

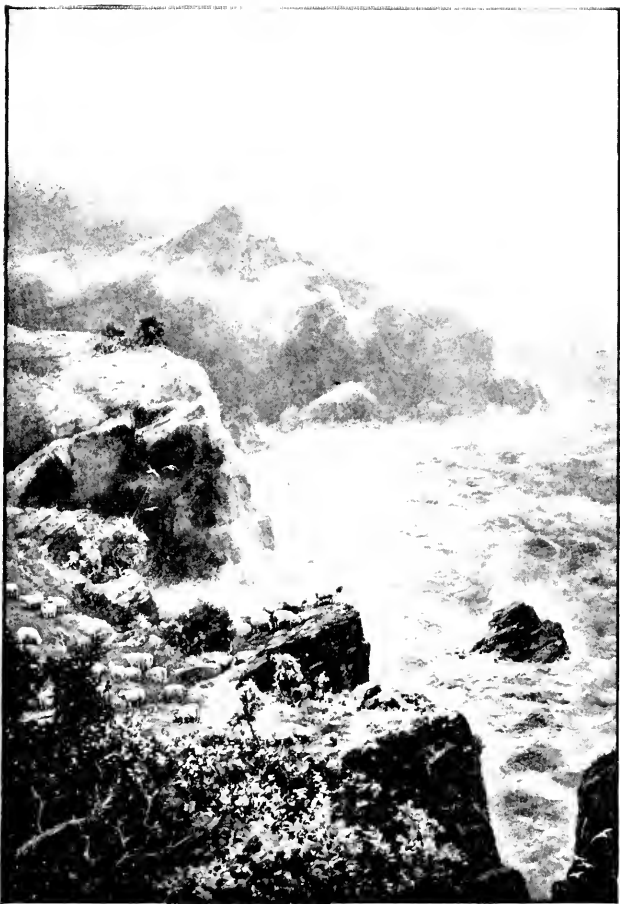


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SCOTT'S POETICAL WORKS

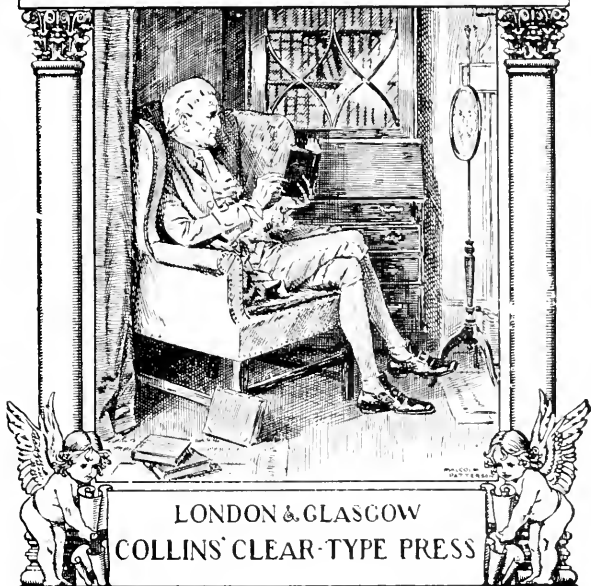
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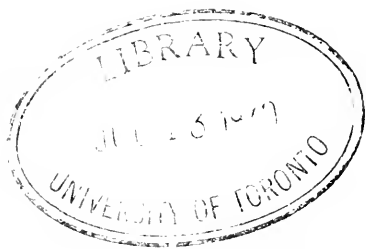
Henry Jones & Co.

NO. 1. "The whitening breakers sound so near, Page 132.
Where, boiling through the rocks, they roar." A

THE
POETICAL WORKS
OF
SIR WALTER SCOTT



LONDON & GLASGOW
COLLINS' CLEAR-TYPE PRESS



DO
NOT
REPLACE
THIS

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L

THE
LAY OF THE LAST MINSTREL.

A POEM IN SIX CANTOS.

TO THE
RIGHT HONOURABLE
CHARLES EARL OF DALKEITH,

THIS POEM IS INSCRIBED BY
THE AUTHOR.

PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION.

The Poem, now offered to the Public, is intended to illustrate the customs and manners which anciently prevailed on the Borders of England and Scotland. The inhabitants living in a state partly pastoral and partly warlike, and combining habits of constant depredation with the influence of a rude spirit of chivalry, were often engaged in scenes highly susceptible of poetical ornament. As the description of scenery and manners was more the object of the Author than a combined and regular narrative, the plan of the Ancient Metrical Romance was adopted, which allows greater latitude, in this respect, than would be consistent with the dignity of a regular Poem. The same model offered other facilities, as it permits an occasional alteration of measure, which, in some degree, authorises the change of rhythm in the text. The machinery, also, adopted from popular belief, would have seemed puerile in a Poem which did not partake of the rudeness of the old Ballad, or Metrical Romance.

For these reasons, the Poem was put into the mouth of an ancient Minstrel, the last of the race, who, as he is supposed to have survived the Revolution, might have caught somewhat of the refinement of modern poetry, without losing the simplicity of his original model. The date of the Tale itself is about the middle of the sixteenth century, when most of the personages actually flourished. The time occupied by the action is Three A Nights and Three Days.

INTRODUCTION.

THE way was long, the wind was cold,
 The Minstrel was infirm and old ;
 His wither'd cheek, and tresses gray,
 Seem'd to have known a better day ;
 The harp, his sole remaining joy,
 Was carried by an orphan boy.
 The last of all the Bards was he,
 Who sung of Border chivalry ;
 For, welladay ! their date was fled,
 His tuneful brethren all were dead ;
 And he, neglected and oppress'd,
 Wish'd to be with them, and at rest.
 No more on prancing palfrey borne,
 He caroll'd, light as lark at morn ;
 No longer courted and caress'd,
 High placed in hall, a welcome guest,
 He pour'd, to lord and lady gay,
 The unpremeditated lay :
 Old times were changed, old manners gone ;
 A stranger fill'd the Stuarts' throne ;
 The bigots of the iron time
 Had call'd his harmless art a crime.
 A wandering Harper, scorn'd and poor,
 He begg'd his bread from door to door.
 And tuned, to please a peasant's ear,
 The harp, a king had loved to hear.

He pass'd where Newark's stately tower
 Looks out from Yarrow's birchen bower :
 The Minstrel gazed with wishful eye—
 No humbler resting-place was nigh,
 With hesitating step at last,
 The embattled portal arch he pass'd,
 Whose ponderous grate and massy bar
 Had oft roll'd back the tide of war,
 But never closed the iron door
 Against the desolate and poor.

The Duchess marked his weary pace,
His timid mien, and reverend face,
And bade her page the menials tell,
That they should tend the old man well :
For she had known adversity,
Though born in such a high degree ;
In pride of power, in beauty's bloom,
Had wept o'er Monmouth's bloody tomb !

When kindness had his wants supplied,
And the old man was gratified,
Began to rise his minstrel pride :
And he began to talk anon,
Of good Earl Francis, dead and gone,
And of Earl Walter, rest him, God !
A braver ne'er to battle rode ;
And how full many a tale he knew,
Of the old warriors of Buccleuch :
And, would the noble Duchess deign
To listen to an old man's strain,
Though stiff his hand, his voice though weak,
He thought even yet, the sooth to speak,
That, if she loved the harp to hear,
He could make music to her ear.

The humble boon was soon obtain'd ;
The Aged Minstrel audience gain'd.
But, when he reach'd the room of state,
Where she, with all her ladies, sate,
Perchance he wish'd his boon denied :
For, when to tune his harp he tried,
His trembling hand had lost the ease,
Which marks security to please ;
And scenes, long past, of joy and pain,
Came wildering o'er his aged brain—
He tried to tune his harp in vain !
The pitying Duchess praised its chime,
And gave him heart, and gave him time,
Till every string's according glee
Was blended into harmony.

And then, he said, he would full fain
 He could recall an ancient strain,
 He never thought to sing again.
 It was not framed for village churls,
 But for high dames and mighty earls ;
 He had play'd it to King Charles the Good,
 When he kept court in Holyrood ;
 And much he wish'd, yet fear'd, to try
 The long-forgotten melody.
 Amid the strings his fingers stray'd,
 And an uncertain warbling made,
 And oft he shook his hoary head.
 But when he caught the measure wild,
 The old man raised his face, and smiled ;
 And lighten'd up his faded eye,
 With all a poet's ecstasy !
 In varying cadence, soft or strong,
 He swept the sounding chords along :
 The present scene, the future lot,
 His toils, his wants, were all forgot :
 Cold diffidence, and age's frost,
 In the full tide of song were lost ;
 Each blank, in faithless memory void,
 The poet's glowing thought supplied ;
 And, while his harp responsive rung,
 'Twas thus the LATEST MINSTREL sung.

CANTO FIRST.

I.

THE feast was over in Branksome tower,^r
 And the Ladye had gone to her secret bower ;
 Her bower that was guarded by word and by spell
 Deadly to hear, and deadly to tell—
 Jesu Maria, shield us well !
 No living wight, save the Ladye alone,
 Had dared to cross the threshold stone.

II.

The tables were drawn, it was idlesse all ;
 Knight, and page, and household squire,
 Loiter'd through the lofty hall,
 Or crowded round the ample fire :
 The stag-hounds, weary with the chase,
 Lay stretch'd upon the rushy floor,
 And urged, in dreams, the forest race,
 From Teviot-stone to Eskdale-moor.

III.

Nine-and-twenty knights of fame
 Hung their shields in Branksome-Hall ;²
 Nine-and-twenty squires of name
 Brought them their steeds to bower from stall ;
 Nine-and-twenty yeomen tall
 Waited, duteous, on them all :
 They were all knights of mettle true,
 Kinsmen to the bold Buccleuch.

IV.

Ten of them were sheathed in steel,
 With belted sword, and spur on heel :
 They quitted not their harness bright,
 Neither by day, nor yet by night :
 They lay down to rest,
 With corslet laced,
 Pillow'd on buckler cold and hard ;
 They carved at the meal
 With gloves of steel,
 And they drank the red wine through the helmet barr'd.

V.

Ten squires, ten yeomen, mail-clad men,
 Waited the beck of the warders ten ;
 Thirty steeds, both fleet and wight,
 Stood saddled in stable day and night,

Barbed with frontlet of steel, I trow,
 And with Jedwood-axe at saddlebow ;³
 A hundred more fed free in stall :—
 Such was the custom of Branksome-Hall.

VI.

Why do these steeds stand ready dight ?
 Why watch these warriors, arm'd, by night ?—
 They watch, to hear the blood-hound baying ;
 They watch to hear the war-horn braying ;
 To see St. George's red cross streaming,
 To see the midnight beacon gleaming :
 They watch, against Southern force and guile,
 Lest Scroop, or Howard, or Percy's powers,
 Threaten Branksome's lordly towers,
 From Warkworth, or Naworth, or merry Carlisle.⁴

VII.

Such is the custom of Branksome-Hall.—
 Many a valiant knight is here ;
 But he, the chieftain of them all,
 His sword hangs rusting on the wall,
 Beside his broken spear.
 Bards long shall tell
 How Lord Walter fell !⁵
 When startled burghers fled, afar,
 The furies of the Border war ;
 When the streets of high Dunedin
 Saw lances gleam, and falchions redden,
 And heard the slogan's deadly yell—
 Then the Chief of Branksome fell.

VIII.

Can piety the discord heal,
 Or stanch the death-feud's enmity ?
 Can Christian lore, can patriot zeal,
 Can love of blessed charity ?

No ! vainly to each holy shrine,
 In mutual pilgrimage, they drew ;
 Implored, in vain, the grace divine
 For chiefs, their own red falchions slew :
 While Cessford owns the rule of Carr,
 While Ettrick boasts the line of Scott,
 The slaughter'd chiefs, the mortal jar,
 The havoc of the feudal war,
 Shall never, never be forgot !⁶

IX.

In sorrow o'er Lord Walter's bier
 The warlike foresters had bent ;
 And many a flower, and many a tear,
 Old Teviot's maids and matrons lent :
 But o'er her warrior's bloody bier
 The Ladye dropp'd nor flower nor tear !
 Vengeance, deep-brooding o'er the slain,
 Had lock'd the source of softer woe ;
 And burning pride, and high disdain,
 Forbade the rising tear to flow ;
 Until, amid his sorrowing clan,
 Her son lisp'd from the nurse's knee—
 " And if I live to be a man,
 My father's death revenged shall be !"
 Then fast the mother's tears did seek
 To dew the infant's kindling cheek.

X.

All loose her negligent attire,
 All loose her golden hair,
 Hung Margaret o'er her slaughter'd sire,
 And wept in wild despair,
 But not alone the bitter tear
 Had filial grief supplied ;
 For hopeless love, and anxious fear,
 Had lent their mingled tide :

Nor in her mother's alter'd eye
 Dared she to look for sympathy.
 Her lover, 'gainst her father's clan,
 With Carr in arms had stood,⁷
 When Mathouse-burn to Melrose ran,
 All purple with their blood ;
 And well she knew, her mother dread,
 Before Lord Cranstoun she should wed,⁸
 Would see her on her dying bed.

XI.

Of noble race the Ladye came,
 Her father was a clerk of fame,
 Of Bethune's line of Picardie :⁹
 He learn'd the art that none may name,
 In Padua, far beyond the sea.¹⁰
 Men said, he changed his mortal frame
 By feat of magic mystery ;
 For when, in studious mood, he paced
 St. Andrew's cloister'd hall,
 His form no darkening shadow traced
 Upon the sunny wall !¹¹

XII.

And of his skill, as bards avow,
 He taught that Ladye fair,
 Till to her bidding she could bow
 The viewless forms of air.¹²
 And now she sits in secret bower,
 In old Lord David's western tower,
 And listens to a heavy sound,
 That moans the mossy turrets round.
 Is it the roar of Teviot's tide,
 That chafes against the scaur's red side ?
 Is it the wind that swings the oaks ?
 Is it the echo from the rocks ?
 What may it be, the heavy sound,
 That moans old Branksome's turrets round ?

XIII.

At the sullen, moaning sound,
 The ban-dogs bay and howl ;
 And, from the turrets round,
 Loud whoops the startled owl.
 In the hall, both squire and knight
 Swore that a storm was near,
 And looked forth to view the night ;
 But the night was still and clear !

XIV.

From the sound of Teviot's tide,
 Chafing with the mountain's side,
 From the groan of the wind-swung oak,
 From the sullen echo of the rock,
 From the voice of the coming storm,
 The Ladye knew it well !
 It was the Spirit of the Flood that spoke,
 And he called on the Spirit of the Fell.

XV.

RIVER SPIRIT.

“Sleep'st thou, brother ?”—

MOUNTAIN SPIRIT.

—“Brother, nay—

On my hills the moon-beams play.
 From Craik-cross to Skelfhill-pen,
 By every rill, in every glen,
 Merry elves their morris pacing,
 To aërial minstrelsy,
 Emerald rings on brown heath tracing,
 Trip it deft and merrily.
 Up, and mark their nimble feet !
 Up and list their music sweet !”—

XVI.

RIVER SPIRIT.

"Tears of an imprison'd maiden
 Mix with my polluted stream ;
 Margaret of Branksome, sorrow-laden,
 Mourns beneath the moon's pale beam.
 Tell me, thou, who view'st the stars,
 When shall cease these feudal jars ?
 What shall be the maiden's fate ?
 Who shall be the maiden's mate ?"—

XVII.

MOUNTAIN SPIRIT.

"Arthur's slow wain his course doth roll,
 In utter darkness round the pole ;
 The Northern Bear lowers black and grim ;
 Orion's studded belt is dim ;
 Twinkling faint, and distant far,
 Shimmers through mist each planet star ;
 Ill may I read their high decree !
 But no kind influence deign they shower
 On Teviot's tide, and Branksome's tower,
 Till pride be quell'd, and love be free."

XVIII.

The unearthly voices ceast,
 And the heavy sound was still ;
 It died on the river's breast,
 It died on the side of the hill.
 But round Lord David's tower
 The sound still floated near ;
 For it rung in the Ladye's bower,
 And it rung in the Ladye's ear.
 She raised her stately head,
 And her heart throbb'd high with pride :—

| "Your mountains shall bend,
 And your streams ascend,
 Ere Margaret be our foeman's bride!"

XIX.

The Ladye sought the lofty hall,
 Where many a bold retainer lay,
 And, with jocund din, among them all,
 Her son pursued his infant play.
 A fancied moss-trooper,¹³ the boy
 The truncheon of a spear bestrode,
 And round the hall, right merrily,
 In mimic foray rode.
 Even bearded knights, in arms grown old,
 Share in his frolic gambols bore,
 Albeit their hearts of rugged mould,
 Were stubborn as the steel they wore.
 For the grey warriors prophesied,
 How the brave boy, in future war,
 Should tame the Unicorn's pride,
 Exalt the Crescent and the Star.¹⁴

XX.

The Ladye forgot her purpose high,
 One moment, and no more ;
 One moment gazed with a mother's eye,
 As she paused at the arched door :
 Then from amid the armed train,
 She call'd to her William of Deloraine.¹⁵

XXI.

A stark moss-trooping Scott was he,
 As e'er couch'd Border lance by knee ;
 | Through Solway sands, | through Tarras moss,
 Blindfold, he knew the paths to cross ;
 By wily turns, by desperate bounds,
 Had baffled Percy's best blood-hounds ;¹⁶

In Eske or Liddel, fords were none,
 But he would ride them, one by one;
 Alike to him was time or tide,
 December's snow, or July's pride;
 Alike to him was tide or time,
 Moonless midnight, or matin prime:
 Steady of heart, and stout of hand,
 As ever drove prey from Cumberland;
 Five times outlawed had he been,
 By England's King, and Scotland's Queen.

XXII.

"Sir William of Deloraine, good at need,
 Mount thee on the wightest steed;
 Spare not to spur, nor stint to ride,
 Until thou come to fair Tweedside;
 And in Melrose's holy pile
 Seek thou the Monk of St. Mary's aisle.
 Greet the Father well from me;
 Say that the fated hour is come,
 And to-night he shall watch with thee,
 To win the treasure of the tomb:
 For this will be St. Michael's night,
 And, though stars be dim, the moon is bright;
 And the Cross, of bloody red,
 Will point to the grave of the mighty dead.

XXIII.

"What he gives thee, see thou keep;
 Stay not thou for food or sleep:
 Be it scroll, or be it book,
 Into it, Knight, thou must not look;
 If thou readest, thou art lorn!
 Better had'st thou ne'er been born."—

XXIV.

"O swiftly can speed my dapple-grey steed,
 Which drinks of the Teviot clear;

Ere break of day," the Warrior 'gan say,
 "Again will I be here :
 And safer by none may thy errand be done,
 Than, noble dame, by me ;
 Letter nor line know I never a one,
 Wer't my neck-verse at Hairibee."

XXV.

Soon in his saddle sate he fast,
 And soon the steep descent he past,
 Soon cross'd the sounding barbican,
 And soon the Teviot side he won.
 Eastward the wooded path he rode,
 Green hazels o'er his basnet nod ;
 He passed the Peel of Goldiland,
 And cross'd old Borthwick's roaring strand ;
 Dimly he view'd the Moat-hill's mound,
 Where Druid shades still flitted round :¹⁷
 In Hawick twinkled many a light ;
 Behind him soon they set in night ;
 And soon he spurr'd his courser keen
 Beneath the tower of Hazeldean.¹⁸

XXVI.

The clattering hoofs the watchmen mark ;—
 "Stand, ho ! thou courier of the dark."—
 "For Branksome, ho !" the knight rejoin'd,
 And left the friendly tower behind.
 He turn'd him now from Teviotside,
 And, guided by the tinkling rill,
 Northward the dark ascent did ride,
 And gained the moor at Horsliehill ;
 Broad on the left before him lay,
 For many a mile, the Roman way.¹

XXVII.

A moment now he slack'd his speed,
 A moment breathed his panting steed ;

Drew saddle-girth and corslet-band,
 And loosen'd in the sheath his brand.
 On Minto-crag the moonbeams glint,¹⁹
 Where Barnhill hew'd his bed of flint ;
 Who flung his outlaw'd limbs to rest,
 Where falcons hang their giddy nest,
 Mid cliffs, from whence his eagle eye
 For many a league his prey could spy ;
 Cliffs, doubling, on their echoes borne,
 The terrors of the robber's horn ;
 Cliffs, which, for many a later year,
 The warbling Doric reed shall hear,
 When some sad swain shall teach the grove,
 Ambition is no cure for love !

XXVIII.

Unchallenged, thence pass'd Deloraine,
 To ancient Riddel's fair domain,²⁰
 Where Aill, from mountains freed,
 Down from the lakes did raving come ;
 Each wave was crested with tawny foam,
 Like the mane of a chestnut steed.
 In vain ! no torrent, deep or broad,
 Might bar the bold moss-trooper's road.

XXIX.

At the first plunge the horse sunk low,
 And the water broke o'er the saddlebow ;
 Above the foaming tide, I ween,
 Scarce half the charger's neck was seen ;
 For he was barded from counter to tail,
 And the rider was armed complete in mail ;
 Never heavier man and horse
 Stemm'd a midnight torrent's force.
 The warrior's very plume, I say,
 Was daggl'd by the dashing spray ;
 Yet, through good heart, and Our Ladye's grace,
 At length he gain'd the landing place.

XXX.

Now Bowden Moor the march-man won,
 And sternly shook his plumed head,
 As glanced his eye o'er Halidon ;
 For on his soul the slaughter red
 Of that unhallow'd morn' arose
 When first the Scott and Carr were foes ;
 When royal James beheld the fray,
 Prize to the victor of the day ;
 When Home and Douglas, in the van,
 Bore down Buccleuch's retiring clan,
 Till gallant Cessford's heart-blood dear
 Reek'd on dark Elliot's Border spear.

XXXI.

In bitter mood he spurred fast,
 And soon the hated heath was past ;
 And far beneath, in lustre wan,
 Old Melros' rose, and fair Tweed ran :
 Like some tall rock with lichens grey,
 Seem'd dimly huge, the dark Abbaye.
 When Hawick he pass'd, had curfew rung,
 Now midnight lauds were in Melrose sung.
 The sound, upon the fitful gale,
 In solemn wise did rise and fail,
 Like that wild harp, whose magic tone
 Is waken'd by the winds alone.
 But when Melrose he reach'd, 'twas silence all ;
 He meetly stabled his steed in stall,
 And sought the convent's lonely wall.²¹

HERE paused the harp ; and with its swell
 The Master's fire and courage fell ;
 Dejectedly, and low, he bow'd,
 And, gazing timid on the crowd,
 He seem'd to seek, in every eye,
 If they approved his minstrelsy ;
 And, diffident of present praise,

Somewhat he spoke of former days,
 And how old age, and wand'ring long,
 Had done his hand and harp some wrong.
 The Duchess, and her daughters fair,
 And every gentle lady there,
 Each after each, in due degree,
 Gave praises to his melody ;
 His hand was true, his voice was clear,
 And much they long'd the rest to hear.
 Encouraged thus, the Aged Man,
 After meet rest, again began.

CANTO SECOND.

I.

IF thou would'st view fair Melrose aright,
 Go visit it by the pale moonlight ;
 For the gay beams of lightsome day
 Gild, but to flout, the ruins grey.
 When the broken arches are black in night,
 And each shafted oriel glimmers white ;
 When the cold light's uncertain shower
 Streams on the ruin'd central tower ;
 When buttress and buttress, alternately,
 Seem framed of ebon and ivory ;
 When silver edges the imagery,
 And the scrolls that teach thee to live and die ;
 When distant Tweed is heard to rave,
 And the owlet to hoot o'er the dead man's grave,
 Then go—but go alone the while—
 Then view St. David's ruin'd pile ;²²
 And, home returning, soothly swear,
 Was never scene so sad and fair !

II.

Short halt did Deloraine make there ;
 Little reck'd he of the scene so fair :

With dagger's hilt, on the wicket strong,
 He struck full loud, and struck full long.
 The porter hurried to the gate—
 "Who knocks so loud, and knocks so late?"
 "From Branksome I," the warrior cried;
 And straight the wicket open'd wide:
 For Branksome's Chiefs had in battle stood,
 To fence the rights of fair Melrose;
 And lands and livings, many a rood,
 Had gifted the shrine for their souls' repose.

III.

Bold Deloraine his errand said;
 The porter bent his humble head;
 With torch in hand, and feet unshod,
 And noiseless step, the path he trod:
 The arched cloister, far and wide,
 Rang to the warrior's clanking stride,
 Till, stooping low his lofty crest,
 He enter'd the cell of the ancient priest,
 And lifted his barred aventayle,
 To hail the Monk of St. Mary's aisle.

IV.

"The Ladye of Branksome greets thee by me,
 Says, that the fated hour is come,
 And that to-night I shall watch with thee,
 To win the treasure of the tomb."
 From sackcloth couch the Monk arose,
 With toil his stiffen'd limbs he rear'd;
 A hundred years had flung their snows
 On his thin locks and floating beard.

V.

And strangely on the Knight look'd he,
 And his blue eyes gleam'd wild and wide;
 "And, darest thou, Warrior! seek to see
 What heaven and hell alike would hide?"

My breast, in belt of iron pent,
 With shirt of hair and scourge of thorn ;
 For threescore years, in penance spent,
 My knees those flinty stones have worn ;
 Yet all too little to atone
 For knowing what should ne'er be known.
 Would'st thou thy every future year
 In ceaseless prayer and penance dree,
 Yet wait thy latter end with fear—
 Then, daring Warrior, follow me !”—

VI.

“Penance, father, will I none ;
 Prayer know I hardly one ;
 For mass or prayer can I rarely tarry,
 Save to patter an Ave Mary,
 When I ride on a Border foray.”²³
 Other prayer can I none ;
 So speed me my errand, and let me be gone.”

VII.

Again on the Knight look'd the Churchman old,
 And again he sighed heavily ;
 For he had himself been a warrior bold,
 And fought in Spain and Italy.
 And he thought on the days that were long since by,
 When his limbs were strong, and his courage was
 high :—
 Now, slow and faint, he led the way,
 Where, cloister'd round, the garden lay ;
 The pillar'd arches were over their head,
 And beneath their feet were the bones of the dead.

VIII.

Spreading herbs, and flowerets bright,
 Glisten'd with the dew of night ;
 Nor herb, nor floweret, glisten'd there,
 But was carved in the cloister-arches as fair.

The Monk gazed long on the lovely moon,
 Then into the night he looked forth ;
 And red and bright the streamers light
 Were dancing in the glowing north.
 So had he seen, in fair Castile,
 The youth in glittering squadrons start ;²⁴
 Sudden the flying jennet wheel,
 And hurl the unexpected dart.
 He knew, by the streamers that shot so bright,
 That spirits were riding the northern light.

IX.

By a steel-clenched postern door,
 They enter'd now the chancel tall ;
 The darken'd roof rose high aloof
 On pillars lofty and light and small :
 The key-stone, that lock'd each ribbed aisle,
 Was a fleur-de-lys, or a quatre-feuille ;
 The corbells were carved grotesque and grim ;
 And the pillars, with cluster'd shafts so trim,
 With base and with capital flourish'd around,
 Seem'd bundles of lances which garlands had bound.

X.

Full many a scutcheon and banner riven,
 Shook to the cold night-wind of heaven,
 Around the screened altar's pale ;
 And there the dying lamps did burn,
 Before thy low and lonely urn,
 O gallant Chief of Otterburne !²⁵
 And thine, dark Knight of Liddesdale !²⁶
 O fading honours of the dead !
 O high ambition, lowly laid !

XI.

The moon on the east oriel shone²⁷
 Through slender shafts of shapely stone
 By foliated tracery combined ;

Thou would'st have thought some fairy's hand
 'Twixt poplars straight the ozier wand,
 In many a freakish knot, had twined ;
 Then framed a spell, when the work was done,
 And changed the willow-wreaths to stone.
 The silver light, so pale and faint,
 Shew'd many a prophet, and many a saint,
 Whose image on the glass was dyed ;
 Full in the midst, his Cross of Red
 Triumphant Michael brandished,
 And trampled the Apostate's pride.
 The moon-beam kiss'd the holy pane,
 And threw on the pavement a bloody stain.

XII.

They sate them down on a marble stone,—
 (A Scottish monarch slept below ;)
 Thus spoke the Monk, in solemn tone :—
 “ I was not always a man of woe ;
 For Paynim countries I have trod,
 And fought beneath the Cross of God :
 Now, strange to my eyes thine arms appear,
 And their iron clang sounds strange to my ear.

XIII.

“ In these far climes it was my lot
 To meet the wondrous Michael Scott ;²⁸
 A wizard, of such dreaded fame,
 That when, in Salamanca's cave,²⁹
 Him listed his magic wand to wave,
 The bells would ring in Notre Dame !³⁰
 Some of his skill he taught to me ;
 And, Warrior, I could say to thee
 The words that cleft Eildon hills in three,³¹
 And bridled the Tweed with a curb of stone :
 But to speak them were a deadly sin ;
 And for having but thought them my heart within,
 A treble penance must be done.

XIV.

"When Michael lay on his dying bed,
 His conscience was awakened :
 He bethought him of his sinful deed,
 And he gave me a sign to come with speed :
 I was in Spain when the morning rose,
 But I stood by his bed ere evening close.
 The words may not again be said,
 That he spoke to me, on death-bed laid ;
 They would rend this Abbaye's massy nave,
 And pile it in heaps above his grave.

XV.

"I swore to bury his Mighty Book,
 That never mortal might therein look ;
 And never to tell where it was hid,
 Save at his Chief of Branksome's need :
 And when that need was past and o'er,
 Again the volume to restore.
 I buried him on St. Michael's night,
 When the bell toll'd one, and the moon was bright,
 And I dug his chamber among the dead,
 When the floor of the chancel was stained red,
 That his patron's cross might over him wave,
 And scare the fiends from the Wizard's grave.

XVI.

"It was a night of woe and dread,
 When Michael in the tomb I laid !
 Strange sounds along the chancel pass'd,
 The banners waved without a blast"—
 —Still spoke the Monk, when the bell toll'd one !—
 I tell you, that a braver man
 Than William of Deloraine, good at need,
 Against a foe ne'er spurr'd a steed ;
 Yet somewhat was he chill'd with dread,
 And his hair did bristle upon his head.

XVII.

"Lo, Warrior! now, the Cross of Red
 Points to the grave of the mighty dead;
 Within it burns a wondrous light,
 To chase the spirits that love the night:
 That lamp shall burn unquenchably,
 Until the eternal doom shall be."³²
 Slow moved the Monk to the broad flag-stone,
 Which the bloody Cross was traced upon:
 He pointed to a secret nook;
 An iron bar the Warrior took;
 And the Monk made a sign with his wither'd hand,
 The grave's huge portal to expand.

XVIII.

With beating heart to the task he went;
 His sinewy frame o'er the grave-stone bent;
 With bar of iron heaved amain,
 Till the toil-drops fell from his brows, like rain.
 It was by dint of passing strength,
 That he moved the massy stone at length.
 I would you had been there, to see
 How the light broke forth so gloriously,
 Stream'd upward to the chancel roof,
 And through the galleries far aloof!
 No earthly flame blazed e'er so bright:
 It shone like heaven's own blessed light,
 And, issuing from the tomb,
 Show'd the Monk's cowl, and visage pale,
 Danced on the dark-brow'd Warrior's mail,
 And kiss'd his waving plume.

XIX.

Before their eyes the Wizard lay,
 As if he had not been dead a day.
 His hoary beard in silver roll'd,
 He seem'd some seventy winters old;

A palmer's amice wrapp'd him round,
 With a wrought Spanish baldrick bound,
 Like a pilgrim from beyond the sea :
 His left hand held his Book of Might ;
 A silver cross was in his right ;
 The lamp was placed beside his knee :
 High and majestic was his look,
 At which the fellest fiends had shook,
 And all unruffled was his face :
 They trusted his soul had gotten grace.

XX.

Often had William of Deloraine
 Rode through the battle's bloody plain,
 And trampled down the warriors slain,
 And neither known remorse nor awe ;
 Yet now remorse and awe he own'd ;
 His breath came thick, his head swam round,
 When this strange scene of death he saw.
 Bewilder'd and unnerved he stood,
 And the priest pray'd fervently and loud :
 With eyes averted prayed he ;
 He might not endure the sight to see,
 Of the man he had loved so brotherly.

XXI.

And when the priest his death-prayer had pray'd,
 Thus unto Deloraine he said :—
 “ Now, speed thee what thou hast to do,
 Or, Warrior, we may dearly rue ;
 For those, thou may'st not look upon,
 Are gathering fast round the yawning stone ! ”—
 Then Deloraine, in terror, took³³
 From the cold hand the Mighty Book,
 With iron clasp'd, and with iron bound :
 He thought, as he took it, the dead man frown'd ;
 But the glare of the sepulchral light,
 Perchance, had dazzled the warrior's sight.

XXII.

When the huge stone sunk o'er the tomb,
 The night return'd in double gloom ;
 For the moon had gone down, and the stars were few :
 And, as the Knight and Priest withdrew,
 With wavering steps and dizzy brain,
 They hardly might the postern gain.
 'Tis said, as through the aisles they pass'd,
 They heard strange noises on the blast ;
 And through the cloister-galleries small,
 Which at mid-height thread the chancel wall,
 Loud sobs, and laughter louder, ran,
 And voices unlike the voice of man ;
 As if the fiends kept holiday,
 Because these spells were brought to day.
 I cannot tell how the truth may be ;
 I say the tale as 'twas said to me.

XXIII.

"Now, hie thee hence," the Father said,
 "And when we are on death-bed laid,
 O may our dear Ladye, and sweet St. John,
 Forgive our souls for the deed we have done !"—
 The Monk return'd him to his cell,
 And many a prayer and penance sped ;
 When the convent met at the noontide bell—
 The Monk of St. Mary's aisle was dead !
 Before the cross was the body laid,
 With hands clasp'd fast, as if still he pray'd.

XXIV.

The Knight breathed free in the morning wind,
 And strove his hardihood to find :
 He was glad when he pass'd the tombstones grey,
 Which girdle round the fair Abbaye ;
 For the mystic Book, to his bosom prest,
 Felt like a load upon his breast ;

And his joints, with nerves of iron twined,
 Shook, like the aspen leaves in wind.
 Full fain was he when the dawn of day
 Began to brighten Cheviot grey ;
 He joy'd to see the cheerful light,
 And he said Ave Mary, as well as he might.

XXV.

The sun had brighten'd Cheviot grey,
 The sun had brighten'd the Carter's side ;
 And soon beneath the rising day
 Smiled Branksome Towers and Teviot's tide.
 The wild birds told their warbling tale,
 And waken'd every flower that blows ;
 And peeped forth the violet pale,
 And spread her breast the mountain rose.
 And lovelier than the rose so red,
 Yet paler than the violet pale,
 She early left her sleepless bed,
 The fairest maid of Teviotdale.

XXVI.

Why does fair Margaret so early awake,
 And don her kirtle so hastilie ;
 And the silken knots, which in hurry she would make,
 Why tremble her slender fingers to tie ;
 Why does she stop, and look often around,
 As she glides down the secret stair ;
 And why does she pat the shaggy blood-hound,
 As he rouses him up from his lair ;
 And, though she passes the postern alone,
 Why is not the watchman's bugle blown ?

XXVII.

The ladye steps in doubt and dread,
 Lest her watchful mother hear her tread ;
 The lady caresses the rough blood-hound,
 Lest his voice should waken the castle round,

The watchman's bugle is not blown,
 For he was her foster-father's son ;
 And she glides through the greenwood at dawn of
 light
 To meet Baron Henry, her own true knight.

XXVIII.

The Knight and ladye fair are met,
 And under the hawthorn's boughs are set.
 A fairer pair were never seen
 To meet beneath the hawthorn green.
 He was stately, and young, and tall ;
 Dreaded in battle, and loved in hall :
 And she, when love, scarce told, scarce hid,
 Lent to her cheek a livelier red ;
 When the half sigh her swelling breast
 Against the silken ribbon prest ;
 When her blue eyes their secret told,
 Though shaded by her locks of gold—
 Where would you find the peerless fair,
 With Margaret of Branksome might compare !

XXIX.

And now, fair dames, methinks I see
 You listen to my minstrelsy ;
 Your waving locks ye backward throw,
 And sidelong bend your necks of snow :
 Ye ween to hear a melting tale,
 Of two true lovers in a dale ;
 And how the Knight, with tender fire,
 To paint his faithful passion strove ;
 Swore he might at her feet expire,
 But never, never cease to love ;
 And how she blush'd, and how she sigh'd,
 And, half consenting, half denied,
 And said that she would die a maid ;—
 Yet, might the bloody feud be stay'd,
 Henry of Cranstoun, and only he,
 Margaret of Branksome's choice should be.

XXX.

Alas ! fair dames, your hopes are vain !
 My harp has lost the enchanting strain ;
 Its lightness would my age reprove :
 My hairs are grey, my limbs are old,
 My heart is dead, my veins are cold :
 I may not, must not, sing of love.

XXXI.

Beneath an oak, moss'd o'er by eld,
 The Baron's Dwarf his courser held,^{3†}
 And held his crested helm and spear :
 That Dwarf was scarce an earthly man,
 If the tales were true (that of him ran
 Through all the Border, far and near.
 'Twas said, when the Baron a-hunting rode
 Through Reedsdale's glens, but rarely trod,
 He heard a voice cry, "Lost ! lost ! lost !"
 And, like tennis-ball by racket toss'd,
 A leap, of thirty feet and three,
 Made from the gorse this elfin shape,
 Distorted like some dwarfish ape,
 And lighted at Lord Cranstoun's knee.
 Lord Cranstoun was some whit dismay'd ;
 'Tis said that five good miles he rade,
 To rid him of his company ;
 But where he rode one mile, the Dwarf ran four,
 And the Dwarf was first at the castle door.

XXXII.

Use lessens marvel, it is said :
 This elvish Dwarf with the Baron staid ;
 Little he ate, and less he spoke,
 Nor mingled with the menial flock :
 And oft apart his arms he toss'd,
 And often mutter'd "Lost ! lost ! lost !"
 He was waspish, arch, and litherlie,
 But well Lord Cranstoun served he :

And he of his service was full fain ;
 For once he had been ta'en or slain,
 An it had not been for his ministry.
 All between Home and Hermitage,
 Talk'd of Lord Cranstoun's Goblin-Page.

XXXIII.

For the Baron went on pilgrimage,
 And took with him this elvish Page,
 To Mary's Chapel of the Lowes :
 For there, beside our Ladye's lake,
 An offering he had sworn to make,
 And he would pay his vows.
 But the Ladye of Branksome gather'd a band
 Of the best that would ride at her command :
 The trysting place was Newark Lee.
 Wat of Harden came thither amain,
 And thither came John of Thirlestane,
 And thither came William of Deloraine ;
 They were three hundred spears and three.
 Through Douglas-burn, up Yarrow stream,
 Their horses prance, their lances gleam.
 They came to St. Mary's lake ere day ;
 But the chapel was void, and the Baron away.
 They burn'd the chapel for very rage,
 And cursed Lord Cranstoun's Goblin-Page.

XXXIV.

And now, in Branksome's good green wood,
 As under the aged oak he stood,
 The Baron's courser pricks his ears,
 As if a distant noise he hears.
 The Dwarf waves his long lean arm on high,
 And signs to the lovers to part and fly ;
 No time was then to vow or sigh.
 Fair Margaret through the hazel grove,
 Flew like the startled cushat-dove :

The Dwarf the stirrup held and rein ;
 Vaulted the Knight on his steed amain,
 And, pondering deep that morning's scene,
 Rode eastward through the hawthorns green.

WHILE thus he pour'd the lengthen'd tale
 The Minstrel's voice began to fail :
 Full slyly smiled the observant page,
 And gave the wither'd hand of age
 A goblet, crown'd with mighty wine,
 The blood of Velez' scorched vine.
 He raised the silver cup on high,
 And, while the big drop fill'd his eye,
 Pray'd God to bless the Duchess long,
 And all who cheer'd a son of song.
 The attending maidens smiled to see
 How long, how deep, how zealously,
 The precious juice the Minstrel quaff'd ;
 And he, embolden'd by the draught,
 Look'd gaily back to them, and laugh'd.
 The cordial nectar of the bowl
 Swell'd his old veins, and cheer'd his soul ;
 A lighter, livelier prelude ran,
 Ere thus his tale again began.

CANTO THIRD.

I.

AND said I that my limbs were old,
 And said I that my blood was cold,
 And that my kindly fire was fled,
 And my poor wither'd heart was dead,
 And that I might not sing of love?—
 How could I to the dearest theme,
 That ever warm'd a minstrel's dream,
 So foul, so false a recreant prove !
 How could I name love's very name,
 Nor wake my heart to notes of flame ?

II.

In peace, Love tunes the shepherd's reed ;
 In war, he mounts the warrior's steed ;
 In halls, in gay attire is seen ;
 In hamlets, dances on the green.
 Love rules the court, the camp, the grove,
 And men below, and saints above ;
 For love is heaven, and heaven is love.

III.

So thought Lord Cranstoun, as I ween,
 While, pondering deep the tender scene,
 He rode through Branksome's hawthorn green.
 But the page shouted wild and shrill,
 And scarce his helmet could he don,
 When downward from the shady hill
 A stately knight came pricking on.
 That warrior's steed, so dapple-gray,
 Was dark with sweat, and splashed with clay ;
 His armour red with many a stain :
 He seem'd in such a weary plight,
 As if he had ridden the live-long night ;
 For it was William of Deloraine.

IV.

But no whit weary did he seem,
 When, dancing in the sunny beam,
 He mark'd the crane on the Baron's crest ;
 For his ready spear was in his rest.
 Few were the words, and stern and high,
 That mark'd the foemen's feudal hate ;
 For question fierce, and proud reply,
 Gave signal soon of dire debate.
 Their very coursers seem'd to know
 That each was other's mortal foe,
 And snorted fire, when wheel'd around,
 To give each knight his vantage-ground.

V.

In rapid round the Baron bent ;
 He sigh'd a sigh, and pray'd a prayer ;
 The prayer was to his patron saint,
 The sigh was to his ladye fair.
 Stout Deloraine nor sigh'd nor pray'd,
 Nor saint, nor ladye, call'd to aid ;
 But he stoop'd his head, and couch'd his spear,
 And spurred his steed to full career.
 The meeting of these champions proud
 Seem'd like the bursting thunder-cloud.

VI.

Stern was the dint the Borderer lent !
 The stately Baron backwards bent ;
 Bent backwards to his horse's tail,
 And his plumes went scattering on the gale :
 The tough ash spear, so stout and true,
 Into a thousand flinders flew.
 But Cranstoun's lance, of more avail,
 Pierced through, like silk, the Borderer's mail ;
 Through shield, and jack, and acton, past,
 Deep in his bosom broke at last.—
 Still sate the warrior saddle-fast,
 Till, stumbling in the mortal shock,
 Down went the steed, the girthing broke,
 Hurl'd on a heap lay man and horse.
 The Baron onward pass'd his course ;
 Nor knew—so giddy roll'd his brain—
 His foe lay stretch'd upon the plain.

VII.

But when he rein'd his courser round,
 And saw his foeman on the ground
 Lie senseless as the bloody clay,
 He bade his page to stanch the wound,
 And there beside the warrior stay,
 And tend him in his doubtful state,
 And lead him to Branksome castle-gate :

His noble mind was inly moved
 For the kinsman of the maid he loved.
 "This shalt thou do without delay :
 No longer here myself may stay ;
 Unless the swifter I speed away,
 Short shrift will be at my dying day."

VIII.

Away in speed Lord Cranstoun rode ;
 The Goblin-Page behind abode ;
 His lord's command he ne'er withstood,
 Though small his pleasure to do good.
 As the corslet off he took,
 The dwarf espied the Mighty Book !
 Much he marvell'd a knight of pride,
 Like a book-bosom'd priest should ride :³⁶
 He thought not to search or stanch the wound,
 Until the secret he had found.

IX.

The iron band, the iron clasp,
 Resisted long the elfin grasp :
 For when the first he had undone,
 It closed as he the next begun.
 Those iron clasps, that iron band,
 Would not yield to unchristen'd hand,
 Till he smear'd the cover o'er
 With the Borderer's curdled gore ;
 A moment then the volume spread,
 And one short spell therein he read,
 It had much of glamour might,
 Could make a ladye seem a knight ;
 The cobwebs on a dungeon wall
 Seem tapestry in lordly hall ;
 A nut-shell seem a gilded barge,
 A sheeling seem a palace large,
 And youth seem age, and age seem youth—
 All was delusion, nought was truth.³⁷

X.

He had not read another spell,
 When on his cheek a buffet fell,
 So fierce, it stretch'd him on the plain,
 Beside the wounded Deloraine.
 From the ground he rose dismay'd,
 And shook his huge and matted head ;
 One word he mutter'd, and no more,
 " Man of age, thou smitest sore ! " —
 No more the Elfin-Page durst try
 Into the wondrous Book to pry :
 The clasps, though smear'd with Christian gore,
 Shut faster than they were before.
 He hid it underneath his cloak. —
 Now, if you ask who gave the stroke,
 I cannot tell, so mot I thrive ;
 It was not given by man alive.³⁸

XI.

Unwillingly himself he address'd,
 To do his master's high behest :
 He lifted up the living corse,
 And laid it on the weary horse ;
 He led him into Branksome Hall,
 Before the beards of the warders all ;
 And each did after swear and say,
 There only pass'd a wain of hay.
 He took him to Lord David's tower,
 Even to the Lady's secret bower ;
 And, but that stronger spells were spread,
 And the door might not be opened,
 He had laid him on her very bed.
 Whate'er he did of gramarye,
 Was always done maliciously ;
 He flung the warrior on the ground,
 And the blood well'd freshly from the wound,

XII.

As he repass'd the outer court,
 He spied the fair young child at sport :
 He thought to train him to the wood ;
 For, at a word, be it understood,
 He was always for ill, and never for good.
 Seem'd to the boy, some comrade gay
 Led him forth to the woods to play ;
 On the drawbridge the warders stout
 Saw a terrier and lurcher passing out.

XIII.

He led the boy o'er bank and fell,
 Until they came to a woodland brook ;
 The running stream dissolved the spell,³⁹
 And his own elvish shape he took.
 Could he have had his pleasure vilde,
 He had crippled the joints of the noble child ;
 Or, with his fingers long and lean,
 Had strangled him in fiendish spleen :
 But his awful mother he had in dread,
 And also his power was limited ;
 So he but scowl'd on the startled child,
 And darted through the forest wild ;
 The woodland brook he bounding cross'd,
 And laugh'd, and shouted, " Lost ! lost ! lost !"—

XIV.

Full sore amazed at the wondrous change,
 And frighten'd as a child might be,
 At the wild yell and visage strange,
 And the dark words of gramarye,
 The child, amidst the forest bower,
 Stood rooted like a lily flower ;
 And when at length, with trembling pace,
 He sought to find where Branksome lay,
 He fear'd to see that grisly face
 Glare from some thicket on his way.

Thus, starting oft, he journey'd on,
 And deeper in the wood is gone,—
 For aye the more he sought his way,
 The farther still he went astray,—
 Until he heard the mountains round
 Ring to the baying of a hound.

XV.

And hark! and hark! the deep-mouth'd bark
 Comes nigher still, and nigher:
 Bursts on the path a dark blood-hound,
 His tawny muzzle track'd the ground,
 And his red eye shot fire.
 Soon as the wilder'd child saw he,
 He flew at him right furiouslie.
 I ween you would have seen with joy
 The bearing of the gallant boy,
 When, worthy of his noble sire,
 His wet cheek glow'd 'twixt fear and ire!
 He faced the blood-hound manfully,
 And held his little bat on high;
 So fierce he struck, the dog, afraid,
 At cautious distance hoarsely bay'd,
 But still in act to spring;
 When dash'd an archer through the glade,
 And when he saw the hound was stay'd,
 He drew his tough bow-string;
 But a rough voice cried, "Shoot not, boy!
 Ho! shoot not, Edward—'Tis a boy!"

XVI.

The speaker issued from the wood,
 And check'd his fellow's surly mood,
 And quell'd the ban-dog's ire:
 He was an English yeoman good, *your eye*
 And born in Lancashire. *Edward*

Well could he hit a fallow-deer
 Five hundred feet him fro ;
 With hand more true, and eye more clear,
 No archer bended bow.
 His coal-black hair, shorn round and close,
 Set off his sun-burn'd face :
 Old England's sign, St. George's cross,
 His barret-cap did grace ;
 His bugle-horn hung by his side,
 All in a wolf-skin baldric tied ;
 And his short falchion, sharp and clear,
 Had pierced the throat of many a deer.

XVII.

His kirtle, made of forest green,
 Reach'd scantily to his knee ;
 And, at his belt, of arrows keen
 A furbish'd sheaf bore he ;
 His buckler, scarce in breadth a span,
 No larger fence had he ;
 He never counted him a man,
 Would strike below the knee :⁴⁰
 His slacken'd bow was in his hand,
 And the leash, that was his blood-hound's band.

XVIII.

He would not do the fair child harm,
 But held him with his powerful arm,
 That he might neither fight nor flee ;
 For when the Red-Cross spied he,
 The boy strove long and violently.
 "Now, by St. George," the archer cries,
 "Edward, methinks we have a prize !
 This boy's fair face, and courage free,
 Show he is come of high degree."—

XIX.

"Yes! I am come of high degree,
 For I am the heir of bold Buccleuch;
 And, if thou dost not set me free,
 False Southron, thou shalt dearly rue!
 For Walter of Harden shall come with speed,
 And William of Deloraine, good at need,
 And every Scott, from Esk to Tweed;
 And, if thou dost not let me go,
 Despite thy arrows, and thy bow,
 I'll have thee hang'd to feed the crow!"—

XX.

"Gramercy, for thy good-will, fair boy!
 My mind was never set so high;
 But if thou art chief of such a clan,
 And art the son of such a man,
 And ever comest to thy command,
 Our wardens had need to keep good order;
 My bow of yew to a hazel wand,
 Thou'lt make them work upon the Border.
 Meantime, be pleased to come with me,
 For good Lord Dacre shalt thou see;
 I think our work is well begun,
 When we have taken thy father's son."

XXI.

Although the child was led away,
 In Branksome still he seem'd to stay,
 For so the Dwarf his part did play;
 And, in the shape of that young boy,
 He wrought the castle much annoy.
 The comrades of the young Buccleuch
 He pinch'd, and beat, and overthrew
 Nay, some of them he wellnigh slew.
 He tore Dame Maudlin's silken tire,
 And, as Sym Hall stood by the fire,

He lighted the match of his bandelier,
 And wofully scorch'd the hackbuteer.
 It may be hardly thought or said,
 The mischief that the urchin made,
 Till many of the castle guess'd,
 That the young Baron was possess'd !

XXII.

Well I ween the charm he held
 The noble Ladye had soon dispell'd ;
 But she was deeply busied then
 To tend the wounded Deloraine.
 Much she wonder'd to find him lie,
 On the stone threshold stretch'd along ;
 She thought some spirit of the sky
 Had done the bold moss-trooper wrong ;
 Because, despite her precept dread,
 Perchance he in the Book had read ;
 But the broken lance in his bosom stood,
 And it was earthly steel and wood.

XXIII.

She drew the splinter from the wound,
 And with a charm she stanch'd the blood ;⁴¹
 She bade the gash be cleansed and bound :
 No longer by his couch she stood ;
 But she has ta'en the broken lance,
 And wash'd it from the clotted gore,
 And salved the splinter o'er and o'er.⁴²
 William of Deloraine, in trance,
 Whene'er she turn'd it round and round,
 Twisted as if she gall'd his wound.
 Then to her maidens she did say,
 That he should be whole man and sound,
 Within the course of a night and day.
 Full long she toil'd ; for she did rue
 Mishap to friend so stout and true.

XXIV.

So pass'd the day—the evening fell,
 'Twas near the time of curfew bell;
 The air was mild, the wind was calm,
 The stream was smooth, the dew was balm;
 E'en the rude watchman, on the tower,
 Enjoy'd and bless'd the lovely hour.
 Far more fair Margaret loved and bless'd
 The hour of silence and of rest.
 On the high turret sitting lone,
 She waked at times the lute's soft tone;
 Touch'd a wild note, and all between
 Thought of the bower of hawthorns green.
 Her golden hair stream'd free from band,
 Her fair cheek rested on her hand,
 Her blue eyes sought the west afar,
 For lovers love the western star.

XXV.

Is yon the star, o'er Penchryst Pen,
 That rises slowly to her ken,
 And, spreading broad its wavering light,
 Shakes its loose tresses on the night?
 Is yon red glare the western star?—
 O, 'tis the beacon-blaze of war!
 Scarce could she draw her tighten'd breath,
 For well she knew the fire of death!

XXVI.

The Warder view'd it blazing strong,
 And blew his war-note loud and long,
 Till, at the high and haughty sound,
 Rock, wood, and river, rung around.
 The blast alarm'd the festal hall,
 And startled forth the warriors all;
 Far downward, in the castle-yard,
 Full many a torch and cresset glared:

And helms and plumes, confusedly toss'd,
 Were in the blaze half-seen, half-lost ;
 And spears in wild disorder shook,
 Like reeds beside a frozen brook.

XXVII.

The Seneschal, whose silver hair
 Was reddened by the torches' glare,
 Stood in the midst, with gesture proud,
 And issued forth his mandates loud :—
 " On Penchryst glows a bale of fire,⁴³
 And three are kindling on Priestthaughswire ;
 Ride out, ride out,
 The foe to scout !
 Mount, mount for Branksome, every man !
 Thou, Todrig, warn the Johnstone clan,
 That ever are true and stout—
 Ye need not send to Liddesdale ;
 For when they see the blazing bale,
 Elliots and Armstrongs never fail.—
 Ride, Alton, ride, for death and life !
 And warn the Warder of the strife.
 Young Gilbert, let our beacon blaze,
 Our kin, and clan, and friends, to raise."⁴⁴

XXVIII.

Fair Margaret, from the turret head,
 Heard, far below, the coursers' tread,
 While loud the harness rung,
 As to their seats, with clamour dread,
 The ready horsemen sprung :
 And trampling hoofs, and iron coats,
 And leaders' voices, mingled notes,
 And out ! and out !
 In hasty route,
 The horsemen gallop'd forth ;

Dispersing to the south to scout,
 And east, and west, and north,
 To view their coming enemies,
 And warn their vassals and allies.

XXIX.

The ready page, with hurried hand,
 Awaked the need-fire's slumbering brand,
 And ruddy blush'd the heaven :
 For a sheet of flame, from the turret high,
 Waved like a blood-flag on the sky,
 All flaring and uneven ;
 And soon a score of fires, I ween,
 From height, and hill, and cliff, were seen ;
 Each with warlike tidings fraught ;
 Each from each the signal caught ;
 Each after each they glanced to sight,
 As stars arise upon the night.
 They gleam'd on many a dusky tarn,
 Haunted by the lonely earn ;
 On many a cairn's grey pyramid,
 Where urns of mighty chiefs lie hid ;⁴⁵
 Till high Dunedin the blazes saw,
 From Soltra and Dumpender Law ;
 And Lothian heard the Regent's order,
 That all should bowne them for the Border.

XXX.

The livelong night in Branksome rang
 The ceaseless sound of steel ;
 The castle-bell, with backward clang,
 Sent forth the larum peal ;
 Was frequent heard the heavy jar,
 Where massy stone and iron bar
 Were piled on echoing keep and tower,
 To whelm the foe with deadly shower ;

Was frequent heard the changing guard,
 And watch-word from the sleepless ward ;
 While, wearied by the endless din,
 Blood-hound and ban-dog yell'd within.

XXXI.

The noble Dame, amid the broil,
 Shared the grey Seneschal's high toil,
 And spoke of danger with a smile ;
 Cheer'd the young knights, and council sage
 Held with the chiefs of riper age.
 No tidings of the foe were brought,
 Nor of his numbers knew they aught,
 Nor what in time of truce he sought.

Some said, that there were thousands ten ;
 And others ween'd that it was nought

But Leven Clans, or Tynedale men,
 Who came to gather in black-mail ;
 And Liddesdale, with small avail,

Might drive them lightly back agen.
 So pass'd the anxious night away,
 And welcome was the peep of day.

CEASED the high sound—the listening throng
 Applaud the Master of the Song ;
 And marvel much, in helpless age,
 So hard should be his pilgrimage.
 Had he no friend—no daughter dear,
 His wandering toil to share and cheer ;
 No son to be his father's stay,
 And guide him on the rugged way ?
 " Ay, once he had—but he was dead !"—
 Upon the harp he stoop'd his head,
 And busied himself the strings withal ;
 To hide the tear that fain would fall.
 In solemn measure, soft and slow,
 Arose a father's notes of woe.

CANTO FOURTH.

I.

SWEET Teviot ! on thy silver tide
 The glaring bale-fires blaze no more ;
 No longer steel-clad warriors ride
 Along thy wild and willow'd shore ;
 Where'er thou wind'st, by dale or hill,
 All, all is peaceful, all is still,
 As if thy waves, since Time was born,
 Since first they roll'd upon the Tweed,
 Had only heard the shepherd's reed,
 Nor started at the bugle-horn.

II.

Unlike the tide of human time,
 Which, though it change in ceaseless flow,
 Retains each grief, retains each crime
 Its earliest course was doom'd to know ;
 And, darker as it downward bears,
 Is stain'd with past and present tears.
 Low as that tide has ebb'd with me,
 It still reflects to Memory's eye
 The hour my brave, my only boy,
 Fell by the side of great Dundee.
 Why, when the volleying musket play'd
 Against the bloody Highland blade,
 Why was not I beside him laid !—
 Enough—he died the death of fame ;
 Enough—he died with conquering Græme.

III.

Now over Border, dale and fell,
 Full wide and far was terror spread ;
 For pathless marsh, and mountain cell,
 The peasant left his lowly shed,⁴⁶
 The frighten'd flocks and herds were pent
 Beneath the peel's rude battlement ;

And maids and matrons dropp'd the tear,
 While ready warriors seized the spear.
 From Branksome's towers, the watchman's eye
 Dun wreaths of distant smoke can spy,
 Which, curling in the rising sun,
 Show'd southern ravage was begun.⁴⁷

IV.

Now loud the heedful gate-ward cried—
 "Prepare ye all for blows and blood!
 Watt Tinlinn,⁴⁸ from the Liddel-side,
 Comes wading through the flood.
 Full oft the Tynedale snatchers knock
 At his lone gate, and prove the lock;
 It was but last St. Barnabright
 They sieged him a whole summer night,
 But fled at morning; well they knew,
 In vain he never twang'd the yew.
 Right sharp has been the evening shower,
 That drove him from his Liddel tower;
 And, by my faith," the gate-ward said,
 "I think 'twill prove a Warden-Raid."

V.

While thus he spoke, the bold yeoman
 Enter'd the echoing barbican.
 He led a small and shaggy nag,
 That through a bog, from hag to hag,
 Could bound like any Billhope stag.⁴⁹
 It bore his wife and children twain
 A half-clothed serf was all their train;
 His wife, stout, ruddy, and dark-brow'd,
 Of silver brooch and bracelet proud,
 Laugh'd to her friends among the crowd.
 He was of stature passing tall,
 But sparely form'd, and lean withal;

A batter'd morion on his brow ;
 A leather jack, as fence enow,
 On his broad shoulders loosely hung ;
 A border axe behind was slung ;
 His spear, six Scottish ells in length,
 Seem'd newly dyed with gore ;
 His shafts and bow, of wondrous strength,
 His hardy partner bore.

VI.

Thus to the Ladye did Tinlinn show
 The tidings of the English foe :—
 “ Belted Will Howard⁵⁰ is marching here,
 And hot Lord Dacre,⁵¹ with many a spear,
 And all the German hackbut-men,⁵²
 Who have long lain at Askerten :
 They cross'd the Liddel at curfew hour,
 And burn'd my little lonely tower :
 The fiend receive their souls therefor !
 It had not been burnt this year and more.
 Barn-yard and dwelling, blazing bright,
 Served to guide me on my flight ;
 But I was chased the livelong night.
 Black John of Akeshaw, and Fergus Græme,
 Fast upon my traces came,
 Until I turn'd at Priestthaugh Scrogg,
 And shot their horses in the bog,
 Slew Fergus with my lance outright—
 I had him long at high despite :
 He drove my cows last Fastern's night.”

VII.

Now weary scouts from Liddesdale,
 Fast hurrying in, confirm'd the tale ;
 As far as they could judge by ken,
 Three hours would bring to Teviot's strand
 Three thousand armed Englishmen—
 Meanwhile, full many a warlike band,

From Teviot, Aill, and Ettrick shade,
 Came in, their Chief's defence to aid.
 There was saddling and mounting in haste,
 There was pricking o'er moor and lea ;
 He that was last at the trysting-place
 Was but lightly held of his gaye ladye.

VIII.

From fair St. Mary's silver wave,
 From dreary Gamescleugh's dusky height,
 His ready lances Thirlestane brave
 Array'd beneath a banner bright.
 The tressured fleur-de-luce he claims,
 To wreathe his shield, since royal James,
 Encamp'd by Fala's mossy wave,
 The proud distinction grateful gave,
 For faith 'mid feudal jars ;
 What time, save Thirlestane alone,
 Of Scotland's stubborn barons none
 Would march to southern wars ;
 And hence, in fair remembrance worn,
 Yon sheaf of spears his crest has borne ;
 Hence his high motto shines reveal'd—
 "Ready, aye ready," for the field.⁵³

IX.

An aged Knight, to danger steel'd,
 With many a moss-trooper, came on :
 And azure in a golden field,
 The stars and crescent graced his shield,
 Without the bend of Murdieston.⁵⁴
 Wide lay his lands round Oakwood tower,
 And wide round haunted Castle-Ower ;
 High over Borthwick's mountain flood,
 His wood-embosom'd mansion stood ;
 In the dark glen, so deep below,
 The herds of plunder'd England low ;

His bold retainers' daily food,
 And bought with danger, blows, and blood.
 Marauding chief! his sole delight
 The moonlight raid, the morning fight;
 Not even the Flower of Yarrow's charms,
 In youth, might tame his rage for arms;
 And still, in age, he spurn'd at rest,
 And still his brows the helmet press'd,
 Albeit the blanched locks below
 Were white as Dinlay's spotless snow;
 Five stately warriors drew the sword
 Before their father's band;
 A braver knight than Harden's lord
 Ne'er belted on a brand.

X.

Scotts of Eskdale, a stalwart band,⁵⁵
 Came trooping down the Todshawhill;
 By the sword they won their land,
 And by the sword they hold it still.
 Hearken, Ladye, to the tale,
 How thy sires won fair Eskdale.—
 Earl Morton was lord of that valley fair,
 The Beattisons were his vassals there.
 The Earl was gentle, and mild of mood,
 The vassals were warlike, and fierce, and rude;
 High of heart, and haughty of word,
 Little they reck'd of a tame liege lord.
 The Earl into fair Eskdale came,
 Homage and seignory to claim:
 Of Gilbert the Galliard a heriot he sought,
 Saying, "Give thy best steed, as a vassal ought."
 —"Dear to me is my bonny white steed,
 Oft has he help'd me at pinch of need;
 Lord and Earl though thou be, I trow,
 I can rein Bucksfoot better than thou."—
 Word on word gave fuel to fire,
 Till so highly blazed the Beattison's ire,

But that the Earl the flight had ta'en,
 The vassals there their lord had slain.
 Sore he plied both whip and spur,
 As he urged his steed through Eskdale muir;
 And it fell down a weary weight,
 Just on the threshold of Branksome gate.

XI.

The Earl was a wrathful man to see,
 Full fain avenged would he be.
 In haste to Branksome's Lord he spoke,
 Saying—"Take these traitors to thy yoke;
 For a cast of hawks, and a purse of gold,
 All Eskdale I'll sell thee, to have and hold:
 Beshrew thy heart, of the Beattisons' clan
 If thou leavest on Eske a landed man;
 But spare Woodkerrick's lands alone,
 For he lent me his horse to escape upon."
 A glad man then was Branksome bold,
 Down he flung him the purse of gold;
 To Eskdale soon he spurr'd amain,
 And with him five hundred riders has ta'en.
 He left his merry men in the mist of the hill,
 And bade them hold them close and still;
 And alone he wended to the plain,
 To meet with the Galliard and all his train.
 To Gilbert the Galliard thus he said:—
 "Know thou me for thy liege-lord and head,
 Deal not with me as with Morton tame,
 For Scotts play best at the roughest game.
 Give me in peace my heriot due,
 Thy bonny white steed, or thou shalt rue.
 If my horn I three times wind,
 Eskdale shall long have the sound in mind."—

XII.

Loudly the Beattison laugh'd in scorn;
 "Little care we for thy winded horn.

