a circumstance strongly corroborative of a very general belief, that the passions stirred up in the breast of childhood long survive the images of their exciting causes, winding through human life like a stream whose source is hidden.—"Every step of the way after I have passed through the green already mentioned, has for me something

of an early remembrance. There is the stile, at which I can recollect a cross child's-maid upbraiding me with my infirmity, as she lifted me coarsely and carelessly over the flinty steps, which my brothers traversed with shout and bound. I remember the suppressed bitterness of the moment, and, conscious of my own inferiority, the feeling of envy with which I regarded the easy movements and elastic steps of my more happily formed brethren. Alas! these goodly barks have all perished on life's wide ocean, and only that which seemed so little seaworthy, as the naval phrase goes, has reached the port when the tempest is over."

The following anecdotes referring to this period of his life may serve to indicate his temper and turn of mind as a child. One nursery-maid seemed long to retain a vivid recollection that he was frequently too many for her, remarking that he often kept the nursery in a *hullabulloo*, using his *stilts* upon his brothers upon the slightest provocation." "Upon one occasion the cook-maid had angered him, when he, to punish her, drowned a whole litter of puppies in the water-cistern." That day at dinner he refused to eat any, well knowing where the water was taken from, with which the broth was made; an investigation was naturally set on foot in consequence of such an unusual phenomenon, when Walter's trick was brought to light, and he laughed heartily when he saw most of the family vomiting the nauseous broth. One more anecdote of his infancy, and we will leave this part of the subject. Even when a child in his fifth year he was happy in a thunder-storm. A violent tempest of this description happening to break over the town one afternoon, when "cripple Wattie" commenced capering about on his stilts; the rest of the frightened children were collected into the nursery by their scarcely less frightened attendants. Wattie had made

his escape and could nowhere be seen; the anxious parents became alarmed at his absence, and the servants were sent off in all directions in search of him. No tidings however could be learned of the missing favourite, until accidentally one of the men-servants had occasion to go to the back garden, where, to his surprise, he found Wattie lying on his back, clapping his little hands at every flash of lightning, and crying "bonnie, bonnie." He was carried into the house drenched with rain, kicking and screaming with vexation at being disturbed. In these trifling incidents may be discerned traces perhaps of a slight degree of that irascibility generally attendant upon protracted sickness, but at the same time of a temper inclining to drollery, bold and fearless, determined to keep its own under every disadvantage, and claiming kindred with the beautiful and sublime.

In his sixth year Walter was sent to the care of his paternal grandfather at Sandy Knowe, in the hope that the free life of a country boy might confirm his health. Sandy Knowe is situated near the border line of the rich arable strath of the Tweed, where the land rises towards the wild pasture lands of the Lammermuirs. Mr. Robert Scott, although an enterprising agriculturist, was by no means a wealthy man, and he had a numerous family. The farmhouse is built on a braehead, beneath the shelter of rude crags on which the tower of Smailholm stands. But we have the following beautiful sketch of the scene in *Marmion* :

" And feelings roused in life's first day
Glow in the line, and prompt the lay.
Then rise these crags, that mountain tower
Which charmed my fancy's waking hour;
Though no broad river swept along
To claim perchance heroic song;
Though sighed no grove in summer gale
To prompt of love a softer tale,

Though scarce a puny streamlet's speed
 Claimed homage from a shepherd's reed ;
 Yet was poetic impulse given
 By the green hill and clear blue heaven.
 It was a barren scene and wild,
 Where naked cliffs were rudely piled :
 But ever and anon between
 Lay velvet tufts of loveliest green ;
 And well the lonely infant knew
 recesses where the wall-flower grew ;
 And honey-suckle loved to crawl
 Up the low crag and ruined wall.
 I deemed such nooks the sweetest shade
 The sun in all his rounds surveyed ;
 And still I thought that shattered tower
 The mightiest work of human power ;
 And marvel'd as the aged hind
 With some strange tale bewitch'd my mind,
 Of foragers, who with headlong force,
 Down from that strength had spur'd their horse,
 Their southern rapine to renew
 Far in the distant Cheviot's blue ;
 And home returning, fill'd the hall
 With revel, wassel-route and brawl."

The impression this scene made on the infant mind of Scott must have been great, which retained its strength for upwards of thirty years, at which the foregoing description was penned.

The master of the mansion is spoken of by his grandson in these words :—" The poet's grandfather, though both descended from, and allied to, several respectable Border families, was chiefly distinguished for the excellent good sense and independent spirit which enabled him to lead the way in agricultural improvement,—then a pursuit abandoned to persons of a very inferior description. His memory was long preserved in Teviotdale, and still survives as that of an active and intelligent farmer, and the father of a family, all of whom were distinguished by talents, probity, and remarkable success in the pursuits which they adopted." The fate of the old gentleman was

not exempted from that usual to improvers, a race of men who teach others how to acquire riches, but seldom, if ever, secure any portion of the golden bait to themselves.

A story, introduced into the preface of Guy Mannering by Sir Walter, gives a happy idea of this land-improver of the beginning of the eighteenth century. "My grandfather, while riding over Charterhouse Moor, then a very extensive common, fell suddenly among a large band of gipsies, who were carousing in a hollow of the moor, surrounded by bushes. They instantly seized on his horse's bridle with many shouts of welcome, exclaiming, (for he was well known to them,) that they had often dined at his expense, and he must now stay and share their good cheer. My ancestor was a little alarmed, for like the goodman of Lochside, he had more money about his person than he cared to risk in such society. However, being naturally a bold, lively-spirited man, he entered into the humour of the thing, and sat down to the feast, which consisted of all the varieties of game, poultry, pigs, and so forth, that could be collected by a wide and indiscriminate system of plunder. The dinner was a very merry one, but my relative got a hint from some of the older gipsies to retire just when—

"The mirth and fun grew fast and furious."

and mounting his horse accordingly, he took a French leave of his entertainers.

Corresponding with this picture of the goodman of Sandy Knowe, is a story which was current at the period, that he and his gudewife had made a run-away marriage. But as this report took its rise from a disappointed female servant who lived in the house at the time of the marriage, we cannot place great reliance upon it.

The appearance of the old gentleman at the time of his grandson's visit, is thus described :

"——the thatched mansion's grey-haired sire;
Wise without learning, plain and good,
And sprung of Scotland's gentler blood:
Whose eye in age, quick, clear, and keen,
Showed what in youth its glance had been;
Whose doom contending parties sought,
Content with equity unbought."

Sir Walter's grandmother was alive at the time of his visit to Sandy Knowe, but of her no record has been preserved. More is remembered of "Aunt Jenny," who devoted herself from the first to her "puir lame laddie," with all a mother's love. She watched and cherished him, guarded him from accidents, and coddled him with little dainties. She possessed an immense store of ballads, and told tales to amuse his waking hours, and sung him to sleep at nights. For a course of years she continued these unremitting attentions; and well did her favourite bairn repay her affection.

There were two more of the old man's grandchildren residing at Sandy Knowe when Walter arrived, both of whom were younger than the stranger, and they considered him as a famous play-fellow. His own recollections of this period of his life forms a sketch in his own vivid colouring, but opposing Aunt Jenny's opinion of her favourite. He says—

"For I was wayward, bold, and wild,
A self-will'd imp, a grandame's child;
But half a plague and half a jest,
Was still endured, beloved, carest."

We can have little doubt that it was during his residence at Sandy Knowe, the first germs of those conceptions to which he owed his future fame were planted in his mind. The intensity with which he

has been able to identify himself with the feelings which animate the "farmer's ha'," could never have been awakened in after life. He was a lodger in that abode of homely shrewdness and glowing comfort. If he had been wholly educated in Edinburgh, he might have imagined the humour of Dandie Dinmont's character, but he could never have realized the warmth of his affections. Here he had learned from experience how much nobility of sentiment was consistent with what appears to the affected children of the fashionable circles mere ignorance; and he was taught to feel the difference between true worth and refinement, and when in after years he sought for heroes to his tales, he had no prejudices to lay aside, and threw himself boldly into the arms of nature at once.

The pious excitement which had breathed over the rural life of Scotland made a strong impression on him. In his poems, when describing some of the visitors at his grandfather's, he makes honourable mention of

"—————the venerable priest,
Our frequent and familiar guest,—
Whose life and manners well could paint
Alike the student and the saint."

But there were also persons of an entirely different character, who would at times make their appearance at Sandy Knowe; for, in speaking of the original of his Meg Merrilies, he says, "When a child, and among the scenes which she frequented, I have often heard these stories, and cried piteously for poor Jean Gordon. Notwithstanding the failure of Jean's issue, for which "Weary fa' the wae fu' woodie," a granddaughter survived her, whom I remember to have seen. That is, as Dr. Johnston had a shadowy recollection of Queen Anne, as a stately lady in

black, adorned with diamonds, so my memory is haunted with a solemn remembrance of a woman of more than female height, dressed in a long red cloak, who commenced acquaintance by giving me an apple, but whom nevertheless, I looked on with as much awe as the future Doctor, High Church and Tory as he was doomed to be, could look upon the queen. I conceive this woman to have been Madge Gordon." Tales of that savage life which had long maintained its place amid advancing civilization, were the marvels which circulated round the fire as young Scott clung to the knees of his aged grandfather, and a stray specimen of the tribe of gipsies still survived to add greater probability to the dreams which those wild stories conjured up.

The same remark holds good with regard to his aunt's many tales of border strife, and her snatches of old songs. The neighbourhood around Smailholm is haunted ground. In front rise the wizard Eildon hills; behind, the no less wizard tower of Learmont. Storied Melrose and Dryburgh peep from leafy shade, and the "broom o' the Cowden knowes" still waves on the one hand, while, "Yarrow braes" and "Gala water" rise and roll on the other. With what intenseness of reality then must the lovely creations of the Scottish muse have presented themselves to young Scott—how deeply must they have impressed themselves on his belief, and intermingled with his being, when the scene of every legend lay spread out before him. There is something in this blending of fiction and truth, which, to the mind of a child, is almost equivalent to reality.

We have been unable to ascertain how long Walter resided at Sandy Knowe; but on the death of her father, the warm-hearted and indefatigable Aunt Jenny took up her residence in Kelso, and thither

the child of so many cares accompanied her. Miss Scott inhabited a small house in the east corner of the churchyard called "The garden," which was her own property. At a short distance, and in a house which communicated by means of a lane with Miss Jenny's, resided her sister Mrs. Curl. The nieces who had resided at Smailholm accompanied their aunt to Kelso as well as Walter. Miss Jenny mixed a good deal in the most genteel society that the place afforded, and was highly esteemed by all who know her.

The parish school-house was also in the churchyard; and the increasing years and stature of her juvenile relatives, together with the immoderate vicinity of the place of instruction, determined the good lady to send them to school. Every one must remember the strange feelings with which they first entered within the boundaries of the dominie's dominion. A large room, filled with long wooden benches, crossing and re-crossing each other, is occupied by children sorted into classes; each, with real or pretended interest muttering to itself in half-articulated sounds the lessons it will be shortly called upon to repeat aloud. At one end of the apartment is a man ensconced in a desk, with a band of youngsters drawn up around him. They have all books in their hands, and he has a large black strap laying beside him, curiously cut at one end into long narrow stripes, which forms his sceptre of rule, and well known by the scholars under the appellation of the "tawse." The constrained attitudes of the children, and their subdued, slightly tremulous voices, convince the spectator that it is no play that is going forward. If it be winter, a clear turf fire is burning in the grate, and the thin blue smoke goes dancing up the chimney. If it be summer the windows are all open, and the mild air enters refreshingly through them, bearing

upon its wings the sweet smell of flowers, or the circling boom of the wild bee. The door opens, and the new comer is ushered in. In a moment all is silent, and the intense gaze of the silent imps, and the whole scene appal the little stranger, who, holding fast by the hand of his friendly conductor, and stuffing the thumb of his disengaged hand into his mouth, advances with fear and trembling towards the master of the place.

The teacher to whose care Scott was entrusted when first introduced to a school, was not of a character and appearance to assuage the fears of her new pupil; he was a strange, uncouth-looking person, with a two-storied wig, blind of an eye, and withal the worst tempered man in Britain. His name was not less tremendous than himself—it was Lancelot Whale.

Our information, respecting the literary qualifications of this schoolmaster, is less precise than that which relates to his figure and temper; and as little do we know of the progress which his pupil made in learning while under his care. Walter remained only one year at this school, and during that time he was engaged in learning Latin, from which we infer that Aunt Jenny had taken upon herself the charge of initiating him into the earlier branches of learning.

It was long recollected by Sir Walter Scott's schoolfellows, at the seminary of the redoubted Lancelot Whale, that he mingled little in their amusements. One gentleman, who appears to have paid more attention to the lame boy than his more thoughtless compeers, thus speaks of him:—"He was a studious boy, who did not associate much with his school-companions, which was ascribed to his being lame. The path from the school-house to his aunt's residence necessarily lay through the churchyard. A part of the enclosure, not occupied as burying ground, and called "the Knowes," was the

play-ground of the school-boys. I recollect of him passing through this noisy scene to his aunt's, heedless of the amusement of his schoolfellows. I do not remember that he was at this time particularly intimate with Mr. Ballantyne's family. I think there were three of them at school,—David, the oldest son, who went to sea, but returned in bad health, and died many years ago, James, and John." Of these two last named gentleman we will have frequent occasion of speaking in the course of this volume.

Scott appears to have formed no intimacy with any of his schoolmates at Kelso. He was among them, not of them. They knew him only as a studious, quiet boy, who, so soon as the school broke up, pressed through the noisy and frolicsome throng with the aid of his crutch, seemingly unobservant of all that was passing around, and only anxious to shelter himself in the house of his aunt. He was sometimes seen riding about the outskirts of the town on a little poney, but his schoolfellows came into no closer contact with him. The habits of his aunt contributed also to keep him aloof from familiar intercourse with boys of his own age. She formed with her sister and the children a little social compact, scarcely dependant upon extraneous objects for amusement. The ladies visited, and were on civil, but not intimate, terms, with their neighbours. Miss Jenny and her sister, though only daughters of a farmer, had good blood in their veins, and looked down with disdain on what they considered the upsetting pretensions of the rich shopkeepers of Kelso, who, on the other hand, conscious of their wealth, considered the mercantile profession more genteel than the agricultural. By these causes was Walter Scott's familiar intercourse almost exclusively restricted to the circle of his aunt and

cousins; and weak in body, and accustomed to their society, he does not seem to have entertained a desire for any other.

But his father now began to think Walter sufficiently strong to stand the tear and wear of the High School, and was naturally anxious that as little time should be lost, as possible, ere he commenced that course of education which has long been considered, in Scotland, a necessary preparative for entering upon any of the liberal professions. Before recalling him to Edinburgh, however, another experiment was to be made upon his weak leg. Some married man had recommended a trial of the Bath waters, and Jenny, whose home-loving disposition would never otherwise have dreamed of such a journey, undertook to be his guide and guardian to the healing springs. After this excursion, which had no effect, he returned to the paternal mansion.

He was now become a tolerably healthy boy; but his leg, which was still extremely weak, and easily susceptible of fatigue, afforded matter of serious care to his parents. Every known remedy was tried, but in vain; and by the advice of a quack, of the name of Grabame, Walter was laid on beds of leaves soaked or sprinkled with strong ale, but, as the reader will easily guess, with no beneficial result. Nature proved more efficient than art; for although he was at first regularly carried to school in the morning, and anxiously confided, while there, to the care of his younger but more robust brother Thomas, he came in time to be able to indulge in long rambles, and to take a part even in the most boisterous amusements of his playmates.

However indulgent his parents might shew themselves, on account of his physical weakness, in every other respect, he, along with his brothers, was subjected to a most strict system of discipline. His

father, methodical in every thing, insisted upon the most punctual observance of family hours. Their food was wholesome and plentiful, but plain; and with that affectation belonging to a certain class of citizens of the old school, any expression of preference for one kind of food over another was prohibited as a kind of crime. It was esteemed a virtue to appear ignorant of whether the food was palatable or not.

In matters of religious discipline, if possible, greater strictness was observed, as becomed the house of one who was a confidential friend of Dr. Erskine, and an elder of his session. The theatre was a forbidden place. At that period it was customary for the boys attending the High School to desire a play once a year. Attendance on the occasion was not compulsory, but payment of the ticket was. Old Mr. Scott duly paid the three shillings for each of his boys, but refused to permit them to enter the unholy precincts; winding up the whole affair with the remark, "that he would rather give it to a charity sermon!"

But Sunday was the day on which the unbending strictness of the elder's discipline was shewn forth in all its terrors. Beyond enforcing the punctual attendance of his whole household on divine service, duly forenoon and afternoon, he took no active part in the services of the day, although he watchfully superintended their observance. Young Walter would have been better pleased with out-door amusement than being confined for two long hours in the kirk, we may therefore conclude that his attention to the offices of devotion was not of an uninterrupted character. A large Newfoundland dog, belonging to the family, used frequently to come to church during service, and it was a grand manœuvre on the part of Walter, who was generally on the look-out for him,

to open the door of the pew and let him quietly in. Then followed, as a matter of course, shy looks and smiles among the youngsters, and reproving looks from the old people. To prevent this unseemly annoyance, Mr. Scott ordered the dog to be tied up during church hours, which had the desired effect for two Sundays, but Neptune, not approving of his confinement, seemed, as if by instinct, to know Sunday from the other days of the week, and ever afterwards embraced the first opportunity in the morning, of making his escape, and became more regular in his attendance on public worship than formerly.

Whilst subjected to this family discipline, Walter was admitted to participate in the instruction afforded at the High School, and his name appears for the first time in the register of that seminary, in October, 1779, and he attended four seasons, viz., from his entrance till the commencement of the autumn vacation, in 1781, he belonged to the class of Mr. Luke Fraser; from October 1781 till the autumn vacation of 1788, he was a pupil in the class of the rector, Dr. Alexander Adam.

Mr. Fraser bore the character of one of the severest disciplinarians even of the old school. He was a sound and critical scholar, and one of those painstaking teachers who will give his pupils a complete command of the language in which he undertakes to instruct them, if any one can. But however well calculated to impress an accurate knowledge of Latin upon the minds of those who went through the whole of the course, it would require uncommon exertion on the part of any one, joining the class midway in its career, at once to keep pace with it in the daily exercises, and to work backward in order to obtain the same footing with his class-fellows. This must have been peculiarly difficult in the case of Walter Scott, who, as we have previously noticed, had only re-

ceived instruction in Latin, for a year, in the provincial school of Lancelot Whale, and was plunged at once into the class of this disciplinarian just as it was about to start on the third year of its course. When we further add that he was, according to the joint testimony of his mother, and a favourite domestic of the old lady, "a careless boy about his lessons, and that no one ever knew how he got them," we will not wonder that his knowledge of Latin was never very critical or accurate. Dr. Adam was the very reverse of Fraser. He was mild and gentle in his deportment, and one of those who valued language only for the information to which it gives us access. The good natured gossiping tuition of the Doctor, while it touched upon one string of Scott's mind which afterwards vibrated eloquent music, was ill qualified to mend the matter. Walter was equalled by few of his schoolmates in his acquaintance with that maze of desultory learning into which Adam was prone to guide them, and by his own testimony, he was zealous and regular in the manufacture of the versified exercises proposed to them, but in the real business of the class he was so far deficient that he was never known to attain a higher place than the eleventh.

A very necessary part of the instruction, communicated at a public school, is the knack of being able to keep one's place among his fellows; and in this branch of learning, Scott seems to have made greater progress than in Latin. At the first outset of his High School career, we find him carried to school by a servant. "He was very fond of it," said this man, which presents us with a touching picture of the weak and delicate boy, nestling on a friendly breast. By degrees he began to mingle more fully with his equals in age, but met at first with an indifferent reception; he was thrust about and regarded

as a dull boy. One of his juvenile misfortunes ought to be remembered :—the rest of the boys of George's Square had been amusing themselves by thrusting their heads through the rails which enclose the garden in its centre. Walter must needs repeat the operation, but his head, which seems to have been as much larger than that of ordinary children, as it eventually proved, if we may believe Allan Cunningham, smaller than that of ordinary men, stuck in the attempt, and he was kept in that position until a blacksmith was sent for to relieve him.

As he grew in strength, his spirit assumed a firmer tone, and he learned to make aggressors keep a proper distance. He, whose little crutch had at an earlier period kept the nursery in an uproar, made his sturdiest assailants quail beneath the weight of his club-foot. He fought his way manfully to an equality with his class-fellows, carrying home as trophies of his thousand fights, black eyes and bloody noses innumerable, and earning from the children's maid the dainty epithet of "a wearie laddie." One of his juvenile exploits he has himself recorded thus,—“The manning of the Cowgate Port, especially in snow-ball time, was also a choice amusement, as it offered an inaccessible station for the boys who used these missiles to the annoyance of the passengers. The gateway is now demolished, and probably most of its garrison lie as low as the fortress. To recollect that the author himself, however naturally disqualified, was one of these juvenile dreadnoughts, is a sad reflection to one who cannot now step over a brook without assistance.”

His most daring adventure in these youthful battles must not be omitted, more particularly as he himself has deemed it worthy of celebration. In this fray it will be noticed that his brother Thomas, his

guardian when first committed to the perils of the High School yards, stood side by side with him. It was then that he won that ardent, active, and enduring attachment which his brother displayed towards him in after life. At the conclusion of the enterprise we are about to quote, Sir Walter feelingly eulogises him in words of the fondest affection :—"Of five brothers, all healthy and promising, in a degree far beyond one whose infancy was visited by personal infirmity, and whose health after this period seemed long very precarious, I am, nevertheless, the only survivor. The best loved, and the best deserving to be loved, who had destined this event to be the foundation of a literary composition, died 'before his day,' in a distant and foreign land ; and trifles assume an importance not their own, when connected with those who have been loved and lost.

"It is well known in the south that there is little or no boxing at the Scottish schools. About forty or fifty years ago, however, a far more dangerous mode of fighting, in parties or factions, was permitted in the streets of Edinburgh, to the great disgrace of the police, and danger of the parties concerned. These parties were generally formed from the quarters of the town in which the combatants resided, those of a particular square or district fighting against those of an adjoining one. Hence it happened, that the children of the higher classes were often pitted against those of the lower, each taking their side according to the residence of their friends. So far as I recollect, however, it was unmingled either with feelings of democracy or aristocracy ; or, indeed, with malice or ill-will of any kind towards the opposite party. In fact, it was only a rough mode of play. Such contests were, however, maintained with great vigour with stones, and sticks, and fisticuffs, when one party dared to charge, and the other stood their ground.

Of course, mischief sometimes happened, boys are said to have been killed at these *bickers*, as they were called, and serious accidents certainly took place, as many contemporaries can bear witness.

"The author's father, residing in George Square, in the southern side of Edinburgh, the boys belonging to that family, with others in the square, were arranged into a sort of company, to which a lady of distinction presented a handsome set of colours. Now, this company, or regiment, as a matter of course, was engaged in weekly warfare with the boys inhabiting the Cross-causeway, Bristo Street, the Potter-row—in short, the neighbouring suburbs. These last were chiefly of the lower ranks, but hardy loons, who threw stones to a hair's-breadth, and were very rugged antagonists at close quarters. The skirmishes frequently lasted for a whole night, until one party or the other was victorious, when if ours was successful, we drove the enemy to their quarters, and were usually chased back by the reinforcement of bigger lads who came to their assistance. If, on the contrary, we were pursued, as was often the case, into the precincts of our square, we were, in our turn, supported by our elder brothers, domestic servants, and similar auxiliaries.

"It followed, from our frequent opposition to each other, that, though not knowing the names of our enemies, we were yet well acquainted with their appearance, and had nick-names for the most of them. One very active and spirited boy might be considered as the principal leader in the cohort of the suburbs. He was, I suppose, thirteen or fourteen years old, finely made, tall, blue-eyed, with long fair hair, the very picture of a youthful Goth. This lad was always first in the charge, and last in the retreat—the Achilles at once and Ajax of the Cross-causeway. He was too formidable to us not to have a cognomen,

and like that of a knight of old, it was taken from the most remarkable part of his dress, being a pair of old green livery breeches, which was the principal part of his clothing; for, like Pentapolin, according to Don Quixotte's account, Green Brecks, as we always called him, always entered the battle with bare arms, legs, and feet.

"It fell that once upon a time when the combat was at the thickest, this plebeian champion headed a charge so rapid and furious, that all fled before him. He was several paces before his comrades, and had actually laid his hands upon the patrician standard, when one of our party, whom some mis-judging friend had intrusted with a *couteau-de-chasse*, or hanger, inspired with a zeal for the honour of the corps, worthy of Major Sturgeon himself, struck poor Green Brecks over the head, with strength sufficient to cut him down. When this was seen, the casualty was so far beyond what had ever taken place before, that both parties fled different ways, leaving poor Green Brecks with his hair plentifully dabbled in blood, to the care of the watchman, who (honest man) took care not to know who had done the mischief. The bloody hanger was thrown into one of the Meadow ditches, and solemn secrecy was sworn on all hands, but the remorse and terror of the actor were beyond all bounds, and his apprehensions of the most dreadful character. The wounded hero was for a few days in the Infirmary, the case being only a trifling one. But though inquiry was strongly pressed upon him, no argument could make him indicate the person from whom he had received the wound, though he must have been perfectly well known to him. When he recovered, and was dismissed, the author and his brothers opened a communication with him, through the medium of a popular gingerbread baker, of whom both parties were customers, in order to

tender a subsidy in the name of smart money. The sum would excite ridicule were I to name it; but sure I am that the pockets of the noted Green-Breeks never held as much money of his own. He declined the remittance, saying that he would not sell his blood; but at the same time reprobated the idea of being an informer, which he said was *clam*, i. e. base or mean. With much urgency he accepted a pound of snuff for the use of some old woman,—aunt, grandmother, or the like,—with whom he lived. We did not become friends, for the bickers were more agreeable to both parties than any more pacific amusement; but we conducted them ever after under mutual assurances of the highest consideration for each other."

Walter Scott was particularly anxious to be considered in no way inferior to his comrades, hence his joining in their *bickers* and other no less dangerous amusements; and we have another proof of the dawning of that strong unbending will which he displayed in after life, that despite his lameness, he was a regular attender upon the dancing lessons of Mr. Wilson, who waited on the family at home. He was considered to be the best dancer among them. Nor will our readers be astonished at this apparently strange decision, when they consider that in those days the people cared less for grace, or exact observance of measure, than the hearty good-will shown by strenuous thumping of the floor: he who went through most hard work in a given time was the best dancer; and if noise was any criterion, his club-foot would assuredly satisfy the most fastidious.

But Walter laboured under another disqualification besides his lameness; he had, as the learned in melody express it, *no ear*. Mr. Alexander Campbell, organist of an Episcopalian chapel in Edinburgh

at the time we speak of, but afterwards better known as the Editor of "Alleyn's Anthology," laboured to instruct him in music, but it was labour lost—for Walter had no ear. We learn moreover from Burns' Thomson, to whom Sir Walter furnished a few songs, that he was under the necessity of furnishing the poet with a stanza of the exact rythm suited to the air for which he wanted words, and that upon this pattern-card modelled his verses.

While Scott was thus lounging through the routine of High School duties, and mixing with as much apparent keenness and forgetfulness of any nobler aim in the rough sports of boyhood as any of his young compeers, the attentive observer might have detected in him the growth of higher faculties. He had not altogether relinquished those recluse habits which his indisposition had superinduced upon him. Although none more forward or buoyant when once engaged in play, he often forgot to seek it, and seemed as happy in his retirement as when surrounded by his comrades. His manners, perhaps from having lived so much among females, were more gentle and refined than those of other boys. One who was formerly a domestic in the family, and afterwards an humble but confidential friend, said that, unlike his brothers, Walter was ever "regardful and polite;" and that instead of swearing as they were noways loath to do, the strongest expletive she remembers to have heard from him was "Faith!" and the good lady, being somewhat of a puritan, seemed sufficiently scandalized at even that. Walter being more amenable to censure than his brothers, was in the custom of receiving both their share and his own. Another feature of his character at this age, and on this point the old domestic and confidential friend is corroborated by many others, was fervent piety. "He was a pious devoted creature" is the expression used by one

authority. In corroboration, rather a characteristic anecdote is related of the two brothers Walter and Thomas. The butler was of course, as delegated guardian, obliged to wait Walter's time when setting out for school. All our readers cannot have forgot the relief with which boys enjoy a few minutes *coshering* before "the school goes in." Thomas was a fine healthy lad, always on the alert, and dressed in time for "the gathering." But Walter had his prayers to say, and in Thomas's estimation they were somewhat of the longest. "Doctor Wattie," the impatient youngster was one morning heard to exclaim, "canna ye come awa?" "I canna come till I have said my prayers, Tam," replied Walter. "Set your prayers to the deevil, can you no pray whan you come hame to breakfast?"

A great part of the time which the boy spent apart from his comrades was spent in reading, for which he had always a strong inclination. Not contented with the perusal of such books as he could procure at home or borrow from his friends, he scraped acquaintance with Mr. James M'Cleish, a bookseller, from whom he purchased or borrowed many a volume. He used to read in bed for hours in the mornings and evenings. His favourite attitude for studying, if he was up and dressed, as we learn from George Wilkinson, a valued servant (to whom we will have afterwards to recur), was lying upon his back upon the carpet, with all his books around him, his lame leg resting upon his left thigh, and the book he was reading laid upon the lame foot as on a reading-desk. This habit he retained for many years; but what was the nature of the boy's studies at this early period, we have been unable satisfactorily to ascertain; we are confident however that they were not his school tasks. One informant assures us that he spent his time in reading all kinds of nonsense books; while another

remembers the names of "The Arabian Nights' entertainments," and "Rollin's Ancient History." His mother encouraged this love of books, and often invited him to read aloud to her, with which request he readily complied, but always without altering his supine position. The degree to which he was engrossed by a favourite book, kindled up a feud against him in the breast of a beauty of the day. The lady in question expected homage to her good looks from boys as well as men, and was exceedingly mortified to find that Walter preferred the perusal of some romance which he had got hold of to her conversation. Her caressing attempts were unavailing, and her remonstrances could only draw from him "wha wud speak to you." The belle was so annoyed, that on leaving the room, she could not resist the temptation to vent her anger, by putting in her head again, and crying "hob-goblin Wattie?" The epithet sunk deep, for but a short time before his death, he asked her if he was still hob-goblin Wattie? This masculine beauty told him he was ten times more so than ever, maintaining that "he was always a fashious child from over-indulgence, sometimes humorous, but commonly very dull."

Besides the delight he took in reading, his original source of pleasure and information, the conversation of elderly acquaintances was still open to him. The pictures of some of those living libraries of romance have been traced by himself, and we transfer a few of them to these pages, as important indications of what these early impressions were, under which his youthful mind received its directing bias.

First on the list we will place George Constable, Esq. of Wallace Craigie, the original of Jonathan Oldbuck, in the *Antiquary*. In the preface to that novel, Sir Walter states:—"An excellent temper, with a slight degree of sub-acid humour; learning,

wit, and drollery, the more poignant that they were a little marked by the peculiarities of an old bachelor ; a soundness of thought, rendered more forcible by an occasional quaintness of expression, were, the author conceives, the only qualities in which the creature of his imagination resembled his benevolent and excellent old friend." In the introduction to the "Two Drovers" we have an outline of the features of the old gentleman :—"He had been present, I think, at the trial at Carlisle, and seldom mentioned the venerable judge's charge to the jury without tears,—which had a peculiar pathos, as flowing down features carrying rather a sarcastic or almost a cynical expression. This worthy gentleman's reputation for shrewd Scottish sense, knowledge of our national antiquities, and a racy humour peculiar to himself, must still be remembered. For myself, I have pride in recording that for many years we were, in Wordsworth's language,—

"— a pair of friends, though I was young,
And ' George ' was seventy-two."

Mrs. Anne Murray Keith, an intimate friend and schoolmate of his mother, and to whom the author had on many occasions been indebted for the substratum of his Scottish fictions. Sir Walter confesses, in one of his introductions "that the lady termed in his narrative, Mrs. Bethune Balliol, was designed to shadow out in its leading points the interesting character of a dear friend, Mrs. Murray Keith, whose death occurring shortly before, had saddened a wide circle much attached to her." Mrs. Keith was "a little woman, with ordinary features and an ordinary form, and hair which in youth had no decided colour. We may believe Mrs. Martha when she said of herself that she was never remarkable for personal charms.

Mrs. Martha's features had been of a kind which might be said to wear well; their irregularity was now of little consequence, animated as they were by the vivacity of her conversation; her teeth were excellent, and her eyes, although inclining to grey, were lively, laughing, and undimmed by time. A slight shade of complexion, more brilliant than her years premised, subjected my friend, among strangers, to the suspicion of having stretched her foreign habits as far as a prudent touch of rouge. But it was a calumny; for when telling or listening to an interesting or affecting story, I have seen the colour come and go, as if it played on the cheek of eighteen."

Mrs. Margaret Swinton, the maternal grandmother of Scott, is thus made mention of by him:—"She was our constant resource in sickness, or, when tired of noisy play, we closed around her to listen to her tales. As she might be supposed to look back to the beginning of the last century, the fund which supplied us with amusement often related to events of that period." Again, he says;—"This good spinster had, in her composition, a strong vein of the superstitious, and was pleased, among other fancies, to read alone in her chamber, by a taper fixed in a candlestick, which she had formed out of a human skull. One night, this strange piece of furniture acquired suddenly the power of locomotion, and after performing some odd circles on the chimney-piece, fairly leaped on the floor, and continued to roll about the apartment. Mrs. Swinton calmly proceeded to the adjoining room for another light, and had the satisfaction to penetrate the mystery on the spot. Rats abounded in the ancient building she inhabited, and one of them managed to ensconce itself within her favourite *memento mori*."

. It was from the stories of this lady that Scott

obtained the tradition upon which the "Bride of Lammermoor" is founded, as well as the groundwork of "My Aunt Margaret's Mirror." One story in particular, which must have made a strong impression on the mind of Walter, we proceed to give in his own words :—

"Aunt Margaret was, I suppose, seven or eight years old, when residing in the old mansion-house of Swinton, and already displayed the firmness and sagacity which distinguished her through life.—Being one of a large family, she was, owing to slight indisposition, left at home one day, when the rest of the family went to church with Sir John and Lady Swinton, their parents. Before leaving the little invalid, she was strictly enjoined not to go into the parlour where the elder party had breakfasted. But when she found herself alone in the upper part of the house, the spirit of her great ancestress, Eve, took possession of my aunt Margaret, and forth she went to examine the parlour in question. She was struck with admiration and fear at what she saw there. A lady, 'beautiful exceedingly,' was seated by the breakfast-table, and employed in washing the dishes which had been used. Little Margaret would have had no doubt in accounting this singular vision an emanation from the angelical world, but for her employment, which she could not so easily reconcile to her ideas of angels.

"The lady, with great presence of mind, called the astonished child to her, fondled her with much kindness, and judiciously avoiding to render the necessity of secrecy too severe, she told the little girl she must not let any one, except her mother, know that she had seen her. Having allowed this escape-valve for the benefit of her curiosity, the mysterious stranger desired the little girl to look from the window of the parlour to see if her mother was returning from

church. When she turned her head again, the fair vision had vanished, but by what means, Margaret was unable to form a conjecture.

"Long watched and eagerly waited for, the Lady Swinton at last returned from church, and her daughter lost no time in telling her extraordinary tale. 'You are a very sensible girl, Peggy,' answered her mother, 'for if you had spoken of that poor lady to any one but me, you might have cost her her life. But now I will not be afraid of trusting you with any secret, and I will show you where the poor lady lives.' In fact, she introduced her to a concealed apartment, opening by a sliding panel from the parlour, and shewed her the lady in the hiding-place which she inhabited."

This unfortunate lady was Mrs. Macfarlane, but her story has nothing to do with our present purpose, which is merely to shew the strength of character which must have been possessed by a woman, who when a mere girl could be thus relied upon. The death of this relative which happened while Scott was yet young, and which he has termed "the first images of horror that the scenes of real life stamped upon my mind," was fated to be deeply impressive. Mrs. Swinton, at this period about eighty years of age, resided in a house in Charles Street in the immediate neighbourhood of George Square; no person living in the house with her but a favourite maid-servant. The girl became deranged, but her symptoms were not of such a violent nature as to alarm her mistress. One Sunday afternoon, when, with her friends in George Square, Mrs. Swinton chanced to mention some of her servant's aberrations, and Mrs. Scott, alarmed at the idea of her aunt's living alone with a maniac, prevailed on the old lady to allow her cook-maid to sleep in the house. About midnight the woman heard the outer door open; she

ran thither, and was met by the mad servant, who pushed her out, and violently shut the door. The cook succeeded in forcing it open; upon which the maniac flew at her in a state of great excitement, bit her in the shoulder, and threw her down the stair. When she recovered from her stupefaction, she again essayed the door, but found it locked; and she now heard the old lady exclaiming, "Oh! Peggy, you'll no murder your mistress!" Mrs. Scott's servant ran, all undressed as she was, to her master's house to give the alarm. The inmates, horrified by this wild story, rushed to Charles Street, and forced Mrs. Swinton's door. They found the old lady mangled and bloody, lying dead on the hearth, with a gory hatchet beside her, and the house on fire. The flames were speedily extinguished. The depositories of the deceased were broken open, but though every thing was misplaced, nothing was missing. The maniac was nowhere to be seen. It appeared afterwards, that with a small box under her arm, she had walked out of the house, with no covering but her shift; she passed along the Potter-row, and informed a watchman who sat half asleep in his box, that "there was a fire in Charles Street." He looked up and fainted, on beholding the ghastly and bloody spectacle. She was next seen at the Guard House, in the High Street, where she gave a similar alarm, but was seized and detained. The maniac was confined for life, and the cook continued dangerously ill for a long time. Such an event could not fail to lay strong hold on a young mind, and must have lent an additional importance to the memory of Aunt Margaret and her stories.

In this portrait gallery, Alexander Stewart, of Invernahyle, whose conversation added so much to store the mind of the future poet and novellist, must not be forgotten. He was a Highland gentleman of

good family, and had been "*out in the forty-five.*"— This would have been recommendation sufficient for young Walter; and to judge by some of his expressions, which the author of *Waverley* has preserved, we are inclined to think that Mr. Stewart had sat for his picture in the "*Pate in Peril*" of *Redgauntlet*. Stewart's fondness for relating his "*hair-breadth escapes,*" his rough, half-jocular expressions, were the same. "*I was found with the mark of the beast on me in every list,*" were his words, when speaking of the difficulty with which government was induced to grant his pardon after the insurrection was quelled. His adventures during that turbulent period were such as did him honour. His spirit of enterprise blazed brightly to the last, as will appear from the following anecdote, related by Sir Walter.

"Invernahyle chanced to be in Edinburgh when Paul Jones came into the Frith of Forth, and though then an old man, I saw him in arms, and heard him exult in the prospect of drawing his claymore once more before he died. In fact, on that memorable occasion, when the capital of Scotland was menaced by three trifling sloops or brigs, scarce fit to have sacked a fishing village, he was the only man who seemed to propose resistance. He offered to the magistrates, if broad-swords and dirks could be obtained, to find as many Highlanders among the lower classes as would cut off any boat's crew that might be sent into a town full of narrow and winding passages, in which they were like to disperse in quest of plunder. I know not if this plan was attended to; I rather think it seemed too hazardous to the constituted authorities, who might not, even at that time, desire to see arms in Highland hands. A steady and powerful west wind settled the matter, by sweeping Paul Jones and his vessels out of the Frith."

The frequent visits of young Walter at the house of

his uncle, Dr. Rutherford, professor of Botany in the University of Edinburgh, and eminent for his discoveries in chemistry, brought him in contact with the most distinguished scholars of the day. Concerning these visits a sufficiently characteristic anecdote is told. "His thirst for reading is perhaps not described in sufficiently emphatic terms, even in his own narrative. It amounted to an enthusiasm. He was at that time very much in the house of his uncle, and there, even at breakfast, he would constantly have a book open by his side, to refer to while sipping his coffee, like his own Oldbuck in the Antiquary. His uncle frequently commanded him to lay aside his book while eating, and Walter would only ask permission to read out the paragraph in which he was engaged. But this request resembled the miracle of *Balmerino's eik** in conviviality, and the Doctor could never find that his nephew finished a paragraph in his life. It may be mentioned that Shakespeare was at this period frequently in his hands, and that of all his plays, the Merchant of Venice was his principal favourite.

In his father's house, it would appear from these sketches, that young Scott found himself transported into a totally different class of society from what he had been accustomed to during his residence with his grandfather and Aunt Jenny. It was a new world opening to him; but he did not break off his connexion with the lower classes, and still clung to every person who could satisfy his voracious appetite for "auld world stories." He has embalmed the memory of John M'Kinlay—"an old servant of my father's, a excellent old Highlander, without a fault, unless a preference to mountain-dew over less potent liquors be accounted one"—in his last introduction to

* A way of drinking all night at one bowl, by means of perpetual but always replenishing. *Eik* signifies addition.

Guy Mannering; it was even reported by his brothers that "Wattie used to treat Jock M'Kinlay to a dram for the sake of hearing his auld stories about the Highlanders, and the forty-five." A kindly connection was generally kept up between nurses and their foster-children, and Walter long maintained a friendly intercourse with Lizzy Cranstoun, who had nursed him, and in her old age he frequently gave her pecuniary assistance. But there is one of those more humble friends of the family, who seems worthy to be more particularly introduced to the reader.

Rebecca Johnston entered Mr. Scott's service in the year 1779, about the period of Walter's return from the country, and seems to have been entrusted with a more special charge of him than any of the other servants. During the first year of his attendance upon the High School he slept with her. Although then only a girl of fifteen, she had been educated in the strictness of the Burgher secession, and frequently lectured Walter upon his religious duties. She was even then so remarkable for a pious turn of mind, that, on one occasion, when a ball of fire passed over the city, and Walter's young nurse was asked for amid the alarm, he observed that "Becky would be at her prayers." When Becky left the family on the occasion of her marriage to a respectable citizen, Walter officiated as her husband's *best man*, drank tea with the young folks at the house of the bride's mother, and faithfully attended their "kirking" on the following Sunday, both forenoon and afternoon. In virtue of her slight superiority in years, and the high estimation in which she stood with her master and mistress, this good woman seems to have assumed something of the character of a mistress towards her charge, and to have kept it up in after-life. Her ultra-presbyterian notions were particularly shocked at Walter's relaxation from the strictness of his father's profession,

and still more by his ultimately becoming an Episcopalian,—this lapse she could never forget. Her free habits of uttering her opinions, in all places and at all times, seem to have latterly begotten a degree of coldness and alienation between them. Still no one seemed to rejoice more in her former favourite; and we are certain, none mourned his death with a more sincere grief, than did Mrs. Williamson, who survived him four years.

The mind of Scott was not, however, a mere passive recipient of impressions, even at the period of life to which our narrative at present relates. His active fancy was, even at this early period, struggling to recreate and arrange them into a world of his own. He had already learned to imitate the most renowned of the story-tellers by whom he was surrounded. His proficiency in the art will be best told in his own words:—"I must refer to a very early period of my life, were I to point out my first achievements as a tale-teller—but I believe most of my old school-fellows can bear witness that I had a distinguished character for that talent, at a time when the applause of my companions was my recompense for the disgraces and punishments which the future romance-writer incurred for being idle himself and keeping others idle, during hours that should have been employed on our tasks. The chief enjoyment of my holidays was to escape with a chosen friend, who had the same taste with myself; and alternately to recite to each other such wild adventures as we were able to devise. We told, each in turn, interminable stories of knight-errantry, and battles, and enchantments, which were continued from one day to another, as opportunity offered, without our ever thinking of bringing them to a conclusion. As we observed a strict secrecy on the subject of this interview, it acquired all the character of a concealed

pleasure, and we used to select for the scenes of our indulgence, long walks through the solitary and romantic environs of Arthur's Seat, Salisbury Crags, Braid Hills, and similar places in the vicinity of Edinburgh; and the recollection of these holidays still forms an oasis in the pilgrimage I have to look back upon."

Such of our readers as have been educated at a public school in Scotland, cannot fail to have been engaged in such petty warfare as is described by Sir Walter in his introduction to *Green Brecks*. And those of them who may have been tinged in their youth with a slight shade of the romantic, must remember the delight they experienced while investing their combats with a mock dignity derived from viewing them as representatives of the battles they read of in story. Some feeling of this kind seems to have suggested to "the future romance-writer" another medium of giving utterance to his thick-coming fancies; in the use of which his parents seem to have acquiesced with more readiness than their religious prejudices and their dislike to the theatre would have led us to anticipate. Walter, with the aid of his brothers and sister, and some other young friends, were permitted to perform plays in the dining-room. The household served them for an audience, the window-hangings for scenes, and the dresses were, no doubt, in strict keeping with the rest of the decorations. Walter, having a better knowledge of the thing, undertook the management; and being the best reciter, took upon himself the principal parts. *Richard III.* was a favourite piece; and it affords a curious matter of conjecture what the boy's feelings might be when repeating the lines,—

"Why do I halt and be mis-shapen thus?"

Another of their stock pieces was *Jane Shore*, in which Miss Scott represented the heroine.

In the long narratives of chivalry interchanged with his confidant, as well as in his exertions as manager of the private theatricals, we recognise the unconscious working of those faculties which made the future poet. But another circumstance co-operated to give him a bias towards literature.—The society into which he was introduced at his uncle's house, where, as he has himself informed us, he first met with that strange monster, a live poet, in the person of Dr. Cartwright, taught him to feel the value of literary distinction; and the exercises which he was called upon to perform in the rector's class, rendered him familiar with the knowledge of composition. That he had collected under these auspices a stock of the set phrases which go to constitute fine writing, and felt some pride in being able to turn them into a pretty sentence, which will appear from the following anecdote, which is given on the authority of a friend of the family who was present. "At a tea-party in Mr. Scott's house, a lady was complaining of the heavy rains that had then recently fallen in the Highlands, where she had been on a visit. Walter, upon hearing this, looked out from below the table, where he had ensconced himself upon all fours, and said, 'That's poor Caledonia weeping for the poverty of her soil.'"

It was about the same time that he made his first attempt at original versification, the fate of which he has himself left upon record. "At one period of my schoolboy days, I was so far^{off} left to my own desires as to become guilty of verses on a thunder-storm, which were much approved of, until a malevolent critic sprung up in the shape of an apothecary's blue-buakined wife, who affirmed, that my most sweet-poetry was stolen from an old magazine. I

never forgave the imputation; and even now, I acknowledge some resentment against the poor woman's memory. She, indeed, accused me unjustly, when she said, I had stolen my brooms ready-made; but as I had, like most premature poets, copied all the words and ideas of which my verses consisted, she was so far right, that there was not an original word or thought in the whole six lines. I made one or two faint attempts at-verse, after I had undergone this sort of daw-plucking at the hands of the apothecary's wife, but some friend or other always advised me to put my verses in the fire, and, like Dorax in the play, I submitted, though with a swelling heart."

The real history of these unfortunate lines is contained in the following well-authenticated anecdote:—
 "When a boy at school, Walter was overtaken on his way home by a storm of thunder and lightning. His mother, who was anxiously expecting him, was alarmed at his non-appearance, and on his return began to reprimand him severely for staying so long out. The boy excused himself by saying, he had gone into a common-stair for shelter; and, impressed by the awfulness of the scene around him, had written some lines, which he forthwith presented to her. Though possessed of little intrinsic merit, they are interesting as the first attempt of the poet."

"Loud o'er my head when awful thunders roll,
 And vivid lightnings flash from pole to pole;
 It is thy voice, my God, which bids them fly—
 Thy voice directs them through the vaulted sky;
 Then let the good thy mighty power revere,
 And hardened sinners thy just judgment fear."

If in his story-telling adventures and theatrical undertakings we recognize the innate impressible workings of the imagination, in the oracle which spoke from beneath the table, and in these sufficiently common-place verses, we see the fruits of the culti-

vation of his powers of language by external influences. Every day's experience teaches us the possibility of instructing young minds into the use of words. A proper application of fine phraseology often veils poverty of thought. No wonder, then, that a talent which may be successfully cultivated where neither conception nor imagination exist, may be forced to a premature ripeness in a mind richly endowed with both. Imagination and the power of expression go to make up the poet. Both existed in the breast of Scott in no common degree; but his unripe imagination had not yet discovered the mode in which it was to manifest its creations to others, and his talent for verbal expression sounded chill and hollow.

Such was the state of his mind at the time when his High School career terminated, and he was transferred to the University. His name first appears in the College-books in 1783. In the roll of the Humanity class, taught by Professor Hill, it is entered in his own hand "*Gaulterus Scott.*" In the roll of the Greek class, taught by Professor Dalzell, the spelling is correct, written in a stiff schoolboy hand, but quite legible. What character he sustained in these classes, we have no account of; neither is it of the slightest consequence, as the early age at which boys are admitted to our Scottish Universities, and the nature of the studies pursued in the junior classes, render the first year of a college life in reality a blank in our existence. In 1784, his name again occurs in the roll of the second Greek class; and in that of the Logic class, then taught by Professor Bruce.

His attendance upon these classes was, however, in all probability speedily terminated by the bursting of a blood-vessel, and a long tract of bad health, of which that event was the commencement. The interruption thus given to the plan of education which

paternal care had sketched out for him, and habits acquired during the term of indulgence afforded to the invalid, mark the period of his life which ensued as entirely distinct from that which we have hitherto been surveying. This interruption was, moreover, coincident in point of time with that sudden development of the physical constitution, which seems often to change the entire character. His sickness, which was in all probability an effort of nature to work off the dregs of early infirmity, seems almost to have been providentially interposed to chain him down, and afford him leisure to acquire those habits which were to ensure his future renown. His entrance into animal existence was through pain and suffering, and the mental birth was destined to be attended with similar pains.

Here we close that portion of our narrative dedicated to the boyhood of Walter Scott, and have endeavoured to preserve as many traits as possible of the friends and relations by whom he was surrounded; as the history of a boy is more properly that of the persons and circumstances among which his lot has been cast. The character of the earlier years of the period to which we are next to direct the reader's attention, will not very materially differ from what we have been contemplating; but as we advance, the figure of the youthful poet will naturally stand out in bolder relief.

CHAPTER II.

As we have already noticed, Walter Scott was subjected to a violent attack of sickness shortly after being enrolled as a student in the Logic class of the University of Edinburgh, in 1784. For the only distinct account of this illness we are indebted to himself. He says—"When boyhood, advancing into youth required more serious studies and graver cares, a long illness threw me back on the kingdom of fiction, as it were, by a species of fatality. My indisposition arose, in part at least, from my having broken a blood-vessel; and motion and speech were for a long time pronounced positively dangerous. For several weeks I was confined strictly to my bed, during which time I was not allowed to speak above a whisper, to eat more than a spoonful or two of boiled rice, or to have more covering than one thin counterpane. When the reader is informed that I was at this time a growing youth, with the spirits, appetite, and impatience of fifteen, and suffered, of course, greatly under this severe regimen, which the repeated return of my disorder rendered indispensable, he will not be surprised that I was abandoned to my own discretion, so far as reading (my almost sole amusement) was concerned, and still less so, that I abused the indulgence which left my time so much at my own disposal.

"There was at this time a circulating library in Edinburgh, founded, I believe, by the celebrated Allan Ramsay, which, besides containing a most respectable collection of books of every description, was, as might have been expected, peculiarly rich in works of fiction. It exhibited specimens of every kind from the romances of chivalry, and the ponder-

ous folios of *Cyrus* and *Cassandra*, down to the most approved works of later times. I was plunged into this great ocean of reading without compass or pilot; and unless when some one had the charity to play chess with me, I was allowed to do nothing save read, from morning to night. I was, in kindness and pity, which was perhaps erroneous, however natural, permitted to select my subjects of study at my own pleasure, upon the same principle that the humours of children are indulged to keep them out of mischief. As my taste and appetite were gratified in nothing else, I indemnified myself by becoming a glutton of books. Accordingly I believe I read all the romances, old plays, and epic poetry in that formidable collection, and no doubt was unconsciously amassing materials for the task in which it has been my lot to be so much employed.

"At the same time, I did not in all respects abuse the license permitted to me. Familiar acquaintance with the specious miracles of fiction brought with it some degree of satiety, and I begun by degrees to seek in histories, memoirs, voyages, and the like, events nearly as wonderful as those which were the work of imagination, with the additional advantage that they were in a great measure true. The lapse of nearly two years, during which I was left to the exercise of my own free-will, was followed by a temporary residence in the country, where I was again very lonely, but from the amusement which I derived from a good though old fashioned library. The vague and wild use which I made of this advantage I cannot describe better than by referring my reader to the desultory studies of *Waverley* in a similar situation; the passages concerning whose course of reading were imitated from recollections of my own."

