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THE LAKE

SCOTT

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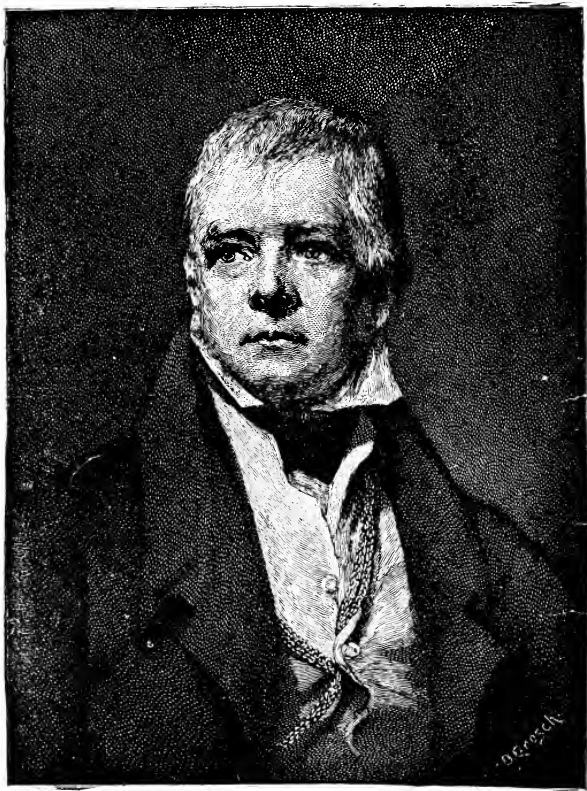
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SIR WALTER SCOTT

# THE LADY OF THE LAKE

BY

SIR WALTER SCOTT, BART.

*WITH INTRODUCTION AND NOTES*



NEW YORK  
MAYNARD, MERRILL, & CO.

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## LIFE OF SCOTT

WALTER SCOTT was born in Edinburgh on the 15th of August, 1771, which was also the birthday of Napoleon Bonaparte. His father was a Writer to the Signet, or, as we would say, an attorney-at-law; a lawyer with a large practice; an elder in the famous Old Grey Friars Church, and a man of integrity, sincerity, and benevolence. Walter was the ninth of twelve children, of whom the first six died young.

“I was,” says Scott in his Autobiography, “an uncommonly healthy child . . . until I was about eighteen months old. One night, however, I exhibited an intense reluctance to be put to bed; and after having been chased around the room, I was with difficulty consigned to my dormitory. It was the last time I was to show such personal agility. In the morning I was affected with fever; and in the course of three days afterwards it was discovered I had lost the power of my right leg.”

The best physicians were consulted, and finally, at the advice of his mother's father, Dr. John Rutherford, Professor of Medicine in the University of Edinburgh, Scott was sent to live at the house of his father's father, Robert Scott, a farmer of Sandy-Knowe in Roxburghshire, where the shepherd would often take him out and lay him down under the rocks beside the sheep. Scott used to say in after life that “the habit of lying on the turf there among the sheep and the lambs had given his mind a

peculiar tenderness for these animals, which it had ever since retained." The boy never completely recovered from his lameness, but his activity among his school-fellows was remarkable, and, according to his own account, he was as mischievous as the wildest urchin of his acquaintance.

In his fourth year he was sent to Bath, in the care of his aunt, Miss Janet Scott, where he remained about a year. By this time, he tells us, his health had become much improved by the country life prescribed for him by his grandfather, although his leg was still shrunken and contracted. In a word, he, who in a city would probably have been condemned to hopeless invalidism, became a healthy, high-spirited, and, except for his lameness, a sturdy child.

While he lived at Bath he learned to read at a day school in the neighborhood, and profited much by the companionship of his aunt, who read aloud to him old English and Scottish ballads until he could repeat long passages by heart.

From Bath he returned first to Edinburgh, and then to Sandy-Knowe; and when about eight years old he was removed to Prestonpans, as it was thought that sea bathing might prove beneficial to his lameness. At Prestonpans little Walter Scott stayed for some weeks, and here became great friends with an old military veteran, Dalgetty by name, who had pitched his tent, after many campaigns, in that little village, where, though called by courtesy a captain, he lived upon an ensign's half pay. He was the original of Captain Dugald Dalgetty, whom, with his redoubtable war horse, Gustavus Adolphus, readers of *The Legend of Montrose* hold in pleasant remembrance.

From Prestonpans, Scott was taken back to his father's

house in George's Square, Edinburgh, and, after having undergone the usual routine of juvenile instructions, he became, in 1779, a pupil in the Edinburgh high school. As a scholar he appears to have been by no means remarkable either for proficiency or for diligence; but his leisure hours were employed to good advantage in reading aloud to his mother, who had good natural taste and great feeling, and who succeeded in inculcating in his opening mind a discriminating love for literature.

In childhood Scott's hair was light chestnut, turning to brown in youth. His mouth was large and good-tempered, his eyes light blue, his eyebrows bushy. In spite of his lameness, he could climb rocks with the most daring, and he soon learned to ride. Out of school he was known as a leader in two different accomplishments: he could tell his schoolfellows stories of wonderful adventures, which always held their attention; or he could lead them across the difficult path under the Castle to attack the boys of the town.

After a few years in Edinburgh, Scott's health again became delicate, and it was thought best that he should be sent to live with his aunt at Kelso, which he calls the most beautiful, if not the most romantic, village in Scotland. From this time the love of natural beauty became with Scott an insatiable passion.

It was while attending the grammar school at Kelso that he became acquainted with James and John Ballantyne. According to James Ballantyne, Scott was then devoted to antiquarian lore, and was certainly the best story-teller he ever heard. "In the intervals of school hours," says Ballantyne, "it was our constant practice to walk together by the banks of the Tweed, and his stories appeared to be quite inexhaustible." This friendship

with the Ballantynes continued through life, John having a share in the publication of many of Scott's works, while James was the printer of nearly all of them.

When Scott returned to Edinburgh his acquaintance with English literature was greatly extended; he had read much in history, poetry, voyages, and travels, and an unusual amount of fairy tales, eastern stories and romances; in short, he had been "driving through a sea of books, like a vessel without a pilot or a rudder."

After having been two years under the rector of the high school, Scott enrolled himself in 1783, for the humanity or Latin class under Professor Hill in the University of Edinburgh, and in the Greek class under Professor Dalzel; the only other class for which he matriculated at the university was that of logic, under Professor Bruce, in 1785. All this time he was constantly reading. He learned Spanish and read Cervantes; he learned Italian and read Tasso and Ariosto; he steeped his mind in mediæval romance and legend, and he still retained his fondness for the old ballads whose acquaintance he had first made in company with his Aunt Janet, when he was a boy of four years.

In 1786, however, he was apprenticed to his father for five years, in order to be initiated into the dry technicalities of conveyancing, for his father destined him for the law. The change was very great; Scott had the strongest aversion to the confinement and the dull routine of the office. His desk was usually supplied with a store of works of fiction, and the eagerness with which he sought out and read everything that had reference to knight-errantry would have won the warm sympathy of the Ingenious Hidalgo, Don Quixote of La Mancha.

About the second year of his apprenticeship he had the



misfortune to burst a blood-vessel, and was confined to his bed for many weeks. During this time, conversation was forbidden, and his only amusements were reading and playing chess. In these weeks of enforced idleness he added to his readings of poetry and romance the study of history, especially as connected with military events, and thus collected much material that was of ultimate use in the composition of his poems and novels. After this illness he enjoyed excellent health, and as his frame gradually hardened, he was rather disfigured than disabled by his lameness. Excursions on foot or on horseback now formed Scott's favorite amusements, and wood, water, and wilderness had inexpressible charms for him. When he saw an old castle or a battle-field, his imagination immediately peopled it with combatants in their proper costumes, and his hearers were overwhelmed by the enthusiasm of his description.

In 1791 Scott was admitted a member of the Speculative Society<sup>1</sup> of the University of Edinburgh, and very shortly afterward was appointed its librarian and subsequently its treasurer and secretary.

The time of Scott's apprenticeship had now elapsed, and after some consideration he determined to prepare himself for the bar, for which purpose he diligently applied himself to the study of Roman civil law, as well as to the municipal law of Scotland. On the 10th of July, 1792, when just completing his twenty-first year, he was called to the bar as an advocate.

Lockhart tells us that Scott became a sound lawyer.

<sup>1</sup> For a description of the Speculative Society, or "Spec.," see Robert Louis Stevenson's delightful essay, *A College Magazine*, published in *Virginibus Puerisque; Memories and Portraits*, New York, Charles Scribner's Sons.

and might have been a great one; Scott's father, on the other hand, told him that he was better fitted to be a peddler than a lawyer, so fond was he of tramping the country in search of noble scenery and historic associations. It was on such expeditions that Scott learned to know the speech and ways of the peasantry, whom he describes so well in his books. In *Redgauntlet*, one of the most interesting of Scott's novels, he gives us, in the person of Alan Fairford, a vivid picture of the tastes and occupations of this period of his life. The truth is, the love for antiquarian lore, which so impressed James Balantyne, was still his ruling passion, while his necessities were not so great as to make an exclusive application to his profession imperative. Although he could speak fluently at the bar, his mind was not at all of a forensic cast, and he was too much the abstract scholar to assume readily the mental attitude of an adroit pleader.

The love of literature was strong in him, and in 1796, the year in which Burns died, he made his first appearance as a writer with a translation of *Lenore*, and the *Wild Huntsman*, from the German of *Bürger*, which met with a favorable reception from a somewhat limited public.

About this time there was widespread indignation in Scotland at the hostile menaces of France, and numerous bodies of volunteer militia were formed to meet the threatened invasion. In the beginning of 1799 a cavalry corps was formed under the name of the Royal Mid-Lothian Regiment of Cavalry; Scott was appointed its adjutant, for which office his lameness was considered no bar. He was a very zealous officer, and highly popular in the regiment, and he always looked back upon this episode in his life with the greatest pleasure.

In his nineteenth year while still apprenticed to his father, Scott fell in love with Margaret, daughter of Sir John and Lady Jane Stuart Belches of Ivernary. For some reason, most probably the difference in their social position, the hope that he might one day marry her was, six years later, definitely abandoned. Shortly afterward, during a visit to the English lakes, Scott met Miss Margaret Carpenter, or Charpentier, the daughter of a French royalist who had fallen a victim to the excesses of the French Revolution. This lady he married on Christmas eve, 1797, and her affectionate thoughtfulness contributed much to the happiness of his life. She died in 1826, leaving two sons and two daughters, the elder of whom married J. G. Lockhart, the translator of the *Spanish Ballads*.

In 1799 Scott was appointed to the office of Sheriff depute of Selkirk, which secured him an annual salary of £300. The duties of the office were very slight, and the income relieved him from any anxiety as to the chances either of his profession or his pen. In 1806 he was appointed one of the clerks of session (on the retirement of Mr. Home), with the understanding that he should not receive the salary (£800 per annum) until after Mr. Home's death, which did not take place for more than five years afterward. When Scott obtained this situation, he gave up his practice at the bar, and at once decided that literature should thereafter form the main business of his life. His first real literary success was his *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*, published in 1802. To the old ballads, the collected results of many years of research, Scott added a few new ones of his own composition, written in imitation of the old. The edition was at once exhausted, and Scott suddenly found himself famous.

He was living now in a cottage at Lasswade, on the Esk, six miles from Edinburgh. Scott had made the dining table with his own hands, and was very proud of his various exploits in carpentering. Here he used to sit up late, and work far into the morning hours; but this gave rise to serious headaches, which induced him to change his habits of life.

In 1804 Scott quitted Lasswade for Ashestiel, in Selkirkshire, where he lived in a house belonging to his cousin. Here he began his life of sport. He would rise at five and work steadily till breakfast; by noon he had finished his day's work, and was ready to ride forth with dog and gun or fishing tackle. Salmon spearing by torchlight was a favorite amusement with him. His dogs and horses he treated as personal friends. On the death of his deerhound Samp, he refused an invitation to dinner, giving as his reason "the death of an old friend."

In 1805 his first great poem, *The Lay of the Last Minstrel*, was completed, and forty-four thousand copies were sold before 1830. For this work Scott received £769, a large sum in those days. In 1808 *Marmion* was published. It was the success of the Lay which produced *Marmion*. It is said that Scott received £1000 from his publisher for this poem before he had written a line of it. The popularity of *Marmion* in turn encouraged him to another attempt in the same vein, and in 1810 he published *The Lady of the Lake*.

Five years earlier he had formed a secret partnership with James Ballantyne, already mentioned, and had embarked in the printing business. In order to keep his presses supplied with work, he soon after founded, with John Ballantyne, a publishing house; neither John Bal-

lantyne nor Scott was a business man, and the business was unprofitable almost from the start.

Meanwhile he removed to Abbotsford on the Tweed, where he bought a hundred acres of land, to which property he soon added the adjoining farms. He says, "We had twenty-five cartloads of the veriest trash in nature, besides dogs, pigs, ponies, poultry, cows, and calves." The ruins of Melrose Abbey could be seen from the grounds, which had, in fact, once belonged to the abbot. Shortly after he was offered the laureateship, an honor which he declined.

Up to this time Scott's literary fame depended entirely on his poetry, but in 1814 his first novel, *Waverley*, took the reading world by storm. The story was published anonymously, and for many years the secret of the author's identity was preserved. The great publishers of London and Edinburgh vied with each other in their efforts to buy a share in *Waverley*, and the series of novels which followed it. They were finally sold to Constable, but by the terms of sale that publisher was required to buy at the same time a large part of the stock of John Ballantyne & Co., the luckless publishing house in which Scott was a shareholder. The purchase of so much of the stock of the old concern seriously impaired Constable's working capital, and the new firm faced the future burdened with debts, largely to the printing-house of James Ballantyne & Co., in which business also Scott was a stockholder.

The remarkable success of *Waverley* was, however, followed by a series of no less remarkable successes. *Guy Mannering* was published in 1815, *The Antiquary*, *The Black Dwarf*, and *Old Mortality* in 1816, *Rob Roy* and *The Heart of Midlothian* in 1818, *Ivanhoe* in 1820, and

*Kenilworth* in 1821, all of which attained a large measure of popular favor.

On the 31st of March, 1820, Scott was created a baronet by King George IV. At the time the honor was conferred the king observed to the poet, "I shall always reflect with pleasure on Sir Walter Scott's having been the first creation of my reign." Scott had already been elected President of the Royal Society of Edinburgh, and seemed almost beyond the reach of adverse fortune. Five years later the crash came. In the commercial excitement of 1825-1826 the house of Constable & Co. was declared bankrupt. The printing firm of James Ballantyne & Co. held Constable's notes for large sums, and it soon became necessary for Scott and his partner to declare their inability to meet their business obligations. In this same year Scott's wife, who had long been an invalid, died, and he himself began to fail in health.

These were blows enough to daunt most men; perhaps the blow to his pride was the heaviest. He says in his diary: "I felt rather sneaking as I came home from the Parliament House—felt as if I were liable *monstrari digito* in no very pleasant way. But this must be borne *cum cæteris*; and, thank God, however uncomfortable, I do not feel despondent."

No; Scott came of a line of fighting ancestors, and he was not one to sit down tamely under difficulties. This misfortune was the touchstone of his character, and brought out all its beauty and generosity. He might have declared himself bankrupt, and have risen again with debts partly paid off; but "for this," he says, "in a court of honor I should deserve to lose my spurs. No; if they permit me, I will be their vassal for life, and dig in the mine of my imagination to find dia-

monds to make good my engagements, not to enrich myself."

As soon as his situation became public, it caused one universal burst of sympathy, and incredible offers of assistance were made to Scott. When the Earl of Dudley heard of his failure, he exclaimed: "Scott ruined! the author of *Waverley* ruined! Why, let every man to whom he has given months of delight, give him a sixpence, and he will rise to-morrow morning richer than a Rothschild."

Scott's liabilities were about £117,000. Two days after the failure he unreservedly assigned the whole of his property to his creditors, together with all his future labors. He then sat down at fifty-five years of age to the task of redeeming this enormous debt. In the first place, he sold his furniture and house in Edinburgh, and took a humble lodging in a side street. During the vacations, when living at Abbotsford, he almost entirely gave up seeing company—a resolution the more easily carried into effect as Lady Scott was no longer living. "I have been rash," he writes in his diary, "in anticipating funds to buy land; but then I made from £5000 to £10,000 a year, and land was my temptation. I think nobody can lose a penny by me, that is one consolation. My children are provided for: thank God for that! I was to have gone home on Saturday to see my friends. My dogs will wait for me in vain. It is foolish, but the thoughts of parting from these dumb creatures have moved me more than any of the painful reflections I have put down. Poor things! I must get them kind masters." Again he writes in a more cheerful strain: "I experience a sort of determined pleasure in confronting the very worst aspect of this sudden reverse; in standing,

as it were, in the breach that has overthrown my future, and saying, 'Here I stand, at least an honest man.' "

The proceeds of the very first work published after the failure, the celebrated novel *Woodstock*, amounted to more than £8000. The next year, 1827, two editions of Scott's next work, *The Life of Napoleon Buonaparte*, produced, for the benefit of the creditors, the then unprecedented sum of £18,000.

These sums, together with the money received from other publications, enabled Scott's trustees to distribute among his creditors six shillings in the pound on their whole claim, before Christmas, 1827, nearly £40,000 having been realized by the exertions of two years. Before the close of 1830 Scott's debt had been reduced to about £54,000.

In December, 1830, it was unanimously agreed, "That Sir Walter Scott be requested to accept his furniture, plate, paintings, library, and curiosities of every description, as the best means the creditors have of expressing their very high sense of his most honorable conduct, and in grateful acknowledgment for the unparalleled and most successful exertions he has made, and continues to make, for them." This generous gift was worth at least £10,000, and it enabled him (to use nearly his own words) to eat with his own spoons and to study with his own books.

When Scott died, his trustees had an undistributed balance on hand, which, with his life insurance, and the money realized by the sale of his copyrights, was sufficient to pay off all his debts.

In the winter of 1830 it became apparent to Scott's friends that his mind had lost something, and was daily losing something of its wonted energy. "I have lost,"



he said, "the power of interesting the country, and ought in justice to all parties to retire while I have some credit." Before the close of the year he was attacked with apoplexy, and a consultation of physicians was held. They told him that if he persisted in working his brain, nothing could prevent another and more serious attack. His first reply was: "As for telling me not to work, Molly might as well put the kettle on the fire and say, 'Now, don't boil,' " but in a few months he put himself unreservedly in the hands of the doctors, and agreed to spend the ensuing winter in a warmer climate.

In October, 1831, Scott left London for Portsmouth, whence he sailed for Malta. In December he went to Naples, where he remained some months, and thence to Rome, where he was received with the greatest enthusiasm. On the 16th of May he left Rome, and crossing the Apennines, went to Venice. From Venice he went to Frankfort, where he took the Rhine steamboat. Coming down the Rhine he had another attack of apoplexy, this time combined with paralysis; he, however, reached London on the 13th of June, and was immediately put to bed. His great anxiety was that he might reach Abbotsford before he died, and at length his medical attendants consented to his removal to Scotland; on the 7th of July everything was prepared for his journey by the steamship. He became unconscious on the boat, and remained so until he came within sight of the towers of Abbotsford. When he reached his home, "his dogs assembled about him, began to fawn upon him, and to lick his hands, and he alternately sobbed and smiled over them until sleep oppressed him." For four or five days after his arrival he was daily wheeled about the house and the garden, but on the 16th he was much feebler and remained in

bed; the next day he asked to be placed at his desk, but when the pen was put into his hand, he was unable to close his fingers upon it, and it dropped upon the paper. The tears sprang to his eyes, but his old pride asserted itself. "Friends," he said, "don't let me expose myself; get me to bed." He was carried to bed, where he lay unconscious for several days. Returning to consciousness, he asked to see Lockhart, his son-in-law and afterward his biographer. "Lockhart," he said, "I may have but a minute to speak to you. My dear, be a good man — be virtuous — be religious — be a good man. Nothing else will give you any comfort when you come to lie here." He paused; Lockhart said, "Shall I send for Sophia and Anne?" — "No," said he, "don't disturb them. Poor souls! I know they were up all night. God bless you all!" With this he sank into a very tranquil sleep, and indeed he scarcely afterward gave any sign of consciousness. He died September 26, 1832, in the second month of his sixty-second year. About seven years before he had written in his diary: "Square the odds and good-night, Sir Walter, about sixty. I care not, if I leave my name unstained, and my family property settled. *Sat est vixisse.*"

## INTRODUCTION

*The Lady of the Lake* was published in May, 1810. Its success was even greater than that of *The Lay of the Last Minstrel* and *Marmion*, eight editions, aggregating twenty thousand copies, having been sold before the end of the year. Mr. Cadell, the publisher, said: "The whole country rang with the praises of the poet; crowds set off to view the scenery of Loch Katrine, till then comparatively unknown; and as the book came out just before the seasons for excursions, every house and inn in that neighborhood was crowded with a constant succession of visitors." The popular verdict on Scott's three greatest poems was thus expressed by Lockhart, "*The Lay*, if I may venture to state the creed now established, is, I should say, generally considered as the most natural and original; *Marmion*, as the most powerful and splendid; *The Lady of the Lake*, as the most interesting, romantic, picturesque, and graceful"; and Jeffrey predicted that the last would be "oftener read hereafter than either of the former."

*The Lady of the Lake*, like *The Lay of the Last Minstrel* and *Marmion*, is written in the romantic measure of English poetry called iambic tetrameter, arranged in rhymed couplets, and variously combined with trimeters. The normal verse is of four feet, each consisting of an accented followed by an unaccented syllable. The rhythm of the poem was inspired principally by Coleridge's

*Christabel*, which was read to Scott by a mutual friend while it was yet in manuscript. *Christabel* is written in a meter which, Coleridge says in his Preface, "is not, properly speaking, irregular, though it may seem so from its being founded on a new principle, namely, that of counting in each line the accents, not the syllables. Though the latter may vary from seven to twelve, yet in each line the accents will be found to be only four. Nevertheless, this occasional variation in the number of syllables is not introduced wantonly, or for the mere ends of convenience, but in correspondence with some transition in the nature of the imagery or passion." Scott adopted a modification of this principle.

The defects of *The Lady of the Lake*, as a work of art, are manifest. The style is in many places rough and unpolished. Scott wrote at a high rate of speed, and though his language always flows easily on, the words are not invariably well chosen. Scott had little natural ear for music, and was not fastidious as to the harmony of his verse. "I am sensible," he said, "that if there be anything good about my poetry, it is a hurried frankness of composition which pleases soldiers, sailors, and young people of bold and active disposition." This "hurried frankness" is no doubt responsible for other defects in versification. Unlike Coleridge, Scott may have considered "the mere ends of convenience"; hence the occurrence of faulty rhymes, of the same words over and over again at the end of the lines, of instances of inconsistency in the sequence of tenses. What Scott said of the composition of *The Lay of the Last Minstrel*, in explaining the rapidity with which that poem was completed, is equally applicable to the composition of the present poem: "There was little occasion for pause or

hesitation, when a troublesome rhyme might be accommodated by an alteration of the stanza, or when an incorrect measure might be remedied by a variation of the rhyme."

Scott has vindicated the meter of his tales as preferable to Pope's couplet, though surely in the case of a romance which was a development of the ballad, the vindication was needless. His meter is the true English counterpart, if there be one, of Homer. And Scott is essentially a ballad writer. Ballad poetry was in literature his first love — the spring at which he drank his earliest inspiration. Each of his greater poems is formed of ballad elements. He himself acknowledged this when he described his earliest considerable poem as, in style and form, a revival of minstrel craft. The great charms of Scott's poetry are simply the characteristics of the old ballads, refined by the influence of modern art and higher culture. Narrative in form and simple in style and language, his poems appeal to the sympathies and the state of knowledge of the mass of the people. They subject the intellect to no violent strain. They are entirely free from subtleties of thought — from intricate subjectivities, remote allusions, and hidden meanings. Their crowning glory is that they are genuine transcripts of nature.

True to his character as a ballad poet, Scott makes large use of the supernatural element. The Augury of the Taghairm, or Oracle of the Hide, in the present poem, the legend of Gilpin Horner in *The Lay of the Last Minstrel*, and the host's tale of the Elfin Warrior and the apparitions at the City Cross in *Marmion* are due to the fondness for the purely romantic and supernatural aspects of the ballad which led Scott to translate Bürger's *Lenore* and *Wild Huntsman*.

In this respect Scott bore the impress of his poetical truth; for he is reported to have said of the translation of *Lenore* by William Taylor: "This was what made me a poet. I had several times attempted the more regular kinds of poetry without success; but here was something that I thought I could do." And accordingly his own translation of that ballad was one of his earliest poetical efforts. But in his larger poems, with the possible exception of *The Lay*, Scott with the artist's instinct keeps the supernatural element duly subordinate to their primary characteristics — narration and description.

The text of this edition is that of Black's *Author's Edition*, with Rolfe's corrections.

## CRITICAL OPINIONS

Surely since Shakespeare's time there has been no great speaker so unconscious of an aim as Sir Walter Scott. — *Thomas Carlyle.*

He saw life, and told the world what he saw. Has any writer since his time supplied it with a fuller, fairer vision? His very style, loose and rambling as it is, is a part of the man, and of the artistic effect he produces. The full vigor and ease with which his imagination plays on life is often suggested by his pleonasms and tautologies; the search for the single final epithet is no part of his method, for he delights in the telling, and is sorry when all is told. — *Walter Raleigh.*

Poetry is consistent with perfect tranquillity of spirit; a true poem may have the calm of a summer day, the placidity of a mountain lake; but eloquence is a torrent, a tempest, a mass in motion, an army with banners, the burst of a hundred instruments of music. Scott's highest excellence as a poet is his eloquence. — *John Burroughs.*

In Scott's narrative poems the scenery is accessory and subordinate. It is a picturesque background to his figures, a landscape through which the action rushes like a torrent, catching a hint of color perhaps from rock or tree, but never any image so distinct that it tempts us aside to reverie or meditation. — *James Russell Lowell.*

Walter Scott is a great genius — he has not his equal — and we need not wonder at the extraordinary effect he has produced on the reading world. He gives me much to think of, and I discover in him a wholly new art, with laws of its own. — *Goethe*.

If there were, or could be, any man whom it would not be a monstrous absurdity to compare with Shakespeare as a creator of men and inventor of circumstance, that man could be none other than Scott. Greater poems than his have been written, and, to my mind, one or two novels better than his best; but when one considers the huge mass of his work, and its quality in the mass, the vast range of his genius, and its command over that range, who shall be compared with him? — *A. C. Swinburne*.

Walter Scott is out and away the king of the romantics. *The Lady of the Lake* has no indisputable claim to be a poem beyond the inherent fitness and desirability of the tale. It is just such a story as a man would make up for himself, walking, in the best of health and temper, through just such scenes as it is laid in. Hence it is that a charm dwells undefinable among these slovenly verses as the unseen cuckoo fills the mountains with his note; hence, even after we have flung the book aside, the scenery and adventures remain present to the mind, a new and green possession, not unworthy of that beautiful name, *The Lady of the Lake*, or the direct romantic opening, — one of the most spirited and poetical in literature, — “The stag at eve had drunk his fill.” — *Robert Louis Stevenson*.

He is not a reflective poet, straining his sight to behold what is hidden from men, and laboring to discover the



secret springs of human thought, character, and conduct. No man is less speculative. He is content with broad, obvious surfaces, colors, sounds. He gives us no deep thoughts, few really magical cadences, no trimmed and polished art. He is at the opposite pole from Virgil, but he is, except in his lack of reflection, very closely akin to a greater than Virgil, to Homer. He is, and he is likely to remain, the Latest Minstrel, the last voice of the Old World; akin to Homer, and more akin to Homer's bards, Phemius and Demodocus. The deeds, not the thoughts, of men are his matter; passion expressed in action, not passions analyzed in the poetic laboratory. So potent was his genius, so inspiring the martial tramp and clang of his measures, that he made the New World listen to the accents of the Old. — *Andrew Lang.*

If Byron and Scott could have been combined, — if the energetic passions of the one could have been joined to the healthy nature and quick sympathies of the other, — we might have seen another Shakespeare in the nineteenth century. — *Leslie Stephen.*

Probably no author of the highest mark has been so little conscious of his greatness as Scott. His amazing success left the manly simplicity of his nature untouched. His warmth of affection for homely folk, his pleasures and his duties, his gentleness and his courtesy, — he was a gentleman, it was said, even to his dogs, — were unaffected by the popularity that made his name everywhere familiar. Whatever was lovely and of good report was loved by him, and the stamp of a healthy nature is left upon all that he has written. — *John Dennis.*

Far-seeing toleration, profound reverence, a critical insight into the various shades of thought and feeling, a

moderation which turns to scorn the falsehood of extremes, a lofty sense of Christian honor, purity, and justice, breathe through every volume of the romances of Walter Scott. — *Dean Stanley.*

His poems are historical narrations, true in all things to the spirit of history, but everywhere overspread with those bright and breathing colors which only genius can bestow on reality; and when it is remembered that the times in which the scenes are laid and his heroes act are distinguished by many of the most energetic virtues that can grace or dignify the character of a free people, and marked by the operation of great passions and important events, every one must feel that the poetry of Sir Walter Scott is, in the noblest sense of the word, national; that it breathes upon us the bold and heroic spirit of perturbed and magnificent ages, and connects us, in the midst of philosophy, science, and refinement, with our turbulent but high-minded ancestors, of whom we have no cause to be ashamed, whether looked at in the fields of war or in the halls of peace. He is a true knight in all things — free, courteous, and brave. War, as he describes it, is a noble game, a kingly pastime. He is the greatest of all war poets. His poetry might make a very coward fearless. — *William Cullen Bryant.*

## HISTORICAL BASIS OF THE POEM

The following paragraphs are taken from Scott's *Tales of a Grandfather* :

I. HIGHLANDERS AND BORDERERS. — There were two great divisions of the country, the Highlands namely, and the Borders, which were so much wilder and more barbarous than the others, that they might be said to be altogether without law; and although they were nominally subjected to the king of Scotland, yet when he desired to execute any justice in those great districts, he could not do so otherwise than by marching there in person, at the head of a strong body of forces, and seizing upon the offenders, and putting them to death with little or no form of trial. Such a rough course of justice, perhaps, made these disorderly countries quiet for a short time, but it rendered them still more averse to the royal government in their hearts, and disposed on the slightest occasion to break out, either into disorders amongst themselves, or into open rebellion. I must give you some more particular account of these wild and uncivilized districts of Scotland, and of the particular sort of people who were their inhabitants, that you may know what I mean when I speak of Highlanders and Borderers.

The Highlands of Scotland, so called from the rocky and mountainous character of the country, consist of a very large proportion of the northern parts of that kingdom. It was into these pathless wildernesses that the

Romans drove the ancient inhabitants of Great Britain ; and it was from these that they afterward sallied to invade and distress that part of Britain which the Romans had conquered, and in some degree civilized. The inhabitants of the Highlands spoke, and still speak, a language totally different from the Lowland Scots. That last language does not greatly differ from English, and the inhabitants of both countries easily understand each other, though neither of them comprehend the Gaelic, which is the language of the Highlanders. The dress of these mountaineers was also different from that of the Lowlanders. They wore a plaid, or mantle of frieze, or of striped stuff called tartan, one end of which being wrapped round the waist, formed a short petticoat, which descended to the knee, while the rest was folded round them like a sort of cloak. They had buskins made of raw hide ; and those who could get a bonnet, had that covering for their heads, though many never wore one during their whole lives, but had only their own shaggy hair tied back by a leathern strap. They went always armed, carrying bows and arrows, large swords, which they wielded with both hands, called claymores, pole-axes, and daggers for close fight. For defense, they had a round wooden shield, or target, stuck full of nails ; and their great men had shirts of mail, not unlike to the flannel shirts now worn, only composed of links of iron, instead of threads of worsted ; but the common men were so far from desiring armor, that they sometimes threw their plaids away, and fought in their shirts, which they wore very long and large, after the Irish fashion.

This part of the Scottish nation was divided into clans, that is, tribes. The persons composing each of these clans believed themselves all to be descended, at some

distant period, from the same common ancestor, whose name they usually bore. Thus, one tribe was called MacDonald, which signifies the sons of Donald; another MacGregor, or the sons of Gregor; MacNeil, the sons of Neil, and so on. Every one of these tribes had its own separate chief, or commander, whom they supposed to be the immediate representative of the great father of the tribe from whom they were all descended. To this chief they paid the most unlimited obedience, and willingly followed his commands in peace or war; not caring although, in doing so, they transgressed the laws of the king, or went into rebellion against the king himself. Each tribe lived in a valley, or district of the mountains, separated from the others; and they often made war upon and fought desperately with each other. But with Lowlanders they were always at war. They differed from them in language, in dress, and in manners; and they believed that the richer grounds of the low country had formerly belonged to their ancestors, and therefore they made incursions upon it, and plundered it without mercy. The Lowlanders, on the other hand, equal in courage and superior in discipline, gave many severe checks to the Highlanders; and thus there was almost constant war or discord between them, though natives of the same country.

Some of the most powerful of the Highland chiefs set themselves up as independent sovereigns. Such were the famous Lords of the Isles, called MacDonald, to whom the island, called the Hebrides, lying on the northwest of Scotland, might be said to belong in property. These petty sovereigns made alliances with the English in their own name. They took the part of Robert the Bruce in the wars, and joined him with their forces. We shall

find that, after his time, they gave great disturbance to Scotland. The Lords of Lorn, MacDouglas by name, were also extremely powerful; and you have seen that they were able to give battle to Bruce, and to defeat him and place him in the greatest jeopardy. He revenged himself afterward by driving John of Lorn out of the country, and by giving great part of his possessions to his own nephew, Sir Colin Campbell, who became the first of the great family of Argyll, which, afterward enjoyed such power in the Highlands.

Upon the whole, you can easily understand that these Highland clans, living among such high and inaccessible mountains, and paying obedience to no one save their own chiefs, should have been instrumental in disturbing the tranquillity of the kingdom of Scotland. They had many virtues, being a kind, brave, and hospitable people, and remarkable for their fidelity to their chiefs; but they were restless, revengeful, fond of plunder, and delighting rather in war than in peace, and disorder than in repose.

The Border counties were in a state little more favorable to a quiet or peaceful government. In some respects the inhabitants of the counties of Scotland lying opposite to England greatly resembled the Highlanders, and particularly in their being, like them, divided into clans, and having chiefs, whom they obeyed in preference to the king, or the officers whom he placed among them. How clanship came to prevail in the Highlands and Borders, and not in the provinces which separated them from each other, it is not easy to conjecture, but the fact was so. The Borders are not, indeed, so mountainous and inaccessible a country as the Highlands; but they also are full of hills, especially on the more western part of the frontier, and were in early times covered with

forests, and divided by small rivers and morasses, into dales and valleys, where the different clans lived, making war sometimes on the English, sometimes on each other, and sometimes on the more civilized country which lay behind them.

But though the Borderers resembled the Highlanders in their mode of government and habits of plundering, and, as it may be truly added, in their disobedience to the general government of Scotland, yet they differed in many particulars. The Highlanders fought always on foot, the Borderers were all horsemen. The Borderers spoke the same language with the Lowlanders, wore the same sort of dress, and carried the same arms. Being accustomed to fight against the English, they were also much better disciplined than the Highlanders. But in point of obedience to the Scottish government, they were not much different from the clans of the north.

II. JAMES V. OF SCOTLAND.—James V. displayed most of the qualities of a wise and good prince. He was handsome in his person, and resembled his father in the fondness for military exercises, and the spirit of chivalrous honor which James IV. loved to display. He also inherited his father's love of justice, and his desire to establish and enforce wise and equal laws, which should protect the weak against the oppression of the great. It was easy to make laws, but to put them in vigorous exercise was of much greater difficulty; and in his attempt to accomplish this laudable purpose, James often incurred the ill will of the more powerful nobles. He was a well-educated and accomplished man; and like his ancestor, James I., was a poet and a musician. He had, however, his defects. He avoided his father's failing of profusion, having no hoarded treasures to employ on pomp and

show; but he rather fell into the opposite fault, being of a temper too parsimonious; and though he loved state and display, he endeavored to gratify that taste as economically as possible, so that he has been censured as rather close and covetous. He was also, though the foibles seem inconsistent, fond of pleasure, and disposed to too much indulgence. It must be added, that when provoked, he was unrelenting even to cruelty; for which he had some apology, considering the ferocity of the subjects over whom he reigned. But, on the whole, James V. was an amiable man and a good sovereign.

His first care was to bring the Borders of Scotland to some degree of order. These, as you were formerly told, were inhabited by tribes of men, forming each a different clan, as they were called, and obeying no orders save those which were given by their chiefs. These chiefs were supposed to represent the first founder of the name, or family. The attachment of the clansmen to the chief was very great: indeed, they paid respect to no one else. In this the Borderers agreed with the Highlanders, as also in their love of plunder and neglect of the general laws of the country. But the Border men wore no tartan dress, and served almost always on horseback, whereas the Highlanders acted always on foot. You will also remember that the Borderers spoke the Scottish language, and not the Gaelic tongue used by the mountaineers.

The situation of these clans on the frontiers exposed them to constant war; so that they thought of nothing else but of collecting bands of their followers together, and making incursions, without much distinction, on the English, on the Lowland (or inland) Scots, or upon each other. They paid little respect either to times of truce or treaties of peace, but exercised their depredations



without regard to either, and often occasioned wars betwixt England and Scotland which would not otherwise have taken place. As their insolence had risen to a high pitch after the field of Flodden had thrown the country into confusion, James V. resolved to take very severe measures against them.

His first step was to secure the persons of the principal chieftains by whom these disorders were privately encouraged. The Earl of Bothwell, the Lord Home, Lord Maxwell, Scott of Buccleuch, Ker of Fairniehirst, and other powerful chiefs, who might have opposed the king's purposes, were seized, and imprisoned in separate fortresses in the inland country.

James then assembled an army, in which warlike purposes were united with those of sylvan sport; for he ordered all the gentlemen in the wild districts which he intended to visit to bring their best dogs, as if his only purpose had been to hunt the deer in those desolate regions. This was to prevent the Borderers from taking the alarm, in which case they would have retreated into their mountains and fastnesses, from whence it would have been difficult to dislodge them.

These men had indeed no distinct idea of the offences which they had committed, and consequently no apprehension of the king's displeasure against them. The laws had been so long silent in that remote and disorderly country, that the outrages which were practiced by the strong against the weak seemed to the perpetrators the natural course of society, and to present nothing that was worthy of punishment.

Thus, as the king in the beginning of his expedition suddenly approached the castle of Piers Cockburn of Henderland, that baron was in the act of providing a

great entertainment to welcome him, when James caused him to be suddenly seized on and executed. Adam Scott of Tushielaw, called the King of the Border, met the same fate.

In the like manner James proceeded against the Highland chiefs; and by executions, forfeitures, and other severe measures he brought the northern mountaineers, as he had already done those of the south, into comparative subjection. He then set at liberty the Border chiefs, and others whom he had imprisoned, lest they should have offered any hindrance to the course of his justice.

James was very fond of hunting, and when he pursued that amusement in the Highlands he used to wear the peculiar dress of that country, having a long and wide Highland shirt and a jacket of Tartan velvet, with plaid hose, and everything else corresponding. The accounts for these are in the books of his chamberlain, still preserved.

The reign of James V. was not alone distinguished by his personal adventures and pastimes, but is honorably remembered on account of wise laws made for the government of his people, and for restraining the crimes and violence which were frequently practiced among them; especially those of assassination, burning of houses, and driving of cattle—the usual and ready means by which powerful chiefs avenged themselves of their feudal enemies.

## AUTHOR'S PREFACE

After the success of *Marmion*, I felt inclined to exclaim with Ulysses in the *Odyssey*:

“One venturous game my hand has won to-day —  
Another, gallants, yet remains to play.”

The ancient manners, the habits and customs of the aboriginal race by whom the Highlands of Scotland were inhabited, had always appeared to me peculiarly adapted to poetry. The change in their manners, too, had taken place almost within my own time, or at least I had learned many particulars concerning the ancient state of the Highlands from the old men of the last generation. I had always thought the old Scottish Gael highly adapted for poetical composition. The feuds and political discussions which, half a century earlier, would have rendered the richer and wealthier part of the kingdom indisposed to countenance a poem, the scene of which was laid in the Highlands, were now sunk in the generous compassion which the English, more than any other nation, feel for the misfortunes of an honorable foe. The poems of Ossian had, by their popularity, sufficiently shown that if writings on Highland subjects were qualified to interest the reader, mere national prejudices were, in the present day, very unlikely to interfere with their success.