Ne'er shall it be the Galliard's lot,
 To yield his steed to a haughty Scott.
 Wend thou to Branksome back on foot,
 With rusty spur and miry boot."—
 He blew his bugle so loud and hoarse,
 That the dun deer started at fair Craikcross ;
 He blew again so loud and clear,
 Through the grey mountain-mist there did
 lances appear ;
 And the third blast rang with such a din,
 That the echoes answer'd from Pentoun-linn,
 And all his riders came lightly in.
 Then had you seen a gallant shock,
 When saddles were emptied, and lances broke !
 For each scornful word the Galliard had said
 A Beattison on the field was laid.
 His own good sword the chieftain drew,
 And he bore the Galliard through and through ;
 Where the Beattisons' blood mix'd with the rill,
 The Galliard's-Haugh men call it still.
 The Scotts have scatter'd the Beattison clan,
 In Eskdale they left but one landed man.
 The valley of Eske, from the mouth to the source,
 Was lost and won for that bonny white horse.

XIII.

Whitslade the Hawk, and Headshaw came,
 And warriors more than I may name ;
 From Yarrow-cleugh to Hindhaugh-swaire,
 From Woodhouseslie to Chester-glen,
 Troop'd man and horse, and bow and spear :
 Their gathering word was Bellenden.⁵⁶
 And better hearts o'er Border sod
 To siege or rescue never rode.
 The Ladye mark'd the aids come in,
 And high her heart of pride arose :
 She bade her youthful son attend,
 That he might know his father's friend,
 And learn to face his foes.

"The boy is ripe to look on war ;
 I saw him draw a cross-bow stiff,
 And his true arrow struck afar
 The raven's nest upon the cliff ;
 The red cross, on a southern breast,
 Is broader than the raven's nest :
 Thou, Whitslade, shalt teach him his weapon
 to wield,
 And o'er him hold his father's shield."

XIV.

Well may you think, the wily page
 Cared not to face the Ladye sage.
 He counterfeited childish fear,
 And shriek'd, and shed full many a tear,
 And moan'd and plain'd in manner wild.
 The attendants to the Ladye told,
 Some fairy, sure, had changed the child,
 That wont to be so free and bold.
 Then wrathful was the noble dame ;
 She blush'd blood-red for very shame :—
 "Hence ! ere the clan his faintness view ;
 Hence with the weakling to Buccleuch !—
 Watt Tinlinn, thou shalt be his guide
 To Rangleburn's lonely side.—
 Sure some fell fiend has cursed our line,
 That coward should e'er be son of mine !"

XV.

A heavy task Watt Tinlinn had,
 To guide the counterfeited lad.
 Soon as the palfrey felt the weight
 Of that ill-omen'd elfish freight,
 He bolted, sprung, and rear'd amain,
 Nor heeded bit, nor curb, nor rein.
 It cost Watt Tinlinn mickle toil
 To drive him but a Scottish mile ;
 But as a shallow brook they cross'd,

The elf, amid the running stream,
 His figure changed, like form in dream,
 And fled, and shouted, "Lost! lost! lost!"
 Full fast the urchin ran and laugh'd,
 But faster still a cloth-yard shaft
 Whistled from startled Tinlinn's yew,
 And pierced his shoulder through and through.
 Although the imp might not be slain,
 And though the wound soon heal'd again,
 Yet, as he ran, he yell'd for pain;
 And Wat of Tinlinn, much aghast,
 Rode back to Branksome fiery fast

XVI.

Soon on the hill's steep verge he stood,
 That looks o'er Branksome's towers and wood;
 And martial murmurs, from below,
 Proclaim'd the approaching southern foe.
 Through the dark wood, in mingled tone,
 Were Border pipes and bugles blown;
 The coursers' neighing he could ken,
 A measured tread of marching men;
 While broke at times the solemn hum,
 The Almayn's sullen kettle-drum;
 And banners tall, of crimson sheen,
 Above the copse appear;
 And, glistening through the hawthorns green,
 Shine helm, and shield, and spear.

XVII.

Light forayers, first, to view the ground,
 Spurr'd their fleet coursers loosely round;
 Behind, in close array, and fast,
 The Kendal archers, all in green,
 Obedient to the bugle blast,
 Advancing from the wood were seen.
 To back and guard the archer band,
 Lord Dacre's bill-men were at hand:

A hardy race, on Irthing bred,
 With kirtles white, and crosses red,
 Array'd beneath the banner tall,
 That stream'd o'er Acre's conquer'd wall ;
 And minstrels, as they march'd in order,
 Play'd, " Noble Lord Dacre, he dwells on the
 Border."

XVIII.

Behind the English bill and bow,
 The mercenaries, firm and slow,
 Moved on to fight, in dark array,
 By Conrad led of Wolfenstein,
 Who brought the band from distant Rhine,
 And sold their blood for foreign pay.
 The camp their home, their law the sword,
 They knew no country, own'd no lord : ⁵⁷
 They were not arm'd like England's sons,
 But bore the levin-darting guns ;
 Buff coats, all frounced and 'broider'd o'er,
 And morsing-horns and scarfs they wore ;
 Each better knee was bared, to aid
 The warriors in the escalade ;
 All, as they march'd, in rugged tongue,
 Songs of Teutonic feuds they sung.

XIX.

But louder still the clamour grew,
 And louder still the minstrels blew,
 When, from beneath the greenwood tree,
 Rode forth Lord Howard's chivalry ;
 His men-at-arms, with glaive and spear,
 Brought up the battle's glittering rear,
 There many a youthful knight, full keen
 To gain his spurs, in arms was seen ;
 With favour in his crest, or glove,
 Memorial of his lady-love.

So rode they forth in fair array,
 Till full their lengthen'd lines display;
 Then call'd a halt, and made a stand,
 And cried, " St. George, for merry England ! "

XX.

Now every English eye, intent
 On Branksome's armed towers was bent;
 So near they were, that they might know
 The straining harsh of each cross-bow;
 On battlement and bartizan
 Gleam'd axe, and spear, and partisan;
 Falcon and culver, on each tower,
 Stood prompt their deadly hail to shower;
 And flashing armour frequent broke
 From eddying whirls of sable smoke,
 Where upon tower and turret head,
 The seething pitch and molten lead
 Reek'd, like a witch's caldron red.
 While yet they gaze, the bridges fall,
 The wicket opes, and from the wall
 Rides forth the hoary Seneschal.

XXI.

Armed he rode, all save the head,
 His white beard o'er his breast-plate spread;
 Unbroke by age, erect his seat,
 He ruled his eager courser's gait;
 Forced him, with chasten'd fire, to prance,
 And, high curvetting, slow advance:
 In sign of truce, his better hand
 Display'd a peeled willow wand;
 His squire, attending in the rear,
 Bore high a gauntlet on a spear.
 When they espied him riding out,
 Lord Howard and Lord Dacre stout
 Sped to the front of their array,
 To hear what this old knight should say.

XXII.

"Ye English warden lords, of you
 Demands the Ladye of Buccleuch,
 Why, 'gainst the truce of Border tide,
 In hostile guise ye dare to ride,
 With Kendal bow, and Gilsland brand,
 And all yon mercenary band,
 Upon the bounds of fair Scotland?
 My Ladye reads you swith return;
 And, if but one poor straw you burn,
 Or do our towers so much molest,
 As scare one swallow from her nest,
 St. Mary! but we'll light a brand
 Shall warm your hearths in Cumberland."—

XXIII.

A wrathful man was Dacre's lord,
 But calmer Howard took the word:
 "May't please thy Dame, Sir Seneschal,
 To seek the castle's outward wall,
 Our pursuivant-at-arms shall show
 Both why we came, and when we go."—
 The message sped, the noble Dame
 To the wall's outward circle came;
 Each chief around lean'd on his spear,
 To see the pursuivant appear.
 All in Lord Howard's livery dress'd,
 The lion argent deck'd his breast;
 He led a boy of blooming hue—
 O sight to meet a mother's view!
 It was the heir of great Buccleuch.
 Obeisance meet the herald made,
 And thus his master's will he said:—

XXIV.

"It irks, high Dame, my noble Lords,
 'Gainst ladye fair to draw their swords;
 But yet they may not tamely see,
 All through the Western Wardenry,

Your law-contemning kinsmen ride,
 And burn and spoil the Border-side ;
 And ill beseems your rank and birth
 To make your towers a flemens-firth.
 We claim from thee William of Deloraine,
 That he may suffer march-treason⁵⁸ pain.
 It was but last St. Cuthbert's even
 He prick'd to Stapleton on Leven,
 Harried the lands of Richard Musgrave,
 And slew his brother by dint of glaive.
 Then, since a lone and widow'd Dame
 These restless riders may not tame,
 Either receive within thy towers
 Two hundred of my master's powers,
 Or straight they sound their warrison,
 And storm and spoil thy garrison :
 And this fair boy, to London led,
 Shall good King Edward's page be bred."

XXV.

He ceased—and loud the boy did cry,
 And stretch'd his little arms on high ;
 Implored for aid each well-known face,
 And strove to seek the Dame's embrace.
 A moment changed that Ladye's cheer,
 Gush'd to her eye the unbidden tear ;
 She gazed upon the leaders round,
 And dark and sad each warrior frown'd ;
 Then, deep within her sobbing breast
 She lock'd the struggling sigh to rest ;
 Unalter'd and collected stood,
 And thus replied, in dauntless mood :—

XXVI.

"Say to your Lords of high emprize,
 Who war on women and on boys,
 That either William of Deloraine
 Will cleanse him, by oath, of march-treason
 stain ;⁵⁹

Or else he will the combat take
 'Gainst Musgrave, for his honour's sake.
 No knight in Cumber!and so good,
 But William may count with him kin and blood
 Knighthood he took of Douglas' sword,⁶⁰
 When English blood swell'd Ancram's ford ;⁶¹
 And but Lord Dacre's steed was wight,
 And bare him ably in the flight,
 Himself had seen him dubb'd a knight.
 For the young heir of Branksome's line,
 God be his aid, and God be mine ;
 Through me no friend shall meet his doom
 Here, while I live, no foe finds room.
 Then, if thy Lords their purpose urge,
 Take our defiance loud and high ;
 Our slogan is their lyke-wake dirge,
 Our moat, the grave where they shall lie."

XXVII.

Proud she look'd round, applause to claim—
 Then lighten'd Thirlestane's eye of flame ;
 His bugle Wat of Harden blew ;
 Pensils and pennons wide were flung,
 To heaven the Border slogan rung,
 " St. Mary for the young Buccleuch !"
 The English war-cry answer'd wide,
 And forward bent each southern spear ;
 Each Kendal archer made a stride,
 And drew the bowstring to his ear ;
 Each minstrel's war-note loud was blown :—
 But, ere a gray-goose shaft had flown,
 A horseman gallop'd from the rear.

XXVIII.

" Ah ! noble Lords !" he breathless said,
 " What treason has your march betray'd ?
 What make you here, from aid so far,
 Before you walls, around you war ?

Your foemen triumph in the thought,
 That in the toils the lion's caught.
 Already on dark Ruberslaw
 The Douglas holds his weapon-schaw ;
 The lances, waving in his train,
 Clothe the dun heath like autumn grain ;
 And on the Liddel's northern strand,
 To bar retreat to Cumberland,
 Lord Maxwell ranks his merry-men good,
 Beneath the eagle and the rood ;
 And Jedwood, Eske, and Teviotdale,
 Have to proud Angus come ;
 And all the Merse and Lauderdale
 Have risen with haughty Home.
 An exile from Northumberland,
 In Liddesdale I've wander'd long ;
 But still my heart was with merry England,
 And cannot brook my country's wrong ;
 And hard I've spurr'd all night, to show
 The mustering of the coming foe."

XXIX.

"And let them come !" fierce Dacre cried ;
 "For soon yon crest, my father's pride,
 That swept the shores of Judah's sea,
 And waved in gales of Galilee,
 From Branksome's highest towers display'd,
 Shall mock the rescue's lingering aid !—
 Level each harquebuss on row ;
 Draw, merry archers, draw the bow ;
 Up, bill-men, to the walls, and cry,
 Dacre for England, win or die !"—

XXX.

"Yet hear," quoth Howard, "calmly hear,
 Nor deem my words the words of fear :
 For who, in field or foray slack,
 Saw the blanche lion e'er fall back ?⁶²

But thus to risk our Border flower
 In strife against a kingdom's power,
 Ten thousand Scots 'gainst thousands three
 Certes, were desperate policy.
 Nay, take the terms the Ladye made,
 Ere conscious of the advancing aid :
 Let Musgrave meet fierce Deloraine⁶³
 In single fight, and, if he gain,
 He gains for us ; but if he's cross'd,
 'Tis but a single warrior lost :
 The rest, retreating as they came,
 Avoid defeat, and death, and shame."

XXXI.

Ill could the haughty Dacre brook
 His brother Warden's sage rebuke ;
 And yet his forward step he staid,
 And slow and sullenly obey'd.
 But ne'er again the Border side
 Did these two lords in friendship ride ;
 And this slight discontent, men say,
 Cost blood upon another day.

XXXII.

The pursuivant-at-arms again
 Before the castle took his stand ;
 His trumpet call'd, with parleying strain,
 The leaders of the Scottish band ;
 And he defied, in Musgrave's right,
 Stout Deloraine to single fight ;
 A gauntlet at their feet he laid,
 And thus the terms of fight he said :—
 " If in the lists good Musgrave's sword
 Vanquish the Knight of Deloraine,
 Your youthful chieftain, Branksome's Lord,
 Shall hostage for his clan remain :
 If Deloraine foil good Musgrave,
 The boy his liberty shall have.
 Howe'er it falls, the English band,

Unharming Scots, by Scots unharm'd,
 In peaceful march, like men unarm'd,
 Shall straight retreat to Cumberland."

XXXIII.

Unconscious of the near relief,
 The proffer pleased each Scottish chief,
 Though much the Ladye sage gainsay'd ;
 For though their hearts were brave and true,
 From Jedwood's recent sack they knew,
 How tardy was the Regent's aid :
 And you may guess the noble Dame
 Durst not the secret prescience own,
 Sprung from the art she might not name,
 By which the coming help was known.
 Closed was the compact, and agreed
 That lists should be enclosed with speed,
 Beneath the castle, on a lawn :
 They fix'd the morrow for the strife,
 On foot, with Scottish axe and knife,
 At the fourth hour from peep of dawn ;
 When Deloraine, from sickness freed,
 Or else a champion in his stead,
 Should for himself and chieftain stand,
 Against stout Musgrave, hand to hand.

XXXIV.

I know right well, that, in their lay,
 Full many minstrels sing and say,
 Such combat should be made on horse,
 On foaming steed, in full career,
 With brand to aid, when as the spear
 Should shiver in the course :
 But he, the jovial Harper,⁶⁴ taught
 Me, yet a youth, how it was fought,
 In guise which now I say ;
 He knew each ordinance and clause
 Of Black Lord Archibald's battle-laws,⁶⁵
 In the old Douglas' day.

He brook'd not, he, that scoffing tongue
 Should tax his minstrelsy with wrong,
 Or call his song untrue :
 For this, when they the goblet plied,
 And such rude taunt had chafed his pride,
 The Bard of Reull he slew.
 On Teviot's side, in fight they stood,
 And tuneful hands were stain'd with blood ;
 Where still the thorn's white branches wave,
 Memorial o'er his rival's grave.

XXXV.

Why should I tell the rigid doom,
 That dragg'd my master to his tomb ;
 How Ousenam's maidens tore their hair,
 Wept till their eyes were dead and dim,
 And wrung their hands for love of him,
 Who died at Jedwood Air ?
 He died !—his scholars, one by one,
 To the cold silent grave are gone ;
 And I, alas ! survive alone,
 To muse o'er rivalries of yore,
 And grieve that I shall hear no more
 The strains, with envy heard before ;
 For, with my minstrel brethren fled,
 My jealousy of song is dead.

HE paused : the listening dames again
 Applaud the hoary Minstrel's strain.
 With many a word of kindly cheer,—
 In pity half, and half sincere,—
 Marvell'd the Duchess how so well
 His legendary song could tell—
 Of ancient deeds, so long forgot ;
 Of feuds, whose memory was not ;
 Of forests, now laid waste and bare ;
 Of towers, which harbour now the hare ;
 Of manners, long since changed and gone ;
 Of chiefs, who under their grey stone

So long had slept, that fickle Fame
 Had blotted from her rolls their name,
 And twined round some new minion's head
 The fading wreath for which they bled ;
 In sooth, 'twas strange, this old man's verse
 Could call them from their marble hearse.

The Harper smiled, well-pleased ; for ne'er
 Was flattery lost on poet's ear :
 A simple race ! they waste their toil
 For the vain tribute of a smile ;
 E'en when in age their flame expires,
 Her dulcet breath can fan its fires :
 Their drooping fancy wakes at praise,
 And strives to trim the short-lived blaze.

Smiled then, well-pleased, the Aged Man,
 And thus his tale continued ran.

CANTO FIFTH.

I.

CALL it not vain :—they do not err,
 Who say, that when the Poet dies,
 Mute Nature mourns her worshipper,
 And celebrates his obsequies :
 Who say, tall cliff, and cavern lone,
 For the departed Bard make moan ;
 That mountains weep in crystal rill ;
 That flowers in tears of balm distil ;
 Through his loved groves that breezes sigh,
 And oaks, in deeper groan, reply ;
 And rivers teach their rushing wave
 To murmur dirges round his grave.

II.

Not that, in sooth, o'er mortal urn
 Those things inanimate can mourn ;

But that the stream, the wood, the gale,
 Is vocal with the plaintive wail
 Of those, who, else forgotten long,
 Lived in the poet's faithful song,
 And, with the poet's parting breath,
 Whose memory feels a second death.
 The Maid's pale shade, who wails her lot,
 That love, true love, should be forgot,
 From rose and hawthorn shakes the tear
 Upon the gentle Minstrel's bier :
 The phantom Knight, his glory fled,
 Mourns o'er the field he heap'd with dead ;
 Mounts the wild blast that sweeps amain,
 And shrieks along the battle-plain.
 The Chief, whose antique crownlet long
 Still sparkled in the feudal song,
 Now, from the mountain's misty throne,
 Sees, in the thanedom once his own,
 His ashes undistinguish'd lie,
 His place, his power, his memory die :
 His groans the lonely caverns fill,
 His tears of rage impel the rill :
 All mourn the Minstrel's harp unstrung,
 Their name unknown, their praise unsung.

III.

Scarcely the hot assault was staid,
 The terms of truce were scarcely made,
 When they could spy, from Branksome's towers,
 The advancing march of martial powers.
 Thick clouds of dust afar appear'd,
 And trampling steeds were faintly heard ;
 Bright spears, above the columns dun,
 Glanced momentary to the sun ;
 And feudal banners fair display'd
 The bands that moved to Branksome's aid.

IV.

Vails not to tell each hardy clan,
 From the fair Middle Marches came ;
 The Bloody Heart blazed in the van,
 Announcing Douglas, dreaded name !⁶⁶
 Vails not to tell what steeds did spurn,
 Where the Seven Spears of Wedderburne
 Their men in battle-order set ;
 And Swinton laid the lance in rest,
 That tamed of yore the sparkling crest
 Of Clarence's Plantagenet.⁶⁷
 Nor list I say what hundreds more,
 From the rich Merse and Lammermore,
 And Tweed's fair borders, to the war,
 Beneath the crest of Old Dunbar,
 And Hepburn's mingled banners come,
 Down the steep mountain glittering far,
 And shouting still, "A Home ! a Home !" ⁶⁸

V.

Now squire and knight, from Branksome sent,
 On many a courteous message went ;
 To every chief and lord they paid
 Meet thanks for prompt and powerful aid ;
 And told them,—how a truce was made,
 And how a day of fight was ta'en
 'Twixt Musgrave and stout Deloraine ;
 And how the Ladye pray'd them dear,
 That all would stay the fight to see,
 And deign, in love and courtesy,
 To taste of Branksome cheer.
 Nor, while they bade to feast each Scot,
 Were England's noble Lords forgot.
 Himself, the hoary Seneschal
 Rode forth, in seemly terms to call
 Those gallant foes to Branksome Hall.
 Accepted Howard, than whom knight
 Was never dubb'd, more bold in fight ;

Nor, when from war and armour free,
 More famed for stately courtesy :
 But angry Dacre rather chose
 In his pavilion to repose.

VI.

Now, noble Dame, perchance you ask,
 How these two hostile armies met ?
 Deeming it were no easy task
 To keep the truce which here was set ;
 Where martial spirits, all on fire,
 Breathed only blood and mortal ire.—
 By mutual inroads, mutual blows,
 By habit, and by nation, foes,
 They met on Teviot's strand ;
 They met and sate them mingled down,
 Without a threat, without a frown,
 As brothers meet in foreign land :
 The hands, the spear that lately grasp'd,
 Still in the mailed gauntlet clasp'd,
 Were interchanged in greeting dear ;
 Visors were raised, and faces shown,
 And many a friend, to friend made known,
 Partook of social cheer.
 Some drove the jolly bowl about ;
 With dice and draughts some chased the day ;
 And some, with many a merry shout,
 In riot, revelry, and rout,
 Pursued the foot-ball play.⁶⁹

VII.

Yet, be it known, had bugles blown,
 Or sign of war been seen,
 Those hands, so fair together ranged,
 Those hands, so frankly interchanged,
 Had dyed with gore the green :
 The merry shout by Teviot-side
 Had sunk in war-cries wild and wide.

And in the groan of death ;
 And whingers, now in friendship bare,
 The social meal to part and share,
 Had found a bloody sheath.
 'Twixt truce and war, such sudden change
 Was not infrequent, nor held strange,
 In the old Border-day :⁷⁰
 But yet on Branksome's towers and town,
 In peaceful merriment, sunk down
 The sun's declining ray.

VIII.

The blithsome signs of wassel gay
 Decay'd not with the dying day ;
 Soon through the latticed windows tall
 Of lofty Branksome's lordly hall,
 Divided square by shafts of stone,
 Huge flakes of ruddy lustre shone ;
 Nor less the gilded rafters rang
 With merry harp and beakers' clang :
 And frequent, on the darkening plain,
 Loud hollo, whoop, or whistle ran,
 As bands, their stragglers to regain,
 Give the shrill watchword of their clan ;⁷¹
 And revellers, o'er their bowls, proclaim
 Douglas or Dacre's conquering name.

IX.

Less frequent heard, and fainter still,
 At length the various clamours died :
 And you might hear, from Branksome hill,
 No sound but Teviot's rushing tide ;
 Save when the changing sentinel
 The challenge of his watch could tell ;
 And save, where, through the dark profound,
 The clanging axe and hammer's sound
 Rung from the nether lawn ;

For many a busy hand toil'd there,
 Strong pales to shape, and beams to square,
 The lists' dread barriers to prepare
 Against the morrow's dawn.

X.

Margaret from hall did soon retreat,
 Despite the Dame's reproving eye ;
 Nor mark'd she, as she left her seat,
 Full many a stifled sigh ;
 For many a noble warrior strove
 To win the Flower of Teviot's love,
 And many a bold ally.—
 With throbbing head and anxious heart,
 All in her lonely bower apart,
 In broken sleep she lay :
 By times, from silken couch she rose ;
 While yet the banner'd hosts repose,
 She view'd the dawning day :
 Of all the hundreds sunk to rest,
 First woke the loveliest and the best.

XI.

She gazed upon the inner court,
 Which in the tower's tall shadow lay ;
 Where coursers' clang, and stamp, and snort,
 Had rung the livelong yesterday ;
 Now still as death ; till stalking slow,—
 The jingling spurs announced his tread,—
 A stately warrior pass'd below ;
 But when he raised his plumed head—
 Blessed Mary ! can it be?—
 Secure, as if in Ousenam bowers,
 He walks through Branksome's hostile towers,
 With fearless step and free.
 She dared not sign, she dared not speak—
 Oh ! if one page's slumbers break,
 His blood the price must pay !

Not all the pearls Queen Mary wears,
 Not Margaret's yet more precious tears,
 Shall buy his life a day.

XII.

Yet was his hazard small; for well
 You may bethink you of the spell
 Of that sly urchin page;
 This to his lord he did impart,
 And made him seem, by glamour art,
 A knight from Hermitage.
 Unchallenged thus, the warder's post,
 The court, unchallenged, thus he cross'd,
 For all the vassalage:
 But O! what magic's quaint disguise
 Could blind fair Margaret's azure eyes!
 She started from her seat;
 While with surprise and fear she strove,
 And both could scarcely master love—
 Lord Henry's at her feet.

XIII.

Oft have I mused, what purpose bad
 That foul malicious urchin had
 To bring this meeting round;
 For happy love's a heavenly sight,
 And by a vile malignant sprite
 In such no joy is found;
 And oft I've deem'd, perchance he thought
 Their erring passion might have wrought
 Sorrow, and sin, and shame;
 And death to Cranstoun's gallant Knight,
 And to the gentle ladye bright,
 Disgrace, and loss of fame.
 But earthly spirit could not tell
 The heart of them that loved so well.
 True love's the gift which God has given
 To man alone beneath the heaven:

It is not fantasy's hot fire,
 Whose wishes, soon as granted, fly ;
 It liveth not in fierce desire,
 With dead desire it doth not die ;
 It is the secret sympathy,
 The silver link, the silken tie,
 Which heart to heart, and mind to mind,
 In body and in soul can bind.—
 Now leave we Margaret and her Knight,
 To tell you of the approaching fight.

XIV.

Their warning blasts the bugles blew,
 The pipe's shrill port aroused each clan ;
 In haste, the deadly strife to view,
 The trooping warriors eager ran :
 Thick round the lists their lances stood,
 Like blasted pines in Etrick wood ;
 To Branksome many a look they threw,
 The combatants' approach to view,
 And bandied many a word of boast,
 About the knight each favour'd most.

XV.

Meantime full anxious was the Dame
 For now arose disputed claim,
 Of who should fight for Deloraine,
 'Twixt Harden and 'twixt Thirlestaine :
 They 'gan to reckon kin and rent,
 And frowning brow on brow was bent ;
 But yet not long the strife—for, lo !
 Himself, the Knight of Deloraine,
 Strong, as it seem'd, and free from pain,
 In armour sheath'd from top to toe,
 Appear'd, and craved the combat due.
 The Dame her charm successful knew,
 And the fierce chiefs their claims withdrew.

XVI.

When for the lists they sought the plain,
 The stately Lady's silken rein
 Did noble Howard hold ;
 Unarmed by her side he walk'd,
 And much, in courteous phrase, they talk'd
 Of feats of arms of old.
 Costly his garb—his Flemish ruff
 Fell o'er his doublet, shaped of buff,
 With satin slash'd and lined ;
 Tawny his boot, and gold his spur,
 His cloak was all of Poland fur,
 His hose with silver twined ;
 His Bilboa blade, by Marchmen felt,
 Hung in a broad and studded belt ;
 Hence, in rude phrase, the Borderers still
 Call'd noble Howard, Belted Will.

XVII.

Behind Lord Howard and the Dame,
 Fair Margaret on her palfrey came,
 Whose foot-cloth swept the ground :
 White was her wimple, and her veil,
 And her loose locks a chaplet pale
 Of whitest roses bound ;
 The lordly Angus, by her side,
 In courtesy to cheer her tried ;
 Without his aid, her hand in vain
 Had strove to guide her broider'd rein.
 He deem'd, she shudder'd at the sight
 Of warriors met for mortal fight ;
 But cause of terror, all unguess'd,
 Was fluttering in her gentle breast,
 When, in their chairs of crimson placed,
 The Dame and she the barriers graced.

XVIII.

Prize of the field, the young Buccleuch,
 An English knight led forth to view ;

Scarce rued the boy his present plight,
 So much he long'd to see the fight.
 Within the lists, in knightly pride,
 High Home and haughty Dacre ride ;
 Their leading staffs of steel they wield,
 As marshals of the mortal field ;
 While to each knight their care assign'd
 Like vantage of the sun and wind.
 Then heralds hoarse did loud proclaim,
 In King and Queen, and Warden's name,
 That none, while lasts the strife,
 Should dare, by look, or sign, or word,
 Aid to a champion to afford,
 On peril of his life ;
 And not a breath the silence broke,
 Till thus the alternate Heralds spoke :—

XIX.

ENGLISH HERALD.

“ Here standeth Richard of Musgrave,
 Good knight and true, and freely born,
 Amends from Deloraine to crave,
 For foul despiteous scathe and scorn.
 He sayeth, that William of Deloraine
 Is traitor false by Border laws ;
 This with his sword he will maintain,
 So help him God, and his good cause ! ”

XX.

SCOTTISH HERALD.

“ Here standeth William of Deloraine,
 Good knight and true, of noble strain,
 Who sayeth, that foul treason's stain,
 Since he bore arms, ne'er soil'd his coat ;
 And that, so help him God above !
 He will on Musgrave's body prove,
 He lies most foully in his throat. ”

LORD DACRE.

“Forward, brave champions, to the fight !
Sound trumpets !”——

LORD HOME.

——“God defend the right !”——
Then, Teviot ! how thine echoes rang,
When bugle-sound and trumpet-clang
Let loose the martial foes,
And in mid list, with shield poised high,
And measured step and wary eye,
The combatants did close.

XXI.

Ill would it suit your gentle ear,
Ye lovely listeners, to hear
How to the axe the helms did sound,
And blood pour'd down from many a wound ;
For desperate was the strife and long,
And either warrior fierce and strong.
But, were each dame a listening knight,
I well could tell how warriors fight !
For I have seen war's lightning flashing,
Seen the claymore with bayonet clashing,
Seen through red blood the war-horse dashing,
And scorn'd, amid the reeling strife,
To yield a step for death or life.—

XXII.

'Tis done, 'tis done ! that fatal blow
Has stretch'd him on the bloody plain ;
He strives to rise—Brave Musgrave, no !
Thence never shalt thou rise again !
He chokes in blood—some friendly hand
Undo the visor's barred band,
Unfix the gorget's iron clasp,
And give him room for life to gasp !—

O, bootless aid!—haste, holy Friar,
 Haste, ere the sinner shall expire!
 Of all his guilt let him be shriven,
 And smooth his path from earth to heaven!

XXIII.

In haste the holy Friar sped;—
 His naked foot was dyed with red,
 As through the lists he ran;
 Unmindful of the shouts on high,
 That hail'd the conqueror's victory,
 He raised the dying man;
 Loose waved his silver beard and hair,
 As o'er him he kneel'd down in prayer;
 And still the crucifix on high
 He holds before his darkening eye;
 And still he bends an anxious ear,
 His faltering penitence to hear;
 Still props him from the bloody sod,
 Still, even when soul and body part,
 Pours ghostly comfort on his heart,
 And bids him trust in God!
 Unheard he prays;—the death-pang's o'er!
 Richard of Musgrave breathes no more.

XXIV.

As if exhausted in the fight,
 Or musing o'er the piteous sight,
 The silent victor stands;
 His beaver did he not unclasp,
 Mark'd not the shouts, felt not the grasp
 Of gratulating hands.
 When lo! strange cries of wild surprise,
 Mingled with seeming terror, rise
 Among the Scottish bands;
 And all, amid the throng'd array,
 In panic haste gave open way

To a half-naked ghastly man,
 Who downward from the castle ran :
 He cross'd the barriers at a bound,
 And wild and haggard look'd around,
 As dizzy, and in pain ;
 And all, upon the armed ground,
 Knew William of Deloraine !
 Each ladye sprung from seat with speed ;
 Vaulted each marshal from his steed ;
 " And who art thou," they cried,
 " Who hast this battle fought and won ?"—
 His plumed helm was soon undone—
 " Cranstoun of Teviot-side !
 For this fair prize I've fought and won,"—
 And to the Ladye led her son.

XXV.

Full oft the rescued boy she kiss'd,
 And often press'd him to her breast •
 For, under all her dauntless show,
 Her heart had throbb'd at every blow ;
 Yet not Lord Cranstoun deign'd she greet,
 Though low he kneeled at her feet.
 Me lists not tell what words were made,
 What Douglas, Home, and Howard, said—
 —For Howard was a generous foe—
 And how the clan united pray'd
 The Ladye would the feud forego,
 And deign to bless the nuptial hour
 Of Cranstoun's Lord and Teviot's Flower.

XXVI.

She look'd to river, look'd to hill,
 Thought on the Spirit's prophecy,
 Then broke her silence stern and still,—
 " Not you, but Fate, has vanquish'd me.
 Their influence kindly stars may shower
 On Teviot's tide and Branksome's tower,
 For pride is quell'd, and love is free."—

She took fair Margaret by the hand,
 Who, breathless, trembling, scarce might
 stand ;

That hand to Cranstoun's lord gave she :—
 “ As I am true to thee and thine,
 Do thou be true to me and mine !

This clasp of love our bond shall be ;
 For this is your betrothing day,
 And all these noble lords shall stay,
 To grace it with their company.”—

XXVII.

All as they left the listed plain,
 Much of the story she did gain ;
 How Cranstoun fought with Deloraine,
 And of his page, and of the Book
 Which from the wounded knight he took ;
 And how he sought her castle high,
 That morn, by help of gramarye ;
 How, in Sir William's armour dight,
 Stolen by his page, while slept the knight,
 He took on him the single fight.
 But half his tale he left unsaid,
 And linger'd till he join'd the maid.—
 Cared not the Ladye to betray
 Her mystic arts in view of day ;
 But well she thought, ere midnight came,
 Of that strange page the pride to tame,
 From his foul hands the Book to save,
 And send it back to Michael's grave.—
 Needs not to tell each tender word
 'Twixt Margaret and 'twixt Cranstoun's lord ;
 Nor how she told of former woes,
 And how her bosom fell and rose,
 While he and Musgrave bandied blows.—
 Needs not these lovers' joys to teil :
 One day, fair maids, you'll know them well.

XXVIII.

William of Deloraine, some chance
Had waken'd from his deathlike trance ;

And taught that, in the listed plain,
Another, in his arms and shield,
Against fierce Musgrave axe did wield,
Under the name of Deloraine.

Hence, to the field, unarm'd, he ran,
And hence his presence scared the clan,
Who held him for some fleeting wraith,
And not a man of blood and breath.

Not much this new ally he loved,
Yet, when he saw what hap had proved,

He greeted him right heartilie :
He would not waken old debate,
For he was void of rancorous hate,

Though rude, and scant of courtesy ;
In raids he spilt but seldom blood,
Unless when men-at-arms withstood,
Or, as was meet, for deadly feud.

He ne'er bore grudge for stalwart blow,
Ta'en in fair fight from gallant foe :

And so 'twas seen of him, e'en now,
When on dead Musgrave he look'd down ;

Grief darken'd on his rugged brow,
Though half disguised with a frown ;
And thus, while sorrow bent his head,
His foeman's epitaph he made.

XXIX.

“ Now, Richard Musgrave, liest thou here !

I ween, my deadly enemy ;

For, if I slew thy brother dear,

Thou slew'st a sister's son to me ;

And when I lay in dungeon dark,

Of Naworth Castle, long months three,

Till ransom'd for a thousand mark,

Dark Musgrave, it was long of thee.

And, Musgrave, could our fight be tried,
 And thou wert now alive, as I,
 No mortal man should us divide,
 Till one, or both of us, did die :
 Yet rest thee God ! for well I know
 I ne'er shall find a nobler foe.
 In all the northern counties here,
 Whose word is Snaffle, spur, and spear,
 Thou wert the best to follow gear !
 'Twas pleasure, as we look'd behind,
 To see how thou the chase could'st wind,
 Cheer the dark blood-hound on his way,
 And with the bugle rouse the fray !⁷²
 I'd give the lands of Deloraine,
 Dark Musgrave were alive again."—

XXX.

So mourn'd he, till Lord Dacre's band
 Were bowning back to Cumberland.
 They raised brave Musgrave from the field,
 And laid him on his bloody shield ;
 On levell'd lances, four and four,
 By turns, the noble burden bore.
 Before, at times, upon the gale,
 Was heard the Minstrel's plaintive wail ;
 Behind, four priests, in sable stole,
 Sung requiem for the warrior's soul :
 Around, the horsemen slowly rode ;
 With trailing pikes the spearmen trode ;
 And thus the gallant knight they bore,
 Through Liddesdale to Leven's shore ;
 Thence to Holme Coltrame's lofty nave,
 And laid him in his father's grave.

THE harp's wild notes, though hush'd the song,
 The mimic march of death prolong ;
 Now seems it far, and now a-near,
 Now meets, and now eludes the ear ;

Now seems some mountain side to sweep,
 Now faintly dies in valley deep ;
 Seems now as if the Minstrel's wail,
 Now the sad requiem, loads the gale ;
 Last, o'er the warrior's closing grave,
 Rung the full choir in choral stave.

After due pause, they bade him tell,
 Why he, who touch'd the harp so well,
 Should thus, with ill-rewarded toil,
 Wander a poor and thankless soil,
 When the more generous Southern Land
 Would well requite his skilful hand.

The Aged Harper, howsoe'er
 His only friend, his harp, was dear,
 Liked not to hear it rank'd so high
 Above his flowing poesy :
 Less liked he still, that scornful jeer
 Misprised the land he loved so dear ;
 High was the sound, as thus again
 The Bard resumed his minstrel strain.

CANTO SIXTH.

I.

BREATHES there the man, with soul so dead,
 Who never to himself hath said,

This is my own, my native land !
 Whose heart hath ne'er within him burn'd,
 As home his footsteps he hath turn'd,

From wandering on a foreign strand !
 If such there breathe, go, mark him well ;
 For him no Minstrel raptures swell ;
 High though his titles, proud his name,
 Boundless his wealth as wish can claim ;
 Despite those titles, power, and pelf,
 The wretch, concentred all in self,
 Living, shall forfeit fair renown,
 And, doubly dying, shall go down

To the vile dust, from whence he sprung,
Unwept, unhonour'd, and unsung.

II.

O Caledonia ! stern and wild,
Meet nurse for a poetic child !
Land of brown heath and shaggy wood,
Land of the mountain and the flood,
Land of my sires ! what mortal hand
Can e'er untie the filial band,
That knits me to thy rugged strand !
Still, as I view each well-known scene,
Think what is now, and what hath been,
Seems as, to me, of all bereft,
Sole friends thy woods and streams were left ;
And thus I love them better still,
Even in extremity of ill.
By Yarrow's streams still let me stray,
Though none should guide my feeble way ;
Still feel the breeze down Ettrick break,
Although it chill my wither'd cheek ;
Still lay my head by Teviot Stone,
Though there, forgotten and alone,
The Bard may draw his parting groan.

III.

Not scorn'd like me ! to Branksome Hall
The Minstrels came, at festive call ;
Trooping they came, from near and far,
The jovial priests of mirth and war ;
Alike for feast and fight prepared,
Battle and banquet both they shared.
Of late, before each martial clan,
They blew their death-note in the van,
But now, for every merry mate,
Rose the portcullis' iron grate ;
They sound the pipe, they strike the string,
They dance, they revel, and they sing,
Till the rude turrets shake and ring.

IV.

Me lists not at this tide declare
 The splendour of the spousal rite,
 How muster'd in the chapel fair
 Both maid and matron, squire and knight :
 Me lists not tell of owches rare,
 Of mantles green, and braided hair,
 And kirtles furr'd with miniver ;
 What plumage waved the altar round,
 How spurs and ringing chainlets sound ;
 And hard it were for bard to speak
 The changeful hue of Margaret's cheek ;
 That lovely hue which comes and flies,
 As awe and shame alternate rise !

V.

Some bards have sung, the Ladye high
 Chapel or altar came not nigh ;
 Nor durst the rites of spousal grace,
 So much she fear'd each holy place.
 False slanders these :—I trust right well
 She wrought not by forbidden spell ;⁷³
 For mighty words and signs have power
 O'er sprites in planetary hour :
 Yet scarce I praise their venturous part,
 Who tamper with such dangerous art.
 But this for faithful truth I say,
 The Ladye by the altar stood,
 Of sable velvet her array,
 And on her head a crimson hood,
 With pearls embroider'd and entwined,
 Guarded with gold, with ermine lined ;
 A merlin sat upon her wrist⁷⁴
 Held by a leash of silken twist.

VI.

The spousal rites were ended soon :
 'Twas now the merry hour of noon,

And in the lofty arched hall
 Was spread the gorgeous festival.
 Steward and squire, with heedful haste,
 Marshall'd the rank of every guest ;
 Pages, with ready blade, were there,
 The mighty meal to carve and share :
 O'er capon, heron-shew, and crane,
 And princely peacock's gilded train,⁷⁵
 And o'er the boar-head, garnish'd brave,
 And cygnet from St. Mary's wave ;
 O'er ptarmigan and venison,
 The priest had spoke his benison.
 Then rose the riot and the din,
 Above, beneath, without, within !
 For, from the lofty balcony,
 Rung trumpet, shalm, and psaltery :
 Their clanging bowls old warriors quaff'd,
 Loudly they spoke, and loudly laugh'd ;
 Whisper'd young knights, in tone more mild,
 To ladies fair, and ladies smiled.
 The hooded hawks, high perch'd on beam,
 The clamour join'd with whistling scream,
 And flapp'd their wings, and shook their bells,
 In concert with the stag-hounds' yells.
 Round go the flasks of ruddy wine,
 From Bourdeaux, Orleans, or the Rhine ;
 Their tasks the busy sewers ply,
 And all is mirth and revelry.

VII.

The Goblin Page, omitting still
 No opportunity of ill,
 Strove now, while blood ran hot and high,
 To rouse debate and jealousy ;
 Till Conrad, Lord of Wolfenstein,
 By nature fierce, and warm with wine,
 And now in humour highly cross'd,
 About some steeds his band had lost,

High words to words succeeding still,
 Smote, with his gauntlet, stout Hunthill ;⁷⁶
 A hot and hardy Rutherford,
 Whom men called Dickon Draw-the-sword.
 He took it on the page's saye,
 Hunthill had driven these steeds away.
 Then Howard, Home, and Douglas rose,
 The kindling discord to compose :
 Stern Rutherford right little said,
 But bit his glove,⁷⁷ and shook his head.—
 A fortnight thence, in Inglewood,
 Stout Conrad, cold, and drench'd in blood,
 His bosom gored with many a wound,
 Was by a woodman's lyme-dog found ;
 Unknown the manner of his death,
 Gone was his brand, both sword and sheath ;
 But ever from that time, 'twas said,
 That Dickon wore a Cologne blade.

VIII.

The dwarf, who fear'd his master's eye
 Might his foul treachery espie,
 Now sought the castle buttery,
 Where many a yeoman, bold and free,
 Revell'd as merrily and well
 As those that sat in lordly selle.
 Watt Tinlinn, there, did frankly raise
 The pledge to Arthur Fire-the-Braes ;
 And he, as by his breeding bound,
 To Howard's merry-men sent it round.
 To quit them, on the English side,
 Red Roland Forster loudly cried,
 "A deep carouse to yon fair bride !"—
 At every pledge, from vat and pail,
 Foam'd forth in floods the nut-brown ale :
 While shout the riders every one ;
 Such day of mirth ne'er cheer'd their clan,
 Since old Buccleuch the name did gain,
 When in the cieuch the buck was ta'en.⁷⁸

IX.

The wily page, with vengeful thought,
 Remember'd him of Tinlinn's yew,
 And swore, it should be dearly bought
 That ever he the arrow drew.
 First, he the yeoman did molest,
 With bitter gibe and taunting jest;
 Told, how he fled at Solway strife,
 And how Hob Armstrong cheer'd his wife ;
 Then, shunning still his powerful arm,
 At unawares he wrought him harm ;
 From trencher stole his choicest cheer,
 Dash'd from his lips his can of beer ;
 Then, to his knee sly creeping on,
 With bodkin pierced him to the bone :
 The venom'd wound, and festering joint,
 Long after rued that bodkin's point.
 The startled yeoman swore and spurn'd,
 And board and flagons overturn'd.
 Riot and clamour wild began ;
 Back to the hall the Urchin ran ;
 Took in a darkling nook his post,
 And grinn'd, and mutter'd, " Lost ! lost ! lost ! "

X.

By this, the Dame, lest farther fray
 Should mar the concord of the day,
 Had bid the Minstrels tune their lay.
 And first stept forth old Albert Græme,
 The Minstrel of that ancient name :⁷⁹
 Was none who struck the harp so well,
 Within the Land Debateable ;
 Well friended, too, his hardy kin,
 Whoever lost, were sure to win ;
 They sought the beeves that made their broth,
 In Scotland and in England both.
 In homely guise, as nature bade,
 His simple song the Borderer said.

XI.

ALBERT GRÆME.

It was an English ladye bright,
 (The sun shines fair on Carlisle wall,⁸⁰)
 And she would marry a Scottish knight,
 For Love will still be lord of all.

Blithely they saw the rising sun,
 When he shone fair on Carlisle wall ;
 But they were sad ere day was done,
 Though Love was still the lord of all.

Her sire gave brooch and jewel fine,
 Where the sun shines fair on Carlisle wall ;
 Her brother gave but a flask of wine,
 For ire that Love was lord of all.

For she had lands, both meadow and lea,
 Where the sun shines fair on Carlisle wall,
 And he swore her death, ere he would see
 A Scottish knight the lord of all!

XII.

That wine she had not tasted well,
 (The sun shines fair on Carlisle wall,)
 When dead, in her true love's arms, she fell,
 For Love was still the lord of all!

He pierced her brother to the heart,
 Where the sun shines fair on Carlisle wall :—
 So perish all would true love part,
 That Love may still be lord of all!

And then he took the cross divine,
 (Where the sun shines fair on Carlisle wall,)
 And died for her sake in Palestine,
 So Love was still the lord of all.

Now all ye lovers, that faithful prove,
 (The sun shines fair on Carlisle wall,)
 Pray for their souls who died for love,
 For Love shall still be lord of all!

XIII.

As ended Albert's simple lay,
 Arose a bard of loftier port ;
 For sonnet, rhyme, and roundelay,
 Renown'd in haughty Henry's court :
 There rung thy harp, unrivall'd long,
 Fitztraver of the silver song !
 The gentle Surrey loved his lyre—
 Who has not heard of Surrey's fame ?⁸¹
 His was the hero's soul of fire,
 And his the bard's immortal name,
 And his was love, exalted high
 By all the glow of chivalry.

XIV.

They sought, together, climes afar,
 And oft, within some olive grove,
 When even came with twinkling star,
 They sung of Surrey's absent love.
 His step the Italian peasant stay'd,
 And deem'd, that spirits from on high,
 Round where some hermit saint was laid,
 Were breathing heavenly melody ;
 So sweet did harp and voice combine,
 To praise the name of Geraldine.

XV.

Fitztraver ! O what tongue may say
 The pangs thy faithful bosom knew,
 When Surrey, of the deathless lay,
 Ungrateful Tudor's sentence slew ?
 Regardless of the tyrant's frown,
 His harp call'd wrath and vengeance down.
 He left, for Naworth's iron towers,
 Windsor's green glades, and courtly bowers,
 And faithful to his patron's name,
 With Howard still Fitztraver came ;
 Lord William's foremost favourite he,
 And chief of all his minstrelsy.

XVI.

FITZTRAYER.

'Twas All-souls' eve, and Surrey's heart beat high ;
 He heard the midnight bell with anxious start,
 Which told the mystic hour, approaching nigh,
 When wise Cornelius promised, by his art,
 To show to him the ladye of his heart,
 Albeit betwixt them roar'd the ocean grim ;
 Yet so the sage had hight to play his part,
 That he should see her form in life and limb,
 And mark, if still she loved, and still she thought
 of him.

XVII.

Dark was the vaulted room of gramarye,
 To which the wizard led the gallant Knight,
 Save that before a mirror, huge and high,
 A hallow'd taper shed a glimmering light
 On mystic implements of magic might :
 On cross, and character, and talisman,
 And almagest, and altar, nothing bright :
 For fitful was the lustre, pale and wan,
 As watchlight by the bed of some departing man.

XVIII.

But soon, within that mirror huge and high,
 Was seen a self-emitted light to gleam ;
 And forms upon its breast the Earl 'gan spy,
 Cloudy and indistinct, as feverish dream ;
 Till, slow arranging, and defined, they seem
 To form a lordly and a lofty room,
 Part lighted by a lamp with silver beam,
 Placed by a couch of Agra's silken loom,
 And part by moonshine pale, and part was hid in
 gloom.

XIX.

Fair all the pageant—but how passing fair
 The slender form, which lay on couch of Ind!
 O'er her white bosom stray'd her hazel hair,
 Pale her dear cheek, as if for love she pined;
 All in her night-robe loose she lay reclined,
 And, pensive, read from tablet eburnine,
 Some strain that seem'd her inmost soul to find:—
 That favour'd strain was Surrey's raptur'd line,
 That fair and lovely form, the Lady Geraldine.

XX.

Slow roll'd the clouds upon the lovely form,
 And swept the goodly vision all away—
 So royal envy roll'd the murky storm
 O'er my beloved Master's glorious day.
 Thou jealous, ruthless tyrant! Heaven repay
 On thee, and on thy children's latest line,
 The wild caprice of thy despotic sway,
 The gory bridal bed, the plunder'd shrine,
 The murder'd Surrey's blood, the tears of Geraldine!

XXI.

Both Scots, and Southern chiefs, prolong
 Applauses of Fitztraver's song;
 These hated Henry's name as death,
 And those still held the ancient faith.—
 Then, from his seat, with lofty air,
 Rose Harold, bard of brave St. Clair;
 St. Clair, who, feasting high at Home,
 Had with that lord to battle come.
 Harold was born where restless seas
 Howl round the storm-swept Orcades;⁸²
 Where erst St. Clairs held princely sway
 O'er isle and islet, strait and bay;—
 Still nods their palace to its fall,
 Thy pride and sorrow, fair Kirkwall!—⁸³

Thence oft he mark'd fierce Pentland rave,
 As if grim Odin rode her wave ;
 And watch'd, the whilst, with visage pale,
 And throbbing heart, the struggling sail ;
 For all of wonderful and wild
 Had rapture for the lonely child.

XXII.

And much of wild and wonderful
 In these rude isles might fancy cull ;
 For thither came, in times afar,
 Stern Lochlin's sons of roving war,
 The Norsemen, train'd to spoil and blood,
 Skill'd to prepare the raven's food ;
 Kings of the main their leaders brave,
 Their barks the dragons of the wave.
 And there, in many a stormy vaie,
 The Scald had told his wondrous tale ;
 And many a Runic column high
 Had witness'd grim idolatry.
 And thus had Harold, in his youth,
 Learn'd many a Saga's rhyme uncouth,--
 Of that Sea-Snake, tremendous curl'd,
 Whose monstrous circle girds the world ;⁸⁴
 Of those dread Maids,⁸⁵ whose hideous yell
 Maddens the battle's bloody swell ;
 Of Chiefs, who, guided through the gloom
 By the pale death-lights of the tomb,
 Ransack'd the graves of warriors old,
 Their falchions wrench'd from corpses' hold,⁸⁶
 Waked the deaf tomb with war's alarms,
 And bade the dead arise to arms !
 With war and wonder all on flame,
 To Roslin's bowers young Harold came,
 Where, by sweet glen and greenwood tree,
 He learn'd a milder minstrelsy ;
 Yet something of the Northern spell
 Mix'd with the softer numbers well.

XXIII.

HAROLD.

O listen, listen, ladies gay !
 No haughty feat of arms I tell ;
 Soft is the note, and sad the lay,
 That mourns the lovely Rosabelle.

—“ Moor, moor the barge, ye gallant crew !
 And, gentle ladye, deign to stay !
 Rest thee in Castle Ravensheuch,⁸⁷
 Nor tempt the stormy firth to-day.

“ The blackening wave is edged with white :
 To inch and rock the sea-mews fly ;
 The fishers have heard the Water-Sprite,
 Whose screams forbode that wreck is nigh.

“ Last night the gifted Seer did view
 A wet shroud swathed round ladye gay ;
 Then stay thee, Fair, in Ravensheuch :
 Why cross the gloomy firth to-day ? ”—

“ ’Tis not because Lord Lindesay’s heir
 To-night at Roslin leads the ball,
 But that my ladye-mother there
 Sits lonely in her castle-hall.

“ ’Tis not because the ring they ride,
 And Lindesay at the ring rides well,
 But that my sire the wine will chide,
 If ’tis not fill’d by Rosabelle. ”—

O’er Roslin all that dreary night,
 A wondrous blaze was seen to gleam ;
 ’Twas broader than the watch-fire’s light,
 And redder than the bright moon-beam.

It glared on Roslin's castled rock,
 It ruddied all the copse-wood glen ;
 'Twas seen from Dryden's groves of oak,
 And seen from cavern'd Hawthornden.

Seem'd all on fire that chapel proud,
 Where Roslin's chiefs uncoffin'd lie,
 Each Baron, for a sable shroud,
 Sneathed in his iron panoply.

Seem'd all on fire within, around,
 Deep sacristy and altar's pale ;
 Shone every pillar foliage-bound,
 And glimmer'd all the dead men's mail.⁸³

Blazed battlement and pinnet high,
 Blazed every rose-carved buttress fair—
 So still they blaze, when fate is nigh
 The lordly line of high St. Clair.

There are twenty of Roslin's barons bold
 Lie buried within that proud chapelle ;
 Each one the holy vault doth hold—
 But the sea holds lovely Rosabelle !

And each St. Clair was buried there,
 With candle, with book, and with knell ;
 But the sea-caves rung, and the wild winds sung,
 The dirge of lovely Rosabelle.

XXIV.

So sweet was Harold's piteous lay,
 Scarce mark'd the guests the darken'd hall,
 Though, long before the sinking day,
 A wondrous shade involved them all :
 It was not eddying mist or fog,
 Drain'd by the sun from fen or bog ;
 Of no eclipse had sages told ;

And yet, as it came on apace,
 Each one could scarce his neighbour's face,
 Could scarce his own stretch'd hand behold.
 A secret horror check'd the feast,
 And chill'd the soul of every guest ;
 Even the high Dame stood half aghast,
 She knew some evil on the blast ;
 The elvish page fell to the ground,
 And, shuddering, mutter'd, " Found ! found !
 found ! "

XXV.

Then sudden, through the darken'd air,
 A flash of lightning came ;
 So broad, so bright, so red the glare,
 The castle seem'd on flame.
 Glanced every rafter of the hall,
 Glanced every shield upon the wall ;
 Each trophied beam, each sculptured stone,
 Were instant seen, and instant gone ;
 Full through the guests' bedazzled band
 Resistless flash'd the levin-brand,
 And fill'd the hall with smouldering smoke,
 As on the elvish page it broke.
 It broke, with thunder long and loud,
 Dismay'd the brave, appall'd the proud,—
 From sea to sea the larum rung ;
 On Berwick wall, and at Carlisle withal,
 To arms the startled warders sprung.
 When ended was the dreadful roar,
 The elvish dwarf was seen no more !

XXVI.

Some heard a voice in Branksome Hall,
 Some saw a sight, not seen by all ;
 That dreadful voice was heard by some,
 Cry, with loud summons, " GYLBIN, COME ! "

And on the spot where burst the brand,
 Just where the page had flung him down,
 Some saw an arm, and some a hand,
 And some the waving of a gown.
 The guests in silence pray'd and shook,
 And terror dimm'd each lofty look.
 But none of all the astonish'd train
 Was so dismay'd as Deloraine ;
 His blood did freeze, his brain did burn,
 'Twas fear'd his mind would ne'er return ;
 For he was speechless, ghastly, wan,
 Like him of whom the story ran,
 Who spoke the spectre-hound in Man.⁸⁹
 At length, by fits, he darkly told,
 With broken hint, and shuddering cold—
 That he had seen, right certainly,
A shape with amice wrapp'd around,
With a wrought Spanish baldrick bound,
Like pilgrim from beyond the sea ;
 And knew—but how it matter'd not—
 It was the wizard, Michael Scott.

XXVII.

The anxious crowd, with horror pale,
 All trembling heard the wondrous tale,
 No sound was made, no word was spoke,
 Till noble Angus silence broke ;
 And he a solemn sacred plight
 Did to St. Bride of Douglas make,⁹⁰
 That he a pilgrimage would take
 To Melrose Abbey, for the sake
 Of Michael's restless sprite.
 Then each, to ease his troubled breast,
 To some bless'd saint his prayers address'd :
 Some to St. Modan made their vows,
 Some to St. Mary of the Lowes,
 Some to the Holy Rood of Lisle,
 Some to our Ladye of the Isle ;

Each did his patron witness make,
 That he such pilgrimage would take,
 And monks should sing, and bells should toll,
 All for the weal of Michael's soul.
 While vows were ta'en, and prayers were pray'd,
 'Tis said the noble dame, dismay'd,
 Renounced, for aye, dark magic's aid.

XXVIII.

Nought of the bridal will I tell,
 Which after in short space befell;
 Nor how brave sons and daughters fair
 Bless'd Teviot's Flower, and Cranstoun's heir :
 After such dreadful scene, 'twere vain
 To wake the note of mirth again.

More meet it were to mark the day
 Of penitence and prayer divine,
 When pilgrim-chiefs, in sad array,
 Sought Melrose' holy shrine.

XXIX.

With naked foot, and sackcloth vest,
 And arms enfolded on his breast,
 Did every pilgrim go ;
 The standers-by might hear uneth,
 Footstep, or voice, or high-drawn breath,
 Through all the lengthen'd row :
 No lordly look, nor martial stride,
 Gone was their glory, sunk their pride,
 Forgotten their renown ;
 Silent and slow, like ghosts they glide
 To the high altar's hallow'd side,
 • And there they knelt them down :
 Above the suppliant chieftains wave
 The banners of departed brave ;
 Beneath the letter'd stones were laid
 The ashes of their fathers dead ;
 From many a garnish'd niche around,
 Stern saints and tortured martyrs frown'd.

XXX.

And slow up the dim aisle afar,
 With sable cowl and scapular,
 And snow-white stoles, in order duc,
 The holy Fathers, two and two,
 In long procession came ;
 Taper and host, and book they bare,
 And holy banner, flourish'd fair
 With the Redeemer's name.
 Above the prostrate pilgrim band
 The mitred Abbot stretch'd his hand,
 And bless'd them as they kneel'd ;
 With holy cross he sign'd them all,
 And pray'd they might be sage in hall,
 And fortunate in field.
 Then mass was sung, and prayers were said,
 And solemn requiem for the dead ;
 And bells toll'd out their mighty peal,
 For the departed spirit's weal ;
 And ever in the office close
 The hymn of intercession rose ;
 And far the echoing aisles prolong
 The awful burthen of the song,—
 DIES IRÆ, DIES ILLA,
 SOLVET SÆCLUM IN FAVILLA ;
 While the pealing organ rung ;
 Were it meet with sacred strain
 To close my lay, so light and vain,
 Thus the holy Fathers sung.

XXXI.

HYMN FOR THE DEAD.

That day of wrath, that dreadful day,
 When heaven and earth shall pass away,
 What power shall be the sinner's stay ?
 How shall he meet that dreadful day ?

When, shriveling like a parched scroll,
 The flaming heavens together roll ;
 When louder yet, and yet more dread,
 Swells the high trump that wakes the dead !

Oh! on that day, that wrathful day,
 When man to judgment wakes from clay,
 Be THOU the trembling sinner's stay,
 Though heaven and earth shall pass away !

HUSH'D is the harp—the Minstrel gone.
 And did he wander forth alone?
 Alone, in indigence and age,
 To linger out his pilgrimage?
 No; close beneath proud Newark's tower,
 Arose the Minstrel's lowly bower;
 A simple hut; but there was seen
 The little garden hedged with green,
 The cheerful hearth, and lattice clean.
 There shelter'd wanderers, by the blaze,
 Oft heard the tale of other days;
 For much he loved to ope his door,
 And give the aid he begg'd before.
 So pass'd the winter's day; but still,
 When summer smiled on sweet Bowhill,
 And July's eve, with balmy breath,
 Waved the blue-bells on Newark heath;
 When throstles sung in Hare head-shaw,
 And corn was green on Carterhaugh,
 And flourish'd, broad, Blackandro's oak,
The aged Harper's soul awoke!
Then would he sing achievements high,
 And circumstance of chivalry,
Till the rapt traveller would stay,
 Forgetful of the closing day;
 And noble youths, the strain to hear,
 Forsook the hunting of the deer;
 And Yarrow, as he roll'd along,
Bore burden to the Minstrel's song.

MARMION.

A TALE OF FLODDEN FIELD, IN SIX CANTOS.

TO THE

RIGHT HONOURABLE

HENRY LORD MONTAGU,

&c. &c. &c.

THIS ROMANCE IS INSCRIBED BY

THE AUTHOR.

ADVERTISEMENT TO THE FIRST EDITION.

It is hardly to be expected, that an Author whom the Public have honoured with some degree of applause, should not be again a trespasser on their kindness. Yet the Author of *Marmion* must be supposed to feel some anxiety concerning its success, since he is sensible that he hazards, by this second intrusion, any reputation which his first Poem may have procured him. The present story turns upon the private adventures of a fictitious character; but is called a Tale of Flodden Field, because the hero's fate is connected with that memorable defeat, and the causes which led to it. The design of the Author was, if possible, to apprize his readers, at the outset, of the date of his Story, and to prepare them for the manners of the Age in which it is laid. Any Historical Narrative, far more an attempt at Epic composition, exceeded his plan of a Romantic Tale; yet he may be permitted to hope, from the popularity of *The Lay of the Last Minstrel*, that an attempt to paint the manners of the feudal times, upon a broader scale, and in the course of a more interesting story, will not be unacceptable to the Public.

The Poem opens about the commencement of August, and concludes with the defeat of Flodden, 9th September, 1513.

INTRODUCTION TO CANTO FIRST.

TO

WILLIAM STEWART ROSE, ESQ.

Ashestiel, Ettrick Forest.

NOVEMBER'S sky is chill and drear,
 November's leaf is red and sear :
 Late, gazing down the steepy linn,
 That hems our little garden in,
 Low in its dark and narrow glen,
 You scarce the rivulet might ken,
 So thick the tangled greenwood grew,
 So feeble trill'd the streamlet through :
 Now, murmuring hoarse, and frequent seen
 Through bush and brier, no longer green,
 An angry brook, it sweeps the glade,
 Brawls over rock and wild cascade,
 And, foaming brown with doubled speed,
 Hurries its waters to the Tweed.

No longer Autumn's glowing red
 Upon our Forest hills is shed ;
 No more, beneath the evening beam,
 Fair Tweed reflects their purple gleam ;
 Away hath pass'd the heather-bell
 That bloom'd so rich on Needpath-fell ;
 Sallow his brow, and russet bare
 Are now the sister-heights of Yair.
 The sheep, before the pinching heaven,
 To shelter'd dale and down are driven,
 Where yet some faded herbage pines,
 And yet a watery sunbeam shines :
 In meek despondency they eye
 The wither'd sward and wintry sky,
 And far beneath their summer hill,
 Stray sadly by Glenkinnon's rill :
 The shepherd shifts his mantle's fold,
 And wraps him closer from the cold ;

His dogs, no merry circles wheel,
 But, shivering, follow at his heel;
 A cowering glance they often cast,
 As deeper moans the gathering blast.

My imps, though hardy, bold, and wild,
 As best befits the mountain child,
 Feel the sad influence of the hour,
 And wail the daisy's vanished flower;
 Their summer gambols tell, and mourn,
 And anxious ask,—Will spring return,
 And birds and lambs again be gay,
 And blossoms clothe the hawthorn spray?

Yes, prattlers, yes. The daisy's flower
 Again shall paint your summer bower;
 Again the hawthorn shall supply
 The garlands you delight to tie;
 The lambs upon the lea shall bound,
 The wild birds carol to the round,
 And while you frolic light as they,
 Too short shall seem the summer day.

To mute and to material things
 New life revolving summer brings;
 The genial call dead Nature hears,
 And in her glory reappears.
 But oh! my country's wintry state
 What second spring shall renovate?
 What powerful call shall bid arise
 The buried warlike and the wise;
 The mind that thought for Britain's weal,
 The hand that grasp'd the victor steel?
 The vernal sun new life bestows
 Even on the meanest flower that blows;
 But vainly, vainly may he shine,
 Where glory weeps o'er NELSON'S shrine;
 And vainly pierce the solemn gloom,
 That shrouds, O PITT, thy hallowed tomb!

Deep grav'd in every British heart,
 O never let those names depart !
 Say to your sons,—Lo, here his grave,
 Who victor died on Gadite wave ;
 To him, as to the burning levin,
 Short, bright, resistless course was given.
 Where'er his country's foes were found,
 Was heard the fated thunder's sound,
 Till burst the bolt on yonder shore,
 Roll'd, blazed, destroy'd,—and was no more.

Nor mourn ye less his perish'd worth,
 Who bade the conqueror go forth,
 And launch'd that thunderbolt of war
 On Egypt, Hafnia, Trafalgar ;
 Who, born to guide such high emprise,
 For Britain's weal was early wise ;
 Alas! to whom the Almighty gave,
 For Britain's sins, an early grave !
 His worth, who, in his mightiest hour,
 A bauble held the pride of power,
 Spurn'd at the sordid lust of pelf,
 And served his Albion for herself ;
 Who, when the frantic crowd amain
 Strain'd at subjection's bursting rein,
 O'er their wild mood full conquest gain'd,
 The pride, he would not crush, restrain'd,
 Show'd their fierce zeal a worthier cause,
 And brought the freeman's arm, to aid the free-
 man's laws.