We are of opinion that Sir Walter has made a mistake, in allotting the period of two years to his

confinement in town during this sickness; and we have pretty conclusive evidence for forming such an opinion. In November, 1784, he was in good health, and looking forward to a winter's attendance upon the classes; next we find the following entry in the minute-book of the Society of Writers to the Signet:—"15th May, 1786.—Compeared Walter Scott, and presented an indenture dated 31st March last, entered into between him and Walter Scott, his son, for five years from the date thereof;" and third, we have Sir Walter's own testimony that he met Burns in Edinburgh in the winter of that year; besides, we have the evidence of a near relative, that he paid a long visit to Roxburghshire during his fourteenth or fifteenth year. The ascertained dates of subsequent events forbid us to assign a later period of his life to this illness; we may therefore assume, that his long confinement and subsequent visit to the country occurred between the close of 1784 and sometime in 1786; but at all events, we have incontrovertible evidence that he was in Edinburgh, and alive and merry in the winter of 1786.

Sir Walter, in the list of amusements of his sick chamber, forgets *Drawing*. Scott's mother was no mean proficient in this elegant accomplishment, if we are to believe an intimate friend and old schoolmate. It was natural, therefore, that with the imitative propensities of boyhood, Walter should betake himself to the scratching of flowers on paper, during the tedious hours of his sickness. It was merely the power of imitating form or colour with more or less accuracy, and feeling a harmless pride in success. That Sir Walter never in after-life felt any vocation to the pencil, is one strong ground for believing that he was not possessed of this faculty. There is not the smallest doubt that he found pleasure in gazing upon the creations of art and in the conversation of eminent artists; but in like manner, many who have the sense

of harmony and melody very imperfectly developed, are susceptible of being much excited by music.

We return from this digression to record the existence of a perishable memorial of this period of Scott's life. On a window of the house in George Square, at that time inhabited by his father's family, there may still be seen the following inscription, scratched with a diamond, in a hand strikingly similar to that which he wrote to the last, but with more lengthened tails to the capital letters,—“Walter Scott—1785—ha, who art thou?—Begone.” This trifle is undoubtedly connected with the impatience of the tardy convalescent; but still the name and date lend it importance, which is seldom attached to a scrawl upon a pane of glass.

We have no other record of his sick apartment, and will therefore follow him to Roxburghshire. Captain Robert Scott, a brother of his father's, had entered the naval service of the East India Company in early life, and returned to his native country about the year 1784, with a respectable competency. In the year following he purchased the small property of Rosebank, in the immediate neighbourhood of Kelso. Captain Scott is described as a pleasant, gentlemanly man, with no small degree of that sturdy pride which men of decided character derive from the consciousness of being the makers of their own fortunes. He was in the commission of the peace, and discharged the duties of a magistrate with strict impartiality.—The Captain occupied a good deal of his time in improving the property he had purchased, making additions to the house, and keeping his garden and ornamental grounds in order. He had never been married; and our kind-hearted old friend, Miss Jenny, was installed into the office of housekeeper; she took great pleasure in seeing his nephews and nieces, and indeed all his friends about him. The scanty notices we have been able to collect of this

gentleman leave a most favourable impression of his character. To the high sense of honour, and clear-sighted activity of the sailor, he seems to have united a cordial and benevolent disposition. In his taste for agricultural pursuits, and in the anxious desire he testified, by settling his estate upon his nephew, Walter, to keep up his remembrance in the land, we trace the gradual progress of honest ambition, from the good grandson, proud of being the most enterprising farmer of his district, through the small laird, to the baronial splendour of the proprietor of Abbotsford.

To the house of this gentleman Walter was sent, in the hope that the air and soil which had proved to be so congenial to his sickly childhood, might again reinvigorate him. He found himself restored to the care of his "Aunt Jenny," and, in attendance upon her, he again met the playmates of his childhood.—But he also met with more new friends than his uncle. "In early youth," he says, alluding to this period of his life, "I resided for a considerable time in the vicinity of Kelso, where my life passed in a very solitary manner. I had few acquaintances, scarce any companions, and books, which were at the time almost essential to my happiness, were difficult to come by. It was then that I was particularly indebted to the liberality and friendship of an old lady of the Society of Friends, eminent for her benevolence and charity. Her deceased husband had been a medical man of eminence, and left her, with other valuable property, a small and well-selected library. This the kind old lady allowed me to rummage at pleasure, and carry home what volumes I chose, on condition that I should take, at the same time, some of the tracts printed for encouraging and extending the doctrines of her own sect. She did not even exact any assurance that I would read these performances, being too justly afraid of involving me

in a breach of promise, but was merely desirous that I should have the chance of instruction within my reach, in case, whim, curiosity, or accident, might induce me to have recourse to it."

The lady here painted in such amiable colours was the mother of — Waldie, Esq., of Henderside, one of whose sons attended Whale's school in Kelso at the same time with Sir Walter. This venerable person was always known by the name of "Lady Waldie," a name which, when applied by a Scottish peasant to one who has no hereditary claim to the title, is no common tribute of respect. It is expressive of blended dignity and gentleness, of diffusive benevolence, and purity in word and deed in the party thus designated, so genuine and impressive, as even to breathe their softening influence over the minds of a rough-witted, fearless race, more inclined to pass shrewd and caustic remarks upon their superiors in wealth and station, than to pay them a slavish homage. The character of the Scottish peasant is indeed a strange mixture of passive obedience, with undaunted maintenance of the right of private judgment. Scarcely any motive is sufficient to sting him to insubordination; but he never attempts to shut his eyes to the worthlessness of those beneath whose lash he crouches. He dares to be a tame slave, without seeking to reconcile himself to his situation by attributing fancied virtues to his master; nor does he offer to hide his dislike.

But to return to "Lady Waldie." She was, as Scott relates, a member of the Society of Friends, but no bigot to her sect. She did not hesitate frequently to attend the parish church. "She was," says an old lady, "a great observer of the stars and heavenly bodies; frequently looking at them, and talking of them." Walter Scott, used to say, that "she was eye looking to heaven." This little anecdote indicates the rich and susceptible mind of the

speaker, but it likewise conveys a pleasing image of her who could make so strong an impression on him.

Scott's craving for books found another source whence to satisfy itself, on the well-covered shelves of a circulating library in Kelso, kept by Mr. Elliot. This librarian had that kind of taste which does not extend beyond a keen sense of the beauty of orderly arrangement and neatness, was of a shrewd turn of mind, and spoke plausibly. His stock of knowledge, particularly in what regarded antiquarian matters, was pretty extensive, and his assortment of books was tolerably various. Both the man and his establishment, possessed a strong power of attraction for the convalescent.

It was during the period of this visit to his uncle Robert, that Scott owed his introduction to the collections of the Bishop of Drumore. "In early life," he says, "I had been an eager student of ballad poetry, and the tree is still in my recollection, beneath which I lay and first entered upon the enchanting perusal of Percy's '*Reliques of Ancient Poetry*.'" The thread of association is, we confess, but slender; but there are several allusions scattered through Scott's writings, tending to confirm us in the opinion, that it is to this period we are to refer his first acquaintance with Percy's book.

The perusal of that work, by giving him a taste for ballad literature, naturally led him on to the kindred publications of Herd and Evans. Herd "was known and esteemed for his shrewd, manly, common sense and antiquarian science, mixed with much good nature and modesty. His hardy and antique mould of countenance, procured him amongst his acquaintance, the name of Greystiel." His collection, was an attempt to do for Scottish what Percy had accomplished for English traditionary song. Evans' work "contained," says Sir Walter,

"several modern pieces of great merit, which are not to be found elsewhere, and which are understood to be the production of William Julius Mickle, translator of the *Lusiad*, though they were never claimed by him, nor received among his works." In the author's preface to the last edition of *Kenilworth*, we find the following passage:—"There is a period in youth, when the mere power of numbers has a more strong effect on ear and imagination, than in more advanced life. At this season of immature taste, the author was greatly delighted with the poems of Mickle and Langhorne,—poets, who, though, by no means deficient in the higher branches of their art, were eminent for their powers of verbal melody, above most who have practised this department of poetry. One of those pieces of Mickle, which the author was particularly pleased with, is a ballad, or rather a species of elegy, on the subject of Cumnor Hall, which, with others by the same author, were to be found in 'Evans' *Ancient Ballads*,' to which work, Mickle made liberal contributions. The first stanza especially, had a peculiar species of enchantment for the youthful ear of the author, the force of which is not even now entirely spent: some others are sufficiently prosaic." We find Sir Walter referring his acquaintance with the poetry of Langhorne and Mickle to the same period; and we know from the account he has given of his interview with Robert Burns, that he was familiar with the writings of Langhorne in 1786.

The precise period of Scott's return from Rosebank has not been satisfactorily ascertained; but, certain it is, that he passed the winter of 1786-87 in Edinburgh, as sufficiently appears from the accounts given by himself in a letter to his son-in-law, of an important era in his life—his interview with Burns.

"As for Burns, I may truly say, *Virgilium vidi tantum*, I was a lad of fifteen in 1786, when he came

first to Edinburgh, but he had sense and feeling enough to be much interested in his poetry, and would have given the world to know him; but I had very little acquaintance with any literary people, and still less with the gentry of the west country, the two sets that he most frequented. Mr. Thomas Grierson was at that time a clerk of my father's. He knew Burns, and promised to ask him to his lodgings to dinner, but had no opportunity to keep his word, otherwise I might have seen more of this distinguished man. As it was, I saw him one day at the late venerable Professor Fergusson's, where there were several gentlemen of literary reputation, among whom I remember the celebrated Mr. Dugald Stewart. Of course the youngsters sate silent, looked and listened. The only thing I remember which was remarkable in Burns' manner, was the effect produced upon him by a print of Bunbury's, representing a soldier lying dead on the snow, his dog sitting in misery on the one side, and on the other his widow, with a child in her arms. These lines were written beneath:—

“Cold on Canadian hills, or Minden's plain
Perhaps that parent wept her soldier slain—
Bent o'er her babe, her eye dissolv'd in dew;
The big drops mingling with the milk he drew,
Gave the sad presage of his future years,
The child of misery baptiz'd in tears.”

“Burns seemed much affected by the print, or rather the ideas which it suggested to his mind. He actually shed tears. He asked whose the lines were, and it chanced that nobody but myself remembered that they occur in a half-forgotten poem of Langhorne's, called by the unpromising title of ‘The Justice of the Peace.’ I whispered my information to a friend present, who mentioned it to Burns, who rewarded me with a look and a word, which, though

of mere civility, I then received and still recollect with great pleasure.

"His person was strong and robust: his manners rustic, not clownish; a sort of dignified plainness and simplicity, which received part of its effect, perhaps, from one's knowledge of his extraordinary talents. His features are represented in Mr. Nasmyth's picture, but to me it conveys the idea that they are diminished as if seen in perspective. I think his countenance was more massive than it looks in any of the portraits. I would have taken the poet, had I not known what he was, for a very sagacious country farmer of the old Scotch school, *i. e.*, none of your modern agriculturists, who keep labourers for their drudgery, but the *douce gude-man* who held his own plough. There was a strong expression of sense and shrewdness in all his lineaments; the eye alone, I think, indicated the poetical character and temperament. It was large and of a dark cast, and glowed, (I say, literally, *glowed*,) when he spoke with feeling or interest. I never saw such another eye in a human head, though I have seen the most distinguished men in my time. His conversation expressed perfect self-confidence, without the slightest presumption. Among the men who were the most learned of their time and country, he expressed himself with perfect firmness, but without the least intrusive forwardness; and when he differed in opinion, he did not hesitate to express it firmly, yet at the same time with modesty. I do not remember any part of his conversation distinctly enough to be quoted, nor did I ever see him again except in the street, where he did not recognise me, as I could not expect he should. He was much caressed in Edinburgh, but (considering what literary emoluments have been since his day,) the efforts made for his relief were extremely trifling.

"I remember on this occasion I mentioned, I thought

Burns' acquaintance with English Poetry was rather limited, and also, that having twenty times the abilities of Allan Ramsay and of Ferguson, he talked of them with too much humility as his model; there was doubtless national predilection in his estimate."

The youth who could be so deeply impressed with the appearance of Burns in one interview, as to retain, after an interval of forty years, such a vivid picture of the "ploughman poet," and who was widely enough read to detect the comparatively limited extent of Burns' reading, and who was already capable of feeling his superiority to the then celebrated Ramsay and Ferguson, had, at the age of fifteen, outgrown the experience of boyhood. His mind was rapidly advancing towards maturity. Nor was his poetical exertions continued upon so limited a scale as his words, "I made one or two faint attempts at verse," would lead us to suppose. For we are informed by a gentleman who was about this period in habits of familiar intercourse with him, that he 'was shewn a poem by Scott which he had composed on the "Conquest of Granada," containing about sixteen hundred lines. This poem he burned very soon after it was finished. This gentleman adds, "He told extempore and most fluently, admirable stories of his own invention. He was also most ready with extempore poetry, or at least rhymes. In fact he could almost have conversed in rhyme."

It was about this period however he thus expresses himself,—“In short, excepting the usual tribute to a mistress's eyebrow, which is the language of passion rather than poetry, I had not for ten years indulged the wish to couple so much as *love* and *dove*, when finding Lewis in possession of so much reputation, and conceiving that if I fell behind him in poetical powers, I considerably exceeded him in general information, I suddenly took it into my head to attempt the style by which he had raised himself to fame.”

With one exception, which will be afterwards noticed, we have no indications of the turn which his studies' now took till we find him attending Dugald Stewart's lectures on Moral Philosophy in the year 1790; but we may form a shrewd guess at their character, as we then find him uncommonly well versed in nothern antiquities; so that there can be little doubt as to the nature of his favourite pursuits.

These antiquarian researches abstracted the attention of Scott from his duties in his father's office; and we are of opinion that his own official delinquencies suggested the description of the legal studies of the laird of Monkbarrow.

"He was then put apprentice to the^e profession of a writer, or attorney, in which he profited so far, that he made himself master of the whole forms of fensal investitures, and shewed much pleasure in reconciling their incongruities, and tracing their origin, that his master had great hope that he would one day be an able conveyancer. But he halted upon the threshold, and though he acquired some knowledge of the origin and system of the law of his country, he could never be persuaded to apply it to lucrative and practical purposes. It was not from any inconsiderate neglect of the advantages attending the possession of money that he thus deceived the hopes of his master. 'Were he thoughtless or light-headed,' said his instructor, 'I would know what to make of him. But he never pays away a shilling without looking anxiously after the change, makes his sixpence go farther than another lad's half-crown, and will ponder over an^old black-letter copy of the acts of parliament for days, rather than go to the golf or the change-house; and yet he will not bestow one of those days on a little business of routine, that would put twenty shillings in his pocket—a strange mixture of frugality and industry, and negligent indolence,—I don't know what to make of him.'" •

However his father might find him as intractable as Oldbuck, in his aversion to all personal application of his knowledge, we doubt the resemblance stopped here. Scott had no dislike to amusement, either sedentary or active, neither had he any peculiar dexterity in making his money go farther than that of other people. He never acted regularly either as a clerk or apprentice. A gentleman who was a clerk in his father's office, during Walter's nominal apprenticeship, has recorded that they had many a tough bout at chess in the office, during the old gentleman's absence; and they were frequently interrupted by his inopportune entrance, when down went chess-board and men into the desk, and the two delinquents assumed as business-like a deportment as their trepidation would permit.

That young Scott was allowed so much freedom, while under so strict a disciplinarian as his father, was in all probability owing to his recent delicate state of health; and as a necessary consequence, the supposed invalid would be allowed to devote more time to exercise in the open air, than he would have otherwise been allowed to steal from the writing-desk. The consequence of such indulgence has been told by himself:—"Since my fourteenth or fifteenth year, my health, originally delicate, had been extremely robust. From infancy I had laboured under the infirmity of a severe lameness, but, as I believe is usually the case with men of spirit who suffer under personal inconveniences of this nature, I had, since the improvement of my health, in defiance of this incapacitating circumstance, distinguished myself by the endurance of toil on foot or horseback, having often walked thirty miles a day, and rode upwards of a hundred, without stopping. In this manner I made many pleasing journeys through parts of the country then not very accessible, gaining more amusement and instruction than I have been able to acquire since

I have travelled in a more commodious manner. I practised most sylvan sports, also, with some success and with great delight.

Walter was in the habit of paying a visit of some length to his uncle, Captain Scott, every autumn; besides an annual visit to the Highlands. The Highlands afforded at that period, a new field of observation, more congenial to his natural and acquired sympathies, than they could have done, if in their present state of civilisation. On the occasion of his first trip to the north, he left on record a description of his feelings when Perth first burst upon his view, from the Wicks of Baigie:—"Childish wonder, indeed, was an ingredient in my delight; for I was not above fifteen years old, and as this had been my first incursion which I was permitted to make on a pony of my own, I also experienced the glow of independence, mingled with that degree of anxiety, which the most conceited boy feels when he is first abandoned to his own undirected councils. I recollect pulling up the reins without meaning to do so, and gazing on the scene before me, as if I had been afraid it would shift like those in a theatre, before I could distinctly observe its different parts, or convince myself that what I saw was real. Since that hour, and the period is now more than fifty years past, the recollection of that inimitable landscape has possessed the strongest influence over my mind, and retained its place as a memorable thing, when much that was influential on my own fortunes has fled from my recollection."

At the abode of Mr. Stewart, Scott found much that was calculated to make an enduring impression upon his mind. There was the worthy old gentleman himself, such as we have previously described him, with all his clannish and Jacobitical predilections; there was the cave where Invernahyle had lain concealed after the battle of Culloden, so near

the sentinels placed by the English troops who garrisoned his house, that he could hear the muster-roll called; there were all the associations connected with one who "had been out" both in '15 and '45, and been deeply engaged in all the intrigues which filled up the space between these two memorable years; nay, who had even fought a broad-sword duel with the celebrated Rob Roy. In short, the wild and striking scenery of the district was inhabited by a people whose dress, language, and manners, and actual history realized those legends upon which his youthful imagination had so fondly dwelt.

That Scott, was, on a subsequent occasion, carried deeper into the recesses of the Highlands, seems likewise to have been caused by his family's connexions with Invernahyle. The story will be best narrated in his own words. "There were considerable debts due by Stewart of Appin, (chiefly to the author's family,) which were likely to be lost to the creditors, if they could not be made available out of the farm of Invernenty, the scene of the murder done upon Mac Laren, by the son of Rob Roy.

Mac Laren's family, "consisting of several strap-ping deer-stalkers, still possessed the farm, by virtue of a long lease for a trifling rent. There was no chance of any one buying it with such an incumbrance, and a transaction was entered into by the Mac Larens, who being desirous to emigrate to America, agreed to sell their lease to the creditors for £500, and to remove at the next term of Whitsunday. But whether they repented their bargain, or desired to make a better, or whether from a mere point of honour, the Mac Larens declared they would not permit a summons of removal to be executed against them, which was necessary for the legal completion of the bargain. And such was the general impression that they were men capable of resisting

the legal execution of warning by very effectual means, no king's messenger would execute the summons, without the support of a military force. An escort of a sergeant and six men was obtained from a Highland regiment lying in Stirling, and the author, then a writer's apprentice, equivalent to the honourable situation of an attorney's clerk, was invested with the superintendence of the expedition, with directions to see that the messenger discharged his duty fully, and that the gallant sergeant did not exceed his part by committing violence or plunder. And thus it happened, oddly enough, that the author first entered the romantic scenery of Loch Katrine, of which he may perhaps say he has somewhat extended the reputation, riding in all the dignity of danger, with a front and rear guard, and loaded arms. The sergeant was absolutely a Highland Sergeant Kite, full of stories of Rob Roy and of himself, and a very good companion. We experienced no interruption whatever, and when we came to Inverenty found the house deserted. We took up our quarters for the night, and used some of the victuals which we found there. On the morning we returned as unmolested as we came."

Scott's excursions to the south, subsequent to his illness, were the mere every-day-occurrences to which he had been accustomed from his infancy; they wanted the freshness and sharpness of scenery and manners, and their memory became insensibly mixed with the events of after-years. We have been able to obtain only two anecdotes of his adventures in Roxburghshire, which can with any degree of certainty be referred to this period.

On one occasion, when preparing for his departure to the neighbourhood of Kelso, like a dutiful nephew, he called upon his Aunt Jenny, who happened to be residing in Edinburgh at the time, to inquire whether she had any commissions for him. He was invited

to tea, and informed that she had something which she wished to entrust to his care. When he took his leave in the evening, a nondescript parcel of a tolerable size was delivered to him with great formality, and many strong injunctions to look to its safety. "Tak care o't, Wattie, for there's siller in't." The bearer was considerably teased, while on the road, by the incessant rattling and jingling which the parcel kept up in his pocket, sorely to the annoyance of his pony. On reaching his journey's end, he hastened to deliver it to the blacksmith of the village, to whom it was addressed; intimating at the same time that he felt great curiosity to know the contents of the parcel. "Deed, its just ane o' your Auntie's pattens, and tippence to mend it," was the smith's reply.

The other adventure is of more consequence, and paints the active benevolence of the young man in a very amiable light. A gentleman who resided at some distance from Rosebank had unfortunately become involved in a tedious litigation, which terminated in a caption being issued against him. He was bed-ridden at the time, but his opponents were nevertheless determined to enforce the rigour of the law. This intelligence reached the ears of Scott a few hours before the time appointed to put it into execution; and he, without a moment's delay, mounted his horse and rode off to give the alarm. He approached the house of the invalid at a furious rate, his face flushed, and his horse foaming—both nearly blown. "Mount, mount for your life," he cried. His tale was soon told; the invalid, wrapped in blankets, was hurried into a vehicle, and conveyed to Edinburgh, where he had the satisfaction of arranging matters more to his mind than becoming an inmate of a debtor's prison. Few readers will fail to trace in this incident a degree of similarity to the death-scene of the Laird of Ellangowan; an association which,

in connexion with the following passage from the preface to *Guy Mannering*, may help to guide some more fortunate investigator to all the particulars of the story.

"Such a preceptor as Mr. Sampson is supposed to have been, was actually tutor in the family of a gentleman of considerable property. The young lads, his pupils, grew up and went out in the world, but the tutor continued to reside in the family, no uncommon circumstance in Scotland (in former days) where food and shelter were readily afforded to humble friends and dependants. The laird's predecessors had been imprudent; he himself was passive and unfortunate. Death swept away his sons, whose success in life might have balanced his own bad luck and incapacity. Debts increased, and funds diminished, till ruin came. The estate was sold, and the old man was about to remove from the house of his fathers, to go he knew not whither, when, like an old piece of furniture, which, left alone in its wonted corner, may hold together for a long while, but breaks to pieces on an attempt to move it, he fell down on his own threshold under a paralytic affection.

"The tutor awakened as from a dream. He saw his patron dead, and that his patron's only remaining child, now neither graceful nor beautiful, if she had been ever either the one or the other, had by this calamity become a harmless and penniless orphan. He addressed her nearly in the words which Dominie Sampson uses to Miss Bertram, and professed his determination not to leave her. Accordingly, roused to the exercise of talents which had long slumbered, he opened a little school, and supported his patron's child for the rest of her life, treating her with the same humble observance and devoted attention, which he had used to her in the days of her prosperity. Such is the outline of Dominie Sampson's story, in which there is neither romantic incident nor

sentimental passion; but which, perhaps, from the rectitude and simplicity of character it displays, may instruct the heart and fill the eye of the reader, as irresistibly as if it respected distresses of a more dignified and refined character.

Scott during this period became acquainted with the literature of Germany. Its more immediate working, as far as it concerned himself, he thus narrates :—

“In Edinburgh, where the remarkable coincidence between the German language and that of the Lowland Scottish, encouraged young men to approach this newly discovered spring of literature, a class was formed of six or seven intimate friends, who proposed to make themselves acquainted with the German language. They were in the habit of living much together, and the time they spent in this new study was felt as a period of great amusement. One source of this diversion was the laziness of one of their number, the present author, who, averse to the necessary toil of grammar and its rules, was in the practice of fighting his way to the knowledge of the German, by his acquaintance with the Scottish and Anglo-Saxon dialects, and of course frequently committed blunders which were not lost upon his more accurate and more studious companions. A more general source of amusement was the despair of the teacher, on finding it impossible to extract from his Scottish students the degree of sensibility necessary, as he thought, to enjoy the beauties of the author, to whom he considered it proper first to introduce them. We were desirous to penetrate at once into the recesses of the Teutonic literature, while Dr. Willich, who was our teacher, was judiciously disposed to commence our studies with the more simple diction of Gessner, and prescribed to us “*The Death of Abel*,” as the production from which our German tasks were to be drawn. We could do more sympathize with the overstrained

sentimentality of Adam and his family, than we could have had a feeling for the jolly Faun of the same author, who broke his beautiful jug, and then made a song on it, which might have moved all Staffordshire. To sum up the distresses of Dr. Willich, we with one consent voted Abel an insufferable bore, and gave the pre-eminence, in point of masculine character, to his brother Cain, or even to Lucifer himself. When these jests failed to amuse us, we had for our entertainment the unutterable sounds manufactured by a Frenchman, our fellow-student, who, with the economical purpose of learning two languages at once, was endeavouring to acquire German, of which he knew nothing, by English, concerning which he was nearly as ignorant. Heaven only knows the notes which he uttered, in attempting, with unpractised organs, to imitate the gutturals of these two untractable languages. At length, in the midst of much laughing and little study, most of us acquired some knowledge, more or less extensive, of the German language.

The history of this German class is less interesting on account of the light it throws upon the progress of Scott's studies in that language, than from the information it communicates respecting his disposition and habits of intellectual labour at this period of his life. It shows him in possession of confirmed health—the boldest and gayest among his young companions; it shows him possessed of knowledge beyond his years. He would appear, with an unexampled appetite for reading, to have devoured every book that came in his way, without order or purpose; and at his leisure hours, to have set to work to arrange his multifarious knowledge. It was after this fashion that he accumulated information to an extent which few, if any, have ever possessed, but of a kind that neither himself nor others could see the use until he turned his attention to novel writing. With all its

extent there was a want of precision about his knowledge, that rendered it alike inapplicable to the purposes of a moralist, a metaphysician, or a practical man. It was with his German studies as with every thing else; he mastered the language after a fashion of his own; but in a most artificial manner; any attempts which he has made to express himself in German are ungrammatical in the extreme.

Six years had been spent since Scott's interruption of his College studies by illness—spent betwixt the practice of athletic exercises, idling in a lawyer's office, and studies of the most desultory character, when he again became a student of the Scots Law Class, and the Moral Philosophy Class in the University of Edinburgh. He had long determined upon becoming a member of the bar; and as it was then, as now, the practice of those young men whose destination is the Scottish bar to become members of the Speculative Society, Scott complied with the custom, and was duly elected a member on the 21st December, 1790.

We have no information to what extent Scott benefited during his attendance on the Law Class; the attendance was quite optional on the part of the student, and no exercises afforded him any opportunity of displaying his proficiency. Judging by the natural bent of Scott's mind, we should doubt whether he derived much benefit from the lectures. There is every reason to believe that his legal studies resembled those of his own Darsie Latimer, who says of himself, "I attended a weary session at the Scotch Law class; a wearier at the Civil; and with ~~what~~ excellent advantage, my note-book, filled with caricatures of the professors and my fellow-students, is it not yet extant to testify?" A passage in the introductory chapter of "The Heart of Mid-Lothian" may be understood to throw some additional light upon the author's legal studies. "'And that's all the good you have ob-

tained from the perusal of the commentaries on Scottish Criminal Jurisprudence?" said his companion. 'I suppose the learned author little thinks that the facts which his erudition and acuteness have accumulated for the illustration of legal doctrine, might be so arranged as to form a sort of appendix to the half-bound and slipshod volumes of the circulating library.' 'I'll bet you a pint of claret,' said the elder lawyer, 'that he will not feel sore at the comparison.'" Scott attended the Scots Law class for two successive sessions.

The Moral Philosophy class afforded a more congenial sphere of action to our student, both on account of the studies pursued in it, and of the amiable and highly gifted individual who filled the chair.—Dugald Stewart. It was not in the class alone that Scott was exposed to the influence of his teacher's amiable habits of thought. He was introduced into familiar intercourse with his family. Stimulated by this intercourse, he took an active part in the business of the class, as is apparent from a reminiscence of "A Father's Gift to his Children." "I had no particular intimacy with Sir Walter, but I attended Dugald Stewart's Moral Philosophy class along with him. One of the exercises imposed upon the students, was the writing of Essays, which were delivered to the professor, and afterwards criticised by him publicly in the class. Scott composed one at least, and the title was, 'On the Manners and Customs of the Northern Nations of Europe.' I remember Mr. Stewart saying of this essay:—'The author of that paper shows much knowledge of the subject, and great taste for such research and information.' In general the professor criticised the essays without mentioning the names of the writers, but I know this one to be Scott's because he told me."

"We will now turn our attention to Scott's exertions

in the Speculative Society—not the least important part of a Scottish Law student's academical career. He continued a regular attendant on its meetings, and a zealous sharer of its labours for four years. The duty of this society then as now, consisted partly in the cultivation of the arts of eloquence and composition, and partly in the management of the society's concerns.

The Speculative Society was not so brilliant in Scott's day as at the time when Brougham, Jeffrey, and Horner, trained their young genius within its walls. There were, however, even then among its numbers, some who have since distinguished themselves at the bar and in the church. In the latter years, Jeffrey was a member, and there was laid the foundation of that mutual respect and friendship between Scott and him, which not even the keenness of political partizanship could extinguish.

The third night of Scott's appearance in the club, he was appointed librarian; and in a few months after he was chosen secretary, to which office the discharge of the duties of treasurer was then attached. These various functions he continued to discharge with assiduity till the 1st of December, 1795, when he resigned, on the ground that owing to his other avocations it was out of his power to retain any longer the offices of secretary and librarian. During his secretaryship he regularly extended the minutes of each meeting with his own hand. The writing is at first a sprawling scrawl, which, as we turn over the leaves, contracts into the firm compact hand which he retained almost to the last. His speaking, however, is extremely incorrect, in many instances.

The share taken by Scott in the literary business of the society is worthy of being recorded, as shewing the subjects on which his mind at that time dwelt with interest. His first essay was "On the origin of the feudal system;" his next was "The authenticity of

the Poems of Ossian; and another "On the origin of the Scandinavian Mythology." When we view the subjects of these essays with his previous habits of antiquarian study, it is evident that the warlike achievements of the ancient Celtic races, and their cherished superstitions, were the themes upon which he loved to linger. Besides his own essays, he took an active part in the discussion of the various questions debated in the society.

Scott informs us in one of his works that his principal aim at this period of his life was to qualify himself for rising in the profession of the law. The love of literary distinction had for a time been hushed to slumber. And certainly the experiment instituted and persevered in for four years in the Speculative Society, establishes most satisfactorily that he possessed in no common degree that power of steady and persevering exertion which seldom fails to raise even men of moderate talents to eminence. Whether his extreme industry was not increased in some measure by the watchful control of his father, anxious to train him to habits of business, or in a great degree owing to a good-natured disposition, unable to refuse an undue share of labour, imposed upon him by more indolent companions, is uncertain. That his temper was highly conciliatory, we know; for every person who came in contact with him liked him; and by his more intimate acquaintances, and the members of the society generally he was beloved. One anecdote more before we leave this part of our subject. When Dr. Baird was elevated to the dignity of Principal of the University of Edinburgh in 1793, the Speculative Society, of which he was a member, gave him a dinner. When the evening was somewhat advanced, the gentleman who had presided on the occasion withdrew, and the secretary was unanimously called to fill the vacant chair. Scott ~~hurled~~ ^{hurled} towards it in his own quiet way, and only remarked before he

sat down, "that he was not the first man who had been called upon to fill a place of which he was not worthy." The unintentional blow struck home, and was received with bursts of laughter.

In the minute-book of the Faculty of Advocates, we find the following entry:—"Edinburgh, 10th July, 1792. Mr. Walter Scott, son of Mr. Walter Scott, writer to the signet, was publicly examined, and found sufficiently qualified. The Faculty recommended him to the Dean to assign him a law, for the subject of his discourse to the Lords and the Faculty." The Hon. Henry Erskine was at that time Dean of Faculty. It is to his memory that Scott has paid the most pathetic tribute that ever was whispered from the shadowy region, where the lands of Fiction and Reality meet. We allude to a passage in his *Chronicles of the Canongate*, of which the manner of his own death has since enhanced the melancholy interest, where he makes the paralytic lawyer struggle to describe him as the "wittiest and best-humoured man living." Scott assumed the gown only a few days before the close of the summer session of 1792; and unluckily no authentic record has been preserved of the young advocate's deportment, while assuming the hat in the presence of the assembled judges, or while sitting consequential and timid, yet amused, at the breakfast-table of the witty Dean. As to the sober business details of his professional career, the reader is referred to the next chapter, to which they more properly belong. He has occasionally thrown out, however, in his writings, hints of the favourite vocations of the young lawyers of his day, one or two of which may be noticed, to give an idea of the associates by whom he now found himself surrounded. At the Scottish bar there has always been a due proportion of young men of fortune, who never seriously look for business. Chrystal Croftangry, Esq. thus describes those of Scott's younger days:—

"Of the earlier part of my life, it is only necessary for me to say, that I swept the boards of the Parliament House with the skirts of my gown for the usual number of years, during which young lairds were in my time expected to keep term—got no fees—laughed and made others laugh—drank claret at Bayle's, Fortune's, and Walker's—and ate oysters in the covenant-close." In the introduction to the *Heart of Mid Lothian*, we find the young lawyer described with "the new novel most in repute lying on his table—snugly entrenched, however, beneath Stair's Institutes, or an open volume of Morison's Decisions;" and going about with pockets full of "old play-bills, letters requesting a meeting of the Faculty, rules of the Speculative Society, syllabus of lectures—all the miscellaneous contents of a young advocate's pocket, which contains everything but briefs and hank-notes."

Shortly after becoming a member of the Scottish bar, Scott set out on a pretty extensive tour through the Highlands. He entered the mountainous region through the county of Stirling, where he paid a visit to the venerable father of Sir Ralph Abercromby, who told Sir Walter an anecdote of his early life, which appears to have made a strong impression on him. "When Mr. Abercromby of Tullibody first settled in Stirlingshire, his cattle were repeatedly driven off by the celebrated Rob Roy, or some of his gang; and at length he was obliged, after obtaining a proper safe-conduct, to make the cateran such a visit as that of Waverley to Bean Lean. Rob received him with much courtesy, and made many apologies for the accident, which must have happened, he said, by some mistake. Mr. Abercromby was regaled with collops from two of his own cattle, which were huff up by the heels in the cavern, and was dismissed in perfect safety, after having agreed to pay in future a small sum of *black mail*, in con-

sideration of which Rob Roy not only undertook to forbear his herds in future, but to replace any that should be stolen from him by other freebooters. Mr. Abercromby said, Rob Roy affected to consider him as a friend to the Jacobite interest, and a sincere enemy to the Union. Neither of these circumstances were true; but the laird thought it quite unnecessary to undeceive his Highland host, at the risk of bringing on a political dispute in such a situation."

Scott's route, after this visit, seems to have led him up through the strath of Monteith to Loch Katrine, and thence down upon Loch Lomond. Between these two justly celebrated sheets of water is situated the Fort of Inversnaid, built originally to suppress the restless freebooter, Rob Roy. It was at the close of the civil war, 1745, repaired and strengthened. A more pacific age, however, had arrived, as is strikingly exemplified from the following memorial, of the condition in which Scott found the fortress. "About 1792, when the author chanced to pass that way, while on a tour through the Highlands, a garrison, consisting of a single veteran, was still maintained at Inversnaid. The venerable warder was reaping his barley croft in all peace and tranquillity; and when we asked admittance to repose ourselves, he told us we would find the key of *The Fort* under the door."

His further progress we cannot trace with accuracy, but he seems to have taken a wide sweep through the centre of the Highlands, as we next find him a visitant of Mr. Walker the parish minister of Dunnotar. Sir Walter says, in the original preface to the *Chronicles of the Canongate*, "It is about 30 years since, or more, that the author met with this singular person (Old Mortality,) in the churchyard of Dunnotar, when spending a day or two with the late learned and excellent clergyman, Mr. Walker, the

minister of that parish, for the purpose of a close examination of the ruins of the castle of Dunnotar, and other subjects of antiquarian research in the neighbourhood. Old Mortality chanced to be at the same place, on the usual business of his pilgrimage; for the castle of Dunnotar, though lying in the anti-covenanting district of the Mearns was, with the parish churchyard, celebrated for the oppressions sustained there by the Cameronians in the time of James II."

He afterwards continues:—"It was while I was listening to this story, and looking to the monument referred to, that I saw Old Mortality engaged in his daily task of cleaning and repairing the ornaments and epitaphs upon the tomb. His appearance and equipment were exactly as described in the novel. I was very desirous to see something of a person so singular, and expected to have done so, as he took up his quarters with the hospitable and liberal-spirited minister. But though Mr. Walker invited him up after dinner to partake of a glass of spirits and water, to which he was supposed not to be very averse, yet he would not speak frankly upon the subject of his occupation. He was in bad humour, and had, according to his phrase, no freedom of conversation with us. His spirit had been sorely vexed, by hearing in a certain Aberdonian kirk the psalmody directed by a pitch-pipe, or some similar instrument, which was to Old Mortality the abomination of abominations. Perhaps, after all, he did not feel himself at ease with his company; he might suspect the questions asked by a north-country minister and a young barrister to savour more of idle curiosity than profit. At any rate, in the phrase of John Bunyan, Old Mortality went his way, and I saw him no more."

It was during this excursion that Scott paid a visit to the castle of Glamis, the seat of the Earl of Strathmore. Many stories have got into circulation

respecting Scott's superstition; but he appears to us to have had even less of that weakness in his constitution than most men. An anecdote which he has preserved, explains his feelings at this time, in regard to supernatural intercourse.

"I have been myself, at two periods of my life, engaged in scenes favourable to that degree of superstitions awe, which my countrymen expressly call being *serie*. On the first of these occasions, when I happened to pass a night in the magnificent old baronial castle of Glamis. The heavy pile contains much in its appearance, and in the traditions connected with it, impressive to the imagination. It was the scene of the murder of a Scottish king of great antiquity; not, indeed, the gracious Duncan, with whom the name naturally associates itself, but Malcolm the Second. It contains also, a curious monument of the peril of feudal times, being a secret chamber, the entrance of which, by the law or custom of the family, must only be known to three persons at once, viz., the Earl of Strathmore, his heir-apparent, and any third person they may take into their confidence. The extreme antiquity of the building is vouched by the thickness of the walls, and the wild straggling arrangement of the accommodation within doors. After a very hospitable reception from the late Peter Procter, then seneschal of the castle in Lord Strathmore's absence, I was conducted to my apartment in a distant corner of the building. I must own, that as I heard door after door shut after my conductor had retired, I began to consider myself too far from the living, and somewhat too near the dead. We had passed through what is called 'the king's room,' a vaulted apartment, said by tradition, to be the spot of Malcolm's murder, and I had an idea of the vicinity of the castle chapel. •

"In spite of the truth of history, the whole night

scene in Macbeth's castle rushed at once upon my mind, and struck me more forcibly, than even when I have seen its terrors represented by the late John Kemble and his inimitable sister. In a word, I experienced sensations, which, though not remarkable either for timidity or superstition, did not fail to affect me to the point of being disagreeable, while they were mingled at the same time, with a strange and indescribable sort of pleasure, the recollection of which affords me gratification at this moment."

From this tour, Scott returned home in time to make his *debut* at the Jedburgh circuit. He was anxious to obtain an opportunity of displaying his legal lore; but his anxiety to make himself acquainted with the country and inhabitants, was still greater. He was desirous of penetrating into the recesses of those hills with whose rude traditions he was so familiar. In such a mood, he was walking on the streets of Jedburgh, canvassing with a laird from the neighbourhood, the best manner of accomplishing an excursion into Teviotdale, when Mr. Robert Shortreed, sheriff-depute of the county, passed them. "There's just your man," said Scott's friend, and proceeded to introduce the two lawyers to each other. Mr. Shortreed was not only able and willing to assist the young stranger in his proposed excursion; but his official situation enabled him to introduce his new friend to some of those unfortunate culprits, whose destiny it is to pass to their final doom through the purgatory of affording young advocates an opportunity of acquiring practical knowledge in their profession.

Scott had reason to be satisfied with the result of his first trial. The evening before the crown sat, he had an interview with his client in the gaol. To Shortreed's inquiry on his return, what he thought of the case, he replied "Guilty, by 'G—d!" Next day, however, the evidence for the court broke

down, of which circumstance the young lawyer took advantage, and the jury acquitted the prisoner. With a pardonable degree of triumph in an unpledged lawyer, Scott addressed his friend, "Not ill done that, to get off such a blackguard!"

Full of the buoyant spirits of one-and-twenty, and a heart triumphing in the success of his first circuit, he set out along with Mr. Shortreed to explore the recesses of Teviotdale and Liddesdale. The character of the district into which he now penetrated, will be best understood from his own words. "The roads of Liddesdale, in Dandie Dinmont's day, could not be said to exist, and the district was only accessible through a succession of morasses. About thirty years ago, the author himself was the first person who ever drove a little open carriage into these wilds; the excellent roads by which they are now traversed, being then in some progress. The people stared with no small wonder at a sight which many of them had never witnessed in their lives before."

The friends performed their journey on horseback, Mr. Shortreed riding a grey mare, which has since been immortalized by Scott under the name of Dumble. A characteristic anecdote of their tour used to be related with much glee by Mr. Shortreed. On visiting "Wille o' Milburn," the honest farmer was from home, but returned while Scott was tying up his horse in the stable. On being told by Mr. Shortreed that an Edinburgh advocate was come to see him, he expressed great alarm, and even horror as to the character of his visitor, the old fear of the law being still so very rife in Liddesdale, as even to extend to the persons of its simplest administrators. What idea Wille had formed of an Edinburgh advocate, it would be difficult to conjecture, but having gone out to reconnoitre, he soon

returned with a countenance sufficiently bright to shew that his fears had vanished. "Is yon chap the advocate?" he inquired of Mr. Shortreed. "Yes, Willie," replied that gentleman. "Dail o' me's feared for them then," cried the farmer; "yon's just a chield like oursels."

The method employed by Scott at this time for impressing on his memory the local anecdotes and legends which he collected from individuals with whom he came in contact, was curious enough. He seized any piece of wood which came to hand, and kept notching it with his pocket knife as the narrator went on; these poetical *tally sticks*, he, at times intrusted to the charge of his companion; and Mr. Shortreed said, that on one occasion, this strange note-book became so bulky, that, in the words of Burns, the pins in his pocket.

"Might serve to mend a mill in time o' need."

The excursion proved so pleasant, that it was repeated every autumn, after the circuit, for many years. These jaunts Scott used to term his *raids* into Liddesdale, they certainly deserved the name, for he generally returned laden with precious spoil, the materials of his inimitable narratives of his after-years.

Scott's determination to qualify himself as a pleader, now kept him for the greater part of the year a close resident in Edinburgh. His employment in the *Outer-House* might not, as he himself somewhere states, exceed one opportunity of appearing in behalf of the prototype of poor Peter Peebles, but he was regularly present in the private meetings of the Faculty. The consequence was, that he was soon recognised as a young man of steady habits by the managers of that body's affairs. One of the matters of rare importance which the Faculty have to attend

to is the management of its extensive and valuable library; which being entitled to claim a copy of every book entered at Stationer's Hall, may be regarded as one of the national libraries. This library is entrusted to the care of a librarian, who acts with the advice, and under the control, of five curators, chosen from among the body of advocates. On the first of June, Mr. Walter Scott was appointed one of the curators of the library, before he had completed his third year at the bar. During the course of the same year, a piece of duty incidental to his office was imposed upon him, which must have afforded peculiar gratification to one of his turn of mind, and which may be received as a proof of the respect entertained for his acquirements. "It having been represented that the cabinet of medals in the library was in some disorder, it was recommended to Mr. Hodgson Cay and Mr. Walter Scott, two of the present curators of the library, to put the medals in proper arrangement." Up to the time of this commission his attention had never been invited to the inspection of medals; and we may not be going too far when we refer to this incident the commencement of his passion for collecting and preserving the relics of antiquity.

While he was making himself useful in the private business of the learned body of which he was a member, the records of the High Court of Justiciary prove that he was at the same time endeavouring to struggle professionally into notice. This court offers few temptations to lawyers possessed of a lucrative business, and is principally abandoned to those members of the profession who have no better employment. We know from Mr. Shortreed's family, that Scott was a constant attendant at the Jedburgh circuit, and generally managed to get himself employed in a case or two; but the minutes rarely contain the names of the counsel, or anything that

can throw light on the progress of the trial. The forensic efforts of Scott at these perambulatory courts must, therefore, sleep in silence. The records of the court, while sitting in Edinburgh, are more specific, and in them the name of Walter Scott appears for the first time, 14th July, 1795.

A favourite amusement of boys, and such young men as have outgrown the years of boyhood, without relinquishing all its tastes, has ever been the firing of pistols, miniature cannons, and such like penny artillery. On the afternoon of the 17th June, 1795, a young man of the name of James Niven, who, after serving for some time on board of a king's ship, had been discharged in consequence of a wound in his right hand, and was living unemployed with his father, a tobacconist in Edinburgh, loaded and discharged a small iron cannon for the amusement of some of his juvenile associates. According to his own declaration, he puts nothing into it but some powder, a wadding of paper, and a piece of tobacco. It so happened, however, that on discharging the cannon up Liberton's Wynd, a piece of iron, either rammed down with the rest of the loading, or splintered from the metal by the concussion, struck a man standing before one of the doors, and killed him on the spot. There was no suspicion of a malicious intention on the part of Niven, but the fact of his having discharged fire-arms, apparently loaded with an iron bolt, along a public street, argued such a culpable levity and indifference to the lives and safety of others, as induced the public prosecutor to bring up the ^{case} for trial.

The 14th of July, 1795, was appointed for the day of trial. Mr. James Ferguson and Mr. Walter Scott appeared for the prisoner; and it fell to Scott, as junior counsel, to open the case, which he did with such effect, that the bench deferred pronouncing judgment; but ordered parties, procurators to give

in informations upon the relevancy of the indictment, to the clerk of the court to be recorded. Our limits prohibit us from entering upon the full particulars of the argument, but as the written information lodged for the accused bears the signature of Walter Scott, it is worth while to lay before our readers a few extracts to give them a notion of the style and execution of the paper.

The description of the prisoner is introduced with considerable tact—"admitting there may have been a certain degree of culpability in the pannel's conduct, still there is one circumstance which pleads strongly in his favour, so as to preclude all presumption of *dole*. This is the frequent practice, whether proper or improper, of using this amusement in the streets. It is a matter of public notoriety, that boys of all ages and descriptions are, or at least till the late very proper proclamation of the magistrates, were to be seen every evening in almost every corner of the city, amusing themselves with fire-arms and small cannons, and without being checked or interfered with. When the pannel, a poor ignorant raw lad, lately discharged from a ship of war, certainly not the most proper school to learn a prudent aversion to unlucky or mischievous practices, observed the sons of gentlemen of the first respectability engaged in such amusements, unchecked by their parents or the magistrates, surely it can hardly be expected that he should discover that in imitating them in so common a practice, he was constituting himself *hostis humani generis*, a wretch the pest and scourge of mankind."

Again. "It is true that no dangerous pastimes ought to be allowed in a city; but the question occurs here, how are they to be stopped? Certainly not by punishing with death the thoughtless wretch, who, in prosecution of an amusement hitherto unchecked, shall first be stained with the blood of a human being.

This would be equally harsh towards the individual and ineffectual towards the public. Harsh to the individual, because he was only doing what was done by a thousand before him, and with as little intention of harm as they whose diversion had not been attended with the same fatal consequences; and useless to the public, because such practices are not to be checked by a single instance of extreme severity, the opportunity of exercising which may not occur once in a century, but by an extreme attention to police, and to the distribution of lesser punishments proportioned to such transgressions thereof as, if they are not usually, may at least, in some instances be fatal to the inhabitants."

He concludes thus:—"This paper, perhaps already too long, shall now be concluded with the following general observations. Guilt, as an object of punishment, has its origin in the mind and intention of the actor; and therefore, when that is wanting, there is no proper object of chastisement. A madman, for example, can no more properly be said to be guilty of murder than the sword with which he commits it, both being incapable of intending injury. In the present case, in like manner, although it ought no doubt to be matter of deep sorrow and contrition to the pannel that his folly should have occasioned the loss of life to a fellow-creature; yet as that folly can neither be termed malice, nor yet doth amount to a gross negligence, he ought rather to be pitied than condemned. The fact done can never be recalled, and it rests with your lordships to consider the case of this unfortunate young man, who has served his country in an humble though useful station,—deserved such a character as is given him in the letter of his officers,—and been disabled in that service. You will best judge how (considering he has suffered a confinement of six months) he can in humanity be the object of further or severer punishment, for a

deed of which his mind at least, if not his hand, is guiltless. When a case is attended with some nicety, your lordships will allow mercy to incline the balance of justice, well considering, with the legislator of the east, 'It is better ten guilty should escape than that one innocent man should perish in his innocence.'"

The ingenuity of the defence succeeded in obtaining from the jury a verdict of "not guilty," by a plurality of voices, 21st of December, 1795.

The "learned brothers" Ferguson and Scott, again appeared in the court of Justiciary, on the 14th of March, 1796, as counsel for William Brown, accused of stealing iron from a merchant in Leith. They were again successful, the jury finding the charge not proven.

From the period of Scott's becoming a member of the Faculty of Advocates, till 1796, his avocations kept him for the greater part of the year in Edinburgh; but still his leisure hours were devoted to the amusements of society, of which he partook with all the zest of a sound and healthy constitution. During the vacations of the court he continued to pay regular visits to his friends in Roxburghshire and in the Highlands; making likewise frequent excursions through different parts of Scotland. But notwithstanding these numerous calls upon his time, his appetite for books continued with unabated keenness. He read whatever came in his way, incessantly adding to his extensive store of miscellaneous information. All this while, however, as he himself has told us, although fond of dwelling upon the compositions of others, he had never dreamed of an attempt to imitate what gave him so much pleasure. But already the store-house of his mind was filled with the materials, and he suddenly and hurriedly made the attempt, with what success we shall see.

His German studies appear to have been prose-

cuted after rather a desultory fashion. In the summer season while Scott was as usual absent on some of his peregrinations, Miss Letitia Aiken, (afterwards Mrs. Barbauld) visited Edinburgh, and was hospitably received at the house of Professor Stewart, where the young advocate was a frequent and welcome visitor. The conversation naturally turned upon literary topics, in which the accomplished mind of the fair stranger enabled her to take an interesting part. One evening, the new fashion of German literature furnished the theme of discourse; and Miss Aiken took occasion to produce a translation of Burger's ballad of "Leonore." After reading the verses she replaced them in her pocket-book, and resisted all the solicitations of her auditors to favour them with a copy. The ballad poetry of Burger is admirably qualified to make a strong impression upon those who hear it for the first time; and we are not to be surprised that it did so upon Miss Aiken's auditors.

Before Scott returned to town, this lady had left for England; but he found his friends in raptures with her good sense, and loud in their praise of the wonderful ballad, with which she had made them acquainted. Scott piqued himself upon being something of a German scholar, a professed admirer of ballad poetry, and a hunter after every specimen of it that was known to exist. As if to stimulate his curiosity the more, his friends could only furnish him with a meagre and broken account of the story; and the few lines which dwelt in their memory were of a nature calculated to awaken sanguine anticipations:—

"Tramp, tramp, along the land they rode,
Splash, splash, along the sea;
Hurrah, the dead can ride apace!
Dost fear to ride with me?"

To an admirer of legends of *diablerie*, and spirited versification, this was a most tantalizing morsel. Scott was anxious to see the original, a wish he found it no easy matter to gratify; as at that period German works were seldom offered for sale in London, and never in Edinburgh. After a considerable time a copy of Burger's works was procured for him from Hamburg, by the lady of Hugh Scott Esq., of Harden, his relative and intimate friend. Before the book reached Scott, an event had occurred which, joined to his admiration of its contents, conspired to encourage him to perpetrate the deed of authorship for the first time.

Matthew Gregory Lewis published, in 1795, his romance of "The Monk." This work is now seldom talked of, though it created an immense sensation on its first appearance. It was about this time that Lewis became almost a yearly visiter to Scotland, attracted chiefly by his friendship for the noble family of Argyll. Scott was introduced to him during the earliest of these visits by Lady Charlotte Campbell.

Scott soon discovered upon further acquaintance with Lewis that he was greatly his inferior in general information. He recalled to his memory his youthful facility in rhyming, and suddenly took into his head to attempt the style by which Lewis had raised himself to fame. In this mood the copy of Burger's works found him. The original of *Leonora* surpassed even his highly raised expectations. The book had only been a few hours in his possession when he addressed a letter to his friend, in which he gave an animated account of the poem, and promised to furnish him with a translation into English ballad verse. To this self-imposed task he set himself immediately after supper, and he had it completed by daybreak next morning, by which time he had succeeded in working himself up into rather an uncomfortable state of excitement.