I had also read a great deal, seen much, and heard more of 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 recollections, was a labor of love, and it was no less so to recall the manners and incidents introduced. The frequent custom of James IV., and particularly of James V., to walk through their kingdom in disguise, afforded me the hint of an incident which never fails to be interesting if managed with the slightest address or dexterity.

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 nearly related, and with whom I lived, during her whole life, on the most brotherly terms of affection, was residing with me at the time when the work was in progress, and used to ask me what I could possibly do to rise so early in the morning (that happening to be the most convenient to me for composition). 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," she said, "my dearest cousin. You are already popular—more so, perhaps, than you yourself will believe, or than even I, or other partial friends, can fairly allow to your merit. You stand high—do not rashly attempt to climb higher, and incur the risk of a fall; for, depend upon it, a favorite will not be permitted even 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’!”

Afterward I showed my affectionate and anxious critic the first canto of the poem, which reconciled her to my imprudence. Nevertheless, although I answered thus confidently, with the obstinacy often said to be proper to those who bear my surname, I acknowledge that my confidence was considerably shaken by the warning of her excellent taste and unbiased friendship. Nor was I much comforted by her retraction of the unfavorable judgment, when I recollected how likely a natural partiality was to effect that change of opinion. In such cases, affection rises like a light on the canvas, improves any favorable tints which it formerly exhibited, and throws its defects into the shade.

I remember that about the same time a friend started in to “heeze up my hope,” like the “sportsman with his cutty gun,” 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 Ashestiel 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 favorable a representative of readers at large. It is, of course, to be supposed, that I determined rather to guide my opinion by what my friend might appear to feel, than by what he might think fit to say. 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 such a severe 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. Another of his remarks gave me less pleasure. He detected the identity of the king with the wandering knight, Fitz-James, when he winds his bugle to summon his attendants. He was probably thinking of the lively, but somewhat licentious, old ballad, in which the denouement of a royal intrigue takes place as follows :

“ He took a bugle frae his side,  
 He blew both loud and shrill,  
 And four-and-twenty belted knights  
 Came skipping ower the hill ;  
 Then he took out a little knife,  
 Let a' his duddies fa',  
 And he was the brawest gentleman,  
 That was amang them a',  
 And we'll go no more a-roving,” etc.

This discovery, as Mr. Pepys says of the rent in his camlet cloak, was but a trifle, yet it troubled me; and I was at a good deal of pains to efface any marks by which I thought my secret could be traced before the conclusion, when I relied on it with the same hope of producing effect, with which the Irish postboy is said to reserve a "trot for the avenue."

I took uncommon pains to verify the accuracy of the local circumstances of this story. I recollect in particular, that to ascertain whether I was telling a probable tale, I went into Perthshire to see whether King James could actually have ridden from the banks of Loch Venachar to Stirling Castle within the time supposed in the poem, and had the pleasure to satisfy myself that it was quite practicable.

After considerable delay, *The Lady of the Lake* appeared in June, 1810; and its success was certainly so extraordinary as to induce me for the moment to conclude that I 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 favors for three successive times had not as yet been shaken. I had attained, perhaps, that degree of reputation at which prudence, or certainly timidity, would have made a halt, and discontinued efforts by which I was far more likely to diminish my fame than to increase it. But, as the celebrated John Wilkes is said to have explained to his late Majesty, that he himself, amid his full tide of popularity, was never a Wilkite, so I can, with honest truth, exculpate myself from having been at any time a partisan of my own poetry, even when it was in the highest fashion with the million. It must not be supposed that I was either so ungrateful, or so superabundantly candid, as to

despise or scorn the value of those whose voice had elevated me so much higher than my opinion told me I deserved. I felt, on the contrary, the more grateful to the public, as receiving that from partiality to me, which I could not have claimed from merit; and I endeavored to deserve the partiality by continuing such exertions as I was capable of for their amusement.

It may be that I did not, in this continued course of scribbling, consult either the interest of the public or my own. But the former had effectual means of defending themselves, and could, by their coldness, sufficiently check any approach to intrusion; but, for myself, I had now for several years dedicated my hours so much to literary labor that I should have felt difficulty in employing myself otherwise; and so, like Dogberry, I generously bestowed all my tediousness on the public, comforting myself with the reflection, that if posterity should think me undeserving of the favor with which I was regarded by my contemporaries, "they could not but say I *had* the crown," and had enjoyed for a time that popularity which is so much coveted.

I conceived, however, that I held the distinguished situation I had obtained, however unworthily, rather like the champion of pugilism<sup>1</sup> on the condition of being always ready to show proofs of my skill, than in the manner of the champion of chivalry, who performs his duties only on rare and solemn occasions. I was in any case conscious that I could not long hold a situation

<sup>1</sup> "In twice five years the greatest living poet,  
Like to the champion in the fisty ring,  
Is called on to support his claim, or show it,  
Although 'tis an imaginary thing," etc.

— *Don Juan*, Canto IX. Stanza 55.



which the caprice, rather than the judgment, of the public, had bestowed upon me, and preferred being deprived of my precedence by some more worthy rival, to sinking into contempt for my indolence, and losing my reputation by what Scottish lawyers call the *negative prescription*. Accordingly, those who choose to look at the Introduction to *Rokeby* will be able to trace the steps by which I declined as a poet to figure as a novelist; as the ballad says, "Queen Eleanor sunk at Charing Cross to rise again at Queenhithe."

It only remains for me to say, that, during my short preëminence of popularity, I faithfully observed the rules of moderation which I had resolved to follow before I began my course as a man of letters. 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 furiously 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 they are, in such cases, apt to explode in the handling. Let me add, that my reign<sup>1</sup> (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

<sup>1</sup> "Sir Walter reigned before me," etc.

— *Don Juan*, Canto XI. Stanza 57.

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 favor, without incurring permanent ill will, so far as is known to me, among any of my contemporaries.

W. S.

ABBOTSFORD, April, 1830.

## SYNOPSIS

The events narrated in *The Lady of the Lake* are supposed to occupy six days; the poem is composed of six cantos, and each canto describes a day's incidents.

CANTO I. *The Chase*.—The story opens with a description of the chase, by a knight of Snowdon, James Fitz-James, and his companions, of a stag started in Glenartney, and which is followed across the heaths of Uam-Var, through Cambus-more, over Bochastle Heath, across the Teith, past Loch Vennachar and Achray, into the depths of the Trosachs. Here the stag disappears from view, and, in pursuing it, "the gallant horse," on which the knight is mounted, falls dead from exhaustion. There is a description of the Trosachs, in seeking an outlet from which Fitz-James comes upon Loch Katrine as the sun is setting. Blowing his horn with the view of bringing up some of his companions, he sees Ellen, who supposes it to be her father, row over from an islet opposite. Fitz-James, telling of his "benighted road," is invited to the island.

CANTO II. *The Island*.—The story is continued by a description of the departure of Fitz-James next morning, and of the arrival at the island, first of Sir Roderick Dhu, chief of Clan-Alpine, and next of Lord Douglas and Malcolm Græme, "a noble youth," favored by Ellen. In the evening Sir Roderick, who has heard of the king's intention to invade the Highlands, and who hopes that

by linking his fortunes to the House of Douglas friends and allies will flock to the united standard, asks the hand of Ellen. Douglas refuses. The deep disappointment of Roderick Dhu at length finds vent in a jealous quarrel with Græme. Douglas interposes, and Græme leaves the island.

CANTO III. *The Gathering*.—Sir Roderick, after solemn ritual, consisting in the preparation of the Fiery Cross, sends that dread symbol by swift messengers through the district over which he is acknowledged chief, summoning his clan to instant muster on “Lanrick mead.” Douglas and his daughter have meanwhile withdrawn from Loch Katrine to a hollow called Coir-nan-Uriskin, or the Goblin-cave, in the side of Benvenue. They are accompanied by their aged minstrel, Allan-bane.

CANTO IV. *The Prophecy*.—The canto opens with an account of the *Taghairm*, an augury said to be tried only in time of great extremity. Fitz-James again visits Ellen and proposes to take her to Stirling. She refuses. He gives her a ring, on presenting which to the king of Scotland her suit will be favored. On his return Fitz-James is led astray by a treacherous Highland guide, and night finds him a wanderer among the hills. As he journeys on he suddenly comes on a watch fire and a plaided mountaineer, who demands “his name and purpose.” Ultimately, the Highlander promises to conduct him “past Clan-Alpine’s outmost guard.”

CANTO V. *The Combat*.—The narrative of the fifth day’s adventures opens with a dialogue between Fitz-James and the mountaineer, who, stung by Saxon accusations, discloses himself as Roderick Dhu. He whistles and the hillside suddenly appears to be alive with men, who, at the signal, instantly spring from the ground.

Having led the knight of Snowdown beyond the bounds of Clan-Alpine, he challenges him to single combat at "Coilantogle Ford." Roderick Dhu is worsted and wounded. Fitz-James blows his horn; four mounted squires appear with a saddled steed, on which two of them are commanded to place the wounded chief and to take him to Stirling Castle. Fitz-James and the other two ride on. On reaching Stirling, Fitz-James recognizes the form of Douglas, who has come to surrender himself. It is the day of the "burghers' sports," at which the king must be present. Douglas joins in the athletic exercises, in which he excels.

CANTO VI. *The Guard-room.*—Ellen and Allan-bane arrive at the castle, the former to ask audience of the king. The minstrel is conducted to the room where Roderick Dhu lies dying. Roderick inquires as to the results of the battle which had meanwhile taken place in the Trosachs, between his clan and the royal troops. As the minstrel describes the battle of *Beal-an-Duine*, and shows how, although the engagement was nobly fought by Clan-Alpine, the advantage lay with the royal forces, "Stout Roderick Dhu" expires. Fitz-James conducts Ellen to the room where the king is holding court. On looking round she sees every one uncovered except Fitz-James, and discovers,

"That Snowdown's Knight is Scotland's King."

Douglas is restored to the royal favor, and Ellen is united to Malcolm Græme.

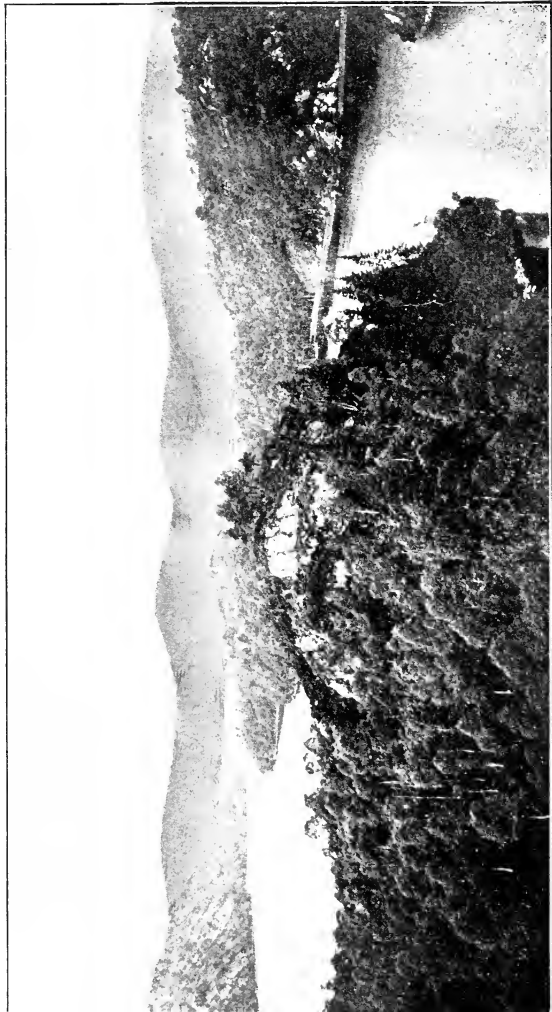
## CHARACTERS OF THE POEM

<p>JAMES FITZ-JAMES, <i>the Knight of Snowdown.</i></p>	<p>MALISE, <i>Roderick's henchman.</i></p>
<p>JAMES DOUGLAS, <i>Lord of Bothwell, uncle of the banished Earl of Angus.</i></p>	<p>ANGUS, <i>the young chieftain of Duncraggan.</i></p>
<p>ELLEN DOUGLAS, <i>his daughter.</i></p>	<p>NORMAN, <i>the heir of Armandave.</i></p>
<p>MARGARET, <i>Douglas' sister-in-law.</i></p>	<p>BRIAN, <i>a hermit, retainer of Roderick Dhu.</i></p>
<p>RODERICK DHU, <i>her son.</i></p>	<p>THE RED MURDOCH, <i>a follower of Rhoderick Dhu.</i></p>
<p>MALCOLM GRÈME, <i>Ellen's lover.</i></p>	<p>BLANCHE <i>of Devan.</i></p>
<p>ALLAN-BANE, <i>a minstrel attendant on Douglas.</i></p>	<p>BERTRAM <i>of Ghent.</i></p>
	<p>JOHN <i>of Brent.</i></p>
	<p>LEWIS <i>of Tullibardine.</i></p>

SCENE: *Perthshire, chiefly Loch Katrine and its neighborhood; afterwards Stirling Castle.*

TIME: *About 1530.*





Loch Katrine



# THE LADY OF THE LAKE



## CANTO FIRST

### THE CHASE

HARP of the North! that mouldering long hast  
hung

On the witch-elm that shades Saint Fillan's  
spring, -

And down the fitful breeze thy numbers flung,

Till envious ivy did around thee cling,

Muffling with verdant ringlet every string, — 5

O Minstrel Harp, still must thine accents sleep?

Mid rustling leaves and fountains murmuring,

Still must thy sweeter sounds their silence keep,

Nor bid a warrior smile, nor teach a maid to weep?

1. Each canto is introduced by one or more Spenserian stanzas. Those which precede the first canto may be considered as introductory to the whole poem. They consist in an invocation of the Scottish Harp, symbolizing the old minstrelsy, in the manner of the Greek and Latin poets, whose poems began with invocations of the Muses.

2. witch-elm, or wych-elm, distinguished by its long leaves. St. Fillan's spring. St. Fillan was a Scotch abbot of the seventh century.

3. numbers, verses. Cf. Longfellow's *Psalm of Life* :

"Tell me not in mournful numbers," etc.

Not thus, in ancient days of Caledon, 10  
 Was thy voice mute amid the festal crowd,  
 When lay of hopeless love, or glory won,  
 Aroused the fearful or subdued the proud.  
 At each according pause was heard aloud  
 Thine ardent symphony sublime and high ! 15  
 Fair dames and crested chiefs attention bowed ;  
 For still the burden of thy minstrelsy  
 Was Knighthood's dauntless deed, and Beauty's  
 matchless eye.

O, wake once more ! how rude soe'er the hand  
 That ventures o'er thy magic maze to stray ; 20  
 O, wake once more ! though scarce my skill command  
 Some feeble echoing of thine earlier lay :  
 Though harsh and faint, and soon to die away,  
 And all unworthy of thy nobler strain,  
 Yet if one heart throb higher at its sway, 25  
 The wizard note has not been touched in vain.  
 Then silent be no more ! Enchantress, wake again !

## I.

The stag at eve had drunk his fill,  
 Where danced the moon on Monan's rill,

10. **Caledon**, or **Caledonia**. The Roman name for Scotland.

14. **according pause**, interlude.

28. **fill**. This word expresses, not *what* the stag drank, but *how much* he drank. It is therefore objective of measure, and should be construed as an adverb.

29. **Monan's rill**. This stream is not entered in any map or gazetteer that we have seen. Monan was a Scotch martyr of the fourth century.

And deep his midnight lair had made 30  
 In lone Glenartney's hazel shade ;  
 But when the sun his beacon red  
 Had kindled on Benvoirlich's head,  
 The deep-mouthed bloodhound's heavy bay  
 Resounded up the rocky way, 35  
 And faint, from farther distance borne,  
 Were heard the clanging hoof and horn.

## II.

As Chief, who hears his warder call,  
 'To arms! the foemen storm the wall,'  
 The antlered monarch of the waste 40  
 Sprung from his heathery couch in haste.  
 But ere his fleet career he took,  
 The dew-drops from his flanks he shook ;  
 Like crested leader proud and high  
 Tossed his beamed frontlet to the sky ; 45  
 A moment gazed adown the dale,  
 A moment snuffed the tainted gale,  
 A moment listened to the cry,  
 That thickened as the chase drew nigh ;  
 Then, as the headmost foes appeared, 50  
 With one brave bound the copse he cleared,

31. **Glenartney**, a glen or valley in Perthshire.

33. **Benvoirlich**, a mountain, 3180 feet high, on the southern side of Loch Earn. *Ben* is the Gaelic for mountain, as in Ben Lomond, Ben Venue, etc. ; Welsh, *pen*.

45. **beamed frontlet**, the stag's forehead, bearing his antlers or horns.

51. **brave**, grand or splendid, without reference to courage. [Fr. *brave*, Sc. *braw*, Ger. *brav*, handsome.] *Copse*, *coppice*.

And, stretching forward free and far,  
Sought the wild heaths of Uam-Var.

## III.

Yelled on the view the opening pack ;  
Rock, glen, and cavern paid them back ; 55  
To many a mingled sound at once  
The awakened mountain gave response.  
A hundred dogs bayed deep and strong,  
Clattered a hundred steeds along,  
Their peal the merry horns rung out, 60  
A hundred voices joined the shout ;  
With hark and whoop and wild halloo,  
No rest Benvoirlich's echoes knew.  
Far from the tumult fled the roe,  
Close in her covert covered the doe, 65  
The falcon, from her cairn on high,  
Cast on the rout a wondering eye.  
Till far beyond her piercing ken

53. **Uam-Var**, a mountain to the northeast of Callander, and the highest point in the "Braes of Doune."

54. **the opening pack**, the hounds spreading out in beginning the chase.

56. **many a mingled sound**. In the modern idiom the article always follows the adjectives *many*, *what*, and *such*; and adjectives qualified by *so*, *how*, *as*, and *too*. In O. E. the same construction is found; but Shakespeare has "*a many merry men*" (*As You Like It*, I. i. 119), and "*a many thousand warlike French*" (*King John*, IV. ii. 199). In these instances it is equivalent to "*a great number (of)*"; and here *many* may correctly be considered a noun, as it is in the phrase "*a great many.*"

66. **falcon** = a kind of hawk. **cairn**, a heap of stones.

67. **rout**, tumult.

68. **ken**, sight.

The hurricane had swept the glen.  
 Faint, and more faint, its failing din 70  
 Returned from cavern, cliff, and linn,  
 And silence settled, wide and still,  
 On the lone wood and mighty hill.

## IV.

Less loud the sounds of sylvan war  
 Disturbed the heights of Uam-Var, 75  
 And roused the cavern where, 't is told,  
 A giant made his den of old ;  
 For ere that steep ascent was won,  
 High in his pathway hung the sun,  
 And many a gallant, stayed perforce, 80  
 Was fain to breathe his faltering horse,  
 And of the trackers of the deer  
 Scarce half the lessening pack was near ;  
 So shrewdly on the mountain-side  
 Had the bold burst their mettle tried. 85

## V.

The noble stag was pausing now  
 Upon the mountain's southern brow,  
 Where broad extended, far beneath,  
 The varied realms of fair Menteith.  
 With anxious eye he wandered o'er 90

71. linn, waterfall.

84. shrewdly, severely. Cf. *Hamlet*, I. iv. 1:

"The air bites shrewdly."

89. Menteith, the district through which the river Teith flows.

Mountain and meadow, moss and moor,  
 And pondered refuge from his toil,  
 By far Lochard or Aberfoyle.  
 But nearer was the copsewood gray  
 That waved and wept on Loch Achray, 95  
 And mingled with the pine-trees blue  
 On the bold cliffs of Benvenue:  
 Fresh vigor with the hope returned,  
 With flying foot the heath he spurned,  
 Held westward with unwearied race, 100  
 And left behind the panting chase.

## VI.

'T were long to tell what steeds gave o'er,  
 As swept the hunt through Cambusmore;  
 What reins were tightened in despair,  
 When rose Benledi's ridge in air; 105  
 Who flagged upon Bochastle's heath,

93. **Lochard**, a small lake near the town of Aberfoyle. See map.

95. **Loch Achray**, a small lake between Loch Katrine and Loch Vennachar. The name means "The Lake of the Level Field."

97. **Benvenue**, "Center Mountain," a high mountain near Loch Katrine, and halfway between Ben Ledi and Ben Lomond.

99. **heath**, or **heather**, a low shrub with a purple flower, which grows on the Scotch hills.

103. **Cambusmore**, the Great Cambus. Cambusmore is situated on the Keltie Water, a few miles to the southeast of Callander.

105. **Benledi**, a mountain on the north side of Loch Vennachar. The name means "the hill of God."

106. **Bochastle**, a *haugh* or plain between the stream that flows out of Loch Vennachar and the Teith.

Who shunned to stem the flooded Teith, —  
 For twice that day, from shore to shore,  
 The gallant stag swam stoutly o'er.  
 Few were the stragglers, following far, 110  
 That reached the lake of Vennachar;  
 And when the Brigg of Turk was won,  
 The headmost horseman rode alone.

## VII.

Alone, but with unbated zeal,  
 That horseman plied the scourge and steel; 115  
 For jaded now, and spent with toil,  
 Embossed with foam, and dark with soil,  
 While every gasp with sobs he drew,  
 The laboring stag strained full in view.  
 Two dogs of black Saint Hubert's breed, 120  
 Unmatched for courage, breath, and speed,  
 Fast on his flying traces came,  
 And all but won that desperate game;  
 For, scarce a spear's length from his haunch,  
 Vindictive toiled the bloodhounds stanch; 125  
 Nor nearer might the dogs attain,  
 Nor farther might the quarry strain.

112. **Brigg of Turk**, a small village, taking its name from the bridge on the Glenfinlas Water, at the east end of Loch Achray.

120. **of black Saint Hubert's breed**, black hounds of the breed preserved by the abbots of Saint Hubert, the patron saint of hunting.

123. **all but won**, very nearly won. *All* is an adverb, modifying *but won*. *But*, or *except*, or *leave out* that they won, and they did *all*. [*But* = be out; A.-S. *butan* = *beutan*.]

127. **quarry**, the hunted animal.

Thus up the margin of the lake,  
 Between the precipice and brake,  
 O'er stock and rock their race they take. 130

## VIII.

The Hunter marked that mountain high,  
 The lone lake's western boundary,  
 And deemed the stag must turn to bay,  
 Where that huge rampart barred the way ;  
 Already glorying in the prize, 135  
 Measured his antlers with his eyes ;  
 For the death-wound and death-halloo  
 Mustered his breath, his whinyard drew :  
 But thundering as he came prepared,  
 With ready arm and weapon bared, 140  
 The wily quarry shunned the shock,  
 And turned him from the opposing rock ;  
 Then, dashing down a darksome glen,  
 Soon lost to hound and Hunter's ken,  
 In the deep Trosachs' wildest nook 145  
 His solitary refuge took.  
 There, while close couched the thicket shed

129. *brake*, ferns and bushes.

131. *that mountain high*, Ben-au, or Ben-a'an, to the north-west of Loch Achray, the "lone lake" of the passage.

133. *to bay*. "At bay" would be more correct; in a position in which it was checked, or brought to a standstill, as in the expression, "The stag *at bay*." [Fr. *bayer*, to gape, to watch.]

138. *whinyard*, a kind of sword or cutlass.

145. *Trosachs'*, literally "the bristled territory," is the Gaelic name applied to the district between Lochs Achray and Katrine.



Cold dews and wild flowers on his head.  
 He heard the baffled dogs in vain  
 Rave through the hollow pass amain, 150  
 Chiding the rocks that yelled again.

## IX.

Close on the hounds the Hunter came,  
 To cheer them on the vanished game;  
 But, stumbling in the rugged dell,  
 The gallant horse exhausted fell. 155  
 The impatient rider strove in vain  
 To rouse him with the spur and rein,  
 For the good steed, his labors o'er,  
 Stretched his stiff limbs, to rise no more;  
 Then, touched with pity and remorse, 160  
 He sorrowed o'er the expiring horse.  
 'I little thought, when first thy rein  
 I slacked upon the banks of Seine,  
 That Highland eagle e'er should feed  
 On thy fleet limbs, my matchless steed! 165  
 Woe worth the chase, woe worth the day,  
 That costs thy life, my gallant gray!'

150. *amain*, loudly, vigorously.

154. *the rugged dell*. "In the defile of *Beal-an-duine*, where Fitz-James's steed fell exhausted, we are in the heart of the great gorge." — Anderson's *Guide to the Highlands*.

158. *his labors o'er*. An absolute phrase, "his labors *being* over."

159. *to rise no more*. A phrase attributive to *limbs*. They were "limbs *which were* to rise no more."

163. *Seine*, a river of France, on which Paris is situated.

166. *Woe worth the chase*, woe *be to* the chase. *Worth*' is

## X.

Then through the dell his horn resounds,  
 From vain pursuit to call the hounds.  
 Back limped, with slow and crippled pace, 175  
 The sulky leaders of the chase ;  
 Close to their master's side they pressed,  
 With drooping tail and humbled crest ;  
 But still the dingle's hollow throat  
 Prolonged the swelling bugle-note. 175  
 The owlets started from their dream,  
 The eagles answered with their scream,  
 Round and around the sounds were cast,  
 Till echo seemed an answering blast ;  
 And on the Hunter hied his way, 180  
 To join some comrades of the day,  
 Yet often paused, so strange the road,  
 So wondrous were the scenes it showed.

## XI.

The western waves of ebbing day  
 Rolled o'er the glen their level way ; 185

imperative of O. E. *wurth, worthe*, to be, become. [A.-S. *weorthan*, Ger. *werden*.] *Chase* and *day* are datives. Cf. "Woe is me" (*Hamlet*, III. i. 168).

174. *dingle*, a small valley.

180. *hied his way*. *Hie* is an intransitive verb, meaning to hasten [A.-S. *higan*]; *way* is therefore a redundant object. *Hie* is, however, used with a personal and reflexive object: "Hie thee hither" (*Macbeth*, I. v. 26). In "Hie you to horse" (*Macbeth*, III. i. 34), "you" may be either nominative or objective.

185. *their level way*. Toward sunset the rays of the sun become more and more nearly *horizontal*. In this passage, *day*

Each purple peak, each flinty spire,  
 Was bathed in floods of living fire.  
 But not a setting beam could glow  
 Within the dark ravines below,  
 Where twined the path in shadow hid, 190  
 Round many a rocky pyramid,  
 Shooting abruptly from the dell  
 Its thunder-splintered pinnacle;  
 Round many an insulated mass,  
 The native bulwarks of the pass, 195  
 Huge as the tower which builders vain  
 Presumptuous piled on Shinar's plain.  
 The rocky summits, split and rent,  
 Formed turret, dome, or battlement,  
 Or seemed fantastically set 200  
 With cupola or minaret,  
 Wild crests as pagod ever decked,  
 Or mosque of Eastern architect.  
 Nor were these earth-born castles bare,  
 Nor lacked they many a banner fair; 205  
 For, from their shivered brows displayed,  
 Far o'er the unfathomable glade,  
 All twinkling with the dewdrop sheen,

or light is spoken of as a liquid; and the metaphor is appropriately maintained throughout, in the words *waves, ebbing, rolled, bathed, floods*.

194. insulated, isolated.

195. native bulwarks, natural fortifications.

196. tower, the tower of Babel. Cf. Genesis xi. 1-9.

201. minaret,<sup>s</sup> a slender, lofty tower, on a Mohammedan mosque or temple.

202. pagod or pagoda, a Chinese temple.

The brier-rose fell in streamers green,  
 And creeping shrubs of thousand dyes 210  
 Waved in the west-wind's summer sighs.

## XII.

Boon nature scattered, free and wild,  
 Each plant or flower, the mountain's child.  
 Here eglantine embalmed the air,  
 Hawthorn and hazel mingled there; 215  
 The primrose pale and violet flower  
 Found in each cleft a narrow bower;  
 Foxglove and nightshade, side by side,  
 Emblems of punishment and pride,  
 Grouped their dark hues with every stain 220  
 The weather-beaten crags retain.  
 With boughs that quaked at every breath;  
 Gray birch and aspen wept beneath;  
 Aloft, the ash and warrior oak  
 Cast anchor in the rifted rock; 225  
 And, higher yet, the pine-tree hung  
 His shattered trunk, and frequent flung,  
 Where seemed the cliffs to meet on high,  
 His boughs athwart the narrowed sky.

224. *warrior oak*. The oak is so called, probably, from its being used in building ships of war. The nautical figure is continued, not very happily, in the next line, where the trees are compared to ships at "anchor."

227. *frequent*. An adjective, qualifying *pine-tree* = "many a pine-tree." It may, however, also be taken as an adverb = "at frequent intervals." The object of *flung* is *boughs*.

229. *athwart*, *on-thwart*, *i.e.*, cross-wise. [A.-S. *on*, *in*, and *theor*, cross, perverse.]

Highest of all, where white peaks glanced, 230  
 Where glistening streamers waved and danced,  
 The wanderer's eye could barely view  
 The summer heaven's delicious blue;  
 So wondrous wild, the whole might seem  
 The scenery of a fairy dream. 235

## XIII.

Onward, amid the copse 'gan peep  
 A narrow inlet, still and deep,  
 Affording scarce such breadth of brim  
 As served the wild duck's brood to swim.  
 Lost for a space, through thickets veering, 240  
 But broader when again appearing,  
 Tall rocks and tufted knolls their face  
 Could on the dark-blue mirror trace;  
 And farther as the Hunter strayed,  
 Still broader sweep its channels made. 245  
 The shaggy mounds no longer stood,  
 Emerging from entangled wood,  
 But, wave-encircled, seemed to float,  
 Like castle girdled with its moat;  
 Yet broader floods extending still 250  
 Divide them from their parent hill,  
 Till each, retiring, claims to be  
 An islet in an inland sea.

240. *veering*, turning, curving.249. *moat*, a ditch, filled with water, surrounding a castle.

## XIV.

And now, to issue from the glen,  
 No pathway meets the wanderer's ken,                    255  
 Unless he climb with footing nice  
 A far-projecting precipice.  
 The broom's tough roots his ladder made,  
 The hazel saplings lent their aid ;  
 And thus an airy point he won,                            260  
 Where, gleaming with the setting sun,  
 One burnished sheet of living gold,  
 Loch Katrine lay beneath him rolled,  
 In all her length far winding lay,  
 With promontory, creek, and bay,                            265

254. to issue. An attribute to *pathway* : "no pathway by which he may issue."

256. Unless he climb. The subjunctive mood, expressing the uncertainty which attaches to the future: "unless he (shall) climb," which he may or may not do. *Nice*, cautious, careful. [Variously derived from A.-S. *hnesc*, tender; and from Lat. *nescius*, ignorant. Probably there are two words *nice* in English, one derived from each of these roots. There were two corresponding words in O. E.; namely, *nesh*, soft, tender; and *nice*, silly, foolish; the former derived from A.-S. *hnesc*; the latter from O. Fr. *nice*, Fr. *niais*, Sc. *nice*, simple, Lat. *nescius*, unlearned. One form of *nesh* was *neys*; and as this latter would be pronounced exactly like *nice*, the words were very naturally confounded. The latter is, of course, the word in the text. In illustration of the change which its meaning has undergone, cf. *fond*, affectionate; Shakespeare, *fond*, foolish; O. E. *fonne*, Sc. *fon*, to play the fool, and to *fondle*.]

258. broom, a wild shrub bearing yellow flowers and pods.

262. Explain the metaphor in this line.

263. Loch Katrine, the lake referred to in the title of the poem. It disputes with Loch Lomond, which it excels in romantic interest, the title of "The Queen of Scottish Lakes." It is situated in the southwest of Perthshire.

And islands that, empurpled bright,  
 Floated amid the livelier light,  
 And mountains that like giants stand  
 To sentinel enchanted land.  
 High on the south, huge Benvenue 270  
 Down to the lake in masses threw  
 Craggs; knolls, and mounds, confusedly hurled,  
 The fragments of an earlier world;  
 A wildering forest feathered o'er  
 His ruined sides and summit hoar, 275  
 While on the north, through middle air,  
 Ben-an heaved high his forehead bare.

## XV.

From the steep promontory gazed  
 The stranger, raptured and amazed,  
 And, 'What a scene were here,' he cried, 280  
 'For princely pomp or churchman's pride!

266. **bright.** An adverb, for *brightly*. In O. E. many adverbs were formed from adjectives by the suffix *-e* (representative of the dative, expressing manner). When the suffix was lost, the adverbs came to have the appearance of adjectives. Hence many adjectives are now used as adverbs, though they have not gone through this process.

268. **mountains**, like *islands*, is governed by *with*, which is here equivalent to *having*, and introduces the enumeration of the details of the lake.

274. **wildering**, perplexing, from the confusion; bewildering. [Ger. *wildren*, *verwildren*, to grow *wild*.]

277. **Ben-an** is on the north side of Loch Katrine, opposite Benvenue.

280. **were here.** Conditional mood = "would be here"; indicating possibility, and implying the contrary fact: "it is not, but it might be."

On this bold brow, a lordly tower ;  
 In that soft vale, a lady's bower ;  
 On yonder meadow far away,  
 The turrets of a cloister gray ; 285  
 How blithely might the bugle-horn  
 Chide on the lake the lingering morn !  
 How sweet at eve the lover's lute  
 Chime when the groves were still and mute !  
 And when the midnight moon should lave 290  
 Her forehead in the silver wave,  
 How solemn on the ear would come  
 The holy matins' distant hum,  
 While the deep peal's commanding tone  
 Should wake, in yonder islet lone, 295  
 A sainted hermit from his cell,  
 To drop a bead with every knell !  
 And bugle, lute, and bell, and all,  
 Should each bewildered stranger call  
 To friendly feast and lighted hall. 300

## XVI.

'Blithe were it then to wander here !  
 But now — beshrew yon nimble deer —  
 Like that same hermit's, thin and spare,  
 The copse must give my evening fare ;

285. *cloister*, a convent.

290. *lave*, bathe.

293. *matins*, morning prayers.

297. *bead*, the old Saxon word for prayer.

302. *beshrew*, curse. [*Be*, and O. E. *shrew*, wicked.] A mild  
 expletive, often used affectionately.

304. *give*, afford or yield.



Some mossy bank my couch must be, 305  
 Some rustling oak my canopy.  
 Yet pass we that; the war and chase  
 Give little choice of resting-place; —  
 A summer night in greenwood spent  
 Were but to-morrow's merriment: 310  
 But hosts may in these wilds abound,  
 Such as are better missed than found;  
 To meet with Highland plunderers here  
 Were worse than loss of steed or deer. —  
 I am alone; — my bugle-strain 315  
 May call some straggler of the train;  
 Or, fall the worst that may betide,  
 Ere now this falchion has been tried.'

305. **Some mossy bank my couch must be.** Cf. :

"The heath this night must be my bed,  
 The bracken curtain for my head."

— Canto III. Stanza 23.

313. **To meet with Highland plunderers here, etc.** The clans who inhabited the romantic regions in the neighborhood of Loch Katrine were, even until a late period, much addicted to predatory excursions upon their Lowland neighbors. It was considered not only lawful, but honorable for hostile tribes to plunder one another. *To meet* is the nominative, or subject, of *were worse*, which is in the conditional mood = "would be worse." The supposition is implied in the subject *to meet*: "It *would be* worse than loss of steed or deer (is bad) *if I were to meet* with Highland plunderers here."

317. **fall the worst.** Subjunctive mood: concessive or conditional: "*if, or though, the worst should befall.*" The apodosis is implied in the next line:

"Ere now this falchion has been tried; "

therefore *I need not fear.*

318. **falchion, a kind of sword.**

## XVII.

But scarce again his horn he wound,  
 When lo! forth starting at the sound, 320  
 From underneath an aged oak  
 That slanted from the islet rock,  
 A damsel guider of its way,  
 A little skiff shot to the bay,  
 That round the promontory steep 325  
 Led its deep line in graceful sweep,  
 Eddying, in almost viewless wave,  
 The weeping willow twig to lave,  
 And kiss, with whispering sound and slow,  
 The beach of pebbles bright as snow. 330  
 The boat had touched this silver strand  
 Just as the Hunter left his stand,  
 And stood concealed amid the brake,  
 To view this Lady of the Lake.  
 The maiden paused, as if again 335  
 She thought to catch the distant strain.  
 With head upraised, and look intent,  
 And eye and ear attentive bent,  
 And locks flung back, and lips apart,  
 Like monument of Grecian art, 340  
 In listening mood, she seemed to stand,  
 The guardian Naiad of the strand.

319. wound = past of *wind*, winded = blew.

323. A damsel guider of its way. An absolute phrase: "a damsel *being* guider of its way."

331. this silver strand. The beach of Loch Katrine in this bay is now called "The Silver Strand."

342. Naiad, a water nymph.

## XVIII.

And ne'er did Grecian chisel trace  
A Nymph, a Naiad, or a Grace,  
Of finer form or lovelier face! 345  
What though the sun, with ardent frown,  
Had slightly tinged her cheek with brown,—  
The sportive toil, which, short and light,  
Had dyed her glowing hue so bright,  
Served too in hastier swell to show 350  
Short glimpses of a breast of snow:  
What though no rule of courtly grace  
To measured mood had trained her pace, —  
A foot more light, a step more true,  
Ne'er from the heath-flower dashed the dew; 355  
E'en the slight harebell raised its head,  
Elastic from her airy tread:  
What though upon her speech there hung  
The accents of the mountain tongue, —  
Those silver sounds, so soft, so dear, 360  
The listener held his breath to hear!

## XIX.

A chieftain's daughter seemed the maid;  
Her satin snood, her silken plaid,  
Her golden brooch, such birth betrayed.  
And seldom was a snood amid 365  
Such wild luxuriant ringlets hid,  
Whose glossy black to shame might bring

363. snood, a ribbon used to bind the hair.

The plumage of the raven's wing;  
 And seldom o'er a breast so fair  
 Mantled a plaid with modest care, 370  
 And never brooch the folds combined  
 Above a heart more good and kind.  
 Her kindness and her worth to spy,  
 You need but gaze on Ellen's eye;  
 Not Katrine in her mirror blue 375  
 Gives back the shaggy banks more true,  
 Than every free-born glance confessed  
 The guileless movements of her breast;  
 Whether joy danced in her dark eye,  
 Or woe or pity claimed a sigh, 380  
 Or filial love was glowing there,  
 Or meek devotion poured a prayer,  
 Or tale of injury called forth  
 The indignant spirit of the North.  
 One only passion unrevealed 385  
 With maiden pride the maid concealed,  
 Yet not less purely felt the flame;—  
 O, need I tell that passion's name?

## XX.

Impatient of the silent horn,  
 Now on the gale her voice was borne: — 390  
 'Father!' she cried; the rocks around  
 Loved to prolong the gentle sound.  
 Awhile she paused, no answer came;  
 'Malcolm, was thine the blast?' the name  
 Less resolutely uttered fell, 395

The echoes could not catch the swell.  
 'A stranger I,' the Huntsman said,  
 Advancing from the hazel shade.  
 The maid, alarmed, with hasty oar  
 Pushed her light shallop from the shore, 400  
 And when a space was gained between,  
 Closer she drew her bosom's screen ; —  
 So forth the startled swan would swing,  
 So turn to prune his ruffled wing.  
 Then safe, though fluttered and amazed, 405  
 She paused, and on the stranger gazed.  
 Not his the form, nor his the eye,  
 That youthful maidens went to fly.

## XXI.

On his bold visage middle age  
 Had slightly pressed its signet sage, 410  
 Yet had not quenched the open truth  
 And fiery vehemence of youth ;  
 Forward and frolic glee was there,  
 The will to do, the soul to dare,  
 The sparkling glance, soon blown to fire, 415  
 Of hasty love or headlong ire.  
 His limbs were cast in manly mould  
 For hardy sports or contest bold ;  
 And though in peaceful garb arrayed,

403. *would swing.* Conditional mood. The subjunctive is implied in the attribute *startled* :

"So the swan would swing forth, if it were startled."