Had'st thou but lived, though stripp'd of power,
 A watchman on the lonely tower,
 Thy thrilling trump had roused the land,
 When fraud or danger were at hand ;
 By thee, as by the beacon-light,
 Our pilots had kept course aright ;
 As some proud column, though alone,
 Thy strength had propp'd the tottering throne :

Now is the stately column broke,
 The beacon-light is quench'd in smoke,
 The trumpet's silver sound is still,
 The warder silent on the hill!

Oh think, how to his latest day,
 When Death, just hovering, claim'd his prey,
 With Palinure's unalter'd mood,
 Firm at his dangerous post he stood;
 Each call for needful rest repell'd,
 With dying hand the rudder held,
 Till, in his fall, with fateful sway,
 The steerage of the realm gave way!
 Then, while on Britain's thousand plains,
 One unpolluted church remains,
 Whose peaceful bells ne'er sent around
 The bloody tocsin's maddening sound,
 But still, upon the hallow'd day,
 Convoke the swains to praise and pray;
 While faith and civil peace are dear,
 Grace this cold marble with a tear,—
 He, who preserved them, **PITT**, lies here!

Nor yet suppress the generous sigh,
 Because his rival slumbers nigh;
 Nor be thy *requiescat* dumb,
 Lest it be said o'er FOX's tomb.
 For talents mourn, untimely lost,
 When best employ'd, and wanted most;
 Mourn genius high, and lore profound,
 And wit that loved to play, not wound;
 And all the reasoning powers divine,
 To penetrate, resolve, combine;
 And feelings keen, and fancy's glow,—
 They sleep with him who sleeps below:
 And, if thou mourn'st they could not save
 From error him who owns this grave,
 Be every harsher thought suppress'd,
 And sacred be the last long rest.

Here, where the end of earthly things
 Lays heroes, patriots, bards, and kings ;
 Where stiff the hand, and still the tongue,
 Of those who fought, and spoke, and sung ;
Here, where the fretted aisles prolong
 The distant notes of holy song,
 As if some angel spoke agen,
 " All peace on earth, good-will to men ;"
 If ever from an English heart,
 O, *here* let prejudice depart,
 And, partial feeling cast aside,
 Record, that Fox a Briton died !
 When Europe crouch'd to France's yoke,
 And Austria bent, and Prussia broke,
 And the firm Russian's purpose brave,
 Was barter'd by a timorous slave,
 Even then dishonour's peace he spurn'd,
 The sullied olive-branch return'd,
 Stood for his country's glory fast,
 And nail'd her colours to the mast !
 Heaven, to reward his firmness, gave
 A portion in this honour'd grave,
 And ne'er held marble in its trust
 Of two such wondrous men the dust.

With more than mortal powers endow'd,
 How high they soar'd above the crowd !
 Theirs was no common party race,
 Jostling by dark intrigue for place ;
 Like fabled Gods, their mighty war
 Shook realms and nations in its jar ;
 Beneath each banner proud to stand,
 Look'd up the noblest of the land,
 Till through the British world were known
 The names of Pitt and Fox alone.
 Spells of such force no wizard grave
 E'er framed in dark Thessalian cave,
 Though his could drain the ocean dry,
 And force the planets from the sky.

These spells are spent, and, spent with these,
 The wine of life is on the lees.
 Genius, and taste, and talent gone,
 For ever tomb'd beneath the stone,
 Where—taming thought to human pride!—
 The mighty chiefs sleep side by side.
 Drop upon Fox's grave the tear,
 'Twill trickle to his rival's bier;
 O'er PITT's the mournful requiem sound,
 And Fox's shall the notes rebound.
 The solemn echo seems to cry,—
 "Here let their discord with them die.
 Speak not for those a separate doom,
 Whom Fate made Brothers in the tomb;
 But search the land of living men,
 Where wilt thou find their like agen?"

Rest, ardent Spirits! till the cries
 Of dying Nature bid you rise;
 Not even your Britain's groans can pierce
 The leaden silence of your hearse;
 Then, O, how impotent and vain
 This grateful tributary strain!
 Though not unmark'd from northern clime,
 Ye heard the Border Minstrel's rhyme:
 His Gothic harp has o'er you rung;
 The Bard you deign'd to praise, your death-
 less names has sung.

Stay yet, illusion, stay a while,
 My wilder'd fancy still beguile!
 From this high theme how can I part,
 Ere half unloaded is my heart!
 For all the tears e'er sorrow drew,
 And all the raptures fancy knew,
 And all the keener rush of blood,
 That throbs through bard in bard-like mood,
 Were here a tribute mean and low,
 Though all their mingled streams could flow—

Woe, wonder, and sensation high,
 In one spring-tide of ecstasy!—
 It will not be—it may not last—
 The vision of enchantment's past :
 Like frostwork in the morning ray,
 The fancied fabric melts away ;
 Each Gothic arch, memorial-stone,
 And long, dim, lofty aisle, are gone ;
 And, lingering last, deception dear,
 The choir's high sounds die on my ear.
 Now slow return the lonely down,
 The silent pastures bleak and brown,
 The farm begirt with copsewood wild,
 The gambols of each frolic child,
 Mixing their shrill cries with the tone
 Of Tweed's dark waters rushing on.

Prompt on unequal tasks to run,
 Thus Nature disciplines her son :
 Meeter, she says, for me to stray,
 And waste the solitary day,
 In plucking from yon fen the reed,
 And watch it floating down the Tweed ;
 Or idly list the shrilling lay,
 With which the milkmaid cheers her way,
 Marking its cadence rise and fall,
 As from the field, beneath her pail,
 She trips it down the uneven dale :
 Meeter for me, by yonder cairn,
 The ancient shepherd's tale to learn ;
 Though oft he stop in rustic fear,
 Lest his old legends tire the ear
 Of one, who, in his simple mind,
 May boast of book-learn'd taste refined.

But thou, my friend, can'st fitly tell,
 (For few have read romance so well,)
 How still the legendary lay
 O'er poet's bosom holds its sway ;

How on the ancient minstrel strain
 Time lays his palsied hand in vain;
 And how our hearts at doughty deeds,
 By warriors wrought in steely weeds,
 Still throb for fear and pity's sake;
 As when the Champion of the Lake
 Enters Morgana's fated house,
 Or in the 'Chapel Perilous,'¹
 Despising spells and demons' force,
 Holds converse with the unburied corse;⁹¹
 Or when, Dame Ganore's grace to move,
 (Alas, that lawless was their love!)
 He sought proud Tarquin in his den,
 And freed full sixty knights; or when,
 A sinful man, and unconfess'd,
 He took the Sangreal's holy quest,
 And, slumbering, saw the vision high,
 He might not view with waking eye.⁹²

The mightiest chiefs of British song
 Scorn'd not such legends to prolong:
 They gleam through Spenser's elfin dream,
 And mix in Milton's heavenly theme;
 And Dryden, in immortal strain,
 Had raised the Table Round again,⁹³
 But that a ribald King and Court
 Bade him toil on, to make them sport;
 Demanded for their niggard pay,
 Fit for their souls, a looser lay,
 Licentious satire, song, and play;
 The world defrauded of the high design,
 Profaned the God-given strength, and marr'd
 the lofty line.

Warm'd by such names, well may we then,
 Though dwindled sons of little men,
 Essay to break a feeble lance
 In the fair fields of old romance;
 Or seek the moated castle's cell,
 Where long through talisman and spell,

While tyrants ruled, and damsels wept,
 Thy Genius, Chivalry, hath slept :
 There sound the harpings of the North,
 Till he awake and sally forth,
 On venturous quest to prick again,
 In all his arms, with all his train,
 Shield, lance, and brand, and plume, and scarf,
 Fay, giant, dragon, squire, and dwarf,
 And wizard with his wand of might,
 And errant maid on palfrey white.
 Around the Genius weave their spells,
 Pure Love, who scarce his passion tells ;
 Mystery, half veil'd and half reveal'd ;
 And Honour, with his spotless shield ;
 Attention, with fix'd eye ; and Fear,
 That loves the tale she shrinks to hear ;
 And gentle Courtesy ; and Faith,
 Unchanged by sufferings, time, or death ;
 And Valour, lion-mettled lord,
 Leaning upon his own good sword.

Well has thy fair achievement shown,
 A worthy meed may thus be won ;
 Ytene's oaks—beneath whose shade
 Their theme the merry minstrels made,
 Of Ascapart, and Bevis bold,⁹⁴
 And that Red King, who, while of old,
 Through Boldrewood the chase he led,
 By his loved huntsman's arrow bled—
 Ytene's oaks have heard again
 Renew'd such legendary strain ;
 For thou hast sung, how He of Gaul,
 That Amadis so famed in hall,
 For Oriana, foil'd in fight
 The Necromancer's felon might ;
 And well in modern verse hast wove
 Partenopex's mystic love :
 Hear, then, attentive to my lay,
 A knightly tale of Albion's elder day.

CANTO FIRST

The Castle.

I.

DAY set on Norham's castled steep,⁹⁵
 And Tweed's fair river, broad and deep,
 And Cheviot's mountains lone :
 The battled towers, the donjon keep,⁹⁶
 The loophole grates, where captives weep,
 The flanking walls that round it sweep,
 In yellow lustre shone.
 The warriors on the turrets high,
 Moving athwart the evening sky,
 Seem'd forms of giant height :
 Their armour, as it caught the rays,
 Flash'd back again the western blaze,
 In lines of dazzling light.

II.

Saint George's banner, broad and gay,
 Now faded, as the fading ray
 Less bright, and less, was flung ;
 The evening gale had scarce the power
 To wave it on the Donjon Tower,
 So heavily it hung.
 The scouts had parted on their search,
 The Castle gates were barr'd ;
 Above the gloomy portal arch,
 Timing his footsteps to a march,
 The Warder kept his guard ;
 Low humming, as he paced along,
 Some ancient Border gathering song.

III.

A distant trampling sound he hears ;
 He looks abroad, and soon appears,
 O'er Horncliff-hill a plump of spears,
 Beneath a pennon gay ;

A horseman, darting from the crowd,
 Like lightning from a summer cloud
 Spurs on his mettled courser proud,
 Before the dark array.
 Beneath the sable palisade,
 That closed the Castle barricade,
 His bugle horn he blew ;
 The warder hasted from the wall,
 And warn'd the Captain in the hall,
 For well the blast he knew ;
 And joyfully that knight did call,
 To sewer, squire, and seneschal.

IV.

“ Now broach ye a pipe of Malvoisie,
 Bring pasties of the doe,
 And quickly make the entrance free,
 And bid my heralds ready be,
 And every minstrel sound his glee,
 And all our trumpets blow ;
 And, from the platform, spare ye not
 To fire a noble salvo-shot ;
 Lord MARMION waits below ! ”
 Then to the Castle's lower ward
 Sped forty yeomen tall,
 The iron-studded gates unbarr'd,
 Raised the portcullis' ponderous guard,
 The lofty palisade unsparr'd
 And let the drawbridge fall.

V.

Along the bridge Lord Marmion rode,
 Proudly his red-roan charger trode,
 His helm hung at the saddlebow ;
 Well by his visage you might know
 He was a stalworth knight, and keen,
 And had in many a battle been ;

The scar on his brown cheek reveal'd
 A token true of Bosworth field ;
 His eyebrow dark, and eye of fire,
 Show'd spirit proud, and prompt to ire ;
 Yet lines of thought upon his cheek
 Did deep design and counsel speak.
 His forehead, by his casque worn bare,
 His thick mustache, and curly hair,
 Coal-black, and grizzled here and there,
 But more through toil than age ;
 His square-turn'd joints, and strength of limb,
 Show'd him no carpet knight so trim,
 But in close fight a champion grim,
 In camps a leader sage.

VI.

Well was he arm'd from head to heel,
 In mail and plate of Milan steel ;⁹⁷
 But his strong helm, of mighty cost,
 Was all with burnish'd gold emboss'd ;
 Amid the plumage of the crest,
 A falcon hover'd on her nest,
 With wings outspread, and forward breast ;
 E'en such a falcon, on his shield,
 Soar'd sable in an azure field :
 The golden legend bore aright,
 Who checks at me, to death is dight.⁹⁸
 Blue was the charger's broider'd rein ;
 Blue ribbons deck'd his arching mane ;
 The knightly housing's ample fold
 Was velvet blue, and trapp'd with gold.

VII.

Behind him rode two gallant squires,
 Of noble name, and knightly sires ;
 They burn'd the gilded spurs to claim ;
 For well could each a war-horse tame,
 Could draw the bow, the sword could sway,
 And lightly bear the ring away ;

Nor less with courteous precepts stored,
 Could dance in hall, and carve at board,
 And frame love-ditties passing rare,
 And sing them to a lady fair.

VIII.

Four men-at-arms came at their backs,
 With halbert, bill, and battle-axe :
 They bore Lord Marmion's lance so strong,
 And led his sumpter-mules along,
 And ambling palfrey, when at need
 Him listed ease his battle-steed.
 The last and trustiest of the four,
 On high his forky pennon bore ;
 Like swallow's tail, in shape and hue,
 Flutter'd the streamer glossy blue,
 Where, blazon'd sable, as before,
 The towering falcon seem'd to soar.
 Last, twenty yeomen, two and two,
 In hosen black, and jerkins blue,
 With falcons broider'd on each breast,
 Attended on their lord's behest.
 Each, chosen for an archer good,
 Knew hunting-craft by lake or wood ;
 Each one a six-foot bow could bend,
 And far a cloth-yard shaft could send ;
 Each held a boar-spear tough and strong,
 And at their belts their quivers rung.
 Their dusty palfreys, and array,
 Show'd they had march'd a weary way.

IX.

'Tis meet that I should tell you now,
 How fairly arm'd, and order'd how,
 The soldiers of the guard,
 With musket, pike, and morion,
 To welcome noble Marmion,
 Stood in the Castle-yard ;

Minstrels and trumpeters were there,
 The gunner held his linstock yare,
 For welcome-shot prepared :
 Enter'd the train, and such a clang,
 As then through all his turrets rang,
 Old Norham never heard.

X.

The guards their morrice-pikes advanced,
 The trumpets flourish'd brave,
 The cannon from the ramparts glanced,
 And thundering welcome gave.
 A blithe salute, in martial sort,
 The minstrels well might sound,
 For, as Lord Marmion cross'd the court,
 He scatter'd angels round.
 "Welcome to Norham, Marmion !
 Stout heart, and open hand !
 Well dost thou brook thy gallant roan,
 Thou flower of English land !"

XI.

Two pursuivants, whom tabarts deck,
 With silver scutcheon round their neck,
 Stood on the steps of stone,
 By which you reach the donjon gate,
 And there, with herald pomp and state,
 They hail'd Lord Marmion :
 They hail'd him Lord of Fontenaye,
 Of Lutterward, and Scivelbaye,
 Of Tamworth tower and town ;⁹⁹
 And he, their courtesy to requite,
 Gave them a chain of twelve marks' weight,
 All as he lighted down.
 "Now, largesse, largesse,¹⁰⁰ Lord Marmion,
 Knight of the crest of gold !
 A blazon'd shield, in battle won,
 Ne'er guarded heart so bold."

XII.

They marshall'd him to the Castle-hall,
 Where the guests stood all aside,
 And loudly flourish'd the trumpet-call,
 And the heralds loudly cried,
 —“ Room, lordings, room for Lord Marmion,
 With the crest and helm of gold !
 Full well we know the trophies won
 In the lists at Cottiswold :
 There, vainly Ralph de Wilton strove
 'Gainst Marmion's force to stand ;
 To him he lost his lady-love,
 And to the King his land.
 Ourselves beheld the listed field,
 A sight both sad and fair ;
 We saw Lord Marmion pierce his shield,
 And saw his saddle bare ;
 We saw the victor win the crest
 He wears with worthy pride ;
 And on the gibbet-tree, reversed,
 His foeman's scutcheon tied.
 Place, nobles, for the Falcon-Knight !
 Room, room, ye gentles gay,
 For him who conquer'd in the right,
 Marmion of Fontenaye ! ”

XIII.

Then stepp'd to meet that noble Lord,
 Sir Hugh the Heron bold,
 Baron of Twisell, and of Ford,
 And Captain of the Hold.¹⁰²
 He led Lord Marmion to the deas,
 Raised o'er the pavement high,
 And placed him in the upper place—
 They feasted full and high :
 The whiles a Northern harper rude
 Chanted a rhyme of deadly feud,

*“How the fierce Thirwalls, and Riddleys all,¹⁰²
 Stout Willimondswick,
 And Hardriding Dick,
 And Hughie of Hawdon, and Will o’ the Wall,
 Have set on Sir Albany Featherstonhaugh,
 And taken his life at the Deadman’s-shaw.”*

Scantly Lord Marmion’s ear could brook
 The harper’s barbarous lay ;
 Yet much he praised the pains he took,
 And well those pains did pay :
 For lady’s suit, and minstrel’s strain,
 By knight should ne’er be heard in vain.

XIV.

“Now, good Lord Marmion,” Heron says,
 “Of your fair courtesy,
 I pray you bide some little space
 In this poor tower with me.
 Here may you keep your arms from rust,
 May breathe your war-horse well ;
 Seldom hath pass’d a week but giust
 Or feat of arms befell :
 The Scots can rein a mettled steed ;
 And love to couch a spear ;—
 Saint George ! a stirring life they lead,
 That have such neighbours near.
 Then stay with us a little space,
 Our northern wars to learn ;
 I pray you, for your lady’s grace !”
 Lord Marmion’s brow grew stern.

XV.

The Captain mark’d his alter’d look,
 And gave a squire the sign ;
 A mighty wassail-bowl he took,
 And crown’d it high in wine.
 “Now pledge me here, Lord Marmion :
 But first I pray thee fair,

Where hast thou left that page of thine,
 That used to serve thy cup of wine,
 Whose beauty was so rare?
 When last in Raby towers we met,
 The boy I closely eyed,
 And often mark'd his cheeks were wet,
 With tears he fain would hide:
 His was no rugged horse-boy's hand,
 To burnish shield or sharpen brand,
 Or saddle battle-steed;
 But meeter seem'd for lady fair,
 To fan her cheek, or curl her hair,
 Or through embroidery, rich and rare,
 The slender silk to lead:
 His skin was fair, his ringlets gold,
 His bosom—when he sigh'd,
 The russet doublet's rugged fold
 Could scarce repel its pride!
 Say, hast thou given that lovely youth
 To serve in lady's bower?
 Or was the gentle page, in sooth,
 A gentle paramour?"

XVI.

Lord Marmion ill could brook such jest;
 He roll'd his kindling eye,
 With pain his rising wrath suppress'd,
 Yet made a calm reply:
 "That boy thou thought'st so goodly fair,
 He might not brook the northern air;
 More of his fate if thou wouldst learn,
 I left him sick in Lindisfarn:
 Enough of him.—But, Heron, say,
 Why does thy lovely lady gay
 Disdain to grace the hall to-day?
 Or has that dame, so fair and sage,
 Gone on some pious pilgrimage?"—
 He spoke in covert scorn, for fame
 Whisper'd light tales of Heron's dame.

XVII.

Unmark'd, at least unreck'd, the taunt,
 Careless the Knight replied,
 "No bird, whose feathers gaily flaunt,
 Delights in cage to bide :
 Norham is grim and grated close,
 Hemm'd in by battlement and fosse,
 And many a darksome tower ;
 And better loves my lady bright
 To sit in liberty and light,
 In fair Queen Margaret's bower.
 We hold our greyhound in our hand,
 Our falcon on our glove ;
 But where shall we find leash or band,
 For dame that loves to rove ?
 Let the wild falcon soar her swing,
 She'll stoop when she has tired her wing."—

XVIII.

"Nay, if with Royal James's bride
 The lovely Lady Heron bide,
 Behold me here a messenger,
 Your tender greetings prompt to bear ;
 For, to the Scottish court address'd,
 I journey at our King's behest,
 And pray you, of your grace, provide
 For me, and mine, a trusty guide.
 I have not ridden in Scotland since
 James back'd the cause of that mock prince,
 Warbeck, that Flemish counterfeit,
 Who on the gibbet paid the cheat.
 Then did I march with Surrey's power,
 What time we razed old Ayton tower." ¹⁰³

XIX.

"For such-like need, my lord, I trow,
 Norham can find you guides enow ;
 For here be some have prick'd as far,
 On Scottish ground, as to Dunbar ;

Have drunk the monks of St. Bothan's ale,
 And driven the beeves of Lauderdale ;
 Harried the wives of Greenlaw's goods,
 And given them light to set their hoods." 104

XX.

"Now, in good sooth," Lord Marmion cried,
 "Were I in warlike wise to ride,
 A better guard I would not lack,
 Than your stout forayers at my back ;
 But, as in form of peace I go,
 A friendly messenger, to know,
 Why through all Scotland, near and far,
 Their King is mustering troops for war,
 The sight of plundering Border spears
 Might justify suspicious fears,
 And deadly feud, or thirst of spoil,
 Break out in some unseemly broil :
 A herald were my fitting guide ;
 Or friar, sworn in peace to bide ;
 Or pardoner, or travelling priest,
 Or strolling pilgrim, at the least."

XXI.

The Captain mused a little space,
 And pass'd his hand across his face.
 —"Fain would I find the guide you want,
 But ill may spare a pursuivant,
 The only men that safe can ride
 Mine errands on the Scottish side :
 And though a bishop built this fort,
 Few holy brethren here resort ;
 Even our good chaplain, as I ween,
 Since our last siege, we have not seen :
 The mass he might not sing or say,
 Upon one stinted meal a-day ;
 So, safe he sat in Durham aisle,
 And pray'd for our success the while.

Our Norham vicar, woe betide,
 Is all too well in case to ride ;
 The priest of Shoreswood ¹⁰⁵—he could rein
 The wildest war-horse in your train ;
 But then, no spearman in the hall
 Will sooner swear, or stab, or brawl.
 Friar John of Tillmouth were the man :
 A blithesome brother at the can,
 A welcome guest in hall and bower,
 He knows each castle, town, and tower,
 In which the wine and ale is good,
 'Twixt Newcastle and Holy-Rood.
 But that good man, as ill befalls,
 Hath seldom left our castle walls,
 Since, on the vigil of St. Bede,
 In evil hour, he cross'd the Tweed,
 To teach Dame Alison her creed.
 Old Bughtrig found him with his wife ;
 And John, an enemy to strife,
 Sans frock and hood, fled for his life.
 The jealous churl hath deeply swore,
 That, if again he venture o'er,
 He shall shrieve penitent no more.
 Little he loves such risks, I know ;
 Yet, in your guard, perchance will go."

XXII.

Young Selby, at the fair hall-board,
 Carved to his uncle and that lord,
 And reverently took up the word.
 " Kind uncle, woe were we each one,
 If harm should hap to brother John.
 He is a man of mirthful speech,
 Can many a game and gambol teach :
 Full well at tables can he play,
 And sweep at bowls the stake away.
 None can a lustier carol bawl,
 The needfullest among us all,
 When time hangs heavy in the hall,

And snow comes thick at Christmas tide,
 And we can neither hunt, nor ride
 A foray on the Scottish side.
 The vow'd revenge of Bughtrig rude,
 May end in worse than loss of hood.
 Let Friar John, in safety, still
 In chimney-corner snore his fill,
 Roast hissing crabs, or flagons swill :
 Last night, to Norham there came one,
 Will better guide Lord Marmion."—
 "Nephew," quoth Heron, "by my fay,
 Well hast thou spoke ; say forth thy say."—

XXIII.

"Here is a holy Palmer come,
 From Salem first, and last from Rome ;
 One, that hath kiss'd the blessed tomb,
 And visited each holy shrine,
 In Araby and Palestine ;
 On hills of Armenie hath been,
 Where Noah's ark may yet be seen ;
 By that Red Sea, too, hath he trod,
 Which parted at the prophet's rod ;
 In Sinai's wilderness he saw
 The Mount, where Israel heard the law,
 'Mid thunder-dint, and flashing levin,
 And shadows, mists, and darkness, given.
 He shows Saint James's cockle-shell,
 Of fair Montserrat, too, can tell ;
 And of that Grot where Olives nod,
 Where, darling of each heart and eye,
 From all the youth of Sicily,
 Saint Rosalie retired to God.¹⁰⁶

XXIV.

"To stout Saint George of Norwich merry,
 Saint Thomas, too, of Canterbury,
 Cuthbert of Durham and Saint Bede,
 For his sins' pardon hath he pray'd.

He knows the passes of the North,
 And seeks far shrines beyond the Forth ;
 Little he eats, and long will wake,
 And drinks but of the stream or lake.
 This were a guide o'er moor and dale ;
 But, when our John hath quaff'd his ale,
 As little as the wind that blows,
 And warms itself against his nose,
 Kens he, or cares, which way he goes."

XXV.

"Gramercy !" quoth Lord Marmion,
 "Full loth were I, that Friar John,
 That venerable man, for me,
 Were placed in fear or jeopardy.
 If this same Palmer will me lead
 From hence to Holy-Rood,
 Like his good saint, I'll pay his meed,
 Instead of cockle-shell, or bead,
 With angels fair and good.
 I love such holy rambles ; still
 They know to charm a weary hill,
 With song, romance, or lay :
 Some jovial tale, or glee, or jest,
 Some lying legend, at the least,
 They bring to cheer the way."

XXVI.

"Ah ! noble sir," young Selby said,
 And finger on his lip he laid,
 "This man knows much, perchance e'en more
 Than he could learn by holy lore.)
 Still to himself he's muttering,
 And shrinks as at some unseen thing.
 Last night we listen'd at his cell ;
 Strange sounds we heard. and, sooth to tell,
 He murmur'd on till morn, howe'er
 No living mortal could be near.

Sometimes I thought I heard it plain,
 As other voices spoke again.
 I cannot tell—I like it not—
 Friar John hath told us it is wrote,
 No conscience clear, and void of wrong,
 Can rest awake, and pray so long.
 Himself still sleeps before his beads
 Have mark'd ten aves, and two creeds." ¹⁰⁷

XXVII.

“Let pass,” quoth Marmion; “by my fay,
 This man shall guide me on my way,
 Although the great arch-fiend and he
 Had sworn themselves of company.
 So please you, gentle youth, to call
 This Palmer ¹⁰⁸ to the Castle-hall.”
 The summon'd Palmer came in place :
 His sable cowl o'erhung his face ;
 In his black mantle was he clad,
 With Peter's keys, in cloth of red,
 On his broad shoulders wrought ;
 The scallop shell his cap did deck ;
 The crucifix around his neck
 Was from Loretto brought ;
 His sandals were with travel tore,
 Staff, budget, bottle, scrip, he wore ;
 The faded palm-branch in his hand
 Show'd pilgrim from the Holy Land.

XXVIII.

When as the Palmer came in hall,
 Nor lord, nor knight, was there more tall,
 Or had a statelier step withal,
 Or look'd more high and keen ;
 For no saluting did he wait,
 But strode across the hall of state,
 And fronted Marmion where he sate,
 As he his peer had been.

But his gaunt frame was worn with toil ;
 His cheek was sunk, alas the while !
 And when he struggled at a smile,
 His eye look'd haggard wild :
 Poor wretch ! the mother that him bare,
 If she had been in presence there,
 In his wan face, and sun-burn'd hair,
 She had not known her child.
 Danger, long travel, want, or woe,
 Soon change the form that best we know—
 For deadly fear can time outgo,
 And blanch at once the hair ;
 Hard toil can roughen form and face,
 And want can quench the eye's bright grace,
 Nor does old age a wrinkle trace
 More deeply than despair.
 Happy whom none of these befall,
 But this poor Palmer knew them all.

XXIX.

Lord Marmion then his boon did ask ;
 The Palmer took on him the task,
 So he would march with morning tide,
 To Scottish court to be his guide.
 " But I have siolemn vows to pay,
 And may not linger by the way,
 To fair St. Andrews bound,
 Within the ocean-cave to pray,
 Where good Saint Rule his holy lay,
 From midnight to the dawn of day,
 Sung to the billows' sound ;¹⁰⁹
 Thence to Saint Fillan's blessed well,
 Whose spring can frenzied dreams dispel,
 And the crazed brain restore :¹¹⁰
 Saint Mary grant, that cave or spring
 Could back to peace my bosom bring,
 Or bid it throb no more ! "

XXX.

And now the midnight draught of sleep,
 Where wine and spices richly steep,
 In massive bowl of silver deep,
 The page presents on knee.
 Lord Marmion drank a fair good rest,
 The Captain pledged his noble guest,
 The cup went through among the rest,
 Who drain'd it merrily ;
 Alone the Palmer pass'd it by,
 Though Selby press'd him courteously.
 This was a sign the feast was o'er ;
 It hush'd the merry wassel roar,
 The minstrels ceased to sound.
 Soon in the castle nought was heard,
 But the slow footstep of the guard,
 Pacing his sober round.

XXXI.

With early dawn Lord Marmion rose :
 And first the chapel doors unclose ;
 Then, after morning rites were done,
 (A hasty mass from Friar John,)
 And knight and squire had broke their fast,
 On rich substantial repast,
 Lord Marmion's bugles blew to horse :
 Then came the stirrup-cup in course :
 Between the Baron and his host,
 No point of courtesy was lost ;
 High thanks were by Lord Marmion paid,
 Solemn excuse the Captain made,
 Till, filing from the gate, had pass'd
 That noble train, their Lord the last.
 Then loudly rung the trumpet call ;
 Thunder'd the cannon from the wall,
 And shook the Scottish shore ;
 Around the castle eddied slow,
 Volumes of smoke as white as snow,
 And hid its turrets hoar ;

Till they roll'd forth upon the air,
 And met the river breezes there,
 Which gave again the prospect fair.

INTRODUCTION TO CANTO SECOND.

TO THE

REV. JOHN MARRIOTT, A.M.

Ashestiel, Ettrick Forest.

THE scenes are desert now, and bare,
 Where flourish'd once a forest fair,¹¹¹
 When these waste glens with copse were lined,
 And peopled with the hart and hind.
 Yon Thorn—perchance whose prickly spears
 Have fenced him for three hundred years,
 While fell around his green compeers—
 Yon lonely Thorn, would he could tell
 The changes of his parent dell,
 Since he, so grey and stubborn now,
 Waved in each breeze a sapling bough ;
 Would he could tell how deep the shade
 A thousand mingled branches made ;
 How broad the shadows of the oak,
 How clung the rowan to the rock,
 And through the foliage show'd his head,
 With narrow leaves and berries red ;
 What pines on every mountain sprung,
 O'er every dell what birches hung,
 In every breeze what aspens shook,
 What alders shaded every brook !

“ Here, in my shade,” methinks he'd say,
 “ The mighty stag at noon-tide lay :
 The wolf I've seen, a fiercer game,
 (The neighbouring dingle bears his name,)
 With lurching step around me prowl,
 And stop, against the moon to howl ;

The mountain-boar, on battle set,
 His tusks upon my stem would whet ;
 While doe, and roe, and red-deer good,
 Have bounded by, through gay green-wood.
 Then oft, from Newark's riven tower,
 Sallied a Scottish monarch's power :
 A thousand vassals muster'd round,
 With horse, and hawk, and horn, and hound ;
 And I might see the youth intent,
 Guard every pass with crossbow bent ;
 And through the brake the rangers stalk,
 And fal'ners hold the ready hawk ;
 And foresters, in green-wood trim,
 Lead in the leash the gazehounds grim,
 Attentive, as the bratchet's bay
 From the dark covert drove the prey,
 To slip them as he broke away.
 The startled quarry bounds amain,
 As fast the gallant greyhounds strain ;
 Whistles the arrow from the bow,
 Answers the harquebuss below ;
 While all the rocking hills reply,
 To hoof-clang, hound, and hunters' cry,
 And bugles ringing lightsomely."

Of such proud huntings, many tales
 Yet linger in our lonely dales,
 Up pathless Ettrick and on Yarrow,
 Where erst the outlaw drew his arrow.
 But not more blithe that silvan court,
 Than we have been at humbler sport ;
 Though small our pomp, and mean our game,
 Our mirth, dear Marriott, was the same.
 Remember'st thou my greyhounds true ?
 O'er holt or hill there never flew,
 From slip or leash there never sprang,
 More fleet of foot, or sure of fang.
 Nor dull, between each merry chase,
 Pass'd by the intermitted space ;

For we had fair resource in store,
In Classic and in Gothic lore :
We mark'd each memorable scene,
And held poetic talk between ;
Nor hill, nor brook, we paced along,
But had its legend or its song.
All silent now—for now are still
Thy bowers, untenanted Bowhill !
No longer, from thy mountains dun,
The yeoman hears the well-known gun,
And while his honest heart glows warm,
At thought of his paternal farm,
Round to his mates a brimmer fills,
And drinks, “ The Chieftain of the Hills ! ”
No fairy forms, in Yarrow's bowers,
Trip o'er the walks, or tend the flowers,
Fair as the elves whom Janet saw
By moonlight dance on Carterhaugh ;
No youthful Baron's left to grace
The Forest-Sheriff's lonely chase,
And ape, in manly step and tone,
The majesty of Oberon :
And she is gone, whose lovely face
Is but her least and lowest grace ;
Though if to Sylphid Queen 'twere given,
To show our earth the charms of Heaven,
She could not glide along the air,
With form more light, or face more fair.
No more the widow's deafen'd ear
Grows quick that lady's step to hear :
At noontide she expects her not,
Nor busies her to trim the cot ;
Pensive she turns her humming wheel,
Or pensive cooks her orphans' meal ;
Yet blesses, ere she deals their bread,
The gentle hand by which they're fed.

From Yair,—which hills so closely bind,
Scarce can the Tweed his passage find,

Though much he fret, and chafe, and toil,
 Till all his eddying currents boil,—
 Her long-descended lord is gone,
 And left us by the stream alone.
 And much I miss those sportive boys,
 Companions of my mountain joys,
 Just at the age 'twixt boy and youth,
 When thought is speech, and speech is truth.
 Close to my side, with what delight
 They press'd to hear of Wallace wight,
 When, pointing to his airy mound,
 I call'd his ramparts holy ground !
 Kindled their brows to hear me speak ;
 And I have smiled, to feel my cheek,
 Despite the difference of our years,
 Return again the glow of theirs.
 Ah, happy boys ! such feelings pure,
 They will not, cannot, long endure ;
 Condemn'd to stem the world's rude tide,
 You may not linger by the side ;
 For Fate shall thrust you from the shore,
 And Passion ply the sail and oar.
 Yet cherish the remembrance still,
 Of the lone mountain, and the rill ;
 For trust, dear boys, the time will come,
 When fiercer transport shall be dumb,
 And you will think right frequently,
 But, well I hope, without a sigh,
 On the free hours that we have spent
 Together, on the brown hill's bent.

When, musing on companions gone,
 We doubly feel ourselves alone,
 Something, my friend, we yet may gain ;
 There is a pleasure in this pain :
 It soothes the love of lonely rest,
 Deep in each gentler heart impress'd.
 'Tis silent amid worldly toils,
 And stifled soon by mental broils ;

But, in a bosom thus prepared,
 Its still small voice is often heard,
 Whispering a mingled sentiment,
 'Twixt resignation and content.
 Oft in my mind such thoughts awake,
 By lone Saint Mary's silent lake ; ¹¹²
 Thou know'st it well,—nor fen, nor sedge,
 Pollute the pure lake's crystal edge ;
 Abrupt and sheer, the mountains sink
 At once upon the level brink ;
 And just a trace of silver sand
 Marks where the water meets the land.
 Far in the mirror, bright and blue,
 Each hill's huge outline you may view ;
 Shaggy with heath, but lonely bare,
 Nor tree, nor bush, nor brake, is there,
 Save where, of land, yon slender line
 Bears thwart the lake the scatter'd pine.
 Yet even this nakedness has power,
 And aids the feeling of the hour :
 Nor thicket, dell, nor copse you spy,
 Where living thing conceal'd might lie ;
 Nor point, retiring, hides a dell,
 Where swain, or woodman lone, might dwell ;
 There's nothing left to fancy's guess,
 You see that all is loneliness :
 And silence aids—though the steep hills
 Send to the lake a thousand rills ;
 In summer tide, so soft they weep,
 The sound but lulls the ear asleep ;
 Your horse's hoof-tread sounds too rude,
 So stilly is the solitude.

Nought living meets the eye or ear,
 But well I ween the dead are near ;
 For though, in feudal strife, a foe
 Hath laid Our Lady's chapel low, ¹¹³
 Yet still, beneath the hallow'd soil,
 The peasant rests him from his toil,

And, dying, bids his bones be laid,
Where erst his simple fathers pray'd.

If age had tamed the passions' strife,
And fate had cut my ties to life,
Here, have I thought, 'twere sweet to dwell,
And rear again the chaplain's cell,
Like that same peaceful hermitage,
Where Milton long'd to spend his age.
'Twere sweet to mark the setting day,
On Bourhope's lonely top decay ;
And, as it faint and feeble died
On the broad lake, and mountain's side,
To say, " Thus pleasures fade away ;
Youth, talents, beauty, thus decay,
And leave us dark, forlorn, and grey ;"
Then gaze on Dryhope's ruin'd tower,
And think on Yarrow's faded Flower :
And when that mountain-sound I heard,
Which bids us be for storm prepared,
The distant rustling of his wings,
As up his force the Tempest brings,
'Twere sweet, ere yet his terrors rave,
To sit upon the Wizard's grave ;
That Wizard Priest's, whose bones are thrust
From company of holy dust ;¹¹⁴
On which no sunbeam ever shines—
(So superstition's creed divines)—
Thence view the lake, with sullen roar,
Heave her broad billows to the shore ;
And mark the wild-swans mount the gale,
Spread wide through mist their snowy sail,
And ever stoop again, to lave
Their bosoms on the surging wave :
Then, when against the driving hail
No longer might my plaid avail,
Back to my lonely home retire,
And light my lamp, and trim my fire ;

There ponder o'er some mystic lay,
 Till the wild tale had all its sway,
 And, in the bittern's distant shriek,
 I heard unearthly voices speak,
 And thought the Wizard Priest was come,
 To claim again his ancient home !
 And bade my busy fancy range,
 To frame him fitting shape and strange,
 Till from the task my brow I clear'd,
 And smiled to think that I had fear'd.

But chief, 'twere sweet to think such life,
 (Though but escape from fortune's strife,)
 Something most matchless good and wise,
 A great and grateful sacrifice ;
 And deem each hour to musing given,
 A step upon the road to heaven.

Yet him, whose heart is ill at ease,
 Such peaceful solitudes displease :
 He loves to drown his bosom's jar
 Amid the elemental war :
 And my black Palmer's choice had been
 Some ruder and more savage scene,
 Like that which frowns round dark Loch-skene.¹¹⁵
 There eagles scream from isle to shore ;
 Down all the rocks the torrents roar ;
 O'er the black waves incessant driven,
 Dark mists infect the summer heaven ;
 Through the rude barriers of the lake,
 Away its hurrying waters break,
 Faster and whiter dash and curl,
 Till down yon dark abyss they hurl.
 Rises the fog-smoke white as snow,
 Thunders the viewless stream below,
 Diving, as if condemn'd to lave
 Some demon's subterranean cave,
 Who, prison'd by enchanter's spell,
 Shakes the dark rock with groan and yell.

And well that Palmer's form and mien
 Had suited with the stormy scene,
 Just on the edge, straining his ken
 To view the bottom of the den,
 Where, deep deep down, and far within,
 Toils with the rocks the roaring linn ;
 Then, issuing forth one foamy wave,
 And wheeling round the Giant's Grave,
 White as the snowy charger's tail,
 Drives down the pass of Moffatdale.

Marriott, thy harp, on Isis strung,
 To many a Border theme has rung :
 Then list to me, and thou shalt know
 Of this mysterious Man of Woe.

CANTO SECOND.

The Convent.

I.

THE breeze, which swept away the smoke,
 Round Norham Castle roll'd,
 When all the loud artillery spoke,
 With lightning-flash, and thunder-stroke,
 As Marmion left the Hold.
 It curl'd not Tweed alone, that breeze,
 For, far upon Northumbrian seas,
 It freshly blew, and strong,
 Where, from high Whitby's cloister'd pile,¹¹⁶
 Bound to St. Cuthbert's Holy Isle,¹¹⁷
 It bore a bark along.
 Upon the gale she stoop'd her side,
 And bounded o'er the swelling tide,
 As she were dancing home ;
 The merry seamen laugh'd, to see
 Their gallant ship so lustily
 Furrow the green sea-foam.

Much joy'd they in their honour'd freight ;
 For, on the deck, in chair of state,
 The Abbess of Saint Hilda placed,
 With five fair nuns, the galley graced.

II.

'Twas sweet to see these holy maids,
 Like birds escaped to green-wood shades,
 Their first flight from the cage,
 How timid, and how curious too,
 For all to them was strange and new,
 And all the common sights they view,
 Their wonderment engage.
 One eyed the shrouds and swelling sail,
 With many a benedicite ;
 One at the rippling surge grew pale,
 And would for terror pray ;
 Then shriek'd, because the sea-dog, nigh,
 His round black head, and sparkling eye,
 Rear'd o'er the foaming spray ;
 And one would still adjust her veil,
 Disorder'd by the summer gale,
 Perchance lest some more worldly eye
 Her dedicated charms might spy ;
 Perchance, because such action graced
 Her fair-turn'd arm and slender waist.
 Light was each simple bosom there,
 Save two, who ill might pleasure share,—
 The Abbess, and the Novice Clare.

III.

The Abbess was of noble blood,
 But early took the veil and hood,
 Ere upon life she cast a look,
 Or knew the world that she forsook.
 Fair too she was, and kind had been
 As she was fair, but ne'er had seen

For her a timid lover sigh,
 Nor knew the influence of her eye.
 Love, to her ear, was but a name,
 Combined with vanity and shame ;
 Her hopes, her fears, her joys, were all
 Bounded within the cloister wall :
 The deadliest sin her mind could reach,
 Was of monastic rule the breach ;
 And her ambition's highest aim
 To emulate Saint Hilda's fame.
 For this she gave her ample dower,
 To raise the convent's eastern tower ;
 For this, with carving rare and quaint,
 She deck'd the chapel of the saint,
 And gave the relic-shrine of cost,
 With ivory and gems emboss'd.
 The poor her Convent's bounty blest,
 The pilgrim in its halls found rest.

IV.

Black was her garb, her rigid rule
 Reform'd on Benedictine school ;
 Her cheek was pale, her form was spare ;
 Vigils, and penitence austere,
 Had early quench'd the light of youth,
 But gentle was the dame, in sooth ;
 Though vain of her religious sway,
 She loved to see her maids obey,
 Yet nothing stern was she in cell,
 And the nuns loved their Abbess well.
 Sad was this voyage to the dame ;
 Summon'd to Lindisfarne, she came,
 There, with Saint Cuthbert's Abbot old,
 And Tynemouth's Prioress, to hold
 A chapter of Saint Benedict,
 For inquisition stern and strict,
 On two apostates from the faith,
 And, if need were, to doom to death.

V.

Nought say I here of Sister Clare,
 Save this, that she was young and fair ;
 As yet a novice unprofess'd,
 Lovely and gentle, but distress'd.
 She was betroth'd to one now dead,
 Or worse, who had dishonour'd fled.
 Her kinsmen bade her give her hand
 To one, who loved her for her land :
 Herself, almost heart-broken now,
 Was bent to take the vestal vow,
 And shroud, within Saint Hilda's gloom,
 Her blasted hopes and wither'd bloom.

VI.

She sate upon the galley's prow,
 And seem'd to mark the waves below ;
 Nay, seem'd, so fix'd her look and eye,
 To count them as they glided by.
 She saw them not—'twas seeming all—
 Far other scene her thoughts recall,—
 A sun-scorch'd desert, waste and bare,
 Nor waves, nor breezes, murmur'd there ;
 There saw she, where some careless hand
 O'er a dead corpse had heap'd the sand,
 To hide it till the jackals come,
 To tear it from the scanty tomb.—
 See what a woful look was given,
 As she raised up her eyes to heaven !

VII.

Lovely, and gentle, and distress'd—
 These charms might tame the fiercest breast :
 Harpers have sung, and poets told,
 That he, in fury uncontroll'd,
 The shaggy monarch of the wood,
 Before a virgin, fair and good,
 Hath pacified his savage mood.

But passions in the human frame,
 Oft put the lion's rage to shame :
 And jealousy, by dark intrigue,
 With sordid avarice in league,
 Had practised with their bowl and knife,
 Against the mourner's harmless life.
 This crime was charged 'gainst those who
 lay
 Prison'd in Cuthbert's islet grey.

VIII.

And now the vessel skirts the strand
 Of mountainous Northumberland ;
 Towns, towers, and halls, successive rise,
 And catch the nuns' delighted eyes.
 Monk-Wearmouth soon behind them lay,
 And Tynemouth's priory and bay ;
 They mark'd, amid her trees, the hall
 Of lofty Seaton-Delaval ;
 They saw the Blythe and Wansbeck floods
 Rush to the sea through sounding woods ;
 They pass'd the tower of Widderington,
 Mother of many a valiant son ;
 At Coquet-isle their beads they tell
 To the good Saint who own'd the cell ;
 Then did the Alne attention claim,
 And Warkworth, proud of Percy's name ;
 And next, they cross'd themselves, to hear
 The whitening breakers sound so near,
 Where, boiling through the rocks, they roar,
 On Dunstanborough's cavern'd shore ;
 Thy tower, proud Bamborough, mark'd they
 there,
 King Ida's castle, huge and square,
 From its tall rock look grimly down,
 And on the swelling ocean frown ;
 Then from the coast they bore away,
 And reach'd the Holy Island's bay.

IX.

The tide did now its flood-mark gain,
And girdled in the Saint's domain:
For, with the flow and ebb, its style
Varies from continent to isle;
Dry-shod, o'er sands, twice every day,
The pilgrims to the shrine find way;
Twice every day, the waves efface
Of staves and sandall'd feet the trace.
As to the port the galley flew,
Higher and higher rose to view
The Castle with its battled walls,
The ancient Monastery's halls,
A solemn, huge, and dark-red pile,
Placed on the margin of the isle.

X.

In Saxon strength that Abbey frown'd,
With massive arches broad and round,
That rose alternate, row and row,
On ponderous columns, short and low,
Built ere the art was known,
By pointed aisle, and shafted stalk,
The arcades of an alley'd walk
To emulate in stone.
On the deep walls, the heathen Dane
Had pour'd his impious rage in vain;
And needful was such strength to these,
Exposed to the tempestuous seas,
Scourged by the winds' eternal sway,
Open to rovers fierce as they,
Which could twelve hundred years withstand
Winds, waves, and northern pirates' hand.
Not but that portions of the pile,
Rebuilt in a later style,
Show'd where the spoiler's hand had been;
Not but the wasting sea-breeze keen

Had worn the pillar's carving quaint,
 And moulder'd in his niche the saint,
 And rounded, with consuming power,
 The pointed angles of each tower ;
 Yet still entire the Abbey stood,
 Like veteran, worn, but unsubdued.

XI.

Soon as they near'd his turrets strong,
 The maidens raised Saint Hilda's song,
 And with the sea-wave and the wind,
 Their voices, sweetly shrill, combined,
 And made harmonious close ;
 Then, answering from the sandy shore,
 Half-drown'd amid the breakers' roar,
 According chorus rose :
 Down to the haven of the Isle,
 The monks and nuns in order file,
 From Cuthbert's cloisters grim ;
 Banner, and cross, and relics there,
 To meet Saint Hilda's maids, they bare ;
 And, as they caught the sounds on air,
 They echoed back the hymn.
 The islanders, in joyous mood,
 Rush'd emulously through the flood,
 To hale the bark to land ;
 Conspicuous by her veil and hood,
 Signing the cross, the Abbess stood,
 And bless'd them with her hand.

XII.

Suppose we now the welcome said,
 Suppose the Convent banquet made :
 All through the holy dome,
 Through cloister, aisle, and gallery,
 Wherever vestal maid might pry,
 Nor risk to meet unhallow'd eye,
 The stranger sisters roam :

Till fell the evening damp with dew,
 And the sharp sea-breeze coldly blew,
 For there, even summer night is chill.
 Then, having stray'd and gazed their fill,
 They closed around the fire ;
 And all, in turn, essay'd to paint
 The rival merits of their saint,
 A theme that ne'er can tire
 A holy maid ; for, be it known,
 That their saint's honour is their own.

XIII.

Then Whitby's nuns exulting told
 How to their house three Barons bold
 Must menial service do ;¹¹⁸
 While horns blow out a note of shame,
 And monks cry " Fye upon your name !
 In wrath, for loss of silvan game,
 Saint Hilda's priest ye slew."—
 " This, on Ascension-day, each year,
 While labouring on our harbour-pier,
 Must Herbert, Bruce, and Percy hear."—
 They told, how in their convent-cell
 A Saxon princess once did dwell,
 The lovely Edelfled ;¹¹⁹
 And how, of thousand snakes, each one
 Was changed into a coil of stone,
 When holy Hilda pray'd ;
 Themselves, within their holy bound,
 Their stony folds had often found.
 They told, how sea-fowls' pinions fail,
 As over Whitby's towers they sail,¹²⁰
 And, sinking down, with flutterings faint,
 They do their homage to the saint.

XIV.

Nor did Saint Cuthbert's daughters fail,
 To vie with these in holy tale ;

His body's resting-place, of old,
 How oft their patron changed, they told ;¹²¹
 How, when the rude Dane burn'd their pile,
 The monks fled forth from Holy Isle ;
 O'er northern mountain, marsh, and moor,
 From sea to sea, from shore to shore,
 Seven years Saint Cuthbert's corpse they bore
 They rested them in fair Melrose ;
 But though, alive, he loved it well,
 Not there his relics might repose ;
 For, wondrous tale to tell !
 In his stone-coffin forth he rides,
 A ponderous bark for river tides,
 Yet light as gossamer it glides,
 Downward to Tilmouth cell.
 Nor long was his abiding there,
 For southward did the saint repair ;
 Chester-le-Street, and Rippon, saw
 His holy corpse, ere Wardilaw
 Hail'd him with joy and fear ;
 And, after many wanderings past,
 He chose his lordly seat at last,
 Where his cathedral, huge and vast,
 Looks down upon the Wear :
 There, deep in Durham's Gothic shade,
 His relics are in secret laid ;
 But none may know the place,
 Save of his holiest servants three,
 Deep sworn to solemn secrecy,
 Who share that wondrous grace.

XV.

Who may his miracles declare !
 Even Scotland's dauntless king, and heir,
 (Although with them they led
 Galwegians, wild as ocean's gale,
 And Lodon's knights, all sheathed in mail,
 And the bold men of Teviotdale,
 Before his standard fled.¹²²

'Twas he, to vindicate his reign,
 Edged Alfred's falchion on the Dane,
 And turn'd the Conqueror back again,¹²³
 When, with his Norman bowyer band,
 He came to waste Northumberland.

XVI.

But fain Saint Hilda's nuns would learn
 If, on a rock, by Lindisfarne,
 Saint Cuthbert sits, and toils to frame
 The sea-born beads that bear his name :¹²⁴
 Such tales had Whitby's fishers told,
 And said they might his shape behold,
 And hear his anvil sound ;
 A deaden'd clang,—a huge dim form,
 Seen but, and heard, when gathering storm
 And night were closing round.
 But this, as tale of idle fame,
 The nuns of Lindisfarne disclaim

XVII.

While round the fire such legends go,
 Far different was the scene of woe,
 Where, in a secret aisle beneath,
 Council was held of life and death.
 It was more dark and lone that vault,
 Than the worst dungeon cell :
 Old Colwulf¹²⁵ built it, for his fault,
 In penitence to dwell,
 When he, for cowl and beads, laid down
 The Saxon battle-axe and crown.
 This den, which, chilling every sense
 Of feeling, hearing, sight,
 Was call'd the Vault of Penitence,
 Excluding air and light,
 Was, by the prelate Sexhelm, made
 A place of burial for such dead,
 As, having died in mortal sin,
 Might not be laid the church within.

'Twas now a place of punishment ;
 Whence if so loud a shriek were sent,
 As reach'd the upper air,
 The hearers bless'd themselves, and said,
 The spirits of the sinful dead
 Bemoan'd their torments there.

XVIII.

But though, in the monastic pile,
 Did of this penitential aisle
 Some vague tradition go,
 Few only, save the Abbot, knew
 Where the place lay ; and still more few
 Were those, who had from him the clew
 To that dread vault to go.
 Victim and executioner
 Were blindfold when transported there.
 In low dark rounds the arches hung,
 From the rude rock the side-walls sprung ;
 The grave-stones, rudely sculptured o'er,
 Half sunk in earth, by time half wore,
 Were all the pavement of the floor ;
 The mildew-drops fell one by one,
 With tinkling plash, upon the stone.
 A cresset, in an iron chain,
 Which served to light this drear domain,
 With damp and darkness seem'd to strive,
 As if it scarce might keep alive ;
 And yet it dimly served to show
 The awful conclave met below.

XIX.

There, met to doom in secrecy,
 Were placed the heads of convents three :
 All servants of Saint Benedict,
 The statutes of whose order strict
 On iron table lay ;

In long black dress, on seats of stone,
Behind were these three judges shown

By the pale cresset's ray :

The Abbess of Saint Hilda's, there,
Sat for a space with visage bare,
Until, to hide her bosom's swell,
And tear-drops that for pity fell,

She closely drew her veil :

Yon shrouded figure, as I guess,
By her proud mien and flowing dress,
Is Tynemouth's haughty prioress,¹²⁶

And she with awe looks pale :

And he, that Ancient Man, whose sight
Has long been quench'd by age's night,
Upon whose wrinkled brow alone,
Nor ruth, nor mercy's trace, is shown,

Whose look is hard and stern,—

Saint Cuthbert's Abbot is his style ;
For sanctity call'd, through the isle,
The Saint of Lindisfarne.

XX.

Before them stood a guilty pair ;
But, though an equal fate they share,
Yet one alone deserves our care.
Her sex a page's dress belied ;
The cloak and doublet, loosely tied,
Obscured her charms, but could not hide

Her cap down o'er her face she drew ;

And, on her doublet breast,

She tried to hide the badge of blue,

Lord Marmion's falcon crest.

But, at the Prioress' command,
A Monk undid the silken band,

That tied her tresses fair,

And raised the bonnet from her head,

And down her slender form they spread,

In ringlets rich and rare.

Constance de Beverley they know,
 Sister profess'd of Fontevraud,
 Whom the church number'd with the dead,
 For broken vows, and convent fled.

XXI.

When thus her face was given to view,
 (Although so pallid was her hue,
 It did a ghastly contrast bear
 To those bright ringlets glistening fair,)
 Her look composed, and steady eye,
 Bespoke a matchless constancy ;
 And there she stood so calm and pale,
 That, but her breathing did not fail,
 And motion slight of eye and head,
 And of her bosom, warranted
 That neither sense nor pulse she lacks,
 You might have thought a form of wax,
 Wrought to the very life, was there ;
 So still she was, so pale, so fair.

XXII.

Her comrade was a sordid soul,
 Such as does murder for a meed ;
 Who, but of fear, knows no control,
 Because his conscience, sear'd and foul,
 Feels not the import of his deed ;
 One, whose brute-feeling ne'er aspires
 Beyond his own more brute desires.
 Such tools the Tempter ever needs,
 To do the savagest of deeds ;
 For them no vision'd terrors daunt,
 Their nights no fancied spectres haunt,
 One fear with them, of all most base,
 The fear of death,—alone finds place.
 This wretch was clad in frock and cowl,
 And shamed not loud to moan and howl.

His body on the floor to dash,
 And crouch, like hound beneath the lash ;
 While his mute partner, standing near,
 Waited her doom without a tear.

XXIII.

Yet well the luckless wretch might shriek,
 Well might her paleness terror speak !
 For there were seen in that dark wall,
 Two niches, narrow, deep and tall ;—
 Who enters at such grisly door,
 Shall ne'er, I ween, find exit more.
 In each a slender meal was laid,
 Of roots, of water, and of bread :
 By each, in Benedictine dress,
 Two haggard monks stood motionless ;
 Who, holding high a blazing torch,
 Show'd the grim entrance of the porch :
 Reflecting back the smoky beam,
 The dark-red walls and arches gleam.
 Hewn stones and cement were display'd,
 And building tools in order laid.

XXIV.

These executioners were chose,
 As men who were with mankind foes,
 And with despite and envy fired,
 Into the cloister had retired ;
 Or who, in desperate doubt of grace,
 Strove, by deep penance, to efface
 Of some foul crime the stain ;
 For, as the vassals of her will,
 Such men the Church selected still,
 As either joy'd in doing ill,
 Or thought more grace to gain,
 If, in her cause, they wrestled down
 Feelings their nature strove to own.
 By strange device were they brought there,
 They knew not how, nor knew not where.

XXV.

And now that blind old Abbot rose,
 To speak the Chapter's doom,
 On those the wall was to enclose,
 Alive, within the tomb ; ¹²⁷
 But stopp'd, because that woful Maid,
 Gathering her powers, to speak essay'd.
 Twice she essay'd, and twice in vain ;
 Her accents might no utterance gain ;
 Nought but imperfect murmurs slip
 From her convulsed and quivering lip ;
 'Twixt each attempt all was so still,
 You seem'd to hear a distant rill—
 'Twas ocean's swells and falls ;
 For though this vault of sin and fear
 Was to the sounding surge so near,
 A tempest there you scarce could hear,
 So massive were the walls.

XXVI.

At length, an effort sent apart
 The blood that curdled to her heart,
 And light came to her eye,
 And colour dawn'd upon her cheek,
 A hectic and a flutter'd streak,
 Like that left on the Cheviot peak,
 By Autumn's stormy sky ;
 And when her silence broke at length,
 Still as she spoke she gather'd strength,
 And arm'd herself to bear.
 It was a fearful sight to see
 Such high resolve and constancy,
 In form so soft and fair.

XXVII.

" I speak not to implore your grace,
 Well know I, for one minute's space
 Successful might I sue ;

Nor do I speak your prayers to gain ;
 For if a death of lingering pain,
 To cleanse my sins, be penance vain,

Vain are your masses too.—

I listen'd to a traitor's tale,
 I left the convent and the veil ;
 For three long years I bow'd my pride,
 A horse-boy in his train to ride ;
 And well my folly's meed he gave,
 Who forfeited, to be his slave,
 All here, and all beyond the grave.—
 He saw young Clara's face more fair,
 He knew her of broad lands the heir,
 Forgot his vows, his faith foreswore,
 And Constance was beloved no more.—

'Tis an old tale, and often told ;

But did my fate and wish agree,
 Ne'er had been read, in story old,
 Of maiden true betray'd for gold,
 That loved, or was avenged, like me !

XXVIII.

“The King approved his favourite's aim ;
 In vain a rival barr'd his claim,

Whose fate with Clare's was plight,
 For he attaints that rival's fame
 With treason's charge—and on they came,
 In mortal lists to fight.

Their oaths are said,

Their prayers are pray'd,

Their lances in the rest are laid,

They meet in mortal shock ;

And, hark ! the throng, with thundering cry,

Shout ‘Marmion, Marmion ! to the sky,

De Wilton to the block !’

Say ye, who preach Heaven shall decide

When in the lists two champions ride,

Say, was Heaven's justice here ?

When, loyal in his love and faith,
 Wilton found overthrow or death,
 Beneath a traitor's spear?
 How false the charge, how true he fell,
 This guilty packet best can tell."—
 Then drew a packet from her breast,
 Paused, gather'd voice, and spoke the rest.

XXIX.

"Still was false Marmion's bridal staid;
 To Whitby's convent fled the maid,
 The hated match to shun.
 'Ho! shifts she thus?' King Henry cried,
 'Sir Marmion, she shall be thy bride,
 If she were sworn a nun.'
 One way remain'd—the King's command
 Sent Marmion to the Scottish land:
 I linger'd here, and rescue plann'd
 For Clara and for me:
 This caitiff Monk, for gold, did swear,
 He would to Whitby's shrine repair,
 And, by his drugs, my rival fair
 A saint in heaven should be.
 But ill the dastard kept his oath,
 Whose cowardice has undone us both.

XXX.

"And now my tongue the secret tells,
 Not that remorse my bosom swells,
 But to assure my soul that none
 Shall ever wed with Marmion.
 Had fortune my last hope betray'd,
 This packet, to the King convey'd,
 Had given him to the headsman's stroke,
 Although my heart that instant broke.—
 Now, men of death, work forth your will,
 For I can suffer, and be still;
 And come he slow, or come he fast,
 It is but Death who comes at last.

XXXI.

"Yet dread me, from my living tomb,
 Ye vassal slaves of bloody Rome !
 If Marmion's late remorse should wake,
 Full soon such vengeance will he take,
 That you shall wish the fiery Dane
 Had rather been your guest again.
 Behind, a darker hour ascends !
 The altars quake, the crosier bends,
 The ire of a despotic King
 Rides forth upon destruction's wing ;
 Then shall these vaults, so strong and deep,
 Burst open to the sea-winds' sweep ;
 Some traveller then shall find my bones
 Whitening amid disjointed stones,
 And, ignorant of priests' cruelty,
 Marvel such relics here should be."

XXXII.

Fix'd was her look, and stern her air :
 Back from her shoulders stream'd her hair ;
 The locks, that wont her brow to shade,
 Stared up erectly from her head ;
 Her figure seem'd to rise more high ;
 Her voice, | despair's wild energy *been*
 Had given a tone of prophecy.
 Appall'd the astonish'd conclave sate ;
 With stupid eyes, the men of fate
 Gazed on the light inspired form,
 And listen'd for the avenging storm ;
 The judges felt the victim's dread ;
 No hand was moved, no word was said,
 Till thus the Abbot's doom was given,
 Raising his sightless balls to heaven :—
 "Sister, let thy sorrows cease ;
 Sinful brother, part in peace !"

From that dire dungeon, place of doom,
 Of execution too, and tomb,
 Paced forth the judges three ;
 Sorrow it were, and shame, to tell
 The butcher-work that there befell,
 When they had glided from the cell
 Of sin and misery.

XXXIII.

An hundred winding steps convey
 That conclave to the upper day ;
 But, ere they breathed the fresher air,
 They heard the shriekings of despair,
 And many a stifled groan :
 With speed their upward way they take,
 (Such speed as age and fear can make,)
 And cross'd themselves for terror's sake,
 As hurrying, tottering on :
 Even in the vesper's heavenly tone,
 They seem'd to hear a dying groan,
 And bade the passing knell to toll
 For welfare of a parting soul.
 Slow o'er the midnight wave it swung,
 Northumbrian rocks in answer rung ;
 To Warkworth cell the echoes roll'd,
 His beads the wakeful hermit told,
 The Bamborough peasant raised his head,
 But slept ere half a prayer he said ;
 So far was heard the mighty knell,
 The stag sprung up on Cheviot Fell,
 Spread his broad nostril to the wind,
 Listed before, aside, behind,
 Then couch'd him down beside the hind,
 And quaked among the mountain fern,
 To hear that sound so dull and stern.

INTRODUCTION TO CANTO THIRD.

TO

WILLIAM ERSKINE, ESQ.

Ashestiel, Ettrick Forest.

LIKE April morning clouds, that pass,
 With varying shadow, o'er the grass,
 And imitate, on field and furrow,
 Life's chequer'd scene of joy and sorrow ;
 Like streamlet of the mountain north,
 Now in a torrent racing forth,
 Now winding slow its silver train,
 And almost slumbering on the plain ;
 Like breezes of the autumn day,
 Whose voice inconstant dies away,
 And ever swells again as fast,
 When the ear deems its murmur past ;
 Thus various, my romantic theme
 Flits, winds, or sinks, a morning dream.
 Yet pleased, our eye pursues the trace
 Of Light and Shade's inconstant race ;
 Pleased, views the rivulet afar,
 Weaving its maze irregular ;
 And pleased, we listen as the breeze
 Heaves its wild sigh through Autumn trees ;
 Then, wild as cloud, or stream, or gale,
 Flow on, flow unconfined, my Tale !

Need I to thee, dear Erskine, tell
 I love the license all too well,
 In sounds now lowly, and now strong,
 To raise the desultory song ?—
 Oft, when 'mid such capricious chime,
 Some transient fit of lofty rhyme
 To thy kind judgment seem'd excuse
 For many an error of the muse,

Oft hast thou said, " If, still mis-spent,
 Thine hours to poetry are lent,
 Go, and to tame thy wandering course,
 Quaff from the fountain at the source ;
 Approach those masters, o'er whose tomb
 Immortal laurels ever bloom :
 Instructive of the feebler bard,
 Still from the grave their voice is heard ;
 From them, and from the paths they show'd,
 Choose honour'd guide and practised road ;
 Nor ramble on through brake and maze,
 With harpers rude of barbarous days.