The success of his attempt induced him to repeat it with some other of Burger's ballads. The friends to whom he communicated the fruits of his labours expressed an interest in them. Frequent applications were made to the young poet for copies, and the trouble which these occasioned, with the urgency of several of his admirers, induced him to send a selection from his productions to the press. "In 1796," he playfully says, "the present author was prevailed on, by the request of friends, to indulge his own vanity by publishing the translations of Leonore with that of the Wild Huntsman, in a thin quarto." The title-page bore no author's or translator's name, being simply, "The Chase; and William and Ellen." This was the first publication from the pen of Walter Scott. Unconsciously he had cast the die, upon the hazard of which was set his future fortune.

In perusing these essays in metre, for they are worthy of no greater name, the similarity of the melody of the versification to that of the Hermit of Warkworth, strikes us at first sight. It has, in the narrative and other less impressive passages, the same well-turned, not "linked sweetness;" the same mixture of plainness, with a polish which is even carried to monotony. Such a verse as this might almost pass current, were we to judge only by sound, for an extract from the beautiful poem of the Hermit.

"Our gallant host was homeward bound,
With many a song of joy;
Green waved the laurel in each plume
The badge of victory."

And a still more striking similarity exists in the following.

"The martial band is past and gone
She reads her raven hair,
And in distraction's bitter mood,
She weeps with wild despair."

These stanzas resemble the poetry of Dr. Percy, likewise, in a still more essential characteristic. Like it, they have the same subdued, unambitious style of the old ballad, without its simplicity. The language is full of the conversational abstractions which, from being the hoarded treasure of the study, have, by slow degrees, become the current medium of social intercourse. It wants the picturesque *naïveté* which delights us in an old song. It is the simplicity of muslin, not of the "hoddin grey."

But when we come to the supernatural part of the story (in William and Helen), we discover appearances of a more nervous turn of mind. The verse is often harsh, and somewhat cramped, but this is evidently the result of an attempt to change the surfeiting sweetness of the measure for a more energetic and rapid descant, harmonising with the subject.—The strain into which the ballad starts when Helen mounts behind her spectral bridegroom, is perhaps the happiest example of Scott's juvenile awkwardness, in which the experienced eye cannot fail to discern the first efforts of a loftier and more daring gracefulness. The reader will excuse the following somewhat long extract as an example :

"Hush, hush, and hush ! Thou mount'st behind,
Upon my black barb steed ;
O'er stock and stile, a hundred miles
We haste to bridal bed."

"To-night—to-night a hundred miles !—
Oh, dearest William, stay !
The bell strikes twelve, dark dismal hour !
Oh, wait, my love, till day."

"Look here—look here—the moon shines clear,
Full fast I woen we ride ;
Mount and away ! for ere the day
We reach our bridal bed."

"The black barb starts, the bridal ring ;
Haste, hush and hush, and seat thee !
The feast is made, the chamber spread,
The bridal guests await thee !"

Strong love prevailed. She basks, she bounces,
 She mounts the barb behind,
 And round her darling William's waist
 Her lily arms she twines.

And hurry ! hurry off they rode,
 As fast as fast might be :
 Spurred from the courser's thundering heel,
 The flashing pebbles fire.

And on the right and on the left,
 Ere they could snatch a view,
 Fast, fast, creak mountain, mead and plain,
 And not and castle flew.

" Sit fast—dost fear ?—The moon shines clear—
 Fleet rides my barb—keep hold !
 Fear'st thou ? " " Oh no ! " she faintly said,
 " But why so stern and cold ! "

" What yonder rings ? What yonder sings ?
 Why shrieks the owl grey ? "
 "'Tis death-bell's clang, his funeral song,
 The body to the clay.

" With song and clang, at morrow's dawn
 Ye may inter the dead ;
 To-night I ride with my young bride,
 To deck our bridal bed.

" Come with thy choir, thou coffin'd guest,
 To swell our nuptial song !
 Come priest, to bless our marriage feast !
 Come all, come all along."

Ceased clang and song : down sunk the hier ;
 The shrouded corpse arose ;
 And hurry, hurry ! all the train
 The thundering steed pursue.

And forward, forward ; on they go,
 High swells the straining steed ;
 Thick pants the rider's labouring breath,
 As headlong on they speed.

" Oh William, why this savage haste ?
 And where the bridal bed ? "
 "'Tis distant far." " Still short and stern ? "
 "'Tis narrow, trustless maid."

" No room for me ! " " Enough for both ;
 Speed, speed, my barb, thy course." " e .
 O'er thundering bridge, through foaming surge,
 He drove the furious horse.

Tramp ! tramp ! along the land they rode ;
 Splash ! splash ! along the sea ;
 The steed is wight, the spur is bright,
 The flashing pebbles flee.

Fled past on right and left, how fast
 Each forest, grove, and bower ;
 On right and left fled past how fast,
 Each city, town, and tower.

" Dost fear ? dost fear ? The moon shines clear ;
 Dost fear to ride with me ?
 Hurrah ! hurrah ! the dead can ride !"
 " Oh, William, let them be !"

" See there, see there ! What yonder swings
 And creaks 'mid whistling rain !"
 Gibbet and steel, the accursed wheel ;
 The murderer in his chain.

" Hollow ! thou felon, follow here,
 To bridal bed we ride ;
 And thou shalt prance a fitter dance
 Before me and my bride."

And hurry, hurry ! clash, clash, clash !
 The wasted form descends ;
 And fleet as wind, through hazel bush,
 The wild career attends.

Tramp, tramp ! along the land they rode !
 Splash, splash ! along the sea ;
 The scourge is red, the spur drops blood,
 The flashing pebbles flee.

How fled what moonshine faintly show'd,
 How fled what darkness hid !
 How fled the earth beneath their feet,
 The heaven above their head !

" Dost fear ? dost fear ? The moon shines clear,
 And well the dead may ride ;
 Does faithful Helen fear for them ?"
 " O leave in peace the dead !"

" Barb, barb ! methinks I hear the cock ;
 The sand will soon be run ;
 Barb, barb ! I smell the morning air,
 The race will soon be done."

Tramp tramp ! along the land they rode,
 Splash, splash ! along the sea ;
 The scourge is red, the spurs drop blood,
 The flashing pebbles flee.

" Hurrah ! hurrah ! well ride the dead ;
 The bride—the bride is come !
 And soon we reach the bridal bed,
 For, Helen, here's my home !"

We can form no idea of the creative power of Scott's imagination at the time this translation was executed. The passage, however, which we have just quoted, although frequently deficient both in rhyme and rhythm, shows by its intensity that his emotions were sufficiently irritable and susceptible to be hurried along by the horrors of the ghastly ride. The delight must have been exquisite—even bordering on pain—when the future poet, shuddering beneath the vague horrors which crept over him, curdling his blood, yet proud of the power he felt of expressing them in verse, trembling with excitement, beheld the last flashes of his expiring taper mingle with the cold grey of the dawn, and almost dared to think that he was a poet.

It was well for the young author that the Edinburgh Review was not then in existence, to make what was so sweet in the mouth "bitter in the belly;" as had the critic who dared to handle so roughly "The Hours of Idleness," been then exulting in the pride of his brilliant and somewhat petulant genius, we doubt not the barrier of five-and-twenty would have been as cavalierly treated as the noble minor. On the part of the public, however, the unfledged author suffered the less keen, but scarcely less mortifying infliction of real neglect. The adventure, to use his own words, "proved a dead loss, and a great part of the edition was condemned to the service of the trunkmaker." And if the critical portion of the press left him unmolested, there were not wanting good-natured friends to supply its omission in a private way. One lady in particular, to whom he had presented a copy of his book, when asked by him, with all the solicitation of a young author, what

she thought of his production, unhesitatingly replied, "not a great deal." Unsatisfied with this reply, he took up the volume, and read part of the contents aloud to her, hoping that, by the aid of his elocution, he might probably be able to impress her with a more correct sense of their merits; but greatly to his discomfiture, he found, on closing the book, his friend's opinion unaltered. This anxious search after approbation from any quarter, to support his shrinking confidence in his own powers, contrasts strangely with his indifference at a later period of life, when satiated with applause; he never made the least attempt to ~~see~~ a review, and seldom ever heard or saw a word which was said on the subject. Praise had become the breath of his nostrils—his daily food—and was swallowed with a less keen relish, although its privation would doubtless have been more keenly felt.

He was not daunted however by this discouragement. He determined upon repeating his effort with increased energy. He said, long afterwards, "I was coldly received by strangers, but my reputation began rather to increase among my own friends, and on the whole I was more bent to show the world that it had neglected something worth notice, than to be affronted by its indifference. Or rather to speak candidly, I found pleasure in the literary labours in which I had, almost by accident, become engaged, and laboured less in the hope of pleasing others, though certainly without despair of doing so, than in the pursuit of a new and agreeable amusement to myself." In short he possessed an indomitable spirit, which neglect only hastened to more daring adventures, the almost unfailing source of great achievements; and his future works certainly prove that he was not ignorant of his own powers, and the reliance he placed upon his immense

store of information, gathered from every available source.

In following thus up the literary character of Scott, we have naturally kept his social and domestic history in the background; nor is there in reality much relating to them at this early period that is worthy of being recorded. One lady to whom the world is indebted for many interesting touches of his character, represents him as quiet and unobtrusive in company, and "rather dull and bashful if any thing." From an eminent artist we learn that even in youth Walter Scott was remarkable for the pleasantness of his manners, and his anxiety to keep others in good humour by avoiding anything that could hurt their feelings, or by appearing to enter with keenness into their favourite pursuits. He was in the habit of spending his Sundays in the family of this gentleman, and "the children used to look forward anxiously to the return of that day. No juvenile undertaking was concluded without the advice of Walter Scott—nothing was considered good of its kind without his approbation." This gentleman, warming as he recalled the early emotions of a friendship which endured till separated by death, ended his recital with the words, "On Sundays we had him all to ourselves!"

We may now consider the preparatory stage of Sir Walter's life as closed. Having now served out what Goethe, in his romance, terms his apprenticeship, and his time as a journeyman, we may henceforth consider him as an author free of his corporation, and commenced business on his own account. His stock in trade, as we have attempted to show in the preceding pages, consisted of an immense store of information, a rich power of natural reflection, intense energy of feeling, and no mean play of fancy. The young shoot is bursting out into a form promising gigantic growth;—the stream is deepening and

widening, collecting great force as it flows onwards. And not only does the mind expand in strength and stature, but the whirl of a busier world is drawing it into a more turbulent vortex.

CHAPTER III.

THE state of political feeling in Scotland at the period when Scott entered upon manhood, as materially influencing the development of his mind, the formation of his character, and his status in society, ought not to be passed over in the history of his life.

The subject is one of difficulty, and liable to misconstruction in whatever manner it may be discussed ; and we cannot do better than give the sketch in the words of an esteemed author, who proceeds to say :—

“After the revolution, in 1688, the homely institutions and ritual of the Presbyterian church were established throughout the country. The influence of a great portion of the landed aristocracy was neutralized by the state of seclusion to which their hostility to the new order of things, and the *surveillance*, under which they were necessarily held doomed them. The union of the kingdoms, by removing even the shadow of the court, the natural sphere of a privileged nobility, to London, attracted thither the portion of the aristocracy friendly to the new government, and by this means the local administration of Scotland was more than ever thrown into the hands of the mercantile and professional classes. The abolition of hereditary jurisdictions completed the transfer of power. By that important enactment a transition was completed, in virtue of which the local administration of law and finance, and the power of enforcing police regulations, passed from the haughty

titled families of Scotland to the small landowners and wealthy merchants, aided in the discharge of their duties by the salaried officials of the crown. Beneath this new order of things, trade, favoured by a number of concurrent circumstances, made rapid advances; and with the growth of wealth, the external aspect of the country, the education of the community, and the establishment of a steady police, continued to make progress.

There was something striking in the extreme meekness with which the middle classes of Scotland bore their augmented power and worldly importance. A deep-rooted traditional respect for that aristocracy, with which they so seldom came into contact, retained possession of their minds. They were contented with comfort, without aspiring to independence. Bearing the heavy burden of preserving the tranquillity and evolving the capabilities of their country, they were perfectly satisfied with the liberty to do this in the name, and as it was with the gracious permission of their betters. They pocketed the substantial benefits, and allowed the honour to be borne by aristocratical shoulders; resembling in this the savage who attributes to the virtues of some superstitiously venerated charm—some old brass button, or rag of red cloth—the success in the chase which he owes to his own quick untiring eye, and fleet unwearied foot. Even the Jacobite gentry, whose restless intrigues threatened hourly the tranquillity and growing wealth of the country, were regarded by the honest burghers with some degree of timidity, it is true, yet with a sort of sneaking kindness, owing much to their frank though supercilious deportment, and more to their ancestral pretensions. In short every person seemed to be animated with a good-humoured spirit of acquiescence in things as they were. Scotland, was in the estimation of the whiggish middle classes, *le vrai royaume de Cocagne*, where, if everything was

not exactly for the best, it was yet so good that it could not well be better. Even the Kirk, which in the days of persecution had contracted a gaunt look and acid expression,

*"A savage air which round her hung
As of a dweller out of doors"—*

a reflection of those bleak wilds and morasses where she was driven to seek shelter far from the busy haunts of men—became sleek, comfortable and tolerant. Her face plumped out like Lismahago's lanthorn jaws in the sunshine of Miss Tabitha Bramble's smiles, and amid the atmosphere of her brother's hospitable table.

Matters stood thus at the accession of George the Third, or even better, for by that time the danger likely to arise from the claims of the Stuart dynasty, existed only in a dream-like remembrance. Scions of the old Jacobite families were instinctively creeping back to the court, and insinuating themselves into the affections of the young monarch. His first favourite, Bute, found the Scots patient of rule on the part of a minister. He found, too, their local magistracies either in the hands of the crown, of a limited number of crown vassals, or in a still more limited number of self-elected citizens, and apt to be organized into one huge government burgh. The attacks of Wilkes and others upon Bute, were occasionally sharpened by sidelong glances at his country, and thus in the quarrel between the court on the one hand, and the wayward and narrow-minded, perhaps, but still sturdy and honest independent party of London, the Scots embraced the quarrel of the king and his minister as a national cause. That the American patriots were in many instances, on an intimate footing with the Whigs of London, and that their cause was eagerly defended by that party, would, perhaps, have been of itself sufficient to

throw Scotland into the scale opposed to the infant liberties of the colonies; and this inclination was strengthened by other motives. The merchants of Glasgow had embarked largely in the Virginian trade, which was carried on by considerable advances on the part of the traders on this side of the Atlantic, slowly replaced by the returns of colonial produce from the other. Terror, lest the large amount of debt due by Virginia, should be held cancelled by the emancipation of the colonies, prompted the sons of St. Mungo (Glasgow) to take an active part against the Americans. The surplus population of the Highlands, not yet reduced to habits of regular industry, and more eager for martial employment than scrupulous about the cause, flocked in like manner about the royal standard. In short, the sentiments of the whole population of Scotland, glowed against the Americans with all the fervour of ignorant and passionate partizans.

The *douce* friends of the revolution establishment, who had long wished to cast over their consciousness of plebeian descent the mantle of patrician intimacy, and the old Jacobite party which had grown weary of devotion to an absolute system, attachment to which precluded them from taking a share in the active business of life, had now found the point of re-union after which they had long sighed loyalty to the existing government. It was agreed on both sides to set up the existing government as the golden calf of their worship, without instituting too curious inquiries into its claims to that honour, or the character of the ritual which was to be adopted. The tories winked hard at the defective hereditary title of the reigning dynasty, and abstained from sneers at the "bits o' baillie bodies." The whigs learned to adopt the same slang of bigoted and exaggerated loyalty which their new compeers had lately been wont to lavish on the exiled family. In short, freed

from the superincumbent load of a real aristocracy, the Jacobite cadets, and the small whig authorities erected themselves into a body for supplying its place. They were deficient, it is true, in that free bearing which the consciousness of almost inexhaustible wealth and personal irresponsibility is found to confer; they were still more deficient in those external graces which seem to be acquired nowhere but in the purlieus of a court; their professional avocations tainted their conversation with the pedantry of law, trade, or agriculture. But in return they reckoned among their number many ripe and excellent scholars. And in one matter they might have matched the proudest, and most far descended aristocracy,—their lordly and supercilious contempt for the intellect, rights and feelings of the poorer classes. This is the worst, but also the most inevitable effect of erecting any number of men into a privileged *caste*. They learn to disregard the claims of those beneath them to a common humanity. Men who in their own circles are alive to the finest and tenderest impulses of the heart can treat with levity and coldness the sufferings of the poor. This is mere thoughtlessness at first, but habit petrifies it into tyranny.

Circumstances had thus conspired to create a numerous petty aristocracy in Scotland, when the heart-burnings spread over Europe by the breaking out of the French revolution, called its most abhorrent features into broad light. The upper classes echoed the war-shout of the ministry with a ferocity elsewhere unparalleled. Not only the supporters and adherents of the principles of parliamentary reform were branded without distinction as democrats, levelers, and atheists; the timid and somewhat servile class of burgh-reformers, who delivered invectives, and laboured busily to eradicate a few of the symptoms which indicated a deeply rooted disease, while angrily denying any connexion with those who more

prudently sought to purify the whole system, were notwithstanding ranked among the political demagogues. The war with France rendered the friends of existing establishments yet more jealous of the politicians whose designs their fears and fancies had painted in such hideous colours. The pulpit even, and the bench, places which ought at all times to be sacred from passion or prejudice, caught the frenzy; and while political harangues were delivered from the one, the most unfair constructions of evidence, the most unconstitutional doctrines were promulgated from the other, in the course of the various trials for sedition and other offences, instituted at the command of a jealous, persecuting, and blood-thirsty government.

The mind of Scott, trained as it had been, was exactly of the kind to be carried away by the prevailing excitement. He was surrounded by those who, for the sake of tranquillity, were opposed to all change, the necessity of which they could not perceive. In the constitution of his mind the imaginative predominated over the reasoning powers, and his earliest impressions were dreams of high-born knights and warlike deeds. Being of the high tory party, the levelling doctrines of the Reformers shocked all his preconceived notions. His prejudices were strengthened by the vehement tone of all around him. The sacrifices of Muir, Gerald, and other victims of power, conspired but to heighten his passions, as the bloodhound is rendered more fierce by the sight and smell of blood. Blindly he threw himself into the ranks of the mis-judging upholders of old abuses; and with the steadiness of purpose, which he himself tells us has been characteristic of his family, he continued through life faithful to the cause of his adoption, although his more matured judgment often teased him with sceptical questionings regarding its justice.

The first opportunity afforded to Scott of proving his warm attachment to the principles he professed, was of a kind suited to a mind of his poetical turn. It was his share in the organising of a corps of volunteers for the national defence under the prospect of French invasion. The independence of the country was threatened, and men of all political principles flocked around her standard. The city of Edinburgh alone provided a force of 8000 well-armed volunteers, including a regiment of cavalry from the city and country, and two corps of artillery, each capable of serving twelve guns. The chivalrous spirit was not confined to the capital, but spread through the land; and it is an interesting coincidence that while the youthful nerves of Scott were grasping the sabre hilt in Edinburgh, the attenuated frame of Robert Burns was toiling in the ranks at Dumfries. The earliest original production of Scott, is his "War-song of the Edinburgh Light Dragoons;" and one of the latest lights of Burns' song is, "Does haughty Gaul invasion threat?" Nothing could be more opposite than the political principles of Burns and Scott, yet we behold them joined in one common cause—the preservation of their native country from a foreign foe.

An anecdote recorded by a lady who witnessed the scene will best shew his martial ardour. "When the yeomanry were first embodied, he made application to be admitted into the corps, but he was rejected on account of his lameness, at which he was much distressed." But for an imagination which, like that of Scott, had always found its chief amusement in dwelling upon legends of arms, this bustling and arming for the fight had a charm for him, and he determined upon trampling down all hindrances interposed between him and its gratification. "It happened that some of the most enthusiastic promoters of the yeomanry corps dined not long afterwards at

the house of a friend where Scott was on a visit.—The subject of his wish to join the regiment was renewed, while the party were standing in the open air enjoying the breeze; and Walter, on being again assured that his lameness was an insurmountable bar to his admission, threw himself up, and caught the *couple-leg* of an out-house. After allowing himself to hang there for a considerable time, he turned to his friends, with a tear in his eye, and said, 'although he had a bad leg, there was not a better pair of arms among them.' " His more sedate friends interposed further obstacles on the ground of the incompatibility of military duties with his professional avocations, but proved equally unavailing; and despite every impediment, Scott forced his way, not only into the regiment, but into the post of quarter-master to the two regiments of Edinburgh light horse. He mentions, somewhere in his writings, that he was fortunate enough to be useful in the preservation of discipline, which must have been no easy matter, in a corps consisting almost entirely of young and high-spirited men. The yeomanry drilled every morning at six o'clock, in the neighbourhood of Jock's Lodge, and again, at a later period of the day. Scott was always present, and always active. The services which he rendered to his regiment by his good humour, his zeal in preventing or soldering up quarrels, and his promotion of hilarity on festive occasions, were scarcely less important than his devotion to the business of the corps. An anecdote corroborative of this is told by Mr. Chambers:—

"The commander of the corps, as not unusually happened, was rather ignorant of the movements of a cavalry regiment, and, therefore, required to bring with him to the drill a paper containing the accustomed words of command in their regular order. One unfortunate morning—a very cold one—the officer came unfurnished with this list, and was of

course desperately nonplused. He could positively do nothing; the troop stood for twenty minutes quite motionless, while he was vainly endeavouring to find the means of supplying the requisite documents. At this moment, while the men were as cold as their own stirrup-irons, and more like a set of mutes at a funeral than a redoubted band of volunteers against Gallic invasion, Sir Walter came limping up, and said to a few of the other officers, in his usual gravely jocular manner, 'I think the *corps* is rather long in lifting this morning,' a drollery so pat to the moment, as to set the whole off in almost inextinguishable laughter." *

In the "war-song," however, to which we have already alluded we possess the least perishable record of his military ardour, and, therefore, make no apology for inserting it here as the first original production of the greatest poet and novelist of his day.

"To horse! to horse! the standard flies,
The bugles sound the call:
The Gallic navy stem the seas
The voice of battle's on the breeze,
Arouse ye one and all.

From high Dun-Edin's towers we come,
A band of brothers true;
Our ensques the Leopard's spoils surround,
With Scotland's hardy thistle crown'd,
We boast the red and blue.

Though tamely crouch to Gallia's frown
Dull Holland's tardy train;
Their ravish'd toys though Romans mourn,
Though gallant Switzers vainly spurn,
And foaming gnaw the chain:

Oh! had they mark'd the avenging call
Their brethren's murder gave,
Disunion ne'er their ranks had mown,
Her patriot valour desperate grown, &
Sought freedom in the grave!

Shall we too bend the stubborn head,
In Freedom's temple born,

Dress our pale cheek in timid smile
 To hail a master in our tale,
 Or brook a victor's scorn ?

No ! though destruction o'er the land
 Come pouring as a flood,
 The sun that sees our falling day,
 Shall mark our sabres deadly sway,
 And set that night in blood.

For gold let Gallia's legions fight
 Or plunder's bloody gain ;
 Unbribed, unbought, our swords we draw,
 To guard our king, to fence our law,
 Nor shall their edge be vain.

If ever breath of British gale
 Shall fan the tri-colour,
 Or footstep of invader rude,
 With rapine foul, and red with blood,
 Pollute our happy shore ;

Then farewell home ! and farewell friends !
 Adieu each tender tie !
 Resolved we mingle in the tide,
 Where charging squadrons furious ride,
 To conquer or to die.

To horse ! to horse ! the sabres gleam ;
 High sounds our bugle's call ;
 Combined by honour's sacred tie,
 Our word is LAWS AND LIBERTY !
 March forward one and all !

We are not astonished that amongst so many men some might be found possessed of that littleness of mind as to take umbrage at Scott's first attempt to distinguish himself above his fellows. They ridiculed the idea of his writing a song at all ; and one day when the officers of the corps dined together at Musselburgh the chief amusement of the evening consisted in repeating with burlesque emphasis, "To horse ! to horse !" and laughing at this "attempt of Scott's" as a piece of gross absurdity. But Scott himself was above noticing their raillery, and continued his usual good humour during the evening.

For the annoyance he might feel at the paltry

malice of these companions in arms, he was amply recompensed by the strengthening attachment of earlier, and the acquisition of new friends. Among the former were Sir William Rae, and Mr. Colin Mackenzie; among the latter Mr. Skene, of Rubislaw. His activity and perseverance likewise attracted the attention of the Duke of Buccleugh, and Mr. Henry Dundas, one of the Secretaries of State—both lively promoters of the scheme of national defence for Scotland. The duke cultivated his personal friendship; while Dundas marked him for an energetic and accomplished young man, whose services as a political partisan it might be worth while to conciliate by professional advancement.

The portion of Scott's life which he devoted to military matters was altogether one of unalloyed enjoyment, and to which he often recurs both in a serious and a playful mood; and perhaps we may not be going too far in attributing to the scraps of strategical knowledge, picked up during his career as quarter-master, his skill in marshalling battles and conducting sieges in his works of fiction. In one of the earlier chapters of *Waverley*, we find the following passage, which has every appearance of a picture from real life.

“Meanwhile his military education proceeded.—Already a good horseman, he was now initiated into the arts of the menage, which, when carried to perfection, almost realize the fable of the Centaur, the guidance of the horse appearing to proceed from the rider's mere volition, rather than from the use of any apparent and external signal of motion. He received also instructions in his field duty; but I must own, that when his first ardour was past, his progress fell short in the latter part of what he wished and expected. The duty of an officer, the most imposing of all others to the inexperienced mind, because accompanied with so much outward pomp and circum-

stance, is in its essence a very dry and abstract task, depending chiefly upon arithmetical combinations, requiring much attention, and a cool and a reasoning head to bring them into action. Our hero was liable to fits of absence, in which his blunders excited some mirth, and called down some reproof. This circumstance impressed him with a painful sense of his inferiority in those qualities which appeared most to deserve and obtain regard in his new profession. He asked himself in vain, why his eye could not judge of distance and space so well as those of his companions; why his head was not always successful in disentangling the various partial movements necessary to effect an evolution; and why his memory, so alert upon most occasions, did not correctly retain technical phrases, and minute points of etiquette, or field discipline. Waverley was naturally modest, and therefore did not fall into the egregious mistake of supposing such minuter points of military duty beneath his notice, or conceiting himself to be born a general, because he made an indifferent subaltern. The truth was, that the vague and unsatisfactory course of reading which he had pursued, working upon a temper naturally retired and abstracted, had given him that wavering and unsettled habit of mind, which is most averse to study and rivetted attention."

Scott, however, did not allow his military pursuits to draw his attention from his professional duties.--- He continued regularly to attend such meetings of the Faculty of Advocates as were held for transacting the private business of the society. In 1797, he was continued on the list of Curators of the Library, and also appointed one of the examiners, whose duty it is to test the acquirements of such individuals as applied for admission into that body. In the month of July of the same year, we find him assisting his friend Mr. Ferguson in a trial before the Court of Justiciary. The case was that of a man of the name

of Potts, accused of a very aggravated act of house-breaking and robbery. The trial was long, but as Scott took no active share in it, we pass over the details as foreign to our subject, simply adding, that the prisoner was found guilty, and sentenced to suffer the last penalty of the law.

On the 7th and 11th of October, Scott was engaged in a series of trials, which, as serving to throw some light on the temper and circumstances of the peasantry of the South of Scotland, at that particular period, merit more particular attention ; and for an account of which we are indebted to Mr. Allan.

By an act of parliament passed in the year 1797, with a view to facilitate the raising and embodying of a militia force in Scotland, it was ordained that the schoolmaster of every parish should make yearly returns to the lieutenancy of the county of the persons liable to serve. The burden of military service fell necessarily upon the poor and industrious classes, who could not afford to provide substitutes, and whose families were in many instances left destitute by the removal of those whose labour had provided for them. By the rich the enactment was easily evaded. The iniquity of such an arrangement was not likely to escape notice at a period when disaffection pervaded the labouring classes to so wide an extent. On the other hand, the passionate determination of the privileged orders to regard all murmurs from the people as a crime, increased their zeal for the enforcement of the law. The indignation of the oppressed peasantry was fostered and matured by the underhand exertions of some of the more violent of that sect of politicians, whose public expression of their sentiments had been forcibly prevented by the suppression of the meeting of delegates at Edinburgh, styling themselves the British Convention, and by the banishment of several of its members. By the active instigation of these agitators, the labourers were

induced to rise in many counties of Scotland, for the purpose of forcibly preventing the execution of the enactment. The local authorities were routed in more than one instance, and the escape of the ring-leaders facilitated by the arrangement of their friends in Edinburgh. The riots were sufficiently serious to call for the interference of the law officers of the crown; and with the view of striking terror by example, several of the parties implicated were arraigned at the bar of the High Court of Justiciary.

With the first of these trials in which Scott was concerned, his connexion seems to have been entirely accidental. It was observed by the presiding judge, that of the four prisoners placed at the bar, two had no counsel in attendance to conduct their defence, and in conformity to the uniform practice of the court, he recommended them to the professional care of two members of the bar. Messrs. Walter Scott, and James L'Amy, who happened to be in court, were named by his lordship, and accepted by the prisoners. The want of previous notice prevented these gentlemen from taking any more active part in the trial, which lasted so long that the verdict of the jury was not received till next day, than watching its progress, and stating at the close those points of the evidence which appeared most favourable to their clients. This latter duty was performed by Scott. Upon the reading of the verdict an objection was stated to it by the counsel for the other two prisoners, on the ground of a defect in point of form, which was after some argument over-ruled by the court. The whole of the accused were sentenced to fourteen years transportation.

It appeared from the statements of the witnesses examined, that the prisoners, one of whom was a female, had formed part of a riotous assemblage, amounting in number to several hundreds, armed with clubs and sticks, who had attacked two depute-lieu-

tenants of the county of Berwick, while engaged at the church of Eccles in adjusting and amending the lists of the schoolmasters. The mob, after driving the magistrates from the church, and forcibly dissolving the meeting, forced Mr. Marjoribanks, one of the depute-lieutenants, to deliver up the lists furnished by the schoolmaster of the parish, to swear that he would never in future assist in carrying the obnoxious law into execution, and to subscribe a fair copy of this oath, wrote out upon a piece of stamped paper. The insurgents next proceeded to the house of the schoolmaster, whom they compelled to take and subscribe a similar oath. Lastly, they proceeded to the seat of Sir Alexander Purves, the other depute-lieutenant concerned in the transaction, and on his refusing to come out to them, forced their way into the house. This gentleman was likewise compelled by threats to take the same oath they had dictated to his brother in office. It does not appear that any person was seriously hurt in the tumult, and no insult was offered to the ladies of Sir Alexander's family. The determined appearance of the rioters, their discrimination in selecting the objects of their attack, and refraining from wanton aggression of others, and the serio-comic incident of the stamped paper upon which the oath was written, must have made a deep impression on the mind of Scott, and perhaps taught him for the first time the true character of a Scottish mob, an assemblage which he afterwards so vividly and correctly portrayed in his "Heart of Mid-Lothian."

The events connected with the trial, which took place on the 11th of October, are more intimately bound up with the temporary feelings of the year 1797. In Berwickshire, and most other counties of Scotland, the labouring classes rose almost to a man, aided and organised, in many instances, by the schoolmasters; and the county gentlemen, unprepared

for resistance, yielded to the exigency of the moment, reserving for themselves the manly vengeance of swearing away the liberty of their assailants in a court of justice. In the county of Haddington, however, they were better provided with the means of resisting the popular will. The county had raised a strong corps of volunteer cavalry; a detachment of the Cinque Port Light Dragoons were quartered in the burgh of Haddington, and the Pembrokeshire cavalry, along with the Sutherland Fencibles, were stationed in Musselburgh.

The village of Tranent is situated between the towns where the troops were stationed. Its inhabitants and those of the neighbourhood are composed principally of colliers and carters—the former a body of men among whom the practice of secret affiliation has always been carried to a great extent; the latter, a class rendered strong and fearless by their migratory habits, but, at the same time, rude and little amenable to the laws. It is impossible for us now to determine whether the great boldness and long established habits of acting in union of the Tranent people had occasioned more fear in the minds of the local magistrates than their brothers in office elsewhere were affected with, or whether the precipitancy which occasioned the deplorable scene of slaughter we have now to describe, was the unaided result of their more timorous and irritable temper.

Tuesday the 29th of August, 1797, was the day fixed for the depute-lieutenant of the county of Haddington, to receive and revise the militia lists of the parishes in the neighbourhood of Tranent. On the evening of Monday the 28th, an orderly dragoon, riding from Haddington to Edinburgh, was obstructed on the streets of Tranent by a crowd assembled after the day's labours to discuss the proceedings of the morrow. No insult was offered to the soldier, but the dense crowd necessarily impeded his pro-

gress. With brutal impatience he endeavoured to force a way, by riding down some of the men near him. He was unsuccessful, but the attempt gave rise to an exchange of abusive epithets, which so increased his choler, that he turned upon the crowd and attempted to draw his sabre. The hilt of his weapon and his bridle were promptly seized by the nearest bystanders, and some women and boys who had mingled with the crowd, began pelting him with stones. He was rescued from his imminent danger by the very men he had first assaulted, and allowed to pursue his journey to Edinburgh, which he did, with the reckless fury of a madman, threatening every person he met, and attempting to ride over others.

The passions of the people assembled on the streets of Tranent were naturally inflamed by this adventure. The cry of "no militia" was caught up, and repeated amid loud huzzaing. The rabble of boys and idle women ran off in the direction of the schoolmaster's house. He was from home, and his wife, terrified by the thick pattering of the feet of the urchins, and the dense mass of people seen in the distance, handed to them from the window an old book and a paper, which she said was the militia roll. The rabble continued to ramble about the village and its vicinity for a short time, and then began to disperse; when those who had received the papers, beginning to feel themselves in an awkward scrape, went back and returned them to the schoolmaster's wife. No injury was offered to person or property during this aimless burst of popular indignation.

Mr. Anderson, of St. Germain's, one of the depute-lieutenants, took the alarm, and addressed a letter to the commanding officer at Haddington, requesting a party of the military under his command on the

morrow. Even this force was reckoned insufficient, and with the consent of his colleague he, between four and five o'clock on the Tuesday morning, despatched circular letters, commanding the instant attendance of the county yeomanry. The detachment from Haddington was ostentatiously drawn up on the streets of Tranent, the main body being stationed near the head inn, at an early hour.

In this inn the magistrates assembled at the appointed time, and were proceeding to business, when the delegates from the neighbouring parishes arrived in a body, and drew up in front of it. The leaders sent to the gentlemen, within, a petition that they would not proceed to enforce the regulations of the militia act, addressed—"To the honourable gentlemen assembled at Tranent, for the purpose of raising six thousand militiamen in Scotland," and subscribed by an immense number of names arranged in a circular form. The only answer returned to the petition was an imperious order to disperse. The supercilious manner in which their request was received co-operated with the memory of the preceding evening's transactions to excite an angry feeling in the multitude. The attempt to overawe and check every expression of their sentiments by the presence of an armed soldiery yet further embittered their dispositions. And the last drop "which makes the cup o'erflow" was added, when the volunteer cavalry of the county galloped into the village brandishing their sabres, jeering and boasting. The experience of every occasion on which this equivocal force has been employed, from the massacre of Tranent down to that of Manchester, warrants us in saying that it is the worst and most dangerous implement ever placed by a silly or abject legislation in the hands of a despotically inclined executive. Vulgar and ferocious they have ever proved them-

selves, and their utility as a defensive force has never yet been put to the test.

The arrival of the yeomanry was as usual the signal for the commencement of mischief. The women, always foremost on such occasions, began to throw stones in the direction of the inn, and in a short time every window of the house was shattered. One of the lieutenants, who was also a justice of the peace, cautioned the people to depart, and attempted to read the riot act, but without being heard or attended to. Several of the stones struck individuals in the ranks of the cavalry, who began to grow impatient and irritated. After a brief delay, the word was given to charge, and the troopers dashed into the middle of the assembled multitude, cutting right and left with their sabres.

The indignation of the mob was now completely aroused at this attempt of barefaced power to trample down the people, and stifle their complaints. Armed with no better weapons than sticks cut from the nearest hedge, and the stones lying about the streets of the village, they manfully threw themselves among the ranks of the armed cavalry, seized the horses by the bridles and opposed tough wood to cold steel. The officers soon discovered that unless they had recourse to their fire-arms, the superiority of their men was extremely doubtful. Orders were given to load and fire. The peasantry began to retreat from the unequal conflict, but without evincing the slightest symptom of relinquishing it. The blood of women was on the swords of the troopers; the contest had been provoked by the supercilious conduct of the magistracy. From windows, heads of stairs, and house tops, the people continued to attack the goldiers with whatever missiles came to hand. One man, stationed behind a chimney, tore from it brick after brick which he threw at the heads of the assailants; he was

repeatedly fired at, but before he was brought down he had emptied several dragoon saddles. During this affray, Mr. Anderson, its principal instigator, made his escape to Musselburgh, riding behind a dragoon, and thence despatched a reinforcement to the friends he had deserted. The peasantry were, after a desperate struggle, driven from the village, which was shortly after taken possession of by the Sutherland fencibles. The slaughter, however, did not cease here. The infuriated cavalry, in despite of every exertion of their officers, pursued the unarmed fugitives over the neighbouring muirs and through the fields of ripened corn. "Men, women, and boys were indiscriminately cut down, notwithstanding their piteous entreaties for mercy. Several persons who had not been near Tranent were encountered by the soldiers and slain.

Thus was opposition to an unjust law yet more unjustly repressed, and scarcely a voice was heard to upbraid. An incidental taunt was all the notice vouchsafed to it in the house of the *people's representatives*. The only editor in Scotland, Mr. Morthland, advocate, and editor of the Scots Chronicle, who dared to state the facts of the case; was attacked at once by a prosecution for libel, at the instance of Mr. Anderson; a motion for his expulsion from the faculty of advocates, made by Mr. Charles Hope, afterwards president of the Court of Session; and the threat of proceedings to be instituted against him by the law officers of the crown. Wearied and harassed by such a multiplicity of persecutions, he was obliged to give way to the torrent, and desist from the publication of his journal, one of the most extensively circulated in Scotland. But the effrontery of the fiscal administration of Scotland did not stop even here. Four of the peasantry, who had escaped from the Tranent massacre, were brought to the bar of the Court of Justiciary, accused of

rioting and mobbing. The vindictive feelings of government were not glutted by all the blood shed on that occasion. It was their trial which took place on the 11th of October, and gave the Tranent riot a yet closer connexion with Scott's personal history, than it could have had as a mere illustration of the temper of the times.

The pleas urged in defence of each of the four pannels were different, (one of them, a woman, escaped having been indicted by a wrong name) and different counsel appeared for each. It will be sufficient for our purpose to follow the trial of Neil Reidpath, an agricultural labourer, who was defended by Mr. Walter Scott. We find the following entry in the books of the court:—"Scott for the pannel Reidpath represented that he did not mean to object to the relevancy of the libel:—That his client had gone to Tranent on the day libelled for the purpose of getting his name struck out of the militia list, as he was above the age; but had no concern in the disgraceful proceedings of the mob there assembled." In support of this allegation five witnesses were produced, one of whom was committed to prison for concealing the truth upon oath. Notwithstanding this awkward accident, the most disagreeable that can happen to a young and ingenuous mind, the evidence against the prisoner was so insufficient that the jury included him in their general verdict,—“Find the verdict not proven.” Little did the young advocate think, while triumphing in his success, that the minute details of the riot to which he was that day forced to listen had furnished materials to aid in rearing the imperishable structure of his fame. The pleasure afforded by this reflection, however, is materially dulled by the remembrance that his kindly feelings, narrowed by the range of his own associates, were not strong enough to break the bonds cast around him by political sectarianism—that he

was led to give up to party what was meant for mankind.

We formerly stated that Scott was in the habit of making frequent excursions into the country. He used to be attended by George Wilkinson on several of these occasions. Wilkinson, whom we have previously noticed, entered the service of old Mr. Scott, when ten years of age, in 1796, and generally waited upon Walter till he was appointed to the office of sheriff. We will here give the little adventures related by Wilkinson, as forming a natural and appropriate link between the history of Scott's social and active pursuits, and that of his literary exertions. These rambles were in truth so many perusals of the great book of nature.

George Wilkinson, (whose mother had nursed Mr. Thomas Scott, and taken charge of Walter at the same time) was much about Walter's person, and was a great favourite of his young master. We will preserve, as nearly as we can, the simple language of the young narrator. The fondness for dogs which early manifested itself, and continued a prominent feature of Scott's character to the last, had already strengthened into a habit. He possessed, in 1796, an old dog which he called Snap, an animal so docile and sagacious, that the boy Wilkinson was decidedly of opinion that the creature was not *canny*. Snap seldom quitted his master's room, except to accompany him on his rambles, and slept every night at his bedfoot. If we may trust George's account, when Walter required the attendance of any of the servants, he needed only to name them to Snap, who trotted off to the hall, or kitchen, and barked at them, as much as to say "you're wanted," and continued doing so till they followed him to his master. Some allowance must be made in this story for the youth and credulity of the narrator at the time, more especially as they seem occasionally to have

exposed him to a system of playful mystification at the hands of his master.

Scott was now in the enjoyment of confirmed and robust health. He was a vigorous walker, ever and anon precipitating himself forward by a huge spring. In going up or down stairs, he had not his equal. His excursions, when the distance was not great, were made on foot. A few necessities were packed up in a bundle and strapped on George's back, (Scott, from some whim or another, always called him Donald); and in this guise the pair wandered from house to house. On these occasions the boy was strictly forbidden to call him "Sir." It was arranged between them that the boy should first enter the house they intended to visit, in order to spy how the land lay. If it appeared that their company was not likely to be regarded as an intrusion, his master followed. The houses into which he thus sought to penetrate, were generally such as had been pointed out to him as the residences of very old people, and with these ancient crones and gaffers he would enter into conversation, striving to lead them on to relate the reminiscences of their youth. If the inmates proved shy and reluctant to converse with strangers, he used to ask for oat-cakes and milk for his boy, of which he at times partook himself, but only in those cases where payment was accepted.

An incident which Wilkinson distinctly recollected to have occurred during one of these rambles, shews that even in his youth Scott's propensity for scraping together "a fouth o' auld nick-nackets" had begun to display itself. It was in a poor cottage, in a muirland part of the country, that the future knight and his squire were conversing with an old dame, who, as her only piece of finery, displayed around her withered neck a string of large "lammer beads." They were the pride of the old woman's heart, and held in high esteem by the aged people of the coun-

try side for their sanatory virtues. Besides possessing many other secret qualities, they were known to be a sure charm against the evil influence of witchcraft, and an infallible remedy for sore eyes. Walter asked the good lady if she would sell her beads. "Yes," she replied; "but I fear ye're no rich aneuch to buy them." "What do ye ask for them, gudewife?" "I'll no gie them under sax pennies the piece." "But, gudewife, I'll gie ye twal pennies for them." In a moment they were from her neck and carefully counted; the old crone being evidently afraid lest the bold bidder should draw back his offer if allowed time for consideration. The cash was paid, and the glad vender exclaimed,—*"Fair fa' yer sonsie face! ye're the honestest merchant I ever met wi'."* The beads were subsequently reset, and presented to Mrs. Scott soon after her marriage.

It would appear from the doubts entertained by the lady of the "lammer beads," as to the ability of her guest's purse to purchase her fairy treasure, that Scott's incognito was well preserved. An adventure which befel him on another occasion, a mile or two above Dalkeith is further corroborative of this. On knocking at the door he was welcomed by the gudewife, in these words—*"Come in by, honest man! I'm glad you're come, for the gudeman's coat needs clouting."* "What's that she says, Donald?" asked Scott. "She thinks we are tailors, and wants us to mend the clais." The fancy struck Scott as so ludicrous, that he burst into a violent fit of laughter, and it was some time before he recovered himself sufficiently to be unable to undeceive the good woman.

Scott sometimes partook of the simple fare which he procured for Donald from the cottars; but in general he preferred filling Donald's pockets, and despatching his own share afterwards, seated in some picturesque spot which struck his fancy, where he

would often sit for hours with the boy by his side, speaking eagerly to himself. Then he would laugh aloud, and take his note-book from his pocket, and write for a while. Even as they walked along it was his habit to break out suddenly into a laugh, and then stop short and begin to write. These rambles were, in a great measure, the secret and the source of his poetic powers. It is pleasing to contemplate the future poet in the full triumphant buoyancy of animal spirits, wandering freely along the highway, like a pilgrim of romance, totally wrapped up in his own imaginings, laughing and talking to himself. He walked with men, "among them, not of them." These excursions were seasons of intense enjoyment.

When Scott had any more extensive journey in contemplation, he and Wilkinson were mounted on two ponies. His expenses were not materially augmented by this addition to his retinue; for he has recorded in a note to St. Ronan's Well, that "a young man, with two ponies and serving-lad, might then travel from the house of one Mrs. Dods to another, through most part of Scotland for about five shillings a-day." But if his expenditure continued nearly the same, the annoyance to which the simplicity of his attendant exposed him was increased. He generally gave the boy silver to pay the tolls, with orders to lay out the small change which he received back in the purchase of gingerbread. In one of his abstracted fits he handed Donald some silver to pay a toll through which they were to pass in the course of the day, merely saying to him, "mind the gingerbread." The boy soon after espying a woman with a well filled basket, stopped and spent all his money given him upon it. His master, who had insensibly got a good way a-head, looked round and not feeling quite secure in the sound judgment of his faithful follower, rode back to see what kept him. "Donald, what detains you?" "I am putting the gingerbread

in my pocket," says Donald. "Have you spent all in gingerbread? How are we to get through the toll?" "You said mind the gingerbread, and I hae na forgotten." This adventure was long a favourite joke with Scott, who used to tell it at table in his own humorous way, while Donald stood at his back, vexed, fidgetting, and blushing.

During his rambles Scott always slept at the public houses, and generally spent the evening beside the kitchen fire, which was in these simple days, what the traveller's room is in our own. There sometimes treating some packman, who took his fancy, to a glass, sometimes birling his bawbee with farmers or drovers on their way to distant markets, he joined in the conversation incidental to the place. He endeavoured to draw out his companions, at times by contradicting and instigating them to discussion. One evening, beside a kitchen fire more crowded than usual, he suddenly lifted his walking stick, and holding it over Donald's head, said with a stern voice, "Pay the lawin, sir; pay the lawin." "I hae nae lawin." "If ye dinna pay the lawin, I'll break your head." As he uttered these words up-started a huge farmer, with "How daur ye bid a bairn like that pay your lawin? If ye offer to lay yer stick on him I'll baste yer hide for ye. Ye had mair need to gie him a bawbee to buy a bap. Come here, my man; there's a bawbee." Donald shrunk from the good-natured farmer, but his master insisted upon his accepting the offer, "Gang and tak it, man; gang and tak it." Donald obeyed, and Scott and the farmer having come to an understanding, commenced a jollification, and continued the best of friends till they separated for the night.

Scott paid every attention to his young attendant; and it is worthy of notice that during the whole of their excursions he never lost the command of his temper but once. Snap was the occasion of the ex-

plosion. The beast had a good deal of the bull dog in him, and was continually quarrelling with other dogs. One day he attacked a colly by the road side, when Donald, annoyed by the scrapes into which Snap was always bringing him, took a stake from the neighbouring hedge, and struck him over the head so hard that the blood came. When they came up to where Scott stood looking on, he raised his stick, and said, "Donald, I'll break your head for breaking Snap's. Do not hurt him again." And checking himself he broke off abruptly.

These excursions were persevered in, until Scott was appointed sheriff depute of Selkirkshire; after which his rambles assumed a different character, and by degrees he discontinued a practice which had ceased to afford him amusement. We have seen, however, how keenly he enjoyed his season of free and idle intercourse with nature; and all who know his works must feel how much of their amusement they owe to his gipsy strolls.

An excursion in the autumn of 1797 seems here fitly in place. It relates to the unfortunate creature, whose peculiarities of form and fortune suggested the Black Dwarf, and is from the pen of Sir Walter Scott himself. "The author saw this poor, and it may be said, unhappy man, David Ritchie, in autumn, 1797. Being then, as he has the happiness still to remain, connected by ties of intimate friendship with the family of Dr. Adam Fergusson, the philosopher and the historian, who then resided in the mansion-house of Halyards, in the vale of Manar, about a mile from Ritchie's hermitage, the author was upon a visit at Halyards, which lasted for several days, and was made acquainted with this singular anchorite, whom Dr. Fergusson considered as an extraordinary character, and whom he assisted in various ways, particularly by the loan of books. Though the taste of the philosopher

and the poor peasant did not, it may be supposed, always correspond. Dr. Fergusson considered him as a man of powerful capacity and original ideas, but whose mind was thrown off its just bias by a predominant degree of self-love and self-opinion, galled by the sense of ridicule and contempt, and avenging itself upon society, in idea at least, by a gloomy misanthropy." Concerning this recluse, Sir Walter again tells us, "He was bred a brushmaker at Edinburgh, and had wandered to several places, working at his trade, from all of which he was chased by the disagreeable attention which his hideous singularity of form and face attracted wherever he came. The author understood him to say, that he had been as far as Dublin." It would appear, that the author's personal intercourse with the original of "Cannie Elsie" was limited to one interview.

While thus engaged in the active pursuits of his professional career, and in snatching perusals of the great book of nature, Scott had not relaxed in his attention to books of a less figurative description.—He continued to prosecute his German studies, although under particular disadvantage, on account of the paucity of German works, they being almost inaccessible. His friend, Mr. Constable, the future Jonathan Oldbuck, procured for him an Adelung's dictionary; and his relative, Mrs. Scott, of Harden, obtained for him, from time to time, the principal works of Schiller, Goethe, and *Lez Motte Fouque*.—From Scott's own account of his method of studying the language, by "fighting his way to the knowledge of the German, by his acquaintance with the Scottish and Anglo-Saxon dialects," we are prepared for the use he made of these literary treasures, when he says, "Being thus furnished with the necessary originals, I began to translate on all sides, certainly without anything like an accurate knowledge of the language." He again says, "I pursued the German

language keenly, and though far from being a correct scholar, became a bold and daring reader, nay, even a translator of various dramatic pieces from that tongue."

One of these translations he published in the beginning of the year 1799—Goethe's "*Goetz of Berlichingen*." The degree of readiness shewn in understanding his author's meaning, the degree of power evinced in clothing his author's thoughts in English idioms, exhibit no mean trial of the translator's proficiency in the art of poetry. Goethe in his play did for Germany what Scott in his best novels did for Scotland; we can find no further distinction between them than that *Goetz of Berlichingen* is dramatic in its forms, while the *Waverley* novels are narratives. That the political lesson this drama unconsciously imparts should have escaped Scott is not to be wondered at. Goethe was a bold inquirer after truth, and the very reverse of a bigot. Scott on the other hand had thrown himself with the blind vehemence of youth, into the ranks of the British Tories, the most narrow minded politicians in the world; they could not argue themselves, and they would not allow any other person to argue. Determined adherence to what was established, be it right or wrong, deep, bitter, and enduring hatred of every opponent, was what they demanded. Enthralled to such a sway, there is little room to be surprised at his misunderstanding the fine picture of society, and manners presented to him; he was forbidden to examine society with such an observant gaze as would have enabled him to recognise its likeness.

Another translation was accomplished about this period, though not published for several years after, entitled "*The House of Aspen*," formed upon the model of Weber's "*Heilige Vehm*," from which Scott tells us he "borrowed the story and a part of the diction," while, "the whole is compressed, and

the incidents and dialogue occasionally much varied." This drama may therefore be considered as an intermediate step between his efforts in translation and in original composition. Viewing it in this light, we may conclude it to be a work entirely Scott's own.

Dramatic composition, however, held only a second place in Scott's affections. The first continued sacred to ballad poetry. After several attempts at imitations and translations, he ventured upon an original poem in a similar style. The scene selected was Glenfinlas, a tract of forest-ground to the westward of the Trossachs, a locality with which his early visits to the Highlands had rendered him familiar. "The tradition which he sought to embody in his verses is simply this:—"While two Highland hunters were passing the night in a solitary *bothy* (hut), and making merry over their venison and whisky, one of them expressed a wish that they had pretty lasses to complete the party. The words were scarcely uttered; when two beautiful young women, habited in green, entered the hut, dancing and singing. One of the hunters was seduced by the syren who attached herself particularly to him, to leave the bothy; the other remained, and, suspicious of the fair seducers, continued to play upon a trump or Jew's harp some strain consecrated to the Virgin Mary. Day at length came, and the temptress vanished. Searching in the forest he found the bones of his unfortunate friend who had been torn to pieces and devoured by the fiend into whose hands he had fallen. The place was thence called the Glen of the Green Women." This story suggested the ballad of "Glenfinlas" or Lord Ronald's Coronach. As this ballad was never published, though pretty widely circulated among the author's friends in manuscript, we will lay a few specimens of this early production of Scott before the reader.

The opening stanza strikes a chord of rude but stately wailing.

" O bon a rie ! O bon a rie !
The pride of Albin's line is o'er,
And fallen Glenartney's stateliest tree ;
We ne'er shall see Lord Ronald more."

The bothy occupied by the two chiefs during their hunting excursion is thus portrayed.