408. *wont,* are accustomed.

And weaponless except his blade, 420  
 His stately mien as well implied  
 A high-born heart, a martial pride,  
 As if a baron's crest he wore,  
 And sheathed in armor trode the shore.  
 Slighting the petty need he showed, 425  
 He told of his benighted road ;  
 His ready speech flowed fair and free,  
 In phrase of gentlest courtesy,  
 Yet seemed that tone and gesture bland  
 Less used to sue than to command. 430

## XXII.

Awhile the maid the stranger eyed,  
 And, reassured, at length replied,  
 That Highland halls were open still  
 To wildered wanderers of the hill.  
 'Nor think you unexpected come 435  
 To yon lone isle, our desert home ;  
 Before the heath had lost the dew,  
 This morn, a couch was pulled for you ;  
 On yonder mountain's purple head  
 Have ptarmigan and heath-cock bled, 440  
 And our broad nets have swept the mere,

425. **Slighting**, making light of.

431. **Awhile**. The object of time. *While* is properly a noun. [A.-S. *hwil*, time.] Measure of time, space, or quantity is expressed by a noun in the objective, without a preposition.

434. **wildered**. This is the passive participle, and shows that Scott used the verb transitively.

438. **a couch was pulled**. The materials for the couch, which consisted of heather and bracken, were *pulled*.

To furnish forth your evening cheer.' —  
 'Now, by the rood, my lovely maid,  
 Your courtesy has erred,' he said;  
 'No right have I to claim, misplaced, 445  
 The welcome of expected guest.  
 A wanderer, here by fortune tost,  
 My way, my friends, my courser lost,  
 I ne'er before, believe me, fair,  
 Have ever drawn your mountain air, 450  
 Till on this lake's romantic strand  
 I found a fay in fairy land!'

## XXIII.

'I well believe,' the maid replied,  
 As her light skiff approached the side, —  
 'I well believe, that ne'er before 455  
 Your foot has trod Loch Katrine's shore;  
 But yet, as far as yesternight,  
 Old Allan-bane foretold your plight, —  
 A gray-haired sire, whose eye intent  
 Was on the visioned future bent. 460

443. **by the rood.** By the cross. [Same as *rod*, that which springs from a *root*. A.-S. *roede*; Lat. *rudis*, a rod, and *radix*, a root.]

449. **fair.** An adjective used as a noun in the vocative or nominative of address. When the adjective is so used, it is generally accompanied by the definite article — *the fair*, *the good*, *the rich*, *the poor*. The adjective and article so used generally name either a class (*the poor* = poor people) or an abstract quality (*the good* = goodness).

452. **fay**, a fairy.

460. "If force of evidence could authorize us to believe facts inconsistent with the general laws of nature, enough might be

He saw your steed, a dappled gray,           461  
 Lie dead beneath the birchen way ;  
 Painted exact your form and mien,  
 Your hunting-suit of Lincoln green,

produced in favor of the existence of the second sight. It is called in Gaelic *Taishitaraugh*, from *Taish*, an unreal or shadowy appearance; and those possessed of the faculty are called *Taishatrin*, which may be aptly translated visionaries. Martin, a steady believer in the second sight, gives the following account of it :

“ ‘ The second sight is a singular faculty of seeing an otherwise invisible object without any previous means used by the person that uses it for that end : the vision makes such a lively impression upon the seers, that they neither see nor think of anything else, except the vision, as long as it continues; and then they appear pensive or jovial, according to the object that was represented to them.

“ ‘ At the sight of a vision, the eyelids of the person are erected, and the eyes continue staring until the object vanish. This is obvious to others who are by when the persons happen to see a vision, and occurred more than once to my own observation, and to others that were with me. . . .

“ ‘ If a woman is seen standing at a man’s left hand, it is a presage that she will be his wife, whether they be married to others, or unmarried at the time of the apparition.

“ ‘ To see a spark of fire fall upon one’s arm or breast is a forerunner of a dead child to be seen in the arms of those persons; of which there are several fresh instances. . . .

“ ‘ To see a seat empty at the time of one’s sitting in it, is a presage of that person’s death soon after’ (Martin’s *Description of the Western Islands*, 1716, 8vo, p. 300, *et seq.*).

“ To these particulars innumerable examples might be added, all attested by grave and credible authors. But, in despite of evidence which neither Bacon, Boyle, nor Johnson were able to resist, the *Taish*, with all its visionary properties, seems to be now universally abandoned to the use of poetry. The exquisitely beautiful poem of *Lochiel* will at once occur to the recollection of every reader.” — *Scott*.

464. **Lincoln green**, cloth made in Lincoln and much used by huntsmen.



That tasselled horn so gayly gilt, 465  
 That falchion's crooked blade and hilt,  
 That cap with heron plumage trim,  
 And yon two hounds so dark and grim.  
 He bade that all should ready be  
 To grace a guest of fair degree; 470  
 But light I held his prophecy,  
 And deemed it was my father's horn  
 Whose echoes o'er the lake were borne.'

## XXIV.

The stranger smiled : — ' Since to your home  
 A destined errant-knight I come, 475  
 Announced by prophet sooth and old,  
 Doomed, doubtless, for achievement bold,  
 I 'll lightly front each high emprise  
 For one kind glance of those bright eyes.  
 Permit me first the task to guide 480  
 Your fairy frigate o'er the tide.'  
 The maid, with smile suppressed and sly,  
 The toil unwonted saw him try;  
 For seldom, sure, if e'er before,  
 His noble hand had grasped an oar : 485  
 Yet with main strength his strokes he drew,  
 And o'er the lake the shallop flew;  
 With heads erect and whimpering cry,  
 The hounds behind their passage ply.

475. *errant-knight*, or *knight-errant*, a wandering knight.

476. *sooth*, true.

478. *emprise*, enterprise.

Nor frequent does the bright oar break      490  
 The darkening mirror of the lake,  
 Until the rocky isle they reach,  
 And moor their shallop on the beach.

## XXV.

The stranger viewed the shore around ;  
 'T was all so close with copsewood bound,      495  
 Nor track nor pathway might declare  
 That human foot frequented there,  
 Until the mountain maiden showed  
 A clambering unsuspected road,  
 That winded through the tangled screen,      500  
 And opened on a narrow green,  
 Where weeping birch and willow round  
 With their long fibres swept the ground.  
 Here, for retreat in dangerous hour,  
 Some chief had framed a rustic bower.      505

## XXVI.

It was a lodge of ample size,  
 But strange of structure and device ;

490. **frequent**, the adjective used adverbially.

492. **rocky isle**, still known as Ellen's Isle.

504. **for retreat in dangerous hour**. "The Celtic chieftains, whose lives were continually exposed to peril, had usually, in the most retired spot of their domains, some place of retreat for the hour of necessity, which, as circumstances would admit, was a tower, a cavern, or a rustic hut, in a strong and secluded situation. One of these last gave refuge to the unfortunate Charles Edward, in his perilous wanderings after the battle of Culloden." — *Scott*.

507. **device**, design.

Of such materials as around  
 The workman's hand had readiest found.  
 Lopped of their boughs, their hoar trunks bared, 510  
 And by the hatchet rudely squared,  
 To give the walls their destined height,  
 The sturdy oak and ash unite ;  
 While moss and clay and leaves combined  
 To fence each crevice from the wind. 515  
 The lighter pine-trees overhead  
 Their slender length for rafters spread,  
 And withered heath and rushes dry  
 Supplied a russet canopy.  
 Due westward, fronting to the green, 520  
 A rural portico was seen,  
 Aloft on native pillars borne,  
 Of mountain fir with bark unshorn,  
 Where Ellen's hand had taught to twine  
 The ivy and Idæan vine, 525  
 The clematis, the favored flower  
 Which boasts the name of virgin-bower,  
 And every hardy plant could bear  
 Loch Katrine's keen and searching air.  
 An instant in this porch she stayed, 530  
 And gayly to the stranger said :  
 ' On heaven and on thy lady call,  
 And enter the enchanted hall !'

525. *Idæan vine*, probably the red whortleberry. Mt. Ida, a mountain near ancient Troy, was famous for its vines.

526. *clematis*, the vine called in this country *Virginia creeper*.

528. Sc. "that." The omission of the relative pronoun is common in English verse.

## XXVII.

‘My hope, my heaven, my trust must be,  
 My gentle guide, in following thee!’ 535  
 He crossed the threshold, — and a clang  
 Of angry steel that instant rang.  
 To his bold brow his spirit rushed,  
 But soon for vain alarm he blushed,  
 When on the floor he saw displayed, 540  
 Cause of the din, a naked blade  
 Dropped from the sheath, that careless flung  
 Upon a stag’s huge antlers swung;  
 For all around, the walls to grace,  
 Hung trophies of the fight or chase: 545  
 A target there, a bugle here,  
 A battle-axe, a hunting spear,  
 And broadswords, bows, and arrows store,  
 With the tusked trophies of the boar.  
 Here grins the wolf as when he died, 550  
 And there the wild-cat’s brindled hide  
 The frontlet of the elk adorns,  
 Or mantles o’er the bison’s horns;  
 Pennons and flags defaced and stained,  
 That blackening streaks of blood retained, 555  
 And deer-skins, dappled, dun, and white,  
 With otter’s fur and seal’s unite,

542. See note on l. 490.

546. target, a small shield.

548. store. Cf. Milton’s *L’Allegro* :

“ With store of ladies, whose bright eyes  
 Rain influence, and adjudge the prize.”

In rude and uncouth tapestry all,  
To garnish forth the sylvan hall.

## XXVIII.

The wondering stranger round him gazed, 560  
And next the fallen weapon raised : —  
Few were the arms whose sinewy strength  
Sufficed to stretch it forth at length.  
And as the brand he poised and swayed,  
' I never knew but one,' he said, 565  
' Whose stalwart arm might brook to wield  
A blade like this in battle-field.'  
She sighed, then smiled and took the word :  
' You see the guardian champion's sword ;  
As light it trembles in his hand 570  
As in my grasp a hazel wand :  
My sire's tall form might grace the part  
Of Ferragus or Ascabart,  
But in the absent giant's hold  
Are women now, and menials old.' 575

## XXIX.

The mistress of the mansion came,  
Mature of age, a graceful dame,

573. **Of Ferragus or Ascabart.** "These two sons of Anak flourished in romantic fable. The first is well known to the admirers of Ariosto by the name of Ferrau. He was an antagonist of Orlando, and was at length slain by him in single combat. Ascart, or Ascabart, makes a very material figure in the History of Bevis of Hampton, by whom he was conquered." — *Scott*.

577. **Mature of age.** *Mature as to*, or with reference to, age; an example of the "genitive of reference."

Whose easy step and stately port  
 Had well become a princely court,  
 To whom, though more than kindred knew, 580  
 Young Ellen gave a mother's due.  
 Meet welcome to her guest she made,  
 And every courteous rite was paid  
 That hospitality could claim,  
 Though all unasked his birth and name. 585  
 Such then the reverence to a guest,  
 That fellest foe might join the feast,  
 And from his deadliest foeman's door  
 Unquestioned turn, the banquet o'er.  
 At length his rank the stranger names, 590  
 'The Knight of Snowdown, James Fitz-James;  
 Lord of a barren heritage,  
 Which his brave sires, from age to age,  
 By their good swords had held with toil;  
 His sire had fallen in such turmoil, 595  
 And he, God wot, was forced to stand

580. **though more than kindred knew.** Though it (namely, "a mother's due") was more than kinship warranted or acknowledged. The mistress was mother of Roderick Dhu, and Ellen's aunt.

585. **Though all unasked,** etc. "The Highlanders, who carried hospitality to a punctilious excess, are said to have considered it as churlish to ask a stranger his name or lineage before he had taken refreshment. Feuds were so frequent among them, that a contrary rule would in many cases have produced the discovery of some circumstance which might have excluded the guest from the benefit of the assistance he stood in need of." — *Scott*.

591. **Fitz-James.** *Fitz* is the Latin *filius*, O. Fr. *fiz*, or *fls*, a son.

596. **wot, knew.** But *wot* is properly the present tense of *to wit*, to know; the past is *wist*.

Oft for his right with blade in hand.  
 This morning with Lord Moray's train  
 He chased a stalwart stag in vain,  
 Outstripped his comrades, missed the deer, 600  
 Lost his good steed, and wandered here.'

## XXX.

Fain would the Knight in turn require  
 The name and state of Ellen's sire.  
 Well showed the elder lady's mien  
 That courts and cities she had seen; 605  
 Ellen, though more her looks displayed  
 The simple grace of sylvan maid,  
 In speech and gesture, form and face,  
 Showed she was come of gentle race.  
 'T were strange in ruder rank to find 610  
 Such looks, such manners, and such mind.  
 Each hint the Knight of Snowdown gave,  
 Dame Margaret heard with silence grave;  
 Or Ellen, innocently gay,  
 Turned all inquiry light away: — 615  
 'Weird women we! by dale and down  
 We dwell, afar from tower and town.  
 We stem the flood, we ride the blast,  
 On wandering knights our spells we cast;

602. *require*, request. Cf. *Henry VIII.* II. iv. 144:

"In humblest manner I require your highness."

616. *Weird*, skilled in witchcraft. *down*, hill. [A.-S. *dun.*] Hence the *Downs*, North and South—ridges in the south of England.

619. *spells*. A form of words, by the recitation of which magical effects were supposed to be produced.

While viewless minstrels touch the string, 620  
 'T is thus our charmed rhymes we sing.'  
 She sung, and still a harp unseen  
 Filled up the symphony between.

## XXXI.

## SONG

'Soldier, rest! thy warfare o'er,  
 Sleep the sleep that knows not breaking; 625  
 Dream of battled fields no more,  
 Days of danger, nights of waking.  
 In our isle's enchanted hall,  
 Hands unseen thy couch are strewing,  
 Fairy strains of music fall, 630  
 Every sense in slumber dewing.  
 Soldier, rest! thy warfare o'er,  
 Dream of fighting fields no more;  
 Sleep the sleep that knows not breaking,  
 Morn of toil, nor night of waking. 635

'No rude sound shall reach thine ear,  
 Armor's clang or war-steed champng,  
 Trump nor pibroch summon here  
 Mustering clan or squadron tramping.  
 Yet the lark's shrill fife may come 640  
 At the daybreak from the fallow,

631. **dewing**, bedewing. A frequent metaphor.

638. **pibroch**, see note on Canto II. l. 356.

641. **fallow**, unplowed land.



And the bittern sound his drum,  
 Booming from the sedgy shallow,  
 Ruder sounds shall none be near,  
 Guards nor warders challenge here, 645  
 Here 's no war-steed's neigh and champing,  
 Shouting clans of squadrons stamping.'

## XXXII.

She paused, — then, blushing, led the lay,  
 To grace the stranger of the day.  
 Her mellow notes awhile prolong 650  
 The cadence of the flowing song,  
 Till to her lips in measured frame  
 The minstrel verse spontaneous came.

## SONG CONTINUED

'Huntsman, rest! thy chase is done;  
 While our slumbrous spells assail ye, 655  
 Dream not, with the rising sun,  
 Bugles here shall sound reveillé.  
 Sleep! the deer is in his den:  
 Sleep! thy hounds are by thee lying.  
 Sleep! nor dream in yonder glen 660  
 How thy gallant steed lay dying.  
 Huntsman, rest! thy chase is done;

642. bittern, a water fowl, something like our *loon*. Goldsmith in his *Animated Nature* says that of all the notes of water fowl none is "so dismally hollow as the booming of the bittern."

643. sedgy, marshy.

657. reveillé, the morning bugle call.

Think not of the rising sun,  
 For at dawning to assail ye  
 Here no bugles sound reveillé.' 665

## XXXIII.

The hall was cleared, — the stranger's bed  
 Was there of mountain heather spread,  
 Where oft a hundred guests had lain,  
 And dreamed their forest sports again.  
 But vainly did the heath-flower shed 670  
 Its moorland fragrance round his head ;  
 Not Ellen's spell had lulled to rest  
 The fever of his troubled breast.  
 In broken dreams the image rose 675  
 Of varied perils, pains, and woes :  
 His steed now flounders in the brake,  
 Now sinks his barge upon the lake ;  
 Now leader of a broken host,  
 His standard falls, his honor 's lost.  
 Then, — from my couch may heavenly might 680  
 Chase that worst phantom of the night ! —  
 Again returned the scenes of youth,  
 Of confident, undoubting truth ;  
 Again his soul he interchanged  
 With friends whose hearts were long estranged. 685  
 They come, in dim procession led,

676. *flounders . . . sinks . . . falls.* Examples of the rhetorical figure called *vision*. When used by historians to convey a vivid impression of events transacted, it is called, with reference to the verb, the *historical present*.

The cold, the faithless, and the dead ;  
 As warm each hand, each brow as gay,  
 As if they parted yesterday.  
 And doubt distracts him at the view, — 690  
 O were his senses false or true ?  
 Dreamed he of death or broken vow,  
 Or is it all a vision now ?

## XXXIV.

At length, with Ellen in a grove  
 He seemed to walk and speak of love ; 695  
 She listened with a blush and sigh,  
 His suit was warm, his hopes were high.  
 He sought her yielded hand to clasp,  
 And a cold gauntlet met his grasp :  
 The phantom's sex was changed and gone, 700  
 Upon its head a helmet shone ;  
 Slowly enlarged to giant size,  
 With darkened cheek and threatening eyes,  
 The grisly visage, stern and hoar,  
 To Ellen still a likeness bore. — 705  
 He woke, and, panting with affright,  
 Recalled the vision of the night.  
 The hearth's decaying brands were red,  
 And deep and dusky lustre shed,  
 Half showing, half concealing, all 710  
 The uncouth trophies of the hall.

702. *Slowly enlarged.* An elliptical concessive clause —  
 “*though slowly enlarged.*”

704. *grisly*, ghastly.

Mid those the stranger fixed his eye  
 Where that huge falchion hung on high,  
 And thoughts on thoughts, a countless throng,  
 Rushed, chasing countless thoughts along, 715  
 Until, the giddy whirl to cure,  
 He rose and sought the moonshine pure.

## XXXV.

The wild rose, eglantine, and broom  
 Wasted around their rich perfume ;  
 The birch-trees wept in fragrant balm ; 720  
 The aspen slept beneath the calm ;  
 The silver light, with quivering glance,  
 Played on the water's still expanse, —  
 Wild were the heart whose passion's sway  
 Could rage beneath the sober ray ! 725  
 He felt its calm, that warrior guest,  
 While thus he communed with his breast : —  
 ' Why is it, at each turn I trace  
 Some memory of that exiled race ?  
 Can I not mountain maiden spy, 730  
 But she must bear the Douglas eye ?

729. **exiled race.** James IV. of Scotland, the father of James V., was killed in the battle of Flodden Field. James V. succeeded to the throne at the age of two years, his mother acting as Regent. A few years later she married the Earl of Angus, a member of the powerful Douglas family, who, through this marriage, became for a time the virtual ruler of Scotland. In 1528, however, the young King James V. escaped from his hands. A sentence of forfeiture was passed against Angus and his kinsmen, the king swearing that while he lived the Douglasses should have no place in his kingdom.

Can I not view a Highland brand,  
 But it must match the Douglas hand ?  
 Can I not frame a fevered dream,  
 But still the Douglas is the theme ? 735  
 I 'll dream no more, — by manly mind  
 Not even in sleep is will resigned.  
 My midnight orisons said o'er,  
 I 'll turn to rest, and dream no more.'  
 His midnight orisons he told, 740  
 A prayer with every bead of gold,  
 Consigned to heaven his cares and woes,  
 And sunk in undisturbed repose,  
 Until the heath-cock shrilly crew,  
 And morning dawned on Benvenue. 745

738. *orisons*, prayers *told*, counted.

741. **A prayer with every bead of gold.** The custom of using beads in rehearsing prayers is referred to. The number of prayers, according to this custom, is represented by the number of beads dropped. *To tell beads* is to be at prayer. The priestly charge to repeat a certain number of paternosters for the souls of the departed is called *bidding of beads*. *Bedesman* is one who is employed to pray, and *bead-roll* signifies the list of those who are to be prayed for. *Bead* first signified *prayer*. A-S. *bead*, a praying; *gebed*, a prayer.

## CANTO SECOND

## THE ISLAND

## I.

AT morn the black-cock trims his jetty wing,  
 'T is morning prompts the linnet's blithest lay,  
 All Nature's children feel the matin spring  
 Of life reviving, with reviving day;  
 And while yon little bark glides down the bay, 5  
 Wafting the stranger on his way again,  
 Morn's genial influence roused a minstrel gray,  
 And sweetly o'er the lake was heard thy strain,  
 Mixed with the sounding harp, O white-haired  
 Allan-bane!

4. *reviving . . . reviving.* The first *reviving* is the infinitive, complement of *feel*; the second *reviving* is the participle, qualifying *day*.

7. *roused.* Past tense; while *glides*, in the dependent clause of time, is present tense. a *minstrel gray.* The Highland chieftains retained, to a late period, a bard or minstrel in their service, as a family officer. He had frequently intrusted to him the education of the children of his chief. He celebrated in verse the triumphs of the clan, and sang these effusions for the entertainment of the lord and his guests. Originally these bards held a position of honor, and were much respected; but as their calling was generally exercised over their cups, and often in low company, the office gradually fell into disrepute.

## II.

## SONG

- 'Not faster yonder rowers' might 10  
     Flings from their oars the spray,  
 Not faster yonder rippling bright,  
 That tracks the shallop's course in light,  
     Melts in the lake away,  
 Than men from memory erase 15  
 The benefits of former days ;  
 Then, stranger, go ! good speed the while,  
 Nor think again of the lonely isle.
- 'High place to thee in royal court,  
     High place in battled line, 20  
 Good hawk and hound for sylvan sport !  
 Where beauty sees the brave resort,  
     The honored meed be thine !  
 True be thy sword, thy friend sincere,  
 Thy lady constant, kind, and dear, 25  
 And lost in love's and friendship's smile  
 Be memory of the lonely isle !

## III.

## SONG CONTINUED

- 'But if beneath you southern sky  
     A plaided stranger roam,  
 Whose drooping crest and stifled sigh, 30  
 And sunken cheek and heavy eye,  
     Pine for his Highland home ;

Then, warrior, then be thine to show  
 The care that soothes a wanderer's woe ;  
 Remember then thy hap erewhile, 35  
 A stranger in the lonely isle.

'Or if on life's uncertain main  
 Mishap shall mar thy sail ;  
 If faithful, wise, and brave in vain,  
 Woe, want, and exile thou sustain 40  
 Beneath the fickle gale ;  
 Waste not a sigh on fortune changed,  
 On thankless courts, or friends estranged,  
 But come where kindred worth shall smile,  
 To greet thee in the lonely isle.' 45

## IV.

As died the sounds upon the tide,  
 The shallop reached the mainland side,  
 And ere his onward way he took,  
 The stranger cast a lingering look,  
 Where easily his eye might reach 50  
 The Harper on the islet beach,  
 Reclined against a blighted tree,  
 As wasted, gray, and worn as he.  
 To minstrel meditation given,  
 His reverend brow was raised to heaven, 55  
 As from the rising sun to claim  
 A sparkle of inspiring flame.  
 His hand, reclined upon the wire,



Seemed watching the awakening fire ;  
 So still he sat as those who wait 60  
 Till judgment speak the doom of fate ;  
 So still, as if no breeze might dare  
 To lift one lock of hoary hair ;  
 So still, as life itself were fled  
 In the last sound his harp had sped. 65

## V.

Upon a rock with lichens wild,  
 Beside him Ellen sat and smiled. —  
 Smiled she to see the stately drake  
 Lead forth his fleet upon the lake,  
 While her vexed spaniel from the beach 70  
 Bayed at the prize beyond his reach ?  
 Yet tell me, then, the maid who knows,  
 Why deepened on her cheek the rose ? —  
 Forgive, forgive, Fidelity !  
 Perchance the maiden smiled to see 75  
 Yon parting lingerer wave adieu,  
 And stop and turn to wave anew ;  
 And, lovely ladies, ere your ire  
 Condemn the heroine of my lyre,  
 Show me the fair would scorn to spy 80  
 And prize such conquest of her eye !

## VI.

While yet he loitered on the spot,  
 It seemed as Ellen marked him not ;

But when he turned him to the glade,  
 One courteous parting sign she made; 85  
 And after, oft the knight would say,  
 That not when prize of festal day  
 Was dealt him by the brightest fair  
 Who e'er wore jewel in her hair,  
 So highly did his bosom swell 90  
 As at that simple mute farewell.  
 Now with a trusty mountain-guide,  
 And his dark stag-hounds by his side,  
 He parts, — the maid, unconscious still,  
 Watched him wind slowly round the hill; 95  
 But when his stately form was hid,  
 The guardian in her bosom chid, —  
 'Thy Malcolm! vain and selfish maid!'  
 'T was thus upbraiding conscience said, —  
 'Not so had Malcolm idly hung 100  
 On the smooth phrase of Southern tongue;  
 Not so had Malcolm strained his eye  
 Another step than thine to spy.' —  
 'Wake, Allan-bane,' aloud she cried  
 To the old minstrel by her side, — 105  
 'Arouse thee from thy moody dream!  
 I'll give thy harp heroic theme,  
 And warm thee with a noble name;  
 Pour forth the glory of the Græme!'

109. **Græme.** "The ancient and powerful family of Graham (which, for metrical reasons, is here spelt after the Scottish pronunciation) held extensive possessions in the counties of Dumbarton and Stirling. Few families can boast of more historical renown, having claim to three of the most remarkable

Scarce from her lip the word had rushed,      110  
 When deep the conscious maiden blushed ;  
 For of his clan, in hall and bower,  
 Young Malcolm Græme was held the flower.

## VII.

The minstrel waked his harp, — three times  
 Arose the well-known martial chimes,      115  
 And thrice their high heroic pride  
 In melancholy murmurs died.  
 ‘Vainly thou bidst, O noble maid,’  
 Claspng his withered hands, he said,  
 ‘Vainly thou bidst me wake the strain,      120  
 Though all unwont to bid in vain.  
 Alas! than mine a mightier hand  
 Has tuned my harp, my strings has spanned!  
 I touch the chords of joy, but low  
 And mournful answer notes of woe;      125  
 And the proud march which victors tread

characters in the Scottish annals. Sir John the Græme, the faithful and undaunted partaker of the labors and patriotic warfare of Wallace, fell in the unfortunate field of Falkirk, in 1298. The celebrated Marquis of Montrose, in whom De Retz saw realized his abstract idea of the heroes of antiquity, was the second of these worthies. And notwithstanding the severity of his temper, and the rigor with which he executed the oppressive mandates of the princes whom he served, I do not hesitate to name as a third, John Græme of Claverhouse, Viscount of Dundee, whose heroic death in the arms of victory may be allowed to cancel the memory of his cruelty to the Non-conformists, during the reigns of Charles II. and James II.” — *Scott.*

121. *unwont*, unaccustomed.

Sinks in the wailing for the dead.  
 O, well for me, if mine alone  
 That dirge's deep prophetic tone!  
 If, as my tuneful fathers said, 130  
 This harp, which erst Saint Modan swayed,  
 Can thus its master's fate foretell,  
 Then welcome be the minstrel's knell!

## VIII.

'But ah! dear lady, thus it sighed,  
 The eve thy sainted mother died; 135  
 And such the sounds which, while I strove  
 To wake a lay of war or love,  
 Came marring all the festal mirth,  
 Appalling me who gave them birth,  
 And, disobedient to my call, 140  
 Wailed loud through Bothwell's bannered hall,  
 Ere Douglasses, to ruin driven,  
 Were exiled from their native heaven. —  
 O! if yet worse mishap and woe  
 My master's house must undergo, 145  
 Or aught but weal to Ellen fair  
 Brood in these accents of despair,  
 No future bard, sad Harp! shall fling

130. *tuneful fathers*, earlier minstrels.

131. *erst*, formerly. *Saint Modan*, a Scotch abbot of the seventh century.

141. *Bothwell's bannered hall*, Bothwell Castle on the Clyde, near Glasgow.

142. *Douglasses*, see note on Canto I. l. 729.

146. *weal*, good fortune.

Triumph or rapture from thy string ;  
 One short, one final strain shall flow, 150  
 Fraught with unutterable woe,  
 Then shivered shall thy fragments lie,  
 Thy master cast him down and die !'

## IX.

Soothing she answered him : ' Assuage,  
 Mine honored friend, the fears of age ; 155  
 All melodies to thee are known  
 That harp has rung or pipe has blown,  
 In Lowland vale or Highland glen,  
 From Tweed to Spey — what marvel, then,  
 At times unbidden notes should rise, 160  
 Confusedly bound in memory's ties,  
 Entangling, as they rush along,  
 The war-march with the funeral song ? —  
 Small ground is now for boding fear ;  
 Obscure, but safe, we rest us here. 165  
 My sire, in native virtue great,  
 Resigning lordship, lands, and state,  
 Not then to fortune more resigned  
 Than yonder oak might give the wind ;  
 The graceful foliage storms may reave, 170  
 The noble stem they cannot grieve.  
 For me ' — she stooped, and, looking round,

159. *Tweed* . . . *Spey*, the former the southern boundary of Scotland, the latter a river in the extreme north.

164. *boding*, foreboding.

170. *reave*, tear away.

Plucked a blue harebell from the ground, —  
 ‘For me, whose memory scarce conveys  
 An image of more splendid days, 175  
 This little flower that loves the lea  
 May well my simple emblem be;  
 It drinks heaven’s dew as blithe as rose  
 That in the King’s own garden grows;  
 And when I place it in my hair, 180  
 Allan, a bard is bound to swear  
 He ne’er saw coronet so fair.’  
 Then playfully the chaplet wild  
 She wreathed in her dark locks, and smiled.

## X.

Her smile, her speech, with winning sway, 185  
 Wiled the old Harper’s mood away.  
 With such a look as hermits throw,  
 When angels stoop to soothe their woe,  
 He gazed, till fond regret and pride  
 Thrilled to a tear, then thus replied: 190  
 ‘Loveliest and best! thou little know’st  
 The rank, the honors, thou hast lost!  
 O, might I live to see thee grace,  
 In Scotland’s court, thy birthright place.  
 To see my favorite’s step advance 195  
 The lightest in the courtly dance.  
 The cause of every gallant’s sigh,  
 And leading star of every eye,

And theme of every minstrel's art,  
The Lady of the Bleeding Heart!'

200

## XI.

'Fair dreams are these,' the maiden cried, —  
Light was her accent, yet she sighed, —  
'Yet is this mossy rock to me  
Worth splendid chair and canopy ;  
Nor would my footstep spring more gay 205  
In courtly dance than blithe strathspey,  
Nor half so pleased mine ear incline  
To royal minstrel's lay as thine.  
And then for suitors proud and high,  
To bend before my conquering eye, — 210  
Thou, flattering bard ! thyself wilt say,  
That grim Sir Roderick owns its sway.  
The Saxon scourge, Clan-Alpine's pride,  
The terror of Loch Lomond's side,  
Would, at my suit, thou know'st, delay 215  
A Lennox foray — for a day.' —

## XII.

The ancient bard her glee repressed :  
'Ill hast thou chosen theme for jest !

200. **Bleeding Heart**, the cognizance of the Douglas family, chosen to commemorate Robert Bruce's dying bequest of his heart to James Douglas, whom he charged with the duty of carrying it to Jerusalem. Bruce's heart is now in Melrose Abbey.

206. **strathspey**, a Highland dance.

214. **Loch Lomond**. See map.

216. **Lennox foray**, a raid into the territory of the Lennox family, south of Loch Lomond.

For who, through all this western wild,  
 Named Black Sir Roderick e'er, and smiled? 220  
 In Holy-Rood a knight he slew;  
 I saw, when back the dirk he drew,  
 Courtiers give place before the stride  
 Of the undaunted homicide;  
 And since, though outlawed, hath his hand 225  
 Full sternly kept his mountain land.  
 Who else dared give — ah! woe the day,  
 That I such hated truth should say! —  
 The Douglas, like a stricken deer,  
 Disowned by every noble peer, 230

220. **Black Sir Roderick.** “ Besides his ordinary name and surname, which were chiefly used in the intercourse with the Lowlands, every Highland chief had an epithet expressive of his patriarchal dignity as head of the clan, and which was common to all his predecessors and successors, as Pharaoh to the kings of Egypt, or Arsaces to those of Parthia. This name was usually a patronymic, expressive of his descent from the founder of the family. Besides this title, which belonged to his office and dignity, the chieftain had usually another peculiar to himself, which distinguished him from the chieftains of the same race. This was sometimes derived from complexion, as *dhu* or *roy*; sometimes from size, as *beg* or *more*; at other times, from some peculiar exploit, or from some peculiarity of habit or appearance. Roderick *dhu* therefore signifies Black Roderick.” — *Scott*.

221. **Holy-Rood**, the royal palace at Edinburgh.

230. **Disowned by every noble peer.** “ The exiled state of this powerful race is not exaggerated in this and subsequent passages. The hatred of James against the race of Douglas was so inveterate, that, numerous as their allies were, and disregarded as the regal authority had usually been in similar cases, their nearest friends, even in the most remote parts of Scotland, durst not entertain them, unless under the strictest and closest disguise. James Douglas, son of the banished Earl of Angus, afterwards well known by the title of Earl of Morton,



Even the rude refuge we have here ?  
 Alas, this wild marauding Chief  
 Alone might hazard our relief,  
 And now thy maiden charms expand,  
 Looks for his guerdon in thy hand ; 235  
 Full soon may dispensation sought,  
 To back his suit, from Rome be brought.  
 Then, though an exile on the hill,  
 Thy father, as the Douglas, still  
 Be held in reverence and fear ; 240  
 And though to Roderick thou 'rt so dear  
 That thou mightst guide with silken thread,  
 Slave of thy will, this chieftain dread,  
 Yet, O loved maid, thy mirth refrain !  
 Thy hand is on a lion's mane.' — 245

## XIII.

'Minstrel,' the maid replied, and high  
 Her father's soul glanced from her eye,  
 'My debts to Roderick's house I know :

lurked, during the exile of his family, in the north of Scotland, under the assumed name of James Innes, otherwise *James the Grieve* (i.e., Reve or Bailiff). 'And as he bore the name,' says Godscroft, 'so did he also execute the office of a grieve or overseer of the lands and rents, the corn and cattle of him with whom he lived.' From the habits of frugality and observation which he acquired in his humble situation, the historian traces that intimate acquaintance with popular character, which enabled him to rise so high in the state, and that honorable economy by which he repaired and established the shattered estates of Angus and Morton." — *Scott*.

235. *guerdon*, reward.

236. *dispensation*, permission granted by the Pope.

All that a mother could bestow  
 To Lady Margaret's care I owe, 250  
 Since first an orphan in the wild  
 She sorrowed o'er her sister's child ;  
 To her brave chieftain son, from ire  
 Of Scotland's king who shrouds my sire,  
 A deeper, holier debt is owed ; 255  
 And, could I pay it with my blood,  
 Allan ! Sir Roderick should command  
 My blood, my life, — but not my hand.  
 Rather will Ellen Douglas dwell  
 A votaress in Maronnan's cell ; 260  
 Rather through realms beyond the sea,  
 Seeking the world's cold charity,  
 Where ne'er was spoke a Scottish word,  
 And ne'er the name of Douglas heard,  
 An outcast pilgrim will she rove, 265  
 Than wed the man she cannot love.

## XIV.

'Thou shak'st, good friend, thy tresses gray, —  
 That pleading look, what can it say  
 But what I own ? — I grant him brave,  
 But wild as Bracklinn's thundering wave ; 270

254. *shrouds*, protects.

260. *votaress*. A woman devoted to any particular service or worship. *Maronnan*. "The parish of Kilmaronock, at the eastern extremity of Loch Lomond ; it derives its name from a cell or chapel, dedicated to Saint Maronnan." — *Scott*.

270. *Bracklinn*, a mountain cataract near the village of Calander.

And generous, — save vindictive mood  
 Or jealous transport chafe his blood :  
 I grant him true to friendly band,  
 As his claymore is to his hand ;  
 But O ! that very blade of steel 275  
 More mercy for a foe would feel :  
 I grant him liberal, to fling  
 Among his clan the wealth they bring,  
 When back by lake and glen they wind,  
 And in the Lowland leave behind, 280  
 Where once some pleasant hamlet stood,  
 A mass of ashes slaked with blood.  
 The hand that for my father fought  
 I honor, as his daughter ought ;  
 But can I clasp it reeking red 285  
 From peasants slaughtered in their shed ?  
 No ! wildly while his virtues gleam,  
 They make his passions darker seem,  
 And flash along his spirit high,  
 Like lightning o'er the midnight sky. 290  
 While yet a child, — and children know,  
 Instinctive taught, the friend and foe, —  
 I shuddered at his brow of gloom,  
 His shadowy plaid and sable plume ;  
 A maiden gown, I ill could bear 295  
 His haughty mien and lordly air :  
 But, if thou join'st a suitor's claim,  
 In serious mood, to Roderick's name,  
 I thrill with anguish ! or, if e'er

A Douglas knew the word, with fear. 300  
 To change such odious theme were best, —  
 What think'st thou of our stranger guest? ' —

## xv.

' What think I of him? — woe the while  
 That brought such wanderer to our isle!  
 Thy father's battle-brand, of yore 305  
 For Tine-man forged by fairy lore,  
 What time he leagued, no longer foes,  
 His Border spears with Hotspur's bows,  
 Did, self-unscabbarded, foeshow  
 The footstep of a secret foe. 310  
 If courtly spy hath harbored here,  
 What may we for the Douglas fear?  
 What for this island, deemed of old  
 Clan-Alpine's last and surest hold?  
 If neither spy nor foe, I pray 315  
 What yet may jealous Roderick say? —  
 Nay, wave not thy disdainful head!  
 Bethink thee of the discord dread  
 That kindled when at Beltane game

305. *yore*, former times.

306. *Tine-man*. "Archibald, the third Earl of Douglas, was so unfortunate in all his enterprises that he acquired the epithet of *Tine-man*, because he *tined*, or lost, his followers in every battle which he fought." — *Scott*.

307. *What time*, at the time when. *leagued*, joined.

308. *Hotspur's bows*. Douglas formed an alliance with the English bowmen under Percy, the Hotspur of Shakespeare's *Henry IV*.

309. *self-unscabbarded*. Cf. Canto I. ll. 536–537.

319. *Beltane game*, May-day games. See note on l. 410, below.

Thou ledst the dance with Malcolm Græme; 320  
 Still, though thy sire the peace renewed,  
 Smoulders in Roderick's breast the feud:  
 Beware! — But hark! what songs are these?  
 My dull ears catch no faltering breeze,  
 No weeping birch nor aspens wake, 325  
 Nor breath is dimpling in the lake;  
 Still is the canna's hoary beard,  
 Yet, by my minstrel faith, I heard —  
 And hark again! some pipe of war  
 Sends the bold pibroch from afar.' 330

## XVI.

Far up the lengthened lake were spied  
 Four darkening specks upon the tide,  
 That, slow enlarging on the view,  
 Four manned and masted barges grew,  
 And, bearing downwards from Glengyle, 335  
 Steered full upon the lonely isle;  
 The point of Brianchoil they passed,  
 And, to the windward as they cast,  
 Against the sun they gave to shine

327. *canna*, a plant with large leaves.

333. *That . . . grew*. Construe: "That (namely the *specks*) growing larger as they slowly approached, became four manned and masted barges."

335. *Glengyle*, the glen or valley at the western extremity of Loch Katrine. It contains the ruins of a castle, a former stronghold of the Macgregors.

337. *Brianchoil*, a point on the southern side of the lake.

338. *to the windward as they cast*, as they brought round the side of the boat to the wind.

The bold Sir Roderick's bannered Pine. 340  
 Nearer and nearer as they bear,  
 Spears, pikes, and axes flash in air.  
 Now might you see the tartans brave,  
 And plaids and plumage dance and wave :  
 Now see the bonnets sink and rise, 345  
 As his tough oar the rower plies ;  
 See, flashing at each sturdy stroke,  
 The wave ascending into smoke ;  
 See the proud pipers on the bow,  
 And mark the gaudy streamers flow 350  
 From their loud chanters down, and sweep  
 The furrowed bosom of the deep,  
 As, rushing through the lake amain,  
 They plied the ancient Highland strain.