" Or deem'st thou not our later time
 Yields topic meet for classic rhyme ?
 Hast thou no elegiac verse
 For Brunswick's venerable hearse ?
 What ! not a line, a tear, a sigh,
 When valour bleeds for liberty?—
 Oh, hero of that glorious time,
 When, with unrivall'd light sublime,—
 Though martial Austria, and though all
 The might of Russia, and the Gaul,
 Though banded Europe stood her foes—
 The star of Brandenburgh arose !
 Thou couldst not live to see her beam
 For ever quench'd in Jena's stream.
 Lamented Chief!—it was not given
 To thee to change the doom of Heaven,
 And crush that dragon in its birth,
 Predestined scourge of guilty earth.
 Lamented Chief!—not thine the power,
 To save in that presumptuous hour,
 When Prussia hurried to the field,
 And snatch'd the spear, but left the shield !
 Valour and skill 'twas thine to try,
 And, tried in vain, 'twas thine to die.
 Ill had it seem'd thy silver hair
 The last, the bitterest pang to share,

For pryncedoms reft, and fcutcheons riven,
And birthrights to ufurpers given ;
Thy land's, thy children's wrongs to feel,
And witness woes thou couldft not heal !
On thee relenting Heaven beftows
For honour'd life an honour'd clofe ;
And when revolves, in time's fure change,
The hour of Germany's revenge,
When, breathing fury for her fake,
Some new Arminius fhall awake,
Her champion, ere he ftroke, fhall come
To whet his fword on BRUNSWICK'S tomb.

“ Or of the Red-Cross hero teach,
Dauntlefs in dungeon as on breach :
Alike to him the fea, the fhore,
The brand, the bridle, or the oar :
Alike to him the war that calls
Its votaries to the fhatter'd walls,
Which the grim Turk, befmeared with blood,
Againft the Invincible made good ;
Or that, whofe thundering voice could wake
The f Silence of the polar lake,
When ftubborn Ruff, and metal'd Swede,
On the warp'd wave their death-game play'd ;
Or that, where Vengeance and Affright
Howl'd round the father of the fight,
Who snatch'd, on Alexandria's fand,
The conqueror's wreath with dying hand.

“ Or, if to touch fuch chord be thine,
Restore the ancient tragic line,
And emulate the notes that rung
From the wild harp, which f Silent hung
By f Silver Avon's holy fhore,
Till twice an hundred years roll'd o'er ;
When fhe, the bold Enchantreff, came,
With fearlefs hand and heart on flame !
From the pale willow snatch'd the treafure
And swept it with a kindred meafure,

Till Avon's swans, while rung the grove
 With Montfort's hate and Basil's love,
 Awakening at the inspired strain,
 Deem'd their own Shakspeare lived again."

Thy friendship thus thy judgment wronging,
 With praises not to me belonging,
 In task more meet for mightiest powers,
 Wouldst thou engage my thriftless hours.
 But say, my Erskine, hast thou weigh'd
 That secret power by all obey'd,
 Which warps not less the passive mind,
 Its source conceal'd or undefined ;
 Whether an impulse, that has birth
 Soon as the infant wakes on earth,
 One with our feelings and our powers,
 And rather part of us than ours ;
 Or whether fitlier term'd the sway
 Of habit, form'd in early day ?
 Howe'er derived, its force confest
 Rules with despotic sway the breast,
 And drags us on by viewless chain,
 While taste and reason plead in vain.
 Look east, and ask the Belgian why,
 Beneath Batavia's sultry sky,
 He seeks not eager to inhale
 The freshness of the mountain gale,
 Content to rear his whiten'd wall
 Beside the dank and dull canal ?
 He'll say, from youth he loved to see
 The white sail gliding by the tree.
 Or see yon weatherbeaten hind,
 Whose sluggish herds before him wind,
 Whose tatter'd plaid and rugged cheek
 His northern clime and kindred speak ;
 Through England's laughing meads he goes,
 And England's wealth around him flows ;
 Ask, if it would content him well,
 At ease in those gay plains to dwell,

Where hedge-rows spread a verdant screen,
And spires and forests intervene,
And the neat cottage peeps between?
No! not for these will he exchange
His dark Lochaber's boundless range:
Not for fair Devon's meads forsake
Bennevis grey, and Garry's lake.

Thus while I ape the measure wild
Of tales that charm'd me yet a child,
Rude though they be, still with the chime
Return the thoughts of early time:
And feelings, roused in life's first day,
Glow in the line, and prompt the ay.
Then rise those crags, that mountain tower,
Which charm'd my fancy's wakening hour.
Though no broad river swept along,
To claim, perchance, heroic song;
Though sigh'd no groves in summer gale,
To prompt of love a softer tale;
Though scarce a puny streamlet's speed
Claim'd homage from a shepherd's reed;
Yet was poetic impulse given,
By the green hill and clear blue heaven.
It was a barren scene, and wild,
Where naked cliffs were rudely piled;
But ever and anon between
Lay velvet tufts of loveliest green;
And well the lonely infant knew
Recesses where the wall-flower grew,
And honey-suckle loved to crawl
Up the low crag and ruin'd wall.
I deem'd such nooks the sweetest shade
The sun in all its round survey'd;
And still I thought that shatter'd tower
The mightiest work of human power;
And marvell'd as the aged hind
With some strange tale bewitch'd my mind.

Of forayers, who, with headlong force,
 Down from that strength had spur'd their horse,
 Their southern rapine to renew,
 Far in the distant Cheviots blue,
 And, home returning, fill'd the hall
 With revel, wassel-rout, and brawl.
 Methought that still with trump and clang,
 The gateway's broken arches rang ;
 Methought grim features, seam'd with scars,
 Glared through the window's rusty bars,
 And ever, by the winter hearth,
 Old tales I heard of woe or mirth,
 Of lovers' slights, of ladies' charms,
 Of witches' spells, of warriors' arms ;
 Of patriot battles, won of old
 By Wallace wight and Bruce the bold ;
 Of later fields of feud and fight,
 When, pouring from their Highland height,
 The Scottish clans, in headlong sway,
 Had swept the scarlet ranks away.
 While stretch'd at length upon the floor,
 Again I fought each combat o'er,
 Pebbles and shells, in order laid,
 The mimic ranks of war display'd ;
 And onward still the Scottish Lion bore,
 And still the scatter'd Southron fled before.

Still, with vain fondness, could I trace,
 Anew, each kind familiar face,
 That brighten'd at our evening fire !
 From the thatch'd mansion's grey-hair'd Sire,
 Wise without learning, plain and good,
 And sprung of Scotland's gentler blood ;
 Whose eye, in age, quick, clear, and keen,
 Show'd what in youth its glance had been ;
 Whose doom discording neighbours sought,
 Content with equity unbought ;
 To him the venerable Priest,
 Our frequent **and** familiar guest,

Whose life and manners well could paint
 Alike the student and the saint ;
 Alas ! whose speech too oft I broke
 With gambol rude and timeless joke :
 For I was wayward, bold, and wild,
 A self-will'd imp, a grandame's child ;
 But half a plague, and half a jest,
 Was still endured, beloved, caress'd.

For me, thus nurtured, dost thou ask
 The classic poet's well-conn'd task ?
 Nay, Erskine, nay—On the wild hill
 Let the wild heath-bell flourish still ;
 Cherish the tulip, prune the vine,
 But freely let the woodbine twine,
 And leave untrimm'd the eglantine :
 Nay, my friend, nay—Since oft thy praise
 Hath given fresh vigour to my lays ;
 Since oft thy judgment could refine
 My flatten'd thought, or cumbrous line ;
 Still kind, as is thy wont, attend,
 And in the minstrel spare the friend.
 Though wild as cloud, as stream, as gale,
 Flow forth, flow unrestrain'd, my Tale !

CANTO THIRD.

The Hostel, or Inn.

I.

THE livelong day Lord Marmion rode :
 The mountain path the Palmer show'd,
 By glen and streamlet winded still,
 Where stunted birches hid the rill.
 They might not choose the lowland road,
 For the Merse forayers were abroad,
 Who, fired with hate and thirst of prey,
 Had scarcely fail'd to bar their way.
 Oft on the trampling band, from crown
 Of some tall cliff, the deer look'd down ;

On wing of jet, from his repose
 In the deep heath, the black-cock rose ;
 Sprung from the gorse the timid roe,
 Nor waited for the bending bow ;
 And when the stony path began,
 By which the naked peak they wan,
 Up flew the snowy ptarmigan.
 The noon had long been pass'd before
 They gain'd the height of Lammermoor ;
 Thence winding down the northern way
 Before them, at the close of day,
 Old Gifford's towers and hamlet lay.

II.

No summons calls them to the tower,
 To spend the hospitable hour.
 To Scotland's camp the Lord was gone ;
 His cautious dame, in bower alone,
 Dreaded her castle to uncloze,
 So late, to unknown friends or foes.
 On through the hamlet as they paced,
 Before a porch, whose front was graced
 With bush and flagon trimly placed,
 Lord Marmion drew his rein :
 The village inn seem'd large, though rude ;¹²³
 Its cheerful fire and hearty food
 Might well relieve his train.
 Down from their seats the horsemen sprung,
 With jingling spurs the court-yard rung ;
 They bind their horses to the stall,
 For forage, food, and firing call,
 And various clamour fills the hall :
 Weighing the labour with the cost,
 Toils everywhere the bustling host.

III.

Soon, by the chimney's merry blaze,
 Through the rude hostel might you gaze ;

Might see, where, in dark nook aloof,
 The rafters of the sooty roof
 Bore wealth of winter cheer ;
 Of sea-fowl dried, and solands store,
 And gammons of the tusky boar,
 And savoury haunch of deer.
 The chimney arch projected wide ;
 Above, around it, and beside,
 Were tools for housewives' hand ;
 Nor wanted, in that martial day,
 The implements of Scottish fray,
 The buckler, lance, and brand.
 Beneath its shade, the place of state,
 On oaken settle Marmion sate,
 And view'd around the blazing hearth.
 His followers mix in noisy mirth ;
 Whom with brown ale, in jolly tide,
 From ancient vessels ranged aside,
 Full actively their host supplied.

IV.

Theirs was the glee of martial breast,
 And laughter theirs at little jest ;
 And oft Lord Marmion deign'd to aid,
 And mingle in the mirth they made ;
 For though, with men of high degree,
 The proudest of the proud was he,
 Yet, train'd in camps, he knew the art
 To win the soldier's hardy heart.
 They love a captain to obey,
 Boisterous as March, yet fresh as May ;
 With open hand, and brow as free,
 Lover of wine and minstrelsy ;
 Ever the first to scale a tower,
 As venturous in a lady's bower :—
 Such buxom chief shall lead his host
 From India's fires to Zembla's frost.

V.

Resting upon his pilgrim staff,
 Right opposite the Palmer stood ;
 His thin dark visage seen but half,
 Half hidden by his hood.
 Still fix'd on Marmion was his look,
 Which he, who ill such gaze could brook,
 Strove by a frown to quell ;
 But not for that, though more than once
 Full met their stern encountering glance,
 The Palmer's visage fell.

VI.

By fits less frequent from the crowd
 Was heard the burst of laughter loud ;
 For still, as squire and archer stared
 On that dark face and matted beard,
 Their glee and game declined.
 All gazed at length in silence drear,
 Unbroke, save when in comrade's ear
 Some yeoman, wondering in his fear,
 Thus whisper'd forth his mind :—
 " Saint Mary ! saw'st thou e'er such sight ?
 How pale his cheek, his eye how bright,
 Whene'er the firebrand's fickle light
 Glances beneath his cowl !
 Full on our Lord he sets his eye ;
 For his best palfrey, would not I
 Endure that sullen scowl."

VII.

But Marmion, as to chase the awe
 Which thus had quell'd their hearts, who saw
 The ever-varying fire-light show
 That figure stern and face of woe,
 Now call'd upon a squire :—

“Fitz-Eustace, know'st thou not some lay,
To speed the lingering night away?
We slumber by the fire.”—

VIII.

“So please you,” thus the youth rejoin'd,
“Our choicest minstrel's left behind.
Ill may we hope to please your ear,
Accustom'd Constant's strains to hear.
The harp full deftly can he strike,
And wake the lover's lute alike ;
To dear Saint Valentine, no thrush
Sings livelier from a spring-tide bush,
No nightingale her love-lorn tune
More sweetly warbles to the moon.
Woe to the cause, whate'er it be,
Detains from us his melody,
Lavish'd on rocks, and billows stern,
Or duller monks of Lindisfarne.
Now must I venture, as I may,
To sing his favourite roundelay.”

IX.

A mellow voice Fitz-Eustace had,
The air he chose was wild and sad ;
Such have I heard, in Scottish land,
Rise from the busy harvest band,
When falls before the mountaineer,
On Lowland plains, the ripen'd ear.
Now one shrill voice the notes prolong,
Now a wild chorus swells the song :
Oft have I listen'd, and stood still,
As it came soften'd up the hill,
And deem'd it the lament of men
Who languish'd for their native glen ;
And thought how sad would be such sound
On Susquehana's swampy ground,

Kentucky's wood-encumber'd brake,
 Or wild Ontario's boundless lake,
 Where heart-sick exiles, in the strain,
 Recall'd fair Scotland's hills again !

X.

SONG.

Where shall the lover rest,
 Whom the fates sever
 From his true maiden's breast,
 Parted for ever ?
 Where, through groves deep and high,
 Sounds the far billow,
 Where early violets die,
 Under the willow.

Chorus.

Eleu loro, &c. Soft shall be his pillow.

There, through the summer day,
 Cool streams are laving ;
 There, while the tempests sway,
 Scarce are boughs waving ;
 There, thy rest shalt thou take,
 Parted for ever,
 Never again to wake,
 Never, O never !

Chorus.

Eleu loro, &c. Never, O never !

XI.

Where shall the traitor rest,
 He, the deceiver,
 Who could win maiden's breast,
 Ruin, and leave her ?

In the lost battle,
 Borne down by the flying,
 Where mingles war's rattle
 With groans of the dying.

Chorus.

Eleu loro, &c. There shall he be lying.

Her wing shall the eagle flap
 O'er the false-hearted ;
 His warm blood the wolf shall lap,
 Ere life be parted.
 Shame and dishonour sit
 By his grave ever ;
 Blessing shall hallow it,—
 Never, O never !

Chorus.

Eleu loro, &c. Never, O never !

XII.

It ceased, the melancholy sound ;
 And silence sunk on all around.
 The air was sad ; but sadder still
 It fell on Marmion's ear,
 And plain'd as if disgrace and ill,
 And shameful death, were near.
 He drew his mantle past his face,
 Between it and the band,
 And rested with his head a space,
 Reclining on his hand.
 His thoughts I scan not ; but I ween,
 That, could their import have been seen,
 The meanest groom in all the hall,
 That e'er tied courser to a stall,
 Would scarce have wish'd to be their prey,
 For Lutterward and Fontenaye.

XIII.

High minds, of native pride and force,
 Most deeply feel thy pangs, Remorse!
 Fear, for their scourge, mean villains have,
 Thou art the torturer of the brave!
 Yet fatal strength they boast to steel
 Their minds to bear the wounds they feel,
 Even while they writhe beneath the smart
 Of civil conflict in the heart.
 For soon Lord Marmion raised his head,
 And, smiling, to Fitz-Eustace said,—
 “Is it not strange, that, as ye sung,
 Seem'd in mine ear a death-peal rung,
 Such as in nunneries they toll
 For some departing sister's soul?
 Say, what may this portend?”—
 Then first the Palmer silence broke,
 (The livelong day he had not spoke,)
 “The death of a dear friend.”¹²⁹

XIV.

Marmion, whose steady heart and eye
 Ne'er changed in worst extremity;
 Marmion, whose soul could scantily brook,
 Even from his King, a haughty look;
 Whose accent of command controll'd,
 In camps, the boldest of the bold—
 Thought, look, and utterance fail'd him now,
 Fall'n was his glance, and flush'd his brow;
 For either in the tone,
 Or something in the Palmer's look,
 So full upon his conscience strook,
 That answer he found none.
 Thus oft it haps, that when within
 They shrink at sense of secret sin,
 A feather daunts the brave;



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SC-1

“There stood array’d in sable band
Four Maids whom Afric bore.”

Page 357.

P

A fool's wild speech confounds the wise,
 And proudest princes veil their eyes
 Before their meanest slave.

XV.

Well might he falter !—By his aid
 Was Constance Beverley betray'd.
 Not that he augur'd of the doom,
 Which on the living closed the tomb
 But, tired to hear the desperate maid
 Threaten by turns, beseech, upbraid ;
 And wroth, because in wild despair,
 She practised on the life of Clare ;
 Its fugitive the Church he gave,
 Though not a victim, but a slave ;
 And deem'd restraint in convent strange
 Would hide her wrongs, and her revenge.
 Himself, proud Henry's favourite peer,
 Held Romish thunders idle fear,
 Secure his pardon he might hold,
 For some slight mulct of penance-gold.
 Thus judging, he gave secret way,
 When the stern priests surprised their prey ;
 His train but deem'd the favourite page
 Was left behind, to spare his age ;
 Or other if they deem'd, none dared
 To mutter what he thought and heard ;
 Woe to the vassal, who durst pry
 Into Lord Marmion's privacy !

XVI.

His conscience slept—he deem'd her well,
 And safe secured in distant cell ;
 But, waken'd by her favourite lay,
 And that strange Palmer's boding say,
 That fell so ominous and drear,
 Full on the object of his fear,

To aid remorse's venom'd throes,
 Dark tales of convent-vengeance rose ;
 And Constance, late betray'd and scorn'd,
 All lovely on his soul return'd ;
 Lovely as when, at treacherous call,
 She left her convent's peaceful wall,
 Crimson'd with shame, with terror mute,
 Dreading alike escape, pursuit,
 Till love, victorious o'er alarms,
 Hid fears and blushes in his arms.

XVII.

“Alas !” he thought, “how changed that mien !
 How changed these timid looks have been,
 Since years of guilt, and of disguise,
 Have steel'd her brow, and arm'd her eyes !
 No more of virgin terror speaks
 The blood that mantles in her cheeks ;
 Fierce, and unfeminine, are there,
 Frenzy for joy, for grief despair ;
 And I the cause—for whom were given
 Her peace on earth, her hopes in heaven !—
 Would,” thought he, as the picture grows,
 “I on its stalk had left the rose !
 Oh, why should man's success remove
 The very charms that wake his love !—
 Her convent's peaceful solitude
 Is now a prison harsh and rude ;
 And, pent within the narrow cell,
 How will her spirit chafe and swell !
 How brook the stern monastic laws !
 The penance how—and I the cause !—
 Vigil and scourge—perchance even worse !”—
 And twice he rose to cry, “To horse !”—
 And twice his Sovereign's mandate came,
 Like damp upon a kindling flame ;
 And twice he thought, “Gave I not charge
 She should be safe, though not at large ?”

They durst not, for their island, shred
One golden ringlet from her head."

XVIII.

While thus in Marmion's bosom strove
Repentance and reviving love,
Like whirlwinds, whose contending sway
I've seen Lord Vennachar obey,
Their Host the Palmer's speech had heard,
And, talkative, took up the word :
"Ay, reverend Pilgrim, you, who stray
From Scotland's simple land away,
To visit realms afar,
Full often learn the art to know
Of future weal, or future woe,
By word, or sign, or star ;
Yet might a knight his fortune hear,
If, knight-like, he despises fear,
Not far from hence ;—if fathers old
Aright our hamlet legend told."—
These broken words the menials move,
(For marvels still the vulgar love,)
And, Marmion giving license cold,
His tale the host thus gladly told :—

XIX.

THE HOST'S TALE.

"A Clerk could tell what years have flown
Since Alexander fill'd our throne,
(Third monarch of that warlike name,)
And eke the time when here he came
To seek Sir Hugo, then our lord :
A braver never drew a sword ;
A wiser never, at the hour
Of midnight, spoke the word of power :
The same, whom ancient records call
The founder of the Goblin-Hall."¹³⁰

I would, Sir Knight, your longer stay
 Gave you that cavern to survey.
 Of lofty roof, and ample size,
 Beneath the castle deep it lies :
 To hew the living rock profound,
 The floor to pave, the arch to round,
 There never toil'd a mortal arm,
 It all was wrought by word and charm ;
 And I have heard my grandsire say,
 That the wild clamour and affray
 Of those dread artisans of hell,
 Who labour'd under Hugo's spell,
 Sounded as loud as ocean's war,
 Among the caverns of Dunbar.

XX

“The King Lord Gifford's castle sought,
 Deep labouring with uncertain thought ;
 Even then he muster'd all his host,
 To meet upon the western coast :
 For Norse and Danish galleys plied
 Their oars within the frith of Clyde.
 There floated Haco's banner trim,¹³¹
 Above Norweyan warriors grim,
 Savage of heart, and large of limb ;
 Threatening both continent and isle,
 Bute, Arran, Cunninghame, and Kyle.
 Lord Gifford, deep beneath the ground,
 Heard Alexander's bugle sound,
 And tarried not his garb to change,
 But, in his wizard habit strange,¹³²
 Came forth,—a quaint and fearful sight ;
 His mantle lined with fox-skins white ;
 His high and wrinkled forehead bore
 A pointed cap, such as of yore
 Clerks say that Pharaoh's Magi wore :
 His shoes were mark'd with cross and spell,
 Upon his breast a pentacle ;¹³³

His zone, of virgin parchment thin,
 Or, as some tell, of dead man's skin,
 Bore many a planetary sign,
 Combust, and retrograde, and trine ;
 And in his hand he held prepared,
 A naked sword without a guard.

XXI.

“ Dire dealings with the fiendish race
 Had mark'd strange lines upon his face ;
 Vigil and fast had worn him grim,
 His eyesight dazzled seem'd and dim,
 As one unused to upper day ;
 Even his own menials with dismay
 Beheld, Sir Knight, the grisly Sire,
 In his unwonted wild attire ;
 Unwonted, for traditions run,
 He seldom thus beheld the sun.—
 ‘ I know,’ he said—his voice was hoarse,
 And broken seem'd its hollow force,—
 ‘ I know the cause, although untold,
 Why the King seeks his vassal's hold :
 Vainly from me my liege would know
 His kingdom's future weal or woe ;
 But yet, if strong his arm and heart,
 His courage may do more than art.

XXII.

“ Of middle air the demons proud,
 Who ride upon the racking cloud,
 Can read, in fix'd or wandering star,
 The issue of events afar ;
 But still their sullen aid withhold,
 Save when by mightier force controll'd.
 Such late I summon'd to my hall ;
 And though so potent was the call,
 That scarce the deepest nook of hell
 I deem'd a refuge from the spell,

Yet, obstinate in silence still,
 The haughty demon mocks my skill.
 But thou—who little know'st thy might,
 As born upon that blessed night ¹³⁴
 When yawning graves, and dying groan,
 Proclaim'd hell's empire overthrown,—
 With untaught valour shalt compel
 Response denied to magic spell.'—
 'Gramercy,' quoth our Monarch free,
 'Place him but front to front with me,
 And, by this good and honour'd brand,
 The gift of Cœur-de-Lion's hand,
 Soothly I swear, that, tide what tide,
 The demon shall a buffet bide.'—
 His bearing bold the wizard view'd,
 And thus, well pleased, his speech renew'd :—
 'There spoke the blood of Malcolm !—mark :
 Forth pacing hence, at midnight dark,
 The rampart seek, whose circling crown
 Crests the ascent of yonder down :
 A southern entrance shalt thou find ;
 There halt, and there thy bugle wind,
 And trust thine elfin foe to see,
 In guise of thy worst enemy :
 Couch then thy lance, and spur thy steed—
 Upon him ! and Saint George to speed !
 If he go down, thou soon shalt know
 Whate'er these airy sprites can show ;—
 If thy heart fail thee in the strife,
 I am no warrant for thy life.'

XXIII.

" Soon as the midnight bell did ring,
 Alone, and arm'd, forth rode the King
 To that old camp's deserted round :
 Sir Knight, you well might mark the mound,
 Left hand the town,—the Pictish race,
 The trench, long since, in blood did trace ;

The moor around is brown and bare,
 The space within is green and fair.
 The spot our village children know,
 For there the earliest wild-flowers grow ;
 But woe betide the wandering wight,
 That treads its circle in the night !
 The breadth across, a bowshot clear,
 Gives ample space for full career :
 Opposed to the four points of heaven,
 By four deep gaps are entrance given.
 The southernmost our Monarch past,
 Halted, and blew a gallant blast ;
 And on the north, within the ring,
 Appear'd the form of England's King,
 Who then, a thousand leagues afar,
 In Palestine waged holy war :
 Yet arms like England's did he wield,
 Alike the leopards in the shield,
 Alike his Syrian courser's frame,
 The rider's length of limb the same :
 Long afterwards did Scotland know,
 Fell Edward was her deadliest foe.

XXIV.

"The vision made our Monarch start,
 But soon he mann'd his noble heart,
 And in the **first** career they ran,
 The Elfin Knight fell, horse and man ;
 Yet did a splinter of his lance
 Through Alexander's visor glance,
 And razed the skin—a puny wound.
 The King, light leaping to the ground,
 With naked blade his phantom foe
 Compell'd the future war to show.
 Of Largs he saw the glorious plain,
 Where still gigantic bones remain,
 Memorial of the Danish war ;

Himself he saw, amid the field,
 On high his brandish'd war-axe wield,
 And strike proud Haco from his car,
 While all around the shadowy Kings
 Denmark's grim ravens cover'd their wings.
 'Tis said, that, in that awful night,
 Remoter visions met his sight,
 Foreshowing future conquests far,
 When our sons' sons wage northern war ;
 A royal city, tower and spire,
 Redden'd the midnight sky with fire,
 And shouting crews her navy bore,
 Triumphant, to the victor shore.
 Such signs may learned clerks explain
 They pass the wit of simple swain.

XXV.

“ The joyful King turn'd home again,
 Headed his host, and quell'd the Dane ;
 But yearly, when return'd the night
 Of his strange combat with the sprite,
 His wound must bleed and smart ;
 Lord Gifford then would gibing say,
 ‘ Bold as ye were, my liege, ye pay
 The penance of your start.’
 Long since, beneath Dunfermline's nave,
 King Alexander fills his grave,
 Our Lady give him rest !
 Yet still the knightly spear and shield
 The Elfin Warrior doth wield,
 Upon the brown hill's breast ;¹³⁵
 And many a knight hath proved his chance,
 In the charm'd ring to break a lance,
 But all have foully sped ;
 Save two, as legends tell, and they
 Were Wallace wight, and Gilbert Hay.—
 Gentles, my tale is said.”

XXVI.

The quaighs were deep, the liquor strong,
 And on the tale the yeoman-throng
 Had made a comment sage and long,
 But Marmion gave a sign :
 And, with their lord, the squires retire ;
 The rest, around the hostel fire,
 Their drowsy limbs recline ;
 For pillow, underneath each head,
 The quiver and the targe were laid.
 Deep slumbering on the hostel floor,
 Oppress'd with toil and ale, they snore :
 The dying flame, in fitful change,
 Threw on the group its shadows strange.

XXVII.

Apart, and nestling in the hay
 Of a waste loft, Fitz-Eustace lay ;
 Scarce, by the pale moonlight, were seen
 The foldings of his mantle green :
 Lightly he dreamt, as youth will dream,
 Of sport by thicket, or by stream.
 Of hawk or hound, of ring or glove,
 Or, lighter yet, of lady's love.
 A cautious tread his slumber broke,
 And, close beside him, when he woke,
 In moonbeam half, and half in gloom,
 Stood a tall form, with nodding plume ;
 But, ere his dagger Eustace drew,
 His master Marmion's voice he knew.

XXVIII.

—“ Fitz-Eustace ! rise, I cannot rest ;
 Yon churl's wild legend haunts my breast,
 And graver thoughts have chafed my mood :
 The air must cool my feverish blood ;
 And fain would I ride forth, to see
 The scene of elfin chivalry.

Arise, and saddle me my steed ;
 And, gentle Eustace, take good heed
 Thou dost not rouse these drowsy slaves ;
 I would not, that the prating knaves
 Had cause for saying, o'er their ale,
 That I could credit such a tale."—
 Then softly down the steps they slid,
 Eustace the stable door undid,
 And, darkling, Marmion's steed array'd,
 While, whispering, thus the Baron said :--

XXIX.

" Did'st never, good my youth, hear tell,
 That on the hour when I was born,
 Saint George, who graced my sire's chapelle,
 Down from his steed of marble fell,
 A weary wight forlorn ?
 The flattering chaplains all agree,
 The champion left his steed to me.
 I would, the omen's truth to show,
 That I could meet this Elfin Foe !
 Blithe would I battle, for the right
 To ask one question at the sprite :—
 Vain thought ! for elves, if elves there be,
 An empty race, by fount or sea,
 To dashing waters dance and sing,
 Or round the green oak wheel their ring."
 Thus speaking, he his steed bestrode,
 And from the hostel slowly rode.

XXX.

Fitz-Eustace followed him abroad,
 And mark'd him pace the village road,
 And listen'd to his horse's tramp,
 Till, by the lessening sound,
 He judged that of the Pictish camp
 Lord Marmion sought the round.

Wonder it seem'd, in the squire's eyes,
 That one, so wary held, and wise,—
 Of whom 'twas said, he scarce received
 For gospel, what the church believed,—
 Should, stirr'd by idle tale,
 Ride forth in silence of the night,
 As hoping half to meet a sprite,
 Array'd in plate and mail.
 For little did Fitz-Eustace know,
 That passions, in contending flow,
 Unfix the strongest mind ;
 Wearied from doubt to doubt to flee,
 We welcome fond credulity,
 Guide confident, though blind.

XXXI.

Little for this Fitz-Eustace cared,
 But, patient, waited till he heard,
 At distance, prick'd to utmost speed,
 The foot-tramp of a flying steed,
 Come town-ward rushing on ;
 First, dead, as if on turf it trode,
 Then, clattering on the village road,—
 In other pace than forth he yode,
 Return'd Lord Marmion.
 Down hastily he sprung from selle,
 And, in his haste, wellnigh he fell ;
 To the squire's hand the rein he threw,
 And spoke no word as he withdrew :
 But yet the moonlight did betray,
 The falcon-crest was soil'd with clay :
 And plainly might Fitz-Eustace see,
 By stains upon the charger's knee,
 And his left side, that on the moor
 He had not kept his footing sure.
 Long musing on these wondrous signs,
 At length to rest the squire reclines,

Broken and short ; for still, between,
 Would dreams of terror intervene :
 Eustace did ne'er so blithely mark
 The first notes of the morning lark.

INTRODUCTION TO CANTO FOURTH.

TO

JAMES SKENE, ESQ.

Ashestiel, Ettrick Forest.

AN ancient Minstrel sagely said,
 "Where is the life which late we led?"
 That motley clown in Arden wood,
 Whom humorous Jacques with envy view'd,
 Not even that clown could amplify,
 On this trite text, so long as I.
 Eleven years we now may tell,
 Since we have known each other well ;
 Since, riding side by side, our hand
 First drew the voluntary brand ;
 And sure, through many a varied scene,
 Unkindness never came between.
 Away these winged years have flown,
 To join the mass of ages gone ;
 And though deep mark'd, like all below,
 With chequer'd shades of joy and woe ;
 Though thou o'er realms and seas hast ranged,
 Mark'd cities lost, and empires changed,
 While here, at home, my narrower ken
 Somewhat of manners saw, and men ;
 Though varying wishes, hopes, and fears,
 Fever'd the progress of these years,
 Yet now, days, weeks, and months, but seem
 The recollection of a dream,
 So still we glide down to the sea
 Of fathomless eternity.

Even now it scarcely seems a day,
Since first I tuned this idle lay ;
A task so often thrown aside,
When leisure graver cares denied,
That now, November's dreary gale,
Whose voice inspir'd my opening tale,
That same November gale once more
Whirls the dry leaves on Yarrow shore.
Their vex'd boughs streaming to the sky,
Once more our naked birches sigh,
And Blackhouse heights, and Etrick Pen,
Have donn'd their wintry shrouds again :
And mountain dark, and flooded mead,
Bid us forsake the banks of Tweed.
Earlier than wont along the sky,
Mix'd with the rack, the snow mists fly ;
The shepherd, who in summer sun,
Had something of our envy won,
As thou with pencil, I with pen,
The features traced of hill and glen ;—
He who, outstretch'd the livelong day,
At ease among the heath-flowers lay,
View'd the light clouds with vacant look,
Or slumber'd o'er his tatter'd book,
Or idly busied him to guide
His angle o'er the lessen'd tide ;—
At midnight now, the snowy plain
Finds sterner labour for the swain.

When red hath set the beamless sun,
Through heavy vapours dark and dun ;
When the tired ploughman, dry and warm,
Hears, half asleep, the rising storm
Hurling the hail, and sleeted rain,
Against the casement's tinkling pane ;
The sounds that drive wild deer, and fox,
To shelter in the brake and rocks,
Are warnings which the shepherd ask
To dismal and to dangerous task.

Oft he looks forth, and hopes, in vain,
 The blast may sink in mellowing rain ;
 Till, dark above, and white below,
 Decided drives the flaky snow,
 And forth the hardy swain must go.
 Long, with dejected look and whine,
 To leave the hearth his dogs repine ;
 Whistling and cheering them to aid,
 Around his back he wreathes the plaid :
 His flock he gathers, and he guides,
 To open downs, and mountain-sides,
 Where fiercest though the tempest blow,
 Least deeply lies the drift below.
 The blast, that whistles o'er the fells,
 Stiffens his locks to icicles ;
 Oft he looks back, while streaming far,
 His cottage window seems a star,—
 Loses its feeble gleam,—and then
 Turns patient to the blast again,
 And, facing to the tempest's sweep,
 Drives through the gloom his lagging sheep.
 If fails his heart, if his limbs fail,
 Benumbing death is in the gale :
 His paths, his landmarks, all unknown,
 Close to the hut, no more his own,
 Close to the aid he sought in vain,
 The morn may find the stiffen'd swain : ¹³⁶
 The widow sees, at dawning pale,
 His orphans raise their feeble wail ;
 And, close beside him, in the snow,
 Poor Yarrow, partner of their woe,
 Couches upon his master's breast,
 And licks his cheek to break his rest.

Who envies now the shepherd's lot,
 His healthy fare, his rural cot,
 His summer couch by greenwood tree,
 His rustic kirk's loud revelry,

His native hill-notes, tuned on high,
 To Marion of the blithesome eye ;
 His crook, his scrip, his oaten reed,
 And all Arcadia's golden creed ?

Changes not so with us, my Skene,
 Of human life the varying scene ?
 Our youthful summer oft we see
 Dance by on wings of game and glee,
 While the dark storm reserves its rage,
 Against the winter of our age :
 As he, the ancient Chief of Troy,
 His manhood spent in peace and joy ;
 But Grecian fires, and loud alarms,
 Call'd ancient Priam forth to arms.
 Then happy those, since each must drain
 His share of pleasure, share of pain,—
 Then happy those, beloved of Heaven,
 To whom the mingled cup is given ;
 Whose lenient sorrows find relief,
 Whose joys are chasten'd by their grief.
 And such a lot, my Skene, was thine,
 When thou of late, wert doom'd to twine,—
 Just when thy bridal hour was by,—
 The cypress with the myrtle tie.
 Just on thy bride her Sire had smiled,
 And bless'd the union of his child,
 When love must change its joyous cheer,
 And wipe affection's filial tear.
 Nor did the actions next his end,
 Speak more the father than the friend
 Scarce had lamented Forbes ¹³⁷ paid
 The tribute to his Minstrel's shade ;
 The tale of friendship scarce was told,
 Ere the narrator's heart was cold—
 Far may we search before we find
 A heart so manly and so kind !
 But not around his honour'd urn,
 Shall friends alone and kindred mourn ;

The thousand eyes his care had dried,
 Pour at his name a bitter tide ;
 And frequent falls the grateful dew,
 For benefits the world ne'er knew.
 If mortal charity dare claim
 The Almighty's attributed name,
 Inscribe above his mouldering clay,
 "The widow's shield, the orphan's stay."
 Nor, though it wake thy sorrow, deem
 My verse intrudes on this sad theme ;
 For sacred was the pen that wrote,
 "Thy father's friend forget thou not :"
 And grateful title may I plead,
 For many a kindly word and deed,
 To bring my tribute to his grave :—
 'Tis little—but 'tis all I have.

To thee, perchance, this rambling strain
 Recalls our summer walks again ;
 When, doing nought,—and, to speak true,
 Not anxious to find aught to do,—
 The wild unbounded hills we ranged,
 While oft our talk its topic changed,
 And, desultory as our way,
 Ranged, unconfined, from grave to gay.
 Even when it flagg'd, as oft will chance,
 No effort made to break its trance,
 We could right pleasantly pursue
 Our sports in social silence too ;
 Thou gravely labouring to portray
 The blighted oak's fantastic spray ;
 I spelling o'er, with much delight,
 The legend of that antique knight,
 Tirante by name, yclep'd the White.
 At either's feet a trusty squire,
 Pandour and Camp, with eyes of fire,
 Jealous, each other's motions view'd,
 And scarce suppress'd their ancient feud.
 The laverock whistled from the cloud ;

The stream was lively, but not loud ;
 From the white thorn the May-flower shed
 Its dewy fragrance round our head :
 Not Ariel lived more merrily
 Under the blossom'd bough, than we.

And blithesome nights, too, have been ours,
 When Winter stript the summer's bowers.
 Careless we heard, what now I hear,
 The wild blast sighing deep and drear,
 When fires were bright, and lamps beam'd gay,
 And ladies tuned the lovely lay ;
 And he was held a laggard soul,
 Who shunn'd to quaff the sparkling bowl.
 Then he, whose absence we deplore,
 Who breathes the gales of Devon's shore,
 The longer miss'd, bewail'd the more ;
 And thou, and I, and dear-loved R——,
 And one whose name I may not say,—
 For not Mimosa's tender tree
 Shrinks sooner from the touch than he,—
 In merry chorus well combined,
 With laughter drown'd the whistling wind.
 Mirth was within ; and Care without
 Might gnaw her nails to hear our shout.
 Not but amid the buxom scene
 Some grave discourse might intervene—
 Of the good horse that bore him best,
 His shoulder, hoof, and arching crest :
 For, like mad Tom's, our chiefest care,
 Was horse to ride, and weapon wear.
 Such nights we've had ; and, though the game
 Of manhood be more sober tame,
 And though the field-day, or the drill,
 Seem less important now—yet still
 Such may we hope to share again.
 The sprightly thought inspires my strain !
 And mark, how, like a horseman true,
 Lord Marmion's march I thus renew.

CANTO FOURTH.

The Camp.

I.

EUSTACE, I said, did blithely mark
 The first notes of the merry lark.
 The lark sang shrill, the cock he crew,
 And loudly Marmion's bugles blew,
 And with their light and lively call,
 Brought groom and yeoman to the stall.
 Whistling they came, and free of heart,
 But soon their mood was changed ;
 Complaint was heard on every part,
 Of something disarranged.
 Some clamour'd loud for armour lost ;
 Some brawl'd and wrangled with the host ;
 " By Becket's bones," cried one, " I fear,
 That some false Scot has stolen my spear !"—
 Young Blount, Lord Marmion's second
 squire,
 Found his steed wet with sweat and mire ;
 Although the rated horse-boy sware,
 Last night he dress'd him sleek and fair.
 While chafed the impatient squire like
 thunder,
 Old Hubert shouts, in fear and wonder,—
 " Help, gentle Blount ! help, comrades all !
 Bevis lies dying in his stall :
 To Marmion who the plight dare tell,
 Of the good steed he loves so well ?"
 Gaping for fear and ruth, they saw
 The charger panting on his straw ;
 Till one, who would seem wisest, cried,—
 " What else but evil could betide,
 With that cursed Palmer for our guide ?
 Better we had through mire and bush
 Been lantern-led by Friar Rush." ¹³⁸

II.

Fitz-Eustace, who the cause but guess'd,
 Nor wholly understood,
 His comrades' clamorous complaints suppress'd ;
 He knew Lord Marmion's mood.
 Him, ere he issued forth, he sought,
 And found deep plunged in gloomy thought,
 And did his tale display
 Simply as if he knew of nought
 To cause such disarray.
 Lord Marmion gave attention cold,
 Nor marvell'd at the wonders told,—
 Pass'd them as accidents of course,
 And bade his clarions sound to horse.

III.

Young Henry Blount, meanwhile, the cost
 Had reckon'd with their Scottish host ;
 And, as the charge he cast and paid,
 " Ill thou deserv'st thy hire," he said ;
 " Dost see, thou knave, my horse's plight ?
 Fairies have ridden him all the night,
 And left him in a foam !
 I trust that soon a conjuring band,
 With English cross, and blazing brand,
 Shall drive the devils from this land,
 To their infernal home :
 For in this haunted den, I trow,
 All night they trample to and fro."—
 The laughing host look'd on the hire,—
 " Gramercy, gentle southern squire,
 And if thou comest among the rest,
 With Scottish broadsword to be blest,
 Sharp be the brand, and sure the blow,
 And short the pang to undergo."
 Here stay'd their talk,—for Marmion
 Gave now the signal to set on.
 The Palmer showing forth the way,
 They journey'd all the morning day.

IV.

The green-sward way was smooth and good,
 Through Humbie's and through Saltoun's wood ;
 A forest glade, which, varying still,
 Here gave a view of dale and hill,
 There narrower closed, till over head
 A vaulted screen the branches made.
 "A pleasant path," Fitz-Eustace said ;
 "Such as where errant-knights might see
 Adventures of high chivalry ;
 Might meet some damsel flying fast,
 With hair unbound, and looks aghast ;
 And smooth and level course were here,
 In her defence to break a spear.
 Here, too, are twilight nooks and dells ;
 And oft, in such, the story tells,
 The damsel kind, from danger freed,
 Did grateful pay her champion's meed."
 He spoke to cheer Lord Marmion's mind :
 Perchance to show his lore design'd ;
 For Eustace much had pored
 Upon a huge romantic tome,
 In the hall window of his home,
 Imprinted at the antique dome
 Of Caxton, or De Worde.
 Therefore he spoke,—but spoke in vain,
 For Marmion answer'd nought again.

V.

Now sudden, distant trumpets shrill,
 In notes prolong'd by wood and hill,
 Were heard to echo far ;
 Each ready archer grasp'd his bow,
 But by the flourish soon they know,
 They breathed no point of war.
 Yet cautious, as in foeman's land,
 Lord Marmion's order speeds the band,
 Some opener ground to gain ;

And scarce a furlong had they rode,
 When thinner trees, receding, show'd
 A little woodland plain.
 Just in that advantageous glade,
 The halting troop a line had made,
 As forth from the opposing shade
 Issued a gallant train.

VI.

First came the trumpets, at whose clang
 So late the forest echoes rang ;
 On prancing steeds they forward press'd,
 With scarlet mantle, azure vest ;
 Each at his trump a banner wore,
 Which Scotland's royal scutcheon bore :
 Heralds and pursuivants, by name
 Bute, Islay, Marchmount, Rothsay, came,
 In painted tabards, proudly showing
 Gules, Argent, Or, and Azure glowing,
 Attendant on a King-at-arms,
 Whose hand the armorial truncheon held
 That feudal strife had often quell'd,
 When wildest its alarms.

VII.

He was a man of middle age ;
 In aspect manly, grave, and sage.
 As on King's errand come ;
 But in the glances of his eye,
 A penetrating, keen, and sly
 Expression found its home ;
 The flash of that satiric rage,
 Which, bursting on the early stage,
 Branded the vices of the age,
 And broke the keys of Rome.
 On milk-white palfrey forth he paced ;
 His cap of maintenance was graced
 With the proud heron-plume.

From his steed's shoulder, loin, and breast,
 Silk housings swept the ground,
 With Scotland's arms, device, and crest,
 Embroider'd round and round.
 The double tressure might you see,
 First by Achaius borne,
 The thistle and the fleur-de-lis,
 And gallant unicorn.
 So bright the King's armorial coat,
 That scarce the dazzled eye could note,
 In living colours, blazon'd brave,
 The Lion, which his title gave,
 A train, which well beseem'd his state,
 But all unarm'd, around him wait.
 Still is thy name in high account,
 And still thy verse has charms,
 Sir David Lindesay of the Mount,
 Lord Lion King-at-arms ! ¹³⁹

VIII.

Down from his horse did Marmion spring,
 Soon as he saw the Lion-King ;
 For well the stately Baron knew
 To him such courtesy was due,
 Whom royal James himself had crown'd,
 And on his temples placed the round
 Of Scotland's ancient diadem :
 And wet his brow with hallow'd wine,
 And on his finger given to shine
 The emblematic gem.
 Their mutual greetings duly made,
 The Lion thus his message said :—
 “ Though Scotland's King hath deeply swore
 Ne'er to knit faith with Henry more,
 And strictly hath forbid resort
 From England to his royal court ;
 Yet, for he knows Lord Marmion's name,
 And honours much his warlike fame,

My liege hath deem'd it shame, and lack
 Of courtesy, to turn him back ;
 And, by his order, I, your guide,
 Must lodging fit and fair provide,
 Till finds King James meet time to see
 The flower of English chivalry."

IX.

Though inly chafed at this delay,
 Lord Marmion bears it as he may,
 The Palmer, his mysterious guide,
 Beholding thus his place supplied,
 Sought to take leave in vain :
 Strict was the Lion-King's command,
 That none, who rode in Marmion's band,
 Should sever from the train :
 "England has here enow of spies
 In Lady Heron's witching eyes :"
 To Marchmount thus, apart, he said,
 But fair pretext to Marmion made.
 The right hand path they now decline,
 And trace against the stream the Tyne.

X.

At length up that wild dale they wind,
 Where Crichtoun Castle ¹⁴⁰ crowns the bank ;
 For there the Lion's care assigned
 A lodging meet for Marmion's rank.
 That Castle rises on the steep
 Of the green vale of Tyne :
 And far beneath, where slow they creep,
 From pool to eddy, dark and deep,
 Where alders moist, and willows weep,
 You hear her streams repine.
 The towers in different ages rose ;
 Their various architecture shows
 The builders' various hands ;

A mighty mass, that could oppose,
 When deadliest hatred fired its foes,
 The vengeful Douglas bands.

XI.

Crichtoun ! though now thy miry court
 But pens the lazy steer and sheep,
 Thy turrets rude, and totter'd Keep,
 Have been the minstrel's loved resort.
 Oft have I traced, within thy fort,
 Of mouldering shields the mystic sense,
 Scutcheons of honour, or pretence,
 Quarter'd in old armorial sort,
 Remains of rude magnificence.
 Nor wholly yet had time defaced
 Thy lordly gallery fair ;
 Nor yet the stony cord unbraced,
 Whose twisted knots, with roses laced,
 Adorn thy ruin'd stair.
 Still rises unimpair'd below,
 The court-yard's graceful portico ;
 Above its cornice, row and row
 Of fair hewn facets richly show
 Their pointed diamond form,
 Though there but houseless cattle go,
 To shield them from the storm.
 And, shuddering, still may we explore,
 Where oft whilom were captives pent,
 The darkness of thy Massy More ;
 Or, from thy grass-grown battlement,
 May trace, in undulating line,
 The sluggish mazes of the Tyne.

XII.

Another aspect Crichtoun show'd,
 As through its portal Marmion rode ;
 But yet 'twas melancholy state
 Received him at the outer gate ;

For none were in the Castle then,
 But women, boys, or aged men.
 With eyes scarce dried, the sorrowing dame,
 To welcome noble Marmion, came ;
 Her son, a stripling twelve years old,
 Proffer'd the Baron's rein to hold ;
 For each man that could draw a sword
 Had march'd that morning with their lord,
 Earl Adam Hepburn,—he who died ¹⁴¹
 On Flodden, by his sovereign's side.
 Long may his Lady look in vain !
 She ne'er shall see his gallant train,
 Come sweeping back through Crichtoun-Dean.
 'Twas a brave race, before the name
 Of hated Bothwell stain'd their fame.

XIII.

And here two days did Marmion rest,
 With every rite that honour claims,
 Attended as the King's own guest :—
 Such the command of Royal James,
 Who marshall'd then his land's array,
 Upon the Borough-moor that lay.
 Perchance he would not foeman's eye
 Upon his gathering host should pry,
 Till full prepared was every band
 To march against the English land.
 Here while they dwelt, did Lindesay's wit
 Oft cheer the Baron's moodier fit ;
 And, in his turn, he knew to prize
 Lord Marmion's powerful mind, and wise.—
 Train'd in the lore of Rome and Greece,
 And policies of war and peace.

XIV.

It chanced, as fell the second night,
 That on the battlements they walk'd,
 And, by the slowly fading light,
 Of varying topics talked ;

And, unaware, the Herald-bard
 Said, Marmion might his toil have spared,
 In travelling so far ;
 For that a messenger from heaven
 In vain to James had counsel given
 Against the English war ; ^{141a}
 And, closer question'd, thus he told
 A tale, which chronicles of old
 In Scottish story have enroll'd :—

XV.

SIR DAVID LINDESAY'S TALE.

“ Of all the palaces so fair,
 Built for the royal dwelling,
 In Scotland, far beyond compare
 Linlithgow is excelling ;
 And in its park in jovial June,
 How sweet the merry linnet's tune,
 How blithe the blackbird's lay !
 The wild-buck-bells ¹⁴² from ferny brake,
 The coot dives merry on the lake,
 The saddest heart might pleasure take
 To see all nature gay.
 But June is to our sovereign dear
 The heaviest month in all the year :
 Too well his cause of grief you know,
 June saw his father's overthrow. ¹⁴³
 Woe to the traitors, who could bring
 The princely boy against his King !
 Still in his conscience burns the sting.
 In offices as strict as Lent,
 King James's June is ever spent.

XVI.

“ When last this ruthless month was come,
 And in Linlithgow's holy dome
 The King, as wont, was praying ;

While, for his royal father's soul,
 The chanters sung, the bells did toll,
 The Bishop mass was saying—
 For now the year brought round again
 The day the luckless king was slain—
 In Katharine's aisle the Monarch knelt,
 With sackcloth-shirt, and iron belt,
 And eyes with sorrow streaming ;
 Around him in their stalls of state,
 The Thistle's Knight-Companions sate,
 Their banners o'er them beaming.
 I too was there, and, sooth to tell,
 Bedeafen'd with the jangling knell,
 Was watching where the sunbeams fell,
 Through the stain'd casement gleaming ;
 But, while I marked what next befell,
 It seem'd as I were dreaming.
 Stepp'd from the crowd a ghostly wight,
 In azure gown, with cincture white ;
 His forehead bald, his head was bare,
 Down hung at length his yellow hair.—
 Now, mock me not, when, good my Lord,
 I pledge to you my knightly word,
 That, when I saw his placid grace,
 His simple majesty of face,
 His solemn bearing, and his pace
 So stately gliding on,—
 Seem'd to me ne'er did limner paint
 So just an image of the Saint,
 Who propp'd the Virgin in her faint,—
 The loved Apostle John !

XVII.

“ He stepp'd before the Monarch's chair,
 And stood with rustic plainness there,
 And little reverence made ;
 Nor head, nor body, bow'd nor bent,
 But on the desk his arm he leant,
 And words like these he said,

In a low voice, but never tone,
 So thrill'd through vein, and nerve, and bone :—
 ' My mother sent me from afar,
 Sir King, to warn thee not to war,—
 Woe waits on thine array ;
 If war thou wilt, of woman fair,
 Her witching wiles and wanton snare,
 James Stuart, doubly warn'd, beware :
 God keep thee as he may !'—

The wondering Monarch seem'd to seek
 For answer, and found none ;
 And when he raised his head to speak,
 The monitor was gone.
 The Marshal and myself had cast
 To stop him as he outward pass'd ;
 But, lighter than the whirlwind's blast,
 He vanish'd from our eyes,
 Like sunbeam on the billow cast,
 That glances but, and dies."

XVIII.

While Lindesay told his marvel strange,
 The twilight was so pale,
 He mark'd not Marmion's colour change,
 While listening to the tale ;
 But, after a suspended pause,
 The Baron spoke :—" Of Nature's laws
 So strong I held the force,
 That never superhuman cause
 Could e'er control their course.
 And, three days since, had judg'd your aim
 Was but to make your guest your game.
 But I have seen, since past the Tweed,
 What much has changed my sceptic creed,
 And made me credit aught."—He staid,
 And seem'd to wish his words unsaid :
 But, by that strong emotion press'd,
 Which prompts us to unload our breast,
 Even when discovery's pain,

To Lindesay did at length unfold
 The tale his village host had told,
 At Gifford, to his train.
 Nought of the Palmer says he there,
 And nought of Constance, or of Clare ;
 The thoughts, which broke his sleep, he seems
 To mention but as feverish dreams.

XIX.

“In vain,” said he, “to rest I spread
 My burning limbs, and couch’d my head :
 Fantastic thoughts return’d ;
 And, by their wild dominion led,
 My heart within me burn’d.
 So sore was the delirious goad,
 I took my steed, and forth I rode,
 And, as the moon shone bright and cold,
 Soon reach’d the camp upon the wold.
 The southern entrance I pass’d through,
 And halted, and my bugle blew.
 Methought an answer met my ear,—
 Yet was the blast so low and drear,
 So hollow, and so faintly blown,
 It might be echo of my own.

XX.

“Thus judging, for a little space
 I listen’d, ere I left the place ;
 But scarce could trust my eyes,
 Nor yet can think they served me true,
 When sudden in the ring I view,
 In form distinct of shape and hue,
 A mounted champion rise.—
 I’ve fought, Lord-Lion, many a day,
 In single fight, and mix’d affray,
 And ever, I myself may say,
 Have borne me as a knight ;

But when this unexpected foe
 Seem'd starting from the gulf below,—
 I care not though the truth I show,—
 I trembled with affright ;
 And as I placed in rest my spear,
 My hand so shook for very fear,
 I scarce could couch it right.

XXI.

“ Why need my tongue the issue tell ?
 We ran our course,—my charger fell ;—
 What could he 'gainst the shock of hell ?—
 I roll'd upon the plain.
 High o'er my head, with threatening hand,
 The spectre shook his naked brand,—
 Yet did the worst remain :
 My dazzled eyes I upward cast,—
 Not opening hell itself could blast
 Their sight, like what I saw !
 Full on his face the moonbeam strook,—
 A face could never be mistook !
 I knew the stern vindictive look,
 And held my breath for awe.
 I saw the face of one who, fled
 To foreign climes, has long been dead,—
 I well believe the last ;
 For ne'er, from vizer raised, did stare
 A human warrior, with a glare
 So grimly and so ghast.
 Thrice o'er my head he shook the blade ;
 But when to good Saint George I pray'd,
 (The first time ere I ask'd his aid,)
 He plunged it in the sheath ;
 And, on his courser mounting light,
 He seem'd to vanish from my sight :
 The moonbeam droop'd, and deepest night
 Sunk down upon the heath.—

'Twere long to tell what cause I have
 To know his face, that met me there,
 Call'd by his hatred from the grave,
 To cumber upper air :
 Dead or alive, good cause had he
 To be my mortal enemy."

XXII.

Marvell'd Sir David of the Mount ;
 Then, learn'd in story, 'gan recount
 Such chance had happ'd of old,
 When once, near Norham, there did fight,
 A spectre fell of fiendish might,
 In likeness of a Scottish knight,
 With Brian Bulmer bold,
 And train'd him nigh to disallow
 The aid of his baptismal vow.
 " And such a phantom, too, 'tis said,
 With Highland broadsword, targe, and plaid,
 And fingers, red with gore,
 Is seen in Rothiemurcus glade,
 Or where the sable pine-trees shade
 Dark Tomantoul, and Auchnaslaid,
 Dromouchty, or Glenmore.
 And yet, whate'er such legends say,
 Of warlike demon, ghost, or fay,
 On mountain, moor, or plain,
 Spotless in faith, in bosom bold,
 True son of chivalry should hold,
 These midnight terrors vain ;
 For seldom have such spirits power
 To harm, save in the evil hour,
 When guilt we meditate within,
 Or harbour unrepented sin."—
 Lord Marmion turn'd him half aside,
 And twice to clear his voice he tried,
 Then press'd Sir David's hand,—

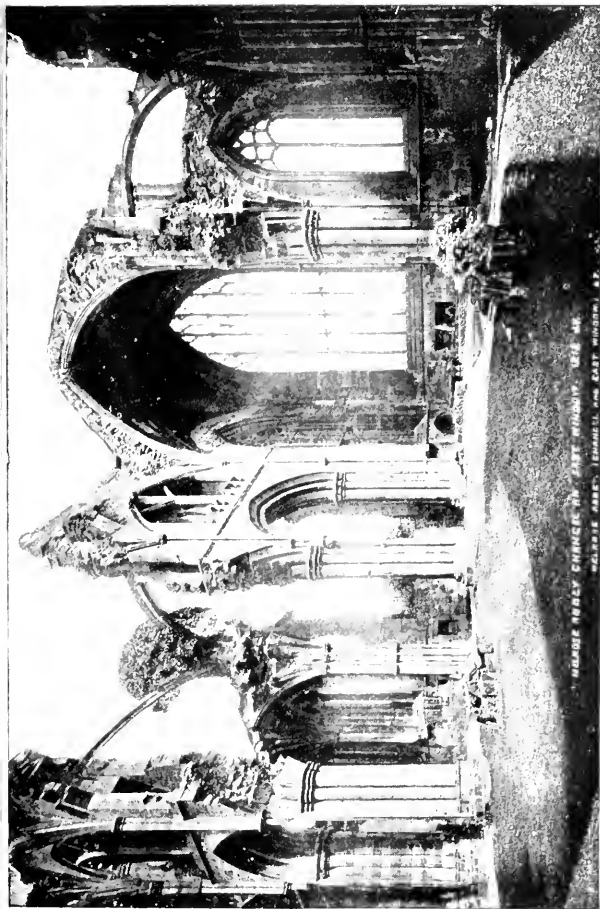
But nought, at length, in answer said ;
 And here their farther converse staid,
 Each ordering that his band
 Should bowne them with the rising day,
 To Scotland's camp to take their way.—
 Such was the King's command.

XXIII.

Early they took Dun-Edin's road,
 And I could trace each step they trode.
 Hill, brook, nor dell, nor rock, nor stone,
 Lies on the path to me unknown.
 Much might it boast of storied lore ;
 But, passing such digression o'er,
 Suffice it that the route was laid
 Across the furzy hills of Braid.
 They pass'd the glen and scanty rill,
 And climb'd the opposing bank, until
 They gain'd the top of Blackford Hill.

XXIV.

Blackford ! on whose uncultured breast,
 Among the broom, and thorn, and whin,
 A truant-boy, I sought the nest,
 Or listed, as I lay at rest,
 While rose, on breezes thin,
 The murmur of the city crowd,
 And, from his steeple jangling loud,
 Saint Giles's mingling din.
 Now, from the summit to the plain,
 Waves all the hill with yellow grain ;
 And o'er the landscape as I look,
 Nought do I see unchanged remain,
 Save the rude cliffs and chiming brook.
 To me they make a heavy moan,
 Of early friendships past and gone.



MELOSE ABBEY. CHANCEL AND EAST WINDOW. SEE 46.
"MELROSE ABBEY," EMANUEL AND EAST WINDOW, 47.

Chancel and East Window, Melrose Abbey.

XXV.

But different far the change has been,
 Since Marmion, from the crown
 Of Blackford, saw that martial scene
 Upon the bent so brown :
 Thousand pavilions, white as snow,
 Spread all the Borough-moor below,¹⁴⁴
 Upland, and dale, and down :—
 A thousand did I say? I ween,
 Thousands on thousands there were seen,
 That chequer'd all the heath between
 The streamlet and the town ;
 In crossing ranks extending far,
 Forming a camp irregular ;
 Oft giving way, where still there stood
 Some relics of the old oak wood,
 That darkly huge did intervene,
 And tamed the glaring white with green :
 In these extended lines there lay
 A martial kingdom's vast array,

XXVI.

For from Hebudes, dark with rain,
 To eastern Lodon's fertile plain,
 And from the southern Redswire edge,
 To farthest Rosse's rocky ledge ;
 From west to east, from south to north,
 Scotland sent all her warriors forth.
 Marmion might hear the mingled hum
 Of myriads up the mountain come ;
 The horses' tramp, and tingling clank,
 Where chiefs review'd their vassal rank,
 And charger's shrilling neigh ;
 And see the shifting lines advance,
 While frequent flash'd, from shield and lance,
 The sun's reflected ray.

XXVII.

Thin curling in the morning air,
 The wreaths of failing smoke declare
 To embers now the brands decay'd,
 Where the night-watch their fires had made.
 They saw, slow rolling on the plain,
 Full many a baggage-cart and wain,
 And dire artillery's clumsy car,
 By sluggish oxen tugg'd to war ;
 And there were Borthwick's Sisters Seven,
 And culverins which France had given.
 Ill-omen'd gift ! the guns remain
 The conqueror's spoil on Flodden plain.

XXVIII.

Nor mark'd they less, where in the air
 A thousand streamers flaunted fair ;
 Various in shape, device, and hue,
 Green, sanguine, purple, red, and blue,
 Broad, narrow, swallow-tail'd, and square,
 Scroll, pennon, pensil, bandrol, there
 O'er the pavilions flew.¹⁴⁵
 Highest and midmost, was descried
 The royal banner floating wide ;
 The staff, a pine-tree, strong and straight,
 Pitch'd deeply in a massive stone,
 Which still in memory is shown,
 Yet bent beneath the standard's weight
 Whene'er the western wind unroll'd,
 With toil, the huge and cumbrous fold,
 And gave to view the dazzling field,
 Where, in proud Scotland's royal shield,
 The ruddy lion ramp'd in gold.¹⁴⁶

XXIX.

Lord Marmion view'd the landscape bright,—
 He view'd it with a chief's delight,—

Until within him burn'd his heart,
 And lightning from his eye did part,
 As on the battle-day ;
 Such glance did falcon never dart,
 When stooping on his prey.
 "Oh ! well, Lord-Lion, hast thou said,
 Thy King from warfare to dissuade
 Were but a vain essay :
 For, by St. George, were that host mine,
 Not power infernal nor divine,
 Should once to peace my soul incline,
 Till I had dimm'd their armour's shine
 In glorious battle-fray !"
 Answer'd the Bard, of milder mood :
 "Fair is the sight,—and yet 'twere good,
 That kings would think withal,
 When peace and wealth their land has bless'd,
 'Tis better to sit still at rest,
 Than rise, perchance to fall."

XXX.

Still on the spot Lord Marmion stay'd,
 For fairer scene he ne'er survey'd.
 When sated with the martial show
 That peopled all the plain below,
 The wandering eye could o'er it go,
 And mark the distant city glow
 With gloomy splendour red ;
 For on the smoke-wreaths, huge and slow,
 That round her sable turrets flow,
 The morning beams were shed,
 And tinged them with a lustre proud,
 Like that which streaks a thunder-cloud.
 Such dusky grandeur clothed the height,
 Where the huge Castle holds its state,
 And all the steep slope down,
 Whose ridgy back heaves to the sky,
 Piled deep and massy, close and high,
 Mine own romantic town !

But northward far, with purer blaze,
 On Ochil mountains fell the rays,
 And as each heathy top they kissed,
 It gleam'd a purple amethyst.
 Yonder the shores of Fife you saw ;
 Here Preston-Bay and Berwick-Law :
 And, broad between them roll'd,
 The gallant Frith the eye might note,
 Whose islands on its bosom float,
 Like emeralds chased in gold.
 Fitz-Eustace' heart felt closely pent ;
 As if to give his rapture vent,
 The spur he to his charger lent,
 And raised his bridle hand,
 And, making demi-volte in air,
 Cried, "Where's the coward that would not dare
 To fight for such a land !"
 The Lindesay smiled his joy to see ;
 Nor Marmion's frown repress'd his glee.

XXXI.

Thus while they look'd, a flourish proud,
 Where mingled trump, and clarion loud,
 And fife, and kettle-drum,
 And sackbut deep, and psaltery,
 And war-pipe with discordant cry,
 And cymbal clattering to the sky,
 Making wild music bold and high,
 Did up the mountain come ;
 The whilst the bells, with distant chime,
 Merrily toll'd the hour of prime,
 And thus the Lindesay spoke :
 "Thus clamour still the war-notes when
 The king to mass his way has ta'en,
 Or to St. Katharine's of Sienne,
 Or Chapel of Saint Rocque.
 To you they speak of martial fame ;
 But me remind of peaceful game,
 When blither was their cheer,

Thrilling in Falkland-woods the air,
 In signal none his steed should spare,
 But strive which foremost might repair
 To the downfall of the deer.

XXXII.