In grey Glenfinlas deepest nook
The solitary cabin stood,
Fast by Monstra's sullen brook
Which murmurs through that lonely wood.

Soft fell the night, the sky was calm,
When three successive days had flown ;
And summer mist in dewy balm
Steep'd healthy bank and mossy stone.

The moon half hid in alvery flakes,
Afar her dubious radiance shed,
Quivering on Katrine's distant lakes,
And resting on Benedi's head.

There is a thrilling interest in the visit of the fair fiend to Moy when left alone by his companion.

Within an hour return'd each hound,
In rush'd the rousers of the deer :
They howl'd in melancholy sound,
Than closely couch beside the deer.

No Ronald yet ; though midnight came,
And sad were Moy's prophetic dreams,
As, bending o'er the dying flame,
He fed the watch-fire's quivering gleams.

Sudden, the hounds erect their ears,
And sudden cease their moaning howl,
Close press'd to Moy, they mark their fears,
By shivering limbs and stifed growl.

Untouch'd the harp began to ring,
As softly, slowly, ope'd the door,
And shook responsive every string,
As light a footstep press'd the floor.

And by the watch-fire's glimmering light,
Close by the minstrel's side was seen
An huntress maid, in beauty bright,
All dropping wet her robes of green.

All dropping wet her garments seem ;
Chill'd was her cheek, her bosom bare,
As bending o'er the dying gleam
She wrang the moisture from her hair.

The author touches the conclusion of the interview with a bolder hand.

He mutter'd thrice St. Oran's rhyme,
And thrice St. Fillan's powerful prayer;
Then turn'd him to the eastern clime,
And sternly shook his coal-black hair.

And bending o'er his harp, he sung
His wildest witch-notes to the wind ;
And loud, and high, and strange they rung,
As many a magic change they find.

Tall wax'd the spirit's altering form,
Till to the roof her stature grew ;
Then mingling with the rising storm,
With one wild yell away she flew.

Rain beats, hail rattles, whirlwinds tear,
The slender hut in fragments flew,
But not a lock of Moy's loose hair,
Was waved by wind or wet by dew.

Wild mingling with the howling gale
Loud bursts of ghastly laughter rise ;
High o'er the minstrel's head they sail,
And die amid the northern skies.

O hon a rie! O hon a rie!
The pride of Albin's line is o'er,
And fallen Glenartney's stateliest tree ;
We ne'er shall see Lord Ronald more.

The author himself was satisfied with the manner he had executed his ballad, and he cared little for the "carping of would-be critics;" besides, it gained him a considerable share of local reputation; many of his friends found faults which they were not slow in making known to the author. The transformation of

the heroes into chieftains, rendered necessary a violation of costume, which the author thus acknowledges. "In one point, the incidents of the poem were irreconcilable with the costume of the times in which they were laid. The ancient Highland chieftains, when they had a mind to 'hunt the dun-deer down,' did not retreat into solitary bothies, or trust the success of the chase to their own unassisted exertions, without a single gillie to help them; they assembled their clan, and all partook of the sport, forming a ring, or enclosure, called the Tinchal, and driving the prey towards the most distinguished persons of the hunt. This course would not have suited me; so Ronold and Moy were cooped up in their solitary wigwam, like two moorfowl shooters of the present day."

Scott was induced to comply with the request of his kinsman of Harden, to compose another ballad. The old tower of Smailholm, near which the poet's earlier days were passed, has been alluded to in these pages. The iron-grated door of this tower had been torn from its hinges by some ill-disposed persons, during the absence of the proprietor, and thrown down the rock. Scott was an earnest suitor that the gate should be replaced, and compliance with his request was promised under the condition that he would make a ballad, the scene of which should lie at the tower, and among the crags amid which it was situated. Scott agreed, and in a short time produced "The Eve of St. John," a ballad of much deeper interest and more varied melody than "Glenfinlas." In short, it is an emanation from a creative mind—it is the first production of Scott in which we discover power and originality. Like *Glenfinlas*, it was never published by the author, although several copies were given to his friends.

These ballads procured for Scott many marks of

kindness and attention from eminent individuals; among others, we may mention John, Duke of Roxburgh, the collector of those volumes from which the Roxburgh Club derives its name, and the author of the *Eve of St. John* became a frequent visitor at the princely mansion of Flenra, where he was allowed unlimited access to the owner's library. Thus his taste for old literature, and the aristocratical bias of his mind, were at once gratified and confirmed. He has somewhere asserted—"it is a mistake to suppose that my situation in life or place in society were materially altered by such success as I attained in literary pursuits." But we are pretty certain that had it not been for his poetical promise, the son of the Edinburgh writer would never have become an intimate visitor in the halls of Dalkeith or Flenra.

It may be necessary that we convey to the reader some idea of the reception which Scott's muse met with from the few friends to whom she was introduced; and this cannot be better done than in his own words:—"Thus I was set up for a poet like a pedlar who has got two ballads to begin the world upon, and I hastened to make the round of all my acquaintances, shewing my precious wares and requesting criticism—a boon which no author asks in vain. For it may be observed, that in the fine arts, those who are in no respect able to produce any specimens themselves, hold themselves not the less entitled to decide upon the works of others; and justly no doubt, to a certain degree, for the merits of composition produced for the express purpose of pleasing the world at large, can only be judged of by the opinions of individuals, and perhaps, as in the case of Molière's old woman, the less sophisticated the person consulted, so much the better. But I was ignorant at the time I speak of, that though the applause of the many may justly appreciate the general merits of a piece, it is not so safe to submit

such a performance to the more minute criticism of the same individuals, when each, in turn, having seated himself in the censor's chair, has placed his mind in a critical attitude, and delivered his opinion sententiously and *ex cathedra*. General applause was in almost every case freely tendered, but the abatements in the way of proposed alterations and corrections were really puzzling. It was in vain the young author, listening with becoming modesty, and with a natural wish to please, cut and carved, and coopered and tinkered upon his unfortunate ballads, —it was in vain he placed, displaced, replaced, and misplaced; every one of his advisors was displeased with the concessions made to his co-assessors, and the author was blamed by some one, in almost every case, for having made two holes in attempting to patch up one.

“At last thinking seriously on the subject, I wrote out a fair copy (of *Glenfinlas*, I think,) and marked all the various corrections that had been proposed. On the whole, I found that I had been required to alter every verse, almost every line, and the only stanzas of the whole ballad which escaped criticism were such as neither could be termed good nor bad, speaking of them as poetry, but were of a common place character, absolutely necessary for the conducting the business of the tale. This unexpected result, after about a fortnight's anxiety, led me to adopt a rule, from which I have seldom departed during more than thirty years of literary life. When a friend, whose judgment I respect, has decided, and upon good advisement told me, that a manuscript was worth nothing, or at least possessed no redeeming qualities sufficient to atone for its defects, I have generally cast it aside; but I am little in the habit of paying attention to minute criticisms, or of offering such to any friend who may do me the honour to consult me. I am convinced

that, in general, in removing even errors of a trivial or a venial kind, the character of originality is lost, which, upon the whole, may be that which is most valuable in the production."

Scott received several letters from Lewis, criticising most minutely the ballads he had been favoured with copies of; and it is evident from these letters, that Lewis well deserved the designation long afterwards conferred upon him by Scott, of "a martinet in the accuracy of rhymes and numbers." In the spirit of defiance to all criticism, however, which Scott had adopted, the lectures of the Monk were for the time fruitless; they did not at the time produce any effect on his inflexibility, though he did not forget them at a future period.

We must now return to Scott's personal adventures; for in tracing his literary career, we have got somewhat ahead of his domestic history. Our young advocate still inhabited the paternal mansion, but it was far from being a pleasant abode to him. His father, who had by unrelaxing industry fought his way to fortune, was chagrined at what he considered the indolence of his son, whose more social habits and freer language jarred upon the cherished prejudices of the inveterate moralist. Late hours, the frequenting the theatre, and yeomanry messes, were in his eyes incompatible with the drudge of the law he would have transformed his son into. Mrs. Scott likewise joined in remonstrances, and home was indeed rendered irksome to Walter.

Like many good people, they were in the habit of making complaints against their children the frequent topic of their discourse with their favourite servants; one of whom ventured, on the strength of the length of her services, to remonstrate with Walter. Being somewhat of a puritan, she even endeavoured to open his eyes to the enormity of his conduct, in defending persons accused of crimes; and upon one occasion,

when she was lifting her voice against the sin of pleading a bad cause, he said, "I have nothing to do with the baseness of it; my business is to make it good." On another occasion, he made a complaint to the same mistress, which shows that he was still anxious for success in his business—"One of my profession never gets flesh to eat till he has no teeth to eat it with." This trick of his parents sermonising by deputy must have been obnoxious to Walter; and many of his friends noted at this period a growing inclination in him to fly from home to the company of his favourite associates.

To these causes of complaint, another as disagreeable was added. The stinted allowance of his father, unassisted by any gains of his own, was insufficient to meet the expenditure which the society he mingled with rendered unavoidable, and he was thus led to contract debts. There is nothing more galling to a delicate mind, rendered morbidly sensitive by being educated in the lap of comfort, than to be assailed by creditors, and yet fear to have recourse to the only friend upon whom it has a valid claim for relief. To the incessant gnawing of this petty misery Scott had for some time been exposed, when by the death of his uncle, early in 1797, he was left proprietor of Rosebank. The sale of the property relieved him from his embarrassments; but in getting rid of this source of annoyance, he incurred another scarcely less provoking. All the old ladies who had sympathised with the honest captain in his pride, at the thought that his name should live in the land after his death, set up their throats against the graceless nephew who had blasted so fair a prospect.—"Aunt Jenny had found men going about picking flowers, &c., before her brother was buried; agents to take possession for the debt, or the purchaser."—One half of the stories told were lies, and the other half grossly exaggerated; but they were not the less

annoying on that account. To make the matter worse, Aunt Jenny felt annoyed at the destruction of her brother's favourite scheme, and for some time after would not even speak to her nephew.

To be out of the way of such animadversions, Scott paid a visit to the watering place of Gilsland, near the border, in a wild uncultivated district of the north of England. The charitable tabbies he left behind him averred that he fled thither from the wrath of Aunt Jenny. There can be little doubt that uncomfortable as he felt himself circumstanced at home, his natural inclination for visiting new scenes must have been greatly strengthened. It was here that he first met Miss Carpenter, his future wife.

Scott's amatory propensities never seem to have exercised such an undue influence over him as to interrupt his steady progress through life. He was not however "made of the tongs any more than his neighbours," though there was no character he more despised than the mere man of pleasure; he was not an absolute Joseph neither. Undeniable evidence exists that he was concerned, previous to the period of his life at which we are now arrived, in at least one affair of love contrary to the rules of holy kirk. We only state the simple fact; and even that would have been passed over in silence but for the duty incumbent upon the biographer of narrating the truth; but the most delicate reader need not fear that we intend to dwell upon the details. But Scott, although not more free than other men from the visitations of passion, was of too noble a nature to abandon himself to the control of sensuality. He nourished a purer flame, and his first love flew a bold flight. It was fixed upon a daughter of Sir William Forbes. The real value of a character like his rarely succeeds in winning the affections of woman, which are more easily captivated by what is brilliant and striking. Without

personal charms to back his suit, he proved the fate of a rejected lover.

Miss Margaret Charlotte Carpenter, who is described as having been "a most lovely creature, with a profusion of dark hair, a fine pale skin, and an elegant and slender person," made a strong impression upon Scott. The lady was ostensibly the daughter of a merchant of Lyons, of the name of John Carpenter; but there were whispers (never satisfactorily contradicted) that her nominal guardian, the Marquis of Downshire, stood in a closer affinity to her. She was amiable and accessible, possessing a portion of £400 a-year in her own right. These qualities, conjoined with her beauty, were no contemptible objects in the eyes of one who had passed the period when a youth is entering life, and rather looking out for some object whose affection may dignify him in his own eyes, than stooping to one who looks up to him for that distinction. At all events, he attached himself to Miss Carpenter; and, assisted by the facilities which the manners of a watering place afforded, he told her his tale of love, and was a thriving wooer. After some correspondence with Lord Downshire the marriage was agreed upon, and the young couple were united at Carlisle, on the 24th December, 1797. It was probably about this time that Scott, out of compliment to his lady, transferred his allegiance from the Presbyterian kirk, in the bosom of which he had been educated, to the Episcopal church.

Above any other people, the middle classes of Great Britain are averse to inter-marriages with foreigners; and Miss Carpenter's French blood would of itself have been enough to annoy her husband's relations, but the rumours regarding her parentage excited their highest indignation. The young lady was accompanied by a Miss Nicholson, who was reported to be her mother, to whom she certainly paid much respect, although there was not the slightest resem-

blance in their faces and figures. Aunt Jenny called a council of war, which was attended by all the spinsters of the line and lineage of Scott, to deliberate whether it would be decent to visit the young couple while this suspicious person resided with them. The debate was summed up by a lady, who, with equal good sense and determination declared, that "so long as she behaved herself properly, it was nothing to them who the devil she was." Scott's father and mother were loud in their complaints against their son for bringing disgrace upon the family by such a marriage.

Walter paid no attention to these tittle-tattles, but carried his bride home to a house which he had prepared for her reception in George's street, and quietly set himself to the enjoyment of domestic life, sweetened by literary pursuits, and varied by the active duties of his profession and military engagements. That this rational scheme of household comfort was all he contemplated is shewn by two remarks made to friends about him at this time. To an attached domestic of his father's, who reproached him with having contracted a marriage which vexed his parents, he answered "that it would keep him at home at nights." To an intimate friend who took the liberty of rallying him on his selection of a wife, he said "she would bring him bairns, and not interfere with his work, and that was all he cared for." He lived long enough to know that kindly and amiable dispositions, unless engrafted upon strict principle and a strong mind, were no sufficient guarantee for happiness in the married state. But at this time no such forebodings haunted him. He had health, a young, pretty, and amiable wife, and a competent income, with the prospect of speedy promotion. He spent the winter in Edinburgh, and the summer vacation in a cottage beautifully situated in the valley of the Esk, a short distance from Lasswade. He

remained with his lady in the town and country houses which they first occupied during the years 1798-99.

His appearance in the Court of Justiciary during these two years was limited to one occasion. This trial also resulted from the raw and undisciplined soldiery which garrisoned the island at that time, and throws additional light upon the character of these troops.

We have already met with the Pembroke-shire cavalry at Tranent; it is to them that our tale relates. They consisted principally of young and fiery Welshmen, new to the military profession, and not very obedient to its strict line of duty. On the evening of the 9th of March, 1799, Serjeant Owen Jenkins, and one or two other non-commissioned officers of the same regiment, among whom was Poloty, the serjeant-major, were carousing in the house of a Mrs. Dawson. The conversation turned upon their respective companions, and the soldier-like appearance of their men. At last they fell into a hot dispute as to who was the tallest man in the regiment. One named one person, another another, till a voice from a neighbouring room contradicted them all, averring that a person not previously mentioned was the tallest man. The voice was recognised to be that of Butler, a private in the regiment, whose turn it was that evening to mount guard, and who had evidently transgressed the limits of duty in straying so far from the guard-house. The rest of the serjeants insisted that Jenkins, to whose troop the delinquent belonged, should seize him; and on his asking time to drink off his liquor, taunted him with inability to preserve discipline among the men entrusted to his command. Already excited by liquor, and smarting under the jeers of his companions, Jenkins, a strong active young man, laid hold of Butler to convey him to the guard house, and dragged him rather roughly

from the tavern. No one followed them, but one of the inhabitants, attracted by a noise in the street, below his windows, looked out. The night was dark, but by the dim light of a lamp, he saw two persons struggling, one of whom seemed to be beating the other with the flat of his sword. This individual heard the man who was beaten say, in a frank tone, "Well serjeant, give me thy hand, and I will go along with thee; only let me stop to gather up my feathers." The serjeant however continued his blows, and the prisoner grappled with him. Amid the struggle they were lost in darkness, and a few minutes later Jenkins burst into Dawson's tavern streaming with blood. He had received no fewer than four deep stabs in his side and breast, with a bayonet, inflicted by Butler, who followed him, and allowed himself to be secured without resistance.

The trial of Butler took place on the 27th of May, when Scott, whose success in the case of the Tranent rioters had procured him a name in the district, appeared as counsel. Twelve witnesses were examined on the part of the prosecution, among whom was the gentleman who had witnessed the scuffle under the lamp. The nature of his evidence was strongly dwelt upon by Scott in his address on behalf of the prisoner; and although it was sufficient to procure for him the mitigated verdict of culpable homicide, the deadly intent with which the blows were evidently given, however, and the violation of discipline implied in the whole transaction, drew upon Butler a sentence more severe than is usually awarded to the culpable homicide, transportation for fourteen years.

Scott's first reward for his devotion to the party in power was granted him at the close of 1799—his appointment to the sheriffdom of Selkirkshire, with an income of about £300 a-year, which proved a very comfortable addition to his revenue. His cir-

cumstances might now be regarded as moderately opulent; for in addition to his salary as sheriff and the annuity of Mrs. Scott, he had lately received an accession to his capital by the death of his father; thus fortune might be said to smile upon him.

His manner of living was adapted to his income neither mean nor ostentatious. He was happy to see his friends about him, especially in a quiet way on a Sunday evening. His country residence was plainly but comfortably furnished, and he appeared to be quite domesticated. Two ladies, visiting one day at Lasswade, found him appparelled in a linen jacket and apron, with a brush in his hand, busily employed in painting his drawing-room. On finding himself surprised in this dishabille, he laughingly threw aside his accoutrements and insisted that as a penalty for taking him unawares they should remain his prisoners during the day. They consented to stay dinner, and he gave the freest scope to his playful humour during the evening.

Sir John Stoddart, who during his tour in Scotland visited the cottage at Lasswade, has paid a beautiful tribute to the pleasant days he spent there. He says, "The circumstance which peculiarly endears this spot to me, is the residence of my friend Mr. Walter Scott, whose poetical talents are too well known to receive any accession of praise from me. I shall have a future occasion to speak of the pleasure and instruction which I derived from the society of such a companion in a subsequent part of my tour; yet I cannot withhold the immediate expression of my feelings; they oblige me to say something, and the fear of doing them injustice prevents me from saying much. Though we cannot pay the debts of friendship in public, we should not be ashamed to acknowledge them; this false shame of our best feelings has indeed become almost fashionable, but is a fashion ominous to general morals, and destructive

of individual happiness. I cannot believe but that a reader of taste would be delighted with even a slight copy of that domestic picture, which I contemplated with so much pleasure during my short visit to my friend,—a man of native kindness and cultivated talent, passing the intervals of a learned profession amidst scenes highly favourable to his poetic inspirations, not in a churlish and rustic solitude, but in the daily exercise of the most precious sympathies, as a husband a father, and a friend. To such an inhabitant, the simple unostentatious elegance of the cottage of Lasswade is well suited, and its image will never recur to my memory without a throng of those pleasing associations whose outline I have faintly sketched."

Scott was now the admired of all admirers, and the circle in which he moved included all that was distinguished for rank or literature in his native city. The raising poet who was patronised and introduced into society by the Dukes of Buccleugh and Roxburgh was a person eagerly sought after. Under the roofs of the Duchess of Gordon, and Lady Charlotte Campbell, he met with the most distinguished strangers who visited Edinburgh. In these gay scenes Scott mingled with more safety than poor Burns did, for his rank and prospects in his profession gave him a claim to admission on a footing of equality, and he was not to be "thrown regardless bye," when the curiosity of his titled friends was sufficiently gratified. His character of poet only served to enhance his claims to attention, to expose him to the blandishments of beauty and fashion. We find many of his minor poems composed at this period at the request of ladies of rank. Even the Lay of the Last Minstrel was occasioned by such a petition.

His most intimate associates at this time seems to have been William Erskine, afterwards Lord Kin-

neder, to whom he frequently expressed his gratitude for literary advice in strong terms. A kindred taste for the antiquities of their native country formed a bond of union between Scott and Lord Woodhouselee. The same affinity of sentiments drew him into relations of intimacy with Mr. Heber, who was a prowler about book-stalls, and a zealous collector of forgotten volumes. Under the auspices of Heber, Scott became acquainted with John Leyden. It was in the shop of Archibald Constable, bookseller, (a man we will have to introduce to our readers once and again) that Heber formed an acquaintance with Leyden, one of the most peculiar characters of the times. A characteristic anecdote of Leyden was often told by Scott, which although more appropriate to a subsequent part of our narrative, may here be related; it alludes to the period when Scott was procuring materials for the *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*:—"In this labour, Leyden was equally interested by friendship for the editor, and his own patriotic zeal for the honour of the Scottish borders; and both may be judged of from the following circumstance. An interesting fragment of an ancient historical ballad had been obtained, but the remainder, to the great disturbance of the editor and his co-adjutor (Leyden) was not to be recovered. Two days afterwards, when the editor was sitting with some company after dinner, a sound was heard at a distance like that of the whistling of a tempest through the torn rigging of the vessel which scuds before it. The sounds increased as they approached. more near, and Leyden (to the great astonishment of such of the guests as did not know him) burst into the room, chanting the desiderated ballad, with the most enthusiastic gesture, and all the energy of the saw tones of his voice. It turned out that he had been between forty and fifty miles, and back again, for the sole purpose of visiting an

old person who possessed this precious remnant of antiquity."

Scott about this period also became acquainted with Dr. Robert Anderson, the first man of letters who published a complete edition of the English poets; he was editor for the *Edinburgh Magazine*. There was always a vacant seat at his fireside for young men of promise, be their rank in life what it might, and not unfrequently a corner in his magazine for their effusions. Around this man of genuine benevolence were gathered at this time a band of young men, destined to fight their way to notoriety, by their own unaided exertions, and despite the frowns of fortune. With most of these young men Scott formed an intimacy; so it might be said with some truth, that Walter Scott was acquainted with all the rank, and all the talent, of the kingdom.

We are now approaching that period at which Scott may be said to have established his future fame upon an imperishable basis, and that too by the publication of a work laying little claim to originality. "We allude to the *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*." Before entering into the detail of a career so brilliant as his was destined to be, we will advert to one or two minor circumstances.

Scott's sheriffdom was one of those semi-sinecures bestowed by the ministry for political services alone, without the slightest regard to the legal accomplishments of the person promoted; it may not therefore be necessary to state, that the commission of Sheriff of a county, as the law then stood, did not render the residence of that functionary within the locality at all requisite. These gentlemen, being invariably selected from the ranks of the legal profession, were generally to be found pursuing their practice as pleaders before the supreme court, the same as if no such office had been entrusted to them. Accordingly, we find Scott, the year after his appointment as

sheriff, engaged as counsel for a man of the name of Elliot, a horse-dealer in Hawick, who was tried for forgery. We notice this trial, as being apparently the last of the same description in which he was engaged, and in which, as the junior counsel, he acquitted not only his client but himself triumphantly. The trial lasted two days; many witnesses were examined, and the jury returned a verdict of guilty of knowingly uttering base notes,—held equivalent by the law to the crime of forging—and therefore subjecting the accused to the capital punishment (now abolished) of death. From certain circumstances elicited by Scott during the procedure, the judges considered themselves warranted in suspending the sentence, and ordered mutual informations to be lodged by the counsel for the crown and the prisoner. The paper in behalf of the latter is in Scott's name, and is a very elaborate production; but the concluding paragraph is more characteristic of the Author of *Waverley* than the young Scotch advocate:—"He (the pannel) has indeed much to answer for, and has, perhaps, too well merited the punishment which he deprecates. But a dead fly will corrupt a box of precious ointment, and the irregular punishment of the most obscure and guilty individual may pervert the noblest system of jurisprudence." The result to the pannel was an unconditional dismissal from the bar.

Although his studies as Sheriff did not render his residence in Selkirkshire imperative, yet Scott thought it necessary for him to reside in the county a certain portion of the year. He therefore removed from his cottage at Laeswade, and took the house of Ashiestel, on the banks of the Tweed, which continued to be his country residence till he took up his abode at Abbotsford. The appointment was to him an agreeable as well as beneficial one. Besides adding to his income, and conferring a general and local respectability to his

character, he was transplanted to a district abounding with valued friends, and with scenery which, dear as it was to him while a boy, was now far more precious to him as a poet. It would appear to be on his removal to the banks of his favourite stream, that Scott abandoned all prospect and desire of obtaining distinction at the bar, and gave full rein to the natural impulses of his heart, and the soaring pinions of his imagination. His office as Sheriff-depute was (exclusive, of course, of the salary,) little more than a nominal one, and he was by no means inclined to increase its duties. Indeed, it is asserted by Hogg, that if ever he displayed anything like partiality in the exercise of his functions, it was towards the poachers by land and water, who were occasionally brought before him, a species of legal game which his brethren of the bench seem, from time immemorial, to have reckoned it one of the prime purposes of their office to nose out and hunt down. Scott entertained, however, a high notion of the importance and dignity of his office, and resolutely vindicated it when occasion required.

Before proceeding to review the poetical career of Walter Scott, we will introduce a few brief sketches of one of his early friend, James Hogg, the Ettrick Shepherd, whose natural genius entitles him to our notice.

Hogg was Scott's junior only by a few months, having been born in March, 1772. His ancestors, as he himself informs us, were all shepherds in the border districts—a class of men to whom, for natural intelligence, moral integrity, fervent piety, and stern independence of mind, we can find no parallel in the annals of mankind. The character of this primitive, and generally speaking, still unsophisticated, class of men is little known or appreciated, even by their own countrymen. Mingling little with their fellow-men beyond the bounds of their own secluded vales,

and then only at distant intervals, their knowledge of mankind is astonishing, and would be reckoned intuitive, did we not know how powerfully the "silence of the mountain solitudes leads to an intimacy with the secret springs which regulate and influence human conduct." The nature of their occupation, too, tends to inspire them with a feeling of trust and reliance on Providence; imbues them with a habitual devoutness of thought, while it elevates their deportment with a natural dignity, almost patriarchal.

This is anything but an exaggerated picture of the border shepherds, as all who have had the opportunity, and the courage, to penetrate into their native fastnesses, and have contented themselves with frugal and healthful fare for the sake of studying original individuality of character, can attest. They are, in fact, in the widest meaning of the expression, truly what Allan Cunningham has so emphatically denominated them, "Nature's gentlemen." But it must not be imagined from what we have here said, that these men are ignorant of the events and transactions of the busy world around them. The very reverse is the fact, and this more especially since the commencement of that system of cheap publishing, which forms one of the most distinct features of the present age. We will here introduce an incident illustrative of our present observations, for which we are indebted to Mr. Allan, from whom we have obtained this sketch. Happening a few years ago to be on a pilgrimage to the classic banks of the Yarrow, with two friends, we visited the Shepherd's house, which was, as usual, crowded with a miscellaneous assemblage from all points of the compass, resembling strongly, indeed, what he himself jocularly termed it, "a bees skaip in the process of casting." With a view, therefore, to relieve him somewhat from the oppressive duties of hospitality, we walked up the

glen to St. Mary's Loch, in order to while away the forenoon. Here we *foregathered* with a shepherd, who, after exchanging civilities, instead of commencing a running commentary on the state of the weather and markets, as we expected, proceeded to our great astonishment, to criticise Scott's *Napoleon*, then newly published, and which none of us, to our inexpressible confusion, had yet seen. Our pastoral friend, however, seemed to have analyzed it completely, and stated several objections, as respected historical accuracy, most of which we afterwards found gravely put forth in the critical press of that day.

Making every allowance, however, for the benefit of intelligent parentage, it must be owned that Hogg's career is one of the most extraordinary examples on record of natural genius forcing its way upwards through all obstacles into a lofty and enviable fame. Like the children of almost every Scotch peasant, since the establishment of our invaluable parochial system of education, Hogg was early instructed in writing and reading; but at seven years of age, in consequence of domestic misfortunes, was taken from school, and sent to service in the dignified capacity of a cow-herd. "In all," he says, "I had spent about half a year at school; and was never another day at any school whatever." He was soon transferred from the charge of cows to that of sheep, in which employment he continued unremittingly till his eighteenth year, without attempting to lift a pen, and scarcely seeing a book,—the Bible excepted. It was not till he was twenty-one that he attempted to write verses, and his first rude efforts were, as he as candidly as justly, says, "sad trash;" but this seems to have arisen chiefly from his attempting flights far beyond the still narrow range of his powers. Scarcely had he begun to scribble, when the casual perusal of Ramsay's unrivalled pastoral fired him with dramatic phrenzy, and he

began to sacrifice alternately to Thalia and Melpomene, with an ardour of devotion, for which, if he attained some notoriety, it was of a kind which his future fame may, without much loss, dispense with. Under the discriminating eye and fostering encouragement of his master, Mr. Wm. Laidlaw, at Elibank, the Shepherd continued to write, and to improve as he wrote, and his effusions began gradually to creep into public notice. Perhaps the startling and reproachful precedent of Burns, then recently laid in his grave, rendered his countrymen the more ready to open their convictions to the claims of his still more rustic and unpolished successor. In 1802, the two first volumes of the *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border* were published; and it must have been in the autumn of that year, that the first interview between Scott and Hogg, as detailed in the Shepherd's own words, took place, although the latter himself, it will be seen, dates it in 1801. "One fine day in the summer of 1801, as I was busily engaged working in the field of Ettrick House, (a farm lately given up in lease to him by his brother William,) Wat Shiel came over to me, and said—'I boud gang down to the Ramsey-cleuch as fast as my feet could carry me, for there were some gentlemen there wha wantit to speak wi' me.'—'Wha can it be at the Ramsey-cleuch that wants me, Wat?'—'I couldna say, for it was na me they spak to in the byganging, but I'm thinking it's the Shirra and some of his gang.'—I was rejoiced to hear this, for I had seen the first volumes of the *Minstrelsy of the Border*, and had copied a number of old things from my mother's recital, and sent them to the editor preparatory for a third volume. I accordingly went towards home to put on my Sunday clothes, but before reaching it I met with the Shirra and Mr. William Laidlaw (Hogg's late master), coming to visit me. They alighted and remained in our cottage for a space

better than an hour, and my mother chaunted the ballad of Old Maitland to them, with which Mr. Scott was highly delighted. I had sent him a copy, but I thought Mr. Scott had some dread of a part of it being forged, which had been the cause of his journey into Ettrick. When he heard my mother sing it he was quite satisfied, and I remember he asked her if she thought it had ever been printed, and her answer was—'Oo, na, na, sir, it was never prented i' the warld, for my brithers an' me learned it frae auld Andrew Moor, an' he learned it, an' mony mae, frae auld Baby Maitlan', that was housekeeper to the first laird o' Tushilaw.'—'Then that must be a very auld story, indeed, Margaret,' said he.—'Aye, it is that! But mair nor that, except George Watson and James Stewart, there was never ane o' my sangs prentit, till ye prentit them yersell, an' ye hae spoilt them a'thegither! *They war made for singing, an' no for reading;* an' they're neither right spelled nor right setten down!'—Mr. Scott answered by a hearty laugh, and the recital of a verse, but I have forgot what it was, and my mother gave him a rap on the knee with her open hand, and said—'It was true enough for a' that.' " Such is a part of Hogg's interesting account of this interesting introduction to his illustrious friend and brother poet. The intercourse, however, lasted two days, and laid the foundation which only terminated with the death of one of them. They visited together several places in the district, renowned in the ballad and legendary lore in which they were both such enthusiasts; and it may be worth while noting a few of the Shepherd's reminiscences of his friend's appearance and bearing at that period. "I remember," says he, "his riding upon a terribly high-spirited horse, which had the perilous fancy of leaping every drain, rivulet, and ditch that came in our way. The consequence was, that he was everlastingly bogging himself, while

sometimes his rider kept his seat in despite of his plunging, and at other times he was obliged to extricate himself the best way he could. We visited the old castles of Thirlestane and Tushilaw, and dined and spent the afternoon and the night with Mr. Brydon of Crosslie. Sir Walter was all the while in the highest good-humour, and seemed to enjoy the the range of mountain solitude which we traversed, exceedingly. Indeed, I never saw him otherwise. In the fields, on the rugged mountains, or even toiling in Tweed to the waist, I have seen his glee not only surpass himself, but all other men. I remember of leaving Altrive with him once, accompanied by Mr. Laidlaw and Sir Adam Ferguson, to visit the tremendous solitude of the Grey Mare's Tail and Loch Skene. I conducted them through that wild region by a path which, if not rode by Clavers, was, I dare say, never before rode by any gentleman. Sir Adam rode inadvertently into a gulf, and got a sad fright; but Sir Walter, in the very worst paths, never dismounted; save at Loch Skene to take some dinner. Our very perils were to him matter of infinite merriment; and then there was a short-tempered boot-boy at the inn (at Moffat) who wanted to pick a quarrel with him, at which he laughed till the water ran over his cheeks." These reminiscences of the Shepherd are valuable and interesting, as displaying at once the animal temperament of his brother bard, and the habitual channel in which Scott's ideas ran, at that period of his life. And in the picture given, we think every one will perceive that the exuberant flow of both—his contempt of toil and danger, and the chivalric current of his feelings—are to be found bursting forth irrepressibly in every page of these immortal strains, to which he soon afterwards gave birth.

Hogg subsequently remarks, that the enthusiasm with which Scott recited and spoke of our ancient

ballads during that interesting tour through the forest of Ettrick, first led him to attempt an imitation of them. Every one knows how successfully he did so in his "Mountain Bard," published in 1807; which, with equal propriety and gratitude he dedicated to the high priest of that altar, whence he caught the fire of his inspiration. Scott, indeed, encouraged the publication of the work by word and deed, not only as an enthusiastic poet, but a warm—an actively warm—friend. Of his kind offices in the former character, Hogg has beautifully said—

"Blest be his generous heart for aye,
He told me where the relic lay,
Pointed my way, with ready will,
Afar on Ettrick's wildest hill;
Watched my first notes with curious eye,
And wondered at my minstrelsy;
He little weened a parent's tongue
Such strains had o'er my cradle sung."

When the work was finished, Scott took the bard with him to Edinburgh, and introduced him to Mr. Constable, who became the publisher, although on terms not the most flattering to the author. The truth was, we believe, that the bibliopole was at first somewhat staggered at the loutish bearing, uncouth dialect, and grotesque caligraphy of the untutored borderer. But Constable lived long enough to form a more favourable opinion of the rustic author, whose poems in a short time became generally known, and generally admired.

It is at all times a delicate, and sometimes a dangerous matter, to touch upon the private intercourse between friend and friend; but we have Hogg's own and oft-repeated authority for stating, that amid all the many vicissitudes of fortune, Scott ever continued to be his warm and consistent friend, in the fullest acceptation of the term. And this we are the more anxious to state, as Sir Walter Scott has more

than once been accused of a callousness and indifference in his friendships, even in those contracted during his earlier years, when the heart was young, and the feelings ardent, amounting to apathetic insensibility. Never was accusation more false, as we will fully testify before we close our narrative.— One instance of his kindly and forgiving disposition we cannot refrain from giving here, as it is in connection with the individual of whom we have just been speaking. Among other literary speculations which mingled with the teeming fancies of Hogg's brain during the heyday of his career at Edinburgh, he conceived the idea of publishing a volume containing a poem by each of the great masters of the lyre then living in Britain. Proceeding to act upon this notion, he further applied personally, or by letter, to the parties concerned, little doubting of their cordial co-operation in a scheme so novel and striking. His applications were, for the most part, favourably received, and either ready contributions or promises of their speedy transmission were sent to him. Hogg became daily more delighted with his scheme, and conceived he had found the "open sesame" to the Temple of Fortune. To his utter discomfiture, however, his friend Scott, of whose support he reckoned himself most secure, at once, and without hesitation, refused to lift his pen for such a purpose. Hogg remonstrated earnestly, but without effect; and finally demanded an explanation of his refusal. But on this point Scott was equally obstinate; nor would he even condescend to give any opinion respecting the propriety of Hogg's projected publication. Stung with indignation at treatment which he conceived to be undeservedly injurious and contemptuous, the Shepherd flung from him, sent him a most abusive letter, impugning equally his qualities as a man, and his capacity as a poet, and refused either to speak

to or meet with him for more than twelve months afterwards. Hogg, at the same time, threw aside his favourite project in angry vexation, conceiving, very justly, even in his wrath, that the want of Scott's name would, in all likelihood, tend materially to frustrate its success. He soon afterwards revived it again, however, in a different fashion, and published his *Poetic Mirror*, giving imitations, (many of them happily executed) of the most celebrated of our country poets. During the interval of estrangement between Scott and Hogg, the latter (who afterwards confessed the quarrel to be all on his side) fell ill, and was soon considered in great danger of his life. Such a casualty is the surest touchstone of earthly affection. Not knowing how he would be received personally by his afflicted friend, Scott made daily and most anxious inquiries after his welfare at the shop of Hogg's border countrymen and earliest benefactors, Grieve and Scott; he desired that no pecuniary consideration might prevent his having the best medical advice in Edinburgh, and everything which could contribute to the restoration of his health; and frequently observed, with much emotion,—“I would not for all I am worth in the world that anything serious should befall Hogg.” As his friends had been enjoined to secrecy by Scott, it was long after his recovery ere the particulars of this affectionate solicitude for his welfare reached the ears of the Shepherd. When it did so, the consequence was an immediate and cordial reconciliation. Scott's reasons for refusing to accede to Hogg's urgent request, as well as declining all explanation on the subject, appear perfectly plain, and reflect the highest credit both on his head and heart. The project was, to say the least of it, a somewhat mercenary one; at least, had it been carried into effect, and conduced much to the editor's profit, there was a strong probability of its being viewed in that light

by the world. Scott, therefore, discountenanced a proposal by which the friend he esteemed might sully the bright fame he had then acquired in the world of letters, and ultimately forfeit his own self-respect—the direst of human misfortunes; while the subject was, at the same time, of a nature which, to a man of delicacy, forbade either argument or remonstrance. During the remainder of Scott's life the friendship thus renewed remained undisturbed, and Hogg was left to mourn the decease of his best friend and patron.

We now turn to our task of noticing the first great publication which Scott ventured upon, little dreaming of the long and glorious voyage before him. We have already seen in what manner he employed himself, for some years previously with the view of preserving the surviving relics of our ancient minstrelsy from oblivion, traversing the barren heaths, and exploring the solitary dells of the south, with unwearied ardour and untiring foot.

Besides his own indefatigable industry in collecting materials for his Minstrelsy, Scott enjoyed many advantages in its compilation, from his intimate acquaintance with the many valuable collections of the same description already published. Besides, he had the benefit of the best exertions of many friends well qualified to assist him, and by their influence obtained access for him to several private libraries and carefully preserved manuscripts, hitherto unprofaned by strangers' touch. The duties, however, of selecting, comparing, arranging—in short, of editing the collection, were nowise lessened by this ready zeal in furnishing materials; on the contrary, they were rendered the more burdensome and responsible, just in proportion to the number and value of the contributions.

Respecting the manner in which Scott discharged his self-imposed task it would be unnecessary now to

examine. The work contains materials for scores of metrical romances; arising, perhaps, not more from the numerous romantic and picturesque incidents which form the groundwork of most of these ancient effusions, than from the earliest votaries of the muse having, as Scott himself remarks, the first choice out of the stock of materials which are proper for the art. "Thus it happens," continues he, "that early poets almost uniformly display a bold, rude, original cast of genius and expressions. They have walked at free-will, and with unconstrained steps along the wilds of Parnassus, while their followers move with constrained gesture and forced attitudes, in order to avoid placing their feet where their predecessors have stepped before them."

The Introduction to the *Minstrelsy*, is without doubt, one of the richest specimens of antiquarian research and abstruse learning, combined with extensive historical knowledge, ever submitted to the public. It gives a condensed but satisfactory history of the border district of Scotland from the earliest known period down to the Reformation—the character and condition of the inhabitants throughout the different ages—their habits, their religion, their superstitions, and their occupations. It shows how deeply and attentively Scott had studied the history of his native land, ere he ventured to lift his pen as an author; how readily his mind laid hold of and stored up every occurrence of interest, and every remarkable trait of character. And now that the wand of the magician is broken, a re-perusal of this, his earliest acknowledged essay, affords an explanation of much that was inexplicable during the period of his mysterious power, and especially that exuberant profusion of historical incident with which he enriched his fictitious narratives, and gave to his plots and his characters, all the semblance and the interest of reality.

The "Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border" is divided into three distinct classes of poems. 1, Historical Ballads. 2, Romantic. 3, Imitations of these compositions by Modern Authors. Of the first two classes, there were no fewer than forty-three ballads which appeared for the first time in the Minstrelsy, if we may credit the testimony of Mr. Motherwell, of Glasgow, himself a poet of no mean rank, and a successful gleaner in the same field. This of itself, certainly entitles Scott and his coadjutors to the everlasting gratitude of their country. For it must be held in mind, that relics of antiquity thus preserved, were every day undergoing a metamorphosis no less destructive of their original appearance and character, than the plate-mail of the heroes whose deeds are recorded in them, suffers from the corroding rust that at once destroys its strength and its identity. But it is Scott himself whom we have mainly to thank for the perfect state in which we find them, and presenting them to us in a form at once intelligible to modern readers, and at the same time with all the genuine marks of authenticity about them. "Fortunately it was," observes Mr. Motherwell, "for the heroic and legendary song of Scotland that the work was undertaken, and still more fortunate that its execution devolved upon one so well qualified in every respect to do its subject the most ample justice. Long will it live a noble and interesting monument of his unwearied research, curious and minute learning, genius, and taste. It is truly a patriot's legacy to posterity; and as much as it may be now esteemed, it is only in times yet gathering in the bosom of futurity, when the interesting traditions, the chivalrous and romantic legends, the wild superstitions, the tragic songs of Scotland have wholly failed from the living memory, that this gift can be duly appreciated. It is then that these volumes will be conned with feelings akin to religious enthusiasm,

that their strange majestic lore will be treasured up in the heart as the precious records of days for ever passed away—that their grand stern legends will be listened to with reverential awe, as if the voice of a remote ancestor from the depths of the tombs had woke the thrilling strains of martial antiquity."

The *Minstrelsy* was generally received on its publication with the applause it merited; and the popularity of the work is perhaps best proved by the fact that a second edition was called for in the course of the first year.

We must advert to a circumstance attending the publication of the *Minstrelsy* which attracted no little attention at the time. This was their issuing from the press of the small provincial town of Kelso, and in a style of typography which far surpassed anything that had ever before been executed in Scotland. The printer was Mr. James Ballantyne, a school-companion of Scott, at Kelso. These circumstances, together with his subsequent eminence in his trade, would sufficiently entitle him to be noticed in these pages. But the close intimacy which afterwards subsisted betwixt Scott and the two brothers, James and John Ballantyne, during the greater part of their mutual lives, and the peculiar circumstances which arose out of that connexion, render our being somewhat particular in our account of both no less expedient than proper.

Mr. Ballantyne's father was a respectable draper in Kelso, and was, or at least considered himself, an individual of no little importance in his native burgh. No great cordiality subsisted betwixt Scott and the Ballantynes while at Kelso, chiefly on account of certain consequential airs which, as the sons of one of the principal merchants of the place, the brothers thought themselves entitled to assume towards their companions. Scott, as we have previously remarked, remained only about a twelvemonth at Kelso, but

the acquaintance so coldly begun, was renewed upon his occasional visits to that place afterwards, and ultimately ripened into a warm and steady friendship. James was at first designed for the law, and served his apprenticeship to a writer in Kelso; after which he came to Edinburgh and entered as a solicitor, but having only got one job in the course of two years, and no payment for that, he returned to his native town, quite at a loss as to his future life. About that time, the tory gentlemen of the county were on the eve of starting a newspaper in accordance with their own political opinions, and Mr. Ballantyne's principles having a similar bias, he was offered the editorship. This was the first acquaintance he formed with the art of printing. After he had been some time established in his situation, his old school-friend, Scott, one day called upon him, and said, "Man, James, I've got a parcel of old border ballads that I wish you would print for me." "Me print!" said Ballantyne, "how could I print, who never learned the art, and, besides, have no types but what are necessary for the newspaper?" This last difficulty was, however, obviated by Sir Walter's urgency. It happened at that time, that an English typesfounder was at that time pushing his wares through Scotland; of these Mr. Ballantyne was induced to order a quantity, almost solely for the purpose of printing his friend's ballads. It happened also that Mr. Ballantyne's foreman had been a long time in a celebrated London printing office, and was therefore capable of using his materials to the best advantage. With these favourable circumstances together with a fine thick wove paper, the "*Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*" burst upon the eyes of the Scottish public a pattern of typographical perfection. As a natural consequence, the Kelso printer was soon in general request in the publishing world, and in the course of a year or two afterwards, chiefly through

the instigation and assistance of Scott, he was induced to remove to Edinburgh, where he commenced his long and distinguished career as a printer. John Ballantyne had, in the meantime, been brought up as a draper, but when his brother's business, as a printer in Kelso, increased, he was taken into the printing office as his clerk, and subsequently accompanied him to Edinburgh, where he soon afterwards commenced business as a bookseller.

Although we have said that, on removing to Ashiesteel in 1800, Scott virtually surrendered himself to the bent of his genius, and abandoned whatever longings he might previously have cherished for professional fame, yet he had by no means come to any determination on the subject, nor was it until the year 1803, that the prudence, if not the necessity, of finally making his election between law and literature, was forced upon him by a sense of his ripening years, and the prospect of an increasing family. This may be regarded as the most critical period of Scott's life, and we believe our readers could wish for no better explanation of the reasons which determined his choice, than what he gives us himself. He says,—

“At this time I stood personally in a different position from that which I occupied when I first dipt my desperate pen in ink for other purposes than those of my profession. In 1796, when I first published the translation from Burger, I was an insulated individual, with only my own wants to provide for, and having, in a great measure, my own inclination alone to consult. In 1803, when the second edition of the *Minstrelsy* appeared, I had arrived at a period of life when men, however thoughtless, encounter duties and circumstances, which press consideration and plans of life upon the most careless minds. I had been for some time married,—was father of a rising family, and though fully enabled to meet the consequent demands upon me, it

was my duty and desire to place myself in a situation which would enable me to make honourable provision against the various contingencies of life.

"It may readily be supposed, that the attempts which I had made in literature had been unfavourable to my success at the bar. The goddess Themis is, at Edinburgh, and I suppose everywhere else, of a peculiarly jealous disposition. She will not readily consent to share her authority, and sternly demands from her votaries, not only that real duty be carefully attended to and discharged, but that a certain air of business shall be observed even in the midst of idleness. It is prudent, if not absolutely necessary, in a young barrister, to appear completely engrossed by his profession; however destitute of employment he may be, he ought to preserve, if possible, the appearance of full occupation. He should, at least, *seem* perpetually engaged among his papers, dusting them as it were; and as Ovid advises of the fair,

‘*Si nullus erit pulvis, tamen, exente nullum.*’

"Perhaps such extremity of attention is more especially required, considering the great number of counsellors who are called to the bar, and how very small a proportion of them are finally disposed, or find encouragement, to follow the law as a profession. Hence the number of deserters is so great, that the least lingering look behind occasions a young novice to be set down as one of the intending fugitives. Certain it is that the Scottish Themis was at this time peculiarly jealous of any flirtation with the Muses, on the part of those who had ranged themselves under her banners.

"The reader will not wonder that my open interference with matters of light literature diminished my employment in the weightier matters of the law.

Nor did the solicitors, upon whose choice the counsel takes rank in his profession, do me less than justice by regarding others among my contemporaries as fitter to discharge the duty due to their clients than a young man who was taken up with running after ballads, whether Teutonic or national. My profession and I, therefore, came to stand nearly upon the footing on which honest Slender consoled himself with having established with Mrs. Anne Page, 'There was no great love between us at the beginning, and it pleased Heaven to decrease it on farther acquaintance!' I became sensible that the time was come when I must either buckle myself resolutely to 'the toil by day, the lamp by night,' renouncing all the Delilahs of my imagination, or bid adieu to the profession of the law, and hold another course.

"I confess my own inclination revolted from the more severe choice, which might have been deemed by many the wiser alternative. As my transgressions had been numerous, my repentance must have been signalised by unusual sacrifices. My father, whose feelings might have been hurt by my quitting the bar, had been two or three years dead, so that I had no control to thwart my own inclination; and my income being equal to all the comforts, and some of the elegancies of life, I was not pressed to an irksome employment by necessity, that most powerful of motives; consequently I was the more easily seduced to choose the employment which was most agreeable. This was yet the easier, that in 1800 I had obtained the preferment of Sheriff of Selkirkshire, about £300 a-year in value, and which was the more agreeable to me, as in that county I had several friends and relations. But I did not abandon the profession to which I had been educated without certain prudential resolutions, which at the risk of egotism, I will here mention, not without the hope that they may be useful to young persons who

may stand in circumstances similar to those in which I then stood.

“In the first place, upon considering the lives and fortunes of persons who had given themselves up to literature, or to the task of pleasing the public, it seemed to me that the circumstances which chiefly affected their happiness and character were those from which Horace has bestowed upon authors the epithet of the Irritable Race. It requires no depth of philosophic reflection to perceive that the petty warfare of Pops with the dunces of his period, could not have been carried on without his suffering the most acute torture, such as a man must endure from mosquitoes, by whose stings he suffers agony, although he can crush them in his grasp by myriads. Nor is it necessary to call to memory the many humiliating instances in which men of the greatest genius have, to avenge some pitiful quarrel, made themselves ridiculous during their lives, to become the still more degraded objects of pity to future times.

“Upon the whole, as I had no pretensions to the genius of the distinguished persons who had fallen into such errors, I concluded there could be no occasion for imitating them in these mistakes, or what I considered as such: and in adopting literary pursuits as the principal occupation of my future life, I resolved, if possible, to avoid those weaknesses of temper which seemed to have most easily beset my more celebrated predecessors.

“With this view, it was my first resolution to keep as far as was in my power abreast of society, continuing to maintain my place in general company without yielding to the very natural temptation of narrowing myself to what is called literary society. By doing so, I imagined I should escape the besetting sin of listening to language which from one motive or

other ascribes a very undue degree of consequence to literary pursuits, as if they were indeed the business rather than the amusement of life. The opposite course can only be compared to the injudicious conduct of one who pampers himself with cordial and luscious draughts until he is unable to endure wholesome bitters. Like Gil Blas, therefore, I resolved to stick by the society of my *commis*, instead of seeking that of a more literary cast, and to maintain my general interest in what was going on around me, reserving the man of letters for the desk and the library." A determination such as this has, we believe, seldom if ever happened in the annals of literature, and certainly must have been considered as a solecism in the world of letters.

But Scott dared to brave the reproach which then attached to a professional apostate, without the palliation of private necessity for his choice; while, at the same time, his pecuniary resources were by no means adequate for the expense of upholding that status in society, which, equally by birth, education, and natural ambition, he felt himself called upon to assume and maintain. He confesses, it is true, that he was in no small degree influenced by hopes of a more substantial kind than the chance profits of his literary labours, for adding to his income,—determined, as he says, to make literature not his crutch, but his staff. These hopes consisted in the chance of obtaining, by the interest of his friends, some one of those easy and profitable, almost sinecure offices of the law, in which many of those who fail to distinguish themselves in their profession, from want of talent or ambition, ultimately find refuge. Such expectations, however, were necessarily of a precarious nature, depending as they did for their fulfilment upon the versatile movements of the wheel of fortune, which were at that period both frequent in occurrence, and uncertain in their results.

There can be little doubt that Scott was stimulated to this determination by the consciousness of his own powers and resources; for no man, however unassuming, arrived at his age, but have the conviction of his own comparative strength or weakness unavoidably forced upon him. He adopted, at this time, another resolution. He says, "I determined that, without shutting my ears to the voice of criticism, I would pay no regard to that which assumed the form of satire. I therefore resolved to arm myself with the triple brass of Horace, against all the roving warfare of satire, parody, and sarcasm; to laugh, if the jest were a good one; or, if otherwise, to let it hum and buzz itself to sleep. It is to the observance of these rules (according to my best belief) that, after a life of thirty years engaged in literary labours of various kinds, I attribute my never having been entangled in any literary quarrel, or controversy; and, which is a more pleasing result, that I have been distinguished by the personal friendship of my most approved contemporaries of all parties."

It is well, indeed, as it is rare, when authors can adopt and keep a resolution like the above; and Scott's career certainly exhibits a most remarkable example of forbearance, moderation, and equanimity; but it may be questioned whether he did not in some instances, carry his indifference, real or affected, to an unjustifiable extent. Silence is not always that of dignity, nor endurance of injuries, that of manly toleration.

We have now arrived at the actual commencement of Scott's career as an author by profession, when he was little thinking that he was to be lighted along in his triumphant course, by the "sunshine of a world's smile,"—his sails filled to cracking with the applauding breath of nations. He was at this time thirty-two years of age; a married man with two children,

—a third, the eldest, named Walter, only lived six weeks. He had then lately removed from a house in South, to a more commodious one in North Castle-street, in which he continued to reside in while in town, up to the period of Mr. Constable's unfortunate bankruptcy in 1825. During the summer, he constantly removed to Ashiesteel, until he became the proprietor of Abbotsford. His parents were both dead; and the few surviving members of his father's family were far separated from him; so that he was arrived at that anxious period of life, when a man beholds himself becoming the centre of a new world of domestic care and affection, and feels all the responsibility attached to that condition.