## XVII.

Ever, as on they bore, more loud 355  
 And louder rung the pibroch proud.

343. **brave**, grand, showy. See Canto I. note l. 24.

350. **mark**, like *see* in the preceding line, is the infinitive, complement to *might*.

351. **chanters**. The *chanter* is the flutelike tube of the bag-pipe on which the tune is played; but the *chanters* is the name sometimes applied to the pipes collectively, and hence to the whole instrument.

356. **pibroch**. Literally *pipe-music*, but specially a Highland martial air in which varying moods and passions are expressed. "Some of these pibrochs," says Dr. Beattie, "being intended to represent a battle, begin with a grave motion resembling a march; then gradually quicken into the onset; run off with noisy confusion and turbulent rapidity to imitate the conflict and pursuit; then swell into a few flourishes of triumphant joy; and perhaps close with the wild and slow wailings of a funeral

At first the sounds, by distance tame,  
 Mellowed along the waters came,  
 And, lingering long by cape and bay,  
 Wailed every harsher note away, 360  
 Then bursting bolder on the ear,  
 The clan's shrill Gathering they could hear,  
 Those thrilling sounds that call the might  
 Of old Clan-Alpine to the fight.  
 Thick beat the rapid notes, as when 365  
 The mustering hundreds shake the glen,  
 And hurrying at the signal dread,  
 The battered earth returns their tread.  
 Then prelude light, of livelier tone,  
 Expressed their merry marching on, 370  
 Ere peal of closing battle rose,  
 With mingled outcry, shrieks, and blows;  
 And mimic din of stroke and ward,  
 As broadsword upon target jarred;  
 And groaning pause, ere yet again, 375

procession." The transitions of feeling are vividly described in the succeeding verses.

362. **Gathering**, the war cry or gathering word of the clan; the *slogan*.

373. **Mimic din**, the *din* of battle imitated by the bagpipe. *Din, pause, charge, shout, retreat*, and *bursts* are nominatives in apposition with *all*: "all were there." **Ward**, parry. The same word as *guard*, which is a Norman-French modification of the root. Such double forms are common, the one taken direct from Anglo-Saxon, the other through the medium of French; e.g., ward, A.-S. *weard*; guard, Fr. *garde*; wise (manner), A.-S. *wise*; guise, Fr. *guise*; wage, A.-S. *wed*; gage, Fr. *gage*. *Legal* and *loyal, regal* and *royal*, the first forms coming from Latin direct, the second through the medium of French, present a similar phenomenon.

Condensed, the battle yelled amain :  
 The rapid charge, the rallying shout,  
 Retreat borne headlong into rout,  
 And bursts of triumph, to declare  
 Clan-Alpine's conquest — all were there. 380  
 Nor ended thus the strain, but slow  
 Sunk in a moan prolonged and low,  
 And changed the conquering clarion swell  
 For wild lament o'er those that fell.

## XVIII.

The war-pipes ceased, but lake and hill 385  
 Were busy with their echoes still ;  
 And, when they slept, a vocal strain  
 Bade their hoarse chorus wake again,  
 While loud a hundred clansmen raise  
 Their voices in their Chieftain's praise. 390  
 Each boatman, bending to his oar,  
 With measured sweep the burden bore.  
 In such wild cadence as the breeze.

392. With measured sweep the burden bore, made his singing and his rowing keep time, so that the strokes of the oar marked the beats in the rhythm of the song. Cf.:

“ Faintly as tolls the evening chime,  
 Our *voices* keep tune, and our *oar's* keep time.”

— Moore.

burden, the *burden* or chorus of a song. This word — which is from O. Fr. *bourdon*, the bass or drone of a bagpipe — was confounded with the word *burden*, a load, which is from A.-S. *beran*, to bear. The confusion is as old as Chaucer :

“ This sompneur *bar* to him a stiff *burdown*.”

— Prol. *Canterbury Tales*, l. 678.

“ Burden bore ” is an example of alliteration.



Makes through December's leafless trees.

The chorus first could Allan know, 395

'Roderick Vich Alpine, ho! iro!'

And near, and nearer as they rowed,

Distinct the martial ditty flowed.

## XIX.

## BOAT SONG

Hail to the Chief who in triumph advances!

Honored and blessed be the ever-green Pine! 400

Long may the tree, in his banner that glances,

Flourish, the shelter and grace of our line!

Heaven send it happy dew,

Earth lend it sap anew,

Gayly to bourgeon and broadly to grow, 405

While every Highland glen

Sends our shout back again,

'Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu, ho! ieroe!'

399. **Hail**, a salutation or exclamation wishing *health* to the person addressed. It is properly a noun [A.-S. *hælu*, health; Lat. *salus*], and may be qualified by an adjective:

"*All hail*, Macbeth! *hail* to thee thane of Glamis."

—*Macbeth*, I. iii. 48.

In "Hail to thee!" and "Hail to the Chief!" there is probably an ellipsis of the verb *be*. Shakespeare, however, turns it into a verb in: "Came missives from the king, who *all-hailed* me, 'Thane of Cawdor!'" *Health*, *whole*, *hale*, are from the same root as this word. *Hail*, to call, is from a different root [Low Ger. *anhalen*; Dutch, *halen*].

402. **shelter and grace**, nominatives in apposition with *Tree*. Our line is our clan or family.

405. **bourgeon**, to bud. [Fr. *bourgeon*, a shoot or bud.]

408. **Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu**, Black Rhoderick, of the family of Alpine. *Dhu* in Gaelic is *black*, and *Vich* is *son of*.

Ours is no sapling, chance-sown by the fountain,  
 Blooming at Beltane, in winter to fade;                      410  
 When the whirlwind has stripped every leaf on the  
       mountain,  
 The more shall Clan-Alpine exult in her shade.  
       Moored in the rifted rock,  
       Proof to the tempest's shock,  
 Firmer he roots him the ruder it blow;                      415  
       Menteith and Breadalbane, then,  
       Echo his praise again,  
 'Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu, ho! ieroe!'

410. **Beltane**, Whitsuntide, from a festival held by ancient custom, in the rural districts of Scotland, on the first day of May, O. S. In Scotland cakes are baked for the occasion; which seem (according to Jamieson) to have been an offering to some Druidical deity. In Ireland, Beltane is celebrated on the 21st of June, by lighting fires on the tops of hills, through which every member of the family is made to pass, to insure good fortune for the rest of the year. [Gael. and Ir. *Beil*, Baal, the sun; and *tein*, fire.]

415. **Firmer he roots him the ruder it blow.** He plants himself the more firmly the more violently the wind blows. Cf. what Cowper says of the oak:

"The monarch owes  
 His firm stability to what he seems —  
*More fixed below, the more disturbed above.*"

The in "the more" is not the article, but an adverb. It is the old ablative of the demonstrative [A.-S. *the*]. In Latin, "the ruder the firmer" would be, "quo vehementius, eo firmitus." *Quo . . . eo* was in Anglo-Saxon *the . . . the*. *Roots him* is here a reflexive verb for "fixes his roots." *It blow* unipersonal and subjunctive.

416. **Menteith and Breadalbane.** Menteith is the vale named after the Lake of Menteith, to the south of Loch Vennachar. Breadalbane is the district on the southern and eastern banks of Loch Tay.

417. **Echo.** Imperative, third person plural.

## XX.

Proudly our pibroch has thrilled in Glen Fruin,  
And Bannochar's groans to our slogan replied ; 420  
Glen Luss and Ross-dhu, they are smoking in ruin,  
And the best of Loch Lomond lie dead on her side.  
Widow and Saxon maid  
Long shall lament our raid,  
Think of Clan-Alpine with fear and with woe ; 425  
Lennox and Leven-glen  
Shake when they hear again,  
'Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu, ho! ieroe!'

Row, vassals, row, for the pride of the Highlands!  
Stretch to your oars for the ever-green Pine! 430  
O that the rosebud that graces yon islands  
Were wreathed in a garland around him to twine!  
O that some seedling gem,  
Worthy such noble stem,  
Honored and blessed in their shadow might grow!  
Loud should Clan-Alpine then 436  
Ring from her deepest glen,  
'Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu, ho! ieroe!'

## XXI.

With all her joyful female band  
Had Lady Margaret sought the strand. 440  
Loose on the breeze their tresses flew,  
And high their snowy arms they threw,  
As echoing back with shrill acclaim,  
And chorus wild, the Chieftain's name ;

While, prompt to please, with mother's art, 445  
 The darling passion of his heart,  
 The Dame called Ellen to the strand,  
 To greet her kinsman ere he land :  
 'Come, loiterer, come! a Douglas thou,  
 And shun to wreathe a victor's brow?' 450  
 Reluctantly and slow, the maid  
 The unwelcome summoning obeyed,  
 And when a distant bugle rung,  
 In the mid-path aside she sprung: —  
 'List, Allan-bane! From mainland east 455  
 I hear my father's signal blast.  
 Be ours,' she cried, 'the skiff to guide,  
 And waft him from the mountain-side.'  
 Then, like a sunbeam, swift and bright,  
 She darted to her shallop light, 460  
 And, eagerly while Roderick scanned,  
 For her dear form, his mother's band,  
 The islet far behind her lay,  
 And she had landed in the bay.

## XXII.

Some feelings are to mortals given 465  
 With less of earth in them than heaven;

449. a Douglas thou, And shun. Elliptical and exclamatory. for "*Art* thou a Douglas, and *dost* thou shun?" But the construction implies a closer interdependence than this: "If you shun to wreathe a victor's brow, are you a Douglas?" "Is it worthy of a Douglas to shun?" etc.

457. Be ours. Let it be our duty, our part. A classical idiom, as in "*sit nobis*," let it be our duty.

And if there be a human tear  
 From passion's dross refined and clear,  
 A tear so limpid and so meek  
 It would not stain an angel's cheek, 470  
 'T is that which pious fathers shed  
 Upon a dutious daughter's head!  
 And as the Douglas to his breast  
 His darling Ellen closely pressed,  
 Such holy drops her tresses steeped, 475  
 Though 't was an hero's eye that weeped.  
 Nor while on Ellen's faltering tongue  
 Her filial welcomes crowded hung,  
 Marked she that fear — affection's proof —  
 Still held a graceful youth aloof; 480  
 No! not till Douglas named his name,  
 Although the youth was Malcolm Græme.

## XXIII.

Allan, with wistful look the while,  
 Marked Roderick landing on the isle;  
 His master piteously he eyed, 485  
 Then gazed upon the Chieftain's pride,  
 Then dashed with hasty hand away

473. **the Douglas.** This Douglas, afterwards particularized as Lord James Douglas of Bothwell, is a fictitious character; but he has his prototype in Archibald Douglas of Kilspindie, uncle of the Earl of Angus, who was banished by James V. on his recovering his personal freedom and assuming the government in 1528. Kilspindie, like the Douglas of the poem, had been James's instructor in manly exercises in his youth. This, however, did not save him from being cruelly spurned by James on his return from exile.

From his dimmed eye the gathering spray ;  
 And Douglas, as his hand he laid  
 On Malcolm's shoulder, kindly said : 490  
 ' Canst thou, young friend, no meaning spy  
 In my poor follower's glistening eye ?  
 I 'll tell thee : — he recalls the day  
 When in my praise he led the lay  
 O'er the arched gate of Bothwell proud, 495  
 While many a minstrel answered loud,  
 When Percy's Norman pennon, won  
 In bloody field, before me shone,  
 And twice ten knights, the least a name  
 As mighty as yon Chief may claim, 500  
 Gracing my pomp, behind me came.  
 Yet trust me, Malcolm, not so proud  
 Was I of all that marshalled crowd,  
 Though the waned crescent owned my might,  
 And in my train trooped lord and knight, 505  
 Though Blantyre hymned her holiest lays,  
 And Bothwell's bards flung back my praise,  
 As when this old man's silent tear,  
 And this poor maid's affection dear,  
 A welcome give more kind and true 510  
 Than aught my better fortunes knew.  
 Forgive, my friend, a father's boast, —  
 O, it out-beggars all I lost ! '

504. *waned crescent*, the cognizance of the house of Buccleugh, who had endeavored, unsuccessfully, to set the king free from the Douglases.

506. *Blantyre*. The priory near Bothwell Castle.

## XXIV.

Delightful praise! — like summer rose,  
 That brighter in the dew-drop glows, 515  
 The bashful maiden's cheek appeared,  
 For Douglas spoke, and Malcolm heard.  
 The flush of shame-faced joy to hide,  
 The hounds, the hawk, her cares divide;  
 The loved caresses of the maid 520  
 The dogs with crouch and whimper paid;  
 And, at her whistle, on her hand  
 The falcon took his favorite stand,  
 Closed his dark wing, relaxed his eye,  
 Nor, though unhooded, sought to fly. 525  
 And, trust, while in such guise she stood,  
 Like fabled Goddess of the wood,  
 That if a father's partial thought  
 O'erweighed her worth and beauty aught,  
 Well might the lover's judgment fail 530  
 To balance with a juster scale;  
 For with each secret glance he stole;  
 The fond enthusiast sent his soul.

## XXV.

Of stature fair, and slender frame,  
 But firmly knit, was Malcolm Græme. 535  
 The belted plaid and tartan hose  
 Did ne'er more graceful limbs disclose;

525. *unhooded.* Falcons were kept with their heads hooded, the uncovering of their heads being the signal for flight.

527. *Goddess of the wood.* Diana.

His flaxen hair, of sunny hue,  
 Curled closely round his bonnet blue.  
 Trained to the chase, his eagle eye 540  
 The ptarmigan in snow could spy ;  
 Each pass, by mountain, lake, and heath,  
 He knew, through Lennox and Menteith ;  
 Vain was the bound of dark-brown doe  
 When Malcolm bent his sounding bow, 545  
 And scarce that doe, though winged with fear,  
 Outstripped in speed the mountaineer :  
 Right up Ben Lomond could he press,  
 And not a sob his toil confess.  
 His form accorded with a mind 550  
 Lively and ardent, frank and kind ;  
 A blither heart, till Ellen came,  
 Did never love nor sorrow tame ;  
 It danced as lightsome in his breast  
 As played the feather on his crest. 555  
 Yet friends, who nearest knew the youth,  
 His scorn of wrong, his zeal for truth,  
 And bards, who saw his features bold  
 When kindled by the tales of old,  
 Said, were that youth to manhood grown, 560  
 Not long should Roderick Dhu's renown  
 Be foremost voiced by mountain fame,  
 But quail to that of Malcolm Græme.

541. *ptarmigan*, a kind of quail which, brown in summer, turns white or nearly white in winter.



## XXVI.

Now back they wend their watery way,  
 And, 'O my sire!' did Ellen say, 565  
 'Why urge thy chase so far astray?  
 And why so late returned? And why' —  
 The rest was in her speaking eye.  
 'My child, the chase I follow far,  
 'T is mimicry of noble war; 570  
 And with that gallant pastime reft  
 Were all of Douglas I have left.  
 I met young Malcolm as I strayed  
 Far eastward, in Glenfinlas' shade;  
 Nor strayed I safe, for all around 575  
 Hunters and horsemen scoured the ground.  
 This youth, though still a royal ward,  
 Risked life and land to be my guard,  
 And through the passes of the wood  
 Guided my steps, not unpursued; 580  
 And Roderick shall his welcome make,  
 Despite old spleen, for Douglas' sake.  
 Then must he seek Strath-Endrick glen,  
 Nor peril aught for me again.'

571. with . . . left. Construe: "All (that) I have left of Douglas were (would be) reft (taken away) with that gallant pastime (if that gallant pastime were taken away)."

574. *Glenfinlas*. The valley on the east of Ben-an.

577. *royal ward*, under the guardianship of the king.

583. *Strath-Endrick glen*. A valley watered by the Endrick, which flows into Loch Lomond, fifteen miles south of Loch Katrine.

584. *peril*, risk. *aught*. The objective or accusative of reference — "in any respect."

## XXVII.

Sir Roderick, who to meet them came, 585  
 Reddened at sight of Malcolm Græme,  
 Yet, not in action, word, or eye,  
 Failed aught in hospitality.  
 In talk and sport they whiled away  
 The morning of that summer day; 590  
 But at high noon a courier light  
 Held secret parley with the knight,  
 Whose moody aspect soon declared  
 That evil were the news he heard.  
 Deep thought seemed toiling in his head; 595  
 Yet was the evening banquet made  
 Ere he assembled round the flame  
 His mother, Douglas, and the Græme,  
 And Ellen too; then cast around  
 His eyes, then fixed them on the ground, 600  
 As studying phrase that might avail  
 Best to convey unpleasant tale.  
 Long with his dagger's hilt he played,  
 Then raised his haughty brow, and said: —

## XXVIII.

'Short be my speech; — nor time affords, 605  
 Nor my plain temper, glozing words.

599. *then cast.* Supply *he* as nominative to *cast*.

601. *As studying.* Elliptical, for "As if he were studying."  
 The full construction is, "As he would do if he were studying."

606. *glozing*, glossing over. Cf. Milton's *Comus*, line 161:

"well-placed words of glozing courtesy."

Kinsman and father, — if such name  
 Douglas vouchsafe to Roderick's claim ;  
 Mine honored mother ; — Ellen, — why,  
 My cousin, turn away thine eye ? — 610  
 And Græme, in whom I hope to know  
 Full soon a noble friend or foe,  
 When age shall give thee thy command,  
 And leading in thy native land, —  
 List all ! — The King's vindictive pride 615  
 Boasts to have tamed the Border-side,  
 Where chiefs, with hound and hawk who came  
 To share their monarch's sylvan game,  
 Themselves in bloody toils were snared,  
 And when the banquet they prepared, 620  
 And wide their loyal portals flung,  
 O'er their own gateway struggling hung.  
 Loud cries their blood from Meggat's mead,  
 From Yarrow braes and banks of Tweed,  
 Where the lone streams of Ettrick glide, 625  
 And from the silver Teviot's side ;  
 The dales, where martial clans did ride,  
 Are now one sheep-walk, waste and wide.  
 This tyrant of the Scottish throne,

616. **tamed the Border-side.** “ In 1529 James made a convention at Edinburgh for the purpose of considering the best mode of quelling the Border robbers, who, during the license of his minority and the troubles which followed, had committed many exorbitances.” — *Scott*. He scoured Ettrick Forest, and put to death many of the leaders of the bandits.

623–626. The Meggat flows into the Yarrow, the Yarrow into the Ettrick, and the Ettrick and the Teviot rivers flow into the Tweed.

So faithless and so ruthless known, 630  
 Now hither comes; his end the same,  
 The same pretext of sylvan game.  
 What grace for Highland Chiefs, judge ye  
 By fate of Border chivalry.  
 Yet more; amid Glenfinlas' green, 635  
 Douglas, thy stately form was seen.  
 This by espial sure I know:  
 Your counsel in the streight I show.'

## XXIX.

Ellen and Margaret fearfully  
 Sought comfort in each other's eye, 640  
 Then turned their ghastly look, each one,  
 This to her sire, that to her son.  
 The hasty color went and came  
 In the bold cheek of Malcolm Græme,  
 But from his glance it well appeared 645  
 'T was but for Ellen that he feared;  
 While, sorrowful, but undismayed,  
 The Douglas thus his counsel said:  
 'Brave Roderick, though the tempest roar,  
 It may but thunder and pass o'er; 650  
 Nor will I here remain an hour,  
 To draw the lightning on thy bower;  
 For well thou know'st, at this gray head  
 The royal bolt were fiercest sped.  
 For thee, who, at thy King's command, 655

637. espial, watching, observation.

638. streight, strait, emergency.

Canst aid him with a gallant band,  
 Submission, homage, humbled pride,  
 Shall turn the Monarch's wrath aside.  
 Poor remnants of the Bleeding Heart,  
 Ellen and I will seek apart 660  
 The refuge of some forest cell,  
 There, like the hunted quarry, dwell,  
 Till on the mountain and the moor  
 The stern pursuit be passed and o'er,'—

## XXX.

'No, by mine honor,' Roderick said, 665  
 'So help me Heaven, and my good blade!  
 No, never! Blasted be yon Pine,  
 My father's ancient crest and mine,  
 If from its shade in danger part  
 The lineage of the Bleeding Heart! 670  
 Hear my blunt speech: grant me this maid  
 To wife, thy counsel to mine aid;  
 To Douglas, leagued with Roderick Dhu,  
 Will friends and allies flock enow;  
 Like cause of doubt, distrust, and grief, 675  
 Will bind to us each Western Chief.  
 When the loud pipes my bridal tell,  
 The Links of Forth shall hear the knell,

666. **So help me Heaven.** In point of fact, a clause of condition—"If Heaven help me so" (or to that extent).

672. **To wife,** for wife. Compare—"We have Abraham to our father" (Matthew iii. 9); and Latin, "Est nobis patri."

674. **enow,** enough. [Sc. *eneuch.*]

678. **The Links of Forth.** The vale of the Forth below Stir-

The guards shall start in Stirling's porch ;  
 And when I light the nuptial torch, 680  
 A thousand villages in flames  
 Shall scare the slumbers of King James ! —  
 Nay, Ellen, blench not thus away,  
 And, mother, cease these signs, I pray ;  
 I meant not all my heat might say. — 685  
 Small need of inroad or of fight,  
 When the sage Douglas may unite  
 Each mountain clan in friendly band,  
 To guard the passes of their land,  
 Till the foiled King from pathless glen 690  
 Shall bootless turn him home again.'

## XXXI.

There are who have, at midnight hour,  
 In slumber scaled a dizzy tower,  
 And, on the verge that beetled o'er  
 The ocean tide's incessant roar, 695  
 Dreamed calmly out their dangerous dream,  
 Till wakened by the morning beam ;  
 When, dazzled by the eastern glow,  
 Such startler cast his glance below,  
 And saw unmeasured depth around, 700  
 And heard unintermitted sound,  
 And thought the battled fence so frail,

ling. *Links* means the windings of a river. [Ger. *lenken*, to bend or wind.]

692. **There are who.** There are persons who.

694. **beetled o'er.** Hung over, like the head of a *beetle* — either the insect so called, or a mallet used for *beating*.

It waved like cobweb in the gale; —  
 Amid his senses' giddy wheel,  
 Did he not desperate impulse feel, 705  
 Headlong to plunge himself below,  
 And meet the worst his fears foreshow? —  
 Thus Ellen, dizzy and astound,  
 As sudden ruin yawned around,  
 By crossing terrors wildly tossed, 710  
 Still for the Douglas fearing most,  
 Could scarce the desperate thought withstand,  
 To buy his safety with her hand.

## XXXII.

Such purpose dread could Malcolm spy  
 In Ellen's quivering lip and eye, 715  
 And eager rose to speak, — but ere  
 His tongue could hurry forth his fear,  
 Had Douglas marked the hectic strife,  
 Where death seemed combating with life;  
 For to her cheek, in feverish flood, 720  
 One instant rushed the throbbing blood,

708. *astound*, for *astounded*.

718. *hectic*. Gk. *ἠκτικός* (*hectikos*), habitual; *ἕξις* (*hexis*), habit; *ἔχειν* (*ekhein*), to have, to be. It was originally used as an adjective, "the hectic fever," meaning the habitual or constitutional fever. Then, as in so many similar phrases, "fever" was dropped, and we find in Shakespeare, "For like the hectic in my blood he rages" (*Hamlet*, IV. iii. 68). Later on the word becomes an adjective again, with the sense "feverish," "hot," "flushed," especial reference being made to the fever of debility and exhaustion. Here it is applied to the alternate redness and paleness of Ellen's cheek.

Then ebbing back, with sudden sway,  
 Left its domain as wan as clay.  
 'Roderick, enough! enough!' he cried,  
 'My daughter cannot be thy bride; 725  
 Not that the blush to wooer dear,  
 Nor paleness that of maiden fear.  
 It may not be, — forgive her, Chief,  
 Nor hazard aught for our relief.  
 Against his sovereign, Douglas ne'er 730  
 Will level a rebellious spear.  
 'T was I that taught his youthful hand  
 To rein a steed and wield a brand;  
 I see him yet, the princely boy!  
 Not Ellen more my pride and joy; 735  
 I love him still, despite my wrongs  
 By hasty wrath and slanderous tongues.  
 O, seek the grace you well may find,  
 Without a cause to mine combined!'

## XXXIII.

Twice through the hall the Chieftain strode; 740  
 The waving of his tartans broad,  
 And darkened brow, where wounded pride  
 With ire and disappointment vied,  
 Seemed, by the torch's gloomy light,  
 Like the ill Demon of the night, 745  
 Stooping his pinions' shadowy sway

726. Not that, that is not.

735. Not Ellen more. Ellen is not more.

743. vied, contended.



Upon the nighted pilgrim's way :  
 But, unrequited Love! thy dart  
 Plunged deepest its envenomed smart,  
 And Roderick, with thine anguish stung, 750  
 At length the hand of Douglas wrung,  
 While eyes that mocked at tears before  
 With bitter drops were running o'er.  
 The death-pangs of long-cherished hope  
 Scarce in that ample breast had scope, 755  
 But, struggling with his spirit proud,  
 Convulsive heaved its checkered shroud,  
 While every sob — so mute were all —  
 Was heard distinctly through the hall.  
 The son's despair, the mother's look, 760  
 Ill might the gentle Ellen brook ;  
 She rose, and to her side there came,  
 To aid her parting steps, the Græme.

## XXXIV.

Then Roderick from the Douglas broke —  
 As flashes flame through sable smoke, 765  
 Kindling its wreaths, long, dark, and low,  
 To one broad blaze of ruddy glow,  
 So the deep anguish of despair  
 Burst, in fierce jealousy, to air.  
 With stalwart grasp his hand he laid 770  
 On Malcolm's breast and belted plaid:

747. nighted, benighted.

749. envenomed, poisoned.

757. checkered shroud, his tartan plaid.

'Back, beardless boy!' he sternly said,  
 'Back, minion! holdst thou thus at naught  
 The lesson I so lately taught?  
 This roof, the Douglas, and that maid, 775  
 Thank thou for punishment delayed.'  
 Eager as greyhound on his game,  
 Fiercely with Roderick grappled Græme.  
 'Perish my name, if aught afford  
 Its Chieftain safety save his sword!' 780  
 Thus as they strove their desperate hand  
 Griped to the dagger or the brand,  
 And death had been — but Douglas rose,  
 And thrust between the struggling foes  
 His giant strength: — 'Chieftains, forego! 785  
 I hold the first who strikes my foe. —  
 Madmen, forbear your frantic jar!  
 What! is the Douglas fallen so far,  
 His daughter's hand is deemed the spoil  
 Of such dishonorable broil?' 790  
 Sullen and slowly they unclasp,  
 As struck with shame, their desperate grasp,  
 And each upon his rival glared,  
 With foot advanced and blade half bared.

## XXXV.

Ere yet the brands aloft were flung, 795  
 Margaret on Roderick's mantle hung,  
 And Malcolm heard his Ellen's scream,  
 As faltered through terrific dream.

Then Roderick plunged in sheath his sword,  
 And veiled his wrath in scornful word : 800  
 ‘Rest safe till morning; pity ’t were  
 Such cheek should feel the midnight air!  
 Then mayst thou to James Stuart tell,  
 Roderick will keep the lake and fell,  
 Nor lackey with his freeborn clan 805  
 The pageant pomp of earthly man.  
 More would he of Clan-Alpine know,  
 Thou canst our strength and passes show. —  
 Malise, what ho!’ — his henchman came :  
 ‘Give our safe-conduct to the Græme.’ 810  
 Young Malcolm answered, calm and bold :  
 ‘Fear nothing for thy favorite hold;  
 The spot an angel deigned to grace  
 Is blessed, though robbers haunt the place.  
 Thy churlish courtesy for those 815  
 Reserve, who fear to be thy foes.  
 As safe to me the mountain way  
 At midnight as in blaze of day,  
 Though with his boldest at his back  
 Even Roderick Dhu beset the track. — 820  
 Brave Douglas, — lovely Ellen, — nay,  
 Naught here of parting will I say.

805. *lackey*. Here, serve as lackey.

809. *henchman*. “This officer is a sort of secretary, and is to be ready, upon all occasions, to venture his life in defense of his master; and at drinking-bouts he stands behind his seat, at his haunch, from which his title is derived, and watches the conversation, to see if any one offends his patron.” — *Scott*.

Earth does not hold a lonesome glen  
 So secret but we meet again. —  
 Chieftain! we too shall find an hour,' — 825  
 He said, and left the sylvan bower.

## XXXVI.

Old Allan followed to the strand —  
 Such was the Douglas's command —  
 And anxious told, how, on the morn,  
 The stern Sir Roderick deep had sworn, 830  
 The Fiery Cross should circle o'er  
 Dale, glen, and valley, down and moor.  
 Much were the peril to the Græme  
 From those who to the signal came ;  
 Far up the lake 't were safest land, 835  
 Himself would row him to the strand.  
 He gave his counsel to the wind,  
 While Malcolm did, unheeding, bind,  
 Round dirk and pouch and broadsword rolled,  
 His ample plaid in tightened fold, 840  
 And stripped his limbs to such array  
 As best might suit the watery way, —

## XXXVII.

Then spoke abrupt: 'Farewell to thee,  
 Pattern of old fidelity !'  
 The Minstrel's hand he kindly pressed, — 845  
 'O, could I point a place of rest !  
 My sovereign holds in ward my land,  
 My uncle leads my vassal band ;

To tame his foes, his friends to aid,  
Poor Malcolm has but heart and blade. 850  
Yet, if there be one faithful Græme  
Who loves the chieftain of his name,  
Not long shall honored Douglas dwell  
Like hunted stag in mountain cell ;  
Nor, ere yon pride-swollen robber dare, — 855  
I may not give the rest to air !  
Tell Roderick Dhu I owed him naught,  
Not the poor service of a boat,  
To waft me to yon mountain-side.’  
Then plunged he in the flashing tide. 860  
Bold o’er the flood his head he bore,  
And stoutly steered him from the shore ;  
And Allan strained his anxious eye,  
Far mid the lake his form to spy,  
Darkening across each puny wave, 865  
To which the moon her silver gave.  
Fast as the cormorant could skim,  
The swimmer plied each active limb ;  
Then landing in the moonlight dell,  
Loud shouted of his weal to tell. 870  
The Minstrel heard the far halloo,  
And joyful from the shore withdrew.

867. *cormorant*, a water bird, something like a crow.

## CANTO THIRD

## THE GATHERING

## I.

TIME rolls his ceaseless course. The race of yore,  
 Who danced our infancy upon their knee,  
 And told our marvelling boyhood legends store  
 Of their strange ventures happed by land or  
 sea,

How are they blotted from the things that be! 5  
 How few, all weak and withered of their force,  
 Wait on the verge of dark eternity,  
 Like stranded wrecks, the tide returning hoarse,  
 To sweep them from our sight! Time rolls his  
 ceaseless course.

Yet live there still who can remember well, 10  
 How, when a mountain chief his bugle blew,  
 Both field and forest, dingle, cliff, and dell,  
 And solitary heath, the signal knew;  
 And fast the faithful clan around him drew,  
 What time the warning note was keenly wound, 15  
 What time aloft their kindred banner flew,

While clamorous war-pipes yelled the gathering  
 sound,  
 And while the Fiery Cross glanced, like a meteor,  
 round.

## II.

The Summer dawn's reflected hue  
 To purple changed Loch Katrine blue ;           20  
 Mildly and soft the western breeze  
 Just kissed the lake, just stirred the trees,  
 And the pleased lake, like maiden coy,  
 Trembled but dimpled not for joy :  
 The mountain shadows on her breast           25

18. **Fiery Cross.** " When a chieftain designed to summon his clan, upon any sudden or important emergency, he slew a goat, and making a cross of any light wood, seared its extremities in the fire, and extinguished them in the blood of the animal. This was called the *Fiery Cross*, also *Cream Tarigh*, or the *Cross of Shame*, because disobedience to what the symbol implied inferred infamy. It was delivered to a swift and trusty messenger, who ran full speed with it to the next hamlet, where he presented it to the principal person, with a single word, implying the place of rendezvous. He who received the symbol was bound to send it forward, with equal dispatch, to the next village; and thus it passed with incredible celerity through all the district which owed allegiance to the chief, and also among his allies and neighbors, if the danger was common to them. At sight of the Fiery Cross, every man, from sixteen years old to sixty, capable of bearing arms, was obliged instantly to repair, in his best arms and accoutrements, to the place of rendezvous. He who failed to appear, suffered the extremities of fire and sword, which were emblematically denounced to the disobedient by the bloody and burnt marks upon this warlike signal. During the civil war of 1745-1746, the Fiery Cross often made its circuit; and upon one occasion it passed through the whole district of Breadalbane, a tract of thirty-two miles, in three hours." — *Scott*.

Were neither broken nor at rest ;  
 In bright uncertainty they lie,  
 Like future joys to Fancy's eye.  
 The water-lily to the light  
 Her chalice reared of silver bright ; 30  
 The doe awoke, and to the lawn,  
 Begemmed with dew-drops, led her fawn ;  
 The gray mist left the mountain-side,  
 The torrent showed its glistening pride ;  
 Invisible in flecked sky 35  
 The lark sent down her revelry ;  
 The blackbird and the speckled thrush  
 Good-morrow gave from brake and bush ;  
 In answer cooed the cushat dove  
 Her notes of peace and rest and love. 40

## III.

No thought of peace, no thought of rest,  
 Assuaged the storm in Roderick's breast.  
 With sheathed broadsword in his hand,  
 Abrupt he paced the islet strand,  
 And eyed the rising sun, and laid 45  
 His hand on his impatient blade.  
 Beneath a rock, his vassals' care  
 Was prompt the ritual to prepare,  
 With deep and deathful meaning fraught ;

30. chalice, cup.

39. cushat dove, ring dove.

46. impatient blade. By a kind of personification, the quality of impatience, which belongs to the owner of the *blade*, is attributed to the *blade* itself.



For such Antiquity had taught 50  
 Was preface meet, ere yet abroad  
 The Cross of Fire should take its road.  
 The shrinking band stood oft aghast  
 At the impatient glance he cast; —  
 Such glance the mountain eagle threw, 55  
 As, from the cliffs of Benvenue,  
 She spread her dark sails on the wind,  
 And, high in middle heaven reclined,  
 With her broad shadow on the lake,  
 Silenced the warblers of the brake. 60

## IV.

A heap of withered boughs was piled,  
 Of juniper and rowan wild,  
 Mingled with shivers from the oak,  
 Rent by the lightning's recent stroke.  
 Brian the Hermit by it stood, 65  
 Barefooted, in his frock and hood.  
 His grizzled beard and matted hair  
 Obscured a visage of despair;  
 His naked arms and legs, seamed o'er,  
 The scars of frantic penance bore. 70  
 That monk, of savage form and face,

62. *rowan*. The *rowan tree* is the mountain ash; called also *roan tree*, and in Sc. *roun tree*.

71. *That monk*, etc. "The state of religion in the Middle Ages afforded considerable facilities for those whose mode of life excluded them from regular worship, to secure, nevertheless, the ghostly assistance of confessors, perfectly willing to adapt the nature of their doctrine to the necessities and peculiar

The impending danger of his race  
 Had drawn from deepest solitude,  
 Far in Benharrow's bosom rude.  
 Not his the mien of Christian priest, 75  
 But Druid's, from the grave released,  
 Whose hardened heart and eye might brook  
 On human sacrifice to look ;  
 And much, 't was said, of heathen lore  
 Mixed in the charms he muttered o'er. 80  
 The hallowed creed gave only worse  
 And deadlier emphasis of curse.  
 No peasant sought that Hermit's prayer,  
 His cave the pilgrim shunned with care ;  
 The eager huntsman knew his bound, 85  
 And in mid chase called off his hound ;  
 Or if, in lonely glen or strath,  
 The desert-dweller met his path,  
 He prayed, and signed the cross between,  
 While terror took devotion's mien. 90

## v.

Of Brian's birth strange tales were told.  
 His mother watched a midnight fold,  
 Built deep within a dreary glen,  
 Where scattered lay the bones of men  
 In some forgotten battle slain, 95

circumstances of their flock. Robin Hood, it is well known,  
 had his celebrated domestic chaplain, Friar Tuck." — *Scott*.

74. Benharrow, a mountain near Loch Lomond.

76. Druid, a priest of the Celtic inhabitants of Britain.

87. strath, a valley through which a river runs.

And bleached by drifting wind and rain.  
 It might have tamed a warrior's heart  
 To view such mockery of his art!  
 The knot-grass fettered there the hand  
 Which once could burst an iron band; 100  
 Beneath the broad and ample bone,  
 That bucklered heart to fear unknown,  
 A feeble and a timorous guest,  
 The fieldfare framed her lowly nest;  
 There the slow blindworm left his slime 105  
 On the fleet limbs that mocked at time;  
 And there, too, lay the leader's skull,  
 Still wreathed with chaplet, flushed and full,  
 For heath-bell with her purple bloom  
 Supplied the bonnet and the plume. 110  
 All night, in this sad glen, the maid  
 Sat shrouded in her mantle's shade:  
 She said no shepherd sought her side,  
 No hunter's hand her snood untied,  
 Yet ne'er again to braid her hair 115  
 The virgin snood did Alice wear;  
 Gone was her maiden glee and sport,  
 Her maiden girdle all too short,  
 Nor sought she, from that fatal night,  
 Or holy church or blessed rite, 120  
 But locked her secret in her breast,  
 And died in travail, unconfessed.

99. **knot-grass**, a kind of weedy grass.

104. **fieldfare**, a kind of thrush.

## VI.

Alone, among his young compeers,  
 Was Brian from his infant years ;  
 A moody and heart-broken boy, 125  
 Estranged from sympathy and joy,  
 Bearing each taunt which careless tongue  
 On his mysterious lineage flung.  
 Whole nights he spent by moonlight pale,  
 To wood and stream his hap to wail, 130  
 Till, frantic, he as truth received  
 What of his birth the crowd believed,  
 And sought, in mist and meteor fire,  
 To meet and know his Phantom Sire !  
 In vain, to soothe his wayward fate, 135  
 The cloister oped her pitying gate ;  
 In vain the learning of the age  
 Unclasped the sable-lettered page ;  
 Even in its treasures he could find  
 Food for the fever of his mind. 140  
 Eager he read whatever tells  
 Of magic, cabala, and spells,  
 And every dark pursuit allied  
 To curious and presumptuous pride ;  
 Till with fired brain and nerves o'erstrung, 145  
 And heart with mystic horrors wrung,  
 Desperate he sought Benharrow's den,  
 And hid him from the haunts of men.

138. *sable-lettered*, black-lettered, so called from the use of heavy faced type.

142. *cabala*. Mystery.

## VII.

The desert gave him visions wild,  
 Such as might suit the spectre's child. 150  
 Where with black cliffs the torrents toil,  
 He watched the wheeling eddies boil,  
 Till from their foam his dazzled eyes  
 Beheld the river Demon rise:  
 The mountain mist took form and limb 155  
 Of noontide hag or goblin grim;  
 The midnight wind came wild and dread,  
 Swelled with the voices of the dead;  
 Far on the future battle-heath  
 His eye beheld the ranks of death: 160  
 Thus the lone Seer, from mankind hurled,  
 Shaped forth a disembodied world.  
 One lingering sympathy of mind  
 Still bound him to the mortal kind;  
 The only parent he could claim 165

149-164. "In adopting the legend concerning the birth of the Founder of the Church of Kilmalie, the author has endeavored to trace the effects which such a belief was likely to produce, in a barbarous age, on the person to whom it related. It was a natural attribute of such a character as the supposed hermit, that he should credit the numerous superstitions with which the minds of ordinary Highlanders are almost always imbued. A few of these are slightly alluded to in this stanza. The River Demon, or River-horse, for it is that form which he commonly assumes, is the Kelpy of the Lowlands, an evil and malicious spirit, delighting to forebode and to witness calamity. The 'noon-tide hag,' a tall, emaciated, gigantic, female figure, is supposed in particular to haunt the district of Knoidart. A goblin dressed in antique armor, and having one hand covered with blood, is a tenant of the forests of Glenmore and Rothiemureus." — *Scott*

Of ancient Alpine's lineage came.  
 Late had he heard, in prophet's dream,  
 The fatal Ben-Shie's boding scream ;  
 Sounds, too, had come in midnight blast  
 Of charging steeds, careering fast 170  
 Along Benharrow's shingly side,  
 Where mortal horseman ne'er might ride ;  
 The thunderbolt had split the pine,—  
 All augured ill to Alpine's line.  
 He girt his loins, and came to show 175  
 The signals of impending woe,  
 And now stood prompt to bless or ban,  
 As bade the Chieftain of his clan.