“Nor less,” he said,—“when looking forth,
 I view yon Empress of the North
 Sit on her hilly throne ;
 Her palace’s imperial bowers,
 Her castle, proof to hostile powers,
 Her stately halls and holy towers—
 Nor less,” he said, “I moan,
 To think what woe mischance may bring,
 And how these merry bells may ring
 The death-dirge of our gallant king ;
 Or with the larum call
 The burghers forth to watch and ward,
 ’Gainst southern sack and fires to guard
 Dun-Edin’s leaguer’d wall.—
 But not for my presaging thought,
 Dream conquest sure, or cheaply bought !
 Lord Marmion, I say nay :
 God is the guider of the field,
 He breaks the champion’s spear and shield,—
 But thou thyself shalt say,
 When joins yon host in deadly stowre,
 That England’s dames must weep in bower,
 Her monks the death-mass sing ;
 For never saw’st thou such a power
 Led on by such a King.”—
 And now, down winding to the plain,
 The barriers of the camp they gain,
 And there they made a stay.—
 There stays the Minstrel, till he fling
 His hand o’er every Border string,
 And fit his harp the pomp to sing,
 Of Scotland’s ancient Court and King,
 In the succeeding lay.

INTRODUCTION TO CANTO FIFTH.

TO

GEORGE ELLIS, ESQ.

Edinburgh.

WHEN dark December glooms the day,
 And takes our autumn joys away ;
 When short and scant the sunbeam throws,
 Upon the weary waste of snows,
 A cold and profitless regard,
 Like patron on a needy bard ;
 When silvan occupation's done,
 And o'er the chimney rests the gun,
 And hang, in idle trophy, near,
 The game-pouch, fishing-rod, and spear ;
 When wiry terrier, rough and grim,
 And greyhound, with his length of limb,
 And pointer, now employ'd no more,
 Cumber our parlour's narrow floor ;
 When in his stall the impatient steed
 Is long condemn'd to rest and feed ;
 When from our snow-encircled home,
 Scarce cares the hardiest step to roam,
 Since path is none, save that to bring
 The needful water from the spring ;
 When wrinkled news-page, thrice conn'd o'er,
 Beguiles the dreary hour no more,
 And darkling politician, cross'd,
 Inveighs against the lingering post,
 And answering housewife sore complains
 Of carriers' snow-impeded wains ;
 When such the country cheer, I come,
 Well pleased, to seek our city home ;
 For converse, and for books, to change
 The Forest's melancholy range,
 And welcome, with renew'd delight,
 The busy day and social night.

Not here need my desponding rhyme
 Lament the ravages of time,
 As erst by Newark's riven towers,
 And Ettrick stripp'd of forest bowers.
 True,—Caledonia's Queen is changed,¹⁴⁷
 Since on her dusky summit ranged,
 Within its steepy limits pent,
 By bulwark, line, and battlement,
 And flanking towers, and laky flood,
 Guarded and garrison'd she stood,
 Denying entrance or resort,
 Save at each tall embattled port ;
 Above whose arch, suspended, hung
 Portcullis spiked with iron prong.
 That long is gone,—but not so long,
 Since, early closed, and opening late,
 Jealous revolved the studded gate,
 Whose task, from eve to morning tide,
 A wicket churlishly supplied.
 Stern then, and steel-girt was thy brow,
 Dun-Edin ! O, how alter'd now,
 When safe amid thy mountain court
 Thou sit'st, like Empress at her sport,
 And liberal, unconfined, and free,
 Flinging thy white arms to the sea,
 For thy dark cloud, with umber'd lower,
 That hung o'er cliff, and lake, and tower,
 Thou gleam'st against the western ray
 Ten thousand lines of brighter day.

Not she, the Championess of old,
 In Spenser's magic tale enroll'd,
 She for the charmed spear renown'd,
 Which forced each knight to kiss the ground,—
 Not she more changed, when, placed at rest,
 What time she was Malbecco's guest,
 She gave to flow her maiden vest ;
 When from the corslet's grasp relieved,
 Free to the sight her bosom heaved ;

Sweet was her blue eye's modest smile,
 Erst hidden by the aventayle ;
 And down her shoulders graceful roll'd
 Her locks profuse, of paly gold.
 They who whilom, in midnight fight,
 Had marvell'd at her matchless might,
 No less her maiden charms approved,
 But looking liked, and liking loved.
 The sight could jealous pangs beguile,
 And charm Malbecco's cares a while ;
 And he, the wandering Squire of Dames,
 Forgot his Columbella's claims,
 And passion, erst unknown, could gain
 The breast of blunt Sir Satyrane ;
 Nor durst light Paridel advance,
 Bold as he was, a looser glance.
 She charm'd, at once, and tamed the heart,
 Incomparable Britomarte !

So thou, fair City ! disarray'd
 Of battled wall, and rampart's aid,
 As stately seem'st, but lovelier far
 Than in that panoply of war.
 Nor deem that from thy fenceless throne
 Strength and security are flown ;
 Still, as of yore, Queen of the North !
 Still canst thou send thy children forth.
 Ne'er readier at alarm-bell's call
 Thy burghers rose to man thy wall,
 Than now, in danger, shall be thine,
 Thy dauntless voluntary line ;
 For fosse and turret proud to stand,
 Their breasts the bulwarks of the land.
 Thy thousands, train'd to martial toil,
 Full red would stain their native soil,
 Ere from thy mural crown there fell
 The slightest knosp, or pinnacle.
 And if it come,—as come it may,
 Dun-Edin ! that eventful day,—

Renown'd for hospitable deed,
 That virtue much with Heaven may plead,
 In patriarchal times whose care
 Descending angels deign'd to share ;
 That claim may wrestle blessings down
 On those who fight for The Good Town,
 Destined in every age to be
 Refuge of injured royalty ;
 Since first, when conquering York arose,
 To Henry meek she gave repose,¹⁴⁸
 Till late, with wonder, grief, and awe,
 Great Bourbon's relics, sad she saw.

Truce to these thoughts !—for, as they rise,
 How gladly I avert mine eyes,
 Bodings, or true or false, to change,
 For Fiction's fair romantic range,
 Or for tradition's dubious light,
 That hovers 'twixt the day and night :
 Dazzling alternately and dim,
 Her wavering lamp I'd rather trim,
 Knights, squires, and lovely dames to see,
 Creation of my fantasy,
 Than gaze abroad on reeky fen,
 And make of mists invading men.
 Who loves not more the night of June
 Than dull December's gloomy noon ?
 The moonlight than the fog of frost ?
 And can we say, which cheats the most ?

But who shall teach my harp to gain
 A sound of the romantic strain,
 Whose Anglo-Norman tones whilere
 Could win the royal Henry's ear,¹⁴⁹
 Famed Beauclerc call'd, for that he loved
 The minstrel, and his lay approved ?
 Who shall these lingering notes redeem,
 Decaying on Oblivion's stream ;

Such notes as from the Breton tongue
 Marie translated, Blondel sung?—
 O! born, Time's ravage to repair,
 And make the dying Muse thy care;
 Who, when his scythe her hoary foe
 Was poising for the final blow,
 The weapon from his hand could wring,
 And break his glass, and shear his wing,
 And bid, reviving in his strain,
 The gentle poet live again;
 Thou, who canst give to lightest lay
 An unpedantic moral gay,
 Nor less the dullest theme bid flit
 On wings of unexpected wit;
 In letters as in life approved,
 Example honour'd, and beloved,—
 Dear ELLIS! to the bard impart
 A lesson of thy magic art,
 To win at once the head and heart,—
 At once to charm, instruct and mend,
 My guide, my pattern, and my friend!

Such minstrel lesson to bestow
 Be long thy pleasing task,—but, O!
 No more by thy example teach,
 —What few can practise, all can preach,—
 With even patience to endure
 Lingered disease, and painful cure,
 And boast affliction's pangs subdued
 By mild and manly fortitude.
 Enough, the lesson has been given:
 Forbid the repetition, Heaven!

Come listen, then! for thou hast known,
 And loved the Minstrel's varying tone,
 Who, like his Border sires of old,
 Waked a wild measure rude and bold,
 Till Windsor's oaks, and Ascot plain,
 With wonder heard the northern strain.

Come listen ! bold in thy applause,
 The Bard shall scorn pedantic laws ;
 And, as the ancient art could stain
 Achievements on the storied pane,
 Irregularly traced and plann'd,
 But yet so glowing and so grand,—
 So shall he strive, in changeful hue,
 Field, feast, and combat, to renew,
 And loves, and arms, and harpers' glee,
 And all the pomp of chivalry.

CANTO FIFTH.

The Court.

I.

THE train has left the hills of Braid ;
 The barrier guard have open made
 (So Lindesay bade) the palisade,
 That closed the tented ground ;
 Their men the warders backward drew,
 And carried pikes as they rode through,
 Into its ample bound.
 Fast ran the Scottish warriors there,
 Upon the Southern band to stare.
 And envy with their wonder rose,
 To see such well-appointed foes ;
 Such length of shafts, such mighty bows,
 So huge, that many simply thought,
 But for a vaunt such weapons wrought ;
 And little deem'd their force to feel,
 Through links of mail, and plates of steel,
 When rattling upon Flodden vale,
 The cloth-yard arrows flew like hail.¹⁵⁰

II.

Nor less did Marmion's skilful view
 Glance every line and squadron through ;

And much he marvell'd one small land
 Could marshal forth such various band :

For men-at-arms were here,
 Heavily sheathed in mail and plate,
 Like iron towers for strength and weight,
 On Flemish steeds of bone and height,

With battle-axe and spear.
 Young knights and squires, a lighter train,
 Practised their chargers on the plain,
 By aid of leg, of hand, and rein,

Each warlike feat to show,
 To pass, to wheel, the croupe to gain,
 And high curvett, that not in vain
 The sword sway might descend amain

On foeman's casque below.¹⁵¹
 He saw the hardy burghers there
 March arm'd, on foot, with faces bare,¹⁵²

For vizor they wore none,
 Nor waving plume, nor crest of knight ;
 But burnished were their corslets bright,
 Their brigantines, and gorgets light,
 Like very silver shone.

Long pikes they had for standing fight,
 Two-handed swords they wore,
 And many wielded mace of weight,
 And bucklers bright they bore.

III.

On foot the yeoman too, but dress'd
 In his steel-jack, a swarthy vest,
 With iron quilted well ;
 Each at his back (a slender store)
 His forty days' provision bore,
 As feudal statutes tell.

His arms were halbert, axe, or spear,¹⁵³
 A crossbow there, a hagbut here,
 A dagger-knife, and brand.

Sober he seem'd, and sad of cheer,
 As loth to leave his cottage dear,
 And march to foreign strand ;
 Or musing, who would guide his steer,
 To till the fallow land.
 Yet deem not in his thoughtful eye
 Did aught of dastard terror lie ;
 More dreadful far his ire,
 Than theirs, who, scorning danger's name,
 In eager mood to battle came,
 Their valour like light straw on flame,
 A fierce but fading fire.

IV.

Not so the Borderer :—bred to war,
 He knew the battle's din afar,
 And joy'd to hear it swell.
 His peaceful day was slothful ease ;
 Nor harp, nor pipe, his ear could please
 Like the loud slogan yell.
 On active steed, with lance and blade,
 The light-arm'd pricker plied his trade,—
 Let nobles fight for fame ;
 Let vassals follow where they lead,
 Burghers to guard their townships bleed,
 But war's the Borderer's game.
 Their gain, their glory, their delight,
 To sleep the day, maraud the night,
 O'er mountain, moss, and moor ;
 Joyful to fight they took their way,
 Scarce caring who might win the day,
 Their booty was secure.
 These, as Lord Marmion's train pass'd by,
 Look'd on at first with careless eye,
 Nor marvell'd aught, well taught to know
 The form and force of English bow.
 But when they saw the Lord array'd
 In splendid arms and rich brocade,
 Each Borderer to his kinsman said,—

"Hist, Ringan! seest thou there!
 Canst guess which road they'll homeward ride?—
 O! could we but on Border side,
 By Eusedale glen, or Liddell's tide,
 Beset a prize so fair!
 That fangless Lion, too, their guide,
 Might chance to lose his glistening hide;
 Brown Maudlin, of that doublet pied,
 Could make a kirtle rare."

V.

Next, Marmion mark'd the Celtic race,
 Of different language, form, and face,
 A various race of man;
 Just then the Chiefs their tribes array'd,
 And wild and garish semblance made,
 The chequer'd trews, and belted plaid,
 And varying notes the war-pipes bray'd,
 To every varying clan;
 Wild through their red or sable hair
 Look'd out their eyes with savage stare,
 On Marmion as he pass'd;
 Their legs above the knee were bare;
 Their frame was sinewy, short, and spare,
 And harden'd to the blast;
 Of taller race, the chiefs they own
 Were by the eagle's plumage known.
 The hunted red-deer's undress'd hide
 Their hairy buskins well supplied;
 The graceful bonnet deck'd their head:
 Back from their shoulders hung the plaid;
 A broadsword of unwieldy length,
 A dagger proved for edge and strength,
 A studded targe they wore,
 And quivers, bows, and shafts,—but, O!
 Short was the shaft, and weak the bow,
 To that which England bore.
 The Isles-men carried at their backs
 The ancient Danish battle-axe.

They raised a wild and wondering cry,
 As with his guide rode Marmion by.
 Loud were their clamouring tongues, as when
 The clanging sea-fowl leave the fen,
 And, with their cries discordant mix'd,
 Grumbled and yell'd the pipes betwixt.

VI.

Thus through the Scottish camp they pass'd,
 And reach'd the City gate at last,
 Where all around, a wakeful guard,
 Arm'd burghers kept their watch and ward.
 Well had they cause of jealous fear,
 When lay encamp'd, in field so near,
 The Borderer and the Mountaineer.
 As through the bustling streets they go,
 All was alive with martial show :
 At every turn, with dinning clang,
 The armourer's anvil clash'd and rang ;
 Or toil'd the swarthy smith, to wheel
 The bar that arms the charger's heel ;
 Or axe, or falchion, to the side
 Of jarring grindstone was applied.
 Page, groom, and squire, with hurrying pace,
 Through street, and lane, and market-place,
 Bore lance, or casque, or sword ;
 While burghers, with important face,
 Described each new-come lord,
 Discuss'd his lineage, told his name,
 His following, and his warlike fame.
 The Lion led to lodging meet,
 Which high o'erlook'd the crowded street ;
 There must the Baron rest,
 Till past the hour of vesper tide,
 And then to Holy-Rood must ride,—
 Such was the King's behest.
 Meanwhile the Lion's care assigns
 A banquet rich, and costly wines,
 To Marmion and his train ;¹⁵⁴

And when the appointed hour succeeds,
 The Baron dons his peaceful weeds,
 And following Lindesay as he leads,
 The palace-halls they gain.

VII.

Old Holy-Rood rung merrily,
 That night, with wassell, mirth, and glee :
 King James within her princely bower,
 Feasted the Chiefs of Scotland's power,
 Summon'd to spend the parting hour ;
 For he had charged, that his array
 Should southward march by break of day.
 Well loved that splendid monarch aye
 The banquet and the song,
 By day the tourney, and by night
 The merry dance, traced fast and light,
 The maskers quaint, the pageant bright,
 The revel loud and long.
 This feast outshone his banquets past,
 It was his blithest—and his last.
 The dazzling lamps, from gallery gay,
 Cast on the Court a dancing ray ;
 Here to the harp did minstrels sing ;
 There ladies touch'd a softer string ;
 With long-ear'd cap, and motley vest,
 The licensed fool retail'd his jest ;
 His magic tricks the juggler plied ;
 At dice and draughts the gallants vied ;
 While some, in close recess apart,
 Courted the ladies of their heart,
 Nor courted them in vain ;
 For often, in the parting hour,
 Victorious Love asserts his power
 O'er coldness and disdain ;
 And flinty is her heart, can view
 To battle march a lover true—
 Can hear, perchance, his last adieu,
 Nor own her share of pain.

VIII.

Through this mix'd crowd of glee and game,
The King to greet Lord Marmion came,
While, reverent, all made room.
An easy task it was, I trow,
King James's manly form to know.
Although, his courtesy to show,
He doff'd, to Marmion bending low,
His broider'd cap and plume.
For royal was his garb and mien,
His cloak, of crimson velvet piled,
Trimm'd with the fur of Martin wild ;
His vest of changeful satin sheen,
The dazzled eye beguiled ;
His gorgeous collar hung adown,
Wrought with the badge of Scotland's crown,
The thistle brave, of old renown :
His trusty blade, Toledo right,
Descended from a baldrick bright ;
White were his buskins, on the heel
His spurs inlaid of gold and steel ;
His bonnet, all of crimson fair,
Was button'd with a ruby rare :
And Marmion deem'd he ne'er had seen
A prince of such a noble mien.

IX.

The Monarch's form was middle size ;
For feat of strength, or exercise,
Shaped in proportion fair ;
And hazel was his eagle eye,
And auburn of the darkest dye,
His short curl'd beard and hair.
Light was his footstep in the dance,
And firm his stirrup in the lists ;
And, oh ! he had that merry glance,
That seldom lady's heart resists.

Lightly from fair to fair he flew,
 And loved to plead, lament, and sue ;—
 Suit lightly won, and short-lived pain,
 For monarchs seldom sigh in vain.

I said he joy'd in banquet bower ;
 But, 'mid his mirth, 'twas often strange,
 How suddenly his cheer would change,

His look o'ercast and lower,
 If, in a sudden turn, he felt
 The pressure of his iron belt,
 That bound his breast in penance pain,
 In memory of his father slain.¹⁵⁵

Even so 'twas strange how, evermore,
 Soon as the passing pang was o'er
 Forward he rush'd, with double glee,
 Into the stream of revelry :

Thus, dim-seen object of affright
 Startles the courser in his flight,
 And half he halts, half springs aside ;
 But feels the quickening spur applied,
 And, straining on the tighten'd rein,
 Scours doubly swift o'er hill and plain.

X.

O'er James's heart, the courtiers say,
 Sir Hugh the Heron's wife held sway :¹⁵⁶

To Scotland's Court she came,
 To be a hostage for her lord,
 Who Cessford's gallant heart had gored,
 And with the King to make accord,
 Had sent his lovely dame.

Nor to that lady free alone
 Did the gay King allegiance own ;

For the fair Queen of France¹⁵⁷
 Sent him a turquois ring and glove,
 And charged him, as her knight and love,
 For her to break a lance ;

And strike three strokes with Scottish brand,
 And march three miles on Southron land,
 And bid the banners of his band

In English breezes dance.

And thus, for France's Queen he drest
 His manly limbs in mailed vest ;
 And thus admitted English fair
 His inmost counsels still to share ;
 And thus, for both, he madly plann'd
 The ruin of himself and land !

And yet, the sooth to tell,
 Nor England's fair, nor France's Queen,
 Were worth one pearl-drop, bright and sheen,
 From Margaret's eyes that fell,—
 His own Queen Margaret, who, in Lithgow's
 bower,
 All lonely sat, and wept the weary hour.

XI.

The Queen sits lone in Lithgow pile,
 And weeps the weary day,
 The war against her native soil,
 Her Monarch's risk in battle broil :—
 And in gay Hoiv-Rood, the while,
 Dame Heron rises with a smile
 Upon the harp to play.

Fair was her rounded arm, as o'er
 The strings her fingers flew ;
 And as she touch'd and tuned them all,
 Ever her bosom's rise and fall
 Was plainer given to view ;
 For, all for heat, was laid aside
 Her wimple, and her hood untied.
 And first she pitch'd her voice to sing,
 Then glanced her dark eye on the King,
 And then around the silent ring ;
 And laugh'd, and blush'd, and oft did say
 Her pretty oath, by Yea, and Nay,
 She could not, would not, durst not play !

At length, upon the harp, with glee,
 Mingled with arch simplicity,
 A soft, yet lively, air she rung,
 While thus the wily lady sung :—

XII.

LOCHINVAR.

Lady Heron's Song.

O, young Lochinvar is come out of the west,
 Through all the wide Border his steed was the best ;
 And save his good broadsword he weapons had none,
 He rode all unarm'd, and he rode all alone.
 So faithful in love, and so dauntless in war,
 There never was knight like the young Lochinvar.

He staid not for brake, and he stopp'd not for stone,
 He swam the Eske river where ford there was none ;
 But ere he alighted at Netherby gate,
 The bride had consented, the gallant came late :
 For a laggard in love, and a dastard in war,
 Was to wed the fair Ellen of brave Lochinvar.

So boldly he enter'd the Netherby Hall,
 Among bride's-men, and kinsmen, and brothers, and all :
 Then spoke the bride's father, his hand on his sword,
 (For the poor craven bridegroom said never a word,
 " O come ye in peace here, or come ye in war,
 Or to dance at our bridal, young Lord Lochinvar ?"—

" I long woo'd your daughter, my suit you denied ;—
 Love swells like the Solway, but ebbs like its tide—
 And now am I come, with this lost love of mine,
 To lead but one measure, drink one cup of wine.
 There are maidens in Scotland more lovely by far,
 That would gladly be bride to the young Lochinvar."

The bride kiss'd the goblet : the knight took it up,
 He quaff'd off the wine, and he threw down the cup.

She look'd down to blush, and she look'd up to sigh,
 With a smile on her lips, and a tear in her eye.
 He took her soft hand, ere her mother could bar,—
 “Now tread we a measure!” said young Lochinvar.

So stately his form, and so lovely her face,
 That never a hall such a galliard did grace;
 While her mother did fret, and her father did fume,
 And the bridegroom stood dangling his bonnet and
 plume;
 And the bride-maidens whisper'd, “'Twere better by
 far,
 To have match'd our fair cousin with young Lochinvar.”

One touch to her hand, and one word in her ear,
 When they reach'd the hall-door, and the charger
 stood near;
 So light to the croupe the fair lady he swung,
 So light to the saddle before her he sprung!
 “She is won! we are gone, over bank, bush, and
 scaur;
 They'll have fleet steeds that follow,” quoth young
 Lochinvar.

There was mounting 'mong Græmes of the Netherby
 clan;
 Forsters, Fenwicks, and Musgraves, they rode and
 they ran:
 There was racing and chasing, on Cannobie Lee,
 But the lost bride of Netherby ne'er did they see.
 So daring in love, and so dauntless in war,
 Have ye e'er heard of gallant like young Lochinvar?

XIII.

The monarch o'er the siren hung
 And beat the measure as she sung;
 And, pressing closer, and more near,
 He whisper'd praises in her ear.

In loud applause the courtiers vied ;
 And ladies wink'd, and spoke aside.
 The witching dame to Marmion threw
 A glance, where seem'd to reign
 The pride that claims applauses due,
 And of her royal conquest too,
 A real or feign'd disdain :
 Familiar was the look, and told,
 Marmion and she were friends of old.
 The King observed their meeting eyes,
 With something like displeas'd surprise ;
 For monarchs ill can rivals brook,
 Even in a word, or smile, or look.
 Straight took he forth the parchment broad,
 Which Marmion's high commission show'd :
 " Our Borders sack'd by many a raid,
 Our peaceful liege-men robb'd," he said :
 " On day of truce our Warden slain,
 Stout Barton kill'd, his vassels ta'en—
 Unworthy were we here to reign,
 Should these for vengeance cry in vain ;
 Our full defiance, hate, and scorn,
 Our herald has to Henry borne."

XIV.

He paused, and led where Douglas stood,
 And with stern eye the pageant view'd :
 I mean that Douglas, sixth of yore,
 Who coronet of Angus bore,
 And, when his blood and heart were high,
 Did the third James in camp defy,
 And all his minions led to die
 On Lauder's dreary flat :
 Princes and favourites long grew tame,
 And trembled at the homely name
 Of Archibald Bell-the-Cat ;¹⁵⁸
 The same who left the dusky vale
 Of Hermitage in Liddisdale,
 Its dungeons, and its towers,

Where Bothwell's turrets brave the air,
 And Bothwell bank is blooming fair,
 To fix his princely bowers.
 Though now, in age, he had laid down
 His armour for the peaceful gown,
 And for a staff his brand,
 Yet often would flash forth the fire,
 'That could, in youth, a monarch's ire
 And minion's pride withstand ;
 And even that day, at council board,
 Unapt to soothe his sovereign's mood,
 Against the war had Angus stood,
 And chafed his royal lord.¹⁵⁹

XV.

His giant-form, like ruin'd tower,
 Though fall'n its muscles' brawny vaunt,
 Hugh-boned, and tall, and grim, and gaunt,
 Seem'd o'er the gaudy scene to lower :
 His locks and beard in silver grew ;
 His eyebrows kept their sable hue.
 Near Douglas when the Monarch stood,
 His bitter speech he thus pursued :
 " Lord Marmion, since these letters say
 That in the North you needs must stay,
 While slightest hopes of peace remain,
 Uncourteous speech it were, and stern,
 To say—Return to Lindisfarne,
 Until my herald come again.—
 Then rest you in Tantallon Hold ;¹⁶⁰
 Your host shall be the Douglas bold,—
 A chief unlike his sires of old.
 He wears their motto on his blade,¹⁶¹
 Their blazen o'er his towers display'd ;
 Yet loves his sovereign to oppose,
 More than to face his country's foes.
 And, I bethink me, by St. Stephen,
 But e'en this morn to me was given

A prize, the first fruits of the war,
 Ta'en by a galley from Dunbar,
 A bevy of the maids of Heaven.
 Under your guard, these holy maids
 Shall safe return to cloister shades,
 And, while they at Tantallon stay,
 Requiem for Cochran's soul may say."
 And, with the slaughter'd favourite's name,
 Across the Monarch's brow there came
 A cloud of ire, remorse and shame.

XVI.

In answer nought could Angus speak ;
 His proud heart swell'd wellnigh to break :
 He turn'd aside, and down his cheek
 A burning tear there stole.
 His hand the Monarch sudden took,
 That sight his kind heart could not brook :
 " Now, by the Bruce's soul,
 Angus, my hasty speech forgive !
 For sure as doth his spirit live,
 As he said of the Douglas old,
 I well may say of you,—
 That never king did subject hold,
 In speech more free, in war more bold,
 More tender and more true :
 Forgive me, Douglas, once again."—
 And, while the King his hand did strain,
 The old man's tears fell down like rain.
 To seize the moment Marmion tried,
 And whisper'd to the King aside :
 " Oh ! let such tears unwonted plead
 For respite short from dubious deed.
 A child will weep a bramble's smart,
 A maid to see her sparrow part,
 A stripling for a woman's heart :
 But woe awaits a country, when
 She sees the tears of bearded men.

Then, oh ! what omen, dark and high,
When Douglas wets his manly eye !”

XVII.

Displeas'd was James, that stranger view'd
And tamper'd with his changing mood.
“ Laugh those that can, weep those that may ”
Thus did the fiery Monarch say,
“ Southward I march by break of day ;
And if within Tantallon strong,
The good Lord Marmion tarries long,
Perchance our meeting next may fall
At Tamworth, in his castle-hall.”—
The haughty Marmion felt the taunt,
And answer'd, grave, the royal vaunt :
“ Much honour'd were my humble home,
If in its halls King James should come ;
But Nottingham has archers good,
And Yorkshire men are stern of mood ;
Northumbrian prickers wild and rude.
On Derby Hills the paths are steep ;
In Ouse and Tyne the fords are deep ;
And many a banner will be torn,
And many a knight to earth be borne,
And many a sheaf of arrows spent,
Ere Scotland's King shall cross the Trent :
Yet pause, brave Prince, while yet you may !”—
The Monarch lightly turn'd away,
And to his nobles loud did call,—
“ Lords, to the dance,—a hall ! a hall !”
Himself his cloak and sword flung by,
And led Dame Heron gallantly ;
And minstrels, at the royal order,
Rung out—“ Blue Bonnets o'er the Border.”

XVIII.

Leave we these revels now, to tell
What to Saint Hilda's maids befell.

Whose galley, as they sail'd again
 To Whitby, by a Scot was ta'en.
 Now at Dun-Edin did they bide,
 Till James should of their fate decide ;
 And soon, by his command,
 Were gently summon'd to prepare
 To journey under Marmion's care,
 As escort honour'd, safe, and fair,
 Again to English land.
 The Abbess told her chaplet o'er,
 Nor knew which saint she should implore ;
 For, when she thought of Constance, sore
 She fear'd Lord Marmion's mood.
 And judge what Clara must have felt !
 The sword, that hung in Marmion's belt,
 Had drunk De Wilton's blood.
 Unwittingly, King James had given,
 As guard to Whitby's shades,
 The man most dreaded under Heaven
 By these defenceless maids :
 Yet what petition could avail,
 Or who would listen to the tale
 Of woman, prisoner, and nun,
 'Mid bustle of a war begun ?
 They deem'd it hopeless to avoid
 The convoy of their dangerous guide.

XIX.

Their lodging, so the King assign'd,
 To Marmion's, as their guardian, join'd ;
 And thus it fell, that, passing nigh,
 The Palmer caught the Abbess' eye,
 Who warn'd him by a scroll,
 She had a secret to reveal,
 That much concern'd the Church's weal,
 And health of sinner's soul ;
 And, with deep charge of secrecy,
 She named a place to meet,

Within an open balcony,
That hung from dizzy pitch, and high,
Above the stately street ;
To which, as common to each home,
At night they might in secret come.

XX.

At night, in secret, there they came,
The Palmer and the holy Dame.
The moon among the clouds rose high,
And all the city hum was by.
Upon the street, where late before
Did din of war and warriors roar,
You might have heard a pebble fall,
A beetle hum, a cricket sing,
An owlet flap his boding wing
On Giles's steeple tall.
The antique buildings, climbing high,
Whose Gothic frontlets sought the sky,
Were here wrapt deep in shade ;
There on their brows the moonbeam broke,
Through the faint wreaths of silvery smoke,
And on the casements play'd.
And other light was none to see,
Save torches gliding far,
Before some chieftain of degree,
Who left the royal revelry
To bowne him for the war.—
A solemn scene the Abbess chose ;
A solemn hour, her secret to disclose.

XXI.

“O, holy Palmer !” she began,—
“For sure he must be sainted man,
Whose blessed feet have trod the ground
Where the Redeemer's tomb is found,—
For his dear Church's sake, my tale
Attend, nor deem of light avail,

Though I must speak of worldly love,—
 How vain to those who wed above !—
 De Wilton and Lord Marmion woo'd
 Clara de Clare, of Gloster's blood ;
 (Idle it were of Whitby's dame,
 To say of that same blood I came ;)
 And once, when jealous rage was high,
 Lord Marmion said despiteously,
 Wilton was traitor in his heart,
 And had made league with Martin Swart,¹⁶²
 When he came here on Simnel's part ;
 And only cowardice did restrain
 His rebel aid on Stokefield's plain,—
 And down he threw his glove :—the thing
 Was tried, as wont, before the King ;
 Where frankly did De Wilton own,
 That Swart in Gueldres he had known ;
 And that between them then there went
 Some scroll of courteous compliment.
 For this he to his castle sent ;
 But when his messenger return'd,
 Judge how De Wilton's fury burn'd !
 For in his packet there was laid
 Letters that claim'd disloyal aid,
 And proved King Henry's cause betray'd.
 His fame, thus blighted, in the field
 He strove to clear, by spear and shield ;—
 To clear his fame in vain he strove,
 For wondrous are His ways above !
 Perchance some form was unobserved ;
 Perchance in prayer, or faith, he swerved ;¹⁶³
 Else how could guiltless champion quail,
 Or how the blessed ordeal fail ?

XXII.

“ His squire, who now De Wilton saw
 As recreant doom'd to suffer law,
 Repentant, own'd in vain,

That, while he had the scrolls in care,
 A stranger maiden, passing fair,
 Had drench'd him with a beverage rare ;
 His words no faith could gain.
 With Clare alone he credence won,
 Who, rather than wed Marmion,
 Did to Saint Hilda's shrine repair,
 To give our house her livings fair
 And die a vestal vot'ress there.
 The impulse from the earth was given,
 But bent her to the paths of heaven.
 A purer heart, a lovelier maid,
 Ne'er shelter'd her in Whitby's shade,
 No, not since Saxon Edelfled ;
 Only one trace of earthly strain,
 That for her lover's loss
 She cherishes a sorrow vain,
 And murmurs at the cross.—
 And then her heritage ;—it goes
 Along the banks of Tame ;
 Deep fields of grain the reaper mows,
 In meadows rich the heifer lows,
 The falconer and huntsman knows
 Its woodlands for the game.
 Shame were it to Saint Hilda dear,
 And I, her humble vot'ress here,
 Should do a deadly sin,
 Her temple spoil'd before mine eyes,
 If this false Marmion such a prize
 By my consent should win ;
 Yet hath our boisterous monarch sworn
 That Clare shall from our house be torn,
 And grievous cause have I to fear,
 Such mandate doth Lord Marmion bear.

XXIII.

“ Now, prisoner, helpless, and betray'd
 To evil power, I claim thine aid,
 By every step that thou hast trod

To holy shrine and grotto dim,
 By every martyr's tortured limb,
 By angel, saint, and seraphim,
 And by the Church of God !
 For mark :—When Wilton was betray'd,
 And with his squire forged letters laid,
 She was, alas ! that sinful maid,
 By whom the deed was done,—
 O ! shame and horror to be said !—
 She was a perjured nun !
 No clerk in all the land, like her,
 Traced quaint and varying character.
 Perchance you may a marvel deem,
 That Marmion's paramour
 (For such vile thing she was) should scheme
 Her lover's nuptial hour ;
 But o'er him thus she hoped to gain,
 As privy to his honour's stain,
 Illimitable power :
 For this she secretly retain'd
 Each proof that might the plot reveal,
 Instructions with his hand and seal ;
 And thus Saint Hilda deign'd,
 Through sinner's perfidy impure,
 Her house's glory to secure,
 And Clare's immortal weal.

XXIV.

" 'Twere long, and needless, here to tell,
 How to my hand these papers fell ;
 With me they must not stay.
 Saint Hilda keep her Abbess true !
 Who knows what outrage he might do,
 While journeying by the way ?—
 O, blessed Saint, if e'er again
 I venturous leave thy calm domain,
 To travel or by land or main,
 Deep penance may I pay !—

Now, Saintly Palmer, mark my prayer :
 I give this packet to thy care,
 For thee to stop they will not dare ;
 And O ! with cautious speed,
 To Wolsey's hand the papers bring,
 That he may show them to the King :
 And, for thy well-earn'd meed,
 Thou holy man, at Whitby's shrine
 A weekly mass shall still be thine,
 While priests can sing and read.—
 What ail'st thou ?—Speak !”—For as he took
 The charge, a strong emotion shook
 His frame ; and, ere reply,
 They heard a faint, yet shrilly tone,
 Like distant clarion feebly blown,
 That on the breeze did die ;
 And loud the Abbess shriek'd in fear,
 “ Saint Withold, save us !—What is here ?
 Look at yon City Cross !
 See on its battled tower appear
 Phantoms, that scutcheons seem to rear,
 And blazon'd banners toss !”—

XXV.

Dun-Edin's Cross, a pillar'd stone,¹⁶⁴
 Rose on a turret octagon ;
 (But now is razed that monument,
 Whence royal edict rang,
 And voice of Scotland's law was sent
 In glorious trumpet-clang.
 O ! be his tomb as lead to lead,
 Upon its dull destroyer's head !—
 A minstrel's malison is said.)—
 Then on its battlements they saw
 A vision, passing Nature's law,
 Strange, wild, and dimly seen ;
 Figures that seem'd to rise and die,
 Gibber and sign, advance and fly,

While nought confirm'd could ear or eye
 Discern of sound or mien.
 Yet darkly did it seem, as there
 Heralds and Pursuivants prepare,
 With trumpet sound and blazon fair,
 A summons to proclaim ;
 But indistinct the pageant proud,
 As fancy forms of midnight cloud,
 When flings the moon upon her shroud
 A wavering tinge of flame ;
 It flits, expands, and shifts, till loud,
 From midmost of the spectre crowd,
 This awful summons came :—¹⁶⁵

XXVI.

“ Prince, prelate, potentate, and peer,
 Whose names I now shall call,
 Scottish, or foreigner, give ear ;
 Subjects of him who sent me here,
 At his tribunal to appear,
 I summon one and all :
 I cite you by each deadly sin,
 That e'er hath soil'd your hearts within :
 I cite you by each brutal lust,
 That e'er defiled your earthly dust,—
 By wrath, by pride, by fear,
 By each o'er-mastering passion's tone,
 By the dark grave, and dying groan !
 When forty days are pass'd and gone,
 I cite you, at your Monarch's throne,
 To answer and appear.”
 Then thunder'd forth a roll of names :
 The first was thine, unhappy James !
 Then all thy nobles came ;
 Crawford, Glencairn, Montrose, Argyle,
 Ross, Bothwell, Forbes, Lennox, Lyle,—
 Why should I tell their separate style ;
 Each chief of birth and fame,

Of Lowland, Highland, Border, Isle,
 Fore-doom'd to Flodden's carnage pile,
 Was cited there by name ;
 And Marmion, Lord of Fontenaye,
 Of Lutterward, and Scrivelbaye ;
 De Wilton, erst of Aberley,
 The self-same thundering voice did say.—
 But then another spoke :
 "Thy fatal summons I deny,
 And thine infernal Lord defy,
 Appealing me to Him on High,
 Who burst the sinner's yoke."
 At that dread accent, with a scream,
 Parted the pageant like a dream,
 The summoner was gone.
 Prone on her face the Abbess fell,
 And fast, and fast, her beads did tell :
 Her nuns came, startled by the yell,
 And found her there alone.
 She mark'd not, at the scene aghast,
 What time, or how, the Palmer pass'd.

XXVII.

Shift we the scene.—The camp doth move,
 Dun-Edin's streets are empty now,
 Save when, for weal of those they love,
 To pray the prayer, and vow the vow,
 The tottering child, the anxious fair,
 The grey-hair'd sire, with pious care,
 To chapels and to shrines repair.—
 Where is the Palmer now? and where
 The Abbess, Marmion, and Clare?—
 Bold Douglas! to Tantallon fair
 They journey in thy charge :
 Lord Marmion rode on his right hand,
 The Palmer still was with the band ;
 Angus, like Lindesay, did command,
 That none should roam at large.

But in that Palmer's alter'd mien
 A wondrous change might now be seen,
 Freely he spoke of war,
 Of marvels wrought by single hand,
 When lifted for a native land ;
 And still look'd high, as if he plann'd
 Some desperate deed afar.
 His courser would he feed and stroke,
 And, tucking up his sable frocke,
 Would first his mettle bold provoke,
 Then soothe or quell his pride.
 Old Hubert said, that never one
 He saw, except Lord Marmion,
 A steed so fairly ride.

XXVIII.

Some half-hour's march behind, there came,
 By Eustace govern'd fair,
 A troop escorting Hilda's Dame,
 With all her nuns, and Clare.
 No audience had Lord Marmion sought ;
 Ever he fear'd to aggravate
 Clara de Clare's suspicious hate ;
 And safer 'twas, he thought,
 To wait till, from the nuns removed, ;
 The influence of kinsmen loved,
 And suit by Henry's self approved,
 Her slow consent had wrought.
 His was no flickering flame, that dies
 Unless when fann'd by looks and sighs,
 And lighted oft at lady's eyes ;
 He long'd to stretch his wide command
 O'er luckless Clara's ample land :
 Besides, when Wilton with him vied,
 Although the pang of humbled pride
 The place of jealousy supplied,
 Yet conquest by that meanness won
 He almost loath'd to think upon,

Led him, at times, to hate the cause,
 Which made him burst through honour's laws.
 If e'er he lov'd, 'twas her alone,
 Who died within that vault of stone.

XXIX.

And now, when close at hand they saw
 North Berwick's town, and lofty Law,
 Fitz-Eustace bade them pause a while,
 Before a venerable pile,
 Whose turrets view'd, afar,
 The lofty Bass, the Lambic Isle,
 The ocean's peace or war.
 At tolling of a bell, forth came
 The convent's venerable Dame,
 And pray'd Saint Hilda's Abbess rest
 With her, a loved and honour'd guest,
 Till Douglas should a bark prepare
 To waft her back to Whitby fair.
 Glad was the Abbess, you may guess,
 And thank'd the Scottish Prioress ;
 And tedious were to tell, I ween,
 The courteous speech that pass'd between.
 O'erjoy'd the nuns their palfreys leave ;
 But when fair Clara did intend,
 Like them, from horseback to descend,
 Fitz-Eustace said,—“ I grieve,
 Fair lady, grieve e'en from my heart,
 Such gentle company to part ;—
 Think not discourtesy,
 But lords' commands must be obey'd ;
 And Marmion and the Douglas said,
 That you must wend with me.
 Lord Marmion hath a letter broad,
 Which to the Scottish Earl he show'd,
 Commanding, that, beneath his care,
 Without delay, you shall repair
 To your good kinsman, Lord Fitz-Clare.”

XXX.

The startled Abbess loud exclaim'd ;
 But she, at whom the blow was aim'd,
 Grew pale as death, and cold as lead,—
 She deem'd she heard her death-doom read.
 " Cheer thee, my child ! " the Abbess said,
 " They dare not tear thee from my hand,
 To ride alone with armed band."—

 " Nay, holy mother, nay,"
 Fitz-Eustace said, " the lovely Clare
 Will be in Lady Angus' care,
 In Scotland while we stay ;
 And, when we move, an easy ride
 Will bring us to the English side,
 Female attendance to provide
 Befitting Gloster's heir :
 Nor thinks nor dreams my noble lord,
 By slightest look, or act, or word,
 To harass Lady Clare.

Her faithful guardian he will be,
 Nor sue for slightest courtesy
 That e'en to stranger falls,
 Till he shall place her, safe and free,
 Within her kinsman's halls."

He spoke, and blush'd with earnest grace ;
 His faith was painted on his face,
 And Clare's worst fear relieved.

The Lady Abbess loud exclaim'd
 On Henry, and the Douglas blamed,
 Entreated, threaten'd, grieved ;
 To martyr, saint, and prophet pray'd,
 Against Lord Marmion inveigh'd,
 And call'd the Prioress to aid,
 To curse with candle, bell, and book.
 Her head the grave Cistercian shook :
 " The Douglas, and the King," she said,
 " In their commands will be obey'd ;

Grieve not, nor dream that harm can fall
The maiden in Tantallon hall."

XXXI.

The Abbess, seeing strife was vain,
Assumed her wonted state again,—
For much of state she had,—
Composed her veil, and raised her head,
And—" Bid," in solemn voice she said,
" Thy master, bold and bad,
The records of his house turn o'er,
And, when he shall there written see,
That one of his own ancestry
Drove the Monks forth of Coventry,¹⁶⁶
Bid him his fate explore !
Prancing in pride of earthly trust,
His charger hurl'd him to the dust,
And, by a base plebian thrust,
He died his band before.
God judge 'twixt Marmion and me ;
He is a Chief of high degree,
And I a poor recluse :
Yet oft, in holy writ, we see
Even such weak minister as me
May the oppressor bruise :
For thus, inspired, did Judith slay
The mighty in his sin,
And Jael thus, and Deborah——"
Here hasty Blount broke in :
" Fitz-Eustace, we must march our band :
St. Anton' fire thee ! wilt thou stand
All day, with bonnet in thy hand,
To hear the Lady preach ?
By this good light ! if thus we stay,
Lord Marmion, for our fond delay,
Will sharper sermon teach,
Come, don thy cap, and mount thy horse ;
The Dame must patience take perforce."—

XXXII.

"Submit we then to force," said Clare,
 "But let this barbarous lord despair
 His purposed aim to win ;
 Let him take living, land, and life ;
 But to be Marmion's wedded wife
 In me were deadly sin :
 And if it be the King's decree,
 That I must find no sanctuary,
 In that inviolable dome,
 Where even a homicide might come,
 And safely rest his head,
 Though at its open portals stood,
 Thirsting to pour forth blood for blood,
 The kinsmen of the dead ;
 Yet one asylum is my own
 Against the dreaded hour ;
 A low, a silent, and a lone,
 Where kings have little power.
 One victim is before me there.—
 Mother, your blessing, and in prayer
 Remember your unhappy Clare !"
 Loud weeps the Abbess, and bestows
 Kind blessings many a one :
 Weeping and wailing loud arose,
 Round patient Clare, the clamorous woes
 Of every simple nun.
 His eyes the gentle Eustace dried,
 And scarce rude Blount the sight could bide.
 Then took the squire her rein,
 And gently led away her steed,
 And, by each courteous word and deed,
 To cheer her strove in vain.

XXXIII.

But scant three miles the band had rode,
 When o'er a height they pass'd,
 And, sudden, close before them show'd
 His towers, Tantallon vast ;

Broad, massive, high, and stretching far,
 And held impregnable in war.
 On a projecting rock they rose,
 And round three sides the ocean flows,
 The fourth did battled walls enclose,
 And double mound and fosse.
 By narrow drawbridge, outworks strong,
 Through studded gates, an entrance long,
 To the main court they cross.
 It was a wide and stately square :
 Around were lodgings, fit and fair,
 And towers of various form,
 Which on the court projected far,
 And broke its lines quadrangular.
 Here was square keep, there turret high,
 Or pinnacle that sought the sky,
 Whence oft the Warder could descry
 The gathering ocean-storm.

XXXIV.

Here did they rest.—The princely care
 Of Douglas, why should I declare,
 Or say they met reception fair ?
 Or why the tidings say,
 Which, varying, to Tantallon came,
 By hurrying posts or fleeter fame,
 With ever varying day ?
 And, first they heard King James had won
 Etail, and Wark, and Ford ; and then,
 That Norham Castle strong was ta'en.
 At that sore marvell'd Marmion ;—
 And Douglas hoped his Monarch's hand
 Would soon subdue Northumberland :
 But whisper'd news there came,
 That, while his host inactive lay,
 And melted by degrees away,
 King James was dallying off the day
 With Heron's wily dame.—

Such acts to chronicles I yield ;
 Go seek them there, and see :
 Mine is a tale of Flodden Field,
 And not a history.—
 At length they heard the Scottish host
 On that high ridge had made their post,
 Which frowns o'er Millfield Plain ;
 And that brave Surrey many a band
 Had gather'd in the Southern land,
 And march'd into Northumberland,
 And camp at Wooler ta'en.
 Marmion, like charger in the stall,
 That hears, without, the trumpet-call,
 Began to chafe, and swear :—
 “ A sorry thing to hide my head
 In castle, like a fearful maid,
 When such a field is near !
 Needs must I see this battle-day :
 Death to my fame if such a fray
 Were fought, and Marmion away !
 The Douglas, too, I wot not why,
 Hath 'bated of his courtesy :
 No longer in his halls I'll stay.”
 Then bade his band they should array
 For march against the dawning day.

INTRODUCTION TO CANTO SIXTH.

TO

RICHARD HEBER, ESQ.

Mertoun-House, Christmas.

HEAP on more wood !—the wind is chill ;
 But let it whistle as it will,
 We'll keep our Christmas merry still.
 Each age has deem'd the new-born year
 The fittest time for festal cheer :

Even, heathen yet, the savage Dane
 At Iol more deep the mead did drain ;¹⁶⁷
 High on the beach his galleys drew,
 And feasted all his pirate crew ;
 Then in his low and pine-built hall,
 Where shields and axes deck'd the wall,
 They gorged upon the half-dress'd steer ;
 Caroused in seas of sable beer ;
 While round, in brutal jest, were thrown
 The half-gnaw'd rib, and marrow-bone :
 Or listen'd all, in grim delight,
 While Scalds yell'd out the joys of fight.
 Then forth, in frenzy, would they lie,
 While wildly-loose their red locks fly,
 And dancing round the blazing pile,
 They make such barbarous mirth the while,
 As best might to the mind recall
 The boisterous joys of Odin's hall.

And well our Christian sires of old
 Loved when the year its course had roll'd,
 And brought blithe Christmas back again,
 With all his hospitable train.
 Domestic and religious rite
 Gave honour to the holy night ;
 On Christmas eve the bells were rung ;
 On Christmas eve the mass was sung :
 That only night in all the year,
 Saw the stoled priest the chalice rear.¹⁶⁸
 The damsel donn'd her kirtle sheen ;
 The hall was dress'd with holy green ;
 Forth to the wood did merry-men go,
 To gather in the mistletoe.
 Then open'd wide the Baron's hall
 To vassal, tenant, serf, and all ;
 Power laid his rod of rule aside,
 And Ceremony doff'd his pride.
 The heir, with roses in his shoes,
 That night might village partner choose ;

The Lord, underogating, share
 The vulgar game of "post and pair."
 All hail'd, with uncontroll'd delight,
 And general voice, the happy night,
 That to the cottage, as the crown,
 Brought tidings of salvation down.

The fire, with well-dried logs supplied
 Went roaring up the chimney wide
 The huge hall-table's oaken face,
 Scrubb'd till it shone, the day to grace,
 Bore then upon its massive board
 No mark to part the squire and lord.
 Then was brought in the lusty brawn,
 By old blue-coated serving-man ;
 Then the grim boar's head frown'd on high,
 Crested with bays and rosemary.
 Well can the green-garb'd ranger tell,
 How, when, and where, the monster fell ;
 What dogs before his death he tore,
 And all the baiting of the boar.
 The wassel round, in good brown bowls,
 Garnish'd with ribbons, blithely trowels.
 There the huge sirloin reek'd ; hard by
 Plum-porridge stood, and Christmas pie ;
 Nor fail'd old Scotland to produce,
 At such high tide, her savoury goose.
 Then came the merry maskers in,
 And carols roar'd with blithesome din ;
 If unmelodious was the song,
 It was a hearty note, and strong.
 Who nsts may in their mumming see
 Traces of ancient mystery ;¹⁶⁹
 White shirts supplied the masquerade,
 And smutted cheeks the visors made ;
 But, O ! what maskers, richly dight,
 Can boast of bosoms half so light !
 England was merry England, when
 Old Christmas brought his sports again.

'Twas Christmas broach'd the mightiest ale ;
 'Twas Christmas told the merriest tale ;
 A Christmas gambol oft could cheer
 The poor man's heart through half the year.

Still linger, in our northern clime,
 Some remnants of the good old time ;
 And still, within our valleys here,
 We hold the kindred title dear,
 Even when, perchance, its far-fetch'd claim
 To Southron ear sounds empty name ;
 For course of blood, our proverbs deem,
 Is warmer than the mountain-stream.
 And thus, my Christmas still I hold
 Where my great-grandsire came of old,
 With amber beard, and flaxen hair,¹⁷⁰
 And reverend apostolic air—
 The feast and holy-tide to share,
 And mix sobriety with wine,
 And honest mirth with thoughts divine .
 Small thought was his, in after time
 E'er to be hitch'd into a rhyme.
 The simple sire could only boast,
 That he was loyal to his cost ;
 The banish'd race of kings revered,
 And lost his land,—but kept his beard.

In these dear halls, where welcome kind
 Is with fair liberty combined ;
 Where cordial friendship gives the hand,
 And flies constraint the magic wand
 Of the fair dame that rules the land.
 Little we heed the tempest drear,
 While music, mirth, and social cheer,
 Speed on their wings the passing year.
 And Mertoun's halls are fair e'en now,
 When not a leaf is on the bough.

Tweed loves them well, and turns again,
 As loath to leave the sweet domain,
 And holds his mirror to her face,
 And clips her with a close embrace :—
 Gladly as he, we seek the dome,
 And as reluctant turn us home.

How just that, at this time of glee,
 My thoughts should, Heber, turn to thee !
 For many a merry hour we've known,
 And heard the chimes of midnight's tone.
 Cease, then, my friend ! a moment cease,
 And leave these classic tomes in peace !
 Of Roman and of Grecian lore,
 Sure mortal brain can hold no more.
 These ancients, as Noll Bluff might say,
 " Were pretty fellows in their day ;"
 But time and tide o'er all prevail—
 On Christmas eve a Christmas tale—
 Of wonder and of war—" Profane !
 What ! leave the lofty Latian strain,
 Her stately prose, her verse's charms,
 To hear the clash of rusty arms :
 In Fairy Land or Limbo lost,
 To jostle conjurer and ghost,
 Goblin and witch !"—Nay, Heber dear,
 Before you touch my charter, hear :
 Though Leyden aids, alas ! no more,
 My cause with many-linguaged lore,
 This may I say :—in realms of death
 Ulysses meets Alcides' *wraith* ;
 Æneas, upon Thracia's shore,
 The ghost of murder'd Polydore ;
 For omens, we in Livy cross,
 At every turn, *locutus Bos*.
 As grave and duly speaks that ox,
 As if he told the price of stocks ;
 Or held, in Rome republican,
 The place of common-councilman.

All nations have their omens drear,
 Their legends wild of woe and fear.
 To Cambria look—the peasant see,
 Bethink him of Glendowerdy,
 And shun “the spirit’s Blasted Tree.”¹⁷¹
 The Highlander, whose red claymore
 The battle turn’d on Maida’s shore,
 Will, on a Friday morn, look pale,
 If ask’d to tell a fairy tale:¹⁷²
 He fears the vengeful Elfin King,
 Who leaves that day his grassy ring:
 Invisible to human ken,
 He walks among the sons of men.

Did’st e’er, dear Heber, pass along
 Beneath the towers of Franchémont,¹⁷³
 Which, like an eagle’s nest in air,
 Hang o’er the stream and hamlet fair?
 Deep in their vaults, the peasants say,
 A mighty treasure buried lay,
 Amass’d through rapine and through wrong,
 By the last Lord of Franchémont.
 The iron chest is bolted hard,
 A huntsman sits, its constant guard;
 Around his neck his horn is hung,
 His hanger in his belt is slung;
 Before his feet his blound-hounds lie;
 An ’twere not for his gloomy eye,
 Whose withering glance no heart can brook,
 As true a huntsman doth he look,
 As bugle e’er in brake did sound,
 Or ever holloo’d to a hound.
 To chase the fiend, and win the prize,
 In that same dungeon ever tries
 An aged necromantic priest;
 It is an hundred years at least,
 Since ’twixt them first the strife begun,
 And neither yet has lost nor won.
 And oft the Conjuror’s words will make

The stubborn Demon groan and quake ;
 And oft the bands of iron break,
 Or bursts one lock, that still amain,
 Fast as 'tis open'd, shuts again.
 That magic strife within the tomb
 May last until the day of doom,
 Unless the adept shall learn to tell
 The very word that clench'd the spell,
 When Franch'mont lock'd the treasure cell.
 An hundred years are pass'd and gone,
 And scarce three letters has he won.

Such general superstition may
 Excuse for old Pitscottie say ;
 Whose gossip history has given
 My song the messenger from Heaven,
 That warn'd, in Lithgow, Scotland's King,
 Nor less the infernal summoning ;
 May pass the Monk of Durham's tale,
 Whose demon fought in Gothic mail ;
 May pardon plead for Fordun grave,
 Who told of Gifford's Goblin-Cave.
 But why such instances to you,
 Who, in an instant, can renew
 Your treasured hoards of various lore,
 And furnish twenty thousand more ?
 Hoards, not like theirs whose volumes rest
 Like treasures in the Franch'mont chest,
 While gripple owners still refuse
 To others what they cannot use ;
 Give them the priest's whole century,
 They shall not spell you letters three ;
 Their pleasure in the books the same
 The magpie takes in pilfer'd gem.
 Thy volumes, open as thy heart,
 Delight, amusement, science, art,
 To every ear and eye impart ;
 Yet who of all who thus employ them,
 Can like the owner's self enjoy them ?—

But, hark ! I hear the distant drum !
 The day of Flodden Field is come.—
 Adieu, dear Heber ! life and health,
 And store of literary wealth.

CANTO SIXTH.

The Battle.

I.

WHILE great events were on the gale,
 And each hour brought a varying tale,
 And the demeanour, changed and cold,
 Of Douglas, fretted Marmion bold.
 And, like the impatient steed of war,
 He snuff'd the battle from afar ;
 And hopes were none, that back again
 Herald should come from Terouenne,
 Where England's King in leaguer lay,
 Before decisive battle-day ;
 Whilst these things were, the mournful Clare
 Did in the Dame's devotions share :
 For the good Countess ceaseless pray'd
 To Heaven and Saints, her sons to aid,
 And, with short interval, did pass
 From prayer to book, from book to mass,
 And all in high Baronial pride,—
 A life both dull and dignified ;—
 Yet as Lord Marmion nothing press'd
 Upon her intervals of rest,
 Dejected Clara well could bear
 The formal state, the lengthen'd prayer,
 Though dearest to her wounded heart
 The hours that she might spend apart.

II.

I said, Tantallon's dizzy steep
 Hung o'er the margin of the deep.
 Many a rude tower and rampart there
 Repell'd the insult of the air,

Which, when the tempest vex'd the sky,
 Half breeze, half spray, came whistling by.
 Above the rest, a turret square
 Did o'er its Gothic entrance bear,
 Of sculpture rude, a stony shield ;
 The Bloody Heart was in the Field,
 And in the chief three mullets stood,
 The cognizance of Douglas blood.
 The turret held a narrow stair,
 Which, mounted, gave you access where
 A parapet's embattled row
 Did seaward round the castle go.
 Sometimes in dizzy steps descending,
 Sometimes in narrow circuit bending,
 Sometimes in platform broad extending,
 Its varying circle did combine
 Bulwark, and bartizan, and line,
 And bastion, tower, and vantage-coign ;
 Above the booming ocean leant
 The far-projecting battlement ;
 The billows burst, in ceaseless flow,
 Upon the precipice below.
 Where'er Tantallon faced the land,
 Gate-works, and walls, were strongly mann'd ;
 No need upon the sea-girt side ;
 The steepy rock, and frantic tide,
 Approach of human step denied ;
 And thus these lines and ramparts rude,
 Were left in deepest solitude.

III.

And, for they were so lonely, Clare
 Would to these battlements repair,
 And muse upon her sorrows there,
 And list the sea-bird's cry ;
 Or slow, like noontide ghost, would glide
 Along the dark-grey bulwarks' side,
 And ever on the heaving tide
 Look down with weary eye.

Oft did the cliff and swelling main,
 Recall the thoughts of Whitby's fane,—
 A home she ne'er might see again ;
 For she had laid adown,
 So Douglas bade, the hood and veil,
 And frontlet of the cloister pale,
 And Benedictine gown :
 It were unseemly sight, he said,
 A novice out of convent shade.—
 Now her bright locks, with sunny glow,
 Again adorn'd her brow of snow ;
 Her mantle rich, whose borders, round,
 A deep and fretted broidery bound,
 In golden foldings sought the ground ;
 Of holy ornament, alone
 Remain'd a cross with ruby stone ;
 And often did she look
 On that which in her hand she bore,
 With velvet bound, and broider'd o'er,
 Her breviary book.
 In such a place, so lone, so grim,
 At dawning pale, or twilight dim,
 It fearful would have been
 To meet a form so richly dress'd,
 With book in hand, and cross on breast,
 And such a woeful mien.
 Fitz-Eustace, loitering with his bow,
 To practise on the gull and crow,
 Saw her, at distance, gliding slow,
 And did by Mary swear,—
 Some love-lorn Fay she might have been,
 Or, in Romance, some spell-bound Queen ;
 For ne'er, in work-day world, was seen
 A form so witching fair.

IV.

Once walking thus, at evening tide,
 It chanced a gliding sail she spied,

And, sighing, thought—"The Abbess, there,
 Perchance, does to her home repair ;
 Her peaceful rule, where Duty, free,
 Walks hand in hand with Charity ;
 Where oft Devotion's tranced glow
 Can such a glimpse of heaven bestow,
 That the enraptured sisters see
 High vision and deep mystery ;
 The very form of Hilda fair,
 Hovering upon the sunny air,
 And smiling on her votaries' prayer."⁷⁴
 O ! wherefore, to my duller eye,
 Did still the Saint her form deny !
 Was it, that, sear'd by sinful scorn,
 My heart could neither melt nor burn ?
 Or lie my warm affections low,
 With him, that taught them first to glow ?
 Yet, gentle Abbess, well I knew,
 To pay thy kindness grateful due,
 And well could brook the mild command,
 That ruled thy simple maiden band.
 How different now ! condemn'd to bide
 My doom from this dark tyrant's pride.—
 But Marmion has to learn, ere long,
 That constant mind, and hate of wrong,
 Descended to a feeble girl,
 From Red De Clare, stout Gloster's Earl :
 Of such a stem, a sapling weak,
 He ne'er shall bend, although he break.

V.

"But see !—what makes this armour here ?"—
 For in her path there lay
 Targe, corslet, helm ;—she view'd them near.—
 "The breast-plate pierced !—Ay, much I fear,
 Weak fence wert thou 'gainst foeman's spear,
 That hath made fatal entrance here,
 As these dark blood-gouts say.—
 Thus Wilton !—Oh ! not corslet's ward,

Not truth, as diamond pure and hard,
 Could be thy many bosom's guard,
 On yon disastrous day!"—
 She raised her eyes in mournful mood,—
 WILTON himself before her stood!
 It might have seem'd his passing ghost,
 For every youthful grace was lost;
 And joy unwonted, and surprise,
 Gave their strange wildness to his eyes.—
 Expect not, noble dames and lords,
 That I can tell such scene in words:
 What skilful limner e'er would choose
 To paint the rainbow's varying hues,
 Unless to mortal it were given
 To dip his brush in dyes of heaven?
 Far less can my weak line declare
 Each changing passion's shade;
 Brightening to rapture from despair,
 Sorrow, surprise, and pity there,
 And joy, with her angelic air,
 And hope, that paints the future fair,
 Their varying hues display'd:
 Each o'er its rival's ground extending,
 Alternate conquering, shifting, blending,
 Till all, fatigued, the conflict yield,
 And mighty Love retains the field.
 Shortly I tell what then he said,
 By many a tender word delay'd,
 And modest blush, and bursting sigh,
 And question kind, and fond reply:—

VI.

DE WILTON'S HISTORY.

"Forget we that disastrous day,
 When senseless in the lists I lay.
 Thence dragg'd,—but how I cannot know,
 For sense and recollection fled,—
 I found me on a pallet low,
 Within my ancient beadsman's shed.

Austin,—remember'st thou, my Clare,
 How thou didst blush, when the old man,
 When first our infant love began,
 Said we would make a matchless pair?—
 Menials, and friends, and kinsmen fled
 From the degraded traitor's bed,—
 He only held my burning head,
 And tended me for many a day,
 While wounds and fever held their sway.
 But far more needful was his care,
 When sense return'd to wake despair ;
 For I did tear the closing wound,
 And dash me frantic on the ground,
 If e'er I heard the name of Clare.
 At length, to calmer reason brought,
 Much by his kind attendance wrought,
 With him I left my native strand,
 And, in a palmer's weeds array'd,
 My hated name and form to shade,
 I journey'd many a land ;
 No more a lord of rank and birth,
 But mingled with the dregs of earth.
 Oft Austin for my reason fear'd,
 When I would sit, and deeply brood
 On dark revenge, and deeds of blood,
 Or wild mad schemes uprear'd.
 My friend at length fell sick, and said,
 God would remove him soon :
 And, while upon his dying bed,
 He begg'd of me a boon—
 If e'er my deadliest enemy
 Beneath my brand should conquer'd lie,
 Even then my mercy should awake,
 And spare his life for Austin's sake.

VII.

“ Still restless as a second Cain,
 To Scotland next my route was ta'en,
 Full well the paths I knew.

Fame of my fate made various sound,
 That death in pilgrimage I found,
 That I had perish'd of my wound,—
 None cared which tale was true :
 And living eye could never guess
 De Wilton in his Palmer's dress ;
 For now that sable slough is shed,
 And trimm'd my shaggy beard and head,
 I scarcely know me in the glass.
 A chance most wondrous did provide,
 That I should be that Baron's guide—
 I will not name his name !—
 Vengeance to God alone belongs ;
 But, when I think on all my wrongs,
 My blood is liquid flame !
 And ne'er the time shall I forget,
 When, in a Scottish hostel set,
 Dark looks we did exchange :
 What were his thoughts I cannot tell ;
 But in my bosom muster'd Hell,
 Its plans of dark revenge.

VIII. 1

“ A word of vulgar augury,
 That broke from me, I scarce knew why,
 Brought on a village tale ;
 Which wrought upon his moody sprite,
 And sent him armed forth by night.
 I borrow'd steed and mail,
 And weapons, from his sleeping band ;
 And, passing from a postern door,
 We met, and 'counter'd hand to hand,—
 He fell on Gifford moor.
 For the death-stroke my brand I drew,
 (O then my helmed head he knew,
 The Palmer's cowl was gone,)
 Then had three inches of my blade
 The heavy debt of vengeance paid,—

My hand the thought of Austin staid ;
 I left him there alone.—
 O good old man ! even from the grave
 Thy spirit could thy master save :
 If I had slain my foeman, ne'er
 Had Whitby's Abbess, in her fear,
 Given to my hand this packet dear,
 Of power to clear my injured fame,
 And vindicate De Wilton's name.—
 Perchance you heard the Abbess tell
 Of the strange pageantry of Hell,
 That broke our secret speech—
 It rose from the infernal shade,
 Or featly was some juggle play'd,
 A tale of peace to teach.
 Appeal to Heaven I judged was best,
 When my name came among the rest.

IX.