The first work published by Scott, after renouncing the law, was his "Sir Tristram," a metrical romance; which, although not an original composition, yet, from the light which, by the most indefatigable research, combined with uncommon discernment and sagacity, he threw on its history, and on the obsolete language in which it was composed, together with an exquisite imitation in the shape of a conclusion to the ancient poem, is well entitled to rank amongst his poetical works. The original was written by Thomas the Rhymer, who lived in the reign of Alexander III.

In the summer of 1804, after the publication of his "Sir Tristram," Scott was at Ashiesteel, when he added another distinguished individual to his already wide circle of friends, in the person of the celebrated African traveller, Mungo Park. This acquaintance was of Scott's own making, and it is pleasing to know the cordial and affectionate familiarity which subsisted between these eminent men, and also that it arose from a strong congeniality in their tastes and habits. Park was a native of Selkirkshire, and was born at the farm-house of Fowlishiels, on the banks of the Yarrow. His father rented his farm from the Duke

of Buccleugh. Mungo, who was the seventh of a family of thirteen, was bred up to the profession of medicine and served an apprenticeship with Mr. Anderson, surgeon, Selkirk. After completing his studies at Edinburgh, where he distinguished himself by his thirst of knowledge and extraordinary assiduity, he proceeded to London in search of employment. Here, by means of a brother-in-law of his own, then merely a journeyman gardener, but who, from an origin much more obscure and humble than even Park himself, subsequently raised himself to fame and fortune as one of the first botanists in the kingdom—he was introduced to Sir Joseph Banks, through whose interest he was selected by the African Association to explore the source of the Niger. Upon his return from his perilous journey, in 1797, he married the daughter of his old master, and not long afterwards settled as a surgeon in Peebles. His adventurous mind, however, pined and fretted under the flat, stale, unprofitable, and we may add laborious routine, of a surgeon's business. In answer to the remonstrances of a friend, respecting the dangers attending another expedition, he replied, that "a few inglorious winters' practice at Peebles would tend as effectually to shorten life as any journey he could undertake." He soon threw up his practice in disgust, and retired with his wife to his paternal mansion of Fowlshiels, quite undecided in his future prospects. The remuneration which he had received from the African Association, together with the profits arising from the publication of his travels, enabled him to live comfortably. It was at this time that Scott and he became acquainted, and a constant intercourse, by an exchange of visits at each other's residences, was kept up during the short time of the traveller's stay in his native country.

Mungo Park was an enthusiastic lover of poetry, more especially the ancient minstrel lays with which his

native district was rife ; and although he made no pretensions to the laurel crown himself, he had occasionally, even from his earliest years, given expression to his thoughts and feelings in verse. It was not to be wondered at, then, that he should testify a particular predilection for the society of one whose mind and memory were so richly stored with the ancient ballad lore of his country, although his reserve towards strangers in general was carried even to a repulsive degree. Scott has somehow noticed, in particular, his friend's strong aversion to be questioned in promiscuous company, on the subject of his adventures, of which grievance, as may be imagined, he had frequent cause to complain. The intercourse of the two friends, however, was doomed to be a short one. Park soon got notice to hold himself in readiness for a second expedition to the Niger ; but this circumstance he kept profoundly secret, well knowing the remonstrances he would have to contend with from his friends and relations, with the more affecting appeals of his wife and young family, against a project which had literally engrossed his whole thoughts for years. His intention was generally suspected, however, and amongst others by Scott ; and the incident from which he drew his inference was curious enough. Happening one day to ride over to Fowlshiel on one of his usual chance visits, Scott was informed that his friend had strolled out. He accordingly alighted, and proceeded on foot up the banks of Park's native stream in hopes of meeting with him. The channel of the river is there very rocky and uneven, occasioning many deep pools and eddies ; and in rounding a corner of the bank, he suddenly came upon Park, who was engaged in a singular manner. He was standing on the brink of one of these pools, into which, he every now and then plunged a large fragment of rock, and seemed earnestly to watch the bubbles that rose to the sur-

face consequent on its submersion. After observing him for some time, Scott joined him, and asked him jocularly, what he meant by pursuing this child's play; when Park replied in an abstracted manner, that this was the plan that he had adopted for determining the depth of the rivers he had to cross in the interior of Africa, judging of their shallowness or profundity by the time which the bubbles took to rise to the surface after plunging in the stone. "From this moment," says Scott, "I had no doubt of his having a second exploratory expedition in contemplation."

The arrangements for Park's second expedition, which had been fixed on so early in 1801, were not completed until the winter of 1805, when he received notice to proceed to London. His parting interview with Scott has been described by the latter in strong and affecting terms. Park paid him a farewell visit at Ashiesteel, where he remained during the night. Next morning Scott *convoyed* him part of his way back to Fowlshiels, across the wild chain of pastoral hills that divide the vales of Tweed and Yarrow. They were both of course on horseback. Park talked much, and with great animation, of his intended expedition; stating, at the same time, his determination of departing stealthily under some pretence to Edinburgh, in order to avoid the distress of a formal parting with his wife and family. At this point of their conversation, the two friends were on the top of William-Hopridge, and the "autumnal mist, which floated slowly and heavily down the valley, presented," says Scott, "a striking emblem of the troubled and uncertain prospect of my friend's undertaking." As it was contemplated that Park should be accompanied in his expedition through the interior of Africa by a small military force, Scott seized the opportunity of strongly remonstrating against this plan, as impolitic and

dangerous,—the number of soldiers intended for the duty being, as he thought, insufficient to protect him from an assault by the natives, yet large enough to excite ill-will and suspicion. Park combated these objections of his friend, by describing the divided and disorganised condition of the various petty kingdoms he would have occasion to traverse, which rendered a combined movement against him extremely improbable; and also referred to the circumstance of guarded caravans, and travellers of all nations, being permitted to travel unmolested through these territories, upon paying a small tribute or impost. This interesting conversation occupied the two friends till they came to a part of the moor where they had previously agreed to separate, and where a narrow ditch divided the moor from the public road. In passing over the ditch, Park's horse stumbled and nearly fell under him. Scott, who remained on the other side, observed, half jocularly, half seriously, "I am afraid, Mungo, that is a bad omen;" to which Park replied, smiling, in the words of the old Scottish adage, "Freits (omens) follow them that freits follow;" and with this proverbial expression, he put spurs to his horse, as if afraid of a ceremonious farewell, and was speedily out of his friend's sight—alas! for ever.

Scott's friendship for Mungo extended itself to the rest of his family. It was a brother of the traveller who made a remark to Scott, which the latter used to relate with great glee, and which corroborates, what has been previously said about his fearless style of riding. They were one day following the chasé together, when Archibald Park, remarking the undaunted way in which Scott took (in sportman's phrase) every thing before him, observed "Od, Wattie, ye'll never halt till ye get a fa' that 'll send ye hame we' yer feet foremost!" Sir Walter replied, that when he got upon horseback

he felt himself quite changed, entering as it were, upon another sort of existence, and having no power of restraint over himself. In this confession, we may clearly discover the secret of that power of glowing description of the charge and the chase, which flowed from his pen with a force that carried away the feelings of his readers with the strength of the whirlwind!

Scott's life now becomes, with a few important exceptions, little else than the history of his numerous publications. At all events, his literary and social character become now so inseparably connected, that they must necessarily progress together through our remaining pages. The subject of our narrative has far out-grown the narrow sphere of domestic retirement, and is now with propriety claimed as a "Citizen of the World." We find our task increase in difficulty as we proceed.

CHAPTER IV.

It was in the autumn of 1804, during his residence at Ashiesteel, that Scott composed the larger portion of his great original work, but which he did not complete till the ensuing winter; we allude to the "Lay of the Last Minstrel." This beautiful poem had been the subject of reflection with him for years; and its different peculiarities appear to have been constructed after the manner of his future residence at Abbotsford. It is curious⁹ to trace the origin and growth of this admirable production—written, as we previously hinted, at the request of a lady; but the following is his own account of the matter:—

"The lovely young Countess of Dalkeith, afterwards Harriet, Duchess of Buccleugh, had come to the land of her husband, with the desire of making herself acquainted with its traditions and customs. All who remember this lady, will agree, that the intellectual character of her extreme beauty, the amenity and courtesy of her manners, the soundness of her understanding, and her unbounded benevolence, gave more the idea of an angelic visitant, than of a being belonging to this nether world; and such a thought was but too consistent with the short space she was permitted to tarry amongst us. Of course, when all made it a pride and pleasure to gratify her wishes, she soon heard enough of Border lore; amongst others, an aged gentleman of property, near Langholm, (Mr. Beattie of Mickledale,*) communicated to her ladyship the story of Gilpin Horner, a tradition in which the narrator and many more of that country firmly believed. The Countess, much delighted with the legend, and the gravity and full confidence with which it was told, enjoined it on me as a task, to compose a ballad on the subject. Of course, to hear was to obey; and thus the goblin story, objected to by several critics as an excrescence upon the poem, was, in fact, the occasion of its being written."

It was more than twelve months, however, after thus being provided with a subject, before he tried

* Mr. Beattie was a man then considerably upwards of eighty, of a shrewd and sarcastic temper, which he did not at any time endeavour to suppress, as the following anecdote will show. A worthy clergyman, with better good-will than taste, was endeavouring to push the old gentleman forward in his recollection of border ballads and legends, by expressing reiterated surprise at his wonderful memory. "No, no, sir," said old Beattie; "my memory is good for very little, for it cannot retain what ought to be preserved. I can remember these stories about gold riding days well enough, which are of no earthly importance; but were you, reverend sir, to repeat one of your very best sermons in this drawing-room, I could not tell you half an hour afterwards what you had been speaking about."

his hand on the first two or three stanzas of the "Lay." These he submitted to the judgment of two literary friends, (William Erskine and George Cranstoun) who visited him one day at his cottage at Lasswade, and for whose opinion he entertained great deference; and the result was curious enough. The character of the poetry, both as to language and ideas, was so perfectly new to them—took them so much by surprise—that they knew not what to make of it. They read and re-read—pondered, hesitated; and at last got up, took their hats, and went away without scarcely a syllable of observation. Attributing their very unusual conduct to a disgust which their friendship prevented them from expressing, Scott threw his manuscript into the fire, and digested his vexation as he best could. Not long afterwards, however, one of these gentlemen, Mr. Erskine, inquired with much interest, after the progress of the romance, confessing the inability of himself and friend to make up their minds for some time, about a production so much out of the common track, but that their ultimate decision had been most favourable. Scott informed his friend, the construction he put upon their silence and its effects; but encouraged by this information, he forthwith re-commenced his task with pleasure, and the public was put in possession of that noble monument of his genius.

The "Lay of the Last Minstrel" is so generally well known that we deem it unnecessary to introduce any specimens of it here; but as the tradition, upon which it is founded, must be strange to the most of our readers, we will give it a place. Two men were *tethering* (fastening) their horses, late one evening, upon their outfield pasture for the night, when they heard a voice, at some distance, crying, "*tint, tint, tint*" (lost), when one of them, named Moffat, called out, "What deil's tint you? come here." Upon

which a creature appeared with something like a human form, but surprisingly little, distorted in features, and misshapen in limbs. The two men instantly took to their heels homewards, but the goblin followed them, and Moffat having fallen by the way, it ran over him, and upon getting to his house it was already there. It abode with the family a long time; was undoubtedly flesh and blood; ate and drank with the rest; and was particularly fond of cream, which it stole on every opportunity. It was besides, very mischievous in disposition, and beat and scratched the children who provoked it without mercy. But that it was not entirely destitute of feeling of a certain description, is evident from the following incident:—One of the children having struck it such a blow on the side of the head that it tumbled over, it immediately started up again, however, exclaiming, "Aha, Will o' Moffat, but you strike sair!" It was often heard calling on some one named Peter Bertram, who—whether man, warlock, or devil—appears to have been its master, from the circumstances attending its disappearance. Whilst playing with the children one evening, a loud shrill voice was heard to call out three times, "Gilpin Horner!" Starting up, it exclaimed, "That is me, I must away," observing, at the same time that it was the voice of Peter Bertram that called for him. It accordingly disappeared, and they saw it no more.

The Lay was published in quarto, at the price of £1 5s., by Longman and Company of London, and Archibald Constable and Company of Edinburgh. "The work, brought out on the usual terms of division of profits between the author and publishers, was not long after purchased by them for £500, to which Messrs. Longman and Company afterwards added £100, in their own unsolicited kindness, in consequence of the uncommon success of the work. It was handsomely given to supply the loss of a fine

horse which broke down suddenly while the author was riding with one of the worthy publishers." The gentleman here alluded to was Mr. Rees: such an incident, thus acknowledged, is honourable to all parties.

The success of this poem was, we believe, without precedent. Every tongue was loud in its praise; and the sentiment of applause was mingled with that of wonder. The "Lay" went through six editions in two years, and Scott informs us (1830) that upwards of thirty thousand copies of the poem were sold by the trade; and in stating this, he observes, "that he had to perform a task difficult to human vanity, when called upon to make the necessary deductions from his own merits in a calm attempt to account for its popularity." That he expected considerable success he freely confesses, but the result far surpassed even his most extravagant expectations. His genius attracted the attention of those in high places—even of royalty itself; and the consequences to his future fortunes were as effectually and permanently beneficial, as gratifying in the manner in which they came.

We have previously stated that hopes had been held out to Scott of his obtaining some one of the easy and lucrative situations connected with the Court of Session, and in 1805, the prospect of an appointment of this nature opened upon him. Mr. George Home, one of the Principal Clerks of Session, after holding his office upwards of thirty years, about this time found it necessary, in consequence of advanced age and infirmity to retire, and Scott had already secured by his own merit, not only the favourable notice of Royalty itself, but of those by whom royalty is generally guided in the distribution of public favours. Mr. Pitt was then at the helm of the state, and his admiration of the "Lay of the Last Minstrel" was such as to lead him to express a

wish to Scott's personal friend, the Right Hon. William Dundas, that he would point out the first opportunity wherein he could serve the author. Thus the appointment now sought was secured to him beforehand. It was not to be immediately profitable to him, however, for "as the law then stood," says Scott, "such official persons were entitled to bargain with their successors, either for a sum of money, which was usually a considerable one, or for an interest in the emoluments of the situation during their life. My predecessor whose services had been unusually meritorious, stipulated for the emoluments of the office during his life, while I should enjoy the survivorship, on the condition that I discharged the duties in the meantime." Upon this understanding the commission was made out, and signed by George III. All was thus completed with the exception of the payment of the fees, and Scott who had proceeded to London, was in daily expectation of receiving his commission, when the nation was stunned to the centre by the sudden death of the illustrious Pitt, which took place on the 23rd of January, 1806. The Fox and Grenville administration succeeded, and being on the other side of politics, Scott found it necessary to make interest with the new ministry for the passing of his grant. Fox, who, no less than his political rival, was an admirer of Scott's genius, and at once acceded to the request. But Scott, upon looking into the document, found that by some mistake or other, Mr. Home's interest had been entirely omitted in it, by which, had he died before him, the old gentleman would have lost the emolument, which it had been stipulated he should retain; he therefore declined accepting it in such a state, and applied to have it made out afresh in proper terms. This was immediately complied with and the grant was made out

accordingly, whereby Scott's interest was placed beyond all danger of mistake.

Fox shewed every inclination to cultivate the friendship of Scott, and even invited him to his residence. The unhappy state of the political world at that time prevented Scott from answering such flattering overtures in the manner his inclinations doubtless prompted him to do, as he was afraid of being accounted an apostate to the political opinions he had always professed. He never saw Fox in his life; and though differing in politics he admired his talents, as is sufficiently evinced in his introduction to *Marmion*. * Fox followed his great rival to the grave in the short space of eight months, and Scott pays the most splendid tribute to the merits of both that ever was poured out over the bier of departed greatness. We are sorry that our limited space prohibits us from transcribing this splendid and affecting effusion; but we cannot refrain from presenting to our readers the following lines, which besides being replete with the noblest feeling and generous sentiment, contain a figure which is perfectly unique in the annals of poetry :

"Genius, and Taste, and Talent gone,
For ever tumbled beneath the stone,
Where—taming thought to human pride!
The mighty chiefs sleep side by side.
Drop upon Fox's grave a tear
'Twill trickle to his rival's bier;
O'er Pitt's the mournful requiem sound
And Fox's shall the notes rebound.
The solemn echo seems to cry,
'Here let their discord with them die;
Speak not for those a separate doom,
Whom Fate made brothers in the tomb,
But search the land of living men,
Where wilt thou find their like again?"

The poet concludes his lofty monody o'er the twin-ashes of Genius departed with the following beautiful

expression of gratitude for their mutual kindness to himself:

Rest, aërial spirits! till the cries
Of dying nature bid you rise;
Not even your Britains' groans can pierce
The leaden silence of your hearse:
Then, oh! how impotent and vain
This grateful tributary strain,
Though not unmark'd from northern climes,
Ye heard the Border Minstrel's rhymes:
His Gothic harp has o'er you rung

The Bard you deigned to praise your deathless name has sung.

We may as well mention here, that nearly six years passed before Scott began to enjoy the emoluments whilst discharging the duties of his appointment as Principal Clerk of Session, when a retiring annuity to superannuate officers was substituted for the disgraceful system of allowing them to dispose of those places by private traffic. Upon this new arrangement Mr. Home surrendered up all interest in his former office to his successor who was shortly admitted to the full benefits of his situation. The emoluments belonging to this office amount, we believe, to somewhere about £1500 a-year.

This appointment was fortunate for Scott; and it may be regarded as no less so for the world; as there is every probability that had not the above, or some similar situation opened up to him, that however much attached to the Muses, he would have uncereemoniously bid them good-bye, and buckled himself resolutely to the toil by day, and lamp by night of his profession, as his income was found inadequate to support his style of liberal hospitality both in his town and country residences; besides he had a young family rising around him whose future provision must be cared for. His moral courage was fully adequate to the sacrifice; and although his talents as a lawyer may not have been of the first order, yet the host of

influential friends who were now banded around him were sufficient to assure him of adding several hundreds more to his annual income. His distrust of the stability of popularity seems indeed to have been a sort of active principle within him throughout life, although as he confesses he experienced little of the fickleness of it in his own person. We are induced to lay before our readers the following letter, as a specimen of his jealous caution in this respect, and as affording an unanswerable contradiction to the oft repeated calumny of his being indifferent to, if not jealous of, the merits of young authors. The letter is addressed to a gentleman who had sent him a newly published poem, with an intimation of his intention of abandoning the service of the muses :—

“From the opinion which I have been enabled to form of the piece, after a hasty revisal, I think you are rash in renouncing the pursuit of letters, although I would by no means recommend that you should sacrifice to that pursuit the time which must necessarily be employed in the graver and duller studies which lead to an honourable independence. Literature, undertaken as a means of living, is very apt to degrade its professors; but when it comes in aid of those whose livelihood is independent of success with the public, it always exalts their character, and very often adds materially to their fortunes. I hope therefore you will use your taste for poetry as a staff on which to lean occasionally, but not as a crutch to trust to for constant support. Let your studies therefore relieve your labours in the weightier matters of the law, and you will find that your chance of attracting the public attention, when you again make such an effort, will be greater, the less you appear to need it: and if the caprice of the public should pass over your merit without notice, you will have the consoling reflection that they may withdraw praise, but cannot affect your independence.

"Perhaps I should have said more of —— (the piece) and less of the author, but I have arrived at that age when the young poet is more interesting to me than the poem, though I think the latter very respectable as a display of immature talent.—I am, Sir, with regard, your obliged servant,

WALTER SCOTT."

Is not this letter, written to an entire stranger dictated in the true spirit of friendship? We could point out innumerable similar instances, but our doing so in the spirit of vindication would be equivalent to an insult to the memory of the illustrious dead. Scott's modest justification of himself could be echoed by many grateful hearts. He says, 1830, "Let me add, that my reign, (since Byron has so called it) was marked by some instances of good nature as well as patience. I never refused a literary person of merit such services in smoothing his way to the public, as were in my power; and I had the advantage, rather an uncommon one with our irritable race, to enjoy general favour, without incurring permanent ill-will, so far as is known to me, among any of my contemporaries."

Scott had no sooner secured a comfortable independence for his old age, than he turned his thoughts to composition with a greater zest than ever. As a sort of interlude he collected his minor poems and ballads, and published them, in 1806, in a small volume. The booksellers, to whom popularity is at all times a more welcome commodity than unknown merit, now opened upon the scent of the young author's rising fame, and in the same year actually brought out a fine paper edition of his whole poems in five volumes. The success of this adventure was considerable, owing, no doubt, to the popularity of the "Lay."

The next production of Scott's muse was "Max-

mion," which was welcomed more warmly than its predecessor. It consists of six cantos, each canto being introduced by a familiar epistle to some friend. Criticism had not been altogether thrown away upon him; and he resolved to bestow more pains upon his future productions; and accordingly, particular passages of *Marmion* were, as he states, "laboured with a good deal of care by one by whom much care was seldom bestowed." But the publication of the poem was prematurely hastened by a casualty which, if it detracted anything from the credit of his fancy, served to reflect honour on the warmth of his heart. He thus alludes to the unfortunate circumstance.

"The misfortunes of a near relation and friend, which happened at this time, led me to alter my prudent determination, which had been to use great precaution in sending this poem into the world; and made it convenient at least, if not absolutely necessary, to hasten its publication. The publishers of the '*Lay of the Last Minstrel*,' emboldened by the success of that poem, willingly offered a thousand pounds for '*Marmion*.' The transaction being no secret, afforded Lord Byron, who was then at general war with all who blacked paper, an opportunity to include me in his satire, entitled '*English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*.' I never could conceive how an arrangement, between an author and his publishers, if satisfactory to the persons concerned, could afford matter of censure to any third party. I had taken no unusual or ungenerous means of enhancing the value of my merchandise. I had never higgled a moment about the bargain, but accepted at once what I considered the handsome offer of my publishers. These gentlemen, at least, were not of opinion that they had been taken advantage of in the transaction, which, indeed, was one of their own framing: on the contrary, the sale of the poem was so far beyond their expectation, as to induce them to supply the

author's cellars with what is always an acceptable present to a young Scotch housekeeper, namely, a hogshead of excellent claret.

"The poem was finished in too much haste to allow me an opportunity of softening down, if not removing, some of its most prominent defects. The nature of Marmion's guilt, although similar instances were found, and might be quoted as existing in feudal times, was, nevertheless, not sufficiently peculiar to be indicative of the character of the period, forgery being the crime of a commercial, rather than a proud and warlike age. This gross defect ought to have been remedied or palliated. Yet I suffered the tree to lie as it had fallen. I have always been of opinion, that corrections, however necessary, have a bad effect after publication. An author is never so decidedly condemned as on his own confession, and may long find apologists and partizans, until he gives up his own cause. I was not, therefore, inclined to afford matter for censure out of my own admissions; and by good fortune, the novelty of the subject, and, if I may say so, some force and vivacity of description, were allowed to atone for many imperfections. Thus the second experiment on the public, generally the most perilous, was, in my case, decidedly successful."

The Edinburgh Review, then in the hey-day of its power, could not permit a victim so worthy of its lash to escape scatheless. Mr. Jeffrey, by whom the work was reviewed, appears to have conceived no little spite at the poet, on account of his persevering in some peculiarities of composition, which the critic had thought proper to censure in the "Lay." The lash, accordingly, descended with an energy proportionate to the offence offered to so high a judicature, but luckily not beyond the victim's powers of endurance. And such was the effrontery of Jeffrey, that after the article was in types, he carried the

proof-sheet in his pocket to Scott's house ; and after sitting down to dinner with his friend, laid the review before him. Scott glanced over the sheets, nodding his head now and then good-humouredly, and saying, "Very well—very well," when Mrs. Scott, whom the courteous manner of her husband had not deceived, snatched them from his hand as he was returning them to the critic ; and after running over the article, exclaimed with a glowing face as she threw it from her, "I wonder at the hardihood which penned such a criticism, and more at the boldness of bringing it to this table." The critic, it may be believed, had little wish to provoke further comment. We have read somewhere, that modesty was never the besetting sin of a Scottish critic ; and, after this specimen of Mr. Jeffrey's daring, who can doubt it ?

But the public were not to be whipped out of their admiration, even by the flippancy of the Edinburgh Reviewers, and *Marmion* rose at once into greater popularity than even his previous poem. The author says in 1830, "The return of sales before me, makes the copies amount to thirty-six thousand, between 1805 and 1825, besides a considerable sale since that period."

One grand complaint of Jeffrey's is, "the neglect of Scottish feelings and Scottish characters" in *Marmion*. In answer to this charge we would refer our reader to the description of the battle of Flodden Field, which seems to be universally acknowledged as the most completely soul-engrossing of any similar scene that occurs either in ancient or modern song. Allan Cunningham, who is no mean authority, says, "The whirlwind of action, and the varied vicissitudes of a heady and desperate fight, are there—yet not one word is said inconsistent with history ; he has imposed his own ideal scene upon us for the reality of truth. From the moment that Surrey passes the river, till the close of the catastrophe, the

reader has no command over himself, but is hurried here and there at the will of the enchanter. He charges with Home and with Gordon; snatches with fiery Blount the banner of Marmion from the ground; aids Fitz-Eustace in bearing his wounded lord from the press of Scottish spears; charges with Stanley; changes sides, and, spear in hand, makes good the desperate ring which protected the wounded king of Scotland. There is a spell upon the reader. Every character and scene is invested with something so natural and national, so original and so peculiar, while the whole is emblazoned with Scotland—Scotland; the rough bearded thistle and the warning Latin legend represent her no better."

Mr. Chambers informs us of Scott's art of depicting battles in the following anecdote. Whilst sitting to Mr. Watson Gordon for his picture, not long before the close of his life, he was shewn a small painting by that artist representing a battle. "This is not the thing at all," said Scott, in reference to the clearness and multitude of the figures: "when you want to paint a battle, you should, in the first place get up a *gude stour* (cloud of dust); then just put in an arm and a sword here and there, and leave all the rest to the spectators."

"Flodden Field" after the lapse of centuries became an object of general interest, upon the publication of Marmion, and crowds of tourists flocked to the site of that fatal combat, to listen in imagination for the renewed thundering of the mortal strife. A curious anecdote, connected with this awakened enthusiasm in the public mind towards that memorable spot, is related by Scott. "When Marmion came out, it made a considerable noise, and had its day, no doubt; and many people went to see Flodden Field; so that an honest fellow thought it would be a good speculation to set up a public-house on the spot, for the accommodation of visitors: and he sent

to me, asking me to write a few lines for a sign he was going to erect, thinking, as his letter told me, that any thing from me would have a good effect. I sent him back word that I was at present a good deal occupied; but begged to suggest, as a next best, a quotation from the book which had occasioned his undertaking, which I remarked, would do very well, with a slight alteration, taking out the letter r—

“ Drink, weary pilgrim, drink, and p(r)ay.”

It will be remembered that Scott mentioned Lord Byron having included him in his satire. But Byron's affected attempt of Scott's mercenary dealings was only a pretence. It was Scott's well known intimacy with Jeffrey, Brougham, and the other champions of the Edinburgh Review, and not his concerns with his publishers, which procured him the distinction of the noble minor's invective. The occasion of Byron's quarrel with the Edinburgh critics is already so well known, that it is only on account of Scott's acquaintance with Byron that we will glance at him here with as much consecutiveness as possible.

While Byron was residing at the University of Cambridge, and when scarcely twenty years of age, he published a volume of poems, entitled “Hours of Idleness.” Of these effusions it is unnecessary to say more than that while they exhibited proofs of no mean poetic talent, there was none of that extravagant pretence, either in language or sentiment which renders the aspirant a fair object of reproof and correction. Unfortunately, he published the volume as being the production of “A Minor;” which seems almost to have been the only motive for a most merciless stricture on his effusions, that shortly afterwards appeared in the Edinburgh Review. We are unwilling to dwell on this criticism, in which, as Scott said in speaking of it afterwards, the writer yielded

to that sin which most readily besets our fraternity, the temptation, namely, of shewing our own wit and entertaining our readers with a lively article, without much respect to the feelings of the author, or even to indications of merit which the work may exhibit." The review was read and raised mirth; the poems were neglected; and the critic had the consolation of thinking that he had fairly annihilated the hopes and ambition of a *titled* author.

If he did think so he had never made a greater miscalculation; for never did a retaliation so severe and unexpected fall from the pen of one of the "irritable race." The effect of the criticism upon him was fearful; his pride had been wounded, and his ambition humbled; but this feeling of humiliation lasted but a short time; he was roused to a full consciousness of his own powers, and the pain and shame of the injury was forgotten in the certainty of revenge.

In the satire which Byron published in retaliation, he did not confine his spleen to the writer of the remarks which had so fearfully stirred his gall.—Almost every author or critic of the period felt the severity of his lash. But it was upon the devoted heads of the Edinburgh Reviewers that the tempest of his wrath expended its greatest fury; and his lines upon the editor himself afford the richest specimens of bitter sarcasm penned in modern times. But it is only in so far as the subject of our narrative is concerned that we have to do. What Byron's motives were for attacking Scott we are at a loss to conceive, unless it be that he suspected him of a connivance with the obnoxious criticism. As these two illustrious men are now no more, and full and satisfactory explanation was exchanged betwixt them on the subject during their lives, we do not think ourselves guilty of injustice to the memory of either, in here quoting a few of the angry lines. After

ridiculing the principal characters in Scott's two larger poems, the noble bard continues :—

“And think'st thou, Scott! in vain conceit perchance,
On public taste to foist thy stale romance,
Though Murray with his Miller may combine
To yield thy muse just half-a-crown a line?
No! when the sons of song begin to trade,
Their bays are near, their former laurels fade.
Let such forego the poet's sacred name,
Who rack their brains for lucre, not for fame:
Low may they sink to merited contempt,
And scorn remunerate the mean attempt!
Such be their meed; such still the just reward
Of prostituted muse and hireling bard!
For this we spurn Apollo's venal son,
And bid a long 'good night' to Marmion!”

The following lines, however, which occur near the conclusion, shew that the noble author was capable of appreciating the great powers of his brother poet, and even in the whirlwind of his passion was candid enough to acknowledge them. After re-enumerating, in the language of derision or reproach, the names of all the great poets then before the public, as men from whose pens it was in vain to expect anything worthy of the muse, he returns to Scott in the following mingled strain of eulogy and reproach :—

“But thou, with powers that mock the aid of praise,
Should'st leave to humbler bards ignoble lays.
Thy country's voice, the voice of all the Nine,
Demand a hallow'd harp, that harp is thine.
Say, will not Caledonia's annals yield
The glorious records of some nobler field
Than the vile foray of a murdering clan,
Whose proudest deeds disgrace the name of man?
Or Marmion's acts of darkness, fitter food
For outlaw'd Sherwood's tales of Robin Hood?
Scotland! still proudly claim thy native bard,
And be thy praise his first, his best reward!
Yet not with thee alone his name should live,
But own the vast renown a world can give;

Be known, perchance, when Albion is no more,
And tell the tale of what she was before ;
To future times her faded fame recall,
And save her glory, though his country fall !"

The appearance of the "English Bards and Scotch Reviewers" created what might be termed a sensation in the literary world. The evidence of such vigour of intellect and power of language, despite its personalities, caused it to be considered as the production of a surprising genius, the more surprising from the youth of the author who was then in his twenty-first year. The insolent scorn of the critic was fairly turned against himself in the estimation of the public ; whilst he derived little sympathy from those whom his ill-judged criticism had drawn in to be partakers of his castigation. Although this production was the first stepping-stone to Byron's literary eminence, we have ample evidence of the deep regret it afterwards caused himself ; for, notwithstanding the impetuousness of his passions, there never was a human being more free from everything akin to vindictiveness or malevolence than the unhappy poet ; and severely as his errors have been judged by the world, he still found the most unrelenting censor in his own bosom.

It was not, however, till 1812, after Lord Byron's return from abroad, that any direct intercourse took place betwixt him and Scott, and the account given by the latter of the abridged and interrupted term of their correspondence, is so redolent of amiable feeling, that we will give it in his own words ; merely premising that it is as it was communicated to Mr. Moore, who was engaged in the compilation of the *Life of Byron*.

After alluding to the criticism on Byron's poems in the *Edinburgh Review*, and stating that he had at the time remonstrated with the editor against its admission, he adverts in gentle terms to Byron's

unjustifiable out-pouring of bile upon himself; speaks of it merely as a scourging which he had suffered with his betters; and that Byron in the other passages paid him so much more praise than he deserved, that he must have been ridiculously ill-natured not to sit down contented. He then goes on to say:—

“I was very much struck, with all the rest of the world, at the vigour and force of imagination displayed in the first cantos of *Childe Harold*, and the other splendid productions which Lord Byron flung from him to the public, with a promptitude that savoured of profusion. My own popularity as a poet was then on the wane, and I was unaffectedly pleased to see an author of so much power and energy take the field. Mr. John Murray happened to be in Scotland that season, and as I mentioned to him the pleasure I should have in making Lord Byron's acquaintance, he had the kindness to mention my wish to his lordship, which led to some correspondence.”

It does not appear from Scott's statement with whom the correspondence originated; but from the introductory sentence of the following letter, we are inclined to think that it was with Scott himself. This epistle demands a prominent place in our pages.

“St. James's Street, July 6, 1812.

“Sir,—I have just been honoured with your letter. I feel sorry that you should have thought it worth while to notice the evil works of my nonage, as the thing is suppressed *voluntarily*, and your explanation is too kind not to give me pain. The satire was written when I was very young and very angry, and fully bent on displaying my wrath and wit, and now I am haunted by the ghosts of my wholesale assertions. I cannot sufficiently thank you for your praise; and now, waiving myself, let me talk to you of the Prince Regent. He ordered

me to be presented to him at the ball; and after some sayings peculiarly pleasing from Royal lips, as to my own attempts, he talked to me of you and your immortalities; he preferred you to every bard past or present, and asked which of your works pleased me most. It was a difficult question. I answered I thought the 'Lay.' He said his own opinion was nearly similar. In speaking of the others, I told him that I thought you more particularly the poet of *Princes*, as *they* never appeared more fascinating than in 'Marmion,' and the 'Lady of the Lake.' He was pleased to coincide and to dwell on the characters of your Jameses, as no less royal than poetical. He spoke alternately of Homer and yourself, and seemed well acquainted with you both; so that, with the exception of the Turks and your humble servant, you were in very good company. I defy Murray to have exaggerated his Royal Highness's opinion of your powers, nor can I pretend to enumerate all he said on the subject; but it may give you pleasure to hear that it was conveyed in language which would only suffer by my attempting to describe it, and with a tone and taste which gave me a very high idea of his abilities and accomplishments, which I had hitherto considered as confined to *manners*, certainly superior to those of any living gentleman.

"This interview was accidental; I never went to the levee; for having seen the courts of Mussulman and Catholic sovereigns, my curiosity was sufficiently allayed, and my politics being as perverse as my rhymes, I had no business there. To be thus praised by your sovereign, must be gratifying to you; and if that gratification is not allayed by the communication being made through me, the bearer of it will consider himself very fortunately and sincerely your obliged and obedient servant,

"BYRON."

Scott's narrative proceeds :—"It was the spring of 1815, that, chancing to be in London, I had the advantage of a personal introduction to Lord Byron. Report had prepared me to meet a man of peculiar habits and a quick temper, and I had my doubts whether we were likely to suit each other in society. I was most agreeably disappointed in this respect. I found Byron in the highest degree courteous, and even kind. We met for an hour or two, almost daily, in Mr. Murray's drawing-room, and found a good deal to say to each other. We also met frequently in parties and evening society, so that for about two months I had the advantage of considerable intimacy with this individual. Our sentiments agreed a good deal, except upon the subjects of religion and politics, upon neither of which I was inclined to believe that Lord Byron entertained very fixed opinions. I remember saying to him that if he lived a few years, he would alter his sentiments. He answered, rather sharply, 'I suppose you are one of those who prophesy I will turn Methodist?' I replied, 'No,—I don't expect your conversion to be of such an ordinary kind. I would rather wish to see you retreat upon the Catholic faith, and distinguish yourself by the austerity of your penances. The species of religion to which you must, or may, one day attach yourself, must exercise a strong power on the imagination.' He smiled gravely, and seemed to allow I might be right.

"On politics he sometimes used to express a high strain of what is now called 'liberalism;' but it appeared to me that the pleasure it afforded him as a vehicle of displaying his wit and satire against individuals in office, was at the bottom of this habit of thinking, rather than any real conviction of the principles on which he talked. He was certainly proud of his rank and ancient family; and, in that respect, as much an aristocrat as was consistent with

good sense and good breeding. Some disgusts, how adopted, I know not, seemed to me to have given this peculiar, and as it appeared to me, contradictory cast of mind; but at heart, I would have termed Byron a patrician on principle.

"Lord Byron's reading did not seem to me to be very extensive, either in poetry or history. Having the advantage of him in that respect, and possessing a good competent share of such reading as is little read, I was sometimes able to put under his eye objects which had for him the interest of novelty. I remember, particularly, repeating to him the fine poem of *Hardknute*, an imitation of the old Scottish ballad, with which he was so much affected, that some one in the apartment asked me what I could possibly have been telling Byron, by which he was so much agitated.

"I saw Byron for the last time, in 1815, after I returned from France. He dined or lunched with me at Long's, in Bond Street. I never saw him so full of gaiety and good humour, to which the presence of Mr. Mathews, the comedian, added not a little. Poor Terry was also present. After one of the gayest parties I was ever present at, my fellow-traveller, Mr. Scott of Gala, and I set off for Scotland, and I never saw Lord Byron again. Several letters passed between us—one perhaps every half year. Like the old heroes in Homer, we exchanged gifts. I gave Byron a beautiful dagger, mounted with gold, which had been the property of the redoubted Elfin Bey. But I was to play the part of Diomed in the *Iliad*, for Byron sent me, some time after, a large sepulchral vase of silver. It was full of dead men's bones, and had inscriptions on two sides of the vase. One ran thus:—'The bones contained in this urn were found in certain ancient sepulchres within the land wall of Athens, in the month of February, 1811.'—The other face bears two

lines of Juvenal. To these I added a third inscription in these words:—'The gift of Lord Byron to Walter Scott.' There was a letter in this vase, more valuable than the gift itself, from the kindness with which the donor expressed himself towards me, I left it naturally in the urn with the bones, but it is now missing. As the theft was not of a nature to be practised by a mere domestic, I am compelled to suspect the inhospitality of some individual of higher station,—most gratuitously exercised certainly, since after what I have said, no one will probably choose to boast of possessing this literary curiosity.

"I met him very frequently in society; our mutual acquaintances doing me the honour to think that he liked to meet with me. I was considerably older, you will recollect, than my noble friend, and had no reason to fear his misconstruing my sentiments towards him; nor had I ever the slightest reason to doubt that they were kindly returned on his part. If I had occasion to be mortified by the display of genius which threw into the shade such pretensions as I was then supposed to possess, I might console myself, that in my own case, the materials of mutual happiness had been mingled in a greater proportion."

The friendship of the two poets, after the above period, suffered no interruption save from the distance which divided them. That they mutually and unaffectedly regarded each other as the greatest poet of the day, is evident. Upon the publication of the third Canto of "*Childe Harold*," in 1816, it was criticised in the *Quarterly Review*, in an article, which, along with an animated exposition of the many beauties of that admirable poem, contains an analysis of the mental structure and habits of thinking peculiar to the noble poet. The tone of the latter, besides being remarkable for its depth of philosophic acuteness, is dictated in the kindest

spirit of Christian philanthropy. Aware that he is dealing with no common mind, that can be laughed or lectured out of its fitful moods, the writer in adverting to the unhappy and misanthropic hue of the poet's thoughts, endeavoured by strong argument and gentle reproof, to awaken him to a sense of the unmanliness, the criminality of cherishing such continual remembrance of his own miseries—such derogatory sentiments of human nature—such scepticism concerning the existence of worth and friendship, as are expressed throughout his poetry; and the morbid delight which he seemed to take in maintaining an impassable gulf, as it were betwixt himself and society. The arguments brought to bear on the subject, are in the highest strain of Christian morality. "It is not the temper and talents of the poet," says the writer; "but the use to which he puts them, on which his happiness or misery is grounded. A powerful and unbridled imagination is the author and architect of its own disappointments. Its fascinations, its exaggerated pictures of good and evil, and the mental distress to which they give rise, are the natural and necessary evils attending on that quick susceptibility of temper and fancy, necessary to the poetic temperament. But the Giver of all talents, while he has qualified them each with its separate and peculiar alloy, has endowed the owner with the power of purifying and refining them. As if to moderate the arrogance of genius, it is justly and wisely made requisite, that the conscious possessor must regulate and tame the fire of his fancy, and descend from the heights to which she exalts him, in order to obtain ease and tranquillity. The materials of happiness, that is, of such degree of happiness as is consistent in our present state, lie around us in profusion, but so low that the man of genius must stoop to gather them; and it is just they should, other-

wise they would be beyond the reach of the mass of society, for whose benefit, as well as for his, Providence has created them. There is no royal and no poetical path to contentment and heart's ease; that by which they are attained is open to all classes of mankind, and lies within the most limited range of intellect. To narrow our wishes and desires within the scope of our powers of attainment; to consider our misfortunes, however peculiar in their character, as our inevitable share in the patrimony of Adam; to bridle those irritable feelings, which, ungoverned, are sure to become governors; to shun that intensity of galling and self-wounding reflection which our poet has forcibly described in his own burning language; to stoop, in short, to the realities of life—repent if we have offended, and pardon if we have been trespassed against—to look on the world less as our foe than as a doubtful and capricious friend—whose applause we ought, as far as possible, to deserve, but neither to court nor contemn;—such seem the most obvious and certain means of keeping or regaining certain tranquillity." The writer then conjures the moody bard to combat his own irritated feelings; to submit to "that discipline of the soul enjoined by religion and recommended by philosophy," as the only means of attaining the full and healthy use of his splendid faculties; and to believe that those who rejoiced in his sufferings bore but a small proportion to those who eagerly longed to see him reconciled to himself and the world.

Byron must have felt the full force of the friendly counsel and remonstrance contained in this comment, so unusual to what is generally admitted into the pages of criticism. It was more than eleven years after the publication of the above article, ere it was generally known that Scott was the writer, and the secret was then only forced from him by the necessity of vindicating himself from a malignant accusation of having

delayed in any way to acknowledge the supremacy of Byron's genius, until the grave was closed on him. Whether Byron ever knew who was the author of the friendly criticism, we have no means of ascertaining, but that he cherished a warm feeling of regard for Scott, we have abundant proofs. In the tenth canto of *Don Juan*, a poem which Scott held to display more versatility of genius than any other production since the days of Shakespeare, he records his partiality for his friend, in one of his capricious episodes, part of which we will extract, as it also includes honourable mention of another name, much more obnoxious to him at one time than any other in the literary world, together with a generous acknowledgement of his regret for his youthful ebullition of spleen :—

Old enemies who have become new friends
Should so continue—'tis a point of honour,
And I know nothing which could make amends
For a return to hatred; I would shun her
Like garlic, however she extends
Her hundred arms and legs, and fair outrun her.
Old flames, new wives, become our bitterest foes—
Converted foes should scorn to join with those.

The lawyer and the critic but behold
The baser sides of literature and life,
And nought remains unseen, but much untold,
By those who scour those double vales of strife.
While common men grow ignorantly old.
The lawyer's brief is like the surgeon's knife.
Dissecting the whole inside of a question
And with it all the process of digestion.

A legal broom's* a moral chimney sweeper,—
And that's the reason he himself's so dirty;
The endless soot bestows a tint far deeper
Than can be hid by altering his shirt, he
Retains the sable stains of the dark creeper,
At least some twenty-nine do out of thirty,

* Did the poet by this figure mean to indicate his suspicion as to the author of the attack on his juvenile poems really was— Mr. Brougham, now Lord Brougham, was generally understood to be the author.

In all their habits, not so jew, I own,
As Cæsar wore his robe, so you wear your gown.

And all our little feuds, at least all mine,
Dear Jeffrey, once my most redoubted foe
(As far as rhyme and criticism combine
To make such puppets of us things below,)
Are over; here's a health to Auld Lang Syne.
I do not know you, and may never know
Your face—but you have acted on the whole
Most nobly, and I own it from my soul.

And when I use the phrase of Auld Lang Syne
'Tis not address'd to you, the more's the pity
For me, for I would rather take my wine
With you than aught (save Scott) in your proud city.
But somehow—it may seem a schoolboy's whine
And yet I seek not to be grand or witty,
But I am half a Scot by birth, and bred
A whole one, and my heart flies to my head.

And though, as you remember, in a fit
Of wrath and rhyme, when juvenile and curly
I railed at Scots to shew my wrath and wit,
Which, must be owned, was sensitive and surly,
Yet, 'tis in vain such sallies to permit,
They cannot quench young feelings, fresh and early;
I scotch'd, not kill'd, the Scotchman in my blood,
And love the land of mountain and of flood.

We must now retrograde, and take up the subject of our narrative, after the publication of *Marmion*. In the course of a few weeks after that, and when its popularity was at its height, the literary world was astounded with a fresh proof of the author's prolific and versatile talents, by the appearance of the "Works of John Dryden, now first collected in eighteen volumes. Illustrated with Notes, Historical, Critical, and Explanatory; and a Life of the Author, by Walter Scott, Esq." The work was published by Mr. Miller, of London, price £9 9s.

In the year succeeding, that is in 1809, there appeared the "State Papers and Letters of Sir Ralph Sadder," with a memoir of his life, and historical notes, in two quarto volumes. This publication was

the joint production of Arthur Clifford, Esq., and Scott. The part contributed by the latter were the memoir and notes.

"The Lady of the Lake" is the next great effort of Scott's muse that comes under our notice. It was published early in 1810; but we will allow him to introduce his own production. He says in his introduction:—

"The poems of Ossian had, by their popularity, sufficiently shewn, that if writings on Highland subjects were qualified to interest the reader, more national prejudices were, in the present day, very unlikely to interfere with their success.* I had also read a great deal, and heard more, concerning that romantic country, where I was in the habit of spending some time every autumn; and the scenery of Loch Katrine was connected with the recollection of many a dear friend, and merry expedition of former days. This poem, the action of which lay among scenes so beautiful, and so deeply imprinted on my recollection, was a labour of love; and it was no less so to recal the manners and incidents introduced.

"I may now confess, however, that the employment, though attended with great pleasure, was not without its doubts and anxieties. A lady to whom I was near related, and with whom I lived, during her whole life, on the most brotherly terms of affection, was residing with me at the time the work was in progress, and used to ask me what I could possibly do to rise so early in the morning. At last I told her the subject of my meditations; and I can never forget the anxiety and affection expressed in her reply. 'Do not be so rash, my dearest cousin,' she said, 'You are already popular—more so, perhaps, than you yourself will believe, or than even I, or other partial friends, can fairly allow you to merit. You stand high—do not rashly attempt to

climb higher, and incur the risk of a fall; for, depend upon it, a favourite will not even be permitted to stumble with impunity.' I replied to this affectionate expostulation in the words of Montrose,—

' He either fears his fate too much,
Or his deserts are small,
Who dares not put it to the touch,
To gain or lose it all.'

' If I fail,' I said, for the dialogue is strong in my recollection, ' It is a sign that I ought never to have succeeded, and I will write prose for life; you shall see no change in my temper, nor will I eat a single meal the worse. But if I succeed,—

' Up with the bonnie blue bonnet,
The dirk, and the feather, and a' !'

" Afterwards, I showed my affectionate and anxious critic the first canto of my poem, which reconciled her to my imprudence.

" I remember, that about the same time, a friend started in to ' heeze up my hope,' like the minstrel in the old song. He was bred a farmer, but a man of powerful understanding, natural good taste, and warm poetical feeling, perfectly competent to supply the wants of an imperfect or irregular education. He was a passionate admirer of field sports, which we often pursued together. As this friend happened to dine with me at Ashiesteel one day, I took the opportunity of reading to him the first canto of the ' Lady of the Lake,' in order to ascertain the effect the poem was likely to produce upon a person who was but too favourable a representation of readers at large. His reception of my recitation, or prelection, was rather singular. He placed his hand across his brow, and listened with great attention through the whole account of the stag-hunt, till the dogs threw themselves into the lake to follow their

master, who embarks with Ellen Douglas. He then started up with a sudden exclamation, struck his hand on the table, and declared in a voice of censure calculated for the occasion, that the dogs must have been totally ruined by being permitted to take the water after so severe a chase. I own, I was much encouraged by the species of reverie which had possessed so zealous a follower of the sports of the ancient Nimrod, who had been completely surprised out of all doubts of the reality of the tale."

Its success, says the author himself, was so extraordinary, as to induce him for the moment to conclude that he had at last fixed a nail in the proverbially inconstant wheel of fortune, whose stability in behalf of an individual who had so boldly courted her favour for three successive times, had not as yet been shaken. Scott thought it necessary at the time to enter into a justification for again intruding his compositions on the public, besides running the risk of incurring the displeasure of the critics, and through their means losing his already pre-eminent popularity. He says, in his own facetious style, "If a man is determined to make a noise in the world, he is as sure to encounter abuse and ridicule, as he who gallops through a village must reckon on being followed by the curs in full cry. Experienced persons know, that in stretching to flog the latter, the rider is very apt to catch a bad fall, nor is an attempt to chastise a malignant critic attended with less danger to the author. On this principle, I let parody, burlesque, and squibs, find their own level, and while the latter hissed most fiercely, I was cautious never to catch them up as schoolboys do, to throw them back against the naughty boy who fired them off; wisely remembering that in such cases they are apt to explode in the handling." Scott had now little to fear from the critics. The opinion of the public was so unanimous

in his favour, that those disposed to carp at him were compelled to yield to the current.

Scott, we have seen, did not confine his genius to the regions of poetry and romance only, but acknowledged with alacrity the duties of Editor and Commentator. About this period, he was in the habit of contributing to the *Edinburgh and Quarterly Reviews*; for the last twenty years of his life, however, he seldom saw the *Edinburgh*; but he became a regular contributor to the *Quarterly*, upon the appointment of his son to the editorship of that work.

We formerly mentioned the migration of James and John Ballantyne to Edinburgh, where James set up a printing office. In this concern Scott had a silent partnership, although no regular contract of co-partnership was ever executed. As the establishment was on an extensive scale, considerable capital was necessary to carry it on, and this was raised by means of cash credit with the banks, and drawing bills on each other. This appears to have been the period of Scott's first acquaintance with that pernicious system of conducting business, the consequences of which he afterwards experienced to so lamentable a degree, and which we shall have to notice more at large. In the meantime, however, the firm of Ballantyne & Co. continued to prosper; and about 1809 a new concern was started, by John Ballantyne commencing business as a bookseller, with Scott as a partner. This concern was on the same hollow basis as the other—no contract being drawn up between the parties, and the capital raised on the former process. This new co-partnery was established solely on the credit of Scott's literary abilities. He was then at the height of his popularity; large sums had been given by other publishers for his works, and still more splendid offers were held out to him for the further productions of his genius; and the idea of securing the profits of author, printer and

publisher, suggested itself to his mind. Accordingly, we find £3000 was placed to Scott's credit in the books of John Ballantyne & Co., for the authorship of the "Lady of the Lake," which was the first of his works published by them. Several new works were started with success; and this publishing scheme would have proved a highly profitable one to the parties, had it been conducted with either care or economy, but the system that was pursued was more than a match for whatever prosperity might attend it, and it was found prudent to dissolve the co-partnery in 1813. Scott had drawn large sums in name of copyright-value for his works, which were paid in bills; these had to be met with other bills when they became due, and the affairs of the parties got into a state of entanglement and confusion, which nothing but the skill and experience of a man of business were able to unravel. The debts of the firm, however, were ultimately all paid off, and Scott resumed his copyrights.

In the same year in which appeared the "Lady of the Lake," Scott arranged and edited the poems of Miss Anna Seward, in three volumes, to which was prefixed an elegant memoir of her life. A friendship of the strongest kind subsisted betwixt that amiable and talented woman and Scott; and it was at her particular desire that he undertook the task. The letter bequeathing to her friend the grateful but melancholy duty he so ably executed, was penned on her deathbed, within a few days of her death, which took place on the 23rd of March, 1809, in the sixty-second year of her age.

The "Vision of Don Roderick" was brought out in 1811. The poem was of an entirely different character, both as to subject and versification, from any of his previous productions. It professes to give a shadowy historical outline of the state of Spain, from before the invasion of the Moors, to the close of

the peninsular war in 1810. Although the sale of this poem was nothing like that of its predecessors, and its after popularity still less so, it was on the whole well received at the time, and reached a second edition in a few weeks. Scott devoted the profits of the work to the relief of the then suffering inhabitants of Portugal.