## VIII.

'T was all prepared ; — and from the rock  
 A goat, the patriarch of the flock 180

168. **Ben-Shie.** "Most great families in the Highlands were supposed to have a tutelar, or rather a domestic spirit, attached to them, who took an interest in their prosperity, and intimated by its wailings any approaching disaster. The Ben-Shie implies a female fairy, whose lamentations were often supposed to precede the death of a chieftain of particular families." — *Scott*.

169. **Sounds, too, had come.** "A presage of the kind alluded to in the text is still believed to announce death to the ancient Highland family of M'Lean of Lochbuy. The spirit of an ancestor slain in battle is heard to gallop along a stony bank, and then to ride thrice around the family residence, ringing his fairy bridle, and thus intimating the approaching calamity. How easily the eye as well as the ear may be deceived upon such occasions, is evident from the stories of armies in the air, and other spectral phenomena with which history abounds." — *Scott*.

171. shingly, pebbly.

174. augured, foretold.

Before the kindling pile was laid,  
 And pierced by Roderick's ready blade.  
 Patient the sickening victim eyed  
 The life-blood ebb in crimson tide  
 Down his clogged beard and shaggy limb, 185  
 Till darkness glazed his eyeballs dim.  
 The grisly priest, with murmuring prayer,  
 A slender crosslet framed with care,  
 A cubit's length in measure due;  
 The shaft and limbs were rods of yew, 190  
 Whose parents in Inch-Cailliach wave  
 Their shadows o'er Clan-Alpine's grave,  
 And, answering Lomond's breezes deep,  
 Soothe many a chieftain's endless sleep.  
 The Cross thus formed he held on high 195  
 With wasted hand and haggard eye,  
 And strange and mingled feelings woke,  
 While his anathema he spoke: —

## IX.

' Woe to the clansman who shall view  
 This symbol of sepulchral yew, 200  
 Forgetful that its branches grew  
 Where weep the heavens their holiest dew

191. *Inch-Cailliach*. The Isle of Nuns, or of Old Women, is a beautiful island opposite Balmaha, on the southeast of Loch Lomond.

200. *of sepulchral yew*. Made of sepulchral yew; a true genitive — the case which indicates the source whence something proceeds or is taken. The yew is called *sepulchral* from its somber character, which has led to its use in graveyards.

On Alpine's dwelling low!  
 Deserter of his Chieftain's trust,  
 He ne'er shall mingle with their dust, 205  
 But, from his sires and kindred thrust,  
 Each clansman's execration just  
 Shall doom him wrath and woe.'  
 He paused; — the word the vassals took,  
 With forward step and fiery look, 210  
 On high their naked brands they shook,  
 Their clattering targets wildly strook;  
 And first in murmur low,  
 Then, like the billow in his course,  
 That far to seaward finds his source, 215  
 And flings to shore his mustered force,  
 Burst with loud roar their answer hoarse,  
 'Woe to the traitor, woe!'  
 Ben-an's gray scalp the accents knew,  
 The joyous wolf from covert drew, 220  
 The exulting eagle screamed afar, —  
 They knew the voice of Alpine's war.

## X.

The shout was hushed on lake and fell,  
 The Monk resumed his muttered spell:

208. **Shall doom him wrath and woe.** *Doom*, as a transitive verb, has a personal object, naming the person condemned. *Wrath and woe* must therefore be considered datives, "Shall condemn him to wrath and woe." *To doom* originally meant *to judge*.

212. **strook**, struck.

223. **fell**. A wild and rocky hill, fit only for pasture.



Dismal and low its accents came, 225  
 The while he scathed the Cross with flame;  
 And the few words that reached the air,  
 Although the holiest name was there,  
 Had more of blasphemy than prayer.  
 But when he shook above the crowd 230  
 Its kindled points, he spoke aloud: —  
 ‘ Woe to the wretch who fails to rear  
 At this dread sign the ready spear!  
 For, as the flames this symbol sear,  
 His home, the refuge of his fear, 235  
     A kindred fate shall know;  
 Far o’er its roof the volumed flame  
 Clan-Alpine’s vengeance shall proclaim,  
 While maids and matrons on his name  
 Shall call down wretchedness and shame, 240  
     And infamy and woe.’  
 Then rose the cry of females, shrill

226. **The while.** For *while*; during the time that. This use of the phrase *the while* as a conjunction is peculiar. Shakespeare uses it frequently as an adverb:

“ God help *the while*.” — fig. 1 *Henry IV*.

“ I’ll bear your logs *the while*.”

— *Tempest*, III. i. 24.

In A.-S. *hwil* is a noun meaning time; but the conjunctive phrase *the while* means *so long as*. *scathed*. Scorched, injured. [A.-S. *sceathan*, to injure; O. E. *scathe*, injury; E. *scath*, used by Shakespeare:

“ To do offence and *scath* in Christendom.”

— *King John*, II. i. 75.

Shakespeare also uses the verb to scathe, to injure, and the adjective *scathful*, destructive.]

As goshawk's whistle on the hill,  
 Denouncing misery and ill,  
 Mingled with childhood's babbling trill 245  
     Of curses stammered slow ;  
 Answering with imprecation dread,  
 'Sunk be his home in embers red !  
 And cursed be the meanest shed  
 That e'er shall hide the houseless head 250  
     We doom to want and woe !'  
 A sharp and shrieking echo gave,  
 Coir-Uriskin, thy goblin cave !  
 And the gray pass where birches wave  
     On Beala-nam-bo. 255

## XI.

Then deeper paused the priest anew,  
 And hard his laboring breath he drew,  
 While, with set teeth and clenched hand,  
 And eyes that glowed like fiery brand,  
 He meditated curse more dread, 260  
 And deadlier, on the clansman's head  
 Who, summoned to his chieftain's aid,  
 The signal saw and disobeyed.  
 The crosslet's points of sparkling wood  
 He quenched among the bubbling blood, 265  
 And, as again the sign he reared,

243. goshawk, a kind of hawk.

253. Coir-Uriskin, a pass on the northern side of Benvenue.

255. Beala-nam-bo, "the pass of cattle," higher up the mountain than the Goblin's Cave.

Hollow and hoarse his voice was heard :  
 ' When flits this Cross from man to man,  
 Vich-Alpine's summons to his clan,  
 Burst be the ear that fails to heed ! 270  
 Palsied the foot that shuns to speed !  
 May ravens tear the careless eyes,  
 Wolves make the coward heart their prize !  
 As sinks that blood-stream in the earth,  
 So may his heart's-blood drench his hearth ! 275  
 As dies in hissing gore the spark,  
 Quench thou his light, Destruction dark !  
 And be the grace to him denied,  
 Bought by this sign to all beside !'  
 He ceased ; no echo gave again 280  
 The murmur of the deep Amen.

## XII.

Then Roderick with impatient look  
 From Brian's hand the symbol took :  
 ' Speed, Malise, speed !' he said, and gave  
 The crosslet to his henchman brave. 285  
 ' The muster-place be Lanrick mead —  
 Instant the time — speed, Malise, speed !'  
 Like heath-bird, when the hawks pursue,  
 A barge across Loch Katrine flew :  
 High stood the henchman on the prow ; 290  
 So rapidly the barge-men row,  
 The bubbles, where they launched the boat,

286. *Lanrick mead.* The mead or meadow on the north side of Loch Vennachar.

Were all unbroken and afloat,  
 Dancing in foam and ripple still,  
 When it had neared the mainland hill;                   295  
 And from the silver beach's side  
 Still was the prow three fathom wide,  
 When lightly bounded to the land  
 The messenger of blood and brand.

## XIII.

Speed, Malise, speed! the dun deer's hide                   300  
 On fleeter foot was never tied.  
 Speed, Malise, speed! such cause of haste  
 Thine active sinews never braced.  
 Bend 'gainst the steepy hill thy breast,  
 Burst down like torrent from its crest;                   305  
 With short and springing footstep pass  
 The trembling bog and false morass;  
 Across the brook like roebuck bound,  
 And thread the brake like questing hound;  
 The crag is high, the scaur is deep,                   310  
 Yet shrink not from the desperate leap:  
 Parched are thy burning lips and brow,  
 Yet by the fountain pause not now;  
 Herald of battle, fate, and fear,  
 Stretch onward in thy fleet career!                   315  
 The wounded hind thou track'st not now,  
 Pursuest not maid through greenwood bough,  
 Nor pliest thou now thy flying pace

With rivals in the mountain race ;  
 But danger, death, and warrior deed 320  
 Are in thy course — speed, Malise, speed !

## XIV.

Fast as the fatal symbol flies,  
 In arms the huts and hamlets rise ;  
 From winding glen, from upland brown,  
 They poured each hardy tenant down. 325  
 Nor slacked the messenger his pace ;  
 He showed the sign, he named the place,  
 And, pressing forward like the wind,  
 Left clamor and surprise behind.  
 The fisherman forsook the strand, 330  
 The swarthy smith took dirk and brand ;  
 With changed cheer, the mower blithe  
 Left in the half-cut swath his scythe ;  
 The herds without a keeper strayed,  
 The plough was in mid-furrow stayed, 335  
 The falconer tossed his hawk away,  
 The hunter left the stag at bay ;  
 Prompt at the signal of alarms,  
 Each son of Alpine rushed to arms ;  
 So swept the tumult and affray 340  
 Along the margin of Achray.  
 Alas, thou lovely lake ! that e'er  
 Thy banks should echo sounds of fear !  
 The rocks, the bosky thickets, sleep

So stilly on thy bosom deep, 345  
 The lark's blithe carol from the cloud  
 Seems for the scene too gayly loud.

## xv.

Speed, Malise, speed! The lake is past,  
 Duncraggan's huts appear at last,  
 And peep, like moss-grown rocks, half seen, 350  
 Half hidden in the copse so green;  
 There mayst thou rest, thy labor done,  
 Their lord shall speed the signal on. —  
 As stoops the hawk upon his prey,  
 The henchman shot him down the way. 355  
 What woful accents load the gale?  
 The funeral yell, the female wail!  
 A gallant hunter's sport is o'er,  
 A valiant warrior fights no more.  
 Who, in the battle or the chase, 360  
 At Roderick's side shall fill his place! —  
 Within the hall, where torch's ray  
 Supplies the excluded beams of day,  
 Lies Duncan on his lowly bier,  
 And o'er him streams his widow's tear. 365  
 His stripling son stands mournful by,  
 His youngest weeps, but knows not why;  
 The village maids and matrons round  
 The dismal coronach resound.

349. **Duncraggan.** A farm or hamlet between Achray and Vennachar.

369. **coronach.** Dirge, or funeral song. "The *Coronach* of

## XVI.

## CORONACH

He is gone on the mountain, 370  
     He is lost to the forest,  
 Like a summer-dried fountain,  
     When our need was the sorest.  
 The font, reappearing,  
     From the rain-drops shall borrow, 375  
 But to us comes no cheering,  
     To Duncan no morrow !  
  
 The hand of the reaper  
     Takes the ears that are hoary,  
 But the voice of the weeper 380  
     Wails manhood in glory.  
 The autumn winds rushing  
     Waft the leaves that are searest,  
 But our flower was in flushing,  
     When blighting was nearest. 385  
  
 Fleet foot on the correi,  
     Sage counsel in cumber,  
 Red hand in the foray,  
     How sound is thy slumber !

the Highlanders, like the *Ululatus* of the Romans, and the *Ululoo* of the Irish, was a wild expression of lamentation poured forth by the mourners over the body of a departed friend. When the words of it were articulate, they expressed the praises of the deceased, and the loss the clan would sustain by his death." — *Scott*.

383. searest, dryest.

386. correi, the hollow side of the hill, where game usually lies.

387. cumber, perplexity.

Like the dew on the mountain, 390  
 Like the foam on the river,  
 Like the bubble on the fountain,  
 Thou art gone, and forever!

## XVII.

See Stumah, who, the bier beside,  
 His master's corpse with wonder eyed, 395  
 Poor Stumah! whom his least halloo  
 Could send like lightning o'er the dew,  
 Bristles his crest, and points his ears,  
 As if some stranger step he hears.  
 'T is not a mourner's muffled tread, 400  
 Who comes to sorrow o'er the dead,  
 But headlong haste or deadly fear  
 Urge the precipitate career.  
 All stand aghast: — unheeding all,  
 The henchman bursts into the hall; 405  
 Before the dead man's bier he stood,  
 Held forth the Cross besmeared with blood;  
 'The muster-place is Lanrick mead;  
 Speed forth the signal! clansmen, speed!'

394. "Stumah" means faithful.

408. The muster-place is Lanrick mead. The mustering or "warning" of the Borderers, described in the ballad of *Jamie Telfer*, was probably in Scott's mind when he wrote this Canto:

"The Scotts they rade, the Scotts they ran,  
 Sae starkly and sae steadilie;  
 And aye the *ower-word* o' the thrang  
 Was 'Rise from Branksome readilie!'"

The *ower-word* means the repeated word or burden.



## XVIII.

Angus, the heir of Duncan's line, 410  
 Sprung forth and seized the fatal sign.  
 In haste the stripling to his side  
 His father's dirk and broadsword tied ;  
 But when he saw his mother's eye  
 Watch him in speechless agony, 415  
 Back to her open arms he flew,  
 Pressed on her lips a fond adieu, —  
 'Alas!' she sobbed, — 'and yet be gone,  
 And speed thee forth, like Duncan's son !'  
 One look he cast upon the bier, 420  
 Dashed from his eye the gathering tear,  
 Breathed deep to clear his laboring breast,  
 And tossed aloft his bonnet crest,  
 Then, like the high-bred colt when, freed,  
 First he essays his fire and speed, 425  
 He vanished, and o'er moor and moss  
 Sped forward with the Fiery Cross.  
 Suspended was the widow's tear  
 While yet his footsteps she could hear ;  
 And when she marked the henchman's eye 430  
 Wet with unwonted sympathy,  
 'Kinsman,' she said, 'his race is run  
 That should have sped thine errand on ;  
 The oak has fallen, — the sapling bough  
 Is all Duncraggan's shelter now. 435  
 Yet trust I well, his duty done,  
 The orphan's God will guard my son. —  
 And you, in many a danger true,

At Duncan's hest your blades that drew,  
 To arms, and guard that orphan's head! 440  
 Let babes and women wail the dead.  
 Then weapon-clang and martial call  
 Resounded through the funeral hall,  
 While from the walls the attendant band  
 Snatched sword and targe with hurried hand; 445  
 And short and flitting energy  
 Glanced from the mourner's sunken eye,  
 As if the sounds to warrior dear  
 Might rouse her Duncan from his bier.  
 But faded soon that borrowed force; 450  
 Grief claimed his right, and tears their course.

## XIX.

Benledi saw the Cross of Fire,  
 It glanced like lightning up Strath-Ire.  
 O'er dale and hill the summons flew,  
 Nor rest nor pause young Angus knew; 455  
 The tear that gathered in his eye  
 He left the mountain-breeze to dry;  
 Until, where Teith's young waters roll  
 Betwixt him and a wooded knoll  
 That graced the sable strath with green, 460  
 The chapel of Saint Bride was seen.

439. **hest**, behest; command.445. **targe**, target; shield.453. **Strath-Ire**. The valley above Loch Lubnaig, watered by the Teith in its upper reaches.461. **The chapel of Saint Bride**. A wooded knoll, a short way below Loch Lubnaig, is still pointed out as the site of this chapel.

Swoln was the stream, remote the bridge,  
 But Angus paused not on the edge;  
 Though the dark waves danced dizzily,  
 Though reeled his sympathetic eye, 465  
 He dashed amid the torrent's roar:  
 His right hand high the crosslet bore,  
 His left the pole-axe grasped, to guide  
 And stay his footing in the tide.  
 He stumbled twice, — the foam splashed high, 470  
 With hoarser swell the stream raced by;  
 And had he fallen, — forever there,  
 Farewell Duncraggan's orphan heir!  
 But still, as if in parting life,  
 Firmer he grasped the Cross of strife, 475  
 Until the opposing bank he gained,  
 And up the chapel pathway strained.

## XX.

A blithesome rout that morning-tide  
 Had sought the chapel of Saint Bride.  
 Her troth Tombea's Mary gave 480

471. *raced*. This word is correctly applied to the rapid flow of a river. It is from A.-S. *raes*, a stream, and *raesan*, to rush. Hence it is applied to the *lade*, or canal, which conducts water to a water wheel. The current above the wheel is called the *head-race*; that below it, the *tail-race*. Cape Race, in Newfoundland, owes its name to the strong *current* which flows there. Cape *Corrientes*, on the coast of Mexico, has the same meaning.

480. *Her troth Tombea's Mary gave*. *Troth-giving*, which properly applies to *betrothal* or contract in promise of marriage, here applies to the marriage ceremony itself. *Troth-plight* in Sc. is the act of pledging faith between lovers by exchanging

To Norman, heir of Armandave,  
 And, issuing from the Gothic arch,  
 The bridal now resumed their march.  
 In rude but glad procession came  
 Bonneted sire and coif-clad dame; 485  
 And plaided youth, with jest and jeer,  
 Which snooded maiden would not hear;  
 And children, that, unwitting why,  
 Lent the gay shout their shrilly cry;  
 And minstrels, that in measures vied 490  
 Before the young and bonny bride,  
 Whose downcast eye and cheek disclose  
 The tear and blush of morning rose.  
 With virgin step and bashful hand  
 She held the kerchief's snowy band. 495  
 The gallant bridegroom by her side  
 Beheld his prize with victor's pride,  
 And the glad mother in her ear  
 Was closely whispering word of cheer.

## XXI.

Who meets them at the churchyard gate? 500  
 The messenger of fear and fate!  
 Haste in his hurried accent lies,  
 And grief is swimming in his eyes.  
 All dripping from the recent flood,  
 Panting and travel-soiled he stood, 505

tokens or presents. [A.-S. *treowth*, truth; *treowian*, to trust.]  
*Tombea*, or Birkhill, is a farm at the head of the Pass of Leny.

504. the recent flood. The flood through which he had recently passed.

The fatal sign of fire and sword  
 Held forth, and spoke the appointed word :  
 'The muster-place is Lanrick mead ;  
 Speed forth the signal ! Norman, speed !'  
 And must he change so soon the hand 510  
 Just linked to his by holy band,  
 For the fell Cross of blood and brand ?  
 And must the day so blithe that rose,  
 And promised rapture in the close,  
 Before its setting hour, divide 515  
 The bridegroom from the plighted bride ?  
 O fatal doom ! — it must ! it must !  
 Clan-Alpine's cause, her Chieftain's trust,  
 Her summons dread, brook no delay ;  
 Stretch to thè race, — away ! away ! 520

## XXII.

Yet slow he laid his plaid aside,  
 And lingering eyed his lovely bride,  
 Until he saw the starting tear  
 Speak woe he might not stop to cheer ;  
 Then, trusting not a second look, 525  
 In haste he sped him up the brook,  
 Nor backward glanced till on the heath  
 Where Lubnaig's lake supplies the 'Teith. —  
 What in the racer's bosom stirred ?  
 The sickening pang of hope deferred, 530

518. *her Chieftain's trust.* The trust which the Chieftain committed to the clan ; namely, to preserve its honor.

527. *till on the heath.* Supply *he paused*. The heath referred to is the broad strath at the southern extremity of Loch Lubnaig.

And memory with a torturing train  
 Of all his morning visions vain.  
 Mingled with love's impatience, came  
 The manly thirst for martial fame ;  
 The stormy joy of mountaineers 535  
 Ere yet they rush upon the spears ;  
 And zeal for Clan and Chieftain burning,  
 And hope, from well-fought field returning,  
 With war's red honors on his crest,  
 To clasp his Mary to his breast. 540  
 Stung by such thoughts, o'er bank and brae,  
 Like fire from flint he glanced away,  
 While high resolve and feeling strong  
 Burst into voluntary song.

## XXIII.

## SONG

The heath this night must be my bed, 545  
 The bracken curtain for my head,  
 My lullaby the warder's tread,  
     Far, far, from love and thee, Mary ;  
 To-morrow eve, more stilly laid,  
 My couch may be my bloody plaid, 550  
 My vesper song thy wail, sweet maid !  
     It will not waken me, Mary !

I may not, dare not, fancy now  
 The grief that clouds thy lovely brow,  
 I dare not think upon thy vow, 555

And all it promised me, Mary.  
 No fond regret must Norman know ;  
 When bursts Clan-Alpine on the foe,  
 His heart must be like bended bow,  
     His foot like arrow free, Mary. 560

A time will come with feeling fraught,  
 For, if I fall in battle fought,  
 Thy hapless lover's dying thought  
     Shall be a thought on thee, Mary.  
 And if returned from conquered foes, 565  
 How blithely will the evening close,  
 How sweet the linnet sing repose,  
     To my young bride and me, Mary !

## XXIV.

Not faster o'er thy heathery braes,  
 Balquidder, speeds the midnight blaze, 570  
 Rushing in conflagration strong  
 Thy deep ravines and dells along,  
 Wrapping thy cliffs in purple glow,  
 And reddening the dark lakes below ;  
 Nor faster speeds it, nor so far, 575  
 As o'er thy heaths the voice of war.

570. the midnight blaze. The heath on the Scottish moorlands is often set fire to, that the sheep may have the advantage of the young herbage. *Balquidder*, etc. The Braes of Balquidder (well known from Tannahill's song) stretch westward from the head of Strath-Ire. They are watered by the Teith, and contain Lochs Voil and Doine. Above the latter, the stream is called the Balvaig. Rob Roy, the famous outlaw, lies buried in the churchyard of Balquidder.

The signal roused to martial coil  
 The sullen margin of Loch Voil,  
 Waked still Loch Doine, and to the source  
 Alarmed, Balvaig, thy swampy course;           580  
 Thence southward turned its rapid road  
 Adown Strath-Gartney's valley broad,  
 Till rose in arms each man might claim  
 A portion in Clan-Alpine's name,  
 From the gray sire, whose trembling hand   585  
 Could hardly buckle on his brand,  
 To the raw boy, whose shaft and bow  
 Were yet scarce terror to the crow.  
 Each valley, each sequestered glen,  
 Mustered its little horde of men,           590  
 That met as torrents from the height  
 In Highland dales their streams unite,  
 Still gathering, as they pour along,

577. *coil*, bustle, stir. In this sense Shakespeare uses the word: "Here's such a *coil*" (*Romeo and Juliet*, II. v. 67). In "When we have shuffled off this mortal *coil*" (*Hamlet*, III. i. 68), the same meaning is also the most prominent; but there is also a reference in *shuffled off* to the primary meaning of the word *convolution*, like the tightening of a rope, or the *coil* of a serpent. [Lat. *colligere*, to gather together.]

580. *Balvaig*. The nominative of address, or vocative.

582. *Strath-Gartney*. The northern side of Loch Katrine, forming a broad valley, stretching from Glengyle on the west to the Trosachs on the east. The Cross of Fire has thus made the complete circuit of Clan-Alpine's lands, having been brought back to Loch Katrine, from which it started, after traveling a distance of between forty and fifty miles.

583. *each man might claim*. Each man *who* might claim. The omission of the nominative relative is rare, and only occurs when the antecedent immediately precedes the relative clause.



A voice more loud, a tide more strong,  
 Till at the rendezvous they stood 595  
 By hundreds prompt for blows and blood.  
 Each trained to arms since life began,  
 Owning no tie but to his clan,  
 No oath but by his chieftain's hand,  
 No law but Roderick Dhu's command. 600

## XXV.

That summer morn had Roderick Dhu  
 Surveyed the skirts of Benvenue,  
 And sent his scouts o'er hill and heath,  
 To view the frontiers of Menteith.  
 All backward came with news of truce; 605  
 Still lay each martial Græme and Bruce,  
 In Rednock courts no horsemen wait,  
 No banner waved on Cardross gate,  
 On Duchray's towers no beacon shone,  
 Nor scared the herons from Loch Con; 610  
 All seemed at peace. — Now wot ye why  
 The Chieftain with such anxious eye,

607. **Rednock.** A mansion about a mile to the east of the Lake of Menteith.

608. **Cardross.** Now Cardross House, on the Forth, a few miles south of Rednock.

609. **Duchray's towers.** Duchray Castle, an ancient stronghold of the Græmes, three miles southwest of Aberfoyle, a village midway between the Lake of Menteith and Loch Ard. The whole district has been made classic ground by Scott's Rob Roy.

610. **Loch Con.** A small lake, in the midst of romantic scenery, two miles south of Loch Katrine. It forms the head waters of the river Forth.

Ere to the muster he repair,  
 This western frontier scanned with care? —  
 In Benvenue's most darksome cleft, 615  
 A fair though cruel pledge was left;  
 For Douglas, to his promise true,  
 That morning from the isle withdrew,  
 And in a deep sequestered dell  
 Had sought a low and lonely cell. 620  
 By many a bard in Celtic tongue  
 Has Coir-nan-Uriskin been sung;  
 A softer name the Saxons gave,  
 And called the grot the Goblin Cave.

## XXVI.

It was a wild and strange retreat, 625  
 As e'er was trod by outlaw's feet.  
 The dell, upon the mountain's crest,  
 Yawned like a gash on warrior's breast;  
 Its trench had stayed full many a rock,  
 Hurl'd by primeval earthquake shock 630  
 From Benvenue's gray summit wild,  
 And here, in random ruin piled,  
 They frowned incumbent o'er the spot,  
 And formed the rugged sylvan grot.  
 The oak and birch with mingled shade 635  
 At noontide there a twilight made,

622. **Coir-nan-Uriskin.** The Den of the *Urisk*, or Highland satyr, a steep and most romantic hollow in the mountain of Benvenue, overhanging the southeastern extremity of Loch Katrine.

633. **incumbent,** overhanging.

Unless when short and sudden shone  
 Some straggling beam on cliff or stone,  
 With such a glimpse as prophet's eye  
 Gains on thy depth, Futurity. 640  
 No murmur waked the solemn still,  
 Save tinkling of a fountain rill ;  
 But when the wind chafed with the lake,  
 A sullen sound would upward break,  
 With dashing hollow voice, that spoke 645  
 The incessant war of wave and rock.  
 Suspended cliffs with hideous sway  
 Seemed nodding o'er the cavern gray.  
 From such a den the wolf had sprung,  
 In such the wild-cat leaves her young ; 650  
 Yet Douglas and his daughter fair  
 Sought for a space their safety there.  
 Gray Superstition's whisper dread  
 Debarred the spot to vulgar tread ;  
 For there, she said, did fays resort, 655  
 And satyrs hold their sylvan court,  
 By moonlight tread their mystic maze,  
 And blast the rash beholder's gaze.

## XXVII.

Now eve, with western shadows long,  
 Floated on Katrine bright and strong, 660  
 When Roderick with a chosen few  
 Repassed the heights of Benvenue.

Above the Goblin Cave they go,  
Through the wild pass of Beal-nam-bo ;  
The prompt retainers speed before, 665  
To launch the shallop from the shore,  
For 'cross Loch Katrine lies his way  
To view the passes of Achray,  
And place his clansmen in array.  
Yet lags the Chief in musing mind, 670  
Unwonted sight, his men behind.  
A single page, to bear his sword,  
Alone attended on his lord ;  
The rest their way through thickets break,  
And soon await him by the lake. 675  
It was a fair and gallant sight,  
To view them from the neighboring height,  
By the low-levelled sunbeam's light !  
For strength and stature, from the clan  
Each warrior was a chosen man, 680  
As even afar might well be seen,  
By their proud step and martial mien.  
Their feathers dance, their tartans float,  
Their targets gleam, as by the boat  
A wild and warlike group they stand, 685  
That well became such mountain-strand.

## XXVIII.

Their Chief with step reluctant still  
Was lingering on the craggy hill,  
Hard by where turned apart the road  
To Douglas's obscure abode. 690

It was but with that dawning morn  
 That Roderick Dhu had proudly sworn  
 To drown his love in war's wild roar,  
 Nor think of Ellen Douglas more ;  
 But he who stems a stream with sand, 695  
 And fetters flame with flaxen band,  
 Has yet a harder task to prove, —  
 By firm resolve to conquer love !  
 Eve finds the Chief, like restless ghost,  
 Still hovering near his treasure lost ; 700  
 For though his haughty heart deny  
 A parting meeting to his eye,  
 Still fondly strains his anxious ear  
 The accents of her voice to hear,  
 And inly did he curse the breeze 705  
 That waked to sound the rustling trees.  
 But hark ! what mingles in the strain ?  
 It is the harp of Allan-bane,  
 That wakes its measure slow and high,  
 Attuned to sacred minstrelsy. 710  
 What melting voice attends the strings ?  
 'T is Ellen, or an angel, sings.

## XXIX.

## HYMN TO THE VIRGIN

*Ave Maria !* maiden mild !  
 Listen to a maiden's prayer !  
 Thou canst hear though from the wild, 715  
 Thou canst save amid despair.

713. *Ave Maria ! Hail, Mary !*

Safe may we sleep beneath thy care,  
 Though banished, outcast, and reviled —  
 Maiden! hear a maiden's prayer;  
 Mother, hear a suppliant child! 720  
*Ave Maria!*

*Ave Maria!* undefiled!  
 The flinty couch we now must share  
 Shall seem with down of eider piled,  
 If thy protection hover there.  
 The murky cavern's heavy air 725  
 Shall breathe of balm if thou hast smiled;  
 Then, Maiden! hear a maiden's prayer,  
 Mother, list a suppliant child!  
*Ave Maria!*

*Ave Maria!* stainless styled!  
 Foul demons of the earth and air, 730  
 From this their wonted haunt exiled,  
 Shall flee before thy presence fair.  
 We bow us to our lot of care,  
 Beneath thy guidance reconciled:  
 Hear for a maid a maiden's prayer, 735  
 And for a father hear a child!  
*Ave Maria!*

## XXX.

Died on the harp the closing hymn, —  
 Unmoved in attitude and limb,  
 As listening still, Clan-Alpine's lord  
 Stood leaning on his heavy sword, 740

Until the page with humble sign  
Twice pointed to the sun's decline.  
Then while his plaid he round him cast,  
'It is the last time — 't is the last,'  
He muttered thrice, — 'the last time e'er 745  
That angel-voice shall Roderick hear!'  
It was a goading thought, — his stride  
Hied hastier down the mountain-side;  
Sullen he flung him in the boat,  
An instant 'cross the lake it shot. 750  
They landed in that silvery bay,  
And eastward held their hasty way,  
Till, with the latest beams of light,  
The band arrived on Laurick height,  
Where mustered in the vale below 755  
Clan-Alpine's men in martial show.

## XXXI.

A various scene the clansmen made:  
Some sat, some stood, some slowly strayed;  
But most, with mantles folded round,  
Were couched to rest upon the ground, 760  
Scarce to be known by curious eye  
From the deep heather where they lie,  
So well was matched the tartan screen  
With heath-bell dark and brackens green;  
Unless where, here and there, a blade 765  
Or lance's point a glimmer made,  
Like glow-worm twinkling through the shade.  
But when, advancing through the gloom,

They saw the Chieftain's eagle plume,  
Their shout of welcome, shrill and wide, 770  
Shook the steep mountain's steady side.  
Thrice it arose, and lake and fell  
Three times returned the martial yell ;  
It died upon Bochastle's plain,  
And Silence claimed her evening reign. 775



## CANTO FOURTH

## THE PROPHECY

## I.

'THE rose is fairest when 't is budding new,  
 And hope is brightest when it dawns from fears;  
 The rose is sweetest washed with morning dew,  
 And love is loveliest when embalmed in tears.  
 O wilding rose, whom fancy thus endears,           5  
 I bid your blossoms in my bonnet wave,  
 Emblem of hope and love through future years !'  
 Thus spoke young Norman, heir of Armandave,  
 What time the sun arose on Vennachar's broad  
     wave.

## II.

Such fond conceit, half said, half sung,           10  
 Love prompted to the bridegroom's tongue.  
 All while he stripped the wild-rose spray,  
 His axe and bow beside him lay,  
 For on a pass 'twixt lake and wood  
 A wakeful sentinel he stood.                   15  
 Hark ! — on the rock a footstep rung,  
 And instant to his arms he sprung.

'Stand, or thou diest! — What, Malise? — soon  
 Art thou returned from Braes of Doune.  
 By thy keen step and glance I know, 20  
 Thou bring'st us tidings of the foe.' —  
 For while the Fiery Cross hied on,  
 On distant scout had Malise gone. —  
 'Where sleeps the Chief?' the henchman said.  
 'Apart, in yonder misty glade; 25  
 To his lone couch I'll be your guide.' —  
 Then called a slumberer by his side,  
 And stirred him with his slackened bow, —  
 'Up, up, Glentarkin! rouse thee, ho!  
 We seek the Chieftain; on the track 30  
 Keep eagle watch till I come back.'

## III.

Together up the pass they sped.  
 'What of the foeman?' Norman said. —  
 'Varying reports from near and far;  
 This certain, — that a band of war 35  
 Has for two days been ready boune,  
 At prompt command to march from Doune;  
 King James the while, with princely powers,  
 Holds revelry in Stirling towers.  
 Soon will this dark and gathering cloud 40  
 Speak on our glens in thunder loud.  
 Inured to bide such bitter bout,

19. Braes of Doune, hills on the north side of the Teith.

36. boune, prepared. See note on l. 157 below.

42. Inured, hardened. bide, endure.

The warrior's plaid may bear it out ;  
 But, Norman, how wilt thou provide  
 A shelter for thy bonny bride ? ' — 45  
 ' What ! know ye not that Roderick's care  
 To the lone isle hath caused repair  
 Each maid and matron of the clan,  
 And every child and aged man  
 Unfit for arms ; and given his charge, 50  
 Nor skiff nor shallop, boat nor barge,  
 Upon these lakes shall float at large,  
 But all beside the islet moor,  
 That such dear pledge may rest secure ? ' —

## IV.

' 'T is well advised, — the Chieftain's plan 55  
 Bespeaks the father of his clan.  
 But wherefore sleeps Sir Roderick Dhu  
 Apart from all his followers true ? '

' It is because last evening-tide  
 Brian an augury hath tried, 60  
 Of that dread kind which must not be  
 Unless in dread extremity,  
 The Taghairm called ; by which, afar,

63. *Taghairm*. " The Highlanders, like all rude people, had various superstitious modes of inquiring into futurity. One of the most noted was the *Taghairm* mentioned in the text. A person was wrapped up in the skin of a newly slain bullock, and deposited beside a waterfall, or at the bottom of a precipice, or in some other strange, wild, and unusual situation, where the scenery around him suggested nothing but objects of horror. In this situation he revolved in his mind the question proposed, and whatever was impressed upon him by his exalted imagina-

Our sires foresaw the events of war.  
 Duncraggan's milk-white bull they slew,'— 65

## MALISE

'Ah! well the gallant brute I knew!  
 The choicest of the prey we had  
 When swept our merrymen Gallangad.  
 His hide was snow, his horns were dark,  
 His red eye glowed like fiery spark; 70  
 So fierce, so tameless, and so fleet,  
 Sore did he cumber our retreat,  
 And kept our stoutest kerns in awe,  
 Even at the pass of Beal 'maha.  
 But steep and flinty was the road, 75  
 And sharp the hurrying pikeman's goad,  
 And when we came to Dennan's Row  
 A child might scathless stroke his brow.'

## V.

## NORMAN

'That bull was slain; his reeking hide  
 They stretched the cataract beside, 80  
 Whose waters their wild tumult toss  
 Adown the black and craggy boss

tion passed for the inspiration of the disembodied spirits who  
 haunt the desolate recesses."—*Scott*.

73. kerns, foot soldiers.

74. Beal 'maha, "the pass of the plain," east of Loch Lomond.

77. Dennan's Row, the point at which the ascent of Ben  
 Lomond commences.

82. boss, a knob.

Of that huge cliff whose ample verge  
 Tradition calls the Hero's Targe.  
 Couched on a shelf beneath its brink, 85  
 Close where the thundering torrents sink,  
 Rocking beneath their headlong sway,  
 And drizzled by the ceaseless spray,  
 Midst groan of rock and roar of stream,  
 The wizard waits prophetic dream. 90  
 Nor distant rests the Chief; — but hush!  
 See, gliding slow through mist and bush,  
 The hermit gains yon rock, and stands  
 To gaze upon our slumbering bands.  
 Seems he not, Malise, like a ghost, 95  
 That hovers o'er a slaughtered host?  
 Or raven on the blasted oak,  
 That, watching while the deer is broke,  
 His morsel claims with sullen croak?'

## MALISE

'Peace! peace! to other than to me 100  
 Thy words were evil augury;  
 But still I hold Sir Roderick's blade  
 Clan-Alpine's omen and her aid,

84. **Hero's Targe.** This rock is in the woods of Glenfinlas.

98. **broke.** "Everything belonging to the chase was matter of solemnity among our ancestors; but nothing was more so than the mode of cutting up, or, as it was technically called, *breaking* the slaughtered stag. The forester had his allotted portion; the hounds had a certain allowance; and, to make the division as general as possible, the very birds had their share also." — *Scott*.

Not aught that, gleaned from heaven or hell,  
 Yon fiend-begotten Monk can tell. 105  
 The Chieftain joins him, see — and now  
 Together they descend the brow.'

## VI.

And, as they came, with Alpine's Lord  
 The Hermit Monk held solemn word : —  
 'Roderick ! it is a fearful strife, 110  
 For man endowed with mortal life,  
 Whose shroud of sentient clay can still  
 Feel feverish pang and fainting chill,  
 Whose eye can stare in stony trance,  
 Whose hair can rouse like warrior's lance, — 115  
 'Tis hard for such to view, unfurled,  
 The curtain of the future world.  
 Yet, witness every quaking limb,  
 My sunken pulse, mine eyeballs dim,  
 My soul with harrowing anguish torn, 120  
 This for my Chieftain have I borne ! —  
 The shapes that sought my fearful couch  
 A human tongue may ne'er avouch ;  
 No mortal man — save he, who, bred

110. *it is a fearful strife.* The conclusion of this clause will be found in the sixth line following :

" To view, unfurled,  
 The curtain of the future world."

118. *witness.* The third person of the imperative: "Let every quaking limb, etc., bear witness that I have borne this for my Chieftain."

124. *save he.* The modern idiom is *save him*, *save* being regarded as a preposition; but it was originally the participle of

Between the living and the dead, 125  
 Is gifted beyond nature's law —  
 Had e'er survived to say he saw.  
 At length the fateful answer came  
 In characters of living flame!  
 Not spoke in word, nor blazed in scroll, 130  
 But borne and branded on my soul: —  
 WHICH SPILLS THE FOREMOST FOEMAN'S LIFE,  
 THAT PARTY CONQUERS IN THE STRIFE.'

## VII.

'Thanks, Brian, for thy zeal and care!  
 Good is thine augury, and fair. 135  
 Clan-Alpine ne'er in battle stood  
 But first our broadswords tasted blood.

an absolute phrase, and in this construction it is used by Shake-  
 speare (*Julius Cæsar*, V. v. 69):

"All the conspirators *save* only *he*."

That is, he only saved, or excepted. The case absolute in  
 Anglo-Saxon was the dative or ablative; but when the case-  
 endings were lost, the noun was commonly regarded as a nomi-  
 native.

127. *he saw*. The object of this verb is the same as that of  
*avouch*; namely, "the *shapes* that sought my fearful couch."

132. *Which spills*, etc. The correlative of *which* is *party*, in  
 the next line. *Foremost*, though an attribute of *life*, really be-  
 longs to *spills*: Whichever party *first* spills blood, that party  
 conquers. This prophecy the hermit derived from the *Tagh-  
 airm*, but the fate of a battle was often anticipated, in the  
 imagination of the combatants, by observing which party first  
 shed blood. "It is said that the Highlanders under Montrose  
 were so deeply imbued with this notion, that on the morning  
 of the battle of Tippermoor they murdered a defenseless herds-  
 man, whom they found in the fields, merely to secure an advan-  
 tage of so much consequence to their party."