“ Now here, within Tantallon Hold,
 To Douglas late my tale I told,
 To whom my house was known of old.
 Won by my proofs, his falchion bright
 This eve anew shall dub me knight.
 These were the arms that once did turn
 The tide of fight on Otterburne,
 And Harry Hotspur forced to yield,
 When the Dead Douglas won the field.
 These Angus gave—his armourer's care,
 Ere morn shall every breach repair ;
 For nought he said, was in his halls,
 But ancient armour on the walls,
 And aged chargers in the stalls,
 And women, priests, and grey-hair'd men ;
 The rest were all in Twisel glen.
 And now I watch my armour here,
 By law of arms, till midnight's near ;
 Then, once again a belted knight,
 Seek Surrey's camp with dawn of light.

X.

"There soon again we meet, my Clare!
 This Baron means to guide thee there:
 Douglas reveres his King's command,
 Else would he take thee from his band.
 And there thy kinsman, Surrey, too,
 Will give De Wilton justice due.
 Now meeter far for martial broil,
 Firmer my limbs, and strung by toil,
 Once more"——"O Wilton! must we then
 Risk new-found happiness again,
 Trust fate of arms once more?
 And is there not an humble glen,
 Where we, content and poor,
 Might build a cottage in the shade,
 A shepherd thou, and I to aid
 Thy task on dale and moor?——
 That reddening brow!— too well I know,
 Not even thy Clare can peace bestow,
 While falsehood stains thy name:
 Go then to fight! Clare bids thee go!
 Clare can a warrior's feelings know,
 And weep a warrior's shame;
 Can Red Earl Gilbert's spirit feel,
 Buckle the spurs upon thy heel,
 And belt thee with thy brand of steel,
 And send thee forth to fame!"

XI.

That night, upon the rocks and bay,
 The midnight moon-beam slumbering lay,
 And pour'd its silver light, and pure,
 Through loop-hole, and through embrasure,
 Upon Tantallon tower and hall;
 But chief where arched windows wide
 Illuminate the chapel's pride,
 The sober glances fall.

Much was there need ; though seam'd with scars,
 Two veterans of the Douglas' wars,
 Though two grey priests were there,
 And each a blazing torch held high,
 You could not by their blaze descry
 The chapel's carving fair.
 Amid that dim and smoky light,
 Chequering the silver moon-shine bright,
 A bishop by the altar stood,
 A noble lord of Douglas blood,
 With mitre sheen, and rocquet white.
 Yet show'd his meek and thoughtful eye
 But little pride of prelacy ;
 More pleased that, in a barbarous age,
 He gave rude Scotland Virgil's page,
 Than that beneath his rule he held
 The bishopric of fair Dunkeld.
 Beside him ancient Angus stood,
 Doff'd his furr'd gown, and sable hood :
 O'er his huge form and visage pale,
 He wore a cap and shirt of mail ;
 And lean'd his large and wrinkled hand
 Upon the huge and sweeping brand
 Which wont of yore, in battle fray,
 His foeman's limbs to shred away,
 As wood-knife lops the sapling spray.¹⁷⁵
 He seem'd as, from the tombs around
 Rising at judgment-day,
 Some giant Douglas may be found
 In all his old array ;
 So pale his face, so huge his limb,
 So old his arms, his look so grim.

XII.

Then at the altar Wilton kneels,
 And Clare the spurs bound on his heels ;
 And think what next he must have felt,
 At buckling of the falchion belt !
 And judge how Clara changed her hue,

While fastening to her lover's side
 A friend, which, though in danger tried,
 He once had found untrue !
 Then Douglas struck him with his blade :
 " Saint Michael and Saint Andrew aid,
 I dub thee knight.
 Arise, Sir Ralph, De Wilton's heir !
 For King, for Church, for Lady fair,
 See that thou fight."—
 And Bishop Gawain, as he rose,
 Said—" Wilton ! grieve not for thy woes,
 Disgrace, and trouble ;
 For He, who honour best bestows,
 May give thee double."—
 De Wilton sobb'd, for sob he must—
 " Where'er I meet a Douglas, trust
 That Douglas is my brother !"—
 " Nay, nay," old Angus said, " not so ;
 To Surrey's camp thou now must go,
 Thy wrongs no longer smother.
 I have two sons in yonder field ;
 And, if thou meet'st them under shield,
 Upon them bravely—do thy worst ;
 And foul fall him that blenches first !"

XIII.

Not far advanced was morning day,
 When Marmion did his troop array
 To Surrey's camp to ride ;
 He had safe conduct for his band,
 Beneath the royal seal and hand,
 And Douglas gave a guide :
 The ancient Earl, with stately grace,
 Would Clara on her palfrey place,
 And whisper'd in an under tone,
 " Let the hawk stoop, his prey is flown."—
 The train from out the castle drew,
 But Marmion stopp'd to bid adieu :—
 " Though something I might 'plain," he said,

"Of cold respect to stranger guest,
 Sent hither by your King's behest,
 While in Tantallon's towers I staid;
 Part we in friendship from your land,
 And, noble Earl, receive my hand."—
 But Douglas round him drew his cloak,
 Folded his arms, and thus he spoke:—
 "My manors, halls, and bowers, shall still
 Be open, at my Sovereign's will,
 To each one whom he lists, howe'er
 Unmeet to be the owner's peer.
 My castles are my King's alone,
 From turret to foundation-stone—
 The hand of Douglas is his own;
 And never shall in friendly grasp
 The hand of such as Marmion clasp."—

XIV.

Burn'd Marmion's swarthy cheek like fire,
 And shook his very frame for ire,
 And—"This to me!" he said,—
 "An 'twere not for thy hoary beard,
 Such hand as Marmion's had not spared
 To cleave the Douglas' head!
 And, first, I tell thee, haughty Peer,
 He, who does England's message here,
 Although the meanest in her state,
 May well, proud Angus, be thy mate:
 And, Douglas, more I tell thee here,
 Even in thy pitch of pride,
 Here in thy hold, thy vassals near,
 (Nay, never look upon your lord,
 And lay your hands upon your sword,
 I tell thee, thou'rt defied!
 And if thou said'st I am not peer
 To any lord in Scotland here,
 Lowland or Highland, far or near,
 Lord Angus, thou hast lied!"—

On the Earl's cheek the flush of rage
 O'ercame the ashen hue of age :
 Fierce he broke forth,—“ And darest thou then
 To beard the lion in his den,

The Douglas in his hall ?

And hopest thou hence unscathed to go?—

No, by Saint Bride of Bothwell, no !

Up drawbridge, grooms—what, Warder, ho !

Let the portcullis fall.”—176

Lord Marmion turn'd,—well was his need,

And dash'd the rowels in his steed,

Like arrow through the archway sprung,

The ponderous grate behind him rung :

To pass there was such scanty room,

The bars, descending, razed his plume.

XV.

The steed along the drawbridge flies,

Just as it trembled on the rise ;

Nor lighter does the swallow skim

Along the smooth lake's level brim :

And when Lord Marmion reach'd his band,

He halts, and turns with clenched hand,

And shout of loud defiance pours,

And shook his gauntlet at the towers.

“ Horse ! horse ! ” the Douglas cried, “ and chase ! ”

But soon he rein'd his fury's pace :

“ A royal messenger he came,

Though most unworthy of the name.—

A letter forged ! Saint Jude to speed !

Did ever knight so foul a deed ! ”

At first in heart it liked me ill,

When the King praised his clerkly skill.

Thanks to Saint Bothan, son of mine,

Save Gawain, ne'er could pen a line :

So swore I, and I swear it still,

Let my boy-bishop fret his fill.—

Saint Mary mend my fiery mood !

Old age ne'er cools the Douglas blood,

I thought to slay him where he stood.
 'Tis pity of him too," he cried :
 " Bold can he speak, and fairly ride,
 I warrant him a warrior tried."
 With this his mandate he recalls,
 And slowly seeks his castle halls.

XVI.

The day in Marmion's journey wore ;
 Yet, ere his passion's gust was o'er,
 They cross'd the heights of Stanrig-moor.
 His troop more closely there he scann'd,
 And miss'd the Palmer from the band.—
 " Palmer or not," young Blount did say,
 " He parted at the peep of day ;
 Good sooth, it was in strange array."—
 " In what array ?" said Marmion, quick.
 " My Lord, I ill can spell the trick ;
 But all night long, with clink and bang,
 Close to my couch did hammers clang ;
 At dawn the falling drawbridge rang,
 And from a loop-hole while I peep,
 Old Bell-the-Cat came from the Keep,
 Wrapp'd in a gown of sables fair,
 As fearful of the morning air ;
 Beneath, when that was blown aside,
 A rusty shirt of mail I spied,
 By Archibald won in bloody work,
 Against the Saracen and Turk :
 Last night it hung not in the hall ;
 I thought some marvel would befall.
 And next I saw them saddled lead
 Old Cheviot forth, the Earl's best steed ;
 A matchless horse, though something old,
 Prompt in his paces, cool and bold.
 I heard the Sheriff Sholto say,
 The Earl did much the Master pray
 To use him on the battle-day ;

But he preferr'd"—"Nay, Henry, cease!
 Thou sworn horse-courser, hold thy peace.—
 Eustace, thou bear'st a brain—I pray,
 What did Blount see at break of day?"—

XVII.

"In brief, my lord, we both descried
 (For then I stood by Henry's side)
 The Palmer mount, and outwards ride,
 Upon the Earl's own favourite steed:
 All sheathed he was in armour bright,
 And much resembled that same knight,
 Subdued by you in Cotswold fight:
 Lord Angus wish'd him speed."—
 The instant that Fitz-Eustace spoke,
 A sudden light on Marmion broke;—
 "Ah! dastard fool, to reason lost!"
 He mutter'd; "'Twas nor fay nor ghost
 I met upon the moonlight wold,
 But living man of earthly mould.—
 O dotage blind and gross!
 Had I but fought as wont, one thrust
 Had laid De Wilton in the dust,
 My path no more to cross.—
 How stand we now?—he told his tale
 To Douglas; and with some avail;
 'Twas therefore gloom'd his rugged brow.—
 Will Surrey dare to entertain,
 'Gainst Marmion, charge disproved and vain?
 Small risk of that, I trow.
 Yet Clare's sharp questions must I shun;
 Must separate Constance from the Nun—
 O, what a tangled web we weave,
 When first we practise to deceive!
 A Palmer too!—no wonder why
 I felt rebuked beneath his eye:
 I might have known there was but one,
 Whose look could quell Lord Marmion."

XVIII.

Stung with these thoughts, he urged to speed
 His troop, and reach'd, at eve, the Tweed,
 Where Lennel's convent ¹⁷⁸ closed their march ;
 (There now is left but one frail arch,

Yet mourn thou not its cells ;

Our time a fair exchange has made ;
 Hard by, in hospitable shade,

A reverend pilgrim dwells,
 Well worth the whole Bernardine brood,
 That e'er wore sandal, frock, or hood.)

Yet did Saint Bernard's Abbot there
 Give Marmion entertainment fair,
 And lodging for his train and Clare.
 Next morn the Baron climb'd the tower,
 To view afar the Scottish power,

Encamp'd on Flodden edge :

The white pavilions made a show,
 Like remnants of the winter snow,

Along the dusky ridge.

Long Marmion look'd :—at length his eye
 Unusual movement might descry

Amid the shifting lines :

The Scottish host drawn out appears,
 For, flashing on the hedge of spears

The eastern sunbeam shines.

Their front now deepening, now extending ;
 Their flank inclining, wheeling, bending,
 Now drawing back, and now descending,
 The skilful Marmion well could know,
 They watch'd the motions of some foe,
 Who traversed on the plain below.

XIX.

Even so it was. From Flodden ridge
 The Scots beheld the English host
 Leave Barmore-wood, their evening post,
 And heedful watch'd them as they cross'd

The Till by Twisel Bridge.¹⁷⁹

High sight it is, and haughty, while
They dive into the deep defile ;
Beneath the cavern'd cliff they fall,
Beneath the castle's airy wall.

By rock, by oak, by hawthorn-tree,
Troop after troop are disappearing ;
Troop after troop their banners rearing,
Upon the eastern bank you see.

Still pouring down the rocky den,
Where flows the sullen Till,
And rising from the dim-wood glen,
Standards on standards, men on men,
In slow succession still,

And, sweeping o'er the Gothic arch,
And pressing on, in ceaseless march,
To gain the opposing hill.

That morn, to many a trumpet clang,
Twisel ! thy rock's deep echo rang ;
And many a chief of birth and rank,
Saint Helen ! at thy fountain drank.
Thy hawthorn glade, which now we see
In spring-tide bloom so lavishly,
Had then from many an axe its doom,
To give the marching columns room.

XX.

And why stands Scotland idly now,
Dark Flodden ! on thy airy brow,
Since England gains the pass the while,
And struggles through the deep defile ?
What checks the fiery soul of James ?
Why sits that champion of the dames
Inactive on his steed,
And sees, between him and his land,
Between him and Tweed's southern strand,
His host Lord Surrey lead ?

What 'vails the vain knight-errant's brand?
 —O, Douglas, for thy leading wand!
 Fierce Randolph, for thy speed!
 O for one hour of Wallace wight,
 Or well-skill'd Bruce, to rule the fight,
 And cry—"Saint Andrew and our right!"
 Another sight had seen that morn,
 From Fate's dark book a leaf been torn,
 And Flodden had been Bannockbourne!—
 The precious hour has pass'd in vain,
 And England's host has gain'd the plain;
 Wheeling their march, and circling still,
 Around the base of Flodden hill.

XXI.

Ere yet the bands met Marmion's eye,
 Fitz-Eustace shouted loud and high,
 "Hark! hark! my lord, an English drum!
 And see ascending squadrons come
 Between Tweed's river and the hill,
 Foot, horse, and cannon:—hap what hap,
 My basnet to a prentice cap,
 Lord Surrey's o'er the Till!—
 Yet more! yet more!—how far array'd
 They file from out the hawthorn shade,
 And sweep so gallant by!
 With all their banners bravely spread,
 And all their armour flashing high,
 Saint George might waken from the dead,
 To see fair England's standards fly."—
 "Stint in thy prate," quoth Blount, "thou'dst best,
 And listen to our lord's behest."—
 With kindling brow Lord Marmion said,—
 "This instant be our band array'd;
 The river must be quickly cross'd,
 That we may join Lord Surrey's host.
 If fight King James,—as well I trust,
 That fight he will, and fight he must,—

The Lady Clare behind our lines
Shall tarry, while the battle joins."

XXII.

Himself he swift on horseback threw,
Scarce to the Abbot bade adieu ;
Far less would listen to his prayer,
To leave behind the helpless Clare.
Down to the Tweed his band he drew,
And mutter'd as the flood they view,
"The pheasant in the falcon's claw,
He scarce will yield to please a daw :
Lord Angus may the Abbot awe,
So Clare shall bide with me."
Then on that dangerous ford, and deep,
Where to the Tweed Leat's eddies creep,
He ventured desperately :
And not a moment will he bide,
Till squire, or groom, before him ride ;
Headmost of all he stems the tide,
And stems it gallantly.
Eustace held Clare upon her horse,
Old Hubert led her rein,
Stoutly they braved the current's course,
And, though far downward driven per force,
The southern bank they gain ;
Behind them straggling, came to shore,
As best they might, the train :
Each o'er his head his yew-bow bore,
A caution not in vain ;
Deep need that day that every string,
By wet unharm'd, should sharply ring.
A moment then Lord Marmion staid,
And breathed his steed, his men array'd,
Then forward moved his band,
Until, Lord Surrey's rear-guard won,
He halted by a Cross of Stone,
That, on a hillock standing lone,
1 Did all the field command

XXIII.

Hence might they see the full array
 Of either host, for deadly fray ;¹³⁰
 Their marshall'd lines stretch'd east and west,
 And fronted north and south,
 And distant salutation pass'd
 From the loud cannon mouth ;
 Not in the close successive rattle,
 That breathes the voice of modern battle,
 But slow and far between.—
 The hillock gain'd, Lord Marmion staid :
 “ Here, by this Cross,” he gently said,
 “ You well may view the scene.
 Here shalt thou tarry, lovely Clare :
 O ! think of Marmion in thy prayer !—
 Thou wilt not ?—well,—no less my care
 Shall, watchful, for thy weal prepare.—
 You, Blount and Eustace, are her guard,
 With ten pick'd archers of my train ;
 With England if the day go hard,
 To Berwick speed amain.—
 But if we conquer, cruel maid,
 My spoils shall at your feet be laid,
 When here we meet again.”
 He waited not for answer there,
 And would not mark the maid's despair
 Nor heed the discontented look
 From either squire ; but spurr'd amain,
 And, dashing through the battle plain,
 His way to Surrey took.

XXIV.

“ ——— The good Lord Marmion, by my life !
 Welcome to danger's hour !—
 Short greeting serves in time of strife :—
 Thus have I ranged my power :
 Myself will rule this central host,
 Stout Stanley fronts their right,

My sons command the vaward post,
 With Brian Tunstall, stainless knight ;^{18x}
 Lord Dacre, with his horsemen light,
 Shall be in rear-ward of the fight,
 And succour those that need it most.
 Now, gallant Marmion, well I know,
 Would gladly to the vanguard go ;
 Edmund, the Admiral, Tunstall there,
 With thee their charge will blithely share ;
 There fight thine own retainers too,
 Beneath De Burg, thy steward true."—
 "Thanks, noble Surrey !" Marmion said,
 Nor farther greeting there he paid ;
 But, parting like a thunderbolt,
 First in the vanguard made a halt,
 Where such a shout there rose
 Of "Marmion ! Marmion !" that the cry,
 Up Flodden mountain shrilling high,
 Startled the Scottish foes.

XXV.

Blount and Fitz-Eustace rested still
 With Lady Clare upon the hill !
 On which, (for far the day was spent,)
 The western sunbeams now were bent.
 The cry they heard, its meaning knew,
 Could plain their distant comrades view :
 Sadly to Blount did Eustace say,
 "Unworthy office here to stay !
 No hope of gilded spurs to-day.—
 But see ! look up—on Flodden bent
 The Scottish foe has fired his tent."
 And sudden, as he spoke,
 From the sharp ridges of the hill,
 All downward to the banks of Till,
 Was wreathed in sable smoke.
 Volumed and fast, and rolling far,
 The cloud enveloped Scotland's war,
 As down the hill they broke ;

Nor martial shout, nor minstrel tone,
 Announced their march ; their tread alone,
 At times one warning trumpet blown,
 At times a stifled hum,
 Told England, from his mountain-throne
 King James did rushing come.—
 Scarce could they hear, or see their foes,
 Until at weapon-point they close.—
 They close, in clouds of smoke and dust,
 With sword-sway, and with lance's thrust :
 And such a yell was there,
 Of sudden and portentous birth,
 As if men fought upon the earth,
 And fiends in upper air ;
 O life and death were in the shout,
 Recoil and rally, charge and rout,
 And triumph and despair.
 Long look'd the anxious squires ; their eye
 Could in the darkness nought descry.

XXVI.

At length the freshening western blast
 Aside the shroud of battle cast ;
 And, first, the ridge of mingled spears
 Above the brightening cloud appears ;
 And in the smoke the pennons flew,
 As in the storm the white sea-mew.
 Then mark'd they, dashing broad and far,
 The broken billows of the war,
 And plumed crests of chieftains brave,
 Floating like foam upon the wave ;
 But nought distinct they see :
 Wide raged the battle on the plain ;
 Spears shook, and falchions flash'd amain ;
 Fell England's arrow-flight like rain ;
 Crests rose, and stoop'd, and rose again,
 Wild and disorderly.
 Amid the scene of tumult, high
 They saw Lord Marmion's falcon fly :

And stainless Tunstall's banner white,
 And Edmund Howard's lion bright,
 Still bear them bravely in the fight :

 Although against them come,
 Of gallant Gordons many a one,
 And many a stubborn Badenoch-man,
 And many a rugged Border clan,
 With Huntly, and with Home.

XXVII.

Far on the left, unseen the while,
 Stanley broke Lennox and Argyle ;
 Though there the western mountaineer
 Rush'd with bare bosom on the spear,
 And flung the feeble targe aside,
 And with both hands the broadsword plied.
 'Twas vain :—But Fortune, on the right,
 With fickle smile, cheer'd Scotland's fight.
 Then fell that spotless banner white,

 The Howard's lion fell ;
 Yet still Lord Marmion's falcon flew
 With wavering flight, while fiercer grew
 Around the battle-yell.
 The Border slogan rent the sky !
 A Home ! a Gordon ! was the cry :
 Loud were the clanging blows ;
 Advanced,—forced back,—now low, now high,
 The pennon sunk and rose ;
 As bends the bark's mast in the gale,
 When rent are rigging, shrouds, and sail,
 It waver'd 'mid the foes.

No longer Blount the view could bear :
 “By Heaven, and all its saints ! I swear
 I will not see it lost !
 Fitz-Eustace, you with Lady Clare
 May bid your beads, and patter prayer,—
 I gallop to the host.”

And to the fray he rode amain,
 Follow'd by all the archer train.
 The fiery youth, with desperate charge,
 Made, for a space, an opening large,—
 The rescued banner rose,—
 But darkly closed the war around,
 Like pine-tree, rooted from the ground,
 It sunk among the foes.
 Then Eustace mounted too :—yet staid
 As loath to leave the helpless maid,
 When, fast as shaft can fly,
 Blood-shot his eyes, his nostrils spread,
 The loose rein dangling from his head,
 Housing and saddle bloody red,
 Lord Marmion's steed rush'd by ;
 And Eustace, maddening at the sight,
 A look and sign to Clara cast
 To mark he would return in haste,
 Then plunged into the fight.

XXVIII.

Ask me not what the maiden feels,
 Left in that dreadful hour alone :
 Perchance her reason stoops, or reels ;
 Perchance a courage, not her own,
 Braces her mind to desperate tone.—
 The scatter'd van of England wheels ;—
 She only said, as loud in air
 The tumult roar'd, “ Is Wilton there ? ”—
 They fly, or, madden'd by despair,
 Fight but to die,—“ Is Wilton there ? ”
 With that, straight up the hill there rode
 Two horsemen drench'd with gore,
 And in their arms, a helpless load,
 A wounded knight they bore.
 His hand still strain'd the broken brand ;
 His arms were smear'd with blood and sand :

Dragg'd from among the horses' feet,
 With dinted shield, and helmet beat,
 The falcon-crest and plumage gone,
 Can that be haughty Marmion ! . . .
 Young Blount his armour did unlace,
 And, gazing on his ghastly face,
 Said—"By Saint George, he's gone !
 That spear-wound has our master sped,
 And see the deep cut on his head !
 Good-night to Marmion."—

"Unnurtured Blount ! thy brawling cease :
 He opes his eyes," said Eustace ; "peace !"

XXIX.

When, doff'd his casque, he felt free air,
 Around 'gan Marmion wildly stare :—
 "Where's Harry Blount ? Fitz-Eustace where ?
 Linger ye here, ye hearts of hare !
 Redeem my pennon,—charge again !
 Cry—'Marmion to the rescue !'—Vain !
 Last of my race, on battle-plain
 That shout shall ne'er be heard again !—
 Yet my last thought is England's—fly,
 To Dacre bear my signet-ring :
 Tell him his squadrons up to bring.—
 Fitz-Eustace, to Lord Surrey hie ;
 Tunstall lies dead upon the field,
 His life-blood stains the spotless shield :
 Edmund is down :—my life is reft ;
 The Admiral alone is left.
 Let Stanley charge with spur of fire,—
 With Chester charge, and Lancashire,
 Full upon Scotland's central host,
 Or victory and England's lost.—
 Must I bid twice ?—hence, varlets ! fly !
 Leave Marmion here alone—to die."
 They parted, and alone he lay ;
 Clare drew her from the sight away,

Till pain wrung forth a lowly moan,
 And half he murmur'd,—“ Is there none,
 Of all my halls have nurst,
 Page, squire, or groom, one cup to bring
 Of blessed water from the spring,
 To slake my dying thirst !”

XXX.

O, Woman ! in our hours of ease,
 Uncertain, coy, and hard to please,
 And variable as the shade
 By the light quivering aspen made ;
 When pain and anguish wring the brow,
 A ministering angel thou !—
 Scarce were the piteous accents said,
 When, with the Baron's casque, the maid
 To the nigh streamlet ran :
 Forgot were hatred, wrongs, and fears ;
 The plaintive voice alone she hears,
 Sees but the dying man.
 She stoop'd her by the runnel's side,
 But in abhorrence backward drew ;
 For, oozing from the mountain's side,
 Where raged the war, a dark-red tide
 Was curdling in the streamlet blue.
 Where shall she turn ?—behold her mark
 A little fountain cell,
 Where water, clear as diamond-spark,
 In a stone basin fell.
 Above, some half-worn letters say,
 Drink . weary . pilgrim . drink . and . pray .
 For . the . kind . soul . of . Sybil . Grey .
 Who . built . this . cross . and . well .
 She fill'd the helm, and back she hied,
 And with surprise and joy espied
 A monk supporting Marmion's head :
 A pious man, whom duty brought
 To dubious verge of battle fought,
 To shrieve the dying, bless the dead

XXXI.

Deep drank Lord Marmion of the wave,
 And, as she stoop'd his brow to lave—
 "Is it the hand of Clare," he said,
 "Or injured Constance, bathes my head?"
 Then, as remembrance rose,—
 "Speak not to me of shrift or prayer!
 I must redress her woes.

Short space, few words, are mine to spare;
 Forgive and listen, gentle Clare!"—

"Alas!" she said, "the while,—
 O, think of your immortal weal!
 In vain for Constance is your zeal;
 She——died at Holy Isle."—

Lord Marmion started from the ground,
 As light as if he felt no wound;
 Though in the action burst the tide,
 In torrents, from his wounded side.
 "Then it was truth,"—he said—"I knew
 That the dark presage must be true.—
 I would the Fiend, to whom belongs
 The vengeance due to all her wrongs,
 Would spare me but a day!

For wasting fire, and dying groan,
 And priests slain on the altar stone,
 Might bribe him for delay.

It may not be!—this dizzy trance—
 Curse on yon base marauder's lance,
 And doubly cursed my failing brand!
 A sinful heart makes feeble hand."
 Then, fainting, down on earth he sunk,
 Supported by the trembling Monk.

XXXII.

With fruitless labour, Clara bound,
 And strove to stanch the gushing wound:
 The Monk, with unavailing cares,
 Exhausted all the Church's prayers

Ever, he said, that, close and near,
 A lady's voice was in his ear,
 And that the priest he could not hear ;
 For that she ever sung,
*" In the lost battle, borne down by the flying,
 Where mingles war's rattle with groans of the
 dying ! "*

So the notes rung ;—
 " Avoid thee, Fiend !—with cruel hand,
 Shake not the dying sinner's sand !—
 O, look, my son, upon yon sign
 Of the Redeemer's grace divine ;
 O, think on faith and bliss !—
 By many a death-bed I have been,
 And many a sinner's parting seen,
 But never aught like this."—
 The war, that for a space did fail,
 Now trebly thundering swell'd the gale,
 And—STANLEY ! was the cry ;
 A light on Marmion's visage spread,
 And fired his glazing eye :
 With dying hand, above his head,
 He shook the fragment of his blade,
 And shouted " Victory !—
 Charge, Chester, charge ! On, Stanley, on !"
 Were the last words of Marmion.

XXXIII.

By this, though deep the evening fell,
 Still rose the battle's deadly swell,
 For still the Scots, around their King,
 Unbroken, fought in desperate ring.
 Where's now their victor vaward wing,
 Where Huntly, and where Home ?—
 O, for a blast of that dread horn,
 On Fontarabian echoes borne,
 That to King Charles did come,

When Rowland brave, and Olivier,
 And every paladin and peer,
 On Roncesvalles died !
 Such blast might warn them, not in vain,
 To quit the plunder of the slain,
 And turn the doubtful day again,
 While yet on Flodden side,
 Afar, the Royal Standard flies,
 And round it toils, and bleeds, and dies,
 Our Caledonian pride !
 In vain the wish—for far away,
 While spoil and havock mark their way,
 Near Sybil's Cross the plunderers stray.—
 “O, Lady,” cried the Monk, “away !”
 And placed her on her steed,
 And led her to the chapel fair,
 Of Tilmouth upon Tweed.
 There all the night they spent in prayer,
 And at the dawn of morning, there
 She met her kinsman, Lord Fitz-Clare.

XXXIV.

But as they left the dark'ning heath,
 More desperate grew the strife of death.
 The English shafts in volleys hail'd,
 In headlong charge their horse assail'd ;
 Front, flank, and rear, the squadrons sweep
 To break the Scottish circle deep,
 That fought around their King.
 But yet, though thick the shafts as snow,
 Though charging knights like whirlwinds go,
 Though bill-men ply the ghastly blow,
 Unbroken was the ring ;
 The stubborn spear-men still made good
 Their dark impenetrable wood,
 Each stepping where his comrade stood,
 The instant that he fell.

No thought was there of dastard flight ;
 Link'd in the serried phalanx tight,
 Groom fought like noble, squire like knight,
 As fearlessly and well ;
 Till utter darkness closed her wing
 O'er their thin host and wounded King.
 Then skilful Surrey's sage commands
 Led back from strife his shatter'd bands ;
 And from the charge they drew,
 As mountain-waves, from wasted lands,
 Sweep back to ocean blue.
 Then did their loss his foemen know ;
 Their King, their Lords, their mightiest low,
 They melted from the field as snow,
 When streams are swoln and south winds blow,
 Dissolves in silent dew.
 Tweed's echoes heard the ceaseless plash,
 While many a broken band,
 Disorder'd, through her currents dash,
 To gain the Scottish land ;
 To town and tower, to town and dale,
 To tell red Flodden's dismal tale,
 And raise the universal wail.
 Tradition, legend, tune, and song,
 Shall many an age that wail prolong :
 Still from the sire the son shall hear
 Of the stern strife, and carnage drear,
 Of Flodden's fatal field,
 Where shiver'd was fair Scotland's spear,
 And broken was her shield !

XXXV.

Day dawns upon the mountain's side :—
 There, Scotland ! lay thy bravest pride,
 Chiefs, knights, and nobles, many a one :
 The sad survivors all are gone.—
 View not that corpse mistrustfully,
 Defaced and mangled though it be ;

Nor to yon Border castle high,
 Look northward with upbraiding eye ;
 Nor cherish hope in vain,
 That, journeying far on foreign strand,
 The Royal Pilgrim to his land
 May yet return again.
 He saw the wreck his rashness wrought ;
 Reckless of life, he desperate fought,
 And fell on Flodden plain :
 And well in death his trusty brand,
 Firm clench'd within his manly hand,
 Beseem'd the monarch slain.¹⁸²
 But, O ! how changed since yon blithe night !—
 Gladly I turn me from the sight,
 Unto my tale again.

XXXVI.

Short is my tale :—Fitz-Eustace' care
 A pierced and mangled body bare
 To moated Lichfield's lofty pile ;
 And there, beneath the southern aisle,
 A tomb, with Gothic sculpture fair,
 Did long Lord Marmion's image bear,
 (Now vainly for its sight you look ;
 'Twas levell'd when fanatic Brook
 The fair cathedral storm'd and took ;¹⁸³
 But, thanks to Heaven and good Saint Chad,
 A guerdon meet the spoiler had !)
 There erst was martial Marmion found,
 His feet upon a couchant hound,
 His hands to heaven upraised :
 And all around, on scutcheon rich,
 And tablet carved, and fretted niche,
 His arms and feats were blazed.
 And yet, though all was carved so fair,
 And priest for Marmion breathed the prayer,
 The last Lord Marmion lay not there.
 From Ettrick woods a peasant swain
 Follow'd his lord to Flodden plain,—

One of those flowers, whom plaintive lay
 In Scotland mourns as "wede away :"
 Sore wounded, Sybil's Cross he spied,
 And dragg'd him to its foot, and died,
 Close by the noble Marmion's side.
 The spoilers stripp'd and gash'd the slain,
 And thus their corpses were mista'en ;
 And thus, in the proud Baron's tomb,
 The lowly woodsman took the room.

XXXVII.

Less easy task it were, to show
 Lord Marmion's nameless grave, and low.
 They dug his grave e'en where he lay,
 But every mark is gone ;
 Time's wasting hand has done away
 The simple Cross of Sybil Grey,
 And broke her font of stone :
 But yet from out the little hill
 Cozes the slender springlet still.
 Oft halts the stranger there,
 For thence may best his curious eye
 The memorable field descry ;
 And shepherd boys repair
 To seek the water-flag and rush,
 And rest them by the hazel bush,
 And plait their garlands fair ;
 Nor dream they sit upon the grave,
 That holds the bones of Marmion brave.—
 When thou shalt find the little hill,
 With thy heart commune, and be still.
 If ever, in temptation strong,
 Thou left'st the right path for the wrong ;
 If every devious step, thus trod,
 Still led thee farther from the road ;
 Dread thou to speak presumptuous doom
 On noble Marmion's lowly tomb ;
 But say, " He died a gallant knight,
 With sword in hand, for England's right."

XXXVIII.

I do not rhyme to that dull elf,
 Who cannot image to himself,
 That all through Flodden's dismal night,
 Wilton was foremost in the fight ;
 That, when brave Surrey's steed was slain,
 'Twas Wilton mounted him again ;
 'Twas Wilton's brand that deepest hew'd,
 Amid the spearmen's stubborn wood :
 Unnamed by Hollinshed or Hall,
 He was the living soul of all :
 That, after fight, his faith made plain,
 He won his rank and lands again ;
 And charged his old paternal shield
 With bearings won on Flodden Field.
 Nor sing I to that simple maid,
 To whom it must in terms be said,
 That King and kinsmen did agree,
 To bless fair Clara's constancy ;
 Who cannot, unless I relate,
 Paint to her mind the bridal's state ;
 That Wolsey's voice the blessing spoke,
 More, Sands, and Denny, pass'd the joke :
 That bluff King Hal the curtain drew,
 And Catherine's hand the stocking threw ;
 And afterwards, for many a day,
 That it was held enough to say,
 In blessing to a wedded pair,
 " Love they like Wilton and like Clare ! "

L'ENVOY.

TO THE READER.

WHY then a final note prolong,
 Or lengthen out a closing song,
 Unless to bid the gentles speed,
 Who long have listed to my rede ?
 To Statesmen grave, if such may deign
 To read the Minstrel's idle strain,

Sound head, clean hand, and piercing wit,
And patriotic heart—as PITT !
A garland for the hero's crest,
And twined by her he loves the best ;
To every lovely lady bright,
What can I wish but faithful knight ?
To every faithful lover too,
What can I wish but lady true ?
And knowledge to the studious sage ;
And pillow to the head of age.
To thee, dear school-boy, whom my lay
Has cheated of thy hour of play,
Light task, and merry holiday !
To all, to each, a fair good-night,
And pleasing dreams, and slumbers light !

THE VISION OF DON RODERICK.

*Quid dignum memorare tuis, Hispania, terris,
Vox humana valet!*—CLAUDIAN.

TO

JOHN WHITMORE, ESQ.

AND TO THE

COMMITTEE OF SUBSCRIBERS FOR RELIEF OF THE PORTUGUESE
SUFFERERS IN WHICH HE PRESIDES,

THIS POEM,

(THE VISION OF DON RODERICK,)

COMPOSED FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE FUND UNDER THEIR
MANAGEMENT, IS RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED BY

WALTER SCOTT.

PREFACE.

The following Poem is founded upon a Spanish Tradition, particularly detailed in the Notes; but bearing, in general, that Don Roderick, the last Gothic King of Spain, when the Invasion of the Moors was impending, had the temerity to descend into an ancient vault, near Toledo, the opening of which had been denounced as fatal to the Spanish Monarchy. The legend adds, that his rash curiosity was mortified by an emblematical representation of those Saracens who, in the year 714, defeated him in battle, and reduced Spain under their dominion. I have presumed to prolong the Vision of the Revolutions of Spain down to the present eventful crisis of the Peninsula; and to divide it, by a supposed change of scene, into THREE PERIODS. The FIRST of these represents the Invasion of the Moors, the Defeat and Death of Roderick, and closes with the peaceful occupation of the country by the Victors. The SECOND PERIOD embraces the state of the Peninsula, when the conquests of the Spaniards and Portuguese in the East and West Indies had raised to the highest pitch the renown of their arms; sullied, however, by superstition and cruelty. An allusion to the inhumanities of the Inquisition terminates this picture. The LAST PART of the Poem opens with the state of Spain previous to the unparalleled treachery of BUONAPARTE; gives a sketch of the usurpation attempted upon that unsuspecting and friendly kingdom, and terminates

with the arrival of the British succours. It may be farther proper to mention, that the object of the Poem is less to commemorate or detail particular incidents, than to exhibit a general and impressive picture of the several periods brought upon the stage.

I am too sensible of the respect due to the Public, especially by one who has already experienced more than ordinary indulgence, to offer any apology for the inferiority of the poetry to the subject it is chiefly designed to commemorate. Yet I think it proper to mention, that while I was hastily executing a work, written for a temporary purpose, and on passing events, the task was most cruelly interrupted by the successive deaths of LORD PRESIDENT BLAIR, and LORD VISCOUNT MELVILLE. In those distinguished characters, I had not only to regret persons whose lives were most important to Scotland, but also whose notice and patronage honoured my entrance upon active life; and, I may add, with melancholy pride, who permitted my more advanced age to claim no common share in their friendship. Under such interruptions, the following verses, which my best and happiest efforts must have left far unworthy of their theme, have, I am myself sensible, an appearance of negligence and incoherence, which, in other circumstances, I might have been able to remove.

EDINEBURGH, *June 24, 1811.*

INTRODUCTION.

I.

LIVES there a strain, whose sounds of mounting fire
 May rise distinguish'd o'er the din of war;
 Or died it with yon Master of the Lyre,
 Who sung beleaguer'd Ilion's evil star?
 Such, WELLINGTON, might reach thee from afar,
 Wafting its descant wide o'er Ocean's range;
 Nor shouts, nor clashing arms, its mood could mar,
 All as it swell'd 'twixt each loud trumpet-change,
 That clangs to Britain victory, to Portugal revenge!

II.

Yes! such a strain, with all o'er-pouring measure,
 Might melodize with each tumultuous sound,
 Each voice of fear or triumph, woe or pleasure,
 That rings Mondego's ravaged shores around;

The thundering cry of hosts with conquest crown'd,
 The female shriek, the ruin'd peasant's moan,
 The shout of captives from their chains unbound,
 The foil'd oppressor's deep and sullen groan,
 A Nation's choral hymn for tyranny o'erthrown.

III.

But we, weak minstrels of a laggard day,
 Skill'd but to imitate an elder page,
 Timid and raptureless, can we repay
 The debt thou claim'st in this exhausted age?
 Thou givest our lyres a theme, that might engage
 Those that could send thy name o'er sea and
 land,
 While sea and land shall last; for Homer's rage
 A theme; a theme for Milton's mighty hand—
 How much unmeet for us, a faint degenerate band!

IV.

Ye mountains stern! within whose rugged breast
 The friends of Scottish freedom found repose;
 Ye torrents! whose hoarse sounds have soothed
 their rest,
 Returning from the field of vanquish'd foes;
 Say have ye lost each wild majestic close,
 That erst the choir of Bards or Druids flung;
 What time their hymn of victory arose,
 And Cattræth's glens with voice of triumph rung,
 And mystic Merlin harp'd, and grey-hair'd Llywarch
 sung!¹⁸⁴

V.

O! if your wilds such minstrelsy retain,
 As sure your changeful gales seem oft to say,
 When sweeping wild and sinking soft again,
 Like trumpet-jubilee, or harp's wild sway;

If ye can echo such triumphant lay,
 Then lend the note to him has loved you long !
 Who pious gather'd each tradition grey,
 That floats your solitary wastes along,
 And with affection vain gave them new voice in song.

VI.

For not till now, how oft so'er the task
 Of truant verse hath lighten'd graver care,
 From Muse or Sylvan was he wont to ask,
 In phrase poetic, inspiration fair ;
 Careless he gave his numbers to the air,
 They came unsought for, if applauses came ;
 Nor for himself prefers he now the prayer ;
 Let but his verse befit a hero's fame,
 Immortal be the verse !—forgot the poet's name.

VII.

Hark, from yon misty cairn their answer tost :
 “ Minstrel ! the fame of whose romantic lyre,
 Capricious-swelling now, may soon be lost,
 Like the light flickering of a cottage fire ;
 If to such task presumptuous thou aspire,
 Seek not from us the meed to warrior due :
 Age after age has gather'd son to sire,
 Since our grey cliffs the din of conflict knew,
 Or, pealing through our vales, victorious bugles blew.

VIII.

“ Decay'd our old traditionary lore,
 Save where the lingering fays renew their ring,
 By milk-maid seen beneath the hawthorn hoar,
 Or round the marge of Minchmore's haunted
 spring : ¹⁸⁵

Save where their legends grey-hair'd shepherds sing,
 That now scarce win a listening ear but thine,
 Of feuds obscure, and Border ravaging,
 And rugged deeds recount in rugged line,
 Of moonlight foray made on Teviot, Tweed, or Tyne.

IX.

“No! search romantic lands, where the near Sun
 Gives with unstinted boon ethereal flame,
 Where the rude villager, his labour done,
 In verse spontaneous¹⁸⁶ chants some favour'd
 name,
 Whether Olalia's charms his tribute claim,
 Her eye of diamond, and her locks of jet;
 Or whether, kindling at the deeds of Græme,¹⁸⁷
 He sing, to wild Morisco measure set,
 Old Albin's red claymore, green Erin's bayonet!

X.

“Explore those regions, where the flinty crest
 Of wild Nevada ever gleams with snows,
 Where in the proud Alhambra's ruin'd breast
 Barbaric monuments of pomp repose;
 Or where the banners of more ruthless foes
 Than the fierce Moor, float o'er Toledo's fane,
 From whose tall towers even now the patriot throws
 An anxious glance, to spy upon the plain
 The blended ranks of England, Portugal, and Spain.

XI.

“There, of Numantian fire a swarthy spark
 Still lightens in the sun-burnt native's eye;
 The stately port, slow step, and visage dark,
 Still mark enduring pride and constancy.
 And, if the glow of feudal chivalry
 Beam not, as once, thy nobles' dearest pride,

Iberia ! oft thy crestless peasantry
 Have seen the plumed Hidalgo quit their side,
 Have seen, yet dauntless stood—'gainst fortune
 fought and died.

XII.

“ And cherish'd still by that unchanging race,
 Are themes for minstrelsy more high than thine ;
 Of strange tradition many a mystic trace,
 Legend and vision, prophecy and sign ;
 Where wonders wild of Arabesque combine
 With Gothic imagery of darker shade,
 Forming a model meet for minstrel line.

Go, seek such theme ! ”—The Mountain Spirit
 said :

With filial awe I heard—I heard, and I obey'd.

The Vision of Don Roderick.

I.

REARING their crests amid the cloudless skies,
 And darkly clustering in the pale moonlight,
 Toledo's holy towers and spires arise,
 As from a trembling lake of silver white.
 Their mingled shadows intercept the sight
 Of the broad burial-ground outstretch'd below,
 And nought disturbs the silence of the night ;
 All sleeps in sullen shade, or silver glow,
 All save the heavy swell of Teio's ceaseless flow.

II.

All save the rushing swell of Teio's tide,
 Or, distant heard, a courser's neigh or tramp ;
 Their changing rounds as watchful horsemen ride,
 To guard the limits of King Roderick's camp.

For, through the river's night-fog rolling damp,
 Was many a proud pavilion dimly seen,
 Which glimmer'd back, against the moon's fair lamp,
 Tissues of silk and silver twisted sheen,
 And standards proudly pitch'd, and warders arm'd
 between.

III.

But of their Monarch's person keeping ward,
 Since last the deep-mouth'd bell of vespers toll'd,
 The chosen soldiers of the royal guard
 The post beneath the proud Cathedral hold :
 A band unlike their Gothic sires of old,
 Who, for the cap of steel and iron maë,
 Bear slender darts, and casques bedeck'd with gold ;
 Where silver-studded belts their shoulders grace,
 Where ivory quivers ring in the broad falchion's place.

IV.

In the light language of an idle court,
 They murmur'd at their master's long delay,
 And held his lengthen'd orisons in sport :—
 "What! will Don Roderick here till morning
 stay,
 To wear in shrift and prayer the night away?
 And are his hours in such dull penance past,
 For fair Florinda's plunder'd charms to pay?"¹⁸³
 Then to the east their weary eyes they cast,
 And wish'd the lingering dawn would glimmer forth
 at last.

V.

But, far within, Toledo's Prelate lent
 An ear of fearful wonder to the King ;
 The silver lamp a fitful lustre sent,
 So long that sad confession witnessing :

For Roderick told of many a hidden thing,
 Such as are lothly utter'd to the air,
 When Fear, Remorse, and Shame, the bosom wring,
 And Guilt his secret burden cannot bear,
 And Conscience seeks in Speech a respite from Despair.

VI.

Full on the Prelate's face, and silver hair,
 The stream of failing light was feebly roll'd :
 But Roderick's visage, though his head was bare,
 Was shadow'd by his hand and mantle's fold.
 While of his hidden soul the sins he told,
 Proud Alaric's descendant could not brook,
 That mortal man his bearing should behold,
 Or boast that he had seen, when Conscience shook,
 Fear tame a monarch's brow, Remorse a warrior's
 look.

VII.

The old man's faded cheek wax'd yet more pale,
 As many a secret sad the King bewray'd ;
 As sign and glance eked out the unfinish'd tale,
 When in the midst his faltering whisper staid.—
 “ Thus royal Witiza was slain,”—he said ;
 “ Yet, holy Father, deem not it was I.”
 Thus still Ambition strives her crimes to shade.—
 “ Oh ! rather deem 'twas stern necessity !
 Self-preservation bade, and I must kill or die.

VIII.

“ And if Florinda's shrieks alarm'd the air,
 If she invoked her absent sire in vain,
 And on her knees implored that I would spare,
 Yet, reverend priest, thy sentence rash refrain !—

All is not as it seems—the female train

Know by their bearing to disguise their mood:”—

But Conscience here, as if in high disdain,

Sent to the Monarch's cheek the burning blood—

He stay'd his speech abrupt—and up the Prelate stood.

IX.

“O harden'd offspring of an iron race!

What of thy crimes, Don Roderick, shall I say?

What alms, or prayers, or penance, can efface

Murder's dark spot, wash treason's stain away!

For the foul ravisher how shall I pray,

Who, scarce repentant, makes his crime his boast?

How hope Almighty vengeance shall delay,

Unless in mercy to yon Christian host,

I spare the shepherd, lest the guiltless sheep be lost?”

X.

Then kindled the dark Tyrant in his mood,

And to his brow return'd its dauntless gloom;

“And welcome then,” he cried, “be blood for blood,

For treason treachery, for dishonour doom!

Yet will I know whence come they, or by whom.

Show, for thou canst—give forth the fated key,

And guide me, Priest, to that mysterious room,¹⁸⁹

Where, if aught true in old tradition be,

His nation's future fates a Spanish King shall see.”—

XI.

“Ill-fated Prince! recall the desperate word,

Or pause ere yet the omen thou obey!

Bethink, yon spell-bound portal would afford

Never to former Monarch entrance-way;

Nor shall it ever ope, old records say,
 Save to a King, the last of all his line,
 What time his empire totters to decay,
 And treason digs, beneath, her fatal mine,
 And, high above, impends avenging wrath divine.”—

XII.

“Prelate ! a monarch’s fate brooks no delay ;
 Lead on !”—The ponderous key the old man took,
 And held the winking lamp, and led the way,
 By winding stair, dark aisle, and secret nook,
 Then on an ancient gateway bent his look ;
 And, as the key the desperate King essay’d,
 Low mutter’d thunders the Cathedral shook,
 And twice he stopp’d, and twice new effort made,
 Till the huge bolts roll’d back, and the loud hinges
 bray’d.

XIII.

Long, large, and lofty, was that vaulted hall ;
 Roof, walls, and floor, were all of marble stone,
 Of polish’d marble, black as funeral pall,
 Carved o’er with signs and characters unknown.
 A paly light, as of the dawning, shone
 Through the sad bounds, but whence they could
 not spy ;
 For window to the upper air was none ;
 Yet, by that light, Don Roderick could descry
 Wonders that ne’er till then were seen by mortal eye.

XIV.

Grim sentinels, against the upper wall,
 Of molten bronze, two Statues held their place ;
 Massive their naked limbs, their stature tall,
 Their frowning foreheads golden circles grace.

Moulded they seem'd for kings of giant race,
 That lived and sinn'd before the avenging flood ;
 This grasp'd a scythe, that rested on a mace ;
 This spread his wings for flight, that pondering
 stood,
 Each stubborn seem'd and stern, immutable of mood.

XV.

Fix'd was the right-hand Giant's brazen look
 Upon his brother's glass of shifting sand,
 As if its ebb he measured by a book,
 Whose iron volume loaded his huge hand ;
 In which was wrote of many a fallen land,
 Of empires lost, and kings to exile driven :
 And o'er that pair their names in scroll expand—
 " LO, DESTINY and TIME ! to whom by Heaven
 The guidance of the earth is for a season given."—

XVI.

Even while they read, the sand-glass wastes away ;
 And, as the last and lagging grains did creep,
 That right-hand Giant 'gan his club upsway,
 As one that startles from a heavy sleep.
 Full on the upper wall the mace's sweep
 At once descended with the force of thunder,
 And hurtling down at once, in crumbled heap,
 The marble boundary was rent asunder,
 And gave to Roderick's view new sights of fear and
 wonder.

XVII.

For they might spy, beyond that mighty breach,
 Realms as of Spain in vision'd prospect laid,
 Castles and towers, in due proportion each,
 As by some skilful artist's hand portray'd :

Here, crossed by many a wild Sierra's shade,
 And boundless plains that tire the traveller's eye ;
 There, rich with vineyard and with olive glade,
 Or deep-embrown'd by forests huge and high,
 Or wash'd by mighty streams, that slowly murmur'd
 by.

XVIII.

And here, as erst upon the antique stage,
 Pass'd forth the band of masquers trimly led,
 In various forms, and various equipage,
 While fitting strains the hearer's fancy fed ;
 So, to sad Roderick's eye in order spread,
 Successive pageants fill'd that mystic scene,
 Showing the fate of battles ere they bled,
 And issue of events that had not been ;
 And, ever and anon, strange sounds were heard
 between.

XIX.

First shrill'd an unrepeated female shriek !—
 It seemed as if Don Roderick knew the call,
 For the bold blood was blanching in his cheek.—
 Then answer'd kettle-drum and atabal,
 Gong-peal and cymbal-clank the ear appal,
 The Tecbir war-cry, and the Lelie's yell,¹⁵⁰
 Ring wildly dissonant along the hall.
 Needs not to Roderick their dread import tell—
 "The Moor!"—he cried, "the Moor!—ring out the
 Tocsin bell !

XX.

"They come ! they come ! I see the groaning lands
 White with the turbans of each Arab horde ;
 Swart Zaarah joins her misbelieving bands,
 Alla and Mahomet their battle-word,

The choice they yield, the Koran or the Sword—
 See how the Christians rush to arms amain!—
 In yonder shout the voice of conflict roar'd,
 The shadowy hosts are closing on the plain—
 Now, God and Saint Iago strike, for the good cause
 of Spain!—

XXI.

“By Heaven, the Moors prevail! the Christians
 yield!

Their coward leader gives for flight the sign!
 The sceptred craven mounts to quit the field—

Is not yon steed Orelia?—Yes, 'tis mine!¹⁹¹

But never was she turn'd from battle-line:

Lo!, where the recreant spurs o'er stock and
 stone!

Curses pursue the slave, and wrath divine!

Rivers ingulph him!”—“Hush,” in shuddering
 tone,

The Prelate said;—“rash Prince, yon vision'd form's
 thine own.”

XXII.

Just then, a torrent cross'd the flier's course;

The dangerous ford the Kingly Likeness tried:

But the deep eddies whelm'd both man and horse,

Swept like benighted peasant down the tide;

And the proud Moslemah spread far and wide,

As numerous as their native locust band;

Berber and Ismael's sons the spoils divide,

With naked scimitars mete out the land,

And for the bondsmen base the freeborn natives brand.

XXIII.

Then rose the grated Harem, to enclose

The loveliest maidens of the Christian line;

Then, menials, to their misbelieving foes,

Castile's young nobles held forbidden wine;

Then, too, the holy Cross, salvation's sign,
 By impious hands was from the altar thrown,
 And the deep aisles of the polluted shrine
 Echo'd, for holy hymn and organ-tone,
 The Santon's frantic dance, the Fakir's gibbering
 moan.

XXIV.

How fares Don Roderick?—E'en as one who spies
 Flames dart their glare o'er midnight's sable
 woof,
 And hears around his children's piercing cries,
 And sees the pale assistants stand aloof;
 While cruel Conscience brings him bitter proof,
 His folly or his crime have caused his grief;
 And while above him nods the crumbling roof,
 He curses earth and Heaven—himself in chief—
 Desperate of earthly aid, despairing Heaven's relief!

XXV.

That scythe-arm'd Giant turn'd his fatal glass
 And twilight on the landscape closed her wings;
 Far to Asturian hills the war-sounds pass,
 And in their stead rebeck or timbrel rings;
 And to the sound the bell-deck'd dancer springs,
 Bazaars resound as when their marts are met,
 In tourney light the Moor his jerrid flings,
 And on the land as evening seem'd to set,
 The Imaum's chant was heard from mosque or
 minaret.

XXVI.

So pass'd that pageant. Ere another came,
 The visionary scene was wrapp'd in smoke,
 Whose sulph'rous wreaths were cross'd by sheets
 of flame;
 With every flash a bolt explosive broke,

Till Roderick deem'd the fiends had burst their
 yoke,
 And waved 'gainst heaven the infernal gonfalone!
 For War a new and dreadful language spoke,
 Never by ancient warrior heard or known ;
 Lightning and smoke her breath, and thunder was
 her tone.

XXVII.

From the dim landscape roll the clouds away—
 The Christians have regain'd their heritage ;
 Before the Cross has waned the Crescent's ray
 And many a monastery decks the stage,
 And lofty church, and low-brow'd hermitage.
 The land obeys a Hermit and a Knight,—
 The Genii those of Spain for many an age ;
 This clad in sackcloth, that in armour bright,
 And that was VALOUR named, this BIGOTRY was
 hight.

XXVIII.

VALOUR was harness'd like a Chief of old,
 Arm'd at all points, and prompt for knightly
 gest ;
 His sword was temper'd in the Ebro cold,
 Morena's eagle plume adorn'd his crest,
 The spoils of Afric's lion bound his breast.
 Fierce he stepp'd forward and flung down his
 gage ;
 As if of mortal kind to brave the best.
 Him follow'd his Companion, dark and sage,
 As he, my Master, sung the dangerous Archimage.

XXIX.

Haughty of heart and brow the Warrior came,
 In look and language proud as proud might be,
 Vaunting his lordship, lineage, fights, and fame :
 Yet was that barefoot monk more proud than he :

And as the ivy climbs the tallest tree,
 So round the loftiest soul his toils he wound,
 And with his spells subdued the fierce and free,
 Till ermined Age and Youth in arms renown'd,
 Honouring his scourge and hair-cloth, meekly kiss'd
 the ground.

XXX.

And thus it chanced that VALOUR, peerless knight,
 Who ne'er to King or Kaiser veil'd his crest,
 Victorious still in bull-feast or in fight,
 Since first his limbs with mail he did invest,
 Stoop'd ever to that Anchoret's behest ;
 Nor reason'd of the right, nor of the wrong,
 But at his bidding laid the lance in rest,
 And wrought fell deeds the troubled world along,
 For he was fierce as brave, and pitiless as strong.

XXXI.

Oft his proud galleys sought some new-found
 world,
 That latest sees the sun, or first the morn ;
 Still at that Wizard's feet their spoils he hurl'd,—
 Ingots of ore from rich Potosi borne,
 Crowns by Caciques, aigrettes by Omrahs worn,
 Wrought of rare gems, but broken, rent, and
 foul ;
 Idols of gold from heathen temples torn,
 Bedabbled all with blood.—With grisly scowl
 The Hermit mark'd the stains, and smiled beneath
 his cowl.

XXXII.

Then did he bless the offering, and bade make
 Tribute to Heaven of gratitude and praise ;
 And at his word the choral hymns awake,
 And many a hand the silver censer sways,

But with the incense-breath these censers raise,
 Mix steams from corpses smouldering in the fire ;
 The groans of prison'd victims mar the lays,
 And shrieks of agony confound the quire ;
 While, 'mid the mingled sounds, the darken'd scenes
 expire.

XXXIII.

Preluding light, were strains of music heard,
 As once again revolved that measured sand ;
 Such sounds as when, for sylvan dance prepared,
 Gay Xeres summons forth her vintage band ;
 When for the light bolero ready stand
 The mozo blithe, with gay muchacha met,¹⁹³
 He conscious of his broider'd cap and band,
 She of her netted locks and light corsette,
 Each tiptoe perch'd to spring, and shake the castanet.

XXXIV.

And well such strains the opening scene became ;
 For VALOUR had relax'd his ardent look,
 And at a lady's feet, like lion tame,
 Lay stretch'd, full loth the weight of arms to
 brook ;
 And soften'd BIGOTRY, upon his book,
 Patter'd a task of little good or ill :
 But the blithe peasant plied his pruning-hook,
 Whistled the muleteer o'er vale and hill,
 And rung from village-green the merry seguidille.

XXXV.

Grey Royalty, grown impotent of toil,
 Let the grave sceptre slip his lazy hold ;
 And, careless, saw his rule become the spoil
 Of a loose Female and her minion bold.

But peace was on the cottage and the fold,
 From court intrigue, from bickering faction far ;
 Beneath the chestnut-tree Love's tale was told,
 And to the tinkling of the light guitar,
 Sweet stoop'd the western sun, sweet rose the
 evening star.

XXXVI.

As that sea-cloud, in size like human hand,
 When first from Carmel by the Tishbite seen,
 Came slowly overshadowing Israel's land,
 A while, perchance, bedeck'd with colours sheen,
 While yet the sunbeams on its skirts had been,
 Limning with purple and with gold its shroud,
 Till darker folds obscured the blue serene,
 And blotted heaven with one broad sable cloud,
 Then sheeted rain burst down, and whirlwinds howl'd
 aloud :—

XXXVII.

Even so, upon that peaceful scene was pour'd,
 Like gathering clouds, full many a foreign band,
 And HE, their Leader, wore in sheath his sword,
 And offer'd peaceful front and open hand,
 Veiling the perjured treachery he plann'd,
 By friendship's zeal and honour's specious guise,
 Until he won the passes of the land ;
 Then burst were honour's oaths, and friendship's
 ties !
 He clutch'd his vulture-grasp, and call'd fair Spain his
 prize.

XXXVIII.

An Iron Crown his anxious forehead bore ;
 And well such diadem his heart became.
 Who ne'er his purpose for remorse gave o'er,
 Or check'd his course for piety or shame ;

Who, train'd a soldier, deem'd a soldier's fame
 Might flourish in the wreath of battles won,
 Though neither truth nor honour deck'd his name ;
 Who, placed by fortune on a Monarch's throne,
 Reck'd not of Monarch's faith, or Mercy's kingly tone.

XXXIX.

From a rude isle his ruder lineage came,
 The spark, that, from a suburb-hovel's hearth
 Ascending, wraps some capital in flame,
 Hath not a meaner or more sordid birth.
 And for the soul that bade him waste the earth—
 The sable land-flood from some swamp obscure,
 That poisons the glad husband-field with dearth,
 And by destruction bids its fame endure,
 Hath not a source more sullen, stagnant, and impure.

XL.

Before that Leader strode a shadowy Form ;
 Her limbs like mist, her torch like meteor show'd,
 With which she beckon'd him through fight and
 storm,
 And all he crush'd that cross'd his desperate road,
 Nor thought, nor fear'd, nor look'd on what he
 trode.
 Realms could not glut his pride, blood could not
 slake,
 So oft as e'er she shook her torch abroad—
 It was AMBITION bade her terrors wake,
 Nor deign'd she, as of yore, a milder form to take.

XLI.

No longer now she spurn'd at mean revenge,
 Or staid her hand for conquer'd foeman's moan ;
 As when, the fates of aged Rome to change,
 By Cæsar's side she cross'd the Rubicon.

Nor joy'd she to bestow the spoils she won,
 As when the banded powers of Greece were task'd
 To war beneath the Youth of Macedon :
 No seemly veil her modern minion ask'd,
 He saw her hideous face, and loved the fiend un-
 mask'd.

XLII.

That Prelate mark'd his march—On banners blazed
 With battles won in many a distant land,
 On eagle-standards and on arms he gazed ;
 “And hopest thou then,” he said, “thy power
 shall stand ?
 O, thou hast builded on the shifting sand,
 And thou hast temper'd it with slaughter's flood ;
 And know, fell scourge in the Almighty's hand,
 Gore-moisten'd trees shall perish in the bud,
 And by a bloody death, shall die the Man of Blood !”

XLIII.

The ruthless Leader beckon'd from his train
 A wan fraternal Shade, and bade him kneel,
 And paled his temples with the crown of Spain,
 While trumpets rang, and heralds cried,
 “Castile !”¹⁹³
 Not that he loved him—No !—In no man's weal,
 Scarce in his own, e'er joy'd that sullen heart ;
 Yet round that throne he bade his warrior's wheel,
 That the poor Puppet might perform his part,
 And be a sceptred slave, at his stern beck to start.

XLIV.

But on the Natives of that Land misused,
 Not long the silence of amazement hung,
 Nor brook'd they long their friendly faith abused ;
 For, with a common shriek, the general tongue

Exclaim'd, "To arms!"—and fast to arms they sprung.

And VALOUR woke, that Genius of the Land!
Pleasure, and ease, and sloth, aside he flung,
As burst th' awakening Nazarite his band,
When 'gainst his treacherous foes he clench'd his
dreadful hand.

XLV.

That Mimic Monarch now cast anxious eye
Upon the Satraps that begirt him round,
Now doff'd his royal robe in act to fly,
And from his brow the diadem unbound.
So oft, so near, the Patriot bugle wound,
From Tarick's walls to Bilboa's mountains
blown,
These martial satellites hard labour found,
To guard a while his substituted throne—
Light recking of his cause, but battling for their own.

XLVI.

From Alpuhara's peak that bugle rung,
And it was echo'd from Corunna's wall;
Stately Seville responsive war-shot flung,
Grenada caught it in her Moorish hall;
Galicia bade her children fight or fall,
Wild Biscay shook his mountain-coronet,
Valencia roused her at the battle-call,
And, foremost still where Valour's sons are met,
First started to his gun each fiery Miquelet.

XLVII.

But unappall'd and burning for the fight,
The Invaders march, of victory secure;
Skilful their force to sever or unite,
And train'd alike to vanquish or endure.

Nor skilful less, cheap conquest to ensure,
 Discord to breathe, and jealousy to sow,
 To quell by boasting, and by bribes to lure ;
 While nought against them bring the unpractised
 foe,
 Save hearts for Freedom's cause, and hands for
 Freedom's blow.

XLVIII.

Proudly they march—but, O ! they march not forth
 By one hot field to crown a brief campaign,
 As when their Eagles, sweeping through the North,
 Destroy'd at every stoop an ancient reign !
 Far other fate had Heaven decreed for Spain ;
 In vain the steel, in vain the torch was plied,
 New Patriot armies started from the slain,
 High blazed the war, and long, and far, and
 wide,¹⁹⁴
 And oft the God of Battles blest the righteous side.

XLIX.

Nor unatoned, where Freedom's foes prevail,
 Remain'd their savage waste. With blade and
 brand,
 By day the Invaders ravaged hill and dale,
 But, with the darkness, the Guerilla band
 Came like night's tempest, and avenged the land,
 And claim'd for blood the retribution due,
 Probed the hard heart, and lopp'd the murd'rous
 hand ;
 And Dawn, when o'er the scene her beam she
 threw,
 Midst ruins they had made, the spoilers' corpses
 knew.

L.

What minstrel verse may sing, or tongue may tell,
 Amid the vision'd strife from sea to sea,
 How oft the Patriot banners rose or fell,
 Still honour'd in defeat as victory !
 For that sad pageant of events to be,
 Show'd every form of fight by field and flood ;
 Slaughter and Ruin, shouting forth their glee,
 Beheld, while riding on the tempest scud,
 The waters choked with slain, the earth bedrench'd
 with blood !

LI.

Then Zaragoza—blighted be the tongue
 That names thy name without the honour due !
 For never hath the harp of Minstrel rung,
 Of faith so felly proved, so firmly true !
 Mine, sap, and bomb, thy shatter'd ruins knew,
 Each art of war's extremity had room,
 Twice from thy half-sack'd streets the foe withdrew
 And when at length stern fate decreed thy doom,
 They won not Zaragoza, but her children's bloody
 tomb. ¹⁹⁵

LII.

Yet raise thy head, sad city ! Though in chains,
 Enthral'd thou canst not be ! Arise, and claim
 Reverence from every heart where Freedom reigns,
 For what thou worshippest !—thy sainted dame,
 She of the Column, honour'd be her name,
 By all, whate'er their creed, who honour love !
 And like the sacred relics of the flame,
 That gave some martyr to the bless'd above,
 To every loyal heart may thy sad embers prove !