His next effort appeared in 1813, under the name of "Rokeby," a tale of the civil war in England; in which he attempted to interest the feelings of his readers in the transactions of that period; but his muse was the muse of romance, and his attempt to throw her spells over the dry matter-of-fact details of comparatively recent history, was, as might have been anticipated, a failure. But there was a more formidable cause for the discomfiture of "Rokeby." Byron had taken the field with his "Childe Harold," and all eyes were now turned towards this newly-arisen meteor, with feelings of wonder, approaching almost to awe. Scott at once felt and confessed the blighting influence of this rival luminary. "I was astonished," he says, "at the power evinced by that work, which neither the 'Hours of Idleness,' nor the 'English Bards and Scotch Reviewers' had prepared me to expect from its author." It must, however, be remembered that Scott had reached that time of life when the poetic feeling begins to cool, and the human heart ceases to own those emotions which constitute so principal an ingredient in the temperament of the Muses' successful votaries.

"Rokeby" was decidedly a break down, but Scott had too long held possession of the field to be driven from it by a single discomfiture. He retreated to his favourite Highlands, and planting his foot once more upon the heather, he resolved to make a last and vigorous effort to redeem the tarnished honour of Caledonia. The subject which he selected for

this purpose, was one calculated to catch the feelings and rouse the patriotic ardour of his countrymen—the achievements of Bruce. The “*Lord of the Isles*” appeared in 1814, which, the author says, was concluded unwillingly and in haste, and under the painful feeling of one who has a task to perform, rather than with the ardour of one who endeavours to perform that task well, enjoyed a sale of 15,000 copies, and enabled Scott to retreat from the field with the honours of war.

In the same year Scott published anonymously, a little metrical romantic tale of the Italian school of composition, entitled the “*Bridal of Friermain*.” Two large editions were sold off, but upon a third being called for, Scott’s name was prefixed.

As Scott’s subsequent poems made, comparatively speaking, but little impression on the public, and as we are unwilling to interrupt the consecutiveness of our notices of his prose works, by adverting to the minor efforts of his muse, we shall here enumerate the latter in as summary a manner as possible.

In 1815, immediately after the battle of Waterloo, Scott, at the suggestion of Mr. Constable, proceeded to the continent, and visited the scene of that engagement. The result of that journey was a lively prose volume, to be afterwards noticed, together with a poem of some length, in commemoration of the great event, both of which came out the same year. The latter production, entitled “*Waterloo*,” has always been reckoned the most unworthy of all Scott’s poetical efforts. Nor is this at all surprising, as it was written at the several stages where the author halted during his journey, whence the manuscript was despatched to Edinburgh, and the whole published with scarce a word of correction.

In the following year, 1816, another small unacknowledged poem, called “*Harold the Dauntless*,” appeared. It is in the style of the rude minstrel,

and contains most of the imperfections, and not a few traits of the author's genius.

In 1820, he published a small volume of fugitive pieces, under the capricious title of "Trivial Poems and Triolets by P. Carey." This volume was scarcely ever heard of, and it is unnecessary to say more.

In 1822, appeared a dramatic sketch from his pen, called "Halidon Hill." It was not intended for the stage, but we are rather surprised that no attempt has ever been made to bring it out as a drama. The incidents are decidedly national, and the characters drawn with fervour and animation. The poem was well received at the time of its appearance, and the author received £2000 from Mr. Constable for the copyright.

The remaining productions of Scott's muse that fall to be mentioned, seem little if at all known. These are "M'Duff's Cross," a short dramatic poem; "The Doom of Devorgoil," and "Auchindrane, or the Ayrshire Tragedy"—productions of a similar character with the former, but of much greater length, which were published in one volume in 1830.

This concludes our notice of the poetical productions of Scott, and must now, for a while, turn from his literary career, to attend to the changes which time and circumstances were effecting in his station in life, as well as in his habits and occupations; we must revert to 1811, and present to our readers the picture of Scott, by one of his own personal acquaintances:—

"Like all true poets, Scott's habits of feelings were of a decidedly rural character; but with this love of the scenes of nature were mingled other feelings of a less imaginative description. It is evident from the whole tenor of his life, that if he ever allowed any one passion completely to engross his mind, it was the ambition of attaining the status

of a country gentleman, and maintaining the hospitable establishment of a wealthy landed proprietor. And this fact leads us to remark an extraordinary inconsistency in his character. In his habits, his demeanour, and desires, he was decidedly *aristocratic*. He was proud of his ancestry; he loved the exercise of the duties pertaining to his official situation in the country; he uniformly affected the society of those above his own rank in life; and, as we have already said, he eagerly longed to be enrolled amongst those who are more emphatically denominated the Lords of the creation. Moreover, he had attached himself, in a political sense, to that party which has always been considered as more peculiarly the aristocratic one in the nation. On the other hand, if we examine his prose writings, it will be found that a spirit of what is termed *Liberalism* predominates throughout. He almost uniformly takes the side of the weak against the strong, and omits no opportunity of ridiculing, or *shewing up*, the weak insolence of office, or holding out the abuse of power, and the empty vanity of mere rank to our contempt and detestation. In practice, a devoted worshipper of kings, he has mercilessly burlesqued monarchy in his character of James, and exposed the licentiousness of princes in the person of Charles. Proud of sitting at the tables of dukes and earls, he has drawn with unsparing truth the reckless ambition of Leicester, the profligacy of Buckingham, and the brutal mirth of Lauderdale over the sufferings of his victims. Jealous of his dignity as a magistrate he has libelled the whole bench of country justices in the character of the empty, overbearing, blustering fool, Sir Robert Hazlewood, of Hazlewood, Baronet; and in his portraiture of Sir Arthur Wardour, he gives us a racy comment on the foolish passion of family pride. Again, it will be found that almost all his best—that is to say, his most virtuous and amiable specimens of

human character, are taken from the lower classes of society. Where shall we find so fine a picture of filial and sisterly affection, and true moral firmness, as in his portraiture of Jeanie Deane—of real generosity and honest worth, as in that of Dandie Dinmont—of humble affection and devoted gratitude, as in Dominie Sampson—or high-souled religious principle, as in Mause Headrigg, or the other poor blind widow, sitting by the wayside to warn the people of God from the persecutors' fangs? If it be true what Byron said of him, "that he was the *poet* of princes," it is as unquestionably true that he was the *chronicler* of the people, and may be said, in this respect, to be in prose what Burns was in rhyme.

All this seems odd enough, but it only demonstrates how far early training will go to supersede a man's natural character. Scott's heart was evidently with the great mass of the people; but he had been educated in strict habits of reverence for rank and office; and therefore it is that, while we find him, in his personal demeanour and habits of acting, seemingly yielding an almost subservient deference to the conventional distinctions of society, and striving to push forward as far abreast of it as possible, the whole spirit of his genius breathes the emphatic language of his brother bard:—

The rank is but the guinea stamp,
The man's the gowd for a' that.

During the last few years of Scott's residence at Ashiesteel he rented the small farm attached to his house, upon which with the usual success of all unskilled interlopers in husbandry, he had the pleasure of experimentalizing as the sole return for a considerable outlay of money. Many people are surprised at this uniform failure of the labours of "gentlemen farmers;" but that they are so, only

shows how ignorant they are of the subject. As a case in point we will relate the amusing anecdote of the celebrated Lord Kames—an inveterate agricultural experimentalist—and his overseer. “John,” said his lordship one day, “I have made a discovery that will save all this trouble and expense of carting out and spreading the manure about the fields. In short, John, I have found out the way of extracting the *essence of dung*, so that I’ll carry out as much as will manure a whole field in my waistcoat pocket.” John hung his head and said nothing. “Why, John,” resumed his lordship, “you don’t appear to see the value of this invention, or—but you don’t surely doubt what I’m telling you, John?” “Oh no, my lord,” replied John, “it’s no for me to doot ony thing your lordship says, but I was juist thinking that if your lordship were to carry out the dung in your waistcoat pocket, ye might bring the crap hame in your great coat pocket!”

But Scott had neither skill nor predilection for the pursuits of husbandry. He longed to have a property of his own, upon which to expend the suggestions of his fancy; and, in an evil hour, he fixed upon a spot which would almost appear to have been selected to try what could be made out of so barren a subject. The following is the account he gives of his commencing proprietor:—

“In the meantime years crept on, and not without their usual depredations on the passing generation. My sons had arrived at the age when the paternal home was no longer their best abode, as both were destined to active life. The field sports, to which I was peculiarly attached, had now less interest, and were replaced by other amusements of a more quiet character; and the means and opportunity of pursuing these were to be sought for. I had, indeed, for some years, attended to farming, a knowledge of

which is, or at least was then, indispensable to the comfort of a family residing in a solitary country-house; but although this was the favourite amusement of many of my friends, I have never been able to consider it as a source of pleasure. I never could think it a matter of passing importance, that my cattle or my crops were better or more plentiful than those of my neighbours; and nevertheless, I began to feel the necessity of some more quiet out-door occupation than I had hitherto pursued. I purchased a small farm of about one hundred acres, with the purpose of planting and improving it, to which property circumstances afterwards enabled me to make considerable additions; and thus an era took place in my life, almost equal to the important one mentioned by the Vicar of Wakefield, when he removed from the Blue Room to the Brown. In point of neighbourhood, at least, the change of residence made little more difference. Abbotsford, to which we removed, was only six or seven miles down the Tweed, and lay on the same beautiful stream. It did not possess the romantic character of Ashiesteel, my former residence; but it had a stretch of meadowland along the river, and possessed, in the phrase of the landscape gardener, considerable capabilities. Above all, the land was my own, like Uncle Toby's bowling-green, to do what I would with it."

The spot which Scott thus fixed upon was originally named "Cartley-hole," for which the poet substituted Abbotsford, from a neighbouring ford in the Tweed.

In the year succeeding his removal to Abbotsford, the emoluments of his situation as principal clerk of session, for the first, began to fall in to Scott. These, with what he already possessed, raised his income to upwards of £2000 a-year. His attendance at his post in the Court of Session was most punctual,

being generally from about ten to two o'clock of the day.

Before we again resume consideration of Scott's literary career, we may here notice a circumstance which strongly marks the estimation in which he was held by his countrymen, both as a poet and a citizen. On the 22nd December, 1813, the lord provost, magistrates, and town council of Edinburgh, voted him the freedom of the city; and at the same time presented him with a handsome silver tankard, on which was a medallion containing a flattering inscription, in Latin, from the elegant pen of Dr. Gregory.

One peculiarity Scott had, was a strong guttural pronunciation of the letter *r*, so peculiar to the natives of Northumberland, and vulgarly termed a *burr*. This habit was so inveterate in him as even to affect his ear in the construction of his verse; and numerous lines could be pointed out in his poems where he has given that single letter the importance of two syllables, thus giving to his metre, in the eyes of those unacquainted with his peculiarity, the appearance, in many places, of being defective.

CHAPTER V.

WE now turn to the last, but certainly not the least, important branch of our task—Sir Walter Scott's prose romances; and as all must feel interested in acquiring an exact knowledge of every circumstance connected with the origin of the remarkable series of productions now under consideration, we will allow the author to tell his own story.

“It makes no part of the present story to detail

how the success of a few ballads had the effect of changing all the purpose and tenor of my life, and of converting a pains-taking lawyer, of some years' standing, into a follower of literature. It is enough to say that I had assumed the latter character for several years, before I seriously thought of attempting a work of imagination in prose, although one or two of my poetical works did not differ from romances, otherwise than being written in verse. But yet I may observe, that about this time, (now, alas! thirty years since,) I had nourished the ambitious desire of composing a tale of chivalry, which was to be in the style of the *Castle of Otranto*, with plenty of Border characters, and supernatural incident. Having found unexpectedly a chapter of this intended work, to be called "*Thomas the Rhymer*," among some old papers, I have subjoined it to this introductory essay, thinking some readers may account as curious the first attempt at romantic composition by an author who has written so much in that department * * * This particular subject was never resumed, but I did not abandon the idea of fictitious composition in prose, though I determined to give another turn to the style of the work.

"My early recollections of the Highland scenery and customs made so favourable an impression in the poem called the '*Lady of the Lake*' that I was induced to think of attempting something of the same kind in prose. I had been a good deal in the Highlands at a time when they were much less accessible and less visited, than they have been of late years, and was acquainted with more of the old warriors of 1745, who were, like most veterans, easily induced to fight their battles over again, for the benefit of a willing listener like myself. It naturally occurred to me that the ancient traditions and high spirit of a people, who, living in a civilized age and

country, retained so strong a tincture of manners belonging to an early period of society, must afford a subject favourable for romance, if it should prove a curious tale marred in the telling.

"It was with some idea of this kind, that about the year 1805, I threw together about one-third part of the first volume of 'Waverley.' It was advertised to be published by the late Mr. John Ballantyne, bookseller in Edinburgh, under the name of 'Waverley; or 'Tis Fifty Years since,'—a title afterwards altered to 'Tis Sixty years since,' that the actual date of publication might be made to correspond with the period in which the scene was laid. Having proceeded so far, I think, as the seventh chapter, I showed my work to a critical friend, whose opinion was unfavourable; and having then some poetical reputation, I was unwilling to risk the loss of it by attempting a new style of composition. I therefore threw aside the work I had commenced without either reluctance or remonstrance. * * * * This portion of the manuscript was laid aside in the drawers of an old desk, which, on my first coming to reside at Abbotsford, in 1811, was placed in a lumber garret and entirely forgotten.

"I happened to want some fishing-tackle for the use of a guest, when it occurred to me to search the old writing-desk already mentioned, in which I used to keep articles of that nature. I got access to it with some difficulty; and in looking for lines and flies, the long-lost manuscript presented itself; I immediately set to work to complete it, according to my original purpose."

"Waverley" appeared early in 1814, immediately previous to Scott's setting out on a tour through the Highlands and Islands of the north of Scotland, with the view of making himself acquainted with the localities he meant to treat of in the "Lord of the

tales." At first the fate of the romance was doubtful. The public was as much puzzled what to think of it, as were the two critical friends to whom Scott submitted the first specimen of his poetical romances. It shortly began to win its way, and when he returned from his tour, he found the whole world astir on the subject, and curiosity in full cry after the name of the author. This was a gratification to Scott, whose sensations of triumph were the more completely happy, that they were confined solely to his own bosom. He says, "The knowledge that I had the public approbation, was like having the property of possessing a hidden treasure, not the less gratifying than if all the world knew it was his own. I did not the less feel gratified for the public favour, although I did not proclaim it,—as the lover who wears his mistress's favour in his bosom is as proud, though not so vain of possessing it, as another who displays the token of her grace upon his bonnet."

Effectual measures had been taken by him beforehand, to secure the enjoyment of his solitary meal. "My original motive," he says, "for publishing the work anonymously, was the consciousness that it was an experiment on the public taste which might very probably fail; and therefore there was no occasion to take on myself the personal risk of discomfiture. For this purpose considerable precautions were used to preserve secrecy. My old friend and school-fellow, Mr. James Ballantyne, who printed these novels, had the exclusive task of corresponding with the author, who thus had not only the advantage of his professional talents, but also of his critical abilities. The original manuscript, or, as it is technically called, *copy*, was transcribed under Mr. Ballantyne's eye by confidential persons; nor was there an instance of treachery during the many years in which these precautions were resorted to,

although various individuals were employed at different times. Double proof-sheets were regularly printed off; one was forwarded to the author by Mr. Ballantyne, and the alterations which it received were, by his own hand, copied upon the other proof-sheet, for the use of the printers, so that even the corrected proofs of the author were never seen in the printing-office; and thus the curiosity of such eager inquirers as made the most amusing investigations was entirely at fault.

Scott says, that one of his chief reasons for keeping unknown, was the desire of preventing all personal discussions respecting his own productions—"It is in every case a dangerous intercourse for an author to be dwelling continually among those who make his writings a frequent and familiar subject of conversation, but who must necessarily be partial judges of works composed in their own society. The habits of self-importance which are thus acquired by authors, are highly injurious to a well-regulated mind; for, the cup of flattery, if it does not, like that of Circe, reduce men to the level of beasts, is sure, if eagerly drained, to bring the best and the ablest down to fools. This risk was in some degree prevented by the mask which I wore, and my own stores of self-conceit were left to their natural course, without being enhanced by the partiality of friends, or adulation of flatterers." These observations will, we believe, be sufficiently understood by every literary man of correct feeling.

In somewhat less than two months twelve thousand copies of "Waverley" were dispersed through England and Scotland, and the delight, as well as curiosity of the public became every day stronger and more universal. And this, be it remembered, in the absence of any recommendation from the critics, who were, for some time, as much nonplussed, as the

Highland cateran, in the story, on getting hold of a watch for the first time. Like him, too, they concluded it must be something—but they did not know what; but, of course, they must say something, and after the popularity of "Waverley" had set in with so strong a current, as to bear down every thing like criticism upon it as a work of fiction, it became fashionable, among these dictators of public taste, to accuse the author of violating historical accuracy in his narrative, and of drawing the characters of the Adventurer, and others of the Stuart cause, in too favourable a light.

Scott says—"Among other unfounded reports, it has been said, that the copyright of "Waverley" was, during the book's progress through the press, offered for sale to various booksellers in London, at a very inconsiderable price. This was not the case. Messrs. Constable and Caddell, who published the work, were the only persons acquainted with the contents of the publication, and they offered a large sum for it while in the course of the printing, which, however, was declined, the author not choosing to part with the copyright.

The "Lord of the Isles" appeared shortly after the publication of Waverley. This was held by many to be decisive of their being from different pens; but still there were some who had their suspicions, and among others, Mrs. Murray Keith, from whom Sir Walter derived many of the traditionary stories and anecdotes, as we formerly mentioned, taxed him one day as the author of "Waverley," which he stoutly denied. "What!" exclaimed the old lady, "d'ye think I dinna ken my ain groats frae ither folks'—kail?"

In the same year he published an edition of Swift's writings, in nineteen volumes, with an elaborate memoir of his life. Also, in 1814, he lent his name to

a publication, in two volumes, 4to., called *Border Antiquities*; besides contributing a most learned and ingenious antiquarian essay to a work entitled "*Illustrations of Northern Antiquities.*" The title of the essay was "*Abstract of the Eyrbyggja-Saga.*"

We thus find Scott appearing before the public as a poet, a novelist, a biographer, a commentator, and an antiquary—embracing a range of no less than six and twenty volumes—all in the course of one year; a circumstance which exhibits a fertility and universality of genius, and a facility of composition, in the same individual, which is, we believe, perfectly unparalleled. And all this, too, be it observed, the work of one who never appeared to his friends to be busy, but still kept his place as a social member of society; a great part of whose time was necessarily employed as principal clerk of the Court of Session; who was busying himself with agricultural improvements; and who even found leisure to take a trip of a couple of months to the Highlands!

"*Guy Mannering*," which appeared in 1815, was our author's next production; and the source whence he derived the rudiments was one which only a mind like his, ever agape for information, and strongly predisposed to the marvellous, would ever have dreamt of availing itself of. It was from John McKinlay, an old servant of his father—"an excellent old Highlander, without a fault, unless a preference to mountain-dew over less potent liquors be accounted one—that Scott heard the marvellous tale which suggested "*Guy Mannering*;" and the original story is certainly a novel and striking one. It is as follows—and old McKinlay believed in the truth of it all most religiously.

Once on a time, a grave and elderly person was benighted while travelling through the wilds of

Galloway, and with difficulty found his way to a gentleman's seat, where he was hospitably admitted. Considerable confusion prevailed throughout the household, and the owner apologised to the venerable stranger for any omission of courtesy he might experience, as his lady was then in the pangs of child-labour. The old man, upon this intimation, although disclaiming the profession of an astrologer, desired to be shewn into an apartment where he might have a view of the heavenly bodies, and promised to cast the nativity of the child. He was accommodated with a suitable apartment accordingly, and spent the greater part of the night making his observations; when, at a certain hour, he sent for the parent, and conjured him to cause the birth to be retarded but for five minutes, were it practicable. This, however, it was found impossible to do; and the child was born at the ominous moment. The astrologer then told the anxious parent, that by a singular conjunction of the planets, the child (a boy) would be subjected to the operation of an evil influence about his twenty-first birth day, which would be the crisis of his fate; and that if he conquered it, his life would be a long and happy one. He advised him to be bred up in the strictest principles of religion and morality, and preserved from all contamination with the world. It was ultimately agreed upon betwixt them that when the unhappy crisis approached, the youth should be sent to pass the ordeal that awaited him at the house of the sage, which was situated in the south of England, and of which he gave the address. Time rolled on: the child sprung up into boyhood—from boyhood to adolescence. The utmost care was taken, as advised, with his education; none but the most pious people were allowed to be near him; and his father was blessed in seeing him become all that a parent could

wish. But as the youth began to approach the term of manhood, a remarkable change came over him. He became moping and melancholy, sleepless and nervous, and both his mental and bodily powers seemed to be giving way, without any apparent cause. The sage being written to respecting these alarming symptoms, stated, that his fitful state of mind was but the commencement of the youth's trials. That he was suffering from the awakening of the passions, which he must be left to subdue in his own breast, in order to work out his preservation from certain and eternal destruction. The young man, meanwhile, combated to the uttermost with his feelings, but he seemed to be sinking daily into the depths of madness or despair. At last the period arrived for his departure to the sage's mansion, and as this was the first time of his being allowed to go forth alone into the world, he lingered long by the way, gazing at all the novelties he saw; that it was the afternoon of the day preceding the night of his birth ere he arrived at his destination—an antiquated and solitary old mansion. The sage received him with affection, but reproved him for his delay, which he said would increase the terrors of the coming night. As the hour of rest approached, the fated youth was made to perform his ablutions; and after partaking of some food of the simplest kind, was led by the astrologer into a remote apartment, furnished only with a lamp, a chair, and a table, on which lay a Bible. After solemnly conjuring the youth to hold fast by his religious principles, and keep steadfastly before his mind the great truths and promises of the word of God, the sage retired; and scarcely was the door closed when the recollection of all his sins of omission and commission rushed upon the youth's mind, like a swarm of demons determined to lash his soul to madness. As he combated

with these horrible sensations, he became aware that his arguments were answered by the sophistry of another, and that the dispute was no longer confined to his own thoughts. The Author of Evil was present in the room with him in bodily shape, laying before him his sins in all their darkest colours, and urging suicide as the readiest mode of escaping from the misery of his thoughts. As the fated and influential hour rolled on, the terrors of the hateful Presence grew more confounding to the mortal senses of the victim, and the knot of the accursed sophistry more and more inextricable. He had no power to explain the assurance of pardon from on high, or name the name in which he trusted. But his faith did not forsake him, and he resisted the tempter until the clock told the lapse of the fated hour, when the demon retired yelling and discomfited. The young man was afterwards married to the sage's daughter; a beautiful girl whom he had seen the previous evening, and the thoughts of whom had co-operated not a little with Satan's sophistry in distracting his thoughts from the contemplation of divine truth; and all of course ended happily.

Out of these materials Scott formed his "Guy Mannering," which was rated by the critics much below its predecessor.

Almost at the same time as "Guy Mannering," "Paul's Letters to his Kinsfolk" appeared, and as it was pretty well known who the writer was, it led the public more astray respecting the authorship of Waverley and Guy Mannering. Paul's Letters were eagerly and universally read, and well deserving of all their popularity.

"Paul's Letters," were like Scott's other works from Waverley downwards, published by Mr. Constable, with whom he had already commenced that destructive system of prospective payment for

his labours, by bills, which ultimately involved him in the downfall of that great publishing establishment. Scott had got into the full career of purchasing, planting, and building at Abbotsford, which indeed he had commenced almost immediately upon his removal thither. It would have been a blessing for all parties had Mr. Constable been less accomodating to the author on these occasions, for it was assuredly the command of ready money which he thus possessed that induced him to launch out into those extravagant schemes which he carried into execution. In the height of their apparent prosperity, Mr. Constable one day disclosed to a friend his own view of the way in which he stood towards Scott. "Scott," said, he, with the humorous expression peculiar to him, "is just Dr. Gillespie's cow. The cow was the first *milker* in the whole parish, but yet the doctor had to bring her to the market. 'Doctor, Doctor,' said every body, 'what's making you sell your cow—her that gies sae muckle milk?' 'I'll tell ye that maybe,' answered the Doctor, 'at the conclusion of the market.' Accordingly, having disposed of the cow, and jogging home in the evening with his neighbours, he was requested to explain his reason for parting with so valuable an animal. 'Oo, ye see,' quoth the doctor, 'there's nae doot my cow was the best in the parish, so far as giving milk was concerned; but then ye maun tak anither thing into account, there was deil ane that needed sae muckle meat. First, ye see, she took her ain meat—then she took Bruckie's—and then she wad hae Hawkie's—and after a' she wad roar for mair!' That, "concluded the bookseller "is Walter Scott."

We come now to Scott's third achievement in his unknown character, "The Antiquary," which came out early in the year 1816. This work did not immediately rise into popularity, but if we mistake not it will stand the test of investigation with less danger

from the captiousness of criticism than almost any of its brethren. It became Scott's peculiar favourite, which predilection he testified upon the occasion of the sale of his manuscripts, when Captain Basil Hall became the purchaser of that of "*The Antiquary*," for the sum of £42. Meeting with Scott, accidentally at Southampton, some time after, the latter alluded to the recent sale, observing that his friend had become possessed of his most favourite novel, and offered to add a few lines to that effect at the end of the MS. Captain Hall, it may be supposed, was not slow to avail himself of the offer, and the preciousness of the MS. has been increased an hundredfold by the addition of the short testimonial.

On the appearance of "*The Antiquary*" the public admiration of its mysterious author was becoming daily warmer, when behold! another unknown, assuming the name of Jedediah Cleishbotham, appeared almost simultaneously on the stage: under whose auspices four handsome volumes, entitled "*Tales of my Landlord*," in the same year, issued from the Ballantyne press. The trick was dexterously played off; for in the preface to the *Antiquary*, the "Author of *Waverley*" took a formal, and to all appearance, final leave of the public, in order to make way for a more worthy competitor in the person of the Schoolmaster of Gandercleuch; but the public had not read many pages ere they saw how the matter stood, and so far from being dissatisfied with the profusion of this literary Briareus, astonishment was only superadded to their admiration.

This new class of productions consisted of two tales—"The Black Dwarf," and "Old Mortality."

"The Black Dwarf" is one of the least natural, most meagre, and altogether most unsatisfactory of all Scott's romances. He observes, "The story was intended to be longer, and the catastrophe more artistically brought out; but a friendly critic, to whose

opinion I subjected the work in its progress, was of opinion, that the idea of the *Solitary* was of a kind too revolting, and more likely to disgust than to interest the reader. As I had a good right to consider my adviser an excellent judge of public opinion, I got off from my subject by hastening the story to an end as fast as possible: and by huddling into one volume a tale which was destined to occupy two, have perhaps produced a narrative as much disproportioned as the *Black Dwarf* who is its subject."

"*Old Mortality*" is a romance of a different stamp. The period, selected for the plot, may be designated as next to that of the Reformation in point of interest and importance in Scotland. The motives, ^{to Scott} who offered violent resistance to their political oppressors were the noblest which could animate any human breast, and future ages must still look back to them with veneration as the fearless vindicators of their civil and religious liberties.

We believe that the author has received more praise and more blame for this than for any other of his productions; and it is a matter of surprise that Scott should have hazarded his pen on such a subject as the Persecution, involved as it still is in much of prejudice and irritating recollection. He found it necessary to notice the clamour that was raised against him both by the Episcopalians and Presbyterians—for both were dissatisfied with the delineation of their respective ancestors, and he was alternately denounced as an apostate to the religious faith of his forefathers. This is the only one of Scott's works wherein he has been accused of political partiality, or an anti-popular feeling.

"*Rob Roy*" came out in the beginning of 1818. None of Scott's novels, we believe, took such a universal and influential hold of the public mind as this one. Our streets and highways were thronged with scampering Dianas; Celtic clubs and societies were

formed in every town and village; tartans, for awhile, fairly superseded broad cloth; and the prince and the peasant alike proudly strutted in the kilt and philabeg.

While the whole country was thus running *clean wud* about Glasgow bailies and breechless Highlanders, Mr. Jedediah Cleishbotham administered a febrifuge in the shape of "The Heart of Mid-Lothian," in four volumes, which made its appearance exactly four months after Rob Roy. The admiration and curiosity of the public at this period was intense; the mysterious author and his works were the topic of every conversation.

The "Heart of Mid-Lothian" is at once the most elaborate and most perfect of all the Scotch novels as respects the number and variety of characters introduced, and the complete development of them. The characters are of all grades from the monarch to the footpad, and the contrast into which they are brought is in the last degree striking and effective; and each of the leading characters is a perfect study of itself.

Amongst Scott's miscellaneous writings in 1818, we may notice the "Essays on Chivalry," and the "Drama," published in the supplement to the *Encyclopedia Britannica*; also his account of the Regalia of Scotland (a pamphlet) which were discovered on the 4th of February, same year, in the old crown-room of Edinburgh castle, lying in the same state in which they had been deposited in 1707.

In 1819, appeared a third series of "Tales of my Landlord," consisting of two Tales, "The Bride of Lammermoor," and the "Legend of Montrose." The first of these is in the highest style of fictitious composition; it is essentially dramatic, and may be termed a tragedy of the first order. The second is a shred of British history, during the turbulent era of the seventeenth century. The narrative is sketchy

and brief, but more vigorous and animated than the generality of Scott's works.

During the composition of these tales Scott was stretched on a bed of sickness. So severe indeed was his illness, that his hair turned quite grey, and he rose from his couch seemingly ten years older than when he lay down. His sufferings did not, however, interrupt his mental labour, otherwise than by reducing him to the necessity of employing an amanuensis, to whom he dictated from bed. Mr. William Laidlaw, who acted in this capacity, mentioned afterwards, that Scott would sometimes be interrupted in one of his most humorous or elevated scenes by an attack of pain; which, being past, he would recommence in the same tone at the point where he left off, and so on day after day. The "Bride of Lammermoor," "Legend of Montrose," and greater part of "Ivanhoe," thus dictated, were afterwards found to be the only parts of this long series of compositions not in the author's own handwriting.

In 1820, "Ivanhoe" made its appearance. This is by far the most brilliant of all Scott's romances. Allan Cunningham tells us, that soon after the publication of "Ivanhoe," Chantrey asked him one day how he liked it. "I said that the descriptions were admirable, and that the narrative flowed on in a full stream, but I thought in individual portraiture, it was not equal to those romances where the author had his foot on Scottish ground." "You speak like a Scotchman," said Chantrey; "I must speak like an Englishman:—the scenery is just, and the characters in keeping. I know every inch of ground where the tournament was held—where Front de Bœuf's castle stood, and even where that pious priest, the Curtal Friar, had his cell by the blessed well of St. Dunstan—what Rob Roy is to you, Ivanhoe is to

me." It is a splendid poem, or rather masque, and the author's unrivalled powers of description make the whole pass before our eyes like a living pageant.

Immediately upon the publication of *Ivanhoe*, in 1820, Scott was called up to London to receive from his sovereign the honour of knighthood, with a baronetcy. This testimonial of royal favour was peculiarly flattering on several accounts. It was the first honour of the kind which his majesty had conferred since his accession to the throne. As Prince of Wales, he had distinguished Scott by many personal proofs of his admiration, his fine taste enabling him fully to appreciate the rarity and splendour of the poet's genius. Accordingly, in his numerous visits to London, our author was generally honoured with an invitation to the royal table, when the most marked attentions were poured upon him. Another source of gratification on the present occasion was, that the honour was as unexpected as unsought. A friend who had got notice of his intended elevation to the baronetage, shortly before it took place, hinted it to him one day,—More than I know of then," replied Scott, with his peculiarly quiet ironical smile: "No, no,—I like not the grinning honour which *Sir Walter* hath!"

It was upon the occasion of this visit to the metropolis, also, that Chantrey executed that noble bust of the poet—the only characteristic likeness of him we have ever seen, either in marble, clay, or copper—which will link the sculptor's name and fame with his, as imperishably, but we trust more worthily, as that of Boswell with Johnson. Mr. Allan Cunningham, who then superintended Mr. Chantrey's establishment, has recorded an account of the transaction, as well as of his own interviews with Scott, to whom he was then for the first time, introduced, which we will give in his own words.—

"When I went to Sir Walter's residence in Piccadilly, I had much the same palpitation of heart which Boswell experienced when introduced to Johnson. When I saw him in Edinburgh (1808), he was in the very pith and flush of life—even, in my opinion, a thought more fat than bard becoms; when I looked on him now, thirteen years had not passed over him and left no mark behind; his hair had grown thin and grey; the stamp of years and study was on his brow. He told me he had suffered much lately from ill health, and that he once doubted his recovery. His eldest son, a tall handsome youth, now a major in the army, was with him. He welcomed me with both hands, and with such kind and complimentary words, that confusion and fear alike fled. He turned the conversation upon song, and said he had long wished to know me, on account of some songs which were reckoned old, but which he was assured were mine; 'at all events,' said he, 'they are not old, they are far too good to be old. I dare say you know what songs I mean?' I was now much embarrassed; I neither owned the songs nor denied them, but said I hoped to see him soon again, for that, if he were willing to sit, my friend, Mr. Chantrey, was anxious to make his bust,—as a memorial to preserve in his collection of the author of *Marmion*. To this he consented. So much was he sought after while he sat to Chantrey that strangers begged leave to stand in the sculptor's galleries, to see him as he went in and out. The bust was at last finished in marble; the sculptor laboured most anxiously, and I never saw him work more successfully: in a long sitting of three hours he chiselled the whole face over, communicating to it the grave humour and comic penetration for which the original was so remarkable. This fine work is now at Abbotsford, with an inscription, saying it is a present to Sir Walter Scott from Francis Chantrey.—I hope it will never be elsewhere.

"When I next saw Sir Walter, King George was about to be crowned, and he had come to London to make one in the ceremony. This was an affair which came within the range of his taste, and when he called on me, he talked of the magnificent scene which Westminster Abbey would present on the morrow, and inquired if I intended to go and look at it. I said I had no curiosity that way, having, when I was young, witnessed the crowning of King Crispin at Dumfries. He burst into a laugh and said, 'That's not unlike our friend Hogg: I asked him if he would accompany me, and he stood balancing the matter between the coronation and St. Boswell's fair, and at last the fair carried it.'"

We may here mention that Scott subsequently used his influence in obtaining appointments for two of Mr. Cunningham's sons in the East India Company's service.

Immediately after Scott's return from London in the character of a baronet, his eldest daughter Sophia was married to John Gibson Lockhart, Esq. advocate.

"Ivanhoe," as we have already stated, came out in the early part of 1820; and in a few months afterwards appeared "The Monastery," in three volumes, which was again followed by "The Abbot," also in three volumes—all in the same year.

We regret that our duty here compels us to advert to an incident in Scott's life, which cannot fail to call up many vitiating recollections in the public mind. The year 1820 will long be remembered for the unhappy disturbances which broke out in various parts of the kingdom. The unusual distress that then prevailed, and the universal hatred of the existing government, led to the renewal of the agitation for parliamentary reform. The popular press assumed a tone of boldness which it had never before offered to use, and which it was found utterly unable to repress

by the usual legal expedients. To counteract these Radical prints, Scott inserted three papers, entitled "The Visionary," in the *Edinburgh Weekly Journal*. These letters were among the worst specimens of the now exploded High Tory principle in politics—treating the advocates of parliamentary reform as a set of raving fanatics, and addressing long arguments to the people, which manifest the most entire ignorance of their real feelings and motives. About the same time, a few Tory gentlemen conceived the idea of publishing a paper on their own principles, and the "Beacon" began to be published early in 1821; but it speedily began to outstrip the most scuttrilous of its opponents in private abuse and defamation. The outcry against this journal became so vehement, that the supporters of it shrunk from the storm, and it was finally stopped in September, the same year.—Scott was severely blamed for his connexion with this publication, but it is only justice to state, that whilst he openly espoused the political principles of the paper, he disclaimed all countenance of the personal scurrilities introduced into it, and was the first to intimate his intention of withdrawing, when he perceived the system adopted by its conductors.

"Kenilworth" was published in January, 1821, in three volumes. It was now evident that the author, whoever he was, who, in the homely Scotch novels, seemed to have dwelt all his life among our Dinmonts and Deanses, had on the contrary been trained up amid all the pomp and circumstance of courts—the public were led farther astray by every new appearance, and he became the "Great Unknown."

Previous to May, 1822, two other tales appeared, "The Pirate," and "The Fortunes of Nigel," in three volumes each. In "The Pirate," he has described the Zetlanders to the life before they became assimilated in feeling to their Scottish neighbours;

while "The Fortunes of Nigel" is behind nothing the author ever wrote, for dramatic power, and masterly portraiture of character.

The Scottish public was diverted from the enjoyment of these novels, during the summer of 1822, by a circumstance scarcely less novel to them than the appearance of the Great Unknown himself. This was the visit of George IV. to his Scottish subjects. Upon this occasion the eyes of the public authorities naturally turned upon Sir Walter Scott, who, as the personal friend of his sovereign, and from his acquaintance with the customary ceremonials used on such exhibitions, seemed to them best fitted for superintending so momentous an event. To these necessary duties Scott lent himself with a zeal which, while it contributed most essentially to the good order, spirit, and dignity of all the proceedings, and drew forth the warm thanks of his coadjutors in the getting up of the pageants, obtained him, as frequently happens in such cases—little credit with either of the parties chiefly concerned—the sovereign and the people. The latter conceived that he made himself too busy about the king's person, and manifested too great an anxiety to push himself forward into the observation of the people. The cause of his sovereign's dissatisfaction will be afterwards noticed.

When the royal squadron anchored in Leith Roads on the afternoon of the 14th of August, Scott was one of a distinguished party who were the first to pay their respects to his majesty. When the latter heard that our author was alongside, he exclaimed, "What! Sir Walter Scott! The man in Scotland I most wished to see? Let him come up." Scott ascended, and was received in the most flattering manner by the king, who detained him on board to dinner, making him sit on his right hand. It is unnecessary to dwell upon the various festivities which took place

during his majesty's visit, in most of which Scott bore a conspicuous part, and in a manner forced to obtrude himself on the public notice with a frequency totally at variance with his characteristic modesty and retiring disposition. At the banquet given to his majesty, Scott was selected, in preference to all the noble and wealthy there assembled, to officiate as vice-chairman. The health of "Sir Walter Scott" was proposed by the Earl of Arrol, to which Scott made a brief reply; and on the "Author of Waverley" being proposed by Lord Ashburton, it is needless to say the toast was not responded to.

The occasion of his majesty's displeasure with our author, was as follows. Amongst the projected pageants was a procession in state to the castle. It seems that this arrangement was not communicated to the king until after all the preparations had been made, and when told of it he expressed his aversion to the proposal in terms so peremptory as intimated his expectation of being no more importuned on the subject. The committee of management were dismayed at this unexpected resistance to their wishes on the part of his majesty, and turned in their extremity to Scott, the author of the project, who cheerfully undertook the delicate task of expostulating with his royal master. He accordingly proceeded to Dalkeith Palace, but found his mission much more difficult than he had anticipated. His majesty expressed himself with bitterness at the disrespect shewn to himself in not consulting his wishes in the matter; but Scott stuck to his point and, in short, bluntly stated that his majesty *must* comply with the projected arrangement. By this respectful firmness, he at length extorted a reluctant consent; but it was remarked that the king treated Scott with coolness for some time afterwards. But the procession was in more respects than one unfortunate for Scott. On

the morning of its taking place, his assistance was required at Holyrood to superintend the arrangements. After seeing all things put in proper order, he left the palace with the intention of viewing the pageant from the window of a friend's house ; but in passing up the Cannongate he found the street so crowded, that he was necessitated to take the space kept open for the pageant. He thus became a most conspicuous object to the assembled multitude, who greeted him with cheers. But there were not wanting those who were ready to impute his appearance to a love of ostentation, and to throw a sneer about, "Sir Walter's procession coming before the king's." Scott was stung to the quick by this innendo, and took advantage of the first opening in the crowd to slip from the public gaze. Sir Walter repeatedly spoke of this circumstance in terms of the most painful anxiety. We may safely assert, that never was so much genius associated with so much modesty as in Scott, and we believe there was only two out of the many tributes to his great name and fame, which he was ever heard to speak of. One of these happened on the occasion of the coronation, when he had pushed his way through the dense multitude for some time with considerable success, but at last got so fast locked up in the crowd, that he was utterly unable to extricate himself. In this difficulty he solicited the assistance of a serjeant of the Scots Greys who was stationed near him ; but the soldier, thinking only of his duty, shook his head and coldly replied, "I can give you no assistance, friend." Scott whispered to him, "Can you not help your countryman, Walter Scott?" The soldier's face flushed up in an instant, "Walter Scott! Yes, Sir. By G—d, you *shall* have help, whatever happens!" and he immediately sent a suitable escort with his illustrious countryman. The other com-

plimentary occasion mentioned by Scott, is told by Captain Basil Hall. One of the officers of the *Barham*, man-of-war, had mentioned that several seamen had entered for service in the vessel, solely in consequence of Sir Walter going with her. "That's something of a compliment certainly," observed Scott, "but I hold that the greatest honour yet paid to my celebrity was by a fishmonger in London last week. Upon my servant applying for some cod for dinner, he found, from its being somewhat late in the day, that there was none to be had; but having accidentally mentioned who it was for, the fishmonger said that altered the matter, and that if a bit was to be had in London for love or money, it would be at my disposal. Accordingly the man walked up with the fish all the way from Billingsgate to Sussex place, in the Regent's Park. Now, if *that* is not substantial literary reputation, I know not what is!" But, perhaps, the truest compliment ever paid to his genius was by the poor weaver, who said, "The only comfort I have in these times of distress is in reading the *Waverley* novels—it is often all the supper I get."

Shortly after the king's visit to Scotland, Sir Walter Scott was appointed one of the deputy-lieutenants of the county of Roxburgh.

Scott's next work, "*Peveril of the Peak*," appeared early in 1823, in four volumes.

Early in the same year, a vacancy occurred in the Roxburgh club, in London, (which admits only a limited number of members, all of the first distinction, either in rank or talent,) by the death of one of the members, when it was proposed by the Earl of Spencer to fill up the vacant chair by the election of the "Unknown author of *Waverley*." This proposal being agreed to, the secretary was requested to address Sir Walter Scott on the subject. Scott returned two humorous and characteristic letters in

reply, which want of space reluctantly compels us to omit. We may mention, however, that Sir Walter only met their club once at their anniversary in 1825.

The story of "*Peveril of the Peak*" is as follows: Sir Geoffrey Peveril, the hero of the tale, is an old baronet of the cavalier faction, during the reign of the merry monarch, Charles II., and descended from an illegitimate son of William the Conqueror. This gentleman was proud of small advantages, irritated at small disappointments, full of prejudices, vain of his high descent, contentious and quarrelsome with all that offered to differ with him, convivial and kind to the poor, except when they plundered his game; and one who hated a roundhead, a poacher, and a presbyterian, as he hated the devil.

When the civil war broke out, Peveril raised a regiment for the king, and was in several of the engagements of that unhappy period, until at length, when his regiment was cut to pieces by Poyntz, he threw himself into his mansion of Martindale Castle, and defended it as long as he could. Forced at last to surrender, he was punished by fine and sequestration. He was taken prisoner at the final defeat of the king's party at Worcester, and would undoubtedly have suffered the fate of a traitor to the commonwealth, had it not been for the interference of his neighbour, Major Bridgenorth, of Moultrassie Hall. Though these gentlemen had taken opposite sides in the civil war, their wives had formed an intimacy sufficiently strong, to be an inducement to their husbands to do a kindness for each other. Besides which, the major had paid a somewhat liberal sum for part of the lands adjoining his own property, which Sir Geoffrey's misfortunes obliged him to sell. Bridgenorth, though a presbyterian, was no republican, whom the love of liberty and religion, in the austere form professed by his party, had led, like

many others, far beyond his first intention in opposing his sovereign. He was equally upright in his intentions with his neighbour, and averse from the extremities to which the independents proceeded under the sway of Cromwell. He dealt justly with every one according to his views, and very kindly with Peveril, when oppressed by the long parliament. A series of losses and privations in his own domestic circle, which is at last reduced to one daughter, Alice, not very likely to survive the mother, who had died shortly after giving her birth, deepens the gloom on his serious and reflecting mind. The amiable and judicious wife of the cavalier baronet, takes charge of the little girl, a few years younger than her only son, Julian. This affords some amends for the benefits conferred on Peveril in the major's day of power. Mutual worth produces mutual benevolence; but there are too many opposing elements in the character of each to admit of social intercourse. It is enough that the knight loves the major, not so well as himself, it is true, but as well as the best possible roundhead could be loved by a zealot in loyalty. Bridgenorth, on the other hand, regards Peveril as much as christian charity could afford to an unenlightened sinner, who had assisted in shedding the blood of the saints.

A closer intimacy is effected between Peveril and Bridgenorth on the restoration of Charles II. At a banquet given by Peveril, at Martindale Castle, in honour of the restoration, the celebrated Countess of Derby, the royal queen of Man, suddenly made her appearance, through a sliding panel in the room where Julian and Alice were at play. Bridgenorth was present, and informed by the countess that she had ordered the execution of William Christian, the brother-in-law of Bridgenorth, for giving possession of the Isle of Man to the parliamentary general.

This so exasperates the major, that he immediately orders her to be arrested. Lady Peveril, however, comes to the rescue, and consigns Bridgenorth to the care of her servants until the countess has time to escape. In the meantime Sir Geoffrey Peveril arrives on the scene, and announces that there was a warrant from the council for the arrest of the countess, whose husband he had served under; and he determines to conduct her away to a place of safety. In so doing, however, he encounters Bridgenorth, and a messenger with the warrant, which he seizes and destroys, defeats the party, and conveys the countess to Vale Royal.

The imaginary feelings of worthlessness which fanaticism induces, causes Bridgenorth to shun the sweets of life. He leaves his house, and places his daughter Alice under the charge of a self-important governante, in the Isle of Man, where the widow of his slaughtered relative resides. After a lapse of some years, she is discovered by Julian, who had been removed to the household of the Countess of Derby. They are, of course, destined for each other, but the hope of fair Alice is checked by the dread of paternal displeasure from the rivalry between the two families. Her struggles between duty and affection are beautifully portrayed. At first, unknown to each other, the youthful lovers exult in the bright summer of their joys—in the fragrant and refreshing sweetness which youth and innocence taste in the dawn of a tender affection. Julian Peveril, however, is destined to act a more conspicuous part in the bustling times in which he lived, than the ardent lover. His patroness is implicated in the popish plot; and Julian is despatched to London, to ascertain its true character, and the aspect of the political horizon. The countess has an attendant, one of the principal personages in the story, called Fenella.

This singular girl, whose acts savour more of fairy potency than of merely mortal power, is of bright and felicitous creation, and may be ranked among the happiest efforts of the author. She is of slender, yet perfect symmetry—of an eastern hue, and of that wild and fiery expression in her eyes, which denotes a mind full of strong and vehement passions. She is not the *less* remarkable for being supposed to be deaf and dumb—a character which she assumes during her services in the household of the countess. When Peveril embarked in a vessel that was sent for him, Fenella, who had a secret attachment for Julian, forced herself on board. In vain did he indicate to this apparently helpless, but interesting creature, the necessity of her returning; but she, by signs, made him understand, that her presence was a necessary protection from some danger with which he was threatened: Fenella, was, however, sent on shore by the Dutch captain who commanded the sloop.

On arriving at Liverpool, Julian falls in with Topham, the noted parliamentary messenger, in whose list of proscriptions he was surprised to find the name of his father. Topham is accompanied by two contemptible fellows, Captain Dangerfield and Everett. Dangerfield swears he will purge the country of papists. "Stick to that, noble captain," said the officer; "but, prithee, reserve thy oaths for the Court of Justice; it is but sheer waste to throw them away as you do in your ordinary conversation." "Fear you nothing, master Topham," answered Dangerfield; "it is requisite to keep a man's gifts in use; and were I altogether to renounce oaths in my private discourse, how should I know how to use one when I needed it? but you hear me use none of your papist abjurations. I swear not by the mass, nor by George, nor by anything that belongs to idolatry; but such downright oaths as may serve a poor protestant gentleman, who would fain serve

heaven and the king." "Bravely spoken, most noble Festus," said his yoke-fellow. "But do not suppose that although I do not use to garnish my words with oaths out of season, that I will be wanting, when called upon, to declare the height and the depth, the width and the length of the hellish plot against the king and the protestant faith."

On the road to Derbyshire, Julian meets at a small inn a stranger whom he saw at Liverpool, and who first declares himself to be Ganlesse, a Roman Catholic priest; but finding his companion no papist, states that he is Simon Canter, a poor preacher of the word. Peveril determines to get rid of him, and starts on his way, threatening him at his peril to follow him. This man was Ned Christian, a brother-in-law of Major Bridgenorth. They meet however at another inn where Christian contrives that Julian shall be robbed of the packet of letters he is conveying from the Countess of Derby to her friends. On arriving at his paternal mansion, Julian finds his father just arrested, and fires his pistol at one of the captors, who happens to be Bridgenorth. His pistols, however, had been rendered harmless, when his pockets had been rifled of the letters. Topham, with his two accomplices, take Sir Geoffrey into custody, while Bridgenorth becomes answerable for Julian, and conducts him to his own house, where Alice warmly welcomes them.

Major Bridgenorth recommends his daughter and his guest to appear strangers to each other, while he conducts Julian into another apartment, where five or six persons in puritanical costume are sitting, to whom Julian's character was announced by the major. Julian recognises Ganlesse among the number. A long grace before a plain but substantial dinner, a thanksgiving somewhat longer than the grace after dinner, and an exposition of a chapter in

the Bible by the major longer than all the three, followed. Bridgenorth while conducting Julian to his chamber, informs him that he is known to be a hired spy, carrying tokens and messages from the Popish Countess of Derby, to her catholic friends in London; he offers him, however, the means of escape, of which Julian refuses to avail himself.

An old retainer of the Peverils, called Lance Outram, musters thirty stout fellows, determined to attack Martindale Castle; but being persuaded against it, he resolves on rescuing Julian from Moultrassie Hall, which they boldly assailed. Julian heard the attack, but was unable to get out of the room, until released by Alice, who called upon him to rescue her father from Outram and his companions. Julian interposes, saves Bridgenorth, and the house which had been set on fire is saved by the joint efforts of both parties. On the road to London, Julian, accompanied by Lance, overtakes the well known minister of Charles' pleasures, Chaffinch, who, under the name of Smith, had been with Ganlesse, when Julian was robbed of his letters. He learns that the packet is in Chaffinch's possession, rides up to him, and takes it from him. Julian arrives in London, and is surprised by meeting Fanella, by whose means he is conveyed into the presence of the merry monarch, who was amusing himself with a number of his courtiers in St. James' Park. Peveril and Fenella are ordered into the apartments of the mistress of one of the king's pimps, the infamous Chaffinch, where he has not long remained before he is surprised by the unexpected appearance of Alice Bridgenorth, who runs into the room followed by the licentious Duke of Buckingham. Alice had been brought to this den of iniquity by her uncle Edward Christian, who by his hypocritical deportment had obtained the guar-

dianship of her from her unsuspecting father ; and the use he made of his power was to offer her fair person at the shrine of the libertine monarch. Julian conveys her from the gripe of prostitution ; and while supporting his lovely burden to his mother's lodgings, he is insulted by two of the Duke of Buckingham's retainers. He quits Alice, and engages with one of them whom he severely wounds. For this offence he is carried to Newgate, where he is confined in the same cell with Jeffrey Hudson, the celebrated dwarf, whose freaks in arms and pasties are humorously recounted. Alice meanwhile is carried off by the other retainer, who had not engaged in the fray, and lodged in the Duke's palace. Her uncle, who fears the discovery of his intrigues, carries her from this place of corruption, and restored her to her father, who was in London at the time.

Julian is removed from Newgate to the Tower, where his father is confined. The father and son along with the dwarf are brought to trial for high treason. The notorious Titus Oates appears against them, with other witnesses, but as Bridgenorth does not appear, the evidence is insufficient, and they are acquitted. They are assailed by the mob on leaving the court, but availing themselves of a cutler's stall, they arm themselves, and with little Hudson, perform prodigies of valour. They are however, invited to a place of refuge, which turns out to be a house belonging to Major Bridgenorth, whom they encounter. He professes friendship, and through a number of hidden passages, conducts Julian to a conventicle of puritans, where he discovers that they are assembled for the purpose of a treasonable conspiracy. Into this plot the gay Buckingham was drawn by the treacherous Ned Christian. Fenella however contrives to get the dwarf enclosed in a violincello, which

with other musical instruments, is sent to court by Buckingham with conspirators (among whom is the renowned Colonel Blood, who attempted to steal the crown from the Tower) for musicians. Little Hudson steps out from his musical prison, and to the great dismay of the conspirators, reveals the plot, Buckingham is sent for, and partly acknowledging his guilt, is forgiven. The countess of Derby appears at court, for the purpose of rescuing the Peverils, who she understood had been prosecuted on her account. The Peverils are presented, and Julian Peveril marries Alice Bridgenorth; her father giving up the claim of mortgage he had on Martindale castle; and Edward Christian, who acknowledges Fenella, or rather Zarah, which was her real name, to be his daughter, is banished.

A few months after "Peveril of the Peak," "Quentin Durward," was ushered into the world, in three volumes. This novel is a fine picture of foreign manners towards the end of the fifteenth century. And well it is contrasted with the introductory outline, which commences the work, of those of the beginning of the nineteenth century, in which the interesting portraits of a restored emigrant of the ancient regime, is one of the happiest probably ever drawn, even by the master hand of Sir Walter Scott.