A surer victim still I know,  
 Self-offered to the auspicious blow :  
 A spy has sought my land this morn, — 140  
 No eve shall witness his return !  
 My followers guard each pass's mouth,  
 To east, to westward, and to south ;  
 Red Murdoch, bribed to be his guide,  
 Has charge to lead his steps aside, 145.  
 Till in deep path or dingle brown ,  
 He light on those shall bring him down. —  
 But see, who comes his news to show !  
 Malise ! what tidings of the foe ? '

## VIII.

' At Doune, o'er many a spear and glaive 150  
 Two Barons proud their banners wave.  
 I saw the Moray's silver star,  
 And marked the sable pale of Mar.'  
 ' By Alpine's soul, high tidings those !

147. **He light on those shall bring him down.** *He light* is subjunctive, to imply uncertainty regarding the particular path or dingle where he might be led. *Shall bring* is future of the indicative, to indicate certainty or confidence of the result. *Who* must be supplied as subject of *shall bring*.

150. **Doune.** The Castle of Doune, an ancient stronghold of the Earls of Menteith, now a picturesque ruin, situated on the left bank of the Teith, midway between Stirling and Callander. The Earls of Moray are Barons of Doune. **glaive**, a sword. [Fr. *glaive* ; Lat. *gladius*.]

153. **pale.** A heraldic term, applied to a band or stripe extending from the top to the bottom of a shield. In the cognizance of the Earl of Mar, the *pale* is *sable* ; that is, black. The heraldic colors are *gules* (red), *azure* (blue), *sable* (black), *vert* (green), *purpure* (purple).



I love to hear of worthy foes. 155

When move they on? 'To-morrow's noon

Will see them here for battle boune.'

'Then shall it see a meeting stern!

But, for the place, — say, couldst thou learn

Nought of the friendly clans of Earn? 160

Strengthened by them, we well might bide

The battle on Benledi's side.

Thou couldst not? — well! Clan-Alpine's men

Shall man the Trosachs' shaggy glen;

Within Loch Katrine's gorge we'll fight, 165

All in our maids' and matrons' sight,

Each for his hearth and household fire,

Father for child, and son for sire,

Lover for maid beloved! — But why —

Is it the breeze affects mine eye? 170

Or dost thou come, ill-omened tear!

A messenger of doubt or fear?

No! sooner may the Saxon lance

Unfix Benledi from his stance,

155. I love to hear of worthy foes. Compare Canto V. l. 238.

"The stern joy which warriors feel  
In foemen worthy of their steel."

157. boune, ready. It is really the passive participle of the verb *to boun*, or *bown*, which occurs frequently in old ballads, in the phrase, "busk and boun," *i.e.*, array and prepare. The past tense *bouned* or *bowynd* occurs in the English version of the *Battle of Otterbourne*:

"The dowghtye Dowglasse *bowynd* him to ride  
In England to take a praye."

[O. E. *boun*; Sc. *bown*; O. Norse, *buinn*.]

174. stance, foundation.

Than doubt or terror can pierce through 175  
 The unyielding heart of Roderick Dhu!  
 'T is stubborn as his trusty targe.  
 Each to his post! — all know their charge.'  
 The pibroch sounds, the bands advance,  
 The broadswords gleam, the banners dance, 180  
 Obedient to the Chieftain's glance. —  
 I turn me from the martial roar,  
 And seek Coir-Uriskin once more.

## IX.

Where is the Douglas? — he is gone;  
 And Ellen sits on the gray stone 185  
 Fast by the cave, and makes her moan,  
 While vainly Allan's words of cheer  
 Are poured on her unheeding ear.  
 'He will return — dear lady, trust! —  
 With joy return; — he will — he must. 190  
 Well was it time to seek afar  
 Some refuge from impending war,  
 When e'en Clan-Alpine's rugged swarm  
 Are cowed by the approaching storm.  
 I saw their boats with many a light, 195  
 Floating the livelong yesternight,  
 Shifting like flashes darted forth  
 By the red streamers of the north;

186. *Fast by*, close to. Compare *Paradise Lost*, I. 11.

198. *red streamers of the north*, the Aurora Borealis or northern lights.

I marked at morn how close they ride,  
 Thick moored by the lone islet's side, 200  
 Like wild ducks couching in the fen  
 When stoops the hawk upon the glen.  
 Since this rude race dare not abide  
 The peril on the mainland side,  
 Shall not thy noble father's care 205  
 Some safe retreat for thee prepare?'

## X.

## ELLEN

'No, Allan, no! Pretext so kind  
 My wakeful terrors could not blind.  
 When in such tender tone, yet grave,  
 Douglas a parting blessing gave, 210  
 The tear that glistened in his eye  
 Drowned not his purpose fixed and high.  
 My soul, though feminine and weak,  
 Can image his; e'en as the lake,  
 Itself disturbed by slightest stroke, 215  
 Reflects the invulnerable rock.  
 He hears report of battle rife,  
 He deems himself the cause of strife.  
 I saw him redden when the theme  
 Turned, Allan, on thine idle dream 220  
 Of Malcolm Græme in fetters bound,  
 Which I, thou saidst, about him wound.

216. *invulnerable*, that cannot be wounded.

217. *rife*, plentiful. Qualifies *reports*.

Think'st thou he trowed thine omen aught?  
 O no! 't was apprehensive thought  
 For the kind youth, — for Roderick too — 225  
 Let me be just — that friend so true;  
 In danger both, and in our cause!  
 Minstrel, the Douglas dare not pause.  
 Why else that solemn warning given,  
 "If not on earth, we meet in heaven!" 230  
 Why else, to Cambus-kenneth's fane,  
 If e'er return him not again,  
 Am I to hie and make me known?  
 Alas, he goes to Scotland's throne,  
 Buys his friends' safety with his own; 235  
 He goes to do — what I had done,  
 Had Douglas' daughter been his son!

## XI.

'Nay, lovely Ellen! — dearest, nay!  
 If aught should his return delay,  
 He only named yon holy fane 240  
 As fitting place to meet again.  
 Be sure he's safe; and for the Græme, —

229. *else.* A clause of condition expressed in a single word, "If that is not the case."

231. *Cambus-kenneth's fane.* The ancient Abbey of Cambus-kenneth, now a ruin, stands on a peninsula of the "Links of Forth," about a mile east of Stirling. It was founded by David I. in 1147.

236. *what I had done, Had, etc.* *Had done* is the principal clause, or apodosis, in the subjunctive mood: "what I *should have done.*" *Had been* is the subordinate clause, or protasis, in the subjunctive also: "*if Douglas' daughter had been his son.*" This implies that the fact is contrary to the supposition.

Heaven's blessing on his gallant name! —  
 My visioned sight may yet prove true,  
 Nor bode of ill to him or you. 245  
 When did my gifted dream beguile?  
 Think of the stranger at the isle,  
 And think upon the harpings slow  
 That presaged this approaching woe!  
 Sooth was my prophecy of fear; 250  
 Believe it when it augurs cheer.  
 Would we had left this dismal spot!  
 Ill luck still haunts a fairy grot.  
 Of such a wondrous tale I know —  
 Dear lady, change that look of woe, 255  
 My harp was wont thy grief to cheer.'

## ELLEN

' Well, be it as thou wilt; I hear,  
 But cannot stop the bursting tear.'  
 The Minstrel tried his simple art,  
 But distant far was Ellen's heart. 260

## XII.

## BALLAD

## ALICE BRAND

Merry it is in the good greenwood,  
 When the mavis and merle are singing,  
 When the deer sweeps by, and the hounds are in cry,  
 And the hunter's horn is ringing.

249. presaged, foretold.

262. mavis and merle, thrush and blackbird.

‘O Alice Brand, my native land 265  
 Is lost for love of you ;  
 And we must hold by wood and wold,  
 As outlaws wont to do.

‘O Alice, ’t was all for thy locks so bright,  
 And ’t was all for thine eyes so blue, 270  
 That on the night of our luckless flight  
 Thy brother bold I slew.

‘Now must I teach to hew the beech  
 The hand that held the glaive,  
 For leaves to spread our lowly bed, 275  
 And stakes to fence our cave.

‘And for vest of pall, thy fingers small,  
 That wont on harp to stray,  
 A cloak must shear from the slaughtered deer,  
 To keep the cold away.’ 280

‘O Richard ! if my brother died,  
 ’T was but a fatal chance ;  
 For darkling was the battle tried,  
 And fortune sped the lance.

267. wold, open country.

277. vest of pall, mantle of rich material.

283. darkling, in the dark. This adverb is used by Shakespeare in the same sense :

“So, out went the candle, and we were left darkling.”

— *Lear*, I. iv. 237.

It has the appearance of being a participle ; but the verb to *darkle*, from which it would come, does not exist. It is probably a noun, from A.-S. *deorcung*, the twilight.

‘ If pall and vair no more I wear, 285  
 Nor thou the crimson sheen,  
 As warm, we ’ll say, is the russet gray,  
 As gay the forest-green.

‘ And, Richard, if our lot be hard,  
 And lost thy native land, 290  
 Still Alice has her own Richard,  
 And he his Alice Brand.’

## XIII.

## BALLAD CONTINUED

’T is merry, ’t is merry, in good greenwood ;  
 So blithe Lady Alice is singing ;  
 On the beech’s pride, and oak’s brown side, 295  
 Lord Richard’s axe is ringing.

Up spoke the moody Elfin King,  
 Who woned within the hill, —  
 Like wind in the porch of a ruined church,  
 His voice was ghostly shrill. 300

‘ Why sounds yon stroke on beech and oak,  
 Our moonlight circle’s screen ?  
 Or who comes here to chase the deer,  
 Beloved of our Elfin Queen ?  
 Or who may dare on wold to wear 305  
 The fairies’ fatal green ?

285. *vair*, the fur of a kind of squirrel.

298. *woned*, lived.

306. *fatal green*. ‘As the *Daoine Shi*’, or Men of Peace, wore green habits, they were supposed to take offense when any

‘Up, Urgan, up! to yon mortal hie,  
 For thou wert christened man;  
 For cross or sign thou wilt not fly,  
 For muttered word or ban. 310

‘Lay on him the curse of the withered heart,  
 The curse of the sleepless eye;  
 Till he wish and pray that his life would part,  
 Nor yet find leave to die.’

## XIV.

## BALLAD CONTINUED

‘T is merry, ’t is merry, in good greenwood, 315  
 Though the birds have stilled their singing;  
 The evening blaze doth Alice raise,  
 And Richard is fagots bringing.

Up Urgan starts, that hideous dwarf,  
 Before Lord Richard stands, 320  
 And, as he crossed and blessed himself,  
 ‘I fear not sign,’ quoth the grisly elf,  
 ‘That is made with bloody hands.’

But out then spoke she, Alice Brand,  
 That woman void of fear, — 325  
 ‘And if there ’s blood upon his hand,  
 ’T is but the blood of deer.’

mortals ventured to assume their favorite color. Indeed, from some reason, which has been, perhaps, originally a general superstition, *green* is held in Scotland to be unlucky to particular tribes and counties.” — *Scott*.



'Now loud thou liest, thou bold of mood !  
It cleaves unto his hand,  
The stain of thine own kindly blood,                 330  
The blood of Ethert Brand.'

Then forward stepped she, Alice Brand,  
And made the holy sign, —  
'And if there 's blood on Richard's hand,  
A spotless hand is mine.                                 335

'And I conjure thee, demon elf,  
By Him whom demons fear,  
To show us whence thou art thyself,  
And what thine errand here ?'

## XV.

## BALLAD CONTINUED

''T is merry, 't is merry, in Fairy-land,                 340  
When fairy birds are singing,  
When the court doth ride by their monarch's side,  
With bit and bridle ringing :

'And gayly shines the Fairy-land —  
But all is glistening show,                                 345  
Like the idle gleam that December's beam  
Can dart on ice and snow.

'And fading, like that varied gleam,  
Is our inconstant shape,

Who now like knight and lady seem, 350  
 And now like dwarf and ape.

‘It was between the night and day,  
 When the Fairy King has power,  
 That I sunk down in a sinful fray,  
 And ’twixt life and death was snatched away 355  
 To the joyless Elfin bower.

‘But wist I of a woman bold,  
 Who thrice my brow durst sign,  
 I might regain my mortal mould,  
 As fair a form as thine.’ 360

She crossed him once — she crossed him twice —  
 That lady was so brave;  
 The fouler grew his goblin hue,  
 The darker grew the cave.

She crossed him thrice, that lady bold; 365  
 He rose beneath her hand  
 The fairest knight on Scottish mould,  
 Her brother, Ethert Brand!

Merry it is in good greenwood,  
 When the mavis and merle are singing, 370  
 But merrier were they in Dunfermline gray,  
 When all the bells were ringing.

357. *wist*, knew.

358. *durst sign*, dare make the sign of the Cross.

371. *Dunfermline*, a town on the Firth of Forth not far from Edinburgh, the residence of the early kings of Scotland.

## XVI.

Just as the minstrel sounds were stayed,  
 A stranger climbed the steepy glade;  
 His martial step, his stately mien, 375  
 His hunting-suit of Lincoln green,  
 His eagle glance, remembrance claims —  
 'T is Snowdoun's Knight, 't is James Fitz-James.  
 Ellen beheld as in a dream,  
 Then, starting, scarce suppressed a scream : 380  
 'O stranger ! in such hour of fear  
 What evil hap has brought thee here ?'  
 'An evil hap how can it be  
 That bids me look again on thee ?  
 By promise bound, my former guide 385  
 Met me betimes this morning-tide,  
 And marshalled over bank and bourne  
 The happy path of my return.'  
 'The happy path !— what ! said he naught  
 Of war, of battle to be fought, 390  
 Of guarded pass ?' 'No, by my faith !  
 Nor saw I aught could augur scathe.'  
 'O haste thee, Allan, to the kern :  
 Yonder his tartans I discern ;  
 Learn thou his purpose, and conjure 395  
 That he will guide the stranger sure !—  
 What prompted thee, unhappy man ?  
 The meanest serf in Roderick's clan

387. *bourne*, boundary.392. *augur scathe*, foretell harm.398. *serf*, dependant.

Had not been bribed, by love or fear,  
Unknown to him to guide thee here.' 400

## XVII.

' Sweet Ellen, dear my life must be,  
Since it is worthy care from thee ;  
Yet life I hold but idle breath  
When love or honor 's weighed with death.  
Then let me profit by my chance, 405  
And speak my purpose bold at once.  
I come to bear thee from a wild  
Where ne'er before such blossom smiled,  
By this soft hand to lead thee far  
From frantic scenes of feud and war. 410  
Near Bochastle my horses wait ;  
They bear us soon to Stirling gate.  
I 'll place thee in a lovely bower,  
I 'll guard thee like a tender flower — '  
' O hush, Sir Knight! 't were female art, 415  
To say I do not read thy heart ;  
Too much, before, my selfish ear  
Was idly soothed my praise to hear,  
That fatal bait hath lured thee back,  
In deathful hour, o'er dangerous track ; 420  
And how, O how, can I atone  
The wreck my vanity brought on! —  
One way remains — I 'll tell him all —  
Yes! struggling bosom, forth it shall!  
Thou, whose light folly bears the blame, 425  
Buy thine own pardon with thy shame!

But first — my father is a man  
Outlawed and exiled, under ban;  
The price of blood is on his head,  
With me 't were infamy to wed. 430  
Still wouldst thou speak? — then hear the truth!  
Fitz-James, there is a noble youth —  
If yet he is! — exposed for me  
And mine to dread extremity —  
Thou hast the secret of my heart; 435  
Forgive, be generous, and depart!

## XVIII.

Fitz-James knew every wily train  
A lady's fickle heart to gain,  
But here he knew and felt them vain.  
There shot no glance from Ellen's eye, 440  
To give her steadfast speech the lie;  
In maiden confidence she stood,  
Though mantled in her cheek the blood,  
And told her love with such a sigh  
Of deep and hopeless agony, 445  
As death had sealed her Malcolm's doom  
And she sat sorrowing on his tomb.  
Hope vanished from Fitz-James's eye,  
But not with hope fled sympathy.  
He proffered to attend her side, 450  
As brother would a sister guide.  
'O little know'st thou Roderick's heart!  
Safer for both we go apart.  
O haste thee, and from Allan learn

If thou mayst trust yon wily kern.' 455  
 With hand upon his forehead laid,  
 The conflict of his mind to shade,  
 A parting step or two he made;  
 Then, as some thought had crossed his brain,  
 He paused, and turned, and came again. 460

## XIX.

'Hear, lady, yet a parting word! —  
 It chanced in fight that my poor sword  
 Preserved the life of Scotland's lord.  
 This ring the grateful Monarch gave,  
 And bade, when I had boon to crave, 465  
 To bring it back, and boldly claim  
 The recompense that I would name.  
 Ellen, I am no courtly lord,  
 But one who lives by lance and sword,  
 Whose castle is his helm and shield, 470  
 His lordship the embattled field.  
 What from a prince can I demand,  
 Who neither reck of state nor land?  
 Ellen, thy hand — the ring is thine;  
 Each guard and usher knows the sign. 475  
 Seek thou the King without delay;  
 This signet shall secure thy way:

458. *parting*, departing.465. *boon to crave*, request to make.470. *helm*, helmet.471. *lordship*, estate, domain.473. *reck of*, care for.477. *signet*, seal ring.

And claim thy suit, whate'er it be,  
 As ransom of his pledge to me.'  
 He placed the golden circlet on, 480  
 Paused — kissed her hand — and then was gone.  
 The aged Minstrel stood aghast,  
 So hastily Fitz-James shot past.  
 He joined his guide, and wending down  
 The ridges of the mountain brown, 485  
 Across the stream they took their way  
 That joins Loch Katrine to Achray.

## XX.

All in the Trosachs' glen was still,  
 Noontide was sleeping on the hill :  
 Sudden his guide whooped loud and high — 490  
 'Murdoch! was that a signal cry?' —  
 He stammered forth, 'I shout to scare  
 Yon raven from his dainty fare.'  
 He looked — he knew the raven's prey,  
 His own brave steed: 'Ah! gallant gray! 495  
 For thee — for me, perchance — 't were well  
 We ne'er had seen the Trosachs' dell. —  
 Murdoch, move first — but silently ;  
 Whistle or whoop, and thou shalt die !'  
 Jealous and sullen on they fared, 500  
 Each silent, each upon his guard.

500. they fared, they went. [A.-S. *faran*; Ger. *fahren*, to go.]

## XXI.

Now wound the path its dizzy ledge  
 Around a precipice's edge,  
 When lo! a wasted female form,  
 Blighted by wrath of sun and storm, 505  
 In tattered weeds and wild array,  
 Stood on a cliff beside the way,  
 And glancing round her restless eye,  
 Upon the wood, the rock, the sky,  
 Seemed naught to mark, yet all to spy. 510  
 Her brow was wreathed with gaudy broom ;  
 With gesture wild she waved a plume  
 Of feathers, which the eagles fling  
 To crag and cliff from dusky wing ;  
 Such spoils her desperate step had sought, 515  
 Where scarce was footing for the goat.  
 The tartan plaid she first descried,  
 And shrieked till all the rocks replied ;  
 As loud she laughed when near they drew,  
 For then the Lowland garb she knew ; 520  
 And then her hands she wildly wrung,  
 And then she wept, and then she sung —  
 She sung! — the voice, in better time,  
 Perchance to harp or lute might chime ;

506. *weeds*. Clothing, generally applied to the dress of a widow, in the phrase, "widow's *weeds*." [A.-S. *waed*, clothing, attire of men or women ; O. E. *wede*.]

510. *Seemed naught to mark, yet all to spy*. She seemed to see everything without intelligently recognizing anything.

519. *As loud she laughed*. She laughed now as loud as she had shrieked before.



And now, though strained and roughened, still 525  
Rung wildly sweet to dale and hill.

## XXII.

## SONG

They bid me sleep, they bid me pray,  
They say my brain is warped and wrung —  
I cannot sleep on Highland brae,  
I cannot pray in Highland tongue. 530  
But were I now where Allan glides,  
Or heard my native Devan's tides,  
So sweetly would I rest, and pray  
That Heaven would close my wintry day !  
'T was thus my hair they bade me braid, 535  
They made me to the church repair ;  
It was my bridal morn they said,  
And my true love would meet me there.  
But woe betide the cruel guile  
That drowned in blood the morning smile ! 540  
And woe betide the fairy dream !  
I only waked to sob and scream.

## XXIII.

'Who is this maid ? what means her lay ?  
She hovers o'er the hollow way,  
And flutters wide her mantle gray, 545  
As the lone heron spreads his wing,  
By twilight, o'er a haunted spring.'

531-532. Allan, Devan, two rivers of Perthshire.

539. guile, deceit.

'Tis Blanche of Devan,' Murdoch said,  
 'A crazed and captive Lowland maid,  
 Ta'en on the morn she was a bride, 550  
 When Roderick forayed Devan-side.  
 The gay bridegroom resistance made,  
 And felt our Chief's unconquered blade.  
 I marvel she is now at large,  
 But oft she 'scapes from Maudlin's charge. — 555  
 Hence, brain-sick fool!' — He raised his bow: —  
 'Now, if thou strik'st her but one blow,  
 I'll pitch thee from the cliff as far  
 As ever peasant pitched a bar!'  
 'Thanks, champion, thanks!' the Maniac cried, 560  
 And pressed her to Fitz-James's side.  
 'See the gray pennons I prepare,  
 To seek my true love through the air!  
 I will not lend that savage groom,  
 To break his fall, one downy plume! 565  
 No! — deep amid disjointed stones,  
 The wolves shall batten on his bones,  
 And then shall his detested plaid,  
 By bush and brier in mid-air stayed,  
 Wave forth a banner fair and free, 570  
 Meet signal for their revelry.'

## XXIV.

'Hush thee, poor maiden, and be still!'  
 'O! thou look'st kindly, and I will.

551. forayed, raided, plundered.

567. batten, fatten.

Mine eye has dried and wasted been,  
 But still it loves the Lincoln green ; 575  
 And, though mine ear is all unstrung,  
 Still, still it loves the Lowland tongue.

‘ For O my sweet William was forester true,  
 He stole poor Blanche’s heart away !  
 His coat it was all of the greenwood hue, 580  
 And so blithely he trilled the Lowland lay !

‘ It was not that I meant to tell . . .  
 But thou art wise and guessest well.’  
 Then, in a low and broken tone,  
 And hurried note, the song went on. 585  
 Still on the Clansman fearfully  
 She fixed her apprehensive eye,  
 Then turned it on the Knight, and then  
 Her look glanced wildly o’er the glen.

## XXV.

‘ The toils are pitched, and the stakes are set, — 590  
 Ever sing merrily, merrily ;  
 The bows they bend, and the knives they whet,  
 Hunters live so cheerily.

‘ It was a stag, a stag of ten,  
 Bearing its branches sturdily ; 595  
 He came stately down the glen, —  
 Ever sing hardily, hardily.

590, etc. toils, snares. The “hunters” represent Roderick Dhu and his men; the “stag of ten” is Fitz-James; the “wounded doe” is Blanche herself.

‘It was there he met with a wounded doe,  
 She was bleeding deathfully;  
 She warned him of the toils below, 600  
 O, so faithfully, faithfully!

‘He had an eye, and he could heed, —  
 Ever sing warily, warily;  
 He had a foot, and he could speed, —  
 Hunters watch so narrowly.’ 605

## XXVI.

Fitz-James’s mind was passion-tossed,  
 When Ellen’s hints and fears were lost;  
 But Murdoch’s shout suspicion wrought,  
 And Blanche’s song conviction brought.  
 Not like a stag that spies the snare, 610  
 But lion of the hunt aware,  
 He waved at once his blade on high,  
 ‘Disclose thy treachery, or die!’  
 Forth at full speed the Clansman flew,  
 But in his race his bow he drew. 615  
 The shaft just grazed Fitz-James’s crest,  
 And thrilled in Blanche’s faded breast. —  
 Murdoch of Alpine! prove thy speed,  
 For ne’er had Alpine’s son such need;  
 With heart of fire, and foot of wind, 620  
 The fierce avenger is behind!  
 Fate judges of the rapid strife —  
 The forfeit death — the prize is life;  
 Thy kindred ambush lies before,

Close couched upon the heathery moor ; 625  
 Them couldst thou reach ! — it may not be —  
 Thine ambushed kin thou ne'er shalt see,  
 The fiery Saxon gains on thee ! —  
 Resistless speeds the deadly thrust,  
 As lightning strikes the pine to dust ; 630  
 With foot and hand Fitz-James must strain  
 Ere he can win his blade again.  
 Bent o'er the fallen with falcon eye,  
 He grimly smiled to see him die,  
 Then slower wended back his way, 635  
 Where the poor maiden bleeding lay.

## XXVII.

She sat beneath the birchen tree,  
 Her elbow resting on her knee ;  
 She had withdrawn the fatal shaft,  
 And gazed on it, and feebly laughed ; 640  
 Her wreath of broom and feathers gray,  
 Daggled with blood, beside her lay.  
 The Knight to stanch the life-stream tried, —  
 ' Stranger, it is in vain ! ' she cried.  
 ' This hour of death has given me more 645  
 Of reason's power than years before ;  
 For, as these ebbing veins decay,  
 My frenzied visions fade away.  
 A helpless injured wretch I die,  
 And something tells me in thine eye 650

That thou wert my avenger born.  
 Seest thou this tress? — O, still I 've worn  
 This little tress of yellow hair,  
 Through danger, frenzy, and despair!  
 It once was bright and clear as thine, 655  
 But blood and tears have dimmed its shine.  
 I will not tell thee when 't was shred,  
 Nor from what guiltless victim's head, —  
 My brain would turn! — but it shall wave  
 Like plumage on thy helmet brave, 660  
 Till sun and wind shall bleach the stain,  
 And thou wilt bring it me again.  
 I waver still. — O God! more bright  
 Let reason beam her parting light! —  
 O, by thy knighthood's honored sign, 665  
 And for thy life preserved by mine,  
 When thou shalt see a darksome man,  
 Who boasts him Chief of Alpine's Clan,  
 With tartans broad and shadowy plume,  
 And hand of blood, and brow of gloom, 670  
 Be thy heart bold, thy weapon strong,  
 And wreak poor Blanche of Devan's wrong! —  
 They watch for thee by pass and fell . . .  
 Avoid the path . . . O God! . . . farewell.'

## XXVIII.

A kindly heart had brave Fitz-James; 675  
 Fast poured his eyes at pity's claims;

And now, with mingled grief and ire,  
 He saw the murdered maid expire.  
 ‘ God, in my need, be my relief,  
 As I wreak this on yonder Chief!’ 680  
 A lock from Blanche’s tresses fair  
 He blended with her bridegroom’s hair;  
 The mingled braid in blood he dyed,  
 And placed it on his bonnet-side:  
 ‘ By Him whose word is truth, I swear, 685  
 No other favor will I wear,  
 Till this sad token I imbrue  
 In the best blood of Roderick Dhu! —  
 But hark! what means yon faint halloo?  
 The chase is up, — but they shall know, 690  
 The stag at bay’s a dangerous foe.’  
 Barred from the known but guarded way,  
 Through copse and cliffs Fitz-James must stray,  
 And oft must change his desperate track,  
 By stream and precipice turned back. 695  
 Heartless, fatigued, and faint, at length,  
 From lack of food and loss of strength,  
 He couched him in a thicket hoar,  
 And thought his toils and perils o’er: —  
 ‘ Of all my rash adventures past, 700  
 This frantic feat must prove the last!  
 Who e’er so mad but might have guessed

680. **wreak**, avenge.

686. **favor**, a token, as a scarf or ribbon, worn by a knight, and the gift of his lady.

687. **imbrue**, drench.

That all this Highland hornet's nest  
 Would muster up in swarms so soon  
 As e'er they heard of bands at Doune? — 705  
 Like bloodhounds now they search me out, —  
 Hark, to the whistle and the shout! —  
 If farther through the wilds I go,  
 I only fall upon the foe:  
 I'll couch me here till evening gray, 710  
 Then darkling try my dangerous way.'

## XXIX.

The shades of eve come slowly down,  
 The woods are wrapt in deeper brown,  
 The owl awakens from her dell,  
 The fox is heard upon the fell; 715  
 Enough remains of glimmering light  
 To guide the wanderer's steps aright,  
 Yet not enough from far to show  
 His figure to the watchful foe.  
 With cautious step and ear awake, 720  
 He climbs the crag and threads the brake;  
 And not the summer solstice there

721. **threads the brake**, feels his way cautiously and with difficulty through the brake. There are probably two ideas in this use of the word: going through a narrow passage, taken from *threading* a needle, and winding about in search of a passage, from the A.-S. root *thrawan*, to wind. Cf. *wend*, from *wendan*, to turn or *wind*.

722. **not the summer solstice there**. The meaning is that the greatest heat of summer had no effect in these cold regions. The solstice is that point in the ecliptic, or sun's apparent course, at which he is farthest from the equator, and appears to



Tempered the midnight mountain air,  
 But every breeze that swept the wold  
 Benumbed his drenched limbs with cold. 725  
 In dread, in danger, and alone,  
 Famished and chilled, through ways unknown,  
 Tangled and steep, he journeyed on ;  
 Till, as a rock's huge point he turned,  
 A watch-fire close before him burned. 730

## XXX.

Beside its embers red and clear,  
 Basked in his plaid a mountaineer ;  
 And up he sprung with sword in hand, —  
 'Thy name and purpose ! Saxon, stand !'  
 'A stranger.' 'What dost thou require ?' 735  
 'Rest and a guide, and food and fire.  
 My life's beset, my path is lost,  
 The gale has chilled my limbs with frost.'

*stand still.* [Lat. *sol* and *sto.*] The *summer solstice* is reached on the 21st of June; the *winter solstice* on the 22d of December — the dates of the longest and shortest days respectively. The intervening points, where the ecliptic cuts the equinoctial, are the *spring* and *autumnal equinoxes* [Lat. *æquus*, and *nox*], reached respectively on the 20th of March and the 23d of September. Then day and night are equal all over the world.

724. the wold. See note, on l. 67.

728. Tangled and steep, refer to *ways*.

734. Saxon. The Highlanders called the Lowlanders *Shasgunach* or *Sassenach*, that is, Saxons. The name *Saxon* is of doubtful etymology, being variously derived from (1) the *saks* or *sax*, their characteristic weapon ; (2) the *Sacae*, a Scythian tribe (*Dr. Danaldson*) ; (3) *Seze*, seamen or pirates (*Dr. Guest*) ; (4) O. Ger. *sass* ; A.-S. *saet*, an inhabitant, or *settler* (*Adelung*).

‘ Art thou a friend to Roderick ? ’ ‘ No.’  
 ‘ Thou dar’st not call thyself a foe ? ’ 740  
 ‘ I dare ! to him and all the band  
 He brings to aid his murderous hand.’  
 ‘ Bold words ! — but, though the beast of game  
 The privilege of chase may claim,  
 Though space and law the stag we lend, 745  
 Ere hound we slip or bow we bend,  
 Who ever recked, where, how, or when,  
 The prowling fox was trapped or slain ?  
 Thus treacherous scouts, — yet sure they lie,  
 Who say thou cam’st a secret spy ! ’ — 750  
 ‘ They do, by heaven ! — come Roderick Dhu,  
 And of his clan the boldest two,  
 And let me but till morning rest,  
 I write the falsehood on their crest.’  
 ‘ If by the blaze I mark aright, 755  
 Thou bear’st the belt and spur of Knight.’  
 ‘ Then by these tokens mayst thou know  
 Each proud oppressor’s mortal foe.’  
 ‘ Enough, enough ; sit down and share  
 A soldier’s couch, a soldier’s fare.’ 760

741. **I dare ! to him**, that is, “ I dare *call myself a foe* to him and all the band *whom* he brings,” etc.

743. **the beast of game**, the stag, which is protected by *game-laws*. The construction is peculiar: *of game* is an attribute to *beast*. The meaning is, the *beast* which belongs to the class called *game*. The general sense of the passage is: we give the stag a fair start, but we show no mercy to the fox.

751. **come Roderick Dhu**. The imperative, third person, expressing a wish: “ Let them come, and let me rest, and I write,” etc.

## XXXI.

He gave him of his Highland cheer,  
 The hardened flesh of mountain deer ;  
 Dry fuel on the fire he laid,  
 And bade the Saxon share his plaid.  
 He tended him like welcome guest, 765  
 Then thus his further speech addressed : —  
 ‘ Stranger, I am to Roderick Dhu  
 A clansman born, a kinsman true ;  
 Each word against his honor spoke  
 Demands of me avenging stroke ; 770  
 Yet more, — upon thy fate, ’t is said,  
 A mighty augury is laid.  
 It rests with me to wind my horn, —  
 Thou art with numbers overborne ;  
 It rests with me, here, brand to brand, 775  
 Worn as thou art, to bid thee stand :  
 But, not for clan, nor kindred’s cause,  
 Will I depart from honor’s laws ;  
 To assail a wearied man were shame,  
 And stranger is a holy name ; 780  
 Guidance and rest, and food and fire,  
 In vain he never must require.  
 Then rest thee here till dawn of day ;  
 Myself will guide thee on the way,  
 O’er stock and stone, through watch and ward, 785  
 Till past Clan-Alpine’s outmost guard,  
 As far as Coilantogle’s ford ;

784. *Myself will guide thee, for I myself.*787. *Coilantogle’s ford, a ford near the western extremity of*

From thence thy warrant is thy sword.  
‘I take thy courtesy, by heaven,  
As freely as ’t is nobly given!’ 790  
‘Well, rest thee; for the bittern’s cry  
Sings us the lake’s wild lullaby.’  
With that he shook the gathered heath,  
And spread his plaid upon the wreath;  
And the brave foemen, side by side, 795  
Lay peaceful down like brothers tried,  
And slept until the dawning beam  
Purpled the mountain and the stream.

Loch Vennachar, across the stream which flows from that lake.  
It is now superseded by a footbridge.

794. wreath, properly a garland or chaplet. [A.-S. *wriþan*, to twist.] In Scotland it is applied to a snowdrift (under the various forms *wreathe*, *wrede*, *wride*, and *ree*), because the wind *whirls* the snow in blowing it into a heap. In the text it is applied to a heap of heather.

## CANTO FIFTH

## THE COMBAT

## I.

FAIR as the earliest beam of eastern light,  
 When first, by the bewildered pilgrim spied,  
 It smiles upon the dreary brow of night,  
 And silvers o'er the torrent's foaming tide,  
 And lights the fearful path on mountain-side, — 5  
 Fair as that beam, although the fairest far,  
 Giving to horror grace, to danger pride,  
 Shine martial Faith, and Courtesy's bright star,  
 Through all the wreckful storms that cloud the  
 brow of War.

## II.

That early beam, so fair and sheen, 10  
 Was twinkling through the hazel screen,  
 When, rousing at its glimmer red,  
 The warriors left their lowly bed,

10. sheen, bright. *Sheen* is now used as a noun, meaning *brightness* or *splendor*; but in O. E. *scheene*, *schene*, or *sheen*, bright, fair, was used as an adjective:

“A Cristofer on his brest of silver *schene*.”

— Chaucer, *Prose Canterbury Tales*, l. 115.

[A.-S. *scyne*; Ger. *schön*, beautiful.]

Looked out upon the dappled sky,  
 Muttered their soldier matins by, 15  
 And then awaked their fire, to steal,  
 As short and rude, their soldier meal.  
 That o'er, the Gael around him threw  
 His graceful plaid of varied hue,  
 And, true to promise, led the way, 20  
 By thicket green and mountain gray.  
 A wildering path! — they winded now  
 Along the precipice's brow,  
 Commanding the rich scenes beneath,  
 The windings of the Forth and Teith, 25  
 And all the vales between that lie,  
 Till Stirling's turrets melt in sky;  
 Then, sunk in copse, their farthest glance  
 Gained not the length of horseman's lance.  
 'T was oft so steep, the foot was fain 30  
 Assistance from the hand to gain;  
 So tangled oft that, bursting through,  
 Each hawthorn shed her showers of dew, —  
 That diamond dew, so pure and clear,  
 It rivals all but Beauty's tear! 35

## III.

At length they came where, stern and steep,  
 The hill sinks down upon the deep.

14. dappled, spotted.

15. by. To be connected with *muttered*, in the sense of *through* or *over*.

17. As short and rude. Supply "as their matins."

18. That o'er. An absolute phrase: "that being over."

Here Vennachar in silver flows,  
 There, ridge on ridge, Benledi rose;  
 Ever the hollow path twined on, 40  
 Beneath steep bank and threatening stone;  
 A hundred men might hold the post  
 With hardihood against a host.  
 The rugged mountain's scanty cloak  
 Was dwarfish shrubs of birch and oak, 45  
 With shingles bare, and cliffs between,  
 And patches bright of bracken green,  
 And heather black, that waved so high,  
 It held the copse in rivalry.  
 But where the lake slept deep and still, 50  
 Dank osiers fringed the swamp and hill;  
 And oft both path and hill were torn,  
 Where wintry torrent down had borne,  
 And heaped upon the cumbered land  
 Its wreck of gravel, rocks, and sand. 55  
 So toilsome was the road to trace,  
 The guide, abating of his pace,  
 Led slowly through the pass's jaws,  
 And asked Fitz-James by what strange cause  
 He sought these wilds, traversed by few, 60  
 Without a pass from Roderick Dhu.

43. **hardihood**, bravery and firmness. Shakespeare's word is *hardiment*, Chaucer's is *hardynesse*. [E. *hardy*, strong, valiant; Fr. *hardi*, akin to A.-S. *heard*, E. *hard*.]

46. **shingles**, gravel.

51. **osiers**, willow trees.

## IV.

' Brave Gael, my pass, in danger tried,  
 Hangs in my belt and by my side ;  
 Yet, sooth to tell,' the Saxon said,  
 ' I dreamt not now to claim its aid. 65  
 When here, but three days since, I came,  
 Bewildered in pursuit of game,  
 All seemed as peaceful and as still  
 As the mist slumbering on yon hill ;  
 Thy dangerous Chief was then afar, 70  
 Nor soon expected back from war.  
 Thus said, at least, my mountain-guide,  
 Though deep perchance the villain lied.'  
 ' Yet why a second venture try ?'  
 ' A warrior thou, and ask me why ! — 75  
 Moves our free course by such fixed cause  
 As gives the poor mechanic laws ?  
 Enough, I sought to drive away  
 The lazy hours of peaceful day ;  
 Slight cause will then suffice to guide 80  
 A Knight's free footsteps far and wide, —  
 A falcon flown, a greyhound strayed,  
 The merry glance of mountain maid ;  
 Or, if a path be dangerous known,  
 The danger's self is lure alone.' 85

## V.

' Thy secret keep, I urge thee not ; —  
 Yet, ere again ye sought this spot,  
 Say, heard ye naught of Lowland war,



Against Clan-Alpine, raised by Mar ?'  
 'No, by my word ; — of bands prepared 90  
 To guard King James's sports I heard ;  
 Nor doubt I aught, but, when they hear  
 This muster of the mountaineer,  
 Their pennons will abroad be flung,  
 Which else in Doune had peaceful hung.' 95  
 'Free be they flung ! for we were loath  
 Their silken folds should feast the moth.  
 Free be they flung ! — as free shall wave  
 Clan-Alpine's pine in banner brave.  
 But, stranger, peaceful since you came, 100  
 Bewildered in the mountain-game,  
 Whence the bold boast by which you show  
 Vich-Alpine's vowed and mortal foe ?'  
 'Warrior, but yester-morn I knew  
 Naught of thy Chieftain, Roderick Dhu, 105  
 Save as an outlawed desperate man,  
 The chief of a rebellious clan,  
 Who, in the Regent's court and sight,  
 With ruffian dagger stabbed a knight ;  
 Yet this alone might from his part 110  
 Sever each true and loyal heart.'

## VI.

Wrathful at such arraignment foul,  
 Dark lowered the clansman's sable scowl.  
 A space he paused, then sternly said,  
 'And heardst thou why he drew his blade ? 115

Heardst thou that shameful word and blow  
 Brought Roderick's vengeance on his foe?  
 What recked the Chieftain if he stood  
 On Highland heath or Holy-Rood?  
 He rights such wrong where it is given,      120  
 If it were in the court of heaven.  
 'Still was it outrage; — yet, 't is true,  
 Not then claimed sovereignty his due;  
 While Albany with feeble hand  
 Held borrowed truncheon of command,      125  
 The young King, mew'd in Stirling tower,  
 Was stranger to respect and power.  
 But then, thy Chieftain's robber life! —  
 Winning mean prey by causeless strife,  
 Wrenching from ruined Lowland swain      130  
 His herds and harvest reared in vain, —  
 Methinks a soul like thine should scorn  
 The spoils from such foul foray borne.'