LIII.

Nor thine alone such wreck. Gerona fair !
 Faithful to death thy heroes shall be sung,
 Manning the towers while o'er their heads the air
 Swart as the smoke from raging furnace hung ;
 Now thicker dark'ning where the mine was sprung,
 Now briefly lighten'd by the cannon's flare,
 Now arch'd with fire-sparks as the bomb was flung,
 And redd'ning now with conflagration's glare,
 While by the fatal light the foes for storm prepare.

LIV.

While all around was danger, strife, and fear,
 While the earth shook, and darken'd was the sky
 And wide Destruction stunn'd the listening ear,
 Appall'd the heart, and stupified the eye,—
 Afar was heard that thrice-repeated cry,
 In which old Albion's heart and tongue unite,
 Whene'er her soul is up, and pulse beats high,
 Whether it hail the wine cup or the fight,
 And bid each arm be strong, or bid each heart be
 light.

LV.

Don Roderick turn'd him as the shout grew loud—
 A varied scene the changeful vision show'd,
 For, where the ocean mingled with the cloud,
 A gallant navy stemm'd the billows broad.
 From mast and stern St. George's symbol flow'd,
 Blent with the silver cross to Scotland dear ;
 Mottling the sea their landward barges row'd.
 And flash'd the sun on bayonet, brand, and spear,
 And the wild beach return'd the seaman's jovial cheer.

LVI.

It was a dread, yet spirit-stirring sight !

The billows foam'd beneath a thousand oars,
Fast as they land the red-cross ranks unite,

Legions on legions bright'ning all the shores.

Then banners rise, and cannon-signal roars,

Then peals the warlike thunder of the drum,

Thrills the loud fife, the trumpet-flourish pours,

And patriot hopes awake, and doubts are dumb,

For, bold in Freedom's cause, the bands of Ocean
come !

LVII.

A various host they came—whose ranks display

Each mode in which the warrior meets the fight,

The deep battalion locks its firm array,

And meditates his aim the marksman light ;

Far glance the light of sabres flashing bright,

Where mounted squadrons shake the echoing
mead,

Lacks not artillery breathing flame and night,

Nor the fleet ordnance whirl'd by rapid steed,

That rivals lightning's flash in ruin and in speed.

LVIII.

A various host—from kindred realms they came,

Brethren in arms, but rivals in renown—

For yon fair bands shall merry England claim,

And with their deeds of valour deck her crown.

Hers their bold port, and hers their martial frown,

And hers their scorn of death in freedom's cause,

Their eyes of azure, and their locks of brown,

And the blunt speech that bursts without a pause,

And freeborn thoughts, which league the Soldier with
the Laws.

LIX.

And, O! loved warriors of the Minstrel's land!
 Yonder your bonnets nod, your tartans wave!
 The rugged form may mark the mountain band,
 And harsher features, and a mien more grave;
 But ne'er in battle-field throbb'd heart so brave,
 As that which beats beneath the Scottish plaid;
 And when the pibroch bids the battle rave,
 And level for the charge your arms are laid,
 Where lives the desperate foe that for such onset
 staid!

LX.

Hark! from yon stately ranks what laughter rings
 Mingling wild mirth with war's stern minstrelsy,
 His jest while each blithe comrade round him
 flings,
 And moves to death with military glee:
 Boast, Erin, boast them! tameless, frank, and free,
 In kindness warm, and fierce in danger known,
 Rough nature's children, humorous as she:
 And HE, yon Chieftain—strike the proudest tone
 Of thy bold harp, green Isle!—the Hero is thine own.

LXI.

Now on the scene Vimeira should be shown,
 On Talavera's fight should Roderick gaze,
 And hear Corunna wail her battle won,
 And see Busaco's crest with lightning blaze:—
 But shall fond fable mix with heroes' praise?
 Hath Fiction's stage for Truth's long triumphs
 room?
 And dare her wild-flowers mingle with the bays,
 That claim a long eternity to bloom
 Around the warrior's crest, and o'er the warrior's
 tomb!

LXII.

Or may I give adventurous Fancy scope,
 And stretch a bold hand to the awful veil
 That hides futurity from anxious hope,
 Bidding beyond it scenes of glory hail,
 And painting Europe rousing at the tale
 Of Spain's invaders from her confines hurl'd,
 While kindling nations buckle on their mail,
 And Fame, with clarion-blast and wings unfurl'd,
 To Freedom and Revenge awakes an injured World?

LXIII.

O vain, though anxious, is the glance I cast,
 Since Fate has mark'd futurity her own :
 Yet fate resigns to worth the glorious past,
 The deeds recorded, and the laurels won.
 Then, though the Vault of Destiny ¹⁹⁸ be gone,
 King, Prelate, all the phantasms of my brain,
 Melted away like mist-wreaths in the sun,
 Yet grant for faith, for valour, and for Spain,
 One note of pride and fire, a Patriot's parting strain !

CONCLUSION.

I.

“WHO shall command Estrella's mountain-tide
 Back to the source, when tempest-chafed, to hie ?
 Who, when Gascogne's vex'd gulf is raging wide,
 Shall hush it as a nurse her infant's cry ?
 His magic power let such vain boaster try,
 And when the torrent shall his voice obey,
 And Biscay's whirlwinds list his lullaby,
 Let him stand forth and bar mine eagles way,
 And they shall heed his voice, and at his bidding stay.

II.

“Else ne’er to stoop, till high on Lisbon’s towers
 They close their wings, the symbol of our yoke,
 And their own sea hath whelm’d yon red-cross
 Powers!”

Thus, on the summit of Alverca’s rock,
 To Marshall, Duke, and Peer, Gaul’s Leader spoke.
 While downward on the land his legions press,
 Before them it was rich with vine and flock,
 And smiled like Eden in her summer dress ;—
 Behind their wasteful march, a reeking wilderness.

III.

And shall the boastful Chief maintain his word,
 Though Heaven hath heard the wailings of the
 land,
 Though Lusitania whet her vengeful sword,
 Though Britons arm, and WELLINGTON command !
 No ! grim Busaco’s iron ridge shall stand
 An adamantine barrier to his force ;
 And from its base shall wheel his shatter’d band,
 As from the unshaken rock the torrent hoarse
 Bears off its broken waves, and seeks a devious
 course.

IV.

Yet not because Alcoba’s mountain-hawk
 Hath on his best and bravest made her food,
 In numbers confident, yon Chief shall baulk
 His Lord’s imperial thirst for spoil and blood :
 For full in view the promised conquest stood,
 And Lisbon’s matrons from their walls, might
 sum
 The myriads that had half the world subdued,
 And hear the distant thunders of the drum,
 That bids the bands of France to storm and havoc
 come.

V.

Four moons have heard these thunders idly roll'd,
 Have seen these wistful myriads eye their prey,
 As famish'd wolves survey a guarded fold—
 But in the middle path a Lion lay !
 At length they move—but not to battle-fray,
 Nor blaze yon fires where meets the manly fight ;
 Beacons of infamy, they light the way
 Where cowardice and cruelty unite
 To damn with double shame their ignominious flight.

VI.

O triumph for the Fiends of Lust and Wrath !
 Ne'er to be told, yet ne'er to be forgot,
 What wanton horrors mark'd their wreckful path !
 The peasant butcher'd in his ruin'd cot,
 The hoary priest even at the altar shot,
 Childhood and age given o'er to sword and flame.
 Woman to infamy ;—no crime forgot,
 By which inventive demons might proclaim
 Immortal hate to man, and scorn of God's great
 name !

VII.

The rudest sentinel, in Britain born,
 With horror paused to view the havoc done,
 Gave his poor crust to feed some wretch forlorn,¹⁰⁷
 Wiped his stern eye, then fiercer grasp'd his gun
 Nor with less zeal shall Britain's peaceful son
 Exult the debt of sympathy to pay ;
 Riches nor poverty the tax shall shun,
 Nor prince nor peer, the wealthy nor the gay,
 Nor the poor peasant's mite, nor bard's more worth-
 less lay.

VIII.

But thou unfoughten wilt thou yield to Fate,
 Minion of Fortune, now miscall'd in vain!
 Can vantage-ground no confidence create,
 Marcella's pass, nor Guarda's mountain-chain?
 Vainglorious fugitive! ¹⁹⁸ yet turn again!
 Behold, where, named by some prophetic Seer,
 Flows Honour's Fountain, as foredoom'd the stain
 From thy dishonour'd name and arms to clear—
 Fallen Child of Fortune, turn, redeem her favour
 here!

IX.

Yet, ere thou turn'st, collect each distant aid;
 Those chief that never heard the lion roar!
 Within whose souls lives not a trace portray'd,
 Of Talavera, or Mondego's shore!
 Marshal each band thou hast, and summon more;
 Of war's fell stratagems exhaust the whole;
 Rank upon rank, squadron on squadron pour,
 Legion on legion on thy foeman roll,—
 And weary out his arm—thou canst not quell his soul.

X.

O vainly gleams with steel Agueda's shore,
 Vainly thy squadrons hide Assuava's plain,
 And front the flying thunders as they roar,
 With frantic charge and ten-fold odds, in vain! ¹⁹⁹
 And what avails thee that, for CAMERON slain,
 Wild from his plaided ranks the yell was
 given—²⁰⁰
 Vengeance and grief gave mountain-rage the rein,
 And, at the bloody spear-point headlong driven,
 Thy Despot's giant guards fled like the rack of
 heaven.

XI.

Go, baffled boaster ! teach thy haughty mood
 To plead at thine imperious master's throne,
 Say, thou hast left his legions in their blood,
 Deceived his hopes, and frustrated thine own ;
 Say, that thine utmost skill and valour shown,
 By British skill and valour were outvied ;
 Last say, thy conqueror was WELLINGTON !
 And if he chafe, be his own fortune tried—
 God and our cause to friend, the venture we'll abide.

XII.

But you, ye heroes of that well-fought day,²⁰¹
 How shall a bard, unknowing and unknown,
 His meed to each victorious leader pay,
 Or bind on every brow the laurels won ?
 Yet fain my harp would wake its boldest tone,
 O'er the wide sea to hail CADOGAN brave ;
 And he, perchance, the minstrel-note might own,
 Mindful of meeting brief that Fortune gave
 'Mid yon far western isles that hear the Atlantic rave.

XIII.

Yes ! hard the task, when Britons wield the sword,
 To give each Chief and every field its fame :
 Hark ! Albuera thunders BERESFORD,
 And Red Barosa shouts for dauntless GRÆME !
 O for a verse of tumult and of flame,
 Bold as the bursting of their cannon sound,
 To bid the world re-echo to their fame !
 For never, upon gory battle-ground,
 With conquest's well-bought wreath were braver
 victors crown'd !

XIV.

O who shall grudge him Albuera's bays,²⁰²
 Who brought a race regenerate to the field,
 Roused them to emulate their fathers' praise,
 Temper'd their headlong rage, their courage
 steel'd,
 And raised fair Lusitania's fallen shield,
 And gave new edge to Lusitania's sword,
 And taught her sons forgotten arms to wield
 Shiver'd my harp, and burst its every chord,
 If it forget thy worth, victorious BERESFORD!

XV.

Not on that bloody field of battle won,
 Though Gaul's proud legions roll'd like mist
 away,
 Was half his self-devoted valour shown—
 He gaged but life on that illustrious day;
 But when he toil'd those squadrons to array,
 Who fought like Britons in the bloody game,
 Sharper than Polish pike or assagay,
 He braved the shafts of censure and of shame,
 And, dearer far than life, he pledged a soldier's fame.

XVI.

Nor be his praise o'erpast who strove to hide
 Beneath the warrior's vest affection's wound,
 Whose wish Heaven for his country's weal denied;
 Danger and fate he sought, but glory found.
 From clime to clime, where'er war's trumpets sound,
 The wanderer went; yet, Caledonia! still
 Thine was his thought in march and tented ground;
 He dream'd 'mid Alpine cliffs of Athole's hill,
 And heard in Ebro's roar his Lyndoch's lovely rill.

XVII.

O hero of a race renown'd of old,
 Whose war-cry oft has waked the battle-swell,
 Since first distinguish'd in the onset bold,
 Wild sounding when the Roman rampart fell !
 By Wallace' side it rung the Southron's knell,
 Alderne, Kilsythe, and Tibber, own'd its fame,
 Tummell's rude pass can of its terrors tell,
 But ne'er from prouder field arose the name,
 Than when wild Ronda learn'd the conquering shout of
 GRÆME ! ²⁰³

XVIII.

But all too long, through seas unknown and dark,
 (With Spenser's parable I close my tale)
 By shoal and rock hath steer'd my venturous bark,
 And landward now I drive before the gale.
 And now the blue and distant shore I hail,
 And nearer now I see the port expand,
 And now I gladly furl my weary sail,
 And as the prow light touches on the strand,
 I strike my red-cross flag and bind my skiff to land.

THE BRIDAL OF TRIERMAIN:
OR,
THE VALE OF ST. JOHN.
A LOVER'S TALE.

PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION.

IN the *Edinburgh Annual Register* for the year 1809, three Fragments were inserted, written in imitation of Living Poets. It must have been apparent, that by these proflusions, nothing burlesque, or disrespectful to the authors, was intended, but that they were offered to the public as serious, though certainly very imperfect, imitations of that style of composition by which each of the writers is supposed to be distinguished. As these exercises attracted a greater degree of attention than the author anticipated, he has been induced to complete one of them, and present it as a separate publication.

It is not in this place that an examination of the works of the master whom he has here adopted as his model, can, with propriety, be introduced; since his general acquiescence in the favourable suffrage of the public must necessarily be inferred from the attempt he has now made. He is induced, by the nature of his subject, to offer a few remarks on what has been called ROMANTIC POETRY;—the popularity of which has been revived in the present day, under the auspices, and by the unparalleled success, of one individual.

The original purpose of poetry is either religious or historical, or, as must frequently happen, a mixture of both. To modern readers, the poems of Homer have many of the features of pure romance; but in the estimation of his contemporaries, they probably derived their chief value from their supposed historical authenticity. The same may be generally said of the poetry of all early ages. The marvels and miracles which the poet blends with his song do not exceed in number or extravagance the figments of the historians of the same period of society; and, indeed, the difference betwixt poetry and prose, as the vehicles of historical truth, is always of late introduction. Poets, under various denominations of Bards, Scalds, Chroniclers, and so forth, are the first historians of all nations. Their intention is to relate the events they have witnessed, or the traditions that have reached them; and they clothe the relation in rhyme, merely as the means of rendering it more solemn in the narrative or more easily committed to memory. But as the poetical historian improves in the art of conveying information, the authenticity of his narrative

unavoidably declines. He is tempted to dilate and dwell upon the events that are interesting to his imagination, and, conscious how indifferent his audience is to the naked truth of his poem, his history gradually becomes a romance.

It is in this situation that those epics are found, which have been generally regarded as the standards of poetry; and it has happened somewhat strangely, that the moderns have pointed out as the characteristics and peculiar excellencies of narrative poetry the very circumstances which the authors themselves adopted, only because their art involved the duties of the historian as well as the poet. It cannot be believed, for example, that Homer selected the siege of Troy as the most appropriate subject for poetry; his purpose was to write the early history of his country; the event he has chosen, though not very fruitful in varied incident, nor perfectly well adapted for poetry, was nevertheless combined with traditionary and genealogical anecdotes extremely interesting to those who were to listen to him; and this he has adorned by the exertions of a genius which, if it has been equalled, has certainly been never surpassed. It was not till comparatively a late period that the general accuracy of his narrative, or his purpose in composing it, was brought into question. Δοκεῖ πρῶτος [ὁ Αναξαγόρας] (καθὰ φησι Φαβορίνος ἐν παντοδαπῇ Ἱστορίᾳ) τὴν Ὀμήρου ποιήσιν ἀποφήνασθαι εἶναι περὶ ἀρετῆς καὶ δικαιοσύνης. But whatever theories might be framed by speculative men, his work was of an historical, not of an allegorical nature. Ἐναντιλλετο μετὰ τοῦ Μέντεω καὶ ὕπου ἐκίστοτε ἀφίκοιτο, πάντα τὰ ἐπιχώρια διεωρᾶτο, καὶ ἱστορίων ἐπυνθάνετο· εἰκὸς δὲ μιν ἦν καὶ μνημόσυνα πάντων γράφεσθαι. Instead of recommending the choice of a subject similar to that of Homer, it was to be expected that critics should have exhorted the poets of these latter days to adopt or invent a narrative in itself more susceptible of poetical ornament, and to avail themselves of that advantage in order to compensate, in some degree, the inferiority of genius. The contrary course has been inculcated by almost all the writers upon the *Εποποιία*; with what success, the fate of Homer's numerous imitators may best show. The *ultimum supplicium* of criticism was inflicted on the author if he did not choose a subject which at once deprived him of all claim to originality, and placed him, if not in actual contest, at least in fatal comparison, with those giants in the land whom it was most his interest to avoid. The celebrated receipt for writing an epic poem, which appeared in the *Guardian*, was the first instance in which common sense was applied to this department of poetry; and, indeed, if the question be considered on its own merits, we must be satisfied that narrative poetry, if strictly confined to the great occurrences of history, would be deprived

of the individual interest which it is so well calculated to excite.

Modern poets may therefore be pardoned in seeking simpler subjects of verse, more interesting in proportion to their simplicity. Two or three figures, well grouped, suit the artist better than a crowd, for whatever purpose assembled. For the same reason, a scene immediately presented to the imagination, and directly brought home to the feelings, though involving the fate of but one or two persons, is more favourable for poetry than the political struggles and convulsions which influence the fate of kingdoms. The former are within the reach and comprehension of all, and, if depicted with vigour, seldom fail to fix attention: The other, if more sublime, are more vague and distant, less capable of being distinctly understood, and infinitely less capable of exciting those sentiments which it is the very purpose of poetry to inspire. To generalise is always to destroy effect. We would, for example, be more interested in the fate of an individual soldier in combat, than in the grand event of a general action; with the happiness of two lovers raised from misery and anxiety to peace and union, than with the successful exertions of a whole nation. From what causes this may originate, is a separate and obviously an immaterial consideration. Before ascribing this peculiarity to causes decidedly and odiously selfish, it is proper to recollect, that while men see only a limited space, and while their affections and conduct are regulated, not by aspiring to an universal good, but by exerting their power of making themselves and others happy within the limited scale allotted to each individual, so long will individual history and individual virtue be the readier and more accessible road to general interest and attention; and, perhaps, we may add, that it is the more useful, as well as the more accessible, inasmuch as it affords an example capable of being easily imitated.

According to the author's idea of Romantic Poetry, as distinguished from Epic, the former comprehends a fictitious narrative, framed and combined at the pleasure of the writer; beginning and ending as he may judge best: which neither exacts nor refuses the use of supernatural machinery; which is free from the technical rules of the *Épée*; and is subject only to those which good sense, good taste, and good morals, apply to every species of poetry without exception. The date may be in a remote age, or in the present; the story may detail the adventures of a prince or of a peasant. In a word, the author is absolute master of his country and its inhabitants, and everything is permitted to him excepting to be heavy or prosaic, for which, free and unembarrassed as he is, he has no manner of apology. Those, it is probable, will be found the peculiarities of this species of composition; and before joining

the outcry against the vitiated taste that fosters and encourages it, the justice and grounds of it ought to be made perfectly apparent. If the want of sieges, and battles, and great military evolutions in our poetry is complained of, let us reflect, that the campaigns and heroes of our days are perpetuated in a record that neither requires nor admits of the aid of fiction; and if the complaint refers to the inferiority of our bards, let us pay a just tribute to their modesty, limiting them, as it does, to subjects which, however indifferently treated, have still the interest and charm of novelty, and which thus prevents them from adding insipidity to their other more insuperable defects.

INTRODUCTION.

I.

COME, LUCY! while 'tis morning hour,
 The woodland brook we needs must pass;
 So, ere the sun assume his power,
 We shelter in our poplar bower,
 Where dew lies long upon the flower,
 Though vanish'd from the velvet grass.
 Curbing the stream, this stony ridge
 May serve us for a sylvan bridge;
 For here compell'd to disunite,
 Round petty isles the runnels glide
 And chafing off their puny spite,
 The shallow murmurers waste their might,
 Yielding to footstep free and light
 A dry-shod pass from side to side.

II.

Nay, why this hesitating pause?
 And, Lucy, as thy step withdraws,
 Why sidelong eye the streamlet's brim?
 Titania's foot without a slip,
 Like thine, though timid, light, and slim,
 From stone to stone might safely trip,
 Nor risk the glow-worm clasp to dip
 That binds her slipper's silken rim.
 Or trust thy lover's strength: nor fear
 That this same stalwart arm of mine,

Which could yon oak's prone trunk uprear,
 Shall shrink beneath the burden dear
 Of form so slender, light, and fine—
 So,—now, the danger dared at last,
 Look back, and smile at perils past!

III.

And now we reach the favourite glade,
 Paled in by copsewood, cliff, and stone,
 Where never harsher sounds invade,
 To break affection's whispering tone,
 Than the deep breeze that waves the shade,
 Than the small brooklet's feeble moan.
 Come! rest thee on thy wonted seat;
 Moss'd is the stone, the turf is green,
 A place where lovers best may meet,
 Who would that not their love be seen.
 The boughs, that dim the summer sky,
 Shall hide us from each lurking spy,
 That fain would spread the invidious tale,
 How Lucy of the lofty eye,
 Noble in birth, in fortunes high,
 She for whom lords and barons sigh,
 Meets her poor Arthur in the dale.

IV.

How deep that blush!—how deep that sigh!
 And why does Lucy shun mine eye?
 Is it because that crimson draws
 Its colour from some secret cause,
 Some hidden movement of the breast,
 She would not that her Arthur guessed?
 O! quicker far is lovers' ken
 Than the dull glance of common men,
 And, by strange sympathy, can spell
 The thoughts the loved one will not tell!
 And mine, in Lucy's blush, saw met
 The hues of pleasure and regret;
 Pride mingled in the sigh her voice,
 And shared with Love the crimson glow;
 Well pleased that thou art Arthur's choice,
 Yet shamed thine own is placed so low:

Thou turn'st thy self-confessing cheek,
 As if to meet the breeze's cooling;
 Then, Lucy, hear thy tutor speak,
 For Love, too, has his hours of schooling.

V.

Too oft my anxious eye has spied
 That secret grief thou fain wouldst hide,
 The passing pang of humbled pride;
 Too oft, when through the splendid hall,
 The load-star of each heart and eye,
 My fair one leads the glittering ball,
 Will her stol'n glance on Arthur fall,
 With such a blush and such a sigh!
 Thou wouldst not yield, for wealth or rank,
 The heart thy worth and beauty won,
 Nor leave me on this mossy bank,
 To meet a rival on a throne:
 Why, then, should vain repinings rise,
 That to thy lover fate denies
 A nobler name, a wide domain,
 A Baron's birth, a menial train,
 Since Heaven assign'd him, for his part,
 A lyre, a falchion, and a heart?

VI.

My sword——its master must be dumb;
 But, when a soldier names my name,
 Approach, my Lucy! fearless come,
 Nor dread to hear of Arthur's shame.
 My heart——'mid all yon courtly crew,
 Of lordly rank and lofty line,
 Is there to love and honour true,
 That boasts a pulse so warm as mine?
 They praised thy diamond's lustre rare—
 Match'd with thine eyes, I thought it faded;
 They praised the pearls that bound thy hair—
 I only saw the locks they braided;
 They talk'd of wealthy dower and land,
 And titles of high birth the token—
 I thought of Lucy's heart and hand,
 Nor knew the sense of what was spoken.

And yet, if rank'd in Fortune's roll,
 I might have learn'd their choice unwise,
 Who rate the dower above the soul,
 And Lucy's diamonds o'er her eyes.

VII.

My lyre—it is an idle toy,
 That borrows accents not its own,
 Like warbler of Colombian sky,
 That sings but in a mimic tone.
 Ne'er did it sound o'er sainted well,
 Nor boasts it aught of Border spell;
 Its strings no feudal slogan pour
 Its heroes draw no broad claymore;
 No shouting clans applauses raise,
 Because it sung their fathers' praise;
 On Scottish moor, or English down,
 It ne'er was graced by fair renown;
 Nor won,—best meed to minstrel true,—
 One favouring smile from fair BUCCLEUCH!
 By one poor streamlet sounds its tone,
 And heard by one dear maid alone.

VIII.

But, if thou bid'st, these tones shall tell
 Of errant knight, and damozelle;
 Of the dread knot a Wizard tied,
 In punishment of maiden's pride,
 In notes of marvel and of fear,
 That best may charm romantic ear.
 For Lucy loves,—like COLLINS, illstarred name
 Whose lay's requital, was that tardy fame,
 Who bound no laurel round his living head,
 Should hang it o'er his monument when dead,—
 For Lucy loves to tread enchanted strand,
 And thread, like him, the maze of fairy land;²⁰⁴
 Of golden battlements to view the gleam,
 And slumber soft by some Elysian stream;
 Such lays she loves,—and, such my Lucy's choice
 What other song can claim her Poet's voice?

CANTO FIRST.

I.

WHERE is the Maiden of mortal strain,
 That may match with the Baron of Triermain ²⁰⁵
 She must be lovely, and constant, and kind,
 Holy and pure, and humble of mind,
 Blithe of cheer, and gentle of mood,
 Courteous, and generous, and noble of blood—
 Lovely as the sun's first ray,
 When it breaks the clouds of an April day ;
 Constant and true as the widow'd dove,
 Kind as a minstrel that sings of love ;
 Pure as the fountain in rocky cave,
 Where never sunbeam kiss'd the wave ;
 Humble as maiden that loves in vain,
 Holy as hermit's vesper strain ;
 Gentle as breeze that but whispers and dies,
 Yet blithe as the light leaves that dance in its sighs ;
 Courteous as monarch the morn he is crown'd,
 Generous as spring-dews that bless the glad ground ;
 Noble her blood as the currents that met
 In the veins of the noblest Plantagenet—
 Such must her form be, her mood, and her strain,
 That shall match with Sir Roland of Triermain.

II.

Sir Roland de Vaux he hath laid him to sleep,
 His blood it was fever'd, his breathing was deep,
 He had been pricking against the Scot,
 The foray was long, and the skirmish hot ;
 His dented helm and his buckler's plight
 Bore token of a stubborn fight.

All in the castle must hold them still,
 Harpers must lull him to his rest,
 With the slow soft tunes he loves the best,
 Till sleep sink down upon his breast
 Like the dew on a summer hill.

III.

It was the dawn of an autumn day ;
 The sun was struggling with frost fog gray,

That like a silvery crape was spread
 Round Skiddaw's dim and distant head
 And faintly gleam'd each painted pane
 Of the lordly halls of Triermaln,

When that Baron bold awoke.
 Starting he woke, and loudly did call,
 Rousing his menials in bower and hall,
 While hastily he spoke.

IV.

" Harken, my minstrels ! Which of ye all
 Touch'd his harp with that dying fall,

So sweet, so soft, so faint,
 It seem'd an angel's whisper'd call
 To an expiring saint ?

And hearken, my merry-men ! What time or where
 Did she pass, that maid with her heavenly brow,
 With her look so sweet and her eyes so fair,
 And her graceful step and her angel air,
 And the eagle plume in her dark-brown hair,
 That pass'd from my bower e'en now ? "

V.

Answer'd him Richard de Bretville ; he
 Was chief of the Baron's minstrelsy,—

" Silent, noble chieftain, we
 Have sat since midnight close,
 When such lulling sounds as the brooklet sings,
 Murrur'd from our melting strings,
 And hush'd you to repose.

Had a harp-note sounded here,
 It had caught my watchful ear,
 Although it fell as faint and shy
 As bashful maiden's half-form'd sigh,
 When she thinks her lover near."—

Answer'd Philip of Fastwaite tall,
 He kept guard in the outer-hall,—
 " Since at eve our watch took post,
 Not a foot has thy portal cross'd ;

Else had I heard the steps, though low
 And light they fell, as when earth receives,
 In morn of frost, the wither'd leaves,
 That drop when no winds blow."—

VI.

"Then come thou hither, Henry, my page,
 Whom I saved from the sack of Hermitage,
 When that dark castle, tower, and spire,
 Rose to the skies a pile of fire,
 And redden'd all the Nine-stane Hill,
 And the shrieks of death, that wildly broke
 Through devouring flame and smothering smoke,
 Made the warrior's heart-blood chill.
 The trustiest thou of all my train,
 My fleetest courser thou must rein,
 And ride to Lyulph's tower,
 And from the Baron of Triermaln
 Greet well that sage of power.
 He is sprung from Druid sires.
 And British bards that tuned their lyres
 To Arthur's and Pendragon's praise.
 And his who sleeps at Dunmailraise
 Gifted like his gifted race,
 He the characters can trace,
 Graven deep in elder time
 Upon Helvellyn's cliffs sublime
 Sign and sigil well doth he know
 And can bode of weal and woe,
 Of kingdoms' fall, and fate of wars,
 From mystic dreams and course of stars.
 He shall tell if middle earth
 To that enchanting shape gave birth,
 Or if 'twas but an airy thing,
 Such as fantastic slumbers bring,
 Framed from the rainbow's varying dyes,
 Or fading tints of western skies.
 For, by the Blessed Rood I swear,
 If that fair form breathe vital air,
 No other maiden by my side
 Shall ever rest De Vaux's bride!"

VII.

The faithful Page he mounts his steed,
 And soon he cross'd green Irthing's mead,
 Dash'd o'er Kirkoswald's verdant plain,
 And Eden barr'd his course in vain.
 He pass'd red Penrith's Table Round,²⁰⁶
 For feats of chivalry renown'd,

Left Mayburgh's mound and stones of power,²⁰⁷
By Druids raised in magic hour,
And traced the Eamont's winding way,
Till Ulfo's lake beneath him lay.

VIII.

Onward he rode, the pathway still
Winding betwixt the lake and hill ;
Till, on the fragment of a rock,
Struck from its base by lightning shock,
He saw the hoary Sage :
The silver moss and lichen twined,
With fern and deer-hair check'd and lined,
A cushion fit for age ;
And o'er him shook the aspin-tree,
A restless rustling canopy.
Then sprung young Henry from his selle,
And greeted Lyulph grave,
And then his master's tale did tell,
And then for counsel crave.
The Man of Years mused long and deep,
Of time's lost treasures taking keep,
And then, as rousing from a sleep,
His solemn answer gave.

IX.

“That maid is born of middle earth,
And may of man be won,
Though there have glided since her birth
Five hundred years and one.
But where's the Knight in all the north,
That dare the adventure follow forth,
So perilous to knightly worth,
In the valley of St. John ?
Listen, youth, to what I tell,
And bind it on thy memory well ;
Nor muse that I commence the rhyme
Far distant mid the wrecks of time.
The mystic tale, by bard and sage,
Is handed down from Merlin's age.

X.

.Lyulph's Tale.

“KING ARTHUR has ridden from merry Carlisle
When Pentecost was o'er :
He journey'd like errant-knight the while,
And sweetly the summer sun did smile
On mountain, moss, and moor.
Above his solitary track
Rose Glaramara's ridgy back,
Amid whose yawning gulfs the sun
Cast amber'd radiance red and dun,
Though never sunbeam could discern
The surface of that sable tarn,
In whose black mirror you may spy
The stars, while noontide lights the sky.
The gallant King he skirted still
The margin of that mighty hill ;
Rocks upon rocks incumbent hung,
And torrents, down the gullies flung,
Join'd the rude river that brawl'd on,
Recoiling now from crag and stone,
Now diving deep from human ken,
And raving down its darksome glen.
The Monarch judged this desert wild,
With such romantic ruin piled,
Was theatre by Nature's hand
For feat of high achievement plann'd.

XI.

“O rather he chose, that Monarch bold,
On vent'rous quest to ride,
In plate and mail, by wood and wold,
Than, with ermine trapp'd and cloth of gold,
In princely bower to bide ;
The bursting crash of a foeman's spear
As it shiver'd against his mail,
Was merrier music to his ear
Than courtier's whisper'd tale :
And the clash of Caliburn more dear,
When on the hostile casque it rung,
Than all the lays
To their monarch's praise
That the harpers of Reged sung.

He loved better to rest by wood or river,
 Than in bower of his bride, Dame Guenever,
 For he left that lady, so lovely of cheer,
 To follow adventures of danger and fear ;
 And the frank-hearted Monarch full little did wot,
 That she smiled, in his absence, on brave Lancelot.

XII.

“ He rode, till over down and dell
 The shade more broad and deeper fell ;
 And though around the mountain's head
 Flow'd streams of purple, and gold, and red,
 Dark at the base, unblest by beam,
 Frown'd the black rocks, and roar'd the stream.
 With toil the King his way pursued
 By lonely Threlkeld's waste and wood,
 Till on his course obliquely shone
 The narrow valley of SAINT JOHN,
 Down sloping to the western sky,
 Where lingering sunbeams love to lie.
 Right glad to feel those beams again,
 The King drew up his charger's rein ;
 With gauntlet raised he screen'd his sight,
 As dazzled with the level light,
 And, from beneath his glove of mail,
 Scann'd at his ease the lovely vale,
 While 'gainst the sun his armour bright
 Gleam'd ruddy like the beacon's light.

XIII.

“ Paled in by many a lofty hill,
 The narrow dale lay smooth and still,
 And, down its verdant bosom led,
 A winding brooklet found its bed.
 But, midmost of the vale, a mound
 Arose with airy turrets crown'd,
 Buttress, and rampire's circling bound,
 And mighty keep and tower ;
 Seem'd some primeval giant's hand
 The castle's massive walls had plann'd,
 A ponderous bulwark to withstand
 Ambitious Nimrod's power.

Above the moated entrance slung,
 The balanced drawbridge trembling hung,
 As jealous of a foe ;
 Wicket of oak, as iron hard,
 With iron studded, clench'd, and barr'd,
 And prong'd portcullis, join'd to guard
 The gloomy pass below.
 But the gray walls no banners crown'd,
 Upon the watch-tower's airy round
 No warder stood his horn to sound,
 No guard beside the bridge was found,
 And, where the Gothic gateway frown'd,
 Glanced neither bill nor bow.

XIV.

“Beneath the castle's gloomy pride
 In ample round did Arthur ride
 Three times ; nor living thing he spied,
 Nor heard a living sound,
 Save that, awakening from her dream,
 The owlet now began to scream,
 In concert with the rushing stream,
 That wash'd the battled mound.
 He lighted from his goodly steed,
 And he left him to graze on bank and mead ;
 And slowly he climb'd the narrow way,
 That reach'd the entrance grim and gray,
 And he stood the outward arch below,
 And his bugle-horn prepared to blow,
 In summons blithe and bold,
 Deeming to rouse from iron sleep
 The guardian of this dismal Keep,
 Which well he guess'd the hold
 Of wizard stern, or goblin grim,
 Or pagan of gigantic limb,
 The tyrant of the wold.

XV.

“The ivory bugle's golden tip
 Twice touch'd the monarch's manly lip,
 And twice his hand withdrew.
 —Think not but Arthur's heart was good ;
 His shield was cross'd by the blessed rood,

Had a pagan host before him stood,
 He had charged them through and through ;
 Yet the silence of that ancient place
 Sunk on his heart, and he paused a space
 Ere yet his horn he blew.
 But, instant as its 'larum rung,
 The castle gate was open flung,
 Portcullis rose with crashing groan
 Full harshly up its groove of stone ;
 The balance-beams obey'd the blast,
 And down the trembling drawbridge cast,
 The vaulted arch before him lay,
 With nought to bar the gloomy way,
 And onward Arthur paced, with hand
 On Caliburn's resistless brand.

XVI.

"A hundred torches, flashing bright,
 Dispell'd at once the gloomy night
 That lour'd along the walls,
 And show'd the King's astonish'd sight
 The inmates of the halls.
 Nor wizard stern, nor goblin grim,
 Nor giant huge of form and limb,
 Nor heathen knight, was there ;
 But the cressets, which odours flung aloft,
 Show'd by their yellow light and soft,
 A band of damsels fair.
 Onward they came, like summer wave
 That dances to the shore ;
 An hundred voices welcome gave,
 And welcome o'er and o'er !
 An hundred lovely hands assail
 The bucklers of the monarch's mail
 And busy labour'd to unhasp
 Rivet of steel and iron clasp.
 One wrapp'd him in a mantle fair,
 And one flung odours on his hair ;
 His short curl'd ringlets one smooth'd down,
 One wreathed them with a myrtle crown.
 A bride upon her wedding-day,
 Was tended ne'er by troop so gay.

XVII.

"Loud laugh'd they all,—the King, in vain,
 With questions task'd the giddy train ;
 Let him entreat, or crave, or call,
 'Twas one reply,—loud laugh'd they all.
 Then o'er him mimic chains they fling,
 Framed of the fairest flowers of spring.
 While some their gentle force unite,
 Onward to drag the wondering knight,
 Some, bolder, urge his pace with blows,
 Dealt with the lily or the rose.
 Behind him were in triumph borne
 The warlike arms he late had worn.
 Four of the train combined to rear
 The terrors of Tintadgel's spear ;
 Two, laughing at their lack of strength,
 Dragg'd Caliburn in cumbrous length ;
 One, while she aped a martial stride,
 Placed on her brows the helmet's pride ;
 Then scream'd, 'twixt laughter and surprise,
 To feel its depth o'erwhelm her eyes.
 With revel-shout, and triumph-song,
 Thus gaily march'd the giddy throng.

XVIII.

"Through many a gallery and hall
 They led, I ween, their royal thrall ;
 At length, beneath a fair arcade
 Their march and song at once they staid.
 The eldest maiden of the band,
 (The lovely maid was scarce eighteen,)
 Raised, with imposing air, her hand,
 And reverent silence did command,
 On entrance of their Queen,
 And they were mute.—But as a glance
 They steal on Arthur's countenance
 Bewilder'd with surprise,
 Their smother'd mirth again 'gan speak,
 In archly dimpled chin and cheek,
 And laughter-lighted eyes.

XIX.

"The attributes of those high days
 Now only live in minstrel-lays ;
 For Nature, now exhausted, still
 Was then profuse of good and ill.
 Strength was gigantic, valour high,
 And wisdom soar'd beyond the sky,
 And beauty had such matchless beam
 As lights not now a lover's dream.
 Yet e'en in that romantic age,
 Ne'er were such charms by mortal seen,
 As Arthur's dazzled eyes engage,
 When forth on that enchanted stage,
 With glittering train of maid and page,
 Advanced the castle's Queen !
 While up the hall she slowly pass'd,
 Her dark eye on the King she cast,
 That flash'd expression strong ;
 The longer dwelt that lingering look,
 Her cheek the livelier colour took,
 And scarce the shame-faced King could brook
 The gaze that lasted long.
 A sage, who had that look espied,
 Where kindling passion strove with pride,
 Had whisper'd, ' Prince, beware !
 From the chafed tiger rend the prey,
 Rush on the lion when at bay,
 Bar the fell dragon's blighted way,
 But shun that lovely snare !'--

XX.

"At once that inward strife suppress'd
 The dame approach'd her warlike guest,
 With greeting in that fair degree,
 Where female pride and courtesy
 Are blended with such passing art
 As awes at once and charms the heart.
 A courtly welcome first she gave,
 Then of his goodness 'gan to crave
 Construction fair and true
 Of her light maidens' idle mirth,
 Who drew from lonely glens their birth,

Nor knew to pay to stranger worth
 And dignity their due ;
 And then she pray'd that he would rest
 That night her castle's honour'd guest.
 The Monarch meetly thanks express'd ;
 The banquet rose at her behest,
 With lay and tale, and laugh and jest,
 Apace the evening flew.

XXI.

“ The Lady sate the Monarch by,
 Now in her turn abash'd and shy,
 And with indifference seem'd to hear
 The toys he whispered in her ear.
 Her bearing modest was and fair,
 Yet shadows of constraint were there,
 That show'd an over-cautious care
 Some inward thought to hide ;
 Oft did she pause in full reply,
 And oft cast down her large dark eye,
 Oft check'd the soft voluptuous sigh,
 That heaved her bosom's pride.
 Slight symptoms these, but shepherds know
 How hot the midday sun shall glow,
 From the mist of morning sky ;
 And so the wily Monarch guess'd,
 That this assumed restraint express'd
 More ardent passions in the breast,
 Than ventured to the eye.
 Closer he press'd, while beakers rang,
 While maidens laugh'd and minstrels sang,
 Still closer to her ear—
 But why pursue the common tale ?
 Or wherefore show how knights prevail
 When ladies dare to hear ?
 Or wherefore trace, from what slight cause
 Its source one tyrant passion draws,
 Till, mastering all within,
 Where lives the man that has not tried,
 How mirth can into folly glide,
 And folly into sin !”

CANTO SECOND.

I.

Lynlph's Tale, continued.

" ANOTHER day, another day,
 And yet another glides away !
 The Saxon stern, the pagan Dane,
 Maraud on Britain's shores again.
 Arthur, of Christendom the flower,
 Lies loitering in a lady's bower ;
 The horn, that foemen wont to fear,
 Sounds but to wake the Cumbrian deer,
 And Caliburn, the British pride,
 Hangs useless by a lover's side.

II.

" Another day, another day,
 And yet another, glides away !
 Heroic plans in pleasure drown'd,
 He thinks not of the Table Round ;
 In lawless love dissolved his life,
 He thinks not of his beauteous wife :
 Better he loves to snatch a flower
 From bosom of his paramour,
 Than from a Saxon knight to wrest
 The honours of his heathen crest !
 Better to wreath, 'mid tresses brown,
 The heron's plume her hawk struck down,
 Than o'er the altar give to flow
 The banners of a Paynim foe.
 Thus, week by week, and day by day,
 His life inglorious glides away :
 But she, that soothes his dream, with fear
 Beholds his hour of waking near.

III.

" Much force have mortal charms to stay
 Our peace in virtue's toilsome way
 But Guendolen's might far outshine
 Each maid of merely mortal line.

Her mother was of human birth,
 Her sire a Genie of the earth,
 In days of old deem'd to preside
 O'er lovers' wiles and beauty's pride,
 By youths and virgins worshipp'd long,
 With festive dance and choral song,
 Till, when the cross to Britain came,
 On heathen altars died the flame.
 Now, deep in Wastdale solitude,
 The downfall of his rights he rued,
 And, born of his resentment heir,
 He train'd to guile that lady fair,
 To sink in slothful sin and shame
 The champions of the Christian name.
 Well skill'd to keep vain thoughts alive,
 And all to promise, nought to give,—
 The timid youth had hope in store,
 The bold and pressing gain'd no more.
 As wilder'd children leave their home,
 After the rainbow's arch to roam,
 Her lovers barter'd fair esteem,
 Faith, fame, and honour, for a dream.

IV.

" Her sire's soft arts the soul to tame
 She practised thus—till Arthur came;
 Then, frail humanity had part,
 And all the mother claim'd her heart.
 Forgot each rule her father gave,
 Sunk from a princess to a slave,
 Too late must Guendolen deplore,
 He, that has all, can hope no more!
 Now must she see her lover strain,
 At every turn her feeble chain;
 Watch, to new-bind each knot, and shrink
 To view each fast-decaying link.
 Art she invokes to Nature's aid,
 Her vest to zone, her locks to braid;
 Each varied pleasure heard her call,
 The feast, the tourney, and the ball:
 Her storied lore she next applies,
 Taxing her mind to aid her eyes;

Now more than mortal wise, and then
 In female softness sunk again ;
 Now, raptur'd, with each wish complying,
 With feign'd reluctance now denying ;
 Each charm she varied, to retain
 A varying heart —and all in vain !”

V.

“Thus in the garden's narrow bound,
 Flank'd by some castle's Gothic round,
 Fain would the artist's skill provide,
 The limits of his realms to hide.
 The walks in labyrinths he twines,
 Shade after shade with skill combines,
 With many a varied flowery knot,
 And copse, and arbour, decks the spot,
 Tempting the hasty foot to stay,
 And linger on the lovely way——
 Vain art ! vain hope ! 'tis fruitless all !
 At length we reach the bounding wall,
 And, sick of flower and trim-dress'd tree,
 Long for rough glades and forest free.

VI.

“Three summer months had scantily flown,
 When Arthur, in embarrass'd tone,
 Spoke of his liegemen and his throne ;
 Said, all too long had been his stay,
 And duties, which a Monarch sway,
 Duties, unknown to humbler men,
 Must tear her knight from Guendolen.—
 She listen'd silently the while,
 Her mood express'd in bitter smile ;
 Beneath her eye must Arthur quail,
 And oft resume the unfinish'd tale,
 Confessing, by his downcast eye,
 The wrong he sought to justify.
 He ceased. A moment mute she gazed,
 And then her looks to heaven she raised
 One palm her temples veiled, to hide
 The tear that sprung in spite of pride !
 The other for an instant press'd
 The foldings of her silken vest !

VII.

"At her reproachful sign and look,
 The hint the Monarch's conscience took.
 Eager he spoke—'No, lady, no!
 Deem not of British Arthur so,
 Nor think he can deserter prove
 To the dear pledge of mutual love.
 I swear by sceptre and by sword,
 As belted knight and Britain's lord,
 That if a boy shall claim my care,
 That boy is born a kingdom's heir;
 But, if a maiden Fate allows,
 To choose that maid a fitting spouse,
 A summer-day in lists shall strive
 My knights,—the bravest knights alive,—
 And he, the best and bravest tried,
 Shall Arthur's daughter claim for bride.'—
 He spoke, with voice resolved and high—
 The lady deign'd him not reply.

VIII.

"At dawn of morn, ere on the brake
 His matins did a warbler make,
 Or stir'd his wing to brush away
 A single dew-drop from the spray.
 Ere yet a sunbeam, through the mist,
 The castle-battlements had kiss'd,
 The gates revolve, the drawbridge falls,
 And Arthur sallies from the walls.
 Doff'd his soft garb of Persia's loom,
 And steel from spur to helmet-plume,
 His Lybian steed full proudly trode,
 And joyful neigh'd beneath his load.
 The Monarch gave a passing sigh
 To penitence and pleasures by,
 When, lo! to his astonish'd ken
 Appear'd the form of Guendolen.

IX.

"Beyond'the outmost wall she stood,
 Attired like huntress of the wood:

Sandall'd her feet, her ankles bare,
 And eagle-plumage deck'd her hair ;
 Firm was her look, her bearing bold,
 And in her hand a cup of gold.
 'Thou goest !' she said, 'and ne'er again
 Must we two meet, in joy or pain.
 Full fain would I this hour delay,
 Though weak the wish—yet, wilt thou stay ?
 —No ! thou look'st forward. Still attend,—
 Part we like lover and like friend,'
 She raised the cup—'Not this the juice
 The sluggish vines of earth produce ;
 Pledge we, at parting, in the draught
 Which Genii love !'—she said, and quaff'd ;
 And strange unwonted lustres fly
 From her flush'd cheek and sparkling eye.

X.

"The courteous Monarch bent him low,
 And, stooping down from saddlebow,
 Lifted the cup, in act to drink.
 A drop escaped the goblet's brink—
 Intense as liquid fire from hell,
 Upon the charger's neck it fell.
 Screaming with agony and fright,
 He bolted twenty feet upright—
 —The peasant still can show the dint,
 Where his hoofs lighted on the flint.—
 From Arthur's hand the goblet flew,
 Scattering a shower of fiery dew,
 That burn'd and blighted where it fell !
 The frantic steed rush'd up the dell,
 As whistles from the bow the reed ;
 Nor bit nor rein could check his speed,
 Until he gain'd the hill ;
 Then breath and sinew fail'd apace,
 And, reeling from the desperate race,
 He stood, exhausted, still.
 The Monarch, breathless and amazed,
 Back on the fatal castle gazed—
 Nor tower nor donjon could he spy,
 Darkening against the morning sky ; 208

But, on the spot where once they frown'd,
 The lonely streamlet brawl'd around
 A tufted knoll, where dimly shone
 Fragments of rock an drifted stone.
 Musing on this strange hap the while,
 The king wends back to fair Carlisle :
 And cares, that cumber royal sway
 Wore memory of the past away.

XI.

“ Full fifteen years, and more, were sped,
 Each brought new wreaths to Arthur's head
 Twelve bloody fields, with glory fought,
 The Saxons to subjection brought :
 Rython, the mighty giant, slain
 By his good brand, relieved Bretagne :
 The Pictish Gillamore in fight,
 And Roman Lucius, own'd his might ;
 And wide were through the world renown'd
 The glories of his Table Round.
 Each knight who sought adventurous fame,
 To the bold court of Britain came,
 And all who suffer'd causeless wrong,
 From tyrant proud, or faitour strong,
 Sought Arthur's presence to complain,
 Nor there for aid implored in vain.

XII.

“ For this the King, with pomp and pride,
 Held solemn court at Whitsuntide,
 And summon'd Prince and Peer,
 All who owed homage for their land,
 Or who craved knighthood from his hand,
 Or who had succour to demand,
 To come from far and near.
 At such high tide, were glee and game
 Mingled with feats of martial fame,
 For many a stranger champion came,
 In lists to break a spear ;
 And not a knight of Arthur's host,
 Save that he trode some foreign coast,
 But at this feast of Pentecost
 Before him must appear.

Ah, Minstrels ! when the Table Round
 Arose, with all its warriors crown'd,
 There was a theme for bards to sound
 In triumph to their string !
 Five hundred years are past and gone,
 But time shall draw his dying groan,
 Ere he behold the British throne
 Begirt with such a ring !

XIII.

“The heralds named the appointed spot,
 As Caerleon or Camelot,
 Or Carlisle fair and free.
 At Penrith, now, the feast was set,
 And in fair Eamont's vale were met
 The flower of Chivalry.²⁰⁹
 There Galaad came with manly grace,
 Yet maiden meekness in his face ;
 There Morolt of the iron mace,
 And love-lorn Tristrem there :
 And Dinadam with lively glance
 And Lanval with the fairy lance,
 And Mordred with his look askance,
 Brunor and Bevidere.
 Why should I tell of numbers more ?
 Sir Cay, Sir Banier, and Sir Bore,
 Sir Carodac the keen,
 The gentle Gawain's courteous lore,
 Hector de Mares and Pellinore,
 And Lancelot, that ever more
 Look'd stol'n-wise on the Queen.²¹⁰

XIV.

“When wine and mirth did most abound,
 And harpers play'd their blythest round,
 A shrilly trumpet shook the ground,
 And marshals clear'd the ring ;
 A maiden, on a palfrey white,
 Heading a band of damsels bright,
 Paced through the circle, to alight
 And kneel before the King.

Arthur, with strong emotion, saw
 Her graceful boldness check'd by awe,
 Her dress, like huntress of the wold,
 Her bow and baldric trapp'd with gold,
 Her sandall'd feet, her ankles bare,
 And the eagle-plume that deck'd her hair.
 Graceful her veil she backward flung——
 The King, as from his seat he sprung,
 Almost cried, 'Guendolen !'
 But 'twas a face more frank and wild,
 Betwixt the woman and the child,
 Where less of magic beauty smiled
 Than of the race of men ;
 And in the forehead's haughty grace,
 The lines of Britain's royal race,
 Pendragon's you might ken.

XV.

"Faltering, yet gracefully, she said—
 'Great Prince ! behold an orphan maid,
 In her departed mother's name,
 A father's vow'd protection claim !
 The vow was sworn in desert lone,
 In the deep valley of St. John.'
 At once the King the suppliant raised,
 And kiss'd her brow, her beauty praised ;
 His vow, he said, should well be kept,
 Ere in the sea the sun was dipp'd,—
 Then, conscious, glanced upon his queen ;
 But she, unruffled at the scene
 Of human frailty, construed mild,
 Look'd upon Lancelot and smiled.

XVI.

"'Up ! up ! each knight of gallant crest
 Take buckler, spear, and brand !
 He that to-day shall bear him best,
 Shall win my Gyneth's hand.
 And Arthur's daughter, when a bride,
 Shall bring a noble dower ;
 Both fair Strath-Clyde and Reged wide,
 And Carlisle town and tower.'

Then might you hear each valiant knight,
 To page and squire that cried,
 'Bring my armour bright, and my courser wight !
 'Tis not each day that a warrior's might
 May win a royal bride.
 Then cloaks and caps of maintenance
 In haste aside they fling ;
 The helmets glance, and gleams the lance,
 And the steel-weaved hauberks ring.
 Small care had they of their peaceful array,
 They might gather it that wolde ;
 For brake and bramble glitter'd gay,
 With pearls and cloth of gold.

XVII.

" Within trumpet sound of the Table Round
 Were fifty champions free,
 And they all arise to fight that prize,—
 They all arise but three.
 Nor love's fond troth, nor wedlock's oath,
 One gallant could withhold,
 For priests will allow of a broken vow,
 For penance or for gold.
 But sigh and glance from ladies bright
 Among the troop were thrown,
 To plead their right, and true-love plight,
 And 'plain of honour flown.
 The knights they busied them so fast,
 With buckling spur and belt,
 That sigh and look, by ladies cast,
 Were neither seen nor felt.
 From pleading, or upbraiding glance,
 Each gallant turns aside,
 And only thought, ' If speeds my lance,
 A queen becomes my bride !
 She has fair Strath-Clyde, and Reged wide,
 And Carlisle tower and town ;
 She is the loveliest maid, beside,
 That ever heir'd a crown.'
 So in haste their coursers they bestride,
 And strike their visors down.

XVIII.

"The champions, arm'd in martial sort,
 Have throng'd into the list,
 And but three knights of Arthur's court
 Are from the tourney miss'd.
 And still these lovers' fame survives
 For faith so constant shown,—
 There were two who loved their neighbours' wives,
 And one who loved his own,²¹¹
 The first was Lancelot de Lac,
 The second Tristrem bold,
 The third was valiant Carodac,
 Who won the cup of gold,
 What time, of all King Arthur's crew
 (Thereof came jeer and laugh,)
 He, as the mate of lady true,
 Alone the cup could quaff.
 Though envy's tongue would fain surmise,
 That but for very shame,
 Sir Carodac, to fight that prize,
 Had given both cup and dame;
 Yet, since but one of that fair court
 Was true to wedlock's shrine,
 Brand him who will with base report,—
 He shall be free from mine.

XIX.

"Now caracoled the steeds in air,
 Now plumes and pennons wanton'd fair,
 As all around the lists so wide
 In panoply the champions ride.
 King Arthur saw with startled eye,
 The flower of chivalry march by,
 The bulwark of the Christian creed,
 The kingdom's shield in hour of need.
 Too late he thought him of the woe
 Might from their civil conflict flow;
 For well he knew they would not part
 Till cold was many a gallant heart.
 His hasty vow he 'gan to rue,
 And Gyneth then apart he drew;
 To her his leading-staff resign'd,
 But added caution grave and kind

XX.

" 'Thou see'st, my child, as promise-bound,
 I bid the trump for tourney sound.
 Take thou my warder as the queen
 And umpire of the martial scene ;
 But mark thou this :—as Beauty bright
 Is polar star to valiant knight,
 As at her word his sword he draws,
 His fairest guerdon her applause,
 So gentle maid should never ask
 Of knighthood vain and dangerous task ;
 And Beauty's eyes should ever be
 Like the twin stars that soothe the sea,
 And Beauty's breath shall whisper peace,
 And bid the storm of battle cease.
 I tell thee this, lest all too far,
 These knights urge tourney into war.
 Blithe at the trumpet let them go,
 And fairly counter blow for blow ;—
 No striplings these, who succour need
 For a razed helm or falling steed.
 But, Gyneth, when the strife grows warm
 And threatens death or deadly harm,
 Thy sire entreats, thy king commands,
 Thou drop the warder from thy hands.
 Trust thou thy father with thy fate,
 Doubt not he choose thee fitting mate ;
 Nor be it said, through Gyneth's pride
 A rose of Arthur's chaplet died.

XXI.

" A proud and discontented glow
 O'ershadow'd Gyneth's brow of snow ;
 She put the warder by :—
 ' Reserve thy boon, my liege,' she said,
 ' Thus chaffer'd down and limited,
 Debased and narrow'd for a maid
 Of less degree than I.
 No petty chief, but holds his heir
 At a more honour'd price and rare
 Than Britain's King holds me !

Although the sun-burn'd maid, for dower,
Has but her father's rugged tower,

His barren hill and lee.—

King Arthur swore, "By crown and sword,

As belted knight and Britain's lord,

That a whole summer's day should strive

His knights, the bravest knights alive!"

Recall thine oath! and to her glen

Poor Gyneth can return agen;

Not on thy daughter will the stain,

That soils thy sword and crown remain.

But think not she will e'er be bride

Save to the bravest, proved and tried;

Pendragon's daughter will not fear

For clashing sword or splinter'd spear,

Nor shrink though blood should flow;

And all too well sad Guendolen

Hath taught the faithlessness of men,

That child of hers should pity, when

Their meed they undergo.'—

XXII.

"He frown'd and sigh'd, the Monarch bold:—

'I give—what I may not withhold;

For, not for danger, dread, or death,

Must British Arthur break his faith.

Too late I mark, thy mother's art

Hath taught thee this relentless part.

I blame her not, for she had wrong,

But not to these my faults belong.

Use, then, the warder as thou wilt;

But trust me, that, if life be spilt,

In Arthur's love, in Arthur's grace,

Gyneth shall lose a daughter's place.'

With that he turn'd his head aside,

Nor brook'd to gaze upon her pride,

As, with the truncheon raised, she sate

The arbitress of mortal fate;

Nor brook'd to mark, in ranks disposed,

How the bold champions stood opposed,

For shrill the trumpet-flourish fell

Upon his ear like passing bell!

Then first from sight of martial fray
Did Britain's hero turn away.

XXIII.

"But Gyneth heard the clangour high,
As hears the hawk the partridge cry.
Oh, blame her not! the blood was hers,
That at the trumpet's summons stirs!--
And e'en the gentlest female eye
Might the brave strife of chivalry
A while untroubled view;
So well accomplish'd was each knight,
To strike and to defend in fight,
Their meeting was a goodly sight,
While plate and mail held true.
The lists with painted plumes were strown.
Upon the wind at random thrown,
But helm and breastplate bloodless shone,
It seem'd their feather'd crests alone
Should this encounter rue.
And ever, as the combat grows,
The trumpet's cheery voice arose,
Like lark's shrill song the flourish flows,
Heard while the gale of April blows
The merry greenwood through.

XXIV.

"But soon to earnest grew their game,
The spears drew blood, the swords struck flame,
And, horse and man, to ground there came
Knights, who shall rise no more!
Gone was the pride the war that graced
Gay shields were cleft, and crests defaced.
And steel coats riven, and helms unbraced,
And pennons stream'd with gore.
Gone, too, were fence and fair array,
And desperate strength made deadly way
At random through the bloody fray,
And blows were dealt with headlong sway
Unheeding where they fell:

And now the trumpet's clamours seem
 Like the shrill sea-bird's wailing scream,
 Heard o'er the whirlpool's gulflng stream,
 The sinking seaman's knell!

XXV.

"Seem'd in this dismal hour, that Fate
 Would Camlan's ruin antedate,
 And spare dark Mordred's crime ;
 Already gasping on the ground
 Lie twenty of the Table Round,
 Of chivalry the prime.
 Arthur, in anguish, tore away
 From head and beard his tresses gray,
 And she, proud Gyneth, felt dismay,
 And quaked with ruth and fear ;
 But still she deem'd her mother's shade
 Hung o'er the tumult, and forbade
 The sign that had the slaughter staid,
 And chid the rising tear.
 Then Brunor, Taulas, Mador, fell,
 Helias the White, and Lionel,
 And many a champion more ;
 Rochemont and Dinadam are down,
 And Ferrand of the Forest Brown
 Lies gasping in his gore.
 Vanoc, by mighty Morolt press'd
 Even to the confines of the list,
 Young Vanoc of the beardless face,
 (Fame spoke the youth of Merlin's race,)
 O'erpower'd at Gyneth's footstool bled,
 His heart's-blood dyed her sandals red.
 But then the sky was overcast.
 Then howl'd at once a whirlwind's blast,
 And, rent by sudden throes,
 Yawn'd in mid lists the quaking earth,
 And from the gulf,—tremendous birth!—
 The form of Merlin rose.

XXVI.

"Sternly the Wizard Prophet eyed
 The dreary lists with slaughter dyed,
 And sternly raised his hand :—

'Madmen,' he said, 'your strife forbear ;
 And thou, fair cause of mischief, hear
 The doom thy fates demand !
 Long shall close in stony sleep
 Eyes for ruth that would not weep ;
 Iron lethargy shall seal
 Heart that pity scorn'd to feel.
 Yet, because thy mother's art
 Warp'd thine unsuspecting heart,
 And for love of Arthur's race,
 Punishment is blent with grace,
 Thou shalt bear thy penance lone
 In the Valley of Saint John,
 And this weird shall overtake thee ;
 Sleep, until a knight shall wake thee,
 For feats of arms as far renown'd
 As warrior of the Table Round.
 Long endurance of thy slumber
 Well may teach the world to number
 All their woes from Gyneth's pride,
 When the Red Cross champions died.'

XXVII.

"As Merlin speaks, on Gyneth's eye
 Slumber's load begins to lie ;
 Fear and anger vainly strive
 Still to keep its light alive.
 Twice, with effort and with pause,
 O'er her brow her hand she draws ;
 Twice her strength in vain she tries,
 From the fatal chair to rise,
 Merlin's magic doom is spoken.
 Vanoc's death must now be wroken,
 Slow the dark-fringed eyelids fall,
 Curtaining each azure ball,
 Slowly as on summer eves
 Violets fold their dusky leaves,
 The weighty baton of command
 Now bears down her sinking hand,
 On her shoulder droops her head ;
 Net of pearl and golden thread,
 Bursting, gave her locks to flow
 O'er her arm and breast of snow.

And so lovely seem'd she there,
Spell-bound in her ivory chair,
That her angry sire, repenting,
Craved stern Merlin for relenting,
And the champions, for her sake,
Would again the contest wake ;
Till, in necromantic night,
Gyneth vanish'd from their sight.

XXVIII.

“ Still she bears her weird alone,
In the Valley of Saint John ;
And her semblance oft will seem,
Mingling in a champion's dream,
Of her weary lot to 'plain,
And crave his aid to burst her chain.
While her wondrous tale was new,
Warriors to her rescue drew,
East and west, and south and north,
From the Liffy, Thames, and Forth.
Most have sought in vain the glen,
Tower nor castle could they ken ;
Not at every time or tide,
Nor by every eye, descried.
Fast and vigil must be borne,
Many a night in watching worn,
Ere an eye of mortal powers
Can discern those magic towers.
Of the persevering few,
Some from hopeless task withdrew,
When they read the dismal threat
Graved upon the gloomy gate.
Few have braved the yawning door,
And those few return'd no more.
In the lapse of time forgot,
Wellnigh lost in Gyneth's lot ;
Sound her sleep as in the tomb,
Till waken'd by the trump of doom.

END OF LYULPH'S TALE.

Here pause my tale ; for all too soon,
 My Lucy, comes the hour of noon.
 Already from thy lofty dome
 Its courtly inmates 'gin to roam,
 And each, to kill the goodly day
 That God has granted them, his way
 Of lazy sauntering has sought ;
 Lordlings and wittlings not a few,
 Incapable of doing aught,
 Yet ill at ease with nought to do.
 Here is no longer place for me ;
 For, Lucy, thou wouldst blush to see
 Some phantom, fashionably thin,
 With limb of lath and kerchief'd chin,
 And lounging gape, or sneering grin,
 Steal sudden on our privacy.
 And how should I, so humbly born,
 Endure the graceful spectre's scorn ?
 Faith ! ill, I fear, while conjuring wand
 Of English oak is hard at hand.

II.

Or grant the hour be all too soon
 For Hessian boot and pantaloon,
 And grant the lounger seldom strays
 Beyond the smooth and gravell'd maze,
 Laud we the gods, that Fashion's train
 Holds hearts of more adventurous strain.
 Artists are hers, who scorn to trace
 Their rules from Nature's boundless grace,
 But their right paramount assert
 To limit her by pedant art,
 Damning whate'er of vast and fair
 Exceeds a canvass three feet square.
 This thicket, for their *gumption* fit,
 May furnish such a happy *bit*.
 Bards, too, are hers, wont to recite
 Their own sweet lays by waxen light,
 Half in the salver's tingle drown'd,
 While the *chasse-café* glides around ;
 And such may hither secret stray,
 To labour an extemporé :

Or sportsman, with his boisterous hollo
 May here his wiser spaniel follow,
 Or stage-struck Juliet may presume
 To choose this bower for tiring-room ;
 And we alike must shun regard,
 From painter, player, sportsman, bard.
 Insects that skim in Fashion's sky,
 Wasp, blue-bottle, or butterfly,
 Lucy, have all alarms for us,
 For all can hum and all can buzz.

III.