The hero, a young Scotchman of the shire of Angus, and the only surviving branch of a gentle family, whom the Ogilvies had harried and exterminated in a feud, sets out for France in search of better fortune. Quentin happens to encounter the King, Louis XI., near the Plessis le Tours, and to ingratiate himself into the royal favour, as far as an ingenuous youth could be prized by such a conceited politician. At first, Louis suffers the young adventurer to be nearly drowned, and then assum-

ing the character of a substantial citizen, succours him. He is carried to an inn, where he is kindly entertained by the king, who discovers that he is in search of service, and looks forward for assistance to a maternal uncle, one of his majesty's bravest Scottish archers, named Ludovic Leslie, or Le Balafre, from a deep scar on his face, and Louis manages to get Quentin introduced to his uncle. The author's description of the interview between the relations is well entitled to a place in this volume.

"The cavalier who awaited Quentin Durward's descent into the apartment where he had breakfasted, was one of those of whom Louis XI. had long since said, that they held in their hands the fortunes of France, as to them were entrusted the direct custody and protection of the royal person.

"Each of them ranked as a gentleman, in place and honour; and their near approach to the king's person gave them dignity in their own eyes, as well as in those of the nation of France. They were sumptuously armed, equipped, and mounted; and each was entitled to allowance for a squire, a valet, a page, and two yeomen. With these followers, and a corresponding equipage, an archer of the Scottish guard, was a person of quality and importance; and vacancies being generally filled up by those who had been trained in the service as pages or valets, the cadets of the best Scottish families were often sent to serve under some friend or relation in those capacities, until a chance of preferment should occur.

"Ludovic Leslie, or, as we shall more frequently call him, Le Balafre, by which name he was generally known in France, was upwards of six feet high, robust, strongly compacted in person, and hard favoured in countenance, which latter attribute was much increased by a large and ghastly scar, which beginning on his forehead, and narrowly missing his

right eye, had laid bare the cheek bone, and descended from thence almost to the tip of his ear, exhibiting a deep seam, which was sometimes scarlet, sometimes blue, and sometimes approaching to black; but always hideous, because at variance with the complexion of the face in whatever state it chanced to be, whether agitated or still, flushed with unusual passion, or in its ordinary state of weather-beaten and sun-burnt swarthiness.

"His dress and arms were splendid. He wore his national bonnet, crested with a tuft of feathers, and with a Virgin Mary of massive silver for a brooch. These had been presented to the Scottish guard, in consequence of the king, in one of his fits of superstitious piety, having devoted the swords of his guards to the service of the Holy Virgin, and, as some say, carried the matter so far as to draw out a commission to Our Lady, as their Captain General. The archer's gorget, arm-pieces, and gauntlets were of the finest steel curiously inlaid with silver; and his hauberk, or shirt of mail, was as clear as the frost work of a winter morning upon fern or brier. He wore a loose surcoat, or cassock, of rich blue velvet, open at the sides like that of a herald, with, a large white cross of embroidered silver bisecting it both before and behind; his knees and legs were protected by hose of mail and shoes of steel; a broad strong poignard (called the *Mercy of God*) hung by his right side; the baldric for his two handed sword, richly embroidered, hung upon his left shoulder: but for convenience, he at present carried in his hand that unwieldy, weapon, which the rules of his service forbade him to lay aside.

"Quentin Durward, though, like the Scottish youth of the period, he had been early taught to look upon arms and war, thought he had never seen a more martial looking, or more completely equipped

and accomplished man-at-arms, than now saluted him in the person of his mother's brother, called Ludovic with the Scar, or Le Balafre; yet he could not but shrink a little from the grim expression of his countenance, while with its rough mustachios, he brushed first one and the other cheek of his kinsman, welcomed his fair nephew to France, and, in the same breath asked what news from Scotland.

"'Little good, dear uncle,' replied young Durward; 'but I am glad that you know me so readily.'

"'I would have known thee, boy, in the *landes* of Bourdeaux, had I met thee there marching like a crane on a pair of stilts. But sit thee down—sit thee down—if there is sorrow to hear of, we will have wine to make us bear it. Ho! old Pinch Measure, our good host, bring us of thy best, and that in an instant.'

"The well-known sound of the Scottish-French was as familiar in taverns near Plessis, as that of the Swiss-French in the modern *ginguettes* of Paris; and promptly—ay, with the promptitude of fear and precipitation, was it heard and obeyed. A flagon of champagne soon stood before them, of which the elder took a draught, while the nephew helped himself to a moderate sip, to acknowledge his uncle's courtesy, saying, in excuse, that he had already drank wine that morning.

"'That had been a rare apology in the mouth of thy sister, fair nephew,' said Le Balafre; 'you must fear the wine pot less, if you would wear beard on your face and write yourself soldier. But come, come—unbuckle your Scottish mail-bag—give us the news of Glen-houlakin—how doth my sister?'

"'Dead, fair uncle,' answered Quentin, sorrowfully.

"'Dead!' echoed his uncle, with a tone rather marked by wonder than sympathy—'why, she was

five years younger than I, and I was never better in my life. Dead! the thing is impossible. I have never had so much as a headache unless after reveling out my two or three days' furlough with the brethren of the joyous science—and my poor sister is dead!—and your father, fair nephew, hath he married again?’

“And ere the youth could reply, he read the answer in his surprise at the question, and said, ‘What, no?—I would have sworn that Allan Durward was no man to live without a wife. He loved to have his house in order—loved to look on a pretty woman too: and was somewhat strict in life withal—matrimony did all this for him. Now, I care little about these comforts; and I can look on a pretty woman without thinking of the sacrament of wedlock—I am scarce holy enough for that.’

“‘Alas! dear uncle, my mother was left a widow a year since, when Glen-houlakin was harried by the Ogilvies. My father, and my two uncles, and my two elder brothers, and seven of my kinsmen, and the harper, and the tasker, and some six more of our people were killed in defending the castle; and there is not a burning hearth, or a standing stone in all Glen-houlakin.’

“‘Cross of St. Andrew!’ said Le Balafre: ‘that is what I call an onslaught. Ay, these Ogilvies were even but sorry neighbours to Glen-houlakin—an evil chance it was; but fate of war—fate of war.—When did this mishap befall, fair nephew?’ With that he took a deep draught of wine, and shook his head with much solemnity, when his kinsman replied, that his family had been destroyed upon the festival of Saint Jude last bye-past.

“‘Look ye there,’ said the soldier; ‘I said it was all chance—on that very day, I and twenty of my comrades carried the castle of Roche-noir by storm,

from Amaury Bras-de-fer, a captain of free lances, whom you must have heard off. I killed him at his own threshold, and gained as much gold as made this fair chain, which was once twice as long as it now is—and that minds me to send part of it on a holy errand.—Here, Andrew—Andrew !’

“ Andrew, his yeoman, entered, dressed like the archer himself, in the general equipment, but without the armour for the limbs—that of the body more coarsely manufactured—his cap without a plume, and his cassock made of serge, or coarse cloth, instead of rich velvet. Untwining his gold chain from his neck, Balafre twisted off, with his firm and strong set teeth, about four inches from the one end of it, and said to his attendant, ‘ Here, Andrew, carry this to my gossip, jolly Father Boniface, the monk of St. Martin’s—greet him well from me, by the same token that he could not say “ God save ye,” when we last parted at midnight. Tell my gossip, that my brother and sister, and some others of my house, are all dead and gone, and I pray him to say masses for their souls, as far as these links will carry him, and to do on trust what else may be necessary to free them from purgatory. And hark ye, as they were just living people, and free from all heresy, it may be that they are well nigh out of limbo already, so that a little matter may have them free of the fetlocks ; and in that case, look ye, ye will say that I desire to take out the gold in curses upon a generation called the Ogilvies, in what way soever the church may best come at them. You understand all this, Andrew ?’

“ The coullier nodded.

“ ‘ Then look that none of the links find their way to the wine-house, ere the monk touches them ; for if it so chance, thou shalt taste of saddle-girth and stirrup-leather, till thou art as raw as Saint Bar-

tholomew.—Yet hold, I see thy eye has fixed on the wine-measure, and thou shalt not go without tasting.'

"So saying, he filled him a brimful cup, which the coutelier drank off, and retired to do his patron's commission.

" 'And now, fair nephew, let us hear what was your own fortune in this unhappy matter.'

" 'I fought it out among those who were older and stouter than I was, till we were all brought down,' said Edward, 'and I received a cruel wound.'—'Not a worse slash than I received ten years since myself,' said Le Balafre.—'Look at this, now, my fair nephew,' tracing the dark crimson gash that was imprinted on his face—'an Ogilvie's sword never plunged so deep a furrow.'

" 'They plunged deeply enough,' answered Quentin, sadly, 'but they were tired at last, and my mother's entreaties procured mercy for me, when I was found to retain some spark of life; but although a learned monk of Aberbrothock, who chanced to be our guest at the fatal time, and narrowly escaped being killed in the fray, was permitted to bind my wounds, and finally to move me to a place of safety, it was only on promise given, both by my mother and him, that I should become a monk.' "

But Quentin found that this vocation would not answer him; and after having learned reading and writing, rare accomplishments in those days, he set off to push his fortunes in the busy world. His endeavours were successful, for having saved the king's life at a bear-hunt, he is enrolled among the Scottish archers of his guard, and frequently on matters of importance. On one occasion, when escorting Isabella, Countess of Croye, they were followed by Orleans, who could not love the match provided for him by the king, but was deeply enamoured with the

lovely Isabella. Quentin, however, unhorses him, and sustains a noble combat with the renowned Dunois, the companion of Orleans, till a body of the archers ride up to his relief. The assailants were made prisoners, and the victorious Durward pursues his dangerous way under uncertain guidance.

"While he hesitated whether it would be better to send back one of his followers, he heard the blast of a horn, and, looking in the direction from whence the sound came, beheld a horseman riding very fast towards them. The low size, and wild, shaggy, untrained state of the animal, reminded Quentin of the mountain-breed of horses in his own country; but this was much more finely limbed, and, with the same appearance of hardiness, was more rapid in its movements. The head, particularly, which, in the Scottish pony, is often limpid and heavy, was small and well placed in the neck of this animal, with full sparkling eyes, and expanded nostrils.

"The rider was even more singular in his appearance than the horse which he rode, though that was extremely unlike the horses of France. Although he managed his palfrey with great dexterity, he sat with his feet in broad stirrups, somewhat resembling a shovel, so short that his knees were well nigh as high as the pommel of his saddle. His dress was a red turban of small size, in which he wore a sullied plume, secured by a clasp of silver; his tunic, which was shaped like those of the Estradoits, a sort of troops whom the Venetians at that time levied in the provinces, on the eastern side of their gulf, was green in colour, and tawdrily laced with gold; he wore very wide drawers or trowsers of white, though none of the cleanest, which gathered beneath the knee, and his awarthy legs were quite bare, unless for the complicated laces which bound a pair of sandals on his feet; he had no spurs, the edge of his

large stirrups being so sharp, as to serve to goad the horse in a severe manner. In a crimson sash, this singular horseman wore a dagger on the right side, and on the left a short crooked Moorish sword; and a tarnished baldrick over the shoulder hung the horn which announced his approach. He had a swarthy and sun-burnt visage, with a thin beard and piercing dark eyes, a well formed mouth and nose, and other features which might have been pronounced handsome, but for the black elf-locks which hung around his face, and the air of wildness and emaciation which rather seemed to indicate a savage, more than a civilized man.

"Quentin rode up to the Bohemian, and said to him as he suddenly assumed his proportion on his horse, 'Methinks, friend, you will prove but a blind guide, if you look at the tail of your horse rather than his ears.'

"'And if I were actually blind,' answered the Bohemian, 'I could guide you through any country in this realm of France, or in those adjoining to it.'

"'Yet you are no Frenchman born,' said the Scot.

"'I am not,' answered the guide.

"'What countryman then are you?' demanded Quentin.

"'I am of no country,' answered the guide.

"'How, of no country?' repeated the Scot.

"'No!' answered the Bohemian, 'of none, I am a Zingaro, a Bohemian, an Egyptian, or whatever the Europeans in their different languages may call our people; but I have no country.'

"'Are you a Christian?' asked the Scotsman.

"The Bohemian shook his head.

"'Dog!' said Quentin, (for there was little toleration in the spirit of Catholicism in those days,) 'dost thou worship Mahoun?'

" 'No,' was the indifferent and concise answer of the guide, who neither seemed offended nor surprised at the young man's violence of manner.

" 'Are you a Pagan, then, or what are you ?'

" 'I have no religion,' answered the Bohemian.

" Durward started back ; for though he had heard of Saracens and idolators, it had never entered into his ideas or belief, that any body of men could exist who practised no mode of worship whatsoever. He recovered from his astonishment to ask where his guide usually dwelt.

" 'Wherever I chance to be for the time,' replied the Bohemian ; 'I have no home.'

" 'How do you guard your property ?'

" 'Excepting the clothes which I wear, and the horse which I ride on, I have no property.'

" 'Yet you dress gaily and ride gallantly,' said Durward ; 'what are your means of subsistence ?'

" 'I eat when I am hungry, drink when I am thirsty, and have no other means of subsistence than chance throws in my way,' replied the vagabond.

" 'Under whose laws do you live ?'

" 'I acknowledge obedience to none but as it suits my pleasure,' said the Bohemian.

" 'Who is your leader, and who commands you ?'

" 'The father of our tribe—if I choose to obey him,' said the guide ; 'otherwise I have no commander.'

" 'You are then,' said the wondering querist, 'destitute of all that other men are combined by ; you have no law, no leader, no suited means of subsistence, no house, no home. You have, may heaven compassionate you, no country—and may heaven enlighten and forgive you, you have no God. What is it that remains to you, deprived of government, domestic happiness, and religion ?'

" 'I have liberty,' said the Bohemian ; 'I crouch

to no one—obey no one—respect no one. I go where I will—live as I can—and die when my day comes.’

“ ‘But you are subject to instant execution, at the pleasure of the judge.’

“ ‘Be it so,’ returned the Bohemian; I can but die so much sooner.’

“ ‘And to imprisonment also,’ said the Scot; ‘and where then is your boasted freedom?’

“ ‘In my thoughts,’ said the Bohemian, ‘which no chains can bind: while yours, even when your limbs are free, remain fettered by your laws and your superstitions, your dreams of local attachment, and your fantastic visions of civil policy. Such as I are free in spirit when our limbs are chained—you are imprisoned in mind, even when your limbs are most at freedom?’

“ ‘Yet the freedom of your thoughts,’ said the Scot, ‘relieves not the pressure of the gyves on your limbs.’

“ ‘For a brief time that may be endured; and if within that period I cannot extricate myself, and fail of relief from my comrades, I can always die, and death is the most perfect of all freedom.’

“ Here was a deep pause of some duration, which Quentin at length broke by resuming his queries.

“ ‘Yours is a wandering race, unknown to the nations of Europe—whence do they derive their origin?’

“ ‘I may not tell you,’ answered the Bohemian.

“ ‘When will they relieve this kingdom from their presence, and return to the land from whence they came?’ said the Scot.

“ ‘When the day of their pilgrimage shall be accomplished,’ replied his vagrant guide.

“ ‘Are you not sprung from those tribes of Israel, which were carried into captivity beyond the great river Euphrates?’ said Quentin, who had not forgotten

the lore which had been taught him at Aberbrothock.

"'Had we been so,' returned the Bohemian, 'we had followed their faith and practised their rites.'

"'What is thine own name?' said Durward.

"'My proper name is only known to my brethren; the men beyond our tents call me Hayraddin Mau-grabin, that is Hayraddin the African man.'

"'Thou speakest too well for one who hath lived always in thy filthy horde,' said the Scot.

"'I have learned some of the knowledge of this land,' said Hayraddin. 'When I was a little boy, our tribe was purchased by the hunters after human flesh. An arrow went through my mother's head, and she died. I was entangled in the blanket on her shoulders, and was taken by the pursuers. A priest begged me from the provost's archers, and trained me up in Frankish learning for two or three years.'

"'How came you to part from him?' demanded Durward.

"'I stole money from him, even the god he worshipped,' answered Hayraddin, with perfect composure. 'He detected me and beat me; I stabbed him with my knife, fled to the wood, and was again united to my people.'

"'Wretch!, said Durward, 'did you murder your benefactor.'

"'What had he to do to burthen me with his benefits? The Zingaro boy was no house-bred cur, to dog the heels of his master and crouch beneath his blows, for scraps of food; he was the imprisoned wolf-whelp, which at the first opportunity broke his chain, murdered his master, and returned to his wilderness.'

"There was another pause, when the young Scot, without further investigating the character and purpose of this suspicious guide, asked Hayraddin,

'whether it was not true that his people, amid their ignorance, pretended to a knowledge of futurity, which was not given to the sages, philosophers and divines of more polished society?'

"'We pretend to it,' said Hayraddin; 'and it is with justice.'

"'How can it be that so high a gift is bestowed on so abject a race?' said Quentin.

"'Can I tell you?' answered Hayraddin—'yes, I may indeed; but it is when you shall explain to me why the dog can trace the footsteps of a man, while man, the noble animal, hath no power to trace those of the dog. These powers which seem to you so wonderful, are instinctive in our race. From the lines on the face and on the hand, we can tell you the future fate of those who consult us, even as surely as you know from the blossom of the tree in spring, what fruit it will bear in harvest.' "

This is a picture of a gipsy, a class of individuals whom Sir Walter Scott had no great respect for, although he sometimes makes them figure in his novels. Very few of the descendants of the aboriginal gipsies are now to be found in Europe. The severity of the laws have considerably thinned this description of vagabonds; and the following statement will show that Sir Walter took an active part in their dispersion, in his capacity of sheriff-depute of Selkirkshire.

"A set of people possessing the same erratic habits, and practising the trade of tinkers, are well known in the borders; and have often fallen under the cognizance of the law. They are often called gypsies, and pass through the country annually in small bands, with their carts and asses. The men are tinkers, poachers, and thieves upon a small scale. They also sell crockery, deal in old rags, in eggs, in salt, in tobacco, and such trifles; and manufacture horn into spoons. I believe most of those who come

through Selkirkshire, resided during winter in the villages of Horncliffe and Spittal, in Northumberland, and in that of Yetholm in Roxburghshire.

"Mr. Smith, the respectable bailie of Kelso, can give the most complete information concerning those who reside at Kirk Yetholm. Formerly, I believe, they were much more desperate in their conduct than at present, but some of the most atrocious families have been extirpated. I allude particularly to the *Winters*, a Northumberland clan, who, I fancy, are all buried by this time.

"Mr. Raddell, justice of the peace for Roxburghshire, with my assistance and concurrence, cleared this country of the last of them about eight or nine years ago. They were thorough desperadoes, of the worst class of vagabonds. Those who now travel through this country give offence chiefly by poaching and small thefts. They are divided into clans, the principal names being Faa, Baillie, Young, Ruthven, and Gordon.

"All of them are perfectly ignorant of religion; nor do their children receive any education. They marry and cohabit amongst each other, and are held in a sort of horror by the common people.

"I do not conceive them to be the proper oriental Egyptian race: at least they are much intermingled with our national outlaws and vagabonds. They are said to keep up a communication with each other through Scotland, and to have some internal government and regulation, as to the districts which each family travels.

"I cannot help again referring to Mr. Smith of Kelso, a gentleman who can give the most accurate information respecting the habits of those itinerants, as their winter-quarters of Yetholm, are upon an estate of which he has long had the management."

The three following queries having been put to

Mr. Smith, a lawyer and magistrate of Kelso, he returned the satisfactory answers, which we here insert, accompanied by his own appropriate remarks.

1. What number of gypsies are there in this country?

"I know of none except the colony of Yetholm, and one family who lately removed from that place to Kelso. Yetholm consists of two towns or large villages, called *Town* Yetholm and *Kirk* Yetholm. The first is in the estate of Mr. Wanchope of Niddry; the latter in that of the Marquis of Tweeddale. The number of the gipsy colony at present in Kirk Yetholm amounts to at least one hundred and nine men women and children: and perhaps two or three may have escaped notice. They marry early in life, in general have many children, and their number seems to be increasing.

2. In what do the men and women mostly employ themselves?

"I have known the colony between forty and fifty years. At my first remembrance of them they were called the *tinklers* (tinkers) of Yetholm, from the males being chiefly then employed in mending pots, and other culinary utensils, especially in their peregrinations through the hilly and less populous parts of the country.

"Sometimes they were called *horners*, from their occupation in making and selling horn spoons, called cutties. Now their common appellation is that of *muggers*, or, what pleases them better, *potters*. They purchase at a cheap rate, the cast or faulty articles at the different manufactories of earthenware, which they carry for sale all over the country; consisting of groups of six, ten, and sometimes twelve or fourteen persons, male and female, young and old, provided with a horse and cart to transport the pottery; besides shelties and asses to carry the youngest of

the children, and such baggage as they find necessary.

"In the country they sleep in barns and byres, or other out-houses; and when they cannot find that accommodation, they take the canvass covering from the pottery cart, and squat below it like a covey of of partridges in the snow.

"A few of the colony also employ themselves occasionally in making besoms, foot-bosses, &c. from heath, broom, and bent, and sell them at Kelso, and the neighbouring towns. After all, their employment can be considered little better than an apology for idleness and vagrancy.

"They are in general great adepts in hunting, shooting, and fishing; in which last they use the net and spear, as well as the rod; and often supply themselves with a hearty meal by their dexterity. They have no notion of their being limited in their field sports, either to time, place, or mode of destruction.

"I do not see that the women are any otherwise employed than attending the young children, and assisting to sell the pottery when carried through the country.

3. Have they any settled abode in winter, and where?

"Their residence, with the exception of a single family, who some years ago came to Kelso is at Kirk Yetholm, and chiefly confined to one row of houses, or street, of that town, which goes by the name of Tinker-row. Most of them have leases of their possessions, granted for a term of nineteen times nineteen years, for payment of a small sum yearly; something of the nature of a quit-rent. There is no tradition in the neighbourhood concerning the time when the gipsies first took up their residence at that place, nor whence they came.

"Most of the leases, I believe, were granted by

the family of the Bennets of Grubet; the last of whom was Sir David Bennet who died about sixty years ago. The late Mr. Nesbet of Dirleton, then succeeded to the estate, comprehending the baronies of Kirk Yetholm and Grubet. Not long after his death the property was acquired by the late Lord Tweeddale's trustees.

"During the latter part of the life of the late Mr. Nesbet, he was less frequently at his estate in Roxburghshire than formerly. He was a great favourite of the gipsies, and was in the habit of calling them his body-guards, and often gave them money."

The following are a few of Mr. Smith's remarks upon this singular race of people, now almost extinct.

"I remember that about forty-five years ago, being then an apprentice to a writer, who was in use to receive the rents as well as the small duties of Kirk Yetholm, he sent me there with a list of names, and a statement of what was due; recommending me to apply to the landlord of the public house in the village for any information or assistance I might need.

* "After waiting a long time and receiving payment from most of the feuars, or renters, I observed to him that none of the persons of the names of Faa, Young, Blythe, Fleckie, &c., who stood at the bottom of the list for small sums, had come to meet me, according to the notice given by the baron officer; and proposed sending to inform them that they were detaining me, and to request their immediate attendance.

"The landlord with a grave face inquired whether my master had desired me to ask money from those men? I said, not particularly; but they stood on the list. 'So I see,' said the landlord; 'but had your master been here himself, he did not dare to ask money from them, either as rent or feu duty. He knows that it is as good as if it were in his pocket. They will pay when their own time comes, but do

not like to pay at a set time with the rest of the barony; and still less to be craved.'

"I accordingly returned without their money, and reported progress. I found that the landlord was right; my master, said with a smile, that it was unnecessary to send to them, after the previous notice from the baron officer; it was enough if I had received the money if offered. Their rent and feu duty was brought to the office in a few weeks. I need scarcely add, those persons all belonged to the tribe.

"When first I knew any thing about the colony, old Will Faa was king, or leader, and had held the sovereignty for many years.

"Meeting at Kelso with Sir Walter Scott, whose discriminating habits and just observations I had occasion to know from his youth, and at the same time seeing one of my Yetholm friends in the horse market, I merely said to Mr. Scott, 'Try to get before that man in the drab coat: look at him on your return, and tell me whether you ever saw him, and what you think of him.' He was so good as to indulge me; and rejoining me, said, without hesitation, 'I never saw the man that I know of; but he is one of the gipsies of Yetholm that you told me of several years ago.' I need hardly say that he was perfectly correct.

"The descendants of Faa now take the name of *Fall*, from the Messrs. Falls, of Dunbar, who, they pride themselves in saying, are of the same stock and lineage. When old Will Faa was upwards of eighty years of age, he called on me at Kelso, in his way to Edinburgh, telling me he was going to see the laird, the late Mr. Nesbit of Dirleton, as he understood he was very unwell, and himself being now old, and not so stout as he had been, he wished to see him once more before he died.

"The old man set out by the nearest road, which

was by no means his common practice. Next market-day some of the farmers informed me that they had been in Edinburgh, and seen Will Faa upon the bridge (the south bridge was not then built); that he was tossing about his old brown hat, and huzzaing with great vociferation, that he had seen the laird before he died. Indeed Will himself had no time to lose, for having set his face homewards by the way of the sea-coast, to vary his route, as is the general custom of the gang, he only got the length of Coldingham, when he was taken ill, and died."

In the following year, 1824, came out "St. Ronan's Well," and "Redgauntlet," in three volumes each. The former was upon a plan hitherto unattempted by Scott, in as far as it dealt with the scenes and characters of our own times, and where he was of course limited to the region of modern everyday life. This field was already crowded with literary competitors of high and deserved fame, and the consequence was, the onset of the whole hive of southern critics about his ears, and holding forth against him the favourite work of his favourite author, somewhat like old Sheriff of Kirkaldy shooting at the devil with the pulpit bible. All was of no avail, however, for although our English brethren were for awhile influenced by this storm of vituperation, the author's own countrymen felt and acknowledged that "his right hand had not forgot his cunning." Touchwood and Meg Dods, the clergyman Cargill, and worthy Mrs. Blower, from the Bowhead, are amongst his very best characters.

In "Redgauntlet," Scott took his last farewell of the "auld Stuart race,"—although from the sort of lingering affection he seemed to cherish towards that ancient family and their adherents, we fully expected he would have celebrated high mass over the remains of Cardinal York,—an individual of whom

he testified great anxiety to glean every particular. Scott has, on this account, been charged with Jacobitism, by people who considered themselves capable of seeing farther through a stone wall than their neighbours; and, indeed, some of the nincompoops have alleged his indulgence of this sentiment in his writings, as the principal reason for keeping his name so long a mystery. These people do not understand the character or feeling of Scotsmen of our author's generation. They were Jacobites in feeling but not in principle. They cherished towards the exiled family only that hereditary veneration of exalted birth so inherent in the national character, mingled with sorrow for their downfall, and regret for the reasons which caused their expulsion from the kingdom of their fathers. So felt Scott, both as a Scotsman and a poet,—the latter, as Shenstone fancifully, though perhaps not less justly observes, being naturally addicted to hereditary attachments—in short, a Tory by nature.—“As for politics,” says the admirer of the Leasowes, in one of his letters, “I think poets are Tories by nature, supposing them to be by nature poets. The love of an individual person or family that has worn a crown for many successions, is an inclination greatly adapted to the fanciful tribe. On the other hand, mathematicians, abstract reasoners, of no manner of attachment to persons, at least of the visible part of them, but prodigiously devoted to the ideas of virtue, liberty, and so forth, are generally *Whigs*.”

In 1825, “The Crusaders” appeared, in four volumes. The Crusaders contains two tales, “The Talisman,” and “The Betrothed.” “The Talisman” is one of the finest eastern tales in the English language, and demonstrates how easy it is for true genius to overcome the obstacles which space, time, and circumstances can interpose to its flight. “The Be-

trothed" is a much inferior work, and is thought still more so from the inapplicability of the general title to it. It ought to be called a Romance of the Cymry, rather than a Tale of the Crusades.

In the summer of 1825, Sir Walter visited Ireland, accompanied by his son-in-law, Mr. Lockhart, and his two daughters, Mrs. Lockhart, and Miss Scott. This excursion was intended to be quite private, and chiefly as a visit to his son, Captain Charles Scott, of the 15th Hussars, then quartered in Dublin, he, therefore, gave no little offence to several public bodies, by declining invitations to various splendid entertainments. But although he could escape the ceremonious courtesies of his Irish admirers, it was not so easy to escape from the more gratifying indications of admiration from the promiscuous crowd. He went to the theatre one night, along with Miss Edgeworth, Mr. Lockhart, and his two daughters. He had not been long seated when a hubbub commenced in the gallery, to the great annoyance of those below—the more so that the loud cheers vollied forth by *the gods* were quite unintelligible to the less exalted portion of the audience. At last the *thunder* became so continued and deafening that the actors were proceeding in dumb show: the curtain fell—the manager appeared and humbly asked the deities what they pleased to want? "Sir Walter Scott!" was the laconic and truly Irish response of some hundreds of voices; and the manager, unaware of the presence of the distinguished visitor, retired quite disconcerted, fancying, doubtless, that the unreasonable *boys* had taken a fancy to have the illustrious author introduced in character on his boards. Some quicker wits in the pit, however, caught the hint, and soon distinguished the object of their godships' acclamations; the intelligence spread like wild-fire; the whole house rose with one consent, and greeted

him in the most enthusiastic manner. Scott acknowledged, as usual in brief terms, this flattering and unsophisticated testimony of public admiration, and again sat down amid loud applause.

Amongst other objects of curiosity in Dublin, Scott visited the tomb of the dean of St. Patrick's. He then examined the library of St. Sepulchre, in the course of which a scene is said to have occurred betwixt himself and the deputy-librarian, which is highly characteristic of the caution with which he preserved his incognito, relative to the authorship of the Waverley novels. The official conceiving that if he could throw the Great Unknown off his guard and discover the grand *secret*, he would be a made man. With this intent he entered into some familiar conversation with him, and carelessly abandoning the immediate subject, he said, "Do you know, Sir Walter, that it was only lately I've had time to get through *your* 'Redgauntlet.'"

"Sir," replied Scott, with perfect composure, "I never heard of *such* a book."

Sir Walter was highly gratified by his tour in the Emerald Isle; in writing to a friend, he says "The poverty of the Irish is not exaggerated—neither is their wit,—nor their good humour—nor their whimsical absurdity—nor their courage. Wit.—I gave a fellow a shilling on one occasion, when sixpence was the fee, saying 'Remember you owe me sixpence, Pat!'—'May your honour live till I pay you!' was the reply. There was courtesy, as well as art in this; and all the clothes on Pat's back would have been dearly bought by the sufta in question. Humour.—There is perpetual kindness in the Irish cabin—buttermilk, and potatoes—a stool is offered, or a stone is rolled, that your honour may sit down, and be out of the smoke, and those who beg every where else, seem desirous to exercise free hospitality in

their own houses. Their natural disposition is turned to gaiety and happiness ; while a Scotchman is thinking about the next term-day, or, if easy on that subject, about hell in the next world ; while an Englishman is making a little hell in the present, because his muffin is not well toasted, Pat's mind is always turned to fun and ridicule. They are terribly excitable to be sure, and will murder you on slight suspicion, and find out next day, that it was all a mistake, and that it was not yourself they meant to kill, at all, at all !”

Having sojourned for a month in the Green Isle, Scott and his friends, took shipping for Holyhead, and proceeded to the Lakes of Cumberland, where with Wordsworth as his guide, he spent some weeks in contemplating the varied beauties of Mere-land ; not forgetting a visit to the author of “*Thalaba*,” who always held a high place in Scott's estimation. The little party then proceeded homewards, where they arrived in safety and high spirits.

Having now seen Scott placed on the topmost rounds of Fortune's wheel, we will pause awhile to contemplate the high and happy situation to which his splendid genius and prodigious industry had raised him, ere we trace that fatal revolution which precipitated him into an abyss of misfortune, in the effort of extricating himself from which his mighty mind sunk.

We cannot better introduce this part of our subject than in Scott's own words, where, in the introduction to the “*Chronicles of the Canongate*,” he takes a sorrowful, yet resigned, retrospective glance at the height from which he had fallen. “Through the success of my literary efforts,” he says, “I had been enabled to indulge some of the tastes which a retired person of my station might be supposed to entertain. In the pen of this nameless romancer,

I seemed to possess something like the secret fountain of coined gold and pearls, vouchsafed to the traveller of the Eastern Tale; and no doubt believed that I might venture, without silly imprudence, to extend my personal expenditure considerably beyond what I should have thought of, had my means been limited to the competence which I derived from inheritance, with the moderate income of a professional situation. I bought, and built, and planted, and was considered by myself, as by the rest of the world, in the safe possession of an easy fortune."

It would appear that Scott's annual income at this time must have been somewhere about £10,000 a-year, reckoning the emoluments of his official situations with the profits of his literary labours; yet he was continually in want of ready money, as will be evident from his cash transactions with Ballantyne and Constable, which will be exhibited in the proper place. Under these circumstances we cannot comprehend how he could flatter himself that he was in the safe possession of an easy fortune, for his territorial acquisitions did not yield a return of more than £200 or £300 a-year. His personal expenses, that is to say of himself, family, and household, in town and country, would not exceed £5000 a-year; the rest was consumed in the buying, building, and planting, he speaks of above.

Scott continued to reside in Castle street during the sittings of the Court of Session, attending daily at his post as principal clerk; but his heart was at Abbotsford, and not a day did he remain in town when he could escape from it. So eager was his affection for this creation of his fancy, that on the day when the court rose for the terms of vacation, and not unfrequently on the Saturdays during its sittings, his carriage was in readiness for him at the door of the Parliament House, and he drove off

direct to the country without calling at his town residence. Whilst residing at Abbotsford, he seemed so constantly engaged in superintending his agricultural and planting operations during the earlier part of the day, and with company in the evening,* that it ap-

* When Monsieur Alexandre, the celebrated ventriloquist, was in Scotland, he paid a visit to Abbotsford, where he entertained his distinguished host, and his numerous visitors, with some specimens of his unrivalled imitations. On the following morning, when he was about to depart, Sir Walter felt a good deal embarrassed as to what sort of acknowledgment he should offer; but at length considering that it would probably be most agreeable to the young foreigner to be paid in professional coin, if any, he retired for a few minutes, and on returning, presented him with the following epigram. It must be remembered that Sir Walter was sheriff of the county of Selkirk.

"Of yore, in old England it was not thought good
To carry two visages under one hood;
What should folk say to you; who have faces such plenty
That from under one hood, you last night showed us twenty!
Stand forth, arch deceiver, and tell us the truth,
Are you handsome, or ugly; in age, or in youth?
Man, woman, or child—a dog or a mouse?
Or are you at once each live thing in the house?
Each live thing, did I ask? each dead implement too,
A workshop in your person—saw, chisel, and screw!
Above all, are you one individual? I know
You must be at least Alexandre and Co.
But I think you're a troop—an assemblage—a mob,
And that I, as the Sheriff, should take up the job;
And instead of rehearsing your wonders in verse,
Must read you the riot-act, and bid you disperse."

—We need not say how gratefully this Impromptu was received by the ventriloquist, who deemed it the most valuable curiosity in his collection. That a great deal of Sir Walter's valuable time was taken up by entertaining visitors with whom he was totally unacquainted, the following anecdote, from among many, will prove.—An English lady and gentleman, who in making the tour of Scotland, arrived in the neighbourhood of Abbotsford, without providing themselves with an introduction to Sir Walter Scott, and who felt, when there, an irresistible inclination to intrude upon him, could think of no expedient by which they could gratify their curiosity, but by throwing themselves upon his mercy, and begging the favour of an interview. In their note to him, they said that in coming to Scotland, their principal object had been to see "the great Idea of the North, Sir Walter Scott;" and they prayed him to consider how hard it would be, if, after all their travels, they should have to return

peared impossible he could find leisure for the composition of those works which were keeping the public in a state of excitement. His habits, however, were methodical. He usually commenced writing about seven o'clock in the morning, and continued at his desk, except a short interval for breakfast, till one or two in the afternoon; then shaved, dressed, and rode or walked out to visit his grounds till dinner time. The evening he dedicated to amusement, either in reading, or entertaining company, which he was seldom without. One of the most remarkable traits of Scott's character was the entire absence of any thing like the airs of authorship in his language and behaviour. He left the author in his study, and came forth to the world the plain country gentleman. When he rode out he was usually dressed in a short green coat, wide trousers, and stout shoes; and he bestrode a strong little gallop-way, fitted for climbing the braes, and from which he could dismount and get up again with ease. He was always attended by two favourite stag-hounds, very fine animals. To those employed on his grounds, he always spoke in the most friendly and familiar terms; the consequence was, that he was universally beloved by his inferiors, equally by those dependent on himself, and all the surrounding district. He was impatient of promiscuous intruders on his property; but he was never known to prosecute any one, contenting himself by merely requesting the trespassers to quit his grounds. Respecting the mansion of Abbotsford itself—the successor of the

home disappointed. After despatching this card they anxiously waited with fear and trembling, lest their last hope should fail; but their expectations were not defeated; for Sir Walter immediately returned an answer, couched in the most polite terms, and concluding with a request that they would come that day to dine with him, “as he had some reason to believe that the Lion of the North, like his friends at Exeter Change, was best worth seeing at feeding time.”

humble homestead of Cartley-hole—the most expressive general description is undoubtedly that of the Frenchman, a “Romance in Stone and Lime.”

The internal appearance of Abbotsford it is almost impossible to describe, but it would occupy volumes to enumerate all the curiosities which were there congregated from every quarter of the known world. A menagerie might almost have been formed out of the zoological presents he received from distant lands. “A friend told me,” says Allan Cunningham, “he was at Abbotsford one evening, when a servant announced a present from—I forget what chieftain in the north. ‘Bring it in,’ said the poet.” The sound of strange feet were soon heard, and in came two beautiful Shetland ponies, with long manes and uncut tails, and so small that they might have been sent to Elfland, to the Queen of the Fairies herself. One poor Scotsman, to show his gratitude to Scott, for some kindness, he, as sheriff, had shown him, sent two kangaroos from New Holland; and Washington Irving lately told me, that some Spaniard or other, having caught two wild Andalusian boars, consulted him how he might have them sent to the author of the “Vision of Don Roderick.”

Such was Abbotsford, in the creation of which, Scott has been heard to declare, that he felt greater pride than in being the author of all the productions of his pen. Alas! to think that with the rearing of this goodly heritage must be associated the sorrowful recollection of all the distresses which overclouded the latter years of his life, and which brought him, perhaps, to an untimely grave!

On his return from Ireland in the autumn of 1825, Scott was engaged to write the Life of Buonaparte, for Constable's Miscellany. It was upon this work he was busily employed, when in February, 1826, the long-established publishing house of Constable

and Co., became bankrupt; and along with it the printing concern of Ballantyne and Co. In the introduction to "The Chronicles of the Canongate," Scott speaks of this, to himself, as well as others, overwhelming misfortune.

"The year 1825, so disastrous to many branches of industry and commerce, did not spare the market of literature; and the sudden ruin that fell on so many booksellers, could scarcely have been expected to leave unscathed one, whose career had of necessity connected him deeply and extensively with the pecuniary transactions of that profession. In a word almost without one note of premonition, I found myself involved in the sweeping catastrophe of the unhappy time, and called upon to meet the demands of creditors upon commercial establishments with which my fortune had long been bound up to the extent of no less a sum than one hundred and twenty thousand pounds."

Scott says, that these disasters came upon him almost without a note of premonition; but our opinion is that he *must* have been aware of the ultimate tendency of the hollow system in which he was engaged with Constable—the drawing and endorsing *accommodation* bills, by means of which they were in possession of ready money; we repeat that he must have been aware of the progress and ultimate tendency of this destructive system; and we have even stronger evidence of the obstinacy with which he shut his eyes to the inevitable consequences. Some months before the fatal crash took place, one of Mr. Constable's bills, for a very large amount, was presented at one of the Edinburgh banks, having Scott's name attached to it. A friendly director, who, from the recent frequency of such transactions, was at no loss to see how matters stood with the publisher, sent for Sir

Walter, and asked him if he was aware of the great number of heavy bills which Mr. Constable had abroad. "Sir Walter," said he, in an earnest tone, "I advise you to be cautious." Scott was struck by this friendly warning, and expressed his thanks. He acknowledged he was aware of Constable being straitened for money, owing to the stagnant state of the commercial world:—"But," he continued, after a pause of reflection, and in a tone of much feeling, "Archie Constable was a good friend to me when friends were somewhat scarcer than at present, and he shall not want a few thousands more yet, if he thinks they can be of any service to him."

The fact was, Scott could not help himself. He was constrained to do what he did equally by feelings of gratitude and self-interest. He could not refuse the credit of his name to one who had so often pledged his own for his convenience, and who had been a sort of banker to him on small emergencies. For instance, when Sir Walter's eldest son obtained his commission in the army, Constable advanced the funds necessary to defray the expenses of his outfit, if not of the purchase-money of the commission itself. But besides all this, it was only by lending his name in this manner that he was enabled himself to obtain from Constable the large advances on his works while they were in progress, nay, as was discovered, on examining the affairs of the bankrupts, sometimes before they were begun!—even before he knew whether his next work was to be a romance in three, or a novel in four volumes, were paid for—in *bills*, of course. Scott was impawning his fancy at blind hazard. The revelations made upon that melancholy occasion was certainly the most extraordinary ever laid before the public, and said little for the prudence of either party. Both, in fact, seem to have acted under a species of intoxication, and it is

difficult to say which of them proceeded most recklessly—Constable in commercial matters, or Scott in his insane passion for the acquisition of territorial property. But be this as it may, Scott was burdened with a debt of £120,000.

The sentiments of the public towards Scott were not at first of a very favourable nature. One of the main causes of irritation against him, was the disclosure of the fact, that the estate of Abbotsford, upon which he had expended such an enormous amount of money, had been settled by a deed of entail upon his eldest son at the time of his marriage; and although it was immediately seen that the deed was not valid, owing to the entailer not being solvent at the date of its execution, still it was suspected that it had been done for the purpose of securing the life-rent to the entailer by a pretended disposition to his son. But the more thoroughly all the circumstances were investigated, the more clearly did Scott's character stand exculpated from so dishonourable a charge; and, indeed, had we no other proof against such an accusation, his subsequent conduct—the self-devotion with which he took the burden of the debts upon himself, and the almost superhuman exertions he made to liquidate them, would be a sufficient repudiation of the calumny.

That Scott would have easily got his creditors to accept of some comparatively trifling composition, no one can doubt; and we believe overtures to this effect were generously pressed upon him by some of those to whom he was most largely indebted. Nay, one of these very individuals privately sent him a blank cheque on the bank, properly signed, desiring him to fill in the amount of composition his creditors would accept, draw the money, and so clear himself at once of all his troubles! The generosity of this offer has perhaps no parallel, unless in the honourable conduct

of him to whom the temptation was held out. He would listen to no terms of compromise—accept of no assistance; it behoved him to abide the consequences of his rashness, he said, and all that he asked for was *time*. “Gentlemen,” said he to the creditors, using a favourite Spanish proverb, which he was fond of quoting, “‘Time and I against any two.’ Let me take this good ally into company, and I believe I shall be able to pay you every farthing.” His offer was accepted: the forbearance manifested toward him by the creditors proved no less kind than judicious, and elicited the grateful acknowledgments of Scott himself while speaking of this distressing period of his life, in the introduction to his last edition of *Chronicles of the Cannongate*.

“With whatever feelings,” says he, “I surrendered on the instant every shred of property which I had been accustomed to call my own, it became vested in the hands of gentlemen, whose integrity, prudence, and intelligence, were combined with all possible liberality and kindness of disposition, and who readily afforded every assistance towards the execution of plans in which the author contemplated the possibility of his ultimate extrication, and which were of such a nature, that had assistance of this sort been withheld, he could have had little prospect of carrying them into effect.” To speak more plainly, a trust-deed was executed in favour of certain gentlemen, whose duties were to receive the funds realized by our author’s labours, and gradually pay off the debts, with interest, by instalments. He likewise insured his life, with the sanction of his trustees, for the sum of £22,000, by which a *post-orbit* interest to that amount was secured to his creditors. With manly promptitude and alacrity, he proceeded to sacrifice all his customary comforts and tastes to a sense of duty; and in order, as far as possible, to lessen his

personal expenses, he sold off his house and furniture in Castle-street—a sacrifice which his creditors never thought of requiring at his hands—and retired to a small flat in St. David Street, once occupied by the celebrated David Hume. He likewise entirely gave up seeing company, and, in fact, denied himself all the indulgences to which he had been so long accustomed. How he internally bore up against all this reverse of circumstances it is painful to conjecture, but certainly his outward deportment displayed a resigned and cheerful magnanimity worthy of the greatest writer of the age. On the very day after the calamity had been made known to him, a friend accosted him as he was on his way to the Parliament House, and offered the condolences proper on such an unfortunate occasion. "It is very hard certainly," he replied in his usual thoughtful voice, "thus to lose all the labours of a lifetime, and be made a poor man at last, when I ought to have been otherwise. But if God grant me health and strength for a few years longer, I have no doubt that I shall redeem it all." "I had several letters from him during these disastrous days," says Mr. Cunningham; "the language was cheerful, and there was no allusion to what had happened: all that he said about them was, 'I miss my daughter, Mrs. Lockhart, who used to sing to me—I have some need of her now.'"

It ought to be mentioned that Scott was the better enabled to carry into effect his plans of economical retrenchment, by the death of Lady Scott, which took place on the 15th May, 1826.

Sir Walter had now attained his fifty-fifth year—a term of life when even the most robust begin to own the nipping frost of time, and feel the vigorous energy which inspires the frame of manhood decay. In Scott's individual case, considering his constitutional infirmity, and the torturing mental afflictions

with which he had been visited, perhaps we might date his comparative powers of exertion several years farther forward. Yet with a devoted alacrity of soul, and a steady determination of purpose, "above all Greek, all Roman fame," he now set himself down to the Herculean task of redeeming a debt of upwards of £120,000, and repairing his shattered fortunes. The first object to which he naturally turned, was the completion of such works as he had been engaged upon previous to the bankruptcy of Constable and Co., but a difficulty arose to interrupt his labours at the very outset. By agreements of 7th March, and 20th October, 1823, Scott had contracted to write two works of fiction on certain terms. At the date of the bankruptcy one of these had been proceeded in a little way, and advertised under the title of "Woodstock." Constable and Co. had sent in the paper to the printers, and the author himself had even received the amount of the price agreed on—in bills as usual. In this state of matters the trustee for the creditors of Constable and Co., claimed to have the work thus contracted and paid for completed for the benefit of those whom he represented, stating his readiness to fulfil Constable and Co's part of the contract by publishing the work. The trustee for the creditors of Sir Walter Scott, on the other hand maintained that the contract had been rendered null and void by the bankruptcy of both parties. Scott himself adopted the same view of the matter as his trustees, and resolutely said, "The work is in my head, and sooner than they shall have it, there it shall remain." It certainly would have been a difficult as well as curious process to compel the Author of Waverley to bring himself to bed of a work of fiction against his will. The matter was referred to arbitration, and ultimately decided in favour of Scott's trustees. His creditors recog-

mending, in the meanwhile, that the novel, as well as "The Life of Buonaparte," should be completed without delay.

"Woodstock" was quickly completed, and we find that at a meeting of the creditors of Ballantyne and Co., held on the 26th of May, Mr. Gibson, (Scott's agent) "reported particulars of the sale of Woodstock, 7,900 copies of which had been sold to Hurst and Robertson at £6,500; but they being unable to complete the bargain, they had been transferred to Longman and Co. on the same terms. The remainder of the impression had been sold to Constable and Co's trustee at 18s. 6d. each copy, at a credit of ten months from delivery, with five per cent. discount for any earlier payment, of which the trustees approved. In consequence of advice from Sir Walter Scott and Longman and Co., it had been thought advisable to restrict the first edition of "The Life of Napoleon" to 6,000 instead of 8,000 copies, as originally intended."

During this memorable year, 1826, Sir Walter Scott, independent of his own misfortunes, and the amount of labour he had to undergo, in order to pay his creditors, performed an invaluable service to his country, by the successful opposition of his pen to a proposed measure of government. This was Mr. Canning's project abolishing the small-note currency of Scotland, and assimilating the monetary system of England. Violent opposition was of course offered to this proposal by the Scottish public, but as their opinions were viewed by the legislature as arising only from selfishness, there seemed little probability of their remonstrances being at all attended to. In this difficulty Scott stepped boldly forward, and in three successive letters published in the *Edinburgh Weekly Journal*, he so forcibly exposed the ridiculousness of the parliamentary scheme, that notwithstand-

ing the powerful support of Mr. Croker, and other financial writers, the government at once dropped all further thoughts of proceeding with the obnoxious measure. The letters had the sonorous and euphonic signature of "Malcachi Malagrowther" attached to them, but contained so many palpable traits of Scott's peculiar humour, pathos, and sarcasm, that there was not a moment's doubt concerning the writer. The author's own feelings were excited in an unusual degree on this occasion. Two days after the first letter appeared, he was in the printing-office with Mr. Ballantyne, when the latter remarked, that he had been more solicitous and careful about the *proof* of this little composition than he had ever observed him to be respecting any of his productions. "Yes," said he, in a tone that startled even this familiar friend, who had heard him speak before under all varieties of circumstances, "my former works were for myself, but this—*this is for my country!*"

"Woodstock" was the last of Scott's works in which he appeared under the mysterious mask of the "Author of Waverley;" for, although the necessary investigation into the books of Ballantyne and Co., had clearly established the paternity of these productions, those concerned did not reckon it altogether prudent to tear the face at once from the Great Unknown, whose magic had hitherto been so prolific a source of wealth. The public were, therefore, left in a sort of dubious twilight on the subject; a wavering betwixt doubt and certainty, more tantalizing even than their previous state of complete ignorance.

It is undoubtedly not one of the least remarkable circumstances with these novels that the mystery of their authorship should have been so long and faithfully preserved, considering the number of individuals to whom the secret was undoubtedly known; Scott

himself speaks of some score of persons who were no strangers to it. But many more than he ever dreamt of, were privy to it, several of whom acquired their information in spite of the most anxious precautions to keep them in ignorance, and were, therefore, no way bound by any friendly or honourable confidence from communicating the fact to the public. We could state many instances of this spontaneous and unsolicited secrecy, but shall only state one as being equally illustrative of the trivial accidents which will sometimes baffle the "best laid schemes of mice and men," and of the honour of the individual immediately concerned. A gentleman, who happened to be in the establishment of Ballantyne and Co., one day, at the time when the public curiosity respecting the mysterious author was at its height; picked up, while walking through the compositor's room, a small slip of paper, which he was just about to throw away again, when his eye caught the autograph of Scott, with which he was well acquainted. It proved to be a card from him to Ballantyne, the address of which was torn off. It commenced Dear James, and consisted only of two sentences, but these were sufficiently explanatory of the great Waverley secret. The first alluded to the return of the last proof sheets of the novel then passing through the press; and the second conveyed the brief intimation—"I have laid another vessel on the stocks." This gentleman preserved his secret for six years—in short until Scott himself publicly divulged it.

Innumerable instances are on record of the attempts made to surprise Scott into an acknowledgment of his identity with "the Author of Waverley," but all were equal futile. To those who had the hardihood directly to impeach him with the fact, he hesitated not at once to reply by a broad denial. The severest trial of this nature to which he was ever ex-

posed, was undoubtedly on the following occasion. "About the year 1817, when the fame of his novels was at the highest, and public curiosity still anxious about them, Scott was on a visit to London, and had the honour of dining with the Prince Regent at Carlton House. Lord Lowther, Mr. Croker, and several others were of the party. After dinner the prince filled a glass, and said 'I have neither a blessed bear, nor yet a tappit hen, (see *Waverley*) but I have, at least, as good claret as ever the Baron of Bradwardine had, and in that claret I drink to the health of the greatest genius of my country, the author of *Waverley*.' The toast was of course, duly honoured, as toasts of princes generally are, and every one waited with some curiosity to know what Mr. Scott would say. He stood and said, that he did not pretend to misunderstand what his royal Highness meant, and accepted the intended compliment with gratitude; but, 'Sire, I am *not* the author of *Waverley*.' The prince immediately rejoined, 'I am excessively glad to hear it, because I now find that I reckon *two* of the greatest men of Europe as my subjects, instead of one—I have now *both* the author of the *Lady of the Lake*, and the author of *Waverley*.' The prince, from that time, always maintained that the novels could not have been written by Scott, because he considered it impossible that any body would be bold enough to mystify *him*. Scott on the other hand said the prince had no right to pry into the secret, which he would have confided to him without any hesitation if they had been alone, but which he had no idea of publishing before company—especially when that company comprised people in any way connected with literary pursuits. Besides, he used to add, 'they were a' half fou.'