## VII.

The Gael beheld him grim the while,  
 And answered with disdainful smile:      135

124. **Albany**, John Stewart, Duke of Albany, a cousin of James IV., was Regent during a part of the minority of James V. "There is scarcely a more disorderly period of Scottish history than that which succeeded the battle of Flodden, and occupied the minority of James V. Feuds of ancient standing broke out like old wounds, and every quarrel among the independent nobility, which occurred daily, and almost hourly, gave rise to fresh bloodshed." — *Scott*.

125. **truncheon**, scepter.

126. **mew'd**, confined.

'Saxon, from yonder mountain high,  
I marked thee send delighted eye  
Far to the south and east, where lay,  
Extended in succession gay,  
Deep waving fields and pastures green, 140  
With gentle slopes and groves between: —  
These fertile plains, that softened vale,  
Were once the birthright of the Gael;  
The stranger came with iron hand,  
And from our fathers reft the land. 145  
Where dwell we now? See, rudely swell  
Crag over crag, and fell o'er fell.  
Ask we this savage hill we tread  
For fattened steer or household bread,  
Ask we for flocks these shingles dry, 150  
And well the mountain might reply, —  
"To you, as to your sires of yore,  
Belong the target and claymore!  
I give you shelter in my breast,  
Your own good blades must win the rest." 155  
Pent in this fortress of the North,  
Think'st thou we will not sally forth,  
To spoil the spoiler as we may,  
And from the robber rend the prey?  
Ay, by my soul! — While on yon plain 160  
The Saxon rears one shock of grain,  
While of ten thousand herds there strays  
But one along yon river's maze, —  
The Gael, of plain and river heir,  
Shall with strong hand redeem his share. 165

Where live the mountain Chiefs who hold  
 That plundering Lowland field and fold  
 Is aught but retribution true?  
 Seek other cause 'gainst Roderick Dhu.'

## VIII.

Answered Fitz-James: 'And, if I sought, 170  
 Think'st thou no other could be brought?  
 What deem ye of my path waylaid?  
 My life given o'er to ambuscade?'  
 'As of a meed to rashness due:  
 Hadst thou sent warning fair and true, — 175  
 I seek my hound or falcon strayed,  
 I seek, good faith, a Highland maid, —  
 Free hadst thou been to come and go;  
 But secret path marks secret foe.  
 Nor yet for this, even as a spy, 180  
 Hadst thou, unheard, been doomed to die,  
 Save to fulfil an augury.'  
 'Well, let it pass; nor will I now  
 Fresh cause of enmity avow,

169. Seek other cause 'gainst Roderick Dhu. "So far, indeed, was a *Creagh*, or foray, from being held disgraceful, that a young chief was always expected to show his talents for command, so soon as he assumed it, by leading his clan on a successful enterprise of this nature, either against a neighboring sept, for which constant feuds usually furnished an apology, or against the Saxons or Lowlanders, for which no apology was necessary. The Gaels, great traditional historians, never forgot that the Lowlands had, at some remote period, been the property of their Celtic forefathers, which furnished an ample vindication of all the ravages that they could make on the unfortunate districts which lay within their reach." — *Scott*.

To chafe thy mood and cloud thy brow. 185  
 Enough, I am by promise tied  
 To match me with this man of pride :  
 Twice have I sought Clan-Alpine's glen  
 In peace ; but when I come again,  
 I come with banner, brand, and bow, 190  
 As leader seeks his mortal foe.  
 For love-lorn swain in lady's bower  
 Ne'er panted for the appointed hour,  
 As I, until before me stand  
 This rebel Chieftain and his band !' 195

## IX.

'Have then thy wish!'—He whistled shrill,  
 And he was answered from the hill ;  
 Wild as the scream of the curlew,  
 From crag to crag the signal flew.  
 Instant, through copse and heath, arose 200  
 Bonnets and spears and bended bows ;  
 On right, on left, above, below,  
 Sprung up at once the lurking foe ;  
 From shingles gray their lances start,  
 The bracken bush sends forth the dart, 205  
 The rushes and the willow-wand  
 Are bristling into axe and brand,  
 And every tuft of broom gives life

192. *love-lorn*. Lorn is an old English form for lost; love-lorn = forsaken by one's love.

198. *Wild as the scream of the curlew*. *Wild* is an adverb (for *wildly*) modifying *flew*. The *curlew* is a water bird, named from its cry. [Fr. *corlieu*.]

To plaided warrior armed for strife.  
 That whistle garrisoned the glen 210  
 At once with full five hundred men,  
 As if the yawning hill to heaven  
 A subterranean host had given.  
 Watching their leader's beck and will,  
 All silent there they stood and still. 215  
 Like the loose crags whose threatening mass  
 Lay tottering o'er the hollow pass,  
 As if an infant's touch could urge  
 Their headlong passage down the verge,  
 With step and weapon forward flung, 220  
 Upon the mountain-side they hung.  
 The Mountaineer cast glance of pride  
 Along Benledi's living side,  
 Then fixed his eye and sable brow  
 Full on Fitz-James: 'How say'st thou now? 225  
 These are Clan-Alpine's warriors true;  
 And, Saxon, — I am Roderick Dhu!'

## X.

Fitz-James was brave: — though to his heart  
 The life-blood thrilled with sudden start,  
 He manned himself with dauntless air, 230  
 Returned the Chief his haughty stare,  
 His back against a rock he bore,  
 And firmly placed his foot before: —  
 'Come one, come all! this rock shall fly  
 From its firm base as soon as I.' 235  
 Sir Roderick marked, — and in his eyes

Respect was mingled with surprise,  
 And the stern joy which warriors feel  
 In foeman worthy of their steel.  
 Short space he stood — then waved his hand: 240  
 Down sunk the disappearing band ;  
 Each warrior vanished where he stood,  
 In broom or bracken, heath or wood ;  
 Sunk brand and spear and bended bow,  
 In osiers pale and copses low ; 245  
 It seemed as if their mother Earth  
 Had swallowed up her warlike birth.  
 The wind's last breath had tossed in air  
 Pennon and plaid and plumage fair, —  
 The next but swept a lone hill-side, 250  
 Where heath and fern were waving wide :  
 The sun's last glance was glinted back  
 From spear and glaive, from targe and jack, —  
 The next, all unreflected, shone  
 On bracken green and cold gray stone. 255

252. was **glinted**, was flashed back. But *glint* [Sc. *glent*] is an intransitive verb, meaning to glance or glide; its use, therefore, as a passive, is improper, or at least unusual:

“ Yet cheerfully thou *glinted* forth.”

— Burns, *To a Mountain Daisy*.

“ The risin' sun, owre Galston muirs,  
 Wi' glorious light was *glintin*.”

— Burns.

[Sc. *glent*, O. E. *glissen*, Ger. *glanzen*, to glitter, and *gleissen*, to shine; same root as *glass*, *glisten*, *glitter*, *glance*.] **last** means last preceding, not latest or final; for “the next” follows it.

253. **jack**, a spear or pike. Observe that *jack* and *pike* are applied both to a spearhead and to a voracious fish with a pointed snout.

## XI.

Fitz-James looked round, — yet scarce believed  
 The witness that his sight received;  
 Such apparition well might seem  
 Delusion of a dreadful dream.

Sir Roderick in suspense he eyed, 260

And to his look the Chief replied :

‘Fear naught, nay, that I need not say —

But — doubt not aught from mine array.

Thou art my guest; — I pledged my word

As far as Coilantogle ford : 265

Nor would I call a clansman’s brand

For aid against one valiant hand.

Though on our strife lay every vale

Rent by the Saxon from the Gael.

So move we on; — I only meant 270

To show the reed on which you leant,

Deeming this path you might pursue

259. **Delusion . . . dreadful dream.** Triple alliteration.

268. **lay**, depended, or was at stake.

270. **move we on.** Imperative, first person plural, for “let us move on.”

272. **Deeming this path you might pursue.** Attributive to “you” in the preceding line; but it explains the “reed” there referred to, and has the force of an adverbial of cause: “I only meant to show that you leant upon a reed, when you thought that you might pursue this path without a pass from Roderick Dhu.” “This incident, like some other passages in the poem illustrative of the character of the ancient Gael, is not imaginary, but borrowed from fact. The Highlanders, with the inconsistency of most nations in the same state, were alternately capable of great exertions of generosity, and of cruel revenge and perfidy.” — *Scott*.



Without a pass from Roderick Dhu.  
 They moved ; — I said Fitz-James was brave  
 As ever knight that belted glaive, 275  
 Yet dare not say that now his blood  
 Kept on its wont and tempered flood,  
 As, following Roderick's stride, he drew  
 That seeming lonesome pathway through,  
 Which yet by fearful proof was rife 280  
 With lances, that, to take his life,  
 Waited but signal from a guide,  
 So late dishonored and defied.  
 Ever, by stealth, his eye sought round  
 The vanished guardians of the ground, 285  
 And still from copse and heather deep  
 Fancy saw spear and broadsword peep,  
 And in the plover's shrilly strain  
 The signal whistle heard again.  
 Nor breathed he free till far behind 290  
 The pass was left; for then they wind  
 Along a wide and level green,  
 Where neither tree nor tuft was seen,  
 Nor rush nor bush of broom was near,  
 To hide a bonnet or a spear. 295

## XII.

The Chief in silence strode before,  
 And reached that torrent's sounding shore,  
 Which, daughter of three mighty lakes,  
 From Vennachar in silver breaks,

298. three mighty lakes, Katrine, Achray, and Vennachar.

Sweeps through the plain, and ceaseless mines 300  
 On Bochastle the mouldering lines,  
 Where Rome, the Empress of the world,  
 Of yore her eagle wings unfurled.  
 And here his course the Chieftain stayed,  
 Threw down his target and his plaid, 305  
 And to the Lowland warrior said :  
 ' Bold Saxon! to his promise just,  
 Vich-Alpine has discharged his trust.  
 This murderous Chief, this ruthless man,  
 This head of a rebellious clan, 310  
 Hath led thee safe, through watch and ward,  
 Far past Clan-Alpine's outmost guard.  
 Now, man to man, and steel to steel,  
 A Chieftain's vengeance thou shalt feel.  
 See, here all vantageless I stand, 315  
 Armed like thyself with single brand ;  
 For this is Coilantogle ford,  
 And thou must keep thee with thy sword.'

## XIII.

The Saxon paused: ' I ne'er delayed,  
 When foeman bade me draw my blade ; 320

301. **Bochastle.** " The torrent which discharges itself from Loch Vennachar, the lowest and eastmost of the three lakes which form the scenery adjoining to the Trosachs, sweeps through a flat and extensive moor called Bochastle. Upon a small eminence called the *Dun* of Bochastle, and, indeed, on the plain itself, are some intrenchments which have been thought Roman." — *Scott*.

315. **vantageless**, without *vantage*; an abbreviated form of *advantage*.



## XIV.

Dark lightning flashed from Roderick's eye :  
 ' Soars thy presumption, then, so high,  
 Because a wretched kern ye slew,  
 Homage to name to Roderick Dhu? 350  
 He yields not, he, to man nor Fate!  
 Thou add'st but fuel to my hate ; —  
 My clansman's blood demands revenge.  
 Not yet prepared ? — By heaven, I change  
 My thought, and hold thy valor light 355  
 As that of some vain carpet knight,  
 Who ill deserved my courteous care,  
 And whose best boast is but to wear  
 A braid of his fair lady's hair.'  
 ' I thank thee, Roderick, for the word ! 360  
 It nerves my heart, it steels my sword ;  
 For I have sworn this braid to stain  
 In the best blood that warms thy vein.  
 Now, truce, farewell ! and, ruth, begone ! —  
 Yet think not that by thee alone, 365  
 Proud Chief ! can courtesy be shown ;  
 Though not from copse, or heath, or cairn,  
 Start at my whistle clansmen stern,  
 Of this small horn one feeble blast  
 Would fearful odds against thee cast. 370  
 But fear not — doubt not — which thou wilt —  
 We try this quarrel hilt to hilt.'

356. *carpet knight*, a drawing-room knight, one who has not known service in the field.

364. *ruth*, pity.

Then each at once his falchion drew,  
Each on the ground his scabbard threw,  
Each looked to sun and stream and plain 375  
As what they ne'er might see again;  
Then foot and point and eye opposed,  
In dubious strife they darkly closed.

## XV.

Ill fared it then with Roderick Dhu,  
That on the field his targe he threw, 380  
Whose brazen studs and tough bull-hide  
Had death so often dashed aside;  
For, trained abroad his arms to wield,  
Fitz-James's blade was sword and shield.  
He practised every pass and ward, 385  
To thrust, to strike, to feint, to guard;  
While less expert, though stronger far,  
The Gael maintained unequal war.  
Three times in closing strife they stood,  
And thrice the Saxon blade drank blood; 390  
No stinted draught, no scanty tide,  
The gushing flood the tartans dyed.  
Fierce Roderick felt the fatal drain,  
And showered his blows like wintry rain;  
And, as firm rock or castle-roof 395

380. his targe he threw, etc. "A round target of light wood, covered with strong leather, and studded with brass or iron, was a necessary part of a Highlander's equipment. In charging regular troops, they received the thrust of the bayonet in this buckler, twisted it aside, and used the broadsword against the incumbered soldier." — *Scott*.

Against the winter shower is proof,  
 The foe, invulnerable still,  
 Foiled his wild rage by steady skill;  
 Till, at advantage ta'en, his brand  
 Forced Roderick's weapon from his hand, 400  
 And backward borne upon the lea,  
 Brought the proud Chieftain to his knee.

## XVI.

'Now yield thee, or by Him who made  
 The world, thy heart's blood dyes my blade!'  
 'Thy threats, thy mercy, I defy! 405  
 Let recreant yield, who fears to die.'  
 Like adder darting from his coil,  
 Like wolf that dashes through the toil,  
 Like mountain-cat who guards her young,  
 Full at Fitz-James's throat he sprung; 410  
 Received, but recked not of a wound,  
 And locked his arms his foeman round. —  
 Now, gallant Saxon, hold thine own!  
 No maiden's hand is round thee thrown!  
 That desperate grasp thy frame might feel 415  
 Through bars of brass and triple steel!  
 They tug, they strain! down, down they go,  
 The Gael above, Fitz-James below.  
 The Chieftain's gripe his throat compressed,  
 His knee was planted on his breast; 420  
 His clotted locks he backward threw,

Across his brow his hand he drew,  
 From blood and mist to clear his sight,  
 Then gleamed aloft his dagger bright !  
 But hate and fury ill supplied 425  
 The stream of life's exhausted tide,  
 And all too late the advantage came,  
 To turn the odds of deadly game :  
 For, while the dagger gleamed on high,  
 Reeled soul and sense, reeled brain and eye. 430  
 Down came the blow ! but in the heath  
 The erring blade found bloodless sheath.  
 The struggling foe may now unclasp  
 The fainting Chief's relaxing grasp ;  
 Unwounded from the dreadful close, 435  
 But breathless all, Fitz-James arose.

## XVII.

He faltered thanks to Heaven for life,  
 Redeemed, unhopèd, from desperate strife ;  
 Next on his foe his look he cast,  
 Whose every gasp appeared his last ; 440  
 In Roderick's gore he dipped the braid, —  
 ' Poor Blanche ! thy wrongs are dearly paid ;  
 Yet with thy foe must die, or live,  
 The praise that faith and valor give.'  
 With that he blew a bugle note, 445  
 Undid the collar from his throat,  
 Unbonneted, and by the wave

Sat down his brow and hands to lave.  
 Then faint afar are heard the feet  
 Of rushing steeds in gallop fleet; 450  
 The sounds increase, and now are seen  
 Four mounted squires in Lincoln green;  
 Two who bear lance, and two who lead  
 By loosened rein a saddled steed;  
 Each onward held his headlong course, 455  
 And by Fitz-James reined up his horse, —  
 With wonder viewed the bloody spot, —  
 ‘Exclaim not, gallants! question not. —  
 You, Herbert and Luffness, alight,  
 And bind the wounds of yonder knight; 460  
 Let the gray palfrey bear his weight,  
 We destined for a fairer freight,  
 And bring him on to Stirling straight;  
 I will before at better speed,  
 To seek fresh horse and fitting weed. 465  
 The sun rides high; — I must be boune  
 To see the archer-game at noon;  
 But lightly Bayard clears the lea. —  
 De Vaux and Herries, follow me.

## XVIII.

‘Stand, Bayard, stand!’ — the steed obeyed, 470  
 With arching neck and bended head,  
 And glancing eye and quivering ear,  
 As if he loved his lord to hear.



No foot Fitz-James in stirrup stayed,  
No grasp upon the saddle laid, 475  
But wreathed his left hand in the mane,  
And lightly bounded from the plain,  
Turned on the horse his armed heel,  
And stirred his courage with the steel.  
Bounded the fiery steed in air, 480  
The rider sat erect and fair,  
Then like a bolt from steel crossbow  
Forth launched, along the plain they go.  
They dashed that rapid torrent through,  
And up Carhonie's hill they flew ; 485  
Still at the gallop pricked the Knight,  
His merry men followed as they might.  
Along thy banks, swift Teith! they ride,  
And in the race they mock thy tide ;  
Torry and Lendrick now are past, 490  
And Deanstown lies behind them cast ;  
They rise, the bannered towers of Doune,  
They sink in distant woodland soon ;  
Blair-Drummond sees the hoofs strike fire,  
They sweep like breeze through Ochtertyre ; 495  
They mark just glance and disappear  
The lofty brow of ancient Kier ;  
They bathe their coursers' sweltering sides,  
Dark Forth! amid thy sluggish tides,  
And on the opposing shore take ground, 500  
With splash, with scramble, and with bound.  
Right-hand they leave thy cliffs, Craig-Forth!  
And soon the bulwark of the North,

Gray Stirling, with her towers and town,  
Upon their fleet career looked down.

505

## XIX.

As up the flinty path they strained,  
Sudden his steed the leader reined;  
A signal to his squire he flung,  
Who instant to his stirrup sprung: —  
'Seest thou, De Vaux, yon woodsman gray, 510  
Who townward holds the rocky way,  
Of stature tall and poor array?  
Mark'st thou the firm, yet active stride,  
With which he scales the mountain-side?  
Know'st thou from whence he comes, or whom?' 515  
'No, by my word; — a burly groom  
He seems, who in the field or chase  
A baron's train would nobly grace —'  
'Out, out, De Vaux! can fear supply,  
And jealousy, no sharper eye? 520  
Afar, ere to the hill he drew,  
That stately form and step I knew;  
Like form in Scotland is not seen,  
Treads not such step on Scottish green.  
'T is James of Douglas, by Saint Serle! 525  
The uncle of the banished Earl.

525. 'T is James of Douglas. When Douglas of Kilspindie returned from exile, to throw himself on the clemency of his former pupil, King James, he was recognized in a similar way by the King. "As James returned from hunting in the park at Stirling, he saw a person at a distance, and, turning to his nobles, exclaimed, 'Yonder is my Graysteil, Archibald of Kilspindie.'"

Away, away, to court, to show  
 The near approach of dreaded foe:  
 The King must stand upon his guard;  
 Douglas and he must meet prepared.' 530  
 Then right-hand wheeled their steeds, and straight  
 They won the Castle's postern gate.

## XX.

The Douglas, who had bent his way  
 From Cambus-kenneth's abbey gray,  
 Now, as he climbed the rocky shelf, 535  
 Held sad communion with himself:—  
 'Yes! all is true my fears could frame;  
 A prisoner lies the noble Græme,  
 And fiery Roderick soon will feel  
 The vengeance of the royal steel. 540  
 I, only I, can ward their fate,—  
 God grant the ransom come not late!  
 The Abbess hath her promise given,  
 My child shall be the bride of Heaven;—  
 Be pardoned one repining tear! 545  
 For He who gave her knows how dear,  
 How excellent!—but that is by,  
 And now my business is—to die.—  
 Ye towers! within whose circuit dread  
 A Douglas by his sovereign bled; 550  
 And thou, O sad and fatal mound!

550. A Douglas by his sovereign bled. William, Earl of Douglas, was slain by James II. at Stirling, in 1452.

551. fatal mound, an eminence on the northeast of the Castle, where state criminals were executed, called the "Heading-hill."

That oft hast heard the death-axe sound,  
 As on the noblest of the land  
 Fell the stern headsman's bloody hand, —  
 The dungeon, block, and nameless tomb 555  
 Prepare — for Douglas seeks his doom!  
 But hark! what blithe and jolly peal  
 Makes the Franciscan steeple reel?  
 And see! upon the crowded street,  
 In motley groups what masquers meet! 560  
 Banner and pageant, pipe and drum,  
 And merry morrice-dancers come.  
 I guess, by all this quaint array,  
 The burghers hold their sports to-day.  
 James will be there; he loves such show, 565  
 Where the good yeoman bends his bow,  
 And the tough wrestler foils his foe,  
 As well as where, in proud career,  
 The high-born tilter shivers spear.  
 I'll follow to the Castle-park, 570  
 And play my prize; — King James shall mark  
 If age has tamed these sinews stark,

562. *morrice-dancers.* The *morrice-dance* was a dance of *Moorish* origin, in which bells and rattles were introduced.

564. *The burghers hold their sports to-day.* "Every burgh in Scotland of the least note, but more especially the considerable towns, had their solemn *play* or festival, when feats of archery were exhibited, and prizes distributed to those who excelled in wrestling, hurling the bar, and the other gymnastic exercises of the period. The usual prize to the best shooter was a silver arrow."

570. *I'll . . . play my prize.* I'll exercise my skill in competing for the prize.

572. *If, whether.*

Whose force so oft in happier days  
His boyish wonder loved to praise.'

## XXI.

The Castle gates were open flung, 575  
The quivering drawbridge rocked and rung,  
And echoed loud the flinty street  
Beneath the coursers' clattering feet,  
As slowly down the steep descent  
Fair Scotland's King and nobles went, 580  
While all along the crowded way  
Was jubilee and loud huzza.  
And ever James was bending low  
To his white jennet's saddle-bow,  
Doffing his cap to city dame, 585  
Who smiled and blushed for pride and shame.  
And well the simperer might be vain, —  
He chose the fairest of the train.  
Gravely he greets each city sire,  
Commends each pageant's quaint attire, 590  
Gives to the dancers thanks aloud,  
And smiles and nods upon the crowd,  
Who rend the heavens with their acclaims, —  
'Long live the Commons' King, King James!'

574. His boyish wonder. When the king was a boy, the Douglas had been his tutor in manly sports.

584. jennet, a small Spanish horse.

585. Doffing, taking off. *Doff*' = do off, as *don* = do on.

594. Commons' King. Scott says, "James's ready participation in these popular amusements was one cause of his acquiring the title of King of the Commons, or *Rex Plebeiorum*, as Lesley has Latinized it."

Behind the King thronged peer and knight, 595  
 And noble dame and damsel bright,  
 Whose fiery steeds ill brooked the stay  
 Of the steep street and crowded way.  
 But in the train you might discern  
 Dark lowering brow and visage stern ; 600  
 There nobles mourned their pride restrained,  
 And the mean burgher's joys disdained ;  
 And chiefs, who, hostage for their clan,  
 Were each from home a banished man,  
 There thought upon their own gray tower, 605  
 Their waving woods, their feudal power,  
 And deemed themselves a shameful part  
 Of pageant which they cursed in heart.

## XXII.

Now, in the Castle-park, drew out  
 Their checkered bands the joyous rout. 610  
 There morricers, with bell at heel  
 And blade in hand, their mazes wheel ;  
 But chief, beside the butts, there stand  
 Bold Robin Hood and all his band, —

603. **hostage**, a person given as security for the performance of the conditions of a treaty or of stipulations of any kind on the performance of which the person is to be released.

606. **feudal power**. Under the feudal system the lord had power to command the services of his tenants in time of war.

610. **checkered bands**, groups in gay dresses.

613. **butts**, targets.

614. **Robin Hood**, a noted English outlaw of the time of King Richard I. "The exhibition of this renowned outlaw and his band was a favorite frolic at such festivals as we are describ-

Friar Tuck with quarterstaff and cowl, 615  
 Old Scathelocke with his surly scowl,  
 Maid Marian, fair as ivory bone,  
 Scarlet, and Mutch, and Little John ;  
 Their bugles challenge all that will,  
 In archery to prove their skill. 620  
 The Douglas bent a bow of might, —  
 His first shaft centred in the white,  
 And when in turn he shot again,  
 His second split the first in twain.  
 From the King's hand must Douglas take 625  
 A silver dart, the archer's stake ;  
 Fondly he watched, with watery eye,  
 Some answering glance of sympathy, —  
 No kind emotion made reply !  
 Indifferent as to archer wight, 630  
 The monarch gave the arrow bright.

ing. This sporting, in which kings did not disdain to be actors, was prohibited in Scotland upon the Reformation, by a statute of the Sixth Parliament of Queen Mary, which ordered, under heavy penalties, that 'na manner of person be chosen Robert Hude, nor Little John, Abbot of Unreason, Queen of May, nor otherwise.' But in 1561 the 'rascal multitude,' says John Knox, 'were stirred up to make a Robin Hude, whilk enormity was of many years left and damned by statute and act of Parliament; yet would they not be forbidden.' Accordingly they raised a very serious tumult, and at length made prisoners the magistrates who endeavored to suppress it, and would not release them till they extorted a formal promise that no one should be punished for his share of the disturbance."

615. **quarterstaff.** A long and stout staff formerly used as a weapon of offense and defense. **cowl,** a monk's hood.

615-618. **Friar Tuck, Old Scathelocke, Maid Marian,** and the rest were companions of Robin Hood. See Scott's *Ivanhoe*.

630. **archer wight,** common archer.

## XXIII.

Now, clear the ring! for, hand to hand,  
 The manly wrestlers take their stand.  
 Two o'er the rest superior rose,  
 And proud demanded mightier foes, — 635  
 Nor called in vain, for Douglas came. —  
 For life is Hugh of Larbert lame;  
 Scarce better John of Alloa's fare,  
 Whom senseless home his comrades bare.  
 Prize of the wrestling match, the King 640  
 To Douglas gave a golden ring,  
 While coldly glanced his eye of blue,  
 As frozen drop of wintry dew.  
 Douglas would speak, but in his breast  
 His struggling soul his words suppressed; 645  
 Indignant then he turned him where  
 Their arms the brawny yeomen bare,  
 To hurl the massive bar in air.  
 When each his utmost strength had shown,  
 The Douglas rent an earth-fast stone 650  
 From its deep bed, then heaved it high,  
 And sent the fragment through the sky  
 A rood beyond the farthest mark;  
 And still in Stirling's royal park,  
 The gray-haired sires, who know the past, 655  
 To strangers point the Douglas cast,  
 And moralize on the decay  
 Of Scottish strength in modern day.

641. golden ring. "The usual prize in wrestling was a ram and a ring, but the animal would have embarrassed my story."  
 — *Scott*.



## XXIV.

The vale with loud applauses rang,  
 The Ladies' Rock sent back the clang. 660  
 The King, with look unmoved, bestowed  
 A purse well filled with pieces broad.  
 Indignant smiled the Douglas proud,  
 And threw the gold among the crowd,  
 Who now with anxious wonder scan, 665  
 And sharper glance, the dark gray man ;  
 Till whispers rose among the throng,  
 That heart so free, and hand so strong,  
 Must to the Douglas blood belong.  
 The old men marked and shook the head, 670  
 To see his hair with silver spread,  
 And winked aside, and told each son  
 Of feats upon the English done,  
 Ere Douglas of the stalwart hand  
 Was exiled from his native land. 675  
 The women praised his stately form,  
 Though wrecked by many a winter's storm ;  
 The youth with awe and wonder saw  
 His strength surpassing Nature's law.  
 Thus judged, as is their wont, the crowd, 680  
 Till murmurs rose to clamors loud.  
 But not a glance from that proud ring  
 Of peers who circled round the King  
 With Douglas held communion kind,  
 Or called the banished man to mind ; 685

660. **The Ladies' Rock**, a small hill near the Castle, from which the ladies watched the games.

No, not from those who at the chase  
 Once held his side the honored place,  
 Begirt his board, and in the field  
 Found safety underneath his shield ;  
 For he whom royal eyes disown, 690  
 When was his form to courtiers known !

## XXV.

The Monarch saw the gambols flag,  
 And bade let loose a gallant stag,  
 Whose pride, the holiday to crown,  
 Two favorite greyhounds should pull down, 695  
 That venison free and Bourdeaux wine  
 Might serve the archery to dine.  
 But Lufra, — whom from Douglas' side  
 Nor bribe nor threat could e'er divide,  
 The fleetest hound in all the North, — 700  
 Brave Lufra saw, and darted forth.  
 She left the royal hounds midway,  
 And dashing on the antlered prey,  
 Sunk her sharp muzzle in his flank,  
 And deep the flowing life-blood drank. 705  
 The King's stout huntsman saw the sport  
 By strange intruder broken short,  
 Came up, and with his leash unbound  
 In anger struck the noble hound.  
 The Douglas had endured, that morn, 710  
 The King's cold look, the nobles' scorn,  
 And last, and worse to spirit proud,  
 Had borne the pity of the crowd ;

But Lufra had been fondly bred,  
 To share his board, to watch his bed, 715  
 And oft would Ellen Lufra's neck  
 In maiden glee with garlands deck;  
 They were such playmates that with name  
 Of Lufra Ellen's image came.  
 His stifled wrath is brimming high, 720  
 In darkened brow and flashing eye;  
 As waves before the bark divide,  
 The crowd gave way before his stride;  
 Needs but a buffet and no more,  
 The groom lies senseless in his gore. 725  
 Such blow no other hand could deal,  
 Though gauntleted in glove of steel.

## XXVI.

Then clamored loud the royal train,  
 And brandished swords and staves amain,  
 But stern the Baron's warning: 'Back! 730  
 Back, on your lives, ye menial pack!  
 Beware the Douglas. — Yes! behold,  
 King James! The Douglas, doomed of old,  
 And vainly sought for near and far,  
 A victim to atone the war, 735  
 A willing victim, now attends,  
 Nor craves thy grace but for his friends. —'  
 'Thus is my clemency repaid?  
 Presumptuous Lord!' the Monarch said:  
 'Of thy misproud ambitious clan, 740

740. *misproud*, with false pride. Cf. *3 King Henry VI.* II. v. 7:

"Strengthening misproud York."

Thou, James of Bothwell, wert the man,  
 The only man, in whom a foe  
 My woman-mercy would not know ;  
 But shall a Monarch's presence brook  
 Injurious blow and haughty look ? — 745  
 What ho ! the Captain of our Guard !  
 Give the offender fitting ward. —  
 Break off the sports !' — for tumult rose,  
 And yeomen 'gan to bend their bows, —  
 'Break off the sports !' he said and frowned, 750  
 'And bid our horsemen clear the ground.'

## XXVII.

Then uproar wild and misarray  
 Marred the fair form of festal day.  
 The horsemen pricked among the crowd,  
 Repelled by threats and insult loud ; 755  
 To earth are borne the old and weak,  
 The timorous fly, the women shriek ;  
 With flint, with shaft, with staff, with bar,  
 The hardier urge tumultuous war.  
 At once round Douglas darkly sweep 760  
 The royal spears in circle deep,  
 And slowly scale the pathway steep,  
 While on the rear in thunder pour  
 The rabble with disordered roar.  
 With grief the noble Douglas saw 765  
 The Commons rise against the law.

And to the leading soldier said :  
 ' Sir John of Hyndford, 't was my blade  
 That knighthood on thy shoulder laid ;  
 For that good deed permit me then 770  
 A word with these misguided men. —

## XXVIII.

' Hear, gentle friends, ere yet for me  
 Ye break the bands of fealty.  
 My life, my honor, and my cause,  
 I tender free to Scotland's laws. 775  
 Are these so weak as must require  
 The aid of your misguided ire ?  
 Or if I suffer causeless wrong,  
 Is then my selfish rage so strong,  
 My sense of public weal so low, 780  
 That, for mean vengeance on a foe,  
 Those cords of love I should unbind  
 Which knit my country and my kind ?  
 O no ! Believe, in yonder tower  
 It will not soothe my captive hour, 785  
 To know those spears our foes should dread  
 For me in kindred gore are red :  
 To know, in fruitless brawl begun,  
 For me that mother wails her son,  
 For me that widow's mate expires, 790

769. **knighthood.** Knighthood was conferred by the king or his representative by a stroke with the flat of the sword on the candidate's shoulder.

773. **fealty, loyalty.**

For me that orphans weep their sires,  
 That patriots mourn insulted laws,  
 And curse the Douglas for the cause.  
 O let your patience ward such ill,  
 And keep your right to love me still !' 795

## XXIX.

The crowd's wild fury sunk again  
 In tears, as tempests melt in rain.  
 With lifted hands and eyes, they prayed  
 For blessings on his generous head  
 Who for his country felt alone, 800  
 And prized her blood beyond his own.  
 Old men upon the verge of life  
 Blessed him who stayed the civil strife ;  
 And mothers held their babes on high,  
 The self-devoted Chief to spy, 805  
 Triumphant over wrongs and ire,  
 To whom the prattlers owed a sire.  
 Even the rough soldier's heart was moved ;  
 As if behind some bier beloved,  
 With trailing arms and drooping head, 810  
 The Douglas up the hill he led,  
 And at the Castle's battled verge,  
 With sighs resigned his honored charge.

794. ward. Here, ward off.

812. battled, with battlements. verge, limits.

## XXX.

The offended Monarch rode apart,  
 With bitter thought and swelling heart, 815  
 And would not now vouchsafe again  
 Through Stirling streets to lead his train.  
 'O Lennox, who would wish to rule  
 This changeling crowd, this common fool?  
 Hear'st thou,' he said, 'the loud acclaim 820  
 With which they shout the Douglas name?  
 With like acclaim the vulgar throat  
 Strained for King James their morning note;  
 With like acclaim they hailed the day  
 When first I broke the Douglas sway; 825  
 And like acclaim would Douglas greet  
 If he could hurl me from my seat.  
 Who o'er the herd would wish to reign,  
 Fantastic, fickle, fierce, and vain?  
 Vain as the leaf upon the stream, 830  
 And fickle as a changeful dream;  
 Fantastic as a woman's mood,  
 And fierce as Frenzy's fevered blood.  
 Thou many-headed monster-thing,  
 O who would wish to be thy king? — 835

## XXXI.

'But soft! what messenger of speed  
 Spurs hitherward his panting steed?  
 I guess his cognizance afar —

838. *cognizance*, the distinguishing mark worn by an armed knight, and sometimes by his dependents.

What from our cousin, John of Mar ? '   
 ' He prays, my liege, your sports keep bound 840   
 Within the safe and guarded ground ;   
 For some foul purpose yet unknown, —   
 Most sure for evil to the throne, —   
 The outlawed Chieftain, Roderick Dhu,   
 Has summoned his rebellious crew ; 845   
 'T is said, in James of Bothwell's aid   
 These loose banditti stand arrayed.   
 The Earl of Mar this morn from Doune   
 To break their muster march, and soon   
 Your Grace will hear of battle fought ; 850   
 But earnestly the Earl besought,   
 Till for such danger he provide,   
 With scanty train you will not ride.'

## XXXII.

'Thou warn'st me I have done amiss, —   
 I should have earlier looked to this ; 855   
 I lost it in this bustling day. —   
 Retrace with speed thy former way ;   
 Spare not for spoiling of thy steed,   
 The best of mine shall be thy need.   
 Say to our faithful Lord of Mar, 860   
 We do forbid the intended war ;   
 Roderick this morn in single fight   
 Was made our prisoner by a knight,   
 And Douglas hath himself and cause



Submitted to our kingdom's laws. 865  
 The tidings of their leaders lost  
 Will soon dissolve the mountain host,  
 Nor would we that the vulgar feel,  
 For their Chief's crimes, avenging steel.  
 Bear Mar our message, Braco, fly!' 870  
 He turned his steed, — 'My liege, I hie,  
 Yet ere I cross this lily lawn  
 I fear the broadswords will be drawn.'  
 The turf the flying courser spurned,  
 And to his towers the King returned. 875

## XXXIII.

Ill with King James's mood that day  
 Suited gay feast and minstrel lay;  
 Soon were dismissed the courtly throng,  
 And soon cut short the festal song.  
 Nor less upon the saddened town 880  
 The evening sunk in sorrow down.  
 The burghers spoke of civil jar,  
 Of rumored feuds and mountain war,  
 Of Moray, Mar, and Roderick Dhu,  
 All up in arms; — the Douglas too, 885  
 They mourned him pent within the hold,  
 'Where stout Earl William was of old.' —  
 And there his word the speaker stayed,  
 And finger on his lip he laid,  
 Or pointed to his dagger blade. 890

868. **vulgar**, the common people.887. **Earl William**. See note on l. 550, above.

But jaded horsemen from the west  
At evening to the Castle pressed,  
And busy talkers said they bore  
Tidings of fight on Katrine's shore ;  
At noon the deadly fray begun,  
And lasted till the set of sun.  
Thus giddy rumor shook the town,  
Till closed the Night her pennons brown.

## CANTO SIXTH

## THE GUARD-ROOM

## I.

THE sun, awakening, through the smoky air  
 Of the dark city casts a sullen glance,  
 Rousing each caitiff to his task of care,  
 Of sinful man the sad inheritance;  
 Summoning revellers from the lagging dance, 5  
 Scaring the prowling robber to his den;  
 Gilding on battled tower the warder's lance,  
 And warning student pale to leave his pen,  
 And yield his drowsy eyes to the kind nurse of men.

What various scenes, and O, what scenes of woe, 10  
 Are witnessed by that red and struggling beam!  
 The fevered patient, from his pallet low,  
 Through crowded hospital beholds its stream;  
 The ruined maiden trembles at its gleam,

3. **caitiff.** An unfortunate or wretched man; not in this case in its opprobrious sense of a despicable fellow. [O. F. *caytif*, wretched; Fr. *chétif*; It. *cattivo*; Lat. *captivus*, from *capio*, I take; E. *captive*.]

9. **the kind nurse of men.** Sleep. Cf.:

“Sleep! O gentle sleep!  
 Nature's soft nurse.”

—2 *Henry IV.* III. i. 5.

The debtor wakes to thought of gyve and jail,      15  
 The love-lorn wretch starts from tormenting dream ;  
 The wakeful mother, by the glimmering pale,  
 Trims her sick infant's couch, and soothes his feeble  
 wail.

## II.

At dawn the towers of Stirling rang  
 With soldier-step and weapon-clang,      20  
 While drums with rolling note foretell  
 Relief to weary sentinel.  
 Through narrow loop and casement barred,  
 The sunbeams sought the Court of Guard,  
 And, struggling with the smoky air,      25  
 Deadened the torches' yellow glare.  
 In comfortless alliance shone  
 The lights through arch of blackened stone,  
 And showed wild shapes in garb of war,  
 Faces deformed with beard and scar,      30  
 All haggard from the midnight watch,  
 And fevered with the stern debauch ;  
 For the oak table's massive board,  
 Flooded with wine, with fragments stored,  
 And beakers drained, and cups o'erthrown,      35  
 Showed in what sport the night had flown.  
 Some, weary, snored on floor and bench ;  
 Some labored still their thirst to quench ;  
 Some, chilled with watching, spread their hands

15. *gyve*, fether.23. *loop*, loophole.35. *beakers*, drinking goblets.

O'er the huge chimney's dying brands, 40  
 While round them, or beside them flung,  
 At every step their harness rung.

## III.

These drew not for their fields the sword,  
 Like tenants of a feudal lord,  
 Nor owned the patriarchal claim 45  
 Of Chieftain in their leader's name ;  
 Adventurers they, from far who roved,  
 To live by battle which they loved.  
 There the Italian's clouded face,  
 The swarthy Spaniard's there you trace ; 50  
 The mountain-loving Switzer there  
 More freely breathed in mountain-air ;  
 The Fleming there despised the soil  
 That paid so ill the laborer's toil ;  
 Their rolls showed French and German name ; 55  
 And merry England's exiles came,  
 To share, with ill-concealed disdain,  
 Of Scotland's pay the scanty gain.  
 All brave in arms, well trained to wield

42. harness, equipment.

47. Adventurers. "The Scottish army consisted chiefly of the nobility and barons, with their vassals, who held lands under them for military service by themselves and their tenants. James V. seems first to have introduced, in addition to the militia furnished from these sources, the service of a small number of mercenaries, who formed a bodyguard, called the Foot-band. I have chosen to give them the harsh features of the mercenary soldiers of the period."

53. Fleming, an inhabitant of Flanders, now a part of Belgium.

The heavy halberd, brand, and shield; 60  
 In camps licentious, wild, and bold;  
 In pillage fierce and uncontrolled;  
 And now, by holytide and feast,  
 From rules of discipline released.

## IV.

They held debate of bloody fray, 65  
 Fought 'twixt Loch Katrine and Achray.  
 Fierce was their speech, and mid their words  
 Their hands oft grappled to their swords;  
 Nor sunk their tone to spare the ear  
 Of wounded comrades groaning near, 70  
 Whose mangled limbs and bodies gored  
 Bore token of the mountain sword,  
 Though, neighboring to the Court of Guard,  
 Their prayers and feverish wails were heard, —  
 Sad burden to the ruffian joke, 75  
 And savage oath by fury spoke! —  
 At length up started John of Brent,  
 A yeoman from the banks of Trent;  
 A stranger to respect or fear,  
 In peace a chaser of the deer, 80  
 In host a hardy mutineer,  
 But still the boldest of the crew  
 When deed of danger was to do.  
 He grieved that day their games cut short,  
 And marred the dicer's brawling sport, 85

And shouted loud, 'Renew the bowl!  
 And, while a merry catch I troll,  
 Let each the buxom chorus bear,  
 Like brethren of the brand and spear.'

## VI.

The warder's challenge, heard without,  
 Stayed in mid-roar the merry shout.  
 A soldier to the portal went, — 110  
 'Here is old Bertram, sirs, of Ghent;  
 And — beat for jubilee the drum! —  
 A maid and minstrel with him come.'  
 Bertram, a Fleming, gray and scarred,  
 Was entering now the Court of Guard, 115  
 A harper with him, and, in plaid  
 All muffled close, a mountain maid,  
 Who backward shrunk to 'scape the view  
 Of the loose scene and boisterous crew.  
 'What news?' they roared: — 'I only know, 120  
 From noon till eve we fought with foe,  
 As wild and as untamable  
 As the rude mountains where they dwell;  
 On both sides store of blood is lost,  
 Nor much success can either boast.' — 125  
 'But whence thy captives, friend? such spoil  
 As theirs must needs reward thy toil.  
 Old dost thou wax, and wars grow sharp;

87. catch, song. troll, sing.

88. buxom, lively.

111. Ghent, a Flemish city.

Thou now hast glee-maiden and harp!  
 Get thee an ape, and trudge the land, 130  
 The leader of a juggler band.'

## VII.

'No, comrade; — no such fortune mine.  
 After the fight these sought our line,  
 That aged harper and the girl,  
 And, having audience of the Earl, 135  
 Mar bade I should purvey them steed,  
 And bring them hitherward with speed.  
 Forbear your mirth and rude alarm,  
 For none shall do them shame or harm.' —  
 'Hear ye his boast?' cried John of Brent, 140  
 Ever to strife and jangling bent;  
 'Shall he strike doe beside our lodge,  
 And yet the jealous niggard grudge  
 To pay the forester his fee?  
 I'll have my share howe'er it be, 145  
 Despite of Moray, Mar, or thee.'  
 Bertram his forward step withstood;  
 And, burning in his vengeful mood,  
 Old Allan, though unfit for strife,  
 Laid hand upon his dagger-knife; 150

131. juggler. "The jongleurs, or jugglers, used to call in the aid of various assistants, to render these performances as captivating as possible. The glee-maiden was a necessary attendant. Her duty was tumbling and dancing. In Scotland these poor creatures seem, even at a late period, to have been bondswomen to their masters." — *Scott*.

136. purvey, provide.

143. niggard, stingy.



But Ellen boldly stepped between,  
 And dropped at once the tartan screen : —  
 So, from his morning cloud, appears  
 The sun of May through summer tears.  
 The savage soldiery, amazed, 155  
 As on descended angel gazed ;  
 Even hardy Brent, abashed and tamed,  
 Stood half admiring, half ashamed.

## VIII.

Boldly she spoke : ‘ Soldiers, attend !  
 My father was the soldier’s friend, 160  
 Cheered him in camps, in marches led,  
 And with him in the battle bled.  
 Not from the valiant or the strong  
 Should exile’s daughter suffer wrong.’  
 Answered De Brent, most forward still 165  
 In every feat or good or ill :  
 ‘ I shame me of the part I played ;  
 And thou an outlaw’s child, poor maid !  
 An outlaw I by forest laws,  
 And merry Needwood knows the cause. 170  
 Poor Rose. — if Rose be living now,’ —  
 He wiped his iron eye and brow, —  
 ‘ Must bear such age, I think, as thou. —  
 Hear ye, my mates ! I go to call  
 The Captain of our watch to hall : 175  
 There lies my halberd on the floor ;

170. **Needwood**, a royal forest in Staffordshire, England.

And he that steps my halberd o'er,  
 To do the maid injurious part,  
 My shaft shall quiver in his heart!  
 Beware loose speech, or jesting rough;      180  
 Ye all know John de Brent. Enough.'

## IX.

Their Captain came, a gallant young, —  
 Of Tullibardine's house he sprung, —  
 Nor wore he yet the spurs of knight;  
 Gay was his mien, his humor light,      185  
 And, though by courtesy controlled,  
 Forward his speech, his bearing bold.  
 The high-born maiden ill could brook  
 The scanning of his curious look  
 And dauntless eye: — and yet, in sooth,      190  
 Young Lewis was a generous youth;  
 But Ellen's lovely face and mien,  
 Ill suited to the garb and scene,  
 Might lightly bear construction strange,  
 And give loose fancy scope to range.      195  
 'Welcome to Stirling towers, fair maid!  
 Come ye to seek a champion's aid,  
 On palfrey white, with harper hoar,

183. **Tullibardine's house.** The family of Murray. The earliest title of the ducal house of Atholl was Baron Murray of Tullibardine. Tullibardine Castle is near Auchterarder in Perthshire.

193. **Ill suited to the garb and scene.** In form, an attribute to *face and mien*, but logically an adverbial of cause to *might bear* = *being ill suited, i.e., because it was ill suited.*

Like errant damosel of yore ?  
 Does thy high quest a knight require,                   200  
 Or may the venture suit a squire ?'  
 Her dark eye flashed ; — she paused and sighed : —  
 ' O what have I to do with pride ! —  
 Through scenes of sorrow, shame, and strife,  
 A suppliant for a father's life,                               205  
 I crave an audience of the King.  
 Behold, to back my suit, a ring,  
 The royal pledge of grateful claims,  
 Given by the Monarch to Fitz-James.'

## X.

The signet-ring young Lewis took                               210  
 With deep respect and altered look,  
 And said : ' This ring our duties own ;  
 And pardon, if to worth unknown,  
 In semblance mean obscurely veiled,  
 Lady, in aught my folly failed.                               215  
 Soon as the day flings wide his gates,  
 The King shall know what suitor waits.  
 Please you meanwhile in fitting bower  
 Repose you till his waking hour ;  
 Female attendance shall obey                               220  
 Your hest, for service or array.

199. *damosel*. A maiden. [O. Fr. *damoiseil* ; Fr. *demoiselle* ; dim. of *dame*, the mistress of a house ; Lat. *domus*.]

214. *In semblance mean obscurely veiled*. This like *to worth unknown*, in the preceding line, refers to the *Lady*.

218. *Please you . . . Repose you*. May it please you to repose yourself. *Please* is imperative ; *repose* is infinitive.

Permit I marshal you the way.'  
 But, ere she followed, with the grace  
 And open bounty of her race,  
 She bade her slender purse be shared 225  
 Among the soldiers of the guard.  
 The rest with thanks their guerdon took,  
 But Brent, with shy and awkward look,  
 On the reluctant maiden's hold  
 Forced bluntly back the proffered gold: — 230  
 'Forgive a haughty English heart,  
 And O, forget its ruder part!  
 The vacant purse shall be my share,  
 Which in my barret-cap I 'll bear,  
 Perchance, in jeopardy of war, 235  
 Where gayer crests may keep afar.'  
 With thanks — 't was all she could — the maid  
 His rugged courtesy repaid.

## XI.

When Ellen forth with Lewis went,  
 Allan made suit to John of Brent: — 240  
 'My lady safe, O let your grace  
 Give me to see my master's face!

222. *I marshal you the way.* A noun clause, object of *permit*. *You* is a "dative of advantage." "Permit that I marshal the way for you."

227. *guerdon.* Reward, *i.e.*, *re-guerdon*. [O. Fr. *guerredon*; A.-S. *widherlean*.]

234. *barret-cap.* Helmet or battle-cap. [Sc. *barrat*, contention; Ice. *barrat*, battle.]

241. *My lady safe.* An absolute phrase: "My lady being safe."

His minstrel I, — to share his doom  
 Bound from the cradle to the tomb.  
 Tenth in descent, since first my sires           245  
 Waked for his noble house their lyres,  
 Nor one of all the race was known  
 But prized its weal above their own.  
 With the Chief's birth begins our care;  
 Our harp must soothe the infant heir,           250  
 Teach the youth tales of fight, and grace  
 His earliest feat of field or chase;  
 In peace, in war, our rank we keep,  
 We cheer his board, we soothe his sleep,  
 Nor leave him till we pour our verse —       255  
 A doleful tribute! — o'er his hearse.  
 Then let me share his captive lot;  
 It is my right, — deny it not!'  
 'Little we reck,' said John of Brent,  
 'We Southern men, of long descent;           260  
 Nor wot we how a name — a word —  
 Makes clansmen vassals to a lord:  
 Yet kind my noble landlord's part, —  
 God bless the house of Beaudesert!  
 And, but I loved to drive the deer           265

265. *but I loved.* Clause of negative condition = "if I loved not." The apodosis or conclusion is, *I had not*, for "I would not have." *But* (= *beout*), whether a relative pronoun or a conjunction, is always negative, and has a corresponding negative in the apodosis. "*Leave out* that I loved to chase the deer, and I should *not* have been an outcast here." The adverb *but*, only, is an abbreviation of *not-but* = *not* or *nothing but*: There are *but few* = There are not but few, *i.e.*, leave out that there are few, and there are none.

More than to guide the laboring steer,  
 I had not dwelt an outcast here.  
 Come, good old Minstrel, follow me;  
 Thy Lord and Chieftain shalt thou see.'

## XII.

Then, from a rusted iron hook, 270  
 A bunch of ponderous keys he took,  
 Lighted a torch, and Allan led  
 Through grated arch and passage dread.  
 Portals they passed, where, deep within,  
 Spoke prisoner's moan and fetters' din; 275  
 Through rugged vaults, where, loosely stored,  
 Lay wheel, and axe, and headsman's sword,  
 And many a hideous engine grim,  
 For wrenching joint and crushing limb,  
 By artists formed who deemed it shame 280  
 And sin to give their work a name.  
 They halted at a low-browed porch,  
 And Brent to Allan gave the torch,  
 While bolt and chain he backward rolled,  
 And made the bar unhasp its hold. 285  
 They entered: — 't was a prison-room  
 Of stern security and gloom,  
 Yet not a dungeon; for the day  
 Through lofty gratings found its way,  
 And rude and antique garniture 290  
 Decked the sad walls and oaken floor,

285. unhasp. Unclasp or undo. [*Un-*, and *A.-S. haeps*, a hasp or buckle.]

Such as the rugged days of old  
 Deemed fit for captive noble's hold.  
 'Here,' said De Brent, 'thou mayst remain  
 Till the Leech visit him again. 295  
 Strict is his charge, the warders tell,  
 To tend the noble prisoner well.'  
 Retiring then the bolt he drew,  
 And the lock's murmurs growled anew.  
 Roused at the sound, from lowly bed 300  
 A captive feebly raised his head;  
 The wondering Minstrel looked, and knew —  
 Not his dear lord, but Roderick Dhu!  
 For, come from where Clan-Alpine fought,  
 They, erring, deemed the Chief he sought. 305

## XIII.

As the tall ship, whose lofty prore  
 Shall never stem the billows more,  
 Deserted by her gallant band,  
 Amid the breakers lies astrand, —  
 So on his couch lay Roderick Dhu! 310  
 And oft his fevered limbs he threw  
 In toss abrupt, as when her sides  
 Lie rocking in the advancing tides,

295. **the Leech.** The physician or healer. [A.-S. *laece*, a physician, from *lac*, *laec*, a gift; E. *leech*, the blood-sucking worm used in remedies.]

305. **the Chief he sought.** That he sought the chieftain. *Chief* is objective, governed by *sought*.

306. **prore.** Prow. [Lat. *prora*, from *pro* before.]

309. **astrand,** stranded.

312. **her sides.** A continuation of the simile of the ship.

That shake her frame with ceaseless beat,  
 Yet cannot heave her from her seat ; — 315  
 O, how unlike her course at sea !  
 Or his free step on hill and lea ! —  
 Soon as the Minstrel he could scan, —  
 ‘ What of thy lady ? — of my clan ? —  
 My mother ? — Douglas ? — tell me all ! 320  
 Have they been ruined in my fall ?  
 Ah, yes ! or wherefore art thou here ?  
 Yet speak, — speak boldly, — do not fear.’ —  
 For Allan, who his mood well knew,  
 Was choked with grief and terror too. — 325  
 ‘ Who fought ? — who fled ? — Old man, be  
     brief ; —  
 Some might, — for they had lost their Chief.  
 Who basely live ? — who bravely died ?’  
 ‘ O, calm thee, Chief !’ the Minstrel cried,  
 ‘ Ellen is safe !’ ‘ For that thank Heaven !’ 330  
 ‘ And hopes are for the Douglas given ; —  
 The Lady Margaret, too, is well ;  
 And, for thy clan, — on field or fell,  
 Has never harp of minstrel told  
 Of combat fought so true and bold. 335  
 Thy stately Pine is yet unbent,  
 Though many a goodly bough is rent.’

327. **Some might.** Some might flee.

333. **for thy clan.** As regards, or with reference to, thy clan.



## XIV.

The Chieftain reared his form on high,  
 And fever's fire was in his eye;  
 But ghastly, pale, and livid streaks 340  
 Checkered his swarthy brow and cheeks.  
 'Hark, Minstrel! I have heard thee play,  
 With measure bold on festal day,  
 In yon lone isle, — again where ne'er  
 Shall harper play or warrior hear! — 345  
 That stirring air that peals on high,  
 O'er Dermid's race our victory. —  
 Strike it! — and then, — for well thou canst, —  
 Free from thy minstrel-spirit glanced,  
 Fling me the picture of the fight, 350  
 When met my clan the Saxon might.  
 I'll listen, till my fancy hears  
 The clang of swords, the crash of spears!  
 These grates, these walls, shall vanish then  
 For the fair field of fighting men, 355  
 And my free spirit burst away,  
 As if it soared from battle fray.  
 The trembling Bard with awe obeyed, —  
 Slow on the harp his hand he laid;  
 But soon remembrance of the sight 360  
 He witnessed from the mountain's height,  
 With what old Bertram told at night,

349. *glanced*. Participle, attribute to *picture*.

354. *shall vanish* . . . For the fair field. Shall give place to the fair field. "I shall fancy myself in the field of battle, and die fighting."

Awakened the full power of song,  
 And bore him in career along; —  
 As shallop launched on river's tide, 365  
 That slow and fearful leaves the side,  
 But, when it feels the middle stream,  
 Drives downward swift as lightning's beam.

## XV.

## BATTLE OF BEAL' AN DUINE

'The minstrel came once more to view  
 The eastern ridge of Benvenue, 370  
 For ere he parted he would say  
 Farewell to lovely Loch Achray —  
 Where shall he find, in foreign land,  
 So lone a lake, so sweet a strand! —  
 There is no breeze upon the fern, 375  
     No ripple on the lake,  
 Upon her eery nods the erne,  
     The deer has sought the brake;  
 The small birds will not sing aloud,  
     The springing trout lies still, 380  
 So darkly glooms yon thunder-cloud,  
 That swathes, as with a purple shroud,  
     Benledi's distant hill.

365. *shallop*, a small boat.

369. *Battle of Beal' an Duine*. "A skirmish actually took place at a pass thus called in the Trosachs, and closed with the remarkable incident mentioned in the text. It was greatly posterior in date to the reign of James V." — *Scott*.

377. *eery*, the nest of a bird that builds in a lofty place.  
*erne*, eagle.

Is it the thunder's solemn sound  
     That mutters deep and dread, 385  
 Or echoes from the groaning ground  
     The warrior's measured tread ?  
 Is it the lightning's quivering glance  
     That on the thicket streams,  
 Or do they flash on spear and lance 390  
     The sun's retiring beams ? —  
 I see the dagger-crest of Mar,  
 I see the Moray's silver star,  
 Wave o'er the cloud of Saxon war,  
 That up the lake comes winding far ! 395  
     To hero bounè for battle-strife,  
     Or bard of martial lay,  
 'T were worth ten years of peaceful life,  
     One glance at their array !

## XVI.

' Their light-armed archers far and near 400  
     Surveyed the tangled ground,  
 Their centre ranks, with pike and spear,  
     A twilight forest frowned,  
 Their barded horsemen in the rear  
     The stern battalia crowned. 405  
 No cymbal clashed, no clarion rang,  
     Still were the pipe and drum ;  
 Save heavy tread, and armor's clang,  
     The sullen march was dumb.

404. **barded**, armored; used only of horses and horsemen.405. **battalia**, an army in battle array.

There breathed no wind their crests to shake, 410  
 Or wave their flags abroad ;  
 Scarce the frail aspen seemed to quake,  
 That shadowed o'er their road.  
 Their vaward scouts no tidings bring,  
 Can rouse no lurking foe, 415  
 Nor spy a trace of living thing,  
 Save when they stirred the roe ;  
 The host moves like a deep-sea wave,  
 Where rise no rocks its pride to brave,  
 High-swelling, dark, and slow. 420  
 The lake is passed, and now they gain  
 A narrow and a broken plain,  
 Before the Trosachs' rugged jaws ;  
 And here the horse and spearmen pause,  
 While, to explore the dangerous glen, 425  
 Dive through the pass the archer-men.

## XVII.

' At once there rose so wild a yell  
 Within that dark and narrow dell,  
 As all the fiends from heaven that fell  
 Had pealed the banner-cry of hell ! 430  
 Forth from the pass in tumult driven,  
 Like chaff before the wind of heaven,  
 The archery appear :  
 For life ! for life ! their flight they ply —  
 And shriek, and shout, and battle-cry, 435

414. *vaward* = *vanward* or *vanguard*, a body of men who ride in front of the main body of an army.



Was brandishing like beam of light, 460  
 Each targe was dark below ;  
 And with the ocean's mighty swing,  
 When heaving to the tempest's wing,  
 They hurled them on the foe.

I heard the lance's shivering crash, 465  
 As when the whirlwind rends the ash ;  
 I heard the broadsword's deadly clang,  
 As if a hundred anvils rang !

But Moray wheeled his rearward rank  
 Of horsemen on Clan-Alpine's flank, — 470  
 “ My banner-man, advance !

I see,” he cried, “ their column shake.  
 Now, gallants ! for your ladies' sake,  
 Upon them with the lance ! ” —

The horsemen dashed among the rout, 475  
 As deer break through the broom ;  
 Their steeds are stout, their swords are out,  
 They soon make lightsome room.

Clan-Alpine's best are backward borne —  
 Where, where was Roderick then ! 480

One blast upon his bugle-horn  
 Were worth a thousand men.

And refluent through the pass of fear  
 The battle's tide was poured ;

Vanished the Saxon's struggling spear, 485  
 Vanished the mountain-sword.

As Bracklinn's chasm, so black and steep,  
 Receives her roaring linn,

As the dark caverns of the deep  
 Suck the wild whirlpool in, 490  
 So did the deep and darksome pass  
 Devour the battle's mingled mass ;  
 None linger now upon the plain,  
 Save those who ne'er shall fight again.

## XIX.

' Now westward rolls the battle's din, 495  
 That deep and doubling pass within. —  
 Minstrel, away ! the work of fate  
 Is bearing on ; its issue wait,  
 Where the rude Trosachs' dread defile  
 Opens on Katrine's lake and isle. 500  
 Gray Benvenue I soon repassed,  
 Loch Katrine lay beneath me cast.  
 The sun is set ; — the clouds are met,  
 The lowering scowl of heaven  
 An inky hue of livid blue 505  
 To the deep lake has given ;  
 Strange gusts of wind from mountain glen  
 Swept o'er the lake, then sunk again.  
 I heeded not the eddying surge,  
 Mine eye but saw the Trosachs' gorge, 510  
 Mine ear but heard that sullen sound,  
 Which like an earthquake shook the ground,  
 And spoke the stern and desperate strife  
 That parts not but with parting life,  
 Seeming, to minstrel ear, to toll 515  
 The dirge of many a passing soul.

Nearer it comes — the dim-wood glen  
 The martial flood disgorged again,  
     But not in mingled tide ;  
 The plaided warriors of the North                   520  
 High on the mountain thunder forth  
     And overhang its side,  
 While by the lake below appears  
 The darkening cloud of Saxon spears.  
 At weary bay each shattered band,                   525  
 Eying their foemen, sternly stand ;  
 Their banners stream like tattered sail,  
 That flings its fragments to the gale,  
 And broken arms and disarray  
 Marked the fell havoc of the day.                   530

## XX.

‘ Viewing the mountain’s ridge askance,  
 The Saxons stood in sullen trance,  
 Till Moray pointed with his lance,  
     And cried : “ Behold yon isle ! —  
 See ! none are left to guard its strand                   535  
 But women weak, that wring the hand :  
 ’T is there of yore the robber band  
     Their booty went to pile ; —  
 My purse, with bonnet-pieces store,  
 To him will swim a bow-shot o’er,                   540  
 And loose a shallop from the shore.

533. *wont*, were accustomed.

539. *bonnet-pieces*, gold coins on which the king’s head bore a bonnet instead of the usual crown.



Lightly we 'll tame the war-wolf then,  
 Lords of his mate, and brood, and den."  
 Forth from the ranks a spearman sprung,  
 On earth his casque and corselet rung, 545  
     He plunged him in the wave: —  
 All saw the deed, — the purpose knew,  
 And to their clamors Benvenue  
     A mingled echo gave;  
 The Saxons shout, their mate to cheer, 550  
 The helpless females scream for fear,  
 And yells for rage the mountaineer.  
 'T was then, as by the outcry riven,  
 Poured down at once the lowering heaven:  
 A whirlwind swept Loch Katrine's breast, 555  
 Her billows reared their snowy crest.  
 Well for the swimmer swelled they high,  
 To mar the Highland marksman's eye;  
 For round him showered, mid rain and hail,  
 The vengeful arrows of the Gael. 560  
 In vain. — He nears the isle — and lo!  
 His hand is on a shallop's bow.  
 Just then a flash of lightning came,  
 It tinged the waves and strand with flame;  
 I marked Duncraggan's widowed dame, 565  
 Behind an oak I saw her stand,  
 A naked dirk gleamed in her hand: —  
 It darkened, — but amid the moan  
 Of waves I heard a dying groan; —  
 Another flash! — the spearman floats 570

A weltering corse beside the boats,  
 And the stern matron o'er him stood,  
 Her hand and dagger streaming blood.

## XXI.

‘“ Revenge! revenge!” the Saxons cried,  
 The Gaels’ exulting shout replied. 575  
 Despite the elemental rage,  
 Again they hurried to engage;  
 But, ere they closed in desperate fight,  
 Bloody with spurring came a knight,  
 Sprung from his horse, and from a crag 580  
 Waved ’twixt the hosts a milk-white flag.  
 Clarion and trumpet by his side  
 Rung forth a truce-note high and wide,  
 While, in the Monarch’s name, afar  
 A herald’s voice forbade the war, 585  
 For Bothwell’s lord and Roderick bold —  
 Were both, he said, in captive hold.’ —  
 But here the lay made sudden stand,  
 The harp escaped the Minstrel’s hand!  
 Oft had he stolen a glance, to spy 590  
 How Roderick brooked his minstrelsy:  
 At first, the Chieftain, to the chime,  
 With lifted hand kept feeble time;  
 That motion ceased, — yet feeling strong  
 Varied his look as changed the song; 595  
 At length, no more his deafened ear  
 The minstrel melody can hear;  
 His face grows sharp, — his hands are clenched,

As if some pang his heart-strings wrenched ;  
 Set are his teeth, his fading eye 600  
 Is sternly fixed on vacancy ;  
 Thus, motionless and moanless, drew  
 His parting breath stout Roderick Dhu ! —  
 Old Allan-bane looked on aghast,  
 While grim and still his spirit passed ; 605  
 But when he saw that life was fled,  
 He poured his wailing o'er the dead.

## XXII.

## LAMENT

' And art thou cold and lowly laid,  
 Thy foeman's dread, thy people's aid,  
 Breadalbane's boast, Clan-Alpine's shade ! 610  
 For thee shall none a requiem say ? —  
 For thee, who loved the minstrel's lay,  
 For thee, of Bothwell's house the stay,  
 The shelter of her exile line,  
 E'en in this prison-house of thine, 615  
 I 'll wail for Alpine's honored Pine !

602. Thus. " Rob Roy, while on his deathbed, learned that a person with whom he was at enmity proposed to visit him. ' Raise me from my bed,' said the invalid ; ' throw my plaid around me, and bring me my claymore, dirk, and pistols, — it shall never be said that a foeman saw Rob Roy MacGregor defenseless and unarmed.' His foeman entered and paid his compliments, inquiring after the health of his formidable neighbor. Rob Roy maintained a cold, haughty civility during their short conference, and so soon as he had left the house, ' Now,' he said, ' all is over — let the piper play *We Return No More*, and he is said to have expired before the dirge was finished." — *Scott*.

610. Breadalbane. See Canto II. l. 416.

' What groans shall yonder valleys fill !  
 What shrieks of grief shall rend yon hill !  
 What tears of burning rage shall thrill,  
 When mourns thy tribe thy battles done, 620  
 Thy fall before the race was won,  
 Thy sword ungirt ere set of sun !  
 There breathes not clansman of thy line,  
 But would have given his life for thine.  
 O, woe for Alpine's honored Pine! 625

' Sad was thy lot on mortal stage! —  
 The captive thrush may brook the cage,  
 The prisoned eagle dies for rage.  
 Brave spirit, do not scorn my strain !  
 And, when its notes awake again, 630  
 Even she, so long beloved in vain,  
 Shall with my harp her voice combine,  
 And mix her woe and tears with mine,  
 To wail Clan-Alpine's honored Pine.'

## XXIII.

Ellen the while, with bursting heart, 635  
 Remained in lordly bower apart,  
 Where played, with many-colored gleams,  
 Through storied pane the rising beams.  
 In vain on gilded roof they fall,  
 And lightened up a tapestried wall, 640

631. Even she. See Canto II. ll. 748-754.

638. storied pane, windows painted with historical scenes.  
Cf. Milton's *Ii Penseroso* :

"Storied windows richly dight."

And for her use a menial train  
 A rich collation spread in vain.  
 The banquet proud, the chamber gay,  
 Scarce drew one curious glance astray ;  
 Or if she looked, 't was but to say, 645  
 With better omen dawned the day  
 In that lone isle, where waved on high  
 The dun-deer's hide for canopy ;  
 Where oft her noble father shared  
 The simple meal her care prepared, 650  
 While Lufra, crouching by her side,  
 Her station claimed with jealous pride,  
 And Douglas, bent on woodland game,  
 Spoke of the chase to Malcolm Græme,  
 Whose answer, oft at random made, 655  
 The wandering of his thoughts betrayed.  
 Those who such simple joys have known  
 Are taught to prize them when they 're gone.  
 But sudden, see, she lifts her head,  
 The window seeks with cautious tread. 660  
 What distant music has the power  
 To win her in this woful hour ?  
 'T was from a turret that o'erhung  
 Her latticed bower, the strain was sung.

## XXIV.

## LAY OF THE IMPRISONED HUNTSMAN

' My hawk is tired of perch and hood, 665  
 My idle greyhound loathes his food,  
 My horse is weary of his stall,

And I am sick of captive thrall.  
I wish I were as I have been,  
Hunting the hart in forest green, 670  
With bended bow and bloodhound free,  
For that 's the life is meet for me.

'I hate to learn the ebb of time  
From yon dull steeple's drowsy chime,  
Or mark it as the sunbeams crawl, 675  
Inch after inch, along the wall.  
The lark was wont my matins ring,  
The sable rook my vespers sing;  
These towers, although a king's they be,  
Have not a hall of joy for me. 680

'No more at dawning morn I rise,  
And sun myself in Ellen's eyes,  
Drive the fleet deer the forest through,  
And homeward wend with evening dew;  
A blithesome welcome blithely meet, 685  
And lay my trophies at her feet,  
While fled the eve on wing of glee, —  
That life is lost to love and me!'

## XXV.

The heart-sick lay was hardly said,  
The listener had not turned her head, 690  
It trickled still, the starting tear,  
When light a footstep struck her ear,  
And Snowdoun's graceful Knight was near.

She turned the hastier, lest again  
 The prisoner should renew his strain. 695  
 'O welcome, brave Fitz-James!' she said;  
 'How may an almost orphan maid  
 Pay the deep debt — ' 'O say not so!  
 To me no gratitude you owe.  
 Not mine, alas! the boon to give, 700  
 And bid thy noble father live;  
 I can but be thy guide, sweet maid,  
 With Scotland's King thy suit to aid.  
 No tyrant he, though ire and pride  
 May lay his better mood aside. 705  
 Come, Ellen, come! 't is more than time,  
 He holds his court at morning prime.'  
 With beating heart, and bosom wrung,  
 As to a brother's arm she clung.  
 Gently he dried the falling tear, 710  
 And gently whispered hope and cheer;  
 Her faltering steps half led, half staid,  
 Through gallery fair and high arcade,  
 Till at his touch its wings of pride  
 A portal arch unfolded wide. 715

697. an almost orphan. Because she is uncertain of her father's fate. Observe the use of *almost* as an attribute to *orphan*, which is here used as an adjective.

702. I can but be thy guide. I can be *nothing except* thy guide. See *supra*, note l. 265.

707. at morning prime, at earliest morning. But *prime* is here a noun, and *morning* an adjective.

709. As to a brother's arm. Adverbial clause of manner to *clung*: "she clung as she would cling to a brother's arm."

## XXVI.

Within 't was brilliant all and light,  
 A thronging scene of figures bright;  
 It glowed on Ellen's dazzled sight,  
 As when the setting sun has given  
 Ten thousand hues to summer even, 720  
 And from their tissue fancy frames  
 Aerial knights and fairy dames.  
 Still by Fitz-James her footing staid;  
 A few faint steps she forward made,  
 Then slow her drooping head she raised, 725  
 And fearful round the presence gazed;  
 For him she sought who owned this state,  
 The dreaded Prince whose will was fate! —  
 She gazed on many a princely port  
 Might well have ruled a royal court; 730  
 On many a splendid garb she gazed, —  
 Then turned bewildered and amazed,  
 For all stood bare; and in the room  
 Fitz-James alone wore cap and plume.  
 To him each lady's look was lent, 735  
 On him each courtier's eye was bent;

719. As when, "as it glows when." *It glows*, here, like *it was brilliant*, and *it glowed*, above, is the impersonal (more correctly *unipersonal*) construction; and *it* is an indefinite pronoun, referring not to any special subject, but to the action of the verb: *it glowed* = glowing went on.

723. *by . . . staid*, beside . . . remained. Observe that *staid* is here intransitive, to *remain*: in l. 712 it is transitive, to *make to stand*, to support.

729. *port*, bearing, carriage.

730. *Might*. Supply *which* as subject of *might*.



Midst furs and silks and jewels sheen,  
 He stood, in simple Lincoln green,  
 The centre of the glittering ring, —  
 And Snowdoun's Knight is Scotland's King! 740

## · XXVII.

As wreath of snow on mountain-breast  
 Slides from the rock that gave it rest,  
 Poor Ellen glided from her stay,  
 And at the Monarch's feet she lay;  
 No word her choking voice commands, — 745  
 She showed the ring, — she clasped her hands.  
 O, not a moment could he brook,  
 The generous Prince, that suppliant look!  
 Gently he raised her, — and, the while,  
 Checked with a glance the circle's smile; 750  
 Graceful, but grave, her brow he kissed,  
 And bade her terrors be dismissed: —  
 'Yes, fair; the wandering poor Fitz-James  
 The fealty of Scotland claims.  
 To him thy woes, thy wishes, bring; 755  
 He will redeem his signet ring.

737. *sheen*. An adjective. See Canto V. l. 10.

740. *Snowdoun's Knight is Scotland's King*. "James V. was a monarch whose good and benevolent intentions often rendered his romantic freaks venial, if not respectable, since, from his anxious attention to the interests of the lower and most oppressed class of his subjects, he was, as we have seen, popularly termed the *King of the Commons*. For the purpose of seeing that justice was regularly administered he used to traverse the vicinage of his several palaces in various disguises." — *Scott*.

741. *wreath of snow*, a snowdrift. See Canto IV. l. 794.

Ask naught for Douglas ; — yester even,  
 His Prince and he have much forgiven ;  
 Wrong hath he had from slanderous tongue,  
 I, from his rebel kinsmen, wrong. 760  
 We would not, to the vulgar crowd,  
 Yield what they craved with clamor loud ;  
 Calmly we heard and judged his cause,  
 Our council aided and our laws.  
 I stanch'd thy father's death-feud stern 765  
 With stout De Vaux and gray Glencairn ;  
 And Bothwell's Lord henceforth we own  
 The friend and bulwark of our throne. —  
 But, lovely infidel, how now ?  
 What clouds thy misbelieving brow ? 770  
 Lord James of Douglas, lend thine aid ;  
 Thou must confirm this doubting maid.'

## XXVIII.

Then forth the noble Douglas sprung,  
 And on his neck his daughter hung.  
 The Monarch drank, that happy hour, 775  
 The sweetest, holiest draught of Power, —  
 When it can say with godlike voice,  
 Arise, sad Virtue, and rejoice !  
 Yet would not James the general eye  
 On nature's raptures long should pry ; 780  
 He stepped between — 'Nay, Douglas, nay,  
 Steal not my proselyte away !

782. *proselyte*, one who is converted. Cf. *infidel*, l. 769 above.

The riddle 't is my right to read,  
 That brought this happy chance to speed.  
 Yes, Ellen, when disguised I stray 785  
 In life's more low but happier way,  
 'T is under name which veils my power,  
 Nor falsely veils, — for Stirling's tower  
 Of yore the name of Snowdoun claims,  
 And Normans call me James Fitz-James. 790  
 Thus watch I o'er insulted laws,  
 Thus learn to right the injured cause.'  
 Then, in a tone apart and low, —  
 ' Ah, little traitress! none must know  
 What idle dream, what lighter thought, 795  
 What vanity full dearly bought,  
 Joined to thine eye's dark witchcraft, drew  
 My spell-bound steps to Benvenue  
 In dangerous hour, and all but gave  
 Thy Monarch's life to mountain glaive!' 800  
 Aloud he spoke: 'Thou still dost hold  
 That little talisman of gold,

784. to speed, to success, to a successful issue.

785. when disguised I stray. The name which James generally assumed in these wanderings was the *Gude-man* (or "farmer") of *Ballangiech*. Scott says the two excellent comic songs, entitled *The Gaberlunzie Man* and *We'll gae nae mair a rovin'*, are said to have been founded on the success of King James's adventures when traveling in the disguise of a beggar. "The latter," Scott adds, "is perhaps the best comic ballad in any language."

789. the name of Snowdoun. "William of Worcester, who wrote about the middle of the fifteenth century, calls Stirling Castle 'Snowdoun.' Sir David Lindsay bestows the same epithet upon it."

Pledge of my faith, Fitz-James's ring, —  
 What seeks fair Ellen of the King ?'

## XXIX.

Full well the conscious maiden guessed 805  
 He probed the weakness of her breast ;  
 But with that consciousness there came  
 A lightening of her fears from Græme,  
 And more she deemed the Monarch's ire  
 Kindled 'gainst him who for her sire 810  
 Rebellious broadsword boldly drew ;  
 And, to her generous feeling true,  
 She craved the grace of Roderick Dhu.  
 'Forbear thy suit ; — the King of kings  
 Alone can stay life's parting wings. 815  
 I know his heart, I know his hand,  
 Have shared his cheer, and proved his brand ; —  
 My fairest earldom would I give  
 To bid Clan-Alpine's Chieftain live ! —  
 Hast thou no other boon to crave ? 820  
 No other captive friend to save ?'  
 Blushing, she turned her from the King,  
 And to the Douglas gave the ring,  
 As if she wished her sire to speak  
 The suit that stained her glowing cheek. 825  
 'Nay, then, my pledge has lost its force,

808. *lightening*, relieving, or making lighter.

813. *grace*, pardon ; generally attributed to him who grants, not, as here, to him who receives it. *The grace of Roderick Dhu* means "the grace, or pardon, of the King for Roderick Dhu."

And stubborn justice holds her course,  
 Malcolm, come forth! — and, at the word,  
 Down kneeled the Græme to Scotland's Lord.  
 'For thee, rash youth, no suppliant sues, 830  
 From thee may Vengeance claim her dues,  
 Who, nurtured underneath our smile,  
 Hast paid our care by treacherous wile,  
 And sought amid thy faithful clan  
 A refuge for an outlawed man, 835  
 Dishonoring thus thy loyal name. —  
 Fetters and warder for the Græme!'

His chain of gold the King unstrung,  
 The links o'er Malcolm's neck he flung,  
 Then gently drew the glittering band, 840  
 And laid the clasp on Ellen's hand.

---

HARP of the North, farewell! The hills grow dark,  
 On purple peaks a deeper shade descending;  
 In twilight copse the glow-worm lights her spark,  
 The deer, half seen, are to the covert wending. 845  
 Resume thy wizard elm! the fountain lending,  
 And the wild breeze, thy wilder minstrelsy;  
 Thy numbers sweet with nature's vespers blend-  
 ing,  
 With distant echo from the fold and lea,  
 And herd-boy's evening pipe, and hum of housing  
 bee. 850

Yet once again, farewell, thou Minstrel Harp!  
 Yet, once again, forgive my feeble sway,

And little reck I of the censure sharp

May idly cavil at an idle lay.

Much have I owed thy strains on life's long  
way, 855

Through secret woes the world has never known,

When on the weary night dawned wearier day,

And bitterer was the grief devoured alone. —

That I o'erlive such woes, Enchantress! is thine  
own.

Hark! as my lingering footsteps slow retire, 860

Some Spirit of the Air has waked thy string!

'T is now a seraph bold, with touch of fire,

'T is now the brush of Fairy's frolic wing.

Receding now, the dying numbers ring

Fainter and fainter down the rugged dell; 865

And now the mountain breezes scarcely bring

A wandering witch-note of the distant spell —

And now, 't is silent all! — Enchantress, fare thee  
well!

854. *cavil*, to make captious objection.

859. *o'erlive*, outlive.



The following song is omitted from Canto VI., following l. 89 :

v.

SOLDIER'S SONG

Our vicar still preaches that Peter and Poule 90  
 Laid a swinging long curse on the bonny brown bowl,  
 That there 's wrath and despair in the jolly black-jack,  
 And the seven deadly sins in a flagon of sack ;  
 Yet whoop, Barnaby ! off with thy liquor,  
 Drink upsees out, and a fig for the vicar ! 95

Our vicar he calls it damnation to sip  
 The ripe ruddy dew of a woman's dear lip,  
 Says that Beelzebub lurks in her kerchief so sly,  
 And Apollyon shoots darts from her merry black eye ;  
 Yet whoop, Jack ! kiss Gillian the quicker, 100  
 Till she bloom like a rose, and a fig for the vicar !

Our vicar thus preaches, — and why should he not ?  
 For the dues of his cure are the placket and pot ;  
 And 't is right of his office poor laymen to lurch  
 Who infringe the domains of our good Mother Church. 105  
 Yet whoop, bully-boys ! off with your liquor,  
 Sweet Marjorie 's the word, and a fig for the vicar !













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