But it was seldom that Scott was arraigned in this trying manner; the point from which he ran the

greatest danger was his introducing into his works conversational remarks, which had occurred in the company of his familiar friends. Thus Hogg found him out by his dissertation about long sheep and short sheep, in the introduction to the *Black Dwarf*; thenceforth, as the Shepherd added the successive novels to his library, had them bound up with the unequivocal title "Scott's Novels," lettered on their back. Scott happened to visit the Bard of Yarrow, and observing this laconic index to the volumes, he remarked with great gravity, "What a stupid fellow of a bookbinder yours must be, Jamie, to spell *Scotts* with two *s*." "Ah! Wattie, Wattie!" returned Hogg, with chuckling glee, "I'm o'er auld a cat to draw that strae before." One old lady caused Scott no little annoyance, by the manner in which she went gadding about upon the publication of every new work, telling every one of her assurance of Scott being the author, pointing out particular passages supplied to him by herself. There was, of course, some truth in the latter assertion, and Scott, therefore, bore with her chattering for some time with great patience; until one day, upon being told a fresh instance of her provoking gossip, he exclaimed with some irritation—"The auld hag! As if she had never bothered any body but me with her cursed lang-winded stories." This remark being duly reported in the proper quarter, had the effect of relieving him from one source of annoyance at east.

We could fill a chapter with anecdotes on this head, but we must stop, after relating the following:—Among many others, an absurd report was very generally circulated that Lady Scott partook of a great share of her husband's literary toil, and that she had written one entire canto of the *Lady of the Lake*. The truth is, that no literary man was per-

haps ever mated with one less capable or less inclined to further his intellectual labours: no two minds can be imagined of more dissimilar elements than those of Scott and his wife—of this, the following anecdote is illustrative. Walking together, one fine spring morning, through the parks at Abbotsford, where many lambs were frisking about in the sunshine, and upon one particularly fine lamb coming confidently close up to them, he exclaimed, in the fulness of his benevolent emotions, "What a beautiful and innocent looking creature, Charlotte!" "It is, indeed," responded the lady, in a reciprocally earnest tone of voice,—"*wouldn't it make a fine pie!*" "Oh God!" ejaculated her husband, as if the odour of the shambles had been suddenly placed under his nostrils.

But the time was now arrived when it became impossible longer to wear the veil of mystery in which he had so long successfully shrouded himself. And as this is probably the last quotation from his pen which we will introduce in these pages, we will allow him to state the manner and occasion of his revealing himself in his own simple language.

"It was," says he "my original intention never to have avowed these works during my life-time, and the original manuscripts were carefully preserved with the purpose of supplying the necessary evidence of the truth, when the period of announcing it should arrive. But the affairs of my publishers having passed into a management different from their own, I had no right any longer to rely upon secrecy in that quarter; and thus my mask, like Aunt Dinah's, in *Tristram Shandy*, having begun to wax a little threadbare about the chin, it became time to lay it aside with a good grace, unless I desired it should fall in pieces from about my face, which was now become likely. Yet I had not the slightest intention of selecting the time and place in which the

disclosure was finally made ; nor was there the slightest concert between my learned and worthy friend Lord Meadowbank upon that occasion. It was, as the reader is probably aware, upon the 23rd of February last, at a public meeting called for establishing a professional Theatrical Fund in Edinburgh, that the communication took place. Just before we sat down to table, Lord Meadowbank asked me privately whether I was still anxious to preserve my incognito on the subject of what were called the *Waverley Novels* ? I did not immediately see the purpose of his lordship's question, although I might certainly have been led to infer it, and replied that the secret had now of necessity become known to so many people, that I was indifferent on the subject. Lord Meadowbank was thus induced, while doing me the great honour of proposing my health to the meeting, to say something on the subject of these novels, so strongly connecting them with me as the author, that by remaining silent I would have been convicted either of the actual paternity, or the still greater crime of being supposed willing to receive indirectly praise to which I had no just title. I thus found myself suddenly and unexpectedly placed in the confessional, and had the task of avowing myself to the numerous and respectable company assembled as the sole and unaided author of these novels of *Waverley*, the paternity of which was likely, at one time, to have formed a controversy of some celebrity, for the ingenuity with which some instructors of the public gave their assurance on the subject was extremely persevering."

The circumstance occurred nearly as stated ; and Scott, in returning thanks for the honour done him by the company, concluded his short but pithy speech as follows :—" He meant then seriously to state, that when he said he was the author, he was the sole and

undivided author. With the exception of quotations, there was not a single word that was not derived from himself, or suggested in the course of his reading. The wand was now broken, and the book burned. You will allow me further to say, with Prospero, it is your breath that has filled my sails."

The sensation excited in the meeting (of which Scott was chairman), by the above announcement, was vented in sounds more resembling yells of delight than mere shouts of applause. And no marvel—considering the occasion was that of a Scotsman telling his countrymen, face to face, that they had amongst them the greatest writer of the age—even he himself, who (to use the words of Lord Meadowbank), had conferred a new reputation on their national character, and bestowed on Scotland an imperishable name, were it only by her having given birth to himself. All broad Scotland—we may say, all Britain—sympathised in the exultation of the audience, at a disclosure which, we fear, something blunted the general regret for the immediate cause of its being made.

The "Life of Napoleon," appeared in August 1827, being extended to nine, instead of its originally intended limits of five volumes. In October 1827, the first series of the "Chronicles of the Canongate," were published in two volumes, consisting of three tales, "The Highland Widow," "The Two Drovers," and "The Surgeon's Daughter." In 1828, a second series of the "Chronicles of the Canongate," came out in three volumes, containing "The Fair Maid of Perth." In November, the same year, he published the first part of a Juvenile History of Scotland, under the title of "Tales of a Grandfather." This delightful work was completed by second and third parts, making altogether nine volumes, published in 1829 and 1830. In 1831, he

added another series on France, also in three volumes. Early in the year 1831, appeared "Anne of Geierstein," in three volumes; and in the same year he published successively in one volume each, "Sermons by a Layman," and an Essay on Gardening and Arboriculture! and also "Letters on Demonology and Witchcraft," in one volume to Murray's 'Family Library.' The principle of integrity and love of independence must have been powerful, which could stimulate a man verging on threescore to such wonderful efforts. In the course of three years we have no fewer than twenty-nine original volumes, from his unassisted pen. But we have not yet stated all. Amongst the other projects for the purpose of raising money, one was for republishing the whole of the "Waverley Novels" in a uniform and condensed size, illustrated by notes, prefaces, and plates, and the whole revised and amended by the author. To accomplish this, when the copyright was brought to the hammer, it was re-purchased by Mr. Caddell, one of the late partners of Constable and Co., at £8,400. This purchase was made by the trustees for Scott's creditors, and the new edition was to be published for them by Mr. Caddell. It began to appear in June, 1829, and the sale soon reached an average of 23,000 copies. The volumes appeared in rapid succession; and so indefatigably did Scott labour at the editing of them, that, amid all the exertion necessary to produce his other original compositions, no less than nineteen were published by December 1830—many of them containing notes and prefaces, as, taken altogether, would form a bulky volume in themselves!

The profits of these volumes must have been large; and the share of them, which belonged to Scott's creditors, with the produce of his other works, ena-

bled our author to pay his creditors so much, that if it had not been for the accumulation of interest, his debts would have been reduced nearly one-half. £54,000 had now been paid, all of which, with the exception of £6,000 or £7,000, had been realised by Scott's individual exertions; besides which, he had paid up the premiums upon the policies of insurance on his life for £22,000. So strikingly honourable did Scott's conduct appear to his creditors, that at a meeting in the latter end of 1830, it was unanimously agreed to present him with the library manuscripts, furniture, and plate, at Abbotsford, all of which he had voluntarily surrendered to them at the period of his insolvency. It is almost frightful to contemplate the amount of labour he must have undergone during these three years.

It was now evident that, but for some fatal interposition, Scott would readily retrieve all his misfortunes; but alas! the toil necessary for such a consummation, came at a period of life when he was unable for the task. In November 1830, he resigned his office of principal clerk of Session, (retaining, of course, the retiring pension), not for the purpose, however, of obtaining ease and relief to himself, but for the purpose of working harder than ever; as he found his literary labour was more remunerative than his attendance in the parliament-house, and he considered it a duty to his creditors to adopt the course which would be most advantageous to them. He immediately retired to Abbotsford, where he set to work with a determination that showed he thought every moment lost which did not contribute to the accomplishment of his object; and it is known that at this period he generally worked for ten or twelve hours per day, and frequently fourteen! The effects of this superhuman labour began speedily to appear.

He became unable to take even a moderate portion of exercise without exhaustion. His speech began to be affected; his contracted right foot became more painful,—in short, evident symptoms of approaching general paralysis manifested themselves. The best medical advice was called in, but his disease was beyond the reach of the healing art. His physicians remonstrated with him upon the dangerous tendency of such continued and mental arduous labour, but it seemed beyond his power to comply with their advice. Dr. Abercrombie of Edinburgh, one day urged him most anxiously upon the necessity of moderating his exertions, “Sir Walter, you must not write so constantly; really, Sir, you must not work.” “I tell you what it is, Doctor,” replied the invalid. “Molly, when she puts the kettle on, may just as well say, kettle, kettle, don’t boil!” The physician was at last compelled to threaten him with the probability of a fatal issue, if he persisted in keeping his mind so constantly on the stretch. This intimation seems to have made some impression upon him at the time, as appears from the following letter to a friend, March 7th, 1831. The passage alluding to his illness is as follows;—“Dr. Abercrombie threatens me with death if I write so much; and die, I suppose I must, if I give it up suddenly. I must assist Lockhart a little, for you are aware of our connexion, and he has always shewed me the duties of a son; but except that, and my own necessary work at the edition of the Waverley novels, as they call them, I can hardly pretend to be writing anything,—for after all, this dying is a ceremony one would put off as long as they could.” The rest of the letter was penned in a cheerful and even happy strain. It was only a few days after this, that he received a shock from an occurrence, which beyond doubt, contributed greatly to shake his enfeebled

powers of body and mind, and hasten the melancholy catastrophe which soon afterwards overtook him.

It need scarcely be mentioned that, as a high tory, Scott contemplated with horror and alarm the Reform Bill introduced into the house of Commons, in March, 1831, exceeding as it did, in its provisions, even what the warmest advocates of the cause had anticipated. Immediately upon its divulgement, the freeholders of Roxburghshire, who were almost all decided tories, held a meeting at Jedburgh, for the purpose of considering what was to be done in reference to the proposed change in the constitution; and Scott, although in the state of health we have described, though himself bound to attend, and record his condemnation of an act, which was tantamount to a revolution in the political condition of Britain. Mr. Chambers says, "A gentleman who was present on this occasion described his face as shrunk, ill-coloured and unhealthy—his voice hollow and tremulous, and his whole frame feeble, shaken, and diminished; but the leaven of Lion-heart was still strong within him. He sat in evident disquiet during the speeches of ministerialists, till near the end of the meeting. He then rose with much of his wonted dignity when addressing an assembly, and told the meeting that he had come there that day with great reluctance, and at much personal inconvenience, as he had been for some time contending with severe indigestion;—"But, gentlemen," said he, clenching his iron fist, and giving it an energetic motion, "had I known that I should have shed my blood on these
 ds, I would have spent my last breath in opposing this measure." He proceeded further to argue the inexpediency of following French political
 hions, and ended by saying, 'I must take leave of you, gentlemen, and I shall do it in the well-known adage of the gladiator to the emperor—*Moriturus*

vos salutat.' In the course of his speech he was hissed by a few individuals who were present, of which he took no notice; but in replying to the gentleman who rose next, when the sound was repeated, he turned quick upon those who were expressing their disapprobation, and said that he cared no more for their hissing than for the braying of the beasts of the field. His feelings, nevertheless, were so affected, that on his way home, he was observed to be in tears; and to the popular insults offered to him—the first of the kind he had been subjected to in his life—together with his strong and excited feelings of evil augury for his country, we hesitate not to impute the acceleration of his fatal distemper.

From this time forward, Scott's indisposition grew rapidly worse and what occasioned no less surprise than additional distress to his friends, his temper, hitherto so gentle and kind, and almost imperturbable, became fretful and peevish in the extreme. In a letter to a friend at this time, he says,—“Although it is said in the newspapers, that I am actually far from well; and instead of being exercising on a brother novelist, Chateaubriand, my influence to decide him to raise an insurrection in France, which is the very probable employment allotted to me by some of the papers, I am keeping my head as cool as I can, and speaking with some difficulty. I am much out riding, or rather crawling about my plantations, when the weather will permit. I have owed you a letter longer than I intended, but I write with pain, and generally use the hand of a friend. I sign with my initials as enough to represent the poor half of me which is left. But I am still yours, W. S.” The penmanship of this letter shews distinctly the rapid progress of his illness. The writing is indistinct, the lines unseen, some of the words

wrong spelt, and the letters of several of them confusedly jumbled together, as if the writer was unable to recollect the due order of their arrangement. Yet he still continued to labour on.

A fourth series of the "Tales of my Landlord," in four volumes, appeared during the summer, consisting of "Count Robert of Paris," and "Castle Dangerous;" and he managed to complete the revising, prefacing, and annotating of all his previous novels. The two additional tales—the last that emanated from his genius—are unquestionably the most faulty and uninteresting of all Scott's productions, and bear melancholy evidence of the gradual obscuring of his intellect. In fact, while engaged with the last of these tales, the symptoms of his disorder became so violent, that his physicians declared, nothing but a complete estrangement from all mental labour, and that for a considerable time, could afford him the slightest chance of recovery. The only possible means of accomplishing this, seemed to be by removing him from the scenes of his labours, and a residence in Italy was recommended. When this proposal was made to him, he expressed the utmost repugnance to it, plainly stating his conviction that he would die during the probation of the experiment, and expressing the liveliest fears, that his bones would be laid far from the Tweed. By the urgent importunity of friends he was at last induced to consent: but a new difficulty presented itself—a requisite mode of accomplishing the journey. The invalid was utterly unfit for bearing the jolting over the rough roads of France and Italy, and it seemed impossible to find a suitable conveyance by sea. In this dilemma, the anxiety of his publisher, Mr. Caddell, suggested to him the probability of procuring a passage in a man-of-war; and he accordingly wrote to Captain Basil Hall, then in London, solicit-

ing his interest with the government in obtaining this favour; the application was successful, and Captain Hall, by the same day's post, communicated to Mr. Caddell that his majesty had ordered a free passage for Sir Walter and his daughter to Malta, in the Barham frigate. As the vessel was then preparing for her voyage, no time was to be lost, and Sir Walter accordingly bade adieu to Abbotsford in October, with a melancholy foreboding of the fate which awaited him. Of this sorrowful presage he has left an affecting testimonial in the following postscript to the last of his productions, "Castle Dangerous."

"The gentle reader is acquainted, that these are, in all probability, the last tales which it will be the lot of the author to submit to the public. He is now on the eve of visiting foreign parts; a ship of war is commissioned by its royal master, to carry the Author of Waverley to climates in which he may possibly obtain such a restoration of health as may serve him to spin his thread to an end in his own country. Had he continued to prosecute his usual literary labours, it seems, indeed, probable that, at the term of years he has already attained, the bowl, to use the pathetic language of Scripture, would have been broken at the fountain; and little can one, who has enjoyed on the whole, an uncommon share of the most inestimable of worldly blessings, be entitled to complain, that life, advancing to its period, should be attended with its usual proportion of shadows and storms. They have affected him at least in no more painful manner than is inseparable from the discharge of this part of the debt of humanity. Of those whose relation to him in the ranks of life, might have insured him their sympathy under indisposition, many are now no more, and those who may yet follow in his wake, are entitled to expect, in bearing

inevitable evils, an example of firmness and patience, more especially of one, who has enjoyed no small good fortune during the course of his pilgrimage. The public have claims on his gratitude, for which the author of *Waverley* has no adequate means of expression; but he may be permitted to hope, that the powers of his mind, such as they are, may not have a different date from his body; and that he may again meet his patronising friends, if not exactly in his old fashion of literature, at least in some branch which may not call for the remark, that—

“Superfluous lays the veteran on the stage.”

Scott reached London by easy stages, being accompanied by his eldest son and his daughter Anne; and thence proceeded to Portsmouth, escorted by Captain Hall, who, in his “*Fragments of Voyages and Travels*,” has given an interesting account of all the incidents during this journey, and previous to the embarkation.

At one of the stages, a blind horse ran against Sir Walter, threw him violently to the ground, and nearly killed him on the spot. “What a fate would this have been!” observes the enthusiastic chronicler, “had the author of *Waverley*, perhaps the foremost man of all the world, been trodden to death by a decayed post-horse!”

Sir Walter's reception at Portsmouth, and the anxious preparations made for his accommodation on board the *Barham*, were alike honourable to the illustrious invalid, and worthy the generous liberty of the English nation. “The lieutenant-governor, Sir Colin Campbell, (says Captain Hall,) and the other local authorities, called upon him almost as if he had been a royal personage, to place at his disposal all the means in their power to render his stay

at Portsmouth pleasant. The port-admiral, Sir Thomas Foley, waited on him to say, that his yacht, and the flag-ship's barge, were at his command, should he or his family wish to sail about. The commissioner, also, Sir Michael Seymour, offered his services, and begged to know if there was anything in the dock-yard which he wished to see." The Lords of the Admiralty happened to be at Portsmouth on a tour of inspection, and they too waited upon Sir Walter, to learn if anything further could be done to meet his wishes. All these attentions were to Scott fully as much matter of anxiety as of gratification. He said, "He wondered why all this fuss was made about one poor individual." During the few days of his residence ashore, however, he recovered his usual spirits so much, that, but for the continued weakness of his foot, a stranger would have reckoned him in perfect health. On the morning of his embarkation, the 29th of October, Captain Hall, who had never seen him so cheerful and animated, says, "Ever and anon, as any one came into the room to pick up things, he was sure to fire off some good-humoured scold about the sin of tardiness, and the proverbial length of time it took to get ladies under weigh, with their endless bonnets and band-boxes. No one of us escaped, indeed, male or female. But there ran through all his observations such an air of humour and drollery, mixed occasionally with a slight dash of caustic sarcasm in the funny style of his own dear Antiquary, that the resemblance was at times complete. In short, there appeared no little trace of illness, that the hopes of his ultimate and full recovery seemed, for the hour, to rest on surer foundations than ever." But, alas! it was soon perceptible that all this was merely a temporary blazing up of the expiring lamp. When the ship was getting under weigh, and the hour of departure from his native

shore was arrived, "I shall not soon forget," says Captain Hall, "the great man's last look, while he held his friends successively by the hand, as he sat on the deck of the frigate, and wished us good bye, one after another, in a tone which shewed that he at least knew all hope was over!"

Sir Walter's voyage to Malta, accompanied by his son and daughter, was short and pleasant. The enthusiasm of the Maltese upon the ship's arrival (having previously got notice of its precious freight) was inconceivable. As he entered the town, a public officer with his attendants met him, and delivered a long speech, welcoming him to the island, and concluding with a request that he would write its history! He was afterwards solicited to sit for his bust, but declined the compliment, on account of his being so much busied with writing. Maltese ingenuity, however, overcame this obstacle. The landlord of the house where Sir Walter lodged, managed to get his desk and writing materials so placed as to be opposite the door of an adjoining apartment, the *key-hole* of which was left open—and through this aperture the artist accomplished his object. After some stay at Malta, he proceeded to Naples in the *Barham*. They arrived in the Bay of Naples in two days afterwards, 17th of December, but the vessel was ordered to perform a nine days' quarantine. This was endured with characteristic natural philosophy by the crew; and Scott, who had greater cause for complaint than any of them, from his younger son Charles being in the town, was the only one who maintained his usual equanimity. But Time is a remedy for all human distresses, and they were permitted to land on the 27th. The parting between the crew and their passenger was affecting—the rough cheeks of most of the man-of-war's men were moist with tears; so strong was the influence of this

remarkable man in winning the regard of all who came within his sphere.

Reinstated in the bosom of his family, as it were, Sir Walter's health and spirits improved so much that he prolonged his stay at Naples till the following April, receiving, in the meanwhile, all the attentions from the natives, as well as the British and other foreign residents, which admiration for his genius could suggest. On the 12th of January, he was introduced at Court, on which occasion, from some freak of fancy, he chose to appear in the splendid dress of the Scottish Archers—the hereditary body-guard of the princes of Scotland, which the natives mistook for a field-marshal's uniform; and much wonder was there amongst them at their previous ignorance of his rank in the army! With the exception of short excursions of curiosity and recreation, he dedicated all his leisure time, while in Naples, to writing; and the last published production of his pen—the long and interesting preface to the second edition of "Castle Dangerous," with many corrections and antiquarian notes on the text—was prepared and forwarded from Naples, in February of this year. In April the travellers proceeded to Rome, where they arrived on the 21st. There they abode for nearly a month, and it was not a little curious that Scott did not pay a single visit to the Vatican, although he inspected all the other curiosities both in Rome and the surrounding country with great attention—more especially the residence of Cardinal York, during his latter days, at Frasoli, a small village about twelve miles from Rome, where he testified great anxiety to glean every particular respecting that individual. From Rome it was intended by the party to return by the Rhine; passing through the states of Germany, and visiting Vienna, Prague, Toblitz, Carlsbad, Munich,

and other principal towns and cities of that empire. Probably the principal inducement to fix on this route was the prospect of visiting the remarkable Goethe, who had sent a pressing invitation to Scott, while he was at Naples, through a mutual friend. "Assure him" said the benevolent old man, "that he will not fail to find himself in every respect at home, under my roof, and meet with the respect and attention which are due to him, not only as the author of a host of important works, but as a right thinker and a man of exalted mind, who has devoted his life to the improvement of mankind. And, as concerns myself, I may truly remark, that this feeling is greatly enhanced by the kindred connexion which has subsisted between us for many a long year." It is needless now to speculate upon the interest which must have attached to this first meeting, between the two greatest literary geniuses of the age, for, alas! it was doomed never to take place. The first news that awaited Scott, on reaching Rome, was the intelligence of the death of his justly celebrated brother bard, which occurred scarcely a month after the date of the above letter. We cannot affirm that the occurrence of this melancholy event had a pernicious effect on his precarious but seemingly improving condition, but certain it is that from this time his health rapidly declined, and his impatience to proceed homeward hourly increased. The party set out accordingly in the beginning of May, and so continued and feverish was the anxiety of the invalid to hasten on, that his companions conceived there was more danger in thwarting his wishes than even in journeying with the exhausting haste at which he insisted on proceeding. It is said that for six days continually they travelled at the rate of seventeen hours per day fatigue which would have tried the strongest

constitution to endure. They rested a day or two at Frankfort, and it was here, perhaps, that the last of those unintentional testimonies to his universal fame was offered to him, while he retained the consciousness of enjoying them. He walked into the shop of a celebrated bibliopole, with the view of obtaining sketches of some of the more striking scenes he had lately passed. After exhibiting some views of the scenery in Switzerland, the bookseller naturally passed to those of Scotland, and without being aware of his visitor's identity, pointed out a *view of Abbotsford*! Scott smiled sadly, and merely observing that he had already a faithful picture of that spot, walked off with his other purchases without making himself known. From that hour he travelled almost unremittingly till he got embarked on the Rhine. It was hoped that the comparative ease of this mode of journeying would prove favourable to him, but his impatience seemed even to increase from the absence of excitement attendant on a land journey, and on the 4th of June he was struck insensible by a shock of his fatal malady, which would undoubtedly have proved mortal, but for the presence of mind of a faithful servant, who opened a vein and bled him profusely. His friends were now as anxious as himself to hasten his return home with all the speed his situation admitted; and in eight days after his last alarming attack he was deposited in the St. James' Hotel, Jermyn Street, London. Here he was instantly attended by Dr. Holland and Sir Henry Hallford, but all remedial measures were found to be unavailing. For some weeks he remained almost totally unconscious, unaware, even of the presence of his son and daughters, although sometimes a smile of intelligence and recognition would lighten up his features. At such times his passing gleams of recollection uniformly terminated in faltering forth

"Abbotsford, Abbotsford!" and it was therefore by the advice of his medical attendants that, as soon as it was possible to remove him without danger, their patient was conveyed to Blackwell and put on board a steam-vessel for his native shore. He was quite sensible at this period, and while he was swung on board, made gestures of acknowledgment and gratitude for the repeated and reverent "God bless you, Sir Walter," which proceeded from the crowd of anxious spectators. This was on the 7th of July, and on the 9th he arrived at Newhaven, whence he was immediately conveyed to Douglas's Hotel, in St. Andrew Square, Edinburgh. Here he remained two nights and a day, when he was supposed capable of being removed to his favourite Abbotsford. He was accordingly lifted out of the hotel, and placed in an easy carriage, at which time he showed perfect consciousness of his situation. He shook hands with his medical attendant, Dr. Watson, who had accompanied him from London, thanked him kindly for all his attentions, and also noticed two or three other friends, though by gestures, rather than words. But his mind evidently continued on the stretch of expectation during his journey homewards, and when he reached a spot from which he might catch the first glimpse of Abbotsford, his impatience to sit up and look around for it became almost irrepressible. He at length arrived at the beloved spot, but his previous excitement subsided into complete apathy and unconsciousness to every thing that was passing around him, nor did he recognise any one, until his old friend and factor, Mr. Laidlaw, appeared at his bed-side, whom he warmly shook by the hand, murmuring, that "now he knew he was at Abbotsford." After some hours rest he revived, and had himself carried into the library and other apartments of his house, and even out to his

garden, now blooming in all the rich hues of summer, and seemed delighted with all around him. He continued in this happy mood for several days, and even improved so much in his intellectual faculties, as to express a wish for various passages from favourite authors being read to him. And here we consider it but proper to mention, no less as illustrative of the predilections of our immortal author, than as a duty to the merits and memory of one of the greatest of England's poets — one, whose writings, although, now, by the lamentable perversion of fashionable taste, permitted to be *overcrowded* by the thousand tinsel versifiers, who get pay and patronage through the united influence of cantering stanzas, hot-pressed paper, gilt edging and binding, together with unconscionable impudence—will yet survive, and be read and admired by posterity, to the eternal shame of the present generation, who seem altogether dead to their merits :—we mean the venerable Crabbe—we reckon it due, therefore, to the memory of both these great men to mention, that it was the fine moral poems of the author of “Phoebe Dawson”—the tale which is said to have soothed and interested the last intelligent moments of Charles Fox—that Scott uniformly desired should be read to him, *alternately with his Bible*.

But the gathering cloud settled gradually down, and in a few days the great mind that, as Byron said, had “rained and lightened” over the universe so long, at length became motionless and insensate.—Yet neither the fibres of body nor mind—both so long firm-strung with exercise—ceased their functions without a struggle. Strong delirium and raving succeeded the healthy operations of the one, and mortification those of the other ; and from day to day did this deadly contest last, until exhausted nature sunk, and after about fourteen days of total

insensibility, Sir Walter Scott expired about half-past one o'clock, in the afternoon, of the 21st September, 1832. He was aged sixty-one years, one month, and six days.

The intelligence of Scott's death, long-expected as it was, passed like the voice of a tempest over Britain, subduing and hushing into silence every sound save of itself. The nation felt

"A mighty Spirit was eclipsed—a Power
Had passed from day to darkness—to whose hour
Of light no likeness is bequeathed—no name,
Focus at once of all the rays of Fame!"

The greater portion of the public prints, on announcing his death, clothed their columns in mourning borders; in several of the sea-ports the vessels lowered their colours half mast high,—in short, there were all the popular demonstrations of *real* grief, usually displayed in courtesy upon the demise of a royal personage. The interment took place on the 26th, and seldom has a scene been witnessed more strikingly solemn; not from the splendid funeral trappings, nor even the long train of the titled, gifted, and wealthy who swelled the crowd of mourners; but from the aspect of profound grief that was spread over every countenance throughout the district. At Selkirk, and in the villages of Darnick and Melrose, all business was suspended, and the signs of the traders in the line of the procession towards Dryburgh Abbey, were almost all covered with black cloth. In passing through Melrose, the whole male population, uncovered, and dressed in mourning, were found drawn up in lines on each side of the market-place, while the bell of the church tolled sadly forth the grief that pervaded all hearts. There was scarcely a rood of ground on the long road to Dryburgh, that had not been rendered famous by the magic pen of the deceased, and all

seemed to feel it: the husbandman left his labour in the field, and stood reverently by the wayside; and the old and infirm were carried to the doors of their cottages, to take a farewell look of all that was left of their great chronicler and benefactor. Even Nature herself seemed to sympathize in the general sorrow. The sky was hung with dusky clouds, and not a breath of air was stirring,—as if to illustrate the truth of the great man's own words,

Call it not vain: they do not err
Who say that when the Poet dies
Mute Nature mourns her worshipper,
• And celebrates his obsequies.”

About night-fall, the funeral train which was nearly a mile in length, reached the precincts of the peaceful groves of Dryburgh, where the coffin was taken from the hearse, and the mourners arranged themselves in the follow order :

H E A D .

Major Sir Walter Scott, eldest son of the deceased.

RIGHT.

Charles Scott, Esq., second
son.
Charles Scott, Esq., of Nesbit
cousin.
William Scott, Esq., of Rae-
burn, cousin.
Colonel Russell, of Ashiestiel,
cousin.

LEFT.

J. G. Lockhart, Esq., son-in-
law.
James Scott, Esq., of Nesbit,
cousin.
Robert Rutherford, Esq.,
W.S., cousin.
Hugh Scott, Esq., of Her-
den.

FOOT.

William Keith, Esq. of Edinburgh.

In this order, with the rest of the mourners following in a double line, at the head of whom was the

Reverend J. Williams, Rector of the Edinburgh Academy, dressed in full canonicals as a clergyman of the Church of England, the party moved forward towards the Abbey. On arriving there the coffin was set down on tressels placed near the grave, and the funeral service was solemnly read by Mr. Williams, amid a stillness the most profound, unless when broken by a stifled sob from a bereaved relative or early friend. The last rites were at length completed, and the group of more than three hundred mourners separated without interchanging a word, or even a gesture of friendly salutation, each moving away singly, slowly, and in silence.

As usual—the grave had scarcely closed over the remains of this illustrious individual, when the prying and restless curiosity of the world began to shew itself. The most preposterous statements were spread abroad respecting the magnitude of his debts, which were set down by one at £50,000, another at £70,000, and a third at upwards of £100,000! The truth was, that upon a statement of Scott's affairs being drawn up, it was found that only a comparative trifle remained to be made up. The real amount of outstanding debt was about £53,000; and to meet this were the £22,000 from insurance offices, and between £10,000 and £11,000 accumulated in the hands of the trustees, arising from the profits of his literary labours; so that little more than £20,000, exclusive, however, of the accumulated interest, remained unrealized. On the 29th October, a meeting of the creditors was called, when an offer was made by Sir Walter's family of the whole of the latter sum against the ensuing February, and that for this a discharge should be granted. The meeting was very numerously attended, and the proposal was adopted without a dissentient voice. In addition to the resolution accepting the offer, and directing the trustees

to see the same carried into effect, the following was moved and carried with a like unanimity :—

“ And while the meeting state their anxious wish that every creditor who is not present may adopt the same resolution, they think it a tribute justly due to the memory of Sir Walter Scott, to express, in the strongest manner, their deep sense of his most honourable conduct, and of the unparalleled benefits which they have derived from the extraordinary exertion of his unrivalled talents, under misfortunes and difficulties which would have paralyzed the exertions of any one else, but in him only further proved the greatness of mind which enabled him to rise superior to them.”

It is thus seen, that Scott, almost by his own unaided labours, had, in the course of five years, almost accomplished the great object of his ambition—to pay his creditors every farthing. The amount ranked against him, in 1826, was liquidated ; the interest of the capital only was undischarged, but as that was passed from by his creditors, and in fact is seldom expected in affairs of bankruptcy, he may be considered as having squared accounts with the world.—When we look back on all the circumstances of this case, how noble, how unparalleled does the conduct of Sir Walter appear ! It is no reflection against others to say, that his innate sense of honour presents a singular contrast to the custom of the world in similar cases, and that he voluntarily took on himself a burden which almost all others have shewn themselves eager by every means to shake off, and have done so without incurring the slightest censure. Cynics will say, perhaps, he only did his duty : perhaps so,—but the melancholy accompaniment to this comment is, *that he killed himself in the struggle.*

When Sir Walter Scott's will was examined it was found that he had perfectly understood the state of

his circumstances, and had provided, in his own mind at least, for all exigencies. It was drawn up by himself, and is dated 4th February, 1831. It enumerates all his various debts, the half of which were then discharged, and the means he calculated on for realizing the remainder. He first directs his executors (his two sons and Mr. Lockhart) to sell his moveable property at Abbotsford, (given back in 1830, by his creditors, as a present,) to his eldest son, at £5000, of which sum £2000 to be given to Mr. Charles Scott, as much to Miss Anne Scott, and the remainder to Mrs. Lockhart, to make up her portion (with a like sum given at her marriage) to the same amount as the rest of the family. He then directs that the future profits of the work, entitled "*Tales of a Grandfather*," and certain articles inserted in the *Annuals*, all of which were lately written for his own immediate comfort and subsistence, be applied to discharge his debts incurred since the execution of the trust; the surplus, if any, to go to the trust. He next enumerates the means which he principally depended on for the payment of all his other debts. First, the new edition of his novels, or rather his share in the profits of that edition; then the similar edition of his poems. In the event of these being sufficient to discharge the debts under the trust, the further profits to go towards the redemption of the heritable bond of £10,000, contracted upon the estate of Abbotsford, for the support of Archibald Constable and Company; the still further profits, if any, to be divided among his family. "And if it be thought necessary," the document thus proceeds, "that any biographical sketch of the author himself to be drawn up, to be attached to the said collection, I do request and entreat my affectionate son-in-law, the said John Gibson Lockhart, who has, during all his connexion with me, shown me the duty and kindness of a son, to

draw up such sketch, using in that matter such letters, correspondence, and diaries, as shall be found in my repositories; and I also request the said John Gibson Lockhart to carry on and conclude the publication of my poetical works as above mentioned, if I shall leave them incomplete, for behoof of the said trust, and also for the same purpose, to correct and cut down the *Life of Bonaparte* to a less size, which may be done with a prospect of considerable advantage, or to suggest some competent person to do so; and in general, I name the said John Gibson Lockhart, my literary executor, assigning my son the said Charles Scott as his assistant, to spare his time as much as possible;"—a recompense, he adds, being rendered to them, either by the trust, or by the assignees under this deed.

Had Scott lived a few years longer, he would have enjoyed the gratification of not only paying off the interest as well as the capital of his debts, but of finding a gradual fortune accumulating to him, without the necessity of lifting his pen. As it is, there is much pleasure in thinking, that those he loved so well will enjoy the benefit of his labours.

The public sentiment elicited by the death of Sir Walter Scott, did equal credit to his country and to human nature. On the 6th of October, a large meeting of noblemen and gentlemen was held in Edinburgh, for the purpose of "doing honour to the memory of Sir Walter Scott, and of taking measures for the erection of some lasting monument of the gratitude and imperishable esteem of his fellow-countrymen." At this meeting were congregated individuals of the most opposite political opinions, at a time when political difference was at the highest; but everything was sunk in the immediate object of their assembling. At the close of the meeting the subscriptions amounted to £1,100 from twenty-four subscribers. His

majesty King William IV, immediately afterwards subscribed £300; the Queen of Spain sent £20; £200 were transmitted by the poor Canadians; in short, contributions poured in from all quarters; and the result has been one of the most splendid monuments which the Modern Athens can boast of, and no city has more reason than she has to glory in the number she contains.

The reader of the foregoing pages will not be displeased we believe, if we should enumerate the Works of Sir Walter Scott under their different descriptions, viz :—

Poems	14 volumes
Novels	75 ..
Miscellaneous Works	42 ..
<hr/>	
131 volumes,	

Besides contributions to Periodicals, which from their scattered condition it is impossible to calculate.

The result of the above enumeration gives a return of *one hundred and thirty-one volumes of original writing* from the pen of Sir Walter Scott, exclusive of his immense range of correspondence, notes, and prefaces to his last edition of the novels, &c. Besides these, his "History of Scotland," "Letters on Demonology," "Provincial and Border Antiquities," contributions to the "Annual Register," &c. The copyrights of which compositions being in the hands of various parties, though belonging to his *original* writings, are not included in the above enumeration.

Need anything be added as a proof of the prolific and versatile talents of "The Wizard of the North."

ABBOTSFORD.

RESPECTING the mansion of Abbotsford itself—the humble successor of Cartleyhole—the most minute detail of the architecture and plenishing of this singular abode is that of Scott's trans-atlantic biographer, Mr. Lake. It is indeed almost *inventorial*, and we will make no apology for transcribing that portion of it referring more particularly to the internal structure and furnishing of the building.

“Not being skilled in the technical tongue of the architects, I beg leave to decline describing the structure of the house further, than merely to say, that it is more than one hundred and fifty feet long in front, as I paced it; was built at two different onsets; has a tall tower at either end, the one not the least like the other; presents sundry zig-zagged gables to the eye; a myriad of indentions and parapets and machicolated eaves; and fantastic water-spouts; labelled windows, not a few of them painted glass; groups of right Elizabethan chimneys; balconies of divers fashions, greater and lesser; stones carved with heraldries innumerable let in here and there in the wall; and a very noble projecting gateway, a *fac-simile*, I am told, of that appertaining to a certain dilapidated royal palace. From this porchway which is spacious and airy, quite open to the

elements in front, and adorned with some enormous petrified stag-horns overhead you are admitted by a pair of folding-doors into the hall, and an imposing *coup d'œil* the first glimpse of the poet's interior does present. The lofty windows, only two in number, being wholly covered with coats-of-arms, the place appears as dark as the twelfth century on your first entrance from noonday; but the delicious coolness of the atmosphere is luxury enough for a minute or two; and by degrees your eyes get accustomed to the effect of those 'storied panes,' and you are satisfied that you stand in one of the most picturesque of apartments. The hall is, I should guess, 'about forty feet long, by twenty in height and breadth. The walls are of richly carved oak, most part of it exceedingly dark, and brought, it appears, from the old palace of Dunfermline; the roof a series of pointed arches of the same, each beam presenting in the centre a shield of arms richly blazoned: of these shields there are sixteen, enough to bear all the quarterings of a perfect pedigree if the poet could show them; but on the maternal side (at the extremity,) there are two or three blanks (of the same sort which made Louis le Grand unhappy,) which have been covered with sketches of Cloudland, and equipped with the appropriate motto, 'Nox alta velat!' The shields properly filled up are distinguished ones; the descent of Scott of Harden on one side, and Rutherford of *that ilk* on the other. There is a door at the eastern end, over and around which the baronet has placed another series of escutcheons, which I looked on with at least as much respect; they are the memorials of his immediate personal connexions, the bearings of his friends and companions. All around the cornice of this noble room, there runs a continued series of blazoned shields, of another sort still; at the centre of one end, I saw the bloody heart of Douglas; and oppo-

site to that the royal lion of Scotland,—and between the ribs there is an inscription in black letter, which I, after some trials, read, and of which I wish I had had sense enough to take a copy. To the best of my recollection, the words are not unlike these: "These be the coat armories of the clannis and chief men of name, wha keepit the marchys of Scotlande in the suld tyme for the kinge. Trewe ware they in their tyme, and in their defense God them defendyt." There are from thirty to forty shields thus distinguished—Douglas, Soulis, Buccleugh, Maxwell, Johnstoune, Glendinning, Herries, Rutherford, Kerr, Elliot, Pringle, Home, and all the other heroes, as you may guess, of the border minstrelsy. The floor of this hall is black and white marble, from the Hebrides, wrought lozengewise; and the upper walls are completely hung with arms and armour. Two full suits of splendid steel occupy niches at the eastern end by themselves; the one an English suit of Henry the Fifth's time, the other an Italian, not quite so old. The variety of cuirasses, black and white, plain and sculptured is endless; helmets are in equal profusion; stirrups and spurs, of every fantasy, dangle above and below them; and there are swords of every order, from the enormous two-handed weapon with which the Swiss peasants dared to withstand the spears of the Austrian chivalry, to the claymore of the 'forty-five,' and the rapier of Dettingen. Indeed, I might come still lower, for, among other spoils, I saw Polish lances, gathered by the author of 'Paul's Letters,' on the field of Waterloo, and a complete suit of chain mail taken off the corpse of one of Tippoo's body-guard at Seringapatam. A series of German executioners' swords was *inter alia* pointed out to me; on the blade of one of which I made out the arms of Augsburg, and a legend which may be thus rendered:

'Dust, when I strike to dust : from sleepless grave,
Sweet Jane, stoop, a sin-stained soul to save.'

I am sorry there is no catalogue of this curious collection. Sir Walter ought to make one himself, for my cicerone informs me there is some particular history attached to almost every piece in it, and known in detail to nobody but himself. 'Stepping westward,' as Wordsworth says, 'from this hall, you find yourself in a narrow low arched room, which runs quite across the house, having a blazoned window again at either extremity, and filled all over with smaller pieces of armour and weapons, such as swords, firelocks, spears, arrows, darts, daggers, &c. Here are the pieces esteemed most precious by reason of their histories respectively. I saw, among the rest, Rob Roy's gun, with his initials, R. M. C., i.e., Robert Macgregor Campbell, round the touch-hole ; the blunderbuss of Hoper, a present to Sir Walter from his friend Sir Humphrey Davy ; a most magnificent sword, as magnificently mounted, the gift of Charles the First to the great Montrose, and having the arms of Prince Henry worked on the hilt ; the hunting bottle of bonnie king Jamie ; Bonaparte's pistols, (found in his carriage at Waterloo, I believe) *cum multis aliis*, I should have mentioned that stag-horns and bulls' horns (the petrified relics of the old mountain monster, I mean,) and so forth, are suspended in great abundance above all the door-ways of these armories ; and that in one corner, a dark one as it ought to be, there is a complete assortment of the old Scottish instruments of torture, not forgetting the very thumbiekins under which cardinal Carstairs did not flinch, and the more terrific iron crown of Wishart the martyr, being a sort of barred head-piece, screwed on the victim at the stake, to prevent him from crying aloud in his agony. In short, there

can be no doubt that, like Grose of merry memory,
the mighty Minstrel,

—Has a fouth o' auld nick-nackets,
Rusty airm caps and jingling jackets,
Wed band the Lothians three in tackets,
A towmont' guid.

These relics of other, and for the most part darker years, are disposed, however, with so much grace and elegance, that I doubt if Mr. John Hope himself would find anything to quarrel with in the beautiful apartments which contain them. The smaller of these opens to the drawing-room on one side, and the dining-room on the other, and is fitted up with low *divans* rather than sofas; so as to make, I doubt not, a most agreeable sitting-room when the apartments are occupied. In the hall, when the weather is hot, the baronet is accustomed to dine; and a gallant refectory, no question, it must make. A ponderous chandelier of painted glass swings from the roof; and the chimney-piece (the design copied from the stone-work of the Abbot's Stall at Melrose), would hold rafters enough for a Christmas fire of the good old times. Were the company suitably attired, a dinner party here would look like a scene in the 'Mysteries of Udolpho.'

"Beyond the smaller, or rather, I should say, the narrower armory, lies the dining-parlour proper, however; and though there is nothing Udolphoish here, yet I can well believe that, when lighted up, and the curtains drawn at night, the place may give no bad notion of the private snuggerly of some lofty lord abbot of the time of the Canterbury Tales. The room is a very handsome one, with a low and very richly carved roof of dark oak against a huge projecting low window, and the dais elevated *more majorem* the ornaments of the roof, niches for lamps,

&c. ; and, in short, all the minor details are, I believe, *fac similes* after Melrose. The walls are hung in crimson, but almost entirely covered with pictures, of which the most remarkable are—the parliamentary general, Lord Essex, a full length on horseback ; the Duke of Monmouth, by Lely ; a capital Hogarth, by himself ; Prior and Gay, both by Jervas ; and the head of Mary Queen of Scots, in a charger, painted by Amias Canrood the day after the decapitation at Fotheringay, and sent some years ago as a present to Sir Walter from a Prussian nobleman, in whose family it had been for more than two centuries. It is a most death-like performance, and the countenance answers well enough to the coins of the unfortunate beauty, though not at all to any of the portraits I have happened to see. I believe there is no doubt as to the authenticity of this most curious picture. Among various family pictures, I noticed particularly Sir Walter's great grandfather, the old cavalier mentioned in one of the epistles in *Marmion*, who let his beard grow after the execution of Charles the First, and who here appears accordingly, with a most venerable appendage of silver whiteness, reaching even unto his girdle. This old gentleman's son hangs close to him ; and had it not been for the costume, &c., I should have taken it for the portrait of Sir Walter himself. It is very like the common portraits of the poet, though certainly not like either Sir Thomas Lawrence's picture, or Chantrey's bust. There is also a very splendid full-length of Lucy Waters, mother to the Duke of Monmouth ; and an oval, capitally painted, of Anne, Duchess of Buccleugh, the same who,

'In pride of youth, in beauty's bloom,
Had wept o'er Monmouth's bloody tomb.'

All the furniture of this room is of massive Gothic oak ; and, as I said before, when it is fairly lit up, and plate and glass set forth, it must needs have a richly and luxuriously antique aspect. Beyond and alongside are narrowish passages, which make one fancy one's self in the penetralia of some dim old monastery ; for roofs and walls and windows (square, round, and oval alike) are sculptured in stone, after the richest relics of Melrose and Roslin Chapel. One of these leads to a charming breakfast-room, which looks to the Tweed on one side, and towards Yarrow and Ettrick on the other : a cheerful room fitted up with novels, romances, and poetry, I could perceive at one end ; and the other walls covered thick and thicker with a most valuable and beautiful collection of water-colour drawings, chiefly by Turner and Thomson of Duddingstone ; the designs, in short, for the magnificent work entitled 'Provincial Antiquities of Scotland !' There is one very grand oil painting over the chimney-piece, Fastcastle, by Thomson, alias the Wolf's Crag of the Bride of Lammermoor, one of the most majestic and melancholy sea-pieces I ever saw ; and some large black and white drawings of the Vision of Don Roderick, by Sir James Stewart of Allanton (whose illustrations of *Marmion* and *Mazeppa* you have seen or heard of,) are at one end of the parlour. The room is crammed with queer cabinets and boxes, and in a niche there is a bust of old Henry Mackenzie, by Joseph of Edinburgh. Returning towards the armory, you have, on one side of a most religious looking corridor, a small greenhouse with a fountain playing before it—the very fountain that in days of yore graced the cross of Edinburgh, and used to flow with claret at the coronation of the Stuarts—a pretty design, and a standing monument of the barbarity of modern innovation. From the small armory you pass, as I said before,

into the drawing-room, a large, lofty, and splendid *salon*, with antique ebony furniture and crimson silk hangings, cabinets, china, and mirrors, *quantum suff.*, and some portraits; among the rest, glorious John Dryden, by Sir Peter Lely, with his grey hairs floating about in a most picturesque style, eyes full of wildness, presenting the old bard, I take it, in one of those 'tremulous moods' in which we have it on record he appeared when interrupted in the midst of his 'Alexander's Feast.' From this you pass into the largest of all the apartments, the library, which, I must say, is really a noble room. It is an oblong of some fifty feet by thirty, with a projection in the centre, opposite the fire-place, terminating in a grand bow-window, fitted up with books also, and, in fact, constituting a sort of chapel to the church. The roof is of carved oak again—a very rich pattern—I believe chiefly *à la Roslin*—and the book-cases, which are also of richly carved oak, reach high up the walls all round. The collection amounts, in this room, to some fifteen or twenty thousand volumes, arranged according to their subjects: British history and antiquities filling the whole of the chief wall; English poetry and drama, classics and miscellanies, one end; Foreign literature, chiefly French and German, the other. The cases on the side opposite the fire are wired and locked, as containing articles very precious and very portable. One consisting entirely of books and MSS. relating to the insurrections of 1715 and 1745; and another (within the recess of the low window) of treatises *de re magica*, both of these being, (I am told, and can well believe,) in their several ways, collections of the rarest curiosity. My ciceroni pointed out, in one corner, a magnificent set of Montfaucon, ten volumes folio, bound in the richest manner in scarlet, and stamped with the royal arms, the gift of his present majesty. There

are few living authors of whose works presentation copies are not to be found here. My friend showed me inscriptions of that sort in, I believe, every European dialect extant. The books are all in prime condition, and bindings that would satisfy Mr. Dibdin. The only picture is Sir Walter's eldest son, in Hussar uniform, and holding his horse, by Allan of Edinburgh, a noble portait, over the fire-place; and the only bust is that of Shakspeare, from the Avon-monument, in a small niche in the centre of the east side. On a rich stand of porphyry, in one corner, reposes a tall silver urn filled with bones from the Piræus, and bearing the inscription, 'Given by George Gordon, Lord Byron, to Sir Walter Scott, Bart.' It contained the letter which accompanied the gift till lately: it has disappeared; no one guesses who took it, but whoever he was, as my guide observed, he must have been a thief for thieving's sake truly, as he durst no more exhibit this autograph than tip himself a bare bodkin. Sad infamous tourist, indeed! Although I saw abundance of comfortable looking desks and arm-chairs, yet this room seemed rather too large and fine for *work*, and I found accordingly after passing a double pair of doors, that there was a *sanctum* within and beyond this library. And here, you may believe, was not to me the least interesting though by no means the most splendid part of the suite.

"The lion's own den proper, then, is a room of about five and twenty feet square, by twenty feet high, containing of what is properly called furniture, nothing but a small writing-table in the centre, a plain arm-chair covered with black leather—a very comfortable one though, for I tried it—and a single chair besides, plain symptoms that this is no place for company. On either side of the fire place there are shelves filled with duodecimos and books of reference, chiefly, of

course, folios; but except these there are no books save the contents of a light gallery which runs round three sides of the room, and is reached by a hanging stair of carved oak in one corner. There are only two portraits, an original of the beautiful and melancholy head of Claverhouse, and a small full-length of Rob Roy. Various little antique cabinets stand round about, each having a bust on it: Stothard's Canterbury Pilgrims are on the mantel-piece; and in one corner I saw a collection of really useful weapons, those of the forest craft, to wit—axes and bills, and so forth, of every calibre. There is only one window pierced in a very thick wall, so that the place is rather sombre; the literary work of the gallery overhead harmonizes with the books well. It is a very comfortable looking room, and very unlike any other I ever was in. I should not forget some Highland claymores, clustered round a target over the Canterbury people, nor a writing-box of carved wood lined with crimson velvet, and furnished with silver plate of right venerable aspect, which looked as if it might have been the implement of old Chaucer himself, but which, from the arms on the lid, must have belonged to some Italian prince of the days of Leo the Magnificent at the furthest.

"The view of the Tweed from all the principle apartments is beautiful. You look out from among bowers, over a lawn of sweet turf, upon the clearest of all streams, fringed with the wildest of birch woods, and backed with the green hills of Ettrick Forest. The rest you must imagine. Altogether the place destined to receive so many pilgrimages, contains within itself beauties not unworthy of its associations. Few poets ever inhabited such a place; and none, ere now, ever created one."

From this lively and poetical description, our readers will be able to form some idea of the internal appear-

ance of Abbotsford, but it would occupy volumes to enumerate all the curiosities which were there congregated from every quarter of the habitable globe.

Whilst residing at Abbotsford—and not a day, not an hour as we have observed did he remain in town when he could escape from it—he seemed so constantly engaged in superintending his agricultural and planting operations during the earlier part of the day, and with company in the evening, that it appeared impossible he could find leisure for the composition of those works which were keeping the whole world in a state of continued excitation. His habits, however, were methodical. He usually commenced writing about seven o'clock in the morning, and continued at his desk, bating the interval of breakfast, till one or two in the afternoon; then shaved, dressed and went out to superintend his improvements. The evening he dedicated solely to amusement, either in reading, listening to his daughter playing on the harp, or piano-forte, or in entertaining company—the latter of which, indeed, he was seldom without. By this uniform system of economising his time, he managed to write, on an average, to the amount of sixteen pages of print per day. When he rode out, Scott was usually dressed in a short green coat, wide trousers, and stout shoes; and he bestrode a stout poney fitted for climbing the braes, and from which he could dismount and get up again with ease. He was always attended by two favourite stag-hounds—very fine animals—one of which, called Maiden, was a present from “the last of all the chieftains” the late Glengary. To those employed on his grounds he always spoke in the most kindly and familiar terms; never assuming the haughty part of the patron and master, but addressing them with the frankness of a friend. The consequence was that he was universally beloved by his inferiors, equally by

those dependant on himself, and all in the surrounding district. He was rather impatient, however, of promiscuous intruders on his property, and latterly manifested the usual aristocratic prejudice against poachers; but we have never heard of his prosecuting any one, contenting himself with ordering the trespasser to quit his domain. Scott was proud of his self-acquired acres, and in one sense he might well be so, seeing that he had, within a few years, from the unassisted stores of his own ingenuity, and the profits of his literary labours, literally converted a wild district of barren and unsheltered moorland, into a rich scene of romantic beauty and repose. It is little wonder, therefore, that he watched with a sort of paternal jealousy over the welfare of this self-created Eden. It has been calculated that the estate of Abbotsford, which brings in scarcely £700 a-year, must have cost Sir Walter Scott upwards of £50,000.

FINIS.

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