But oh, my Lucy say how long
 We still must dread this trifling throng,
 And stoop to hide, with coward art,
 The genuine feelings of the heart !
 No parents thine whose just command
 Should rule their child's obedient hand ;
 Thy guardians, with contending voice,
 Press each his individual choice.
 And which is Lucy's ?—Can it be
 That puny fop, trimm'd cap-a-pee,
 Who loves in the saloon to show
 The arms that never knew a foe ;
 Whose sabre trails along the ground,
 Whose legs in shapeless boots are drown'd ;
 A new Achilles, sure,—the steel
 Fled from his breast to fence his heel
 One, for the simple manly grace
 That wont to deck our martial race,
 Who comes in foreign trashery
 Of tinkling chain and spur,
 A walking haberdashery,
 Of feathers, lace, and fur :
 In Rowley's antiquated phrase,
 Horse-milliner of modern days ?

IV.

Or is it he, the wordy youth,
 So early train'd for statesman's part,
 Who talks of honour, faith, and truth,
 As themes that he has got by heart ;

Whose ethics Chesterfield can teach,
 Whose logic is from Single-speech ;
 Who scorns the meanest thought to vent,
 Save in the phrase of Parliament ;
 Who, in a tale of cat and mouse,
 Calls "order," and "divides the house,"
 Who "craves permission to reply,"
 Whose "noble friend is in his eye ;"
 Whose loving tender some have reckon'd
 A *motion*, you should gladly *second*?

V.

What, neither? Can there be a third,
 To such resistless swains preferr'd?—
 O why, my Lucy, turn aside,
 With that quick glance of injured pride?
 Forgive me, love, I cannot bear
 That alter'd and resentful air.
 Were all the wealth of Russel mine,
 And all the rank of Howard's line,
 All would I give for leave to dry
 That dewdrop trembling in thine eye.
 Think not I fear such fops can wile
 From Lucy more than careless smile ;
 But yet if wealth and high degree
 Give gilded counters currency,
 Must I not fear, when rank and birth
 Stamp the pure ore of genuine worth?
 Nobles there are, whose martial fires
 Rival the fame that raised their sires,
 And patriots, skill'd through storms of fate
 To guide and guard the reeling state.
 Such, such there are--If such should come,
 Arthur must tremble and be dumb,
 Self-exiled seek some distant shore,
 And mourn till life and grief are o'er.

VI.

What sight, what signal of alarm,
 That Lucy clings to Arthur's arm?
 Or is it, that the rugged way
 Makes Beauty lean on lover's stay?

Oh, no! for on the vale and brake,
 Nor sight nor sounds of danger wake,
 And this trim sward of velvet green,
 Were carpet for the Fairy Queen.
 That pressure slight was but to tell,
 That Lucy loves her Arthur well,
 And fain would banish from his mind
 Suspicious fear and doubt unkind.

VII.

But wouldst thou bid the demons fly
 Like mist before the dawning sky,
 There is but one resistless spell—
 Say, wilt thou guess, or must I tell?
 'Twere hard to name, in minstrel phrase,
 A landalet and four blood-bays,
 But bards agree this wizard band
 Can but be bound in Northern land.
 'Tis there—nay, draw not back thy hand!—
 'Tis there this slender finger round
 Must golden amulet be bound,
 Which, bless'd with many a holy prayer,
 Can change to rapture lovers' care,
 And doubt and jealousy shall die,
 And fears give place to ecstasy.

VIII.

Now, trust me, Lucy, all too long
 Has been thy lover's tale and song.
 O, why so silent, love, I pray?
 Have I not spoke the livelong day?
 And will not Lucy deign to say
 One word her friend to bless:
 I ask but one—a simple sound,
 Within three little letters bound,
 O, let the word be YES!

CANTO THIRD.

INTRODUCTION.

I.

LONG loved, long woo'd, and lately won,
 My life's best hope, and now mine own !
 Doth not this rude and Alpine glen
 Recall our favourite haunts agen ?
 A wild resemblance we can trace,
 Though reft of every softer grace,
 As the rough warrior's brow may bear
 A likeness to a sister fair.
 Full well advised our Highland host,
 That this wild pass on foot be cross'd,
 While round Ben-Cruach's mighty base
 Wheel the slow steeds and lingering chaise,
 The keen old carle, with Scottish pride,
 He praised his glen and mountains wide ;
 An eye he bears for nature's face,
 Ay, and for woman's lovely grace.
 Even in such mean degree we find
 The subtle Scot's observing mind ;
 For, nor the chariot nor the train
 Could gape of vulgar wonder gain,
 But when old Allan would expound
 Of Beal-na-paish the Celtic sound.
 His bonnet doff'd, and bow, applied
 His legend to my bonny bride ;
 While Lucy blush'd beneath his eye,
 Courteous and cautious, shrewd and sly.

II.

Enough of him.—Now, ere we lose,
 Plunged in the vale, the distant views,
 Turn thee, my love ! look back once more
 To the blue lake's retiring shore.
 On its smooth breast the shadows seem
 Like objects in a morning dream,
 What time the slumberer is aware
 He sleeps, and all the vision's air :

Even so, on yonder liquid lawn,
 In hues of bright reflection drawn,
 Distinct the shaggy mountains lie,
 Distinct the rocks, distinct the sky ;
 The summer-clouds so plain we note,
 That we might count each dappled spot :
 We gaze and we admire, yet know
 The scene is all delusive show.
 Such dreams of bliss would Arthur draw,
 When first his Lucy's form he saw ;
 Yet sigh'd and sicken'd as he drew,
 Despairing they could ere prove true !

III.

But, Lucy, turn thee now, to view
 Up the fair glen, our destined way :
 The fairy path that we pursue,
 Distinguish'd but by greener hue,
 Winds round the purple brae,
 While Alpine flowers of varied dye
 For carpet serve, or tapestry.
 See how the little runnels leap,
 In threads of silver, down the steep,
 To swell the brooklet's moan !
 Seems that the Highland Naiad grieves,
 Fantastic while her crown she weaves,
 Of rowan, birch, and alder leaves,
 So lovely, and so lone.
 There's no illusion there ; these flowers,
 That wailing brook, these lovely bowers,
 Are, Lucy, all our own ;
 And, since thine Arthur call'd thee wife,
 Such seems the prospect of his life,
 A lovely path, on-winding still,
 By gurgling brook and sloping hill.
 'Tis true, that mortals cannot tell
 What waits them in the distant dell ;
 But be it hap, or be it harm,
 We tread the pathway arm in arm.

IV.

And now, my Lucy, wot'st thou why
 I could thy bidding twice deny,

When twice you pray'd I would again
 Resume the legendary strain
 Of the bold knight of Triermain?
 At length yon peevish vow you swore,
 That you would sue to me no more,
 Until the minstrel fit drew near,
 And made me prize a listening ear.
 But, loveliest, when thou first didst pray
 Continuance of the knightly lay,
 Was it not on the happy day
 That made thy hand mine own?
 When, dizzied with mine ecstasy,
 Nought past, or present, or to be,
 Could I or think on, hear, or see,
 Save, Lucy, thee alone!
 A giddy draught my rapture was,
 As ever chemist's magic gas.

V.

Again the summons I denied
 In yon fair capital of Clyde:
 My Harp—or let me rather choose
 The good old classic form—my Muse,
 (For Harp's an over-scudched phrase,
 Worn out by bards of modern days,)
 My Muse, then—seldom will she wake,
 Save by dim wood and silent lake;
 She is the wild and rustic Maid,
 Whose foot unsandall'd loves to tread
 Where the soft greensward is inlaid
 With varied moss and thyme;
 And, lest the simple lily-braid,
 That coronets her temples, fade,
 She hides her still in greenwood shade,
 To meditate her rhyme.

VI.

And now she comes! The murmur dear
 Of the wild brook hath caught her ear,
 The glade hath won her eye;
 She longs to join with each blithe rill
 That dances down the Highland hill,
 Her blither melody.

And now, my Lucy's way to cheer,
 She bids Ben-Cruach's echoes hear
 How closed the tale, my love whilere
 Loved for its chivalry.
 List how she tells, in notes of flame,
 "Child Roland to the dark tower came!"

I.

BEWCASTLE now must keep the Hold,
 Speir-Adam's steeds must bide in stall,
 Of Hartley-burn the bowmen bold
 Must only shoot from battled wall;
 And Liddesdale may buckle spur,
 And Teviot now may belt the brand,
 Taras and Ewes keep nightly stir,
 And Eskdale foray Cumberland.
 Of wasted fields and plundered flocks
 The Borderers bootless may complain;
 They lack the sword of brave de Vaux,
 There comes no aid from Triermain.
 That lord, on high adventure bound,
 Hath wander'd forth alone,
 And day and night keeps watchful round
 In the Valley of Saint John.

II.

When first began his vigil bold,
 The moon twelve summer nights was old,
 And shone both fair and full;
 High in the vault of cloudless blue,
 O'er streamlet, dale, and rock, she threw
 Her light composed and cool.
 Stretch'd on the brown hill's heathy breast,
 Sir Roland eyed the vale;
 Chief where, distinguish'd from the rest,
 Those clustering rocks uprear'd their crest,
 The dwelling of the fair distress'd,
 As told gray Lyuiph's tale.
 Thus as he lay, the lamp of night
 Was quivering on his armour bright,
 In beams that rose and fell.

And danced upon his buckler's boss,
 That lay beside him on the moss,
 As on a crystal well.

III.

Ever he watch'd, and oft he deem'd,
 While on the mound the moonlight stream'd,
 It alter'd to his eyes ;
 Fain would he hope the rocks 'gan change
 To buttress'd walls their shapeless range,
 Fain think, by transmutation strange,
 He saw gray turrets rise.
 But scarce his heart with hope throb'd high,
 Before the wild illusions fly,
 Which fancy had conceived,
 Abetted by an anxious eye
 That long'd to be deceived.
 It was a fond deception all,
 Such as, in solitary hall,
 Beguiles the musing eye,
 When, gazing on the sinking fire,
 Bulwark, and battlement, and spire,
 In the red gulf we spy.
 For, seen by moon of middle night,
 Or by the blaze of noontide bright,
 Or by the dawn of morning light,
 Or evening's western flame,
 In every tide, at every hour,
 In mist, in sunshine, and in shower,
 The rocks remain'd the same.

IV.

Oft has he traced the charmed mound,
 Oft climb'd its crest, or paced it round,
 Yet nothing might explore,
 Save that the crags so rudely piled,
 At distance seen, resemblance wild
 To a rough fortress bore.
 Yet still his watch the Warrior keeps,
 Feeds hard and spare, and seldom sleeps,
 And drinks but of the well ;

Ever by day he walks the hill,
 And when the evening gale is chill,
 He seeks a rocky cell,
 Like hermit poor to bid his bead,
 And tell his Ave and his Creed,
 Invoking every saint at need,
 For aid to burst the spell.

V.

And now the moon her orb has hid,
 And dwindled to a silver thread,
 Dim seen in middle heaven,
 While o'er its curve careering fast,
 Before the fury of the blast
 The midnight clouds are driven.
 The brooklet raved, for on the hills
 The upland showers had swoln the rills,
 And down the torrents came ;
 Mutter'd the distant thunder dread,
 And frequent o'er the vale was spread
 A sheet of lightning flame.
 De Vaux, within his mountain cave,
 (No human step the storm durst brave,)
 To moody meditation gave
 Each faculty of soul,
 Till, lull'd by distant torrent sound,
 And the sad winds that whistled round,
 Upon his thoughts, in musing drown'd,
 A broken slumber stole.

VI.

'Twas then was heard a heavy sound,
 (Sound, strange and fearful there to hear,
 'Mongst desert hills, where, leagues around,
 Dwelt but the gorcock and the deer :)
 As, starting from his couch of fern,
 Again he heard in clangour stern,
 That deep and solemn swell,—
 Twelve times, in measured tone, it spoke,
 Like some proud minster's pealing clock,
 Or city's larum-bell.

What thought was Roland's first when fel.
 In that deep wilderness, the knell
 Upon his startled ear?
 To slander warrior were I loth,
 Yet must I hold my minstrel troth,—
 It was a thought of fear.

VII.

But lively was the mingled thrill
 That chased that momentary chill,
 For Love's keen wish was there,
 And eager Hope, and Valour high,
 And the proud glow of Chivalry,
 That burn'd to do and dare.
 Forth from the cave the Warrior rush'd,
 Long ere the mountain-voice was hush'd,
 That answer'd to the knell;
 For long and far the unwonted sound,
 Eddying in echoes round and round,
 Was toss'd from fell to fell;
 And Glaramara answer flung,
 And Grisdale-pike responsive rung,
 And Legbert heights their echoes swung,
 As far as Derwent's dell.

VIII.

Forth upon trackless darkness gazed
 The Knight, bedeaften'd and amazed,
 Till all was hush'd and still,
 Save the swoln torrent's sullen roar,
 And the night-blast that wildly bore
 Its course along the hill.
 Then on the northern sky there came
 A light, as of reflected flame,
 And over Legbert-head,
 As if by magic art controll'd,
 A mighty meteor slowly roll'd
 Its orb of fiery red;
 Thou wouldst have thought some demon dire
 Came mounted on that car of fire,
 To do his errant dread.

Far on the sloping valley's course,
 On thicket, rock, and torrent hoarse,
 Shingle and Scrae, and Fell and Force,
 A dusky light arose:
 Display'd, yet alter'd was the scene;
 Dark rock, and brook of silver sheen,
 Even the gay thicket's summer green,
 In bloody tincture glows.

IX.

De Vaux had mark'd the sunbeams set,
 At eve, upon the coronet
 Of that enchanted mound,
 And seen but crags at random flung,
 That, o'er the brawling torrent hung,
 In desolation frown'd.
 What sees he by that meteor's lour?—
 A banner'd Castle, keep, and tower,
 Return the lurid gleam,
 With battled walls and buttress fast,
 And barbican and ballium vast,
 And airy flanking towers, that cast
 Their shadows on the stream.
 'Tis no deceit!—distinctly clear
 Crenell and parapet appear,
 While o'er the pile that meteor drear
 Makes momentary pause;
 Then forth its solemn path it drew,
 And fainter yet and fainter grew
 Those gloomy towers upon the view,
 As its wild light withdraws.

X.

Forth from the cave did Roland rush,
 O'er crag and stream, through brier and bush
 Yet far he had not sped,
 Ere sunk was that portentous light
 Behind the hills, and utter night
 Was on the valley spread.
 He paused perforce, and blew his horn,
 And, on the mountain-echoes borne,
 Was heard an answering sound,

A wild and lonely trumpet-note,—
 In middle air it seem'd to float
 High o'er the battled mound ;
 And sounds were heard, as when a guard,
 Of some proud castle, holding ward,
 Pace forth their nightly round.
 The valiant Knight of Triermaln
 Rung forth his challenge-blast again,
 But answer came there none ;
 And 'mid the mingled wind and rain,
 Darkling he sought the vale in vain,
 Until the dawning shone ;
 And when it dawn'd, that wondrous sight,
 Distinctly seen by meteor light,
 It all had pass'd away !
 And that enchanted mount once more
 A pile of granite fragments bore,
 As at the close of day.

XI.

Steel'd for the deed, De Vaux's heart,
 Scorn'd from his venturous quest to part,
 He walks the vale once more ;
 But only sees, by night or day,
 That shatter'd pile of rocks so gray,
 Hears but the torrent's roar.
 Till when, through hills of azure borne,
 The moon renew'd her silver horn,
 Just at the time her waning ray
 Had faded in the dawning day,
 A summer mist arose ;
 Adown the vale the vapours float,
 And cloudy undulations moat
 That tufted mound of mystic note,
 As round its base they close.
 And higher now the fleecy tide
 Ascends its stern and shaggy side,
 Until the airy billows hide
 The rock's majestic isle ;
 It seem'd a veil of filmy lawn,
 By some fantastic fairy drawn
 Around enchanted pile.





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"Their leaders fall'n, their standards lost."

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XII.

The breeze came softly down the brook,
 And, sighing as it blew,
 The veil of silver mist it shook,
 And to De Vaux's eager look
 Renew'd that wondrous view.
 For, though the loitering vapour braved
 The gentle breeze, yet oft it waved
 Its mantle's dewy fold ;
 And still, when shook that filmy screen,
 Were towers and bastions dimly seen,
 And Gothic battlements between
 Their gloomy length unroll'd.
 Speed, speed, De Vaux, ere on thine eye
 Once more the fleeting vision die !
 —The gallant knight 'gan speed
 As prompt and light as, when the hound
 Is opening, and the horn is wound,
 Careers the hunter's steed.
 Down the steep dell his course amain
 Hath rivall'd archer's shaft ;
 But ere the mound he could attain,
 The rocks their shapeless form regain,
 And, mocking loud his labour vain,
 The mountain spirits laugh'd.
 Far up the echoing dell was born
 Their wild unearthly shout of scorn.

XIII.

Wroth wax'd the Warrior.—“Am I then
 Fool'd by the enemies of men,
 Like a poor hind, whose homeward way
 Is haunted by malicious fay ?
 Is Triermain become your taunt,
 De Vaux your scorn ? False fiends, avaunt !”
 A weighty curtal-axe he bare ;
 The baleful blade so bright and square,
 And the tough shaft of heben wood,
 Were oft in Scottish gore imbrued.
 Backward his stately form he drew,
 And at the rocks the weapon threw,
 Just where one crag's projected crest
 Hung proudly balanced o'er the rest.

Hurl'd with main force, the weapon's shock
 Rent a huge fragment of the rock.
 If by mere strength, 'twere hard to tell,
 Or if the blow dissolved some spell,
 But down the headlong ruin came,
 With cloud of dust and flash of flame.
 Down bank, o'er bush, its course was borne,
 Crush'd lay the copse, the earth was torn,
 Till staid at length, the ruin dread
 Cumber'd the torrent's rocky bed,
 And bade the waters' high-swoln tide
 Seek other passage for its pride.

XIV.

When ceased that thunder, Triermain
 Survey'd the mound's rude front again ;
 And, lo ! the ruin had laid bare,
 Hewn in the stone, a winding stair,
 Whose moss'd and fractured steps might lend
 The means the summit to ascend ;
 And by whose aid the brave De Vaux
 Began to scale these magic rocks,
 And soon a platform won,
 Where, the wild witchery to close,
 Within three lances' length arose
 The Castle of Saint John !
 No misty phantom of the air,
 No meteor-blazon'd show was there ;
 In morning splendour, full and fair,
 The massive fortress shone.

XV.

Embattled high and proudly tower'd,
 Shaded by pond'rous flankers, lower'd
 The portal's gloomy way.
 Though for six hundred years and more,
 Its strength had brook'd the tempest's roar,
 The scutcheon'd emblems which it bore
 Had suffer'd no decay :
 But from the eastern battlement
 A turret had made sheer descent,
 And, down in recent ruin rent,
 In the mid torrent lay.

Else, o'er the Castle's brow sublime,
 Insults of violence or of time
 Unfelt had pass'd away.
 In shapeless characters of yore,
 The gate this stern inscription bore :—

XVI.

Inscription.

“Patience waits the destined day,
 Strength can clear the cumber'd way.
 Warrior, who hast waited long,
 Firm of soul, of sinew strong,
 It is given to thee to gaze
 On the pile of ancient days.
 Never mortal builder's hand
 This enduring fabric plann'd ;
 Sign and sigil, word of power,
 From the earth raised keep and tower.
 View it o'er, and pace it round,
 Rampart, turret, battled mound.
 Dare no more ! To cross the gate
 Were to tamper with thy fate
 Strength and fortitude were vain,
 View it o'er—and turn again.”—

XVII.

“That would I,” said the Warrior bold,
 “If that my frame were bent and old,
 And my thin blood dropp'd slow and cold
 As icicle in thaw ;
 But while my heart can feel it dance,
 Blithe as the sparkling wine of France,
 And this good arm wields sword or lance,
 I mock these words of awe !”
 He said ; the wicket felt the sway
 Of his strong hand, and straight gave way,
 And, with rude crash and jarring bray,
 The rusty bolts withdraw ;
 But o'er the threshold as he strode,
 And forward took the vaulted road,

An unseen arm, with force amain,
 The ponderous gate flung close again,
 And rusted bolt and bar
 Spontaneous took their place once more,
 While the deep arch with sullen roar
 Return'd their surly jar.
 "Now closed is the gin and the prey within
 By the Rood of Lanercost!
 But he that would win the war-wolf's skin,
 May rue him of his boast."
 Thus muttering, on the Warrior went,
 By dubious light down steep descent.

XVIII.

Unbarr'd, unlock'd, unwatch'd, a port
 Led to the Castle's outer court:
 There the main fortress, broad and tall,
 Spread its long range of bower and hall,
 And towers of varied size,
 Wrought with each ornament extreme,
 That Gothic art, in wildest dream
 Of fancy, could devise;
 But full between the Warrior's way
 And the main portal arch, there lay
 An inner moat;
 Nor bridge nor boat
 Affords De Vaux the means to cross
 The clear, profound, and silent fosse.
 His arms aside in haste he flings,
 Cuirass of steel and hauberk rings,
 And down falls helm, and down the shield,
 Rough with the dints of many a field.
 Fair was his manly form, and fair
 His keen dark eye, and close curl'd hair,
 When, all unarm'd, save that the brand
 Of well-proved metal graced his hand,
 With nought to fence his dauntless breast
 But the close gipon's under-vest,
 Whose sullied buff the sable stains
 Of hauberk and of mail retains,—
 Roland De Vaux upon the brim
 Of the broad moat stood prompt to swim.

XIX.

Accoutred thus he dared the tide,
 And soon he reach'd the farther side,
 And enter'd soon the Hold,
 And paced a hall, whose walls so wide
 Were blazon'd all with feats of pride,
 By warriors done of old.
 In middle lists they counter'd here,
 While trumpets seem'd to blow ;
 And there, in den or desert drear,
 They quell'd gigantic foe,
 Braved the fierce griffon in his ire,
 Or faced the dragon's breath of fire.
 Strange in their arms, and strange in face,
 Heroes they seem'd of ancient race,
 Whose deeds of arms, and race, and name,
 Forgotten long by later fame,
 Were here depicted, to appal
 Those of an age degenerate,
 Whose bold intrusion braved their fate
 In this enchanted hall.
 For some short space the venturous Knight
 With these high marvels fed his sight,
 Then sought the chamber's upper end,
 Where three broad easy steps ascend
 To an arch'd portal door,
 In whose broad folding leaves of state
 Was framed a wicket window-grate,
 And, ere he ventured more,
 The gallant Knight took earnest view
 The grated wicket-window through.

XX.

O, for his arms ! Of martial weed
 Had never mortal Knight such need !—
 He spied a stately gallery ; all
 Of snow-white marble was the wall,
 The vaulting, and the floor ;
 And, contrast strange ! on either hand
 There stood array'd in sable band
 Four Maids whom Afric bore ;

And each a Lybian tiger led,
 Held by as bright and frail a thread
 As Lucy's golden hair,—
 For the leash that bound these monsters dread
 Was but of gossamer.
 Each Maiden's short barbaric vest
 Left all unclosed the knee and breast,
 And limbs of shapely jet ;
 White was their vest and turban's fold,
 On arms and ankles rings of gold
 In savage pomp were set ;
 A quiver on their shoulders lay,
 And in their hand an assagay.
 Such and so silent stood they there,
 That Roland wellnigh hoped
 He saw a band of statues rare,
 Station'd the gazer's soul to scare ;
 But when the wicket oped,
 Each grisly beast 'gan upward draw,
 Roll'd his grim eye, and spread his claw,
 Scented the air, and licked his jaw ;
 While these weird Maids, in Moorish tongue,
 A wild and dismal warning sung.

XXI.

"Rash Adventurer, bear thee back !
 Dread the spell of Dahomay !
 Fear the race of Zaharak,
 Daughters of the burning day !

"When the whirlwind's gusts are wheeling,
 Ours it is the dance to braid ;
 Zarah's sands in pillars reeling,
 Join the measure that we tread,
 When the Moon has donn'd her cloak,
 And the stars are red to see,
 Shrill when pipes the sad Siroc,
 Music meet for such as we.

"Where the shatter'd columns lie,
 Showing Carthage once had been,
 If the wandering Santon's eye
 Our mysterious rites hath seen.—

Oft he cons the prayer of death,
 To the nations preaches doom,
 'Azrael's brand hath left the sheath !'
 Moslems, think upon the tomb !'

"Ours the scorpion, ours the snake,
 Ours the hydra of the fen,
 Ours the tiger of the brake,
 All that plague the sons of men.
 Ours the tempest's midnight wrack,
 Pestilence that wastes by day—
 Dread the race of Zaharak !
 Fear the spell of Dahomay !"

XXII.

Uncouth and strange the accents shrill
 Rung those vaulted roofs among,
 Long it was ere, faint and still,
 Died the far resounding song.
 While yet the distant echoes roll,
 The Warrior communed with his soul.
 "When first I took this venturous quest,
 I swore upon the rood,
 Neither to stop, nor turn, nor rest,
 For evil or for good.
 My forward path too well I ween,
 Lies yonder fearful ranks between !
 For man unarm'd, 'tis bootless hope
 With tigers and with fiends to cope—
 Yet, if I turn, what waits me there,
 Save famine dire and fell despair?—
 Other conclusions let me try,
 Since, choose how'er I list, I die.
 Forward, lies faith and knightly fame
 Behind, are perjury and shame.
 In life or death, I hold my word !"
 With that he drew his trusty sword,
 Caught down a banner from the wall,
 And enter'd thus the fearful hall.

XXIII.

On high each wayward Maiden threw
 Her swarthy arm, with wild halloo !

On either side a tiger sprung—
 Against the leftward foe he flung
 The ready banner, to engage
 With tangling folds the brutal rage ;
 The right-hand monster in mid air
 He struck so fiercely and so fair,
 Through gullet and through spinal bone,
 The trenchant blade had sheerly gone.
 His grisly brethren ramp'd and yell'd,
 But the slight leash their rage withheld,
 Whilst, 'twixt their ranks, the dangerous road
 Firmly, though swift, the champion strode.
 Safe to the gallery's bound he drew,
 Safe pass'd an open portal through ;
 And when against pursuit he flung
 The gate, judge if the echoes rung !
 Onward his daring course he bore,
 While, mix'd with dying growl and roar,
 Wild jubilee and loud hurra
 Pursued him on his venturous way.

XXIV.

" Hurra, hurra ! Our watch is done !
 We hail once more the tropic sun.
 Pallid beams of northern day,
 Farewell, farewell ! Hurra, hurra !

" Five hundred years o'er this cold glen
 Hath the pale sun come round agen ;
 Foot of man, till now, hath ne'er
 Dared to cross the Hall of Fear.

" Warrior ! thou, whose dauntless heart
 Gives us from our ward to part,
 Be as strong in future trial,
 Where resistance is denial.

" Now for Afric's glowing sky,
 Zwenga wide and Atlas high,
 Zaharak and Dahomay !——
 Mount the winds ! Hurra, hurra !

XXV.

The wizard song at distance died,
 As if in ether borne astray,
 While through waste halls and chambers wide
 The Knight pursued his steady way,
 Till to a lofty dome he came,
 That flash'd with such a brilliant flame,
 As if the wealth of all the world
 Were there in rich confusion hurl'd.
 For here the gold, in sandy heaps,
 With duller earth, incorporate, sleeps ;
 Was there in ingots piled, and there
 Coin'd badge of empery it bare ;
 Yonder, huge bars of silver lay,
 Dimm'd by the diamond's neighbouring ray,
 Like the pale moon in morning day ;
 And in the midst four Maidens stand,
 The daughters of some distant land.
 Their hue was of the dark-red dye,
 That fringes oft a thunder sky ;
 Their hands palmetto baskets bare,
 And cotton fillets bound their hair ;
 Slim was their form, their mien was shy,
 To earth they bent the humbled eye,
 Folded their arms, and suppliant kneel'd,
 And thus their proffer'd gifts reveal'd.

XXVI.

CHORUS.

" See the treasures Merlin piled,
 Portion meet for Arthur's child.
 Bathe in Wealth's unbounded stream,
 Wealth that Avarice ne'er could dream ! "

FIRST MAIDEN.

" See these clots of virgin gold !
 Sever'd from the sparry mould,
 Nature's mystic alchemy
 In the mine thus bade them lie ;
 And their orient smile can win
 Kings to stoop, and saints to sin. — "

SECOND MAIDEN.

“ See these pearls, that long have slept ;
 These were tears by Naiads wept
 For the loss of Marinel.
 Tritons in the silver shell
 Treasured them, till hard and white
 As the teeth of Amphitrite.”—

THIRD MAIDEN.

“ Does a livelier hue delight ?
 Here are rubies blazing bright,
 Here the emerald’s fairy green,
 And the topaz glows between ;
 Here their varied hues unite,
 In the changeful chrysolite.”—

FOURTH MAIDEN.

“ Leave these gems of poorer shine,
 Leave them all, and look on mine !
 While their glories I expand,
 Shade thine eyebrows with thy hand.
 Mid-day sun and diamond’s blaze
 Blind the rash beholder’s gaze.”—

CHORUS.

“ Warrior, seize the splendid store ;
 Would ’twere all our mountains bore !
 We should ne’er in future story,
 Read, Peru, thy perish’d glory !”

XXVII.

Calmly and unconcern’d, the Knight
 Waved aside the treasures bright :—
 “ Gentle Maidens, rise, I pray !
 Bar not thus my destined way.
 Let these boasted brilliant toys
 Braid the hair of girls and boys !
 Bid your streams of gold expand
 O’er proud London’s thirsty land.
 De Vaux of wealth saw never need,
 Save to purvey him arms and steed,

And all the ore he deign'd to hoard
 Inlays his helm, and hilts his sword."
 Thus gently parting from their hold,
 He left, unmoved, the dome of gold.

XXVIII.

And now the morning sun was high,
 De Vaux was weary, faint, and dry ;
 When, lo ! a plashing sound he hears,
 A gladsome signal that he hears
 Some frolic water-run ;
 And soon he reach'd a courtyard square,
 Where, dancing in the sultry air,
 Toss'd high aloft, a fountain fair
 Was sparkling in the sun.
 On right and left, a fair arcade,
 In long perspective view display'd
 Alleys and bowers, for sun or shade :
 But, full in front, a door,
 Low-brow'd and dark, seem'd as it led
 To the lone dwelling of the dead,
 Whose memory was no more.

XXIX.

Here stopp'd De Vaux an instant's space,
 To bathe his parched lips and face,
 And mark'd with well-pleas'd eye,
 Refracted on the fountain stream,
 In rainbow hues the dazzling beam
 Of that gay summer sky.
 His senses felt a mild control,
 Like that which lulls the weary soul,
 From contemplation high
 Relaxing, when the ear receives
 The music that the greenwood leaves
 Make to the breezes' sigh.

XXX.

And oft in such a dreamy mood,
 The half-shut eye can frame

Fair apparitions in the wood,
 As if the nymphs of field and flood
 In gay procession came.
 Are these of such fantastic mould,
 Seen distant down the fair arcade,
 These Maids enlink'd in sister-fold,
 Who, late at bashful distance staid,
 Now tripping from the greenwood shade,
 Nearer the musing champion draw,
 And, in a pause of seeming awe,
 Again stand doubtful now?—
 Ah, that sly pause of witching powers!
 That seems to say, "To please be ours,
 Be yours to tell us how."
 Their hue was of the golden glow
 That suns of Candahar bestow,
 O'er which in slight suffusion flows
 A frequent tinge of paly rose;
 Their limbs were fashion'd fair and free,
 In nature's justest symmetry;
 And, wreathed with flowers, with odours graced,
 Their raven ringlets reach'd the waist:
 In eastern pomp, its gilding pale
 The hennah lent each shapely nail,
 And the dark sumah gave the eye
 More liquid and more lustrous dye.
 The spotless veil of misty lawn,
 In studied disarrangement, drawn
 The form and bosom o'er,
 To win the eye, or tempt the touch,
 For modesty show'd all too much—
 Too much—yet promised more.

XXXI.

"Gentle Knight, a while delay,"
 Thus they sung, "thy toilsome way,
 While we pay the duty due
 To our Master and to you.
 Over Avarice, over Fear,
 Love triumphant led thee here;
 Warrior, list to us, for we
 Are slaves to Love, are friends to thee.

Though no treasured gems have we,
 To proffer on the bended knee,
 Though we boast nor arm nor heart,
 For the assagay or dart,
 Swains allow each simple girl
 Ruby lip and teeth of pearl ;
 Or, if dangers more you prize,
 Flatterers find them in our eyes.

“ Stay, then, gentle Warrior, stay,
 Rest till evening steal on day ;
 Stay, O, stay !—in yonder bowers
 We will braid thy locks with flowers,
 Spread the feast and fill the wine,
 Charm thy ear with sounds divine.
 Weave our dances till delight
 Yield to languor, day to night.

“ Then shall she you most approve
 Sing the lays that best you love,
 Soft thy mossy couch shall spread,
 Watch thy pillow, prop thy head,
 Till the weary night be o'er—
 Gentle Warrior, wouldst thou more ?
 Wouldst thou more, fair Warrior,—she
 Is slave to Love and slave to thee.”

XXXII.

O, do not hold it for a crime
 In the bold hero of my rhyme,
 For Stoic look,
 And meet rebuke,
 He lack'd the heart or time ;
 As round the band of sirens trip,
 He kiss'd one damsel's laughing lip,
 And press'd another's proffer'd hand.
 Spoke to them all in accents bland,
 But broke their magic circle through ;
 “ Kind Maids,” he said, “ adieu, adieu !
 My fate, my fortune, forward lies.”
 He said, and vanish'd from their eyes ;
 But, as he dared that darksome way,
 Still heard behind their lovely lay :—

“ Fair Flower of Courtesy, depart !
 Go, where the feelings of the heart
 With the warm pulse in concord move ;
 Go, where Virtue sanctions Love ! ”

XXXIII.

Downward De Vaux through darksome ways
 And ruin'd vaults has gone,
 Till issue from their wilder'd maze,
 Or safe retreat, seem'd none, —
 And e'en the dismal path he strays
 Grew worse as he went on.
 For cheerful sun, for living air,
 Foul vapours rise and mine-fires glare,
 Whose fearful light the dangers show'd
 That dogg'd him on that dreadful road.
 Deep pits, and lakes of waters dun,
 They show'd, but show'd not how to shun.
 These scenes of desolate despair,
 These smothering clouds of poison'd air,
 How gladly had De Vaux exchanged,
 Though 'twere to face yon tigers ranged !
 Nay, soothful bards have said
 So perilous his state seem'd now,
 He wish'd him under arbour bough
 With Asia's willing maid.
 When, joyful sound ! at distance near
 A trumpet flourish'd loud and clear,
 And as it ceased, a lofty lay
 Seem'd thus to chide his lagging way.

XXXIV.

“ Son of Honour, theme of story,
 Think on the reward before ye !
 Danger, darkness, toil despise ;
 'Tis Ambition bids thee rise.

“ He that would her heights ascend,
 Many a weary step must wend ;
 Hand and foot and knee he tries ;
 Thus Ambition's minions rise.

“Lag not now, though rough the way,
 Fortune's mood brooks no delay ;
 Grasp the boon that's spread before ye,
 Monarch's power, and Conqueror's glory !”

It ceased. Advancing on the sound,
 A steep ascent the Wanderer found,
 And then a turret stair :
 Nor climb'd he far its steepy round
 Till fresher blew the air,
 And next a welcome glimpse was given,
 That cheer'd him with the light of heaven.
 At length his toil had won
 A lofty hall with trophies dressed,
 Where, as to greet imperial guest,
 Four Maidens stood, whose crimson vest
 Was bound with golden zone.

XXXV.

Of Europe seem'd the damsels all ;
 The first a nymph of lively Gaul,
 Whose easy step and laughing eye
 Her borrow'd air of awe belie ;
 The next a maid of Spain,
 Dark-eyed, dark-hair'd, sedate, yet bold ;
 White ivory skin and tress of gold,
 Her shy and bashful comrade told
 For daughter of Almaine.
 These maidens bore a royal robe,
 With crown, with sceptre, and with globe,
 Emblems of empery ;
 The fourth a space behind them stood
 And leant upon a harp, in mood
 Of minstrel ecstasy.
 Of merry England she, in dress
 Like ancient British Druidess.
 Her hair an azure fillet bound,
 Her graceful vesture swept the ground,
 And, in her hand display'd,
 A crown did that fourth Maiden hold,
 But unadorn'd with gems and gold,
 Of glossy laurel made.

XXXVI.

At once to brave De Vaux knelt down
 These foremost Maidens three,
 And proffer'd sceptre, robe, and crown,
 Liegedom and seignorie,
 O'er many a region wide and fair,
 Destined, they said, for Arthur's heir ;
 But homage would he none :
 "Rather," he said, "De Vaux would ride,
 A Warden of the Border-side,
 In plate and mail, than, robed in pride,
 A monarch's empire own ;
 Rather, far rather, would he be
 A free-born knight of England free,
 Than sit on Despot's throne."
 So pass'd he on, when that fourth Maid,
 As starting from a trance,
 Upon the harp her finger laid ;
 Her magic touch the chords obey'd,
 Their soul awak'd at once !

SONG OF THE FOURTH MAIDEN.

"Quake to your foundations deep,
 Stately Towers, and Banner'd Keep,
 Bid your vaulted echoes moan,
 As the dreaded step they own.

"Fiends, that wait on Merlin's spell,
 Hear the foot-fall ! mark it well !
 Spread your dusky wings abroad,
 Boune ye for your homeward road !

"It is His, the first who e'er
 Dared the dismal Hall of Fear ;
 His, who hath the snares defied
 Spread by Pleasure, Wealth, and Pride.

Quake to your foundations deep,
 Bastion huge, and Turret steep !
 Tremble, Keep ! and totter, Tower !
 This is Gyneth's waking hour."

XXXVII.

Thus while she sung, the venturous Knight
Has reach'd a bower, where milder light

Through crimson curtains fell ;
Such soften'd shade the hill receives,
Her purple veil when twilight leaves
Upon its western swell.

That bower, the gazer to bewitch,
Hath wondrous store of rare and rich

As e'er was seen with eye ;
For there by magic skill, I wis,
Form of each thing that living is
Was limn'd in proper dye.

All seem'd to sleep—the timid hare
On form, the stag upon his lair,
The eagle in her eyrie fair

Between the earth and sky.
But what of pictured rich and rare
Could win De Vaux's eye-glance, where,
Deep slumbering in the fatal chair,

He saw King Arthur's child !
Doubt, and anger, and dismay,
From her brow had pass'd away,
Forgot was that fell tourney-day,

For, as she slept, she smiled :
It seem'd, that the repentant Seer
Her sleep of many a hundred year
With gentle dreams beguiled.

XXXVII!

That form of maiden loveliness,
'Twixt childhood and 'twixt youth,
That ivory chair, that sylvan dress,
The arms and ankles bare, express
Of Lyulph's tale the truth.

Still upon her garment's hem
Vanoc's blood made purple gem,
And the warder of command
Cumber'd still her sleeping hand,
Still her dark locks dishevell'd flow
From net of pearl o'er breast of snow
And so fair the slumberer seems,
That De Vaux impeach'd his dreams,

Vapid all and void of might,
 Hiding half her charms from sight.
 Motionless a while he stands,
 Folds his arms and clasps his hands,
 Trembling in his fitful joy,
 Doubtful how he should destroy
 Long-enduring spell ;
 Doubtful, too, when slowly rise
 Dark-fringed lids of Gyneth's eyes,
 What these eyes shall tell.—
 " St. George ! St. Mary ! can it be,
 That they will kindly look on me ! "

XXXIX.

Gently, lo ! the Warrior kneels,
 Soft that lovely hand he steals,
 Soft to kiss, and soft to clasp—
 But the warder leaves her grasp ;
 Lightning flashes, rolls the thunder !
 Gyneth startles from her sleep,
 Totters Tower, and trembles Keep,
 Burst the Castle-walls asunder !
 Fierce and frequent were the shocks,—
 Melt the magic halls away ;
 —But beneath their mystic rocks,
 In the arms of bold De Vaux,
 Safe the princess lay ;
 Safe and free from magic power,
 Blushing like the rose's flower
 Opening to the day ;
 And round the Champion's brows were bound
 The crown that Druidess had wound,
 Of the green laurel-bay.
 And this was what remain'd of all
 The wealth of each enchanted hall,
 The Garland and the Dame :
 But where should Warrior seek the meed,
 Due to high worth for daring deed,
 Except from LOVE and FAME !

CONCLUSION.

I.

MY LUCY, when the Maid is won,
 The Minstrel's task, thou know'st, is done ;
 And to require of bard
 That to his dregs the tale should run,
 Were ordinance too hard.
 Our lovers, briefly be it said,
 Wedded as lovers wont to wed,
 When tale or play is o'er ;
 Lived long and blest, loved fond and true,
 And saw a numerous race renew
 The honours that they bore.
 Know, too, that when a pilgrim strays
 In morning mist or evening maze,
 Along the mountain lone,
 That fairy fortress often mocks
 His gaze upon the castled rocks
 Of the Valley of St. John ;
 But never man since brave De Vaux
 The charmed portal won.
 'Tis now a vain illusive show,
 That melts whene'er the sunbeams glow
 Or the fresh breeze hath blown.

II.

But see, my love, where far below
 Our lingering wheels are moving slow,
 The whiles, up-gazing still,
 Our menials eye our steepy way,
 Marvelling, perchance, what whim can stay
 Our steps, when eve is sinking gray,
 On this gigantic hill.
 So think the vulgar—Life and time
 Ring all their joys in one dull chime
 Of luxury and ease ;
 And, O ! beside these simple knaves,
 How many better born are slaves
 To such coarse joys as these,—
 Dead to the nobler sense that glows
 When nature's grander scenes unclose !

But, Lucy, we will love them yet,
The mountain's misty coronet,
The greenwood, and the wold ;
And love the more, that of their maze
Adventure high of other days
By ancient bards is told,
Bringing, perchance, like my poor tale,
Some moral truth in fiction's veil :
Nor love them less, that o'er the hill
The evening breeze, as now, comes chill :—
My love shall wrap her warm,
And, fearless of the slippery way,
While safe she trips the heathy brae,
Shall hang on Arthur's arm.

THE FIELD OF WATERLOO :

A POEM.

Though Valois braved young Edward's gentle hand,
And Albert rush'd on Henry's way-worn band,
With Europe's chosen sons, in arms renown'd,
Yet not on Vere's bold archers long they look'd,
Nor Audley's squires nor Mowbray's yeomen brook'd,—
They saw their standard fall, and left their monarch bound.

AKENSIDE.

TO
HER GRACE
THE
DUCHESS OF WELLINGTON,
PRINCESS OF WATERLOO
&c. &c. &c.

THE FOLLOWING VERSES
ARE MOST RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED

BY
THE AUTHOR.

ADVERTISEMENT.

It may be some apology for the imperfections of this poem that it was composed hastily, and during a short tour upon the Continent, when the Author's labours were liable to frequent interruption; but its best apology is, that it was written for the purpose of assisting the Waterloo Subscription.

ABBOTSFORD, 1815.

I.

FAIR Brussels, thou art far behind,
Though, lingering on the morning wind,
We yet may hear the hour
Peal'd over orchard and canal,
With voice prolong'd and measured fall,
From proud St. Michael's tower;

Thy wood, dark Soignies, holds us now,
 Where the tall beeches' glossy bough
 For many a league around,
 With birch and darksome oak between,
 Spreads deep and far a pathless screen,
 Of tangled forest ground.
 Stems planted close by stems defy
 The adventurous foot—the curious eye
 For access seeks in vain ;
 And the brown tapestry of leaves,
 Strew'd on the blighted ground, receives
 Nor sun, nor air, nor rain.
 No opening glade dawns on our way,
 No streamlet, glancing to the ray,
 Our woodland path has cross'd ;
 And the straight causeway which we tread,
 Prolongs a line of dull arcade,
 Unvarying through the unvaried shade
 Until in distance lost.

II.

A brighter, livelier scene succeeds ;
 In groups the scattering wood recedes,
 Hedge-rows, and huts, and sunny meads,
 And corn-fields, glance between ;
 The peasant, at his labour blithe,
 Plies the hook'd staff and shorten'd scythe :—²¹³
 But when these ears were green,
 Placed close within destruction's scope,
 Full little was that rustic's hope
 Their ripening to have seen !
 And, lo, a hamlet and its fanè :—
 Let not the gazer with disdain
 Their architecture view ;
 For yonder rude ungraceful shrine,
 And disproportion'd spire, are thine,
 IMMORTAL WATERLOO !

III.

Fear not the heat, though full and high
 The sun has scorch'd the autumn sky,

And scarce a forest straggler now
 To shade us spreads a greenwood bough ;
 These fields have seen a hotter day
 Than e'er was fired by sunny ray.
 Yet one mile on—yon shatter'd hedge
 Crests the soft hill whose long smooth ridge
 Looks on the field below,
 And sinks so gently on the dale,
 That not the folds of Beauty's veil
 In easier curves can flow.
 Brief space from thence, the ground again
 Ascending slowly from the plain,
 Forms an opposing screen,
 Which, with its crest of upland ground,
 Shuts the horizon all around.
 The soften'd vale between
 Slopes smooth and fair for courser's tread ;
 Not the most timid maid need dread
 To give her snow-white palfrey head
 On that wide stubble-ground ;
 Nor wood, nor tree, nor bush, are there,
 Her course to intercept or scare,
 Nor fosse nor fence are found,
 Save where, from out her shatter'd bowers,
 Rise Hougomont's dismantled towers.

IV.

Now, see'st thou aught in this lone scene
 Can tell of that which late hath been ?—
 A stranger might reply,
 " The bare extent of stubble-plain
 Seems lately lighten'd of its grain ;
 And yonder sable tracks remain
 Marks of the peasant's ponderous wain,
 When harvest-home was nigh.
 On these broad spots of trampled ground,
 Perchance the rustics danced such round
 As Teniers loved to draw ;
 And where the earth seems scorch'd by flame,
 To dress the homely feast they came,
 And toil'd the kerchier'd village dame
 Around her fire of straw."

V.

So deem'st thou—so each mortal deems,
 Of that which is from that which seems :—
 But other harvest here,
 Than that which peasant's scythe demands,
 Was gather'd in by sterner hands,
 With bayonet, blade, and spear.
 No vulgar crop was theirs to reap,
 No stinted harvest thin and cheap !
 Heroes before each fatal sweep
 Fell thick as ripen'd grain ;
 And ere the darkening of the day,
 Piled high as autumn shocks, there lay
 The ghastly harvest of the fray,
 The corpses of the slain.

VI.

Ay, look again—that line, so black
 And trampled, marks the bivouac,
 Yon deep-graved ruts the artillery's track
 So often lost and won ;
 And close beside, the harden'd mud
 Still shows where, fetlock-deep in blood,
 The fierce dragoon, through battle's flood,
 Dash'd the hot war-horse on.
 These spots of excavation tell
 The ravage of the bursting shell—
 And feel'st thou not the tainted steam,
 That reeks against the sultry beam,
 From yonder trenched mound ?
 The pestilential fumes declare
 That Carnage has replenish'd there
 Her garner-house profound.

VII.

Far other harvest-home and feast,
 Than claims the boor from scythe released,
 On these scorch'd fields were known !
 Death hover'd o'er the maddening rout,
 And, in the thrilling battle-shout,
 Sent for the bloody banquet out
 A summons of his own.

Through rolling smoke the Demon's eye
 Could well each destined guest espy,
 Well could his ear in ecstasy
 Distinguish every tone
 That fill'd the chorus of the fray—
 From cannon-roar and trumpet-bray,
 From charging squadrons' wild hurra,
 From the wild clang that mark'd their way,—
 Down to the dying groan,
 And the last sob of life's decay.
 When breath was all but flown.

VIII.

Feast on, stern foe of mortal life,
 Feast on!—but think not that a strife,
 With such promiscuous carnage rife,
 Protracted space may last;
 The deadly tug of war at length
 Must limits find in human strength,
 And cease when these are past.
 Vain hope!—that morn's o'erclouded sun
 Heard the wild shout of fight begun
 Ere he attain'd his height,
 And through the war-smoke, volumed high,
 Still peals that unremitted cry,
 Though now he stoops to night.
 For ten long hours of doubt and dread,
 Fresh succours from the extended head
 Of either hill the contest fed;
 Still down the slope they drew,
 The charge of columns paused not,
 Nor ceased the storm of shell and shot;
 For all that war could do
 Of skill and force was proved that day,
 And turn'd not yet the doubtful fray
 On bloody Waterloo.

IX.

Pale Brussels! then what thoughts were thine,²²³
 When ceaseless from the distant line
 Continued thunders came!

Each burgher held his breath, to hear
 These forerunners of havoc near,
 Of rapine and of flame.
 What ghastly sights were thine to meet,
 When rolling through thy stately street,
 The wounded show'd their mangled plight
 In token of the unfinish'd fight,
 And from each anguish-laden wain
 The blood-drops laid thy dust like rain !
 How often in the distant drum
 Heard'st thou the fell Invader come,
 While Ruin, shouting to his band,
 Shook high her torch and gory brand !—
 Cheer thee, fair City ! From yon stand,
 Impatient, still his outstretch'd hand
 Points to his prey in vain,
 While maddening in his eager mood,
 And all unwont to be withstood,
 He fires the fight again.

X.

“On ! On !” was still his stern exclaim ;²¹⁴
 “Confront the battery's jaws of flame !
 Rush on the levell'd gun !
 My steel-clad cuirassiers, advance !
 Each Hulan forward with his lance,
 My Guard—my Chosen—charge for France
 France and Napoleon !”
 Loud answer'd their acclaiming shout,
 Greeting the mandate which sent out
 Their bravest and their best to dare
 The fate their leader shunn'd to share.²¹⁵
 But HE, his country's sword and shield,
 Still in the battle-front reveal'd,
 Where danger fiercest swept the field,
 Came like a beam of light,
 In action prompt, in sentence brief—
 “Soldiers, stand firm,” exclaim'd the Chief,
 “England shall tell the fight !”²¹⁶

XI.

On came the whirlwind—like the last
 But fiercest sweep of tempest-blast—

On came the whirlwind—steel-gleams broke
 Like lightning through the rolling smoke ;
 The war was waked anew,
 Three hundred cannon-mouths roar'd loud,
 And from their throats, with flash and cloud,
 Their showers of iron threw.
 Beneath their fire, in full career,
 Rush'd on the ponderous cuirassier,
 The lancer couch'd his ruthless spear,
 And hurrying as to havoc near,
 The cohorts' eagles flew.
 In one dark torrent, broad and strong,
 The advancing onset roll'd along,
 Forth harbinger'd by fierce acciain,
 That, from the shroud of smoke and flame,
 Peal'd wildly the imperial name.

XII.

But on the British heart were lost
 The terrors of the charging host ;
 For not an eye the storm that view'd
 Changed its proud glance of fortitude,
 Nor was one forward footstep staid,
 As dropp'd the dying and the dead.
 Fast as their ranks the thunders tear,
 Fast they renew'd each serried square ;
 And on the wounded and the slain
 Closed their diminish'd files again,
 Till from their line scarce spears' lengths three
 Emerging from the smoke they see
 Helmet, and plume, and panoply,—
 Then waked their fire at once !
 Each musketeer's revolving knell,
 As fast, as regularly fell,
 As when they practise to display
 Their discipline on festal day.
 Then down went helm and lance,
 Down were the eagle banners sent,
 Down reeling steeds and riders went,
 Corslets were pierced, and pennons rent ;
 And, to augment the fray,
 Wheel'd full against their staggering flanks.

The English horsemen's foaming ranks
 Forced their resistless way.
 Then to the musket-knell succeeds
 The clash of swords—the neigh of steeds—
 As plies the smith his clanging trade,²¹⁷
 Against the cuirass rang the blade ;
 And while amid their close array
 The well-served cannon rent their way,
 And while amid their scatter'd band
 Raged the fierce rider's bloody brand,
 Recoil'd in common rout and fear,
 Lancer and guard and cuirassier,
 Horsemen and foot—a mingled host,
 Their leaders fall'n, their standards lost.

XIII.

Then, WELLINGTON ! thy piercing eye
 This crisis caught of destiny—
 The British host had stood
 That morn 'gainst charge of sword and lance
 As their own ocean-rocks hold stance,
 But when thy voice had said, “Advance !”
 They were their ocean's flood.—
 O Thou, whose inauspicious aim
 Hath wrought thy host this hour of shame,
 Think'st thou thy broken bands will bide
 The terrors of yon rushing tide ?
 Or will thy chosen brook to feel
 The British shock of lell'd steel,²¹⁸
 Or dost thou turn thine eye
 Where coming squadrons gleam afar,
 And fresher thunders wake the war,
 And other standards fly ?—
 Think not that in yon columns, file
 Thy conquering troops from Distant Dyle—
 Is Blucher yet unknown ?
 Or dwells not in thy memory still,
 (Heard frequent in thine hour of ill,)
 What notes of hate and vengeance thrill
 In Prussia's trumpet tone ?—
 What yet remains ?—shall it be thine
 To head the relics of thy line
 In one dread effort more ?—

The Roman lore thy leisure loved,
 And thou canst tell what fortune proved
 That Chieftain, who, of yore,
 Ambition's dizzy paths essay'd,
 And with the gladiators' aid
 For empire enterprised—
 He stood the cast his rashness play'd,
 Left not the victims he had made,
 Dug his red grave with his own blade
 And on the field he lost was laid,
 Abhorr'd—but not despised.

XIV.

But if revolves thy fainter thought
 On safety—howsoever bought,—
 Then turn thy fearful rein and ride,
 Though twice ten thousand men have died
 On this eventful day,
 To gild the military fame
 Which thou, for life, in traffic tame
 Wilt barter thus away.
 Shall future ages tell this tale
 Of inconsistency faint and frail?
 And art thou He of Lodi's bridge,
 Marengo's field, and Wagram's ridge!
 Or is thy soul like mountain-tide,
 That, swell'd by winter storm and shower,
 Rolls down in turbulence of power,
 A torrent fierce and wide;
 Rest of these aids, a rill obscure,
 Shrinking unnoticed, mean and poor,
 Whose channel shows display'd
 The wrecks of its impetuous course,
 But not one symptom of the force
 By which these wrecks were made!

XV.

Spur on thy way!—since now thine ear
 Has brook'd thy veterans' wish to hear,
 Who, as thy flight they eyed,
 Exclaim'd,—while tears of anguish came,
 Wrung forth by pride, and rage, and shame,—
 “O, that he had but died!”

But yet, to sum this hour of ill,
 Look, ere thou leavest the fatal hill,
 Back on yon broken ranks—
 Upon whose wild confusion gleams
 The moon, as on the troubled streams
 When rivers break their banks,
 And, to the ruin'd peasant's eye,
 Objects half seen roll swiftly by,
 Down the dread current hurl'd—
 So mingle banner, wain, and gun,
 Where the tumultuous flight rolls on
 Of warriors, who, when morn begun,
 Defied a banded world.

XVI.

List—frequent to the hurrying rout,
 The stern pursuers' vengeful shout
 Tells, that upon their broken rear
 Rages the Prussian's bloody spear.
 So fell a shriek was none,
 When Beresina's icy flood
 Redden'd and thaw'd with flame and blood,
 And, pressing on thy desperate way,
 Raised oft and long their wild hurra,
 The children of the Don.
 Thine ear no yell of horror cleft
 So ominous, when, all bereft
 Of aid, the valiant Polack left—
 Ay, left by thee—found soldier's grave
 In Leipsic's corpse-encumber'd wave.
 Fate, in those various perils past,
 Reserved thee still some future cast ;
 On the dread die thou now hast thrown,
 Hangs not a single field alone,
 Nor one campaign—thy martial fame,
 Thy empire, dynasty, and name,
 Have felt the final stroke ;
 And now, o'er thy devoted head
 The last stern vial's wrath is shed,
 The last dread seal is broke.

XVII.

Since live thou wilt—refuse not now
 Before these demagogues to bow,

Late objects of thy **scorn** and hate,
 Who shall thy once imperial fate
 Make wordy theme of vain **debate**.—
 Or shall we say, thou stoop'st less low
 In seeking refuge from the foe,
 Against whose heart, in prosperous life,
 Thine hand hath ever held the knife?

Such homage hath been paid
 By Roman and by Grecian voice,
 And there were honour in the choice,
 If it were freely made.

Then safely come—in one so low,—
 So lost,—we cannot own a foe ;
 Though dear experience bid us end,
 In thee we ne'er can hail a friend.—
 Come, howsoe'er—but do not hide
 Close in thy heart that germ of pride,
 Erewhile, by gifted bard espied,

That “yet imperial hope” ;
 Think not that for a fresh rebound,
 To raise ambition from the ground,
 We yield thee means or scope.

In safety come—but ne'er again
 Hold type of independent reign ;

No islet calls thee lord,
 We leave thee no confederate band,
 No symbol of thy lost command,
 To be a dagger in the hand

From which we wrench'd the sword.

XVIII.

Yet, even in yon sequester'd spot,
 May worthier conquest be thy lot

Than yet thy life has known ;
 Conquest, unbought by blood or harm,
 That needs nor foreign aid nor arm,

A triumph all thine own.

Such waits thee when thou shalt control
 Those passions wild, that stubborn soul,

That marr'd thy prosperous scene :—
 Hear this—from no unmoved heart,
 Which sighs, comparing what **THOU ART**
 With what thou **MIGHT'ST HAVE BEEN !**

XIX.

Thou, too, whose deeds of fame renew'd
 Bankrupt a nation's gratitude,
 To thine own noble heart must owe
 More than the meed she can bestow.
 For not a people's just acclaim,
 Not the full hail of Europe's fame,
 Thy Prince's smiles, thy State's decree
 The ducal rank, the garter'd knee,
 Not these such pure delight afford
 As that, when hanging up thy sword,
 Well may'st thou think, "This honest steel
 Was ever drawn for public weal ;
 And, such was rightful Heaven's decree,
 Ne'er sheathed unless with victory !"

XX.

Look forth, once more, with soften'd heart,
 Ere from the field of fame we part ;
 Triumph and Sorrow border near,
 And joy oft melts into a tear.
 Alas ! what links of love that morn
 Has War's rude hand asunder torn !
 For ne'er was field so sternly fought,
 And ne'er was conquest dearer bought.
 Here piled in common slaughter sleep
 Those whom affection long shall weep :
 Here rests the sire, that ne'er shall strain
 His orphans to his heart again ;
 The son, whom, on his native shore,
 The parent's voice shall bless no more ;
 The bridegroom, who has hardly press'd
 His blushing consort to his breast ;
 The husband, whom through many a year
 Long love and mutual faith endear.
 Thou canst not name one tender tie,
 But here dissolved its relics lie !
 O ! when thou see'st some mourner's veil
 Shroud her thin form and visage pale,
 Or mark'st the Matron's bursting tears
 Stream when the stricken drum she hears ;



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SC-1.

Norham Castle.



Or see'st how manlier grief, suppress'd,
 Is labouring in a father's breast,—
 With no enquiry vain pursue
 The cause, but think on Waterloo !

XXI.

Period of honour as of woes,
 What bright careers 'twas thine to close !—
 Mark'd on thy roll of blood what names
 To Briton's memory, and to Fame's,
 Laid there their last immortal claims !
 Thou saw'st in seas of gore expire
 Redoubted PICTON's soul of fire—
 Saw'st in the mingled carnage lie
 All that of PONSONBY could die—
 DE LANCEY change Love's bridal-wreath,
 For laurels from the hand of Death—
 Saw'st gallant MILLER's failing eye
 Still bent where Albion's banners fly,
 And CAMERON, in the shock of steel,
 Die like the offspring of Lochiel ;
 And generous GORDON, 'mid the strife,
 Fall while he watch'd his leader's life,—
 Ah ! though her guardian angel's shield
 Fenced Britain's hero through the field,
 Fate not the less her power made known,
 Through his friends' hearts to pierce his own !

XXII.

Forgive, brave Dead, the imperfect lay
 Who may your names, your numbers, say ?
 What high-strung harp, what lofty line,
 To each the dear-earn'd praise assign,
 From high-born chiefs of martial fame
 To the poor soldier's lowlier name ?
 Lightly ye rose that dawning-day,
 From your cold couch of swamp and clay-
 To fill, before the sun was low,
 The bed that morning cannot know.--
 Oft may the tear the green sod steep,
 And sacred be the heroes' sleep,
 Till time shall cease to run :

And ne'er beside their noble grave,
 May Briton pass and fail to crave
 A blessing on the fallen brave
 Who fought with Wellington !

XXIII.

Farewell, sad Field : whose blighted face
 Wears desolation's withering trace ;
 Long shall my memory retain
 Thy shatter'd huts and trampled grain,
 With every mark of martial wrong,
 That scathe thy towers, fair Hougomont !
 Yet though thy garden's green arcade
 The marksmar's fatal post was made,
 Though on thy shatter'd beeches fell
 The blended rage of shot and shell,
 Though from thy blacken'd portals torn,
 Their fall thy blighted fruit-trees mourn,
 Has not such havoc bought a name
 Immortal in the rolls of fame ?
 Yes—Agincourt may be forgot,
 And Cressy be an unknown spot,
 And Blenheim's name be new ;
 But still in story and in song,
 For many an age remember'd long,
 Shall live the towers of Hougomont
 And Field of Waterloo.

CONCLUSION.

STERN tide of human Time ! that know'st not rest,
 But, sweeping from the cradle to the tomb,
 Bear'st ever downward on thy dusky breast
 Successive generations to their doom ;
 While thy capacious stream has equal room
 For the gay bark where Pleasure's streamers sport,
 And for the prison-ship of guilt and gloom,
 The fisher-skiff, and barge that bears a court,
 Still wafting onward all to one dark silent port ;—

Stern tide of Time ! through what mysterious change
 Of hope and fear have our frail barks been driven !
 For ne'er, before, vicissitude so strange
 Was to one race of Adam's offspring given.

And sure such varied change of sea and heaven,
 Such unexpected bursts of joy and wee,
 Such fearful strife as that where we have striven,
 Succeeding ages ne'er again shall know,
 Until the awful term when Thou shalt cease to flow!

Well hast thou stood, my Country!—the brave fight
 Hast well maintain'd through good report and ill;
 In thy just cause and in thy native might,
 And in Heaven's grace and justice constant still;
 Whether the banded prowess, strength, and skill
 Of half the world against thee stood array'd,
 Or when, with better views and freer will,
 Beside thee Europe's noblest drew the blade,
 Each emulous in arms the Ocean Queen to aid.

Well art thou now repaid—though slowly rose,
 And struggled long with mists thy blaze of fame,
 While like the dawn that in the orient glows
 On the broad wave its earlier lustre came;
 Then eastern Egypt saw the growing flame,
 And Maida's myrtles gleam'd beneath its ray,
 Where first the soldier, stung with generous shame
 Rivall'd the heroes of the wat'ry way,
 And wash'd in foemen's gore unjust reproach away.

Now, Island Empress, wave thy crest on high,
 And bid the banner of thy Patron flow,
 Gallant Saint George, the flower of Chivalry,
 For thou hast faced, like him; a dragon foe,
 And rescued innocence from overthrow,
 And trampled down, like him, tyrannic might,
 And to the gazing world mayst proudly show
 The chosen emblem of thy sainted Knight,
 Who quell'd devouring pride, and vindicated right.

Yet 'mid the confidence of just renown,
 Renown dear-bought, but dearest thus acquired,
 Write, Britain, write the moral lesson down:
 'Tis not alone the heart with valour fired,
 The discipline so dreaded and admired,
 In many a field of bloody conquest known;
 —Such may by fame be lured, by gold be hired—
 'Tis constancy in the good cause alone,
 Best justifies the meed thy valiant sons have won.

HAROLD THE DAUNTLESS :

A POEM IN SIX CANTOS.

INTRODUCTION.

THERE is a mood of mind, we all have known
On drowsy eve, or dark and low'ring day,
When the tired spirits lose their sprightly tone,
And nought can chase the lingering hours away.
Dull on our soul falls Fancy's dazzling ray,
And wisdom holds his steadier torch in vain,
Obscured the painting seems, mistuned the lay,
Nor dare we of our listless load complain,
For who for sympathy may seek that cannot tell of pain ?

The jolly sportsman knows such dreariness,
When bursts in deluge the autumnal rain,
Clouding that morn which threatens the heath-cock's brood ;
Of such, in summer's drought, the anglers plain,
Who hope the soft mild southern shower in vain ;
But, more than all, the discontented fair,
Whom father stern, and sterner aunt, restrain
From county-ball, or race occurring rare,
While all her friends around their vestments gay prepare.

Ennui !—or, as our mothers call'd thee, Spleen !
To thee we owe full many a rare device ;—
Thine is the sheaf of painted cards, I ween,
The rolling billiard-ball, the rattling dice,
The turning-lathe for framing gimcrack nice ;
The amateur's blotch'd pallet thou mayst claim,
Retort, and air-pump, threatening frogs and mice,
(Murders disguised by philosophic name,)
And much of trifling grave, and much of buxom game.

Then of the books, to catch thy drowsy glance
Compiled, what bard the catalogue may quote !
Plays, poems, novels, never read but once ;—
But not of such the tale fair Edgeworth wrote,
That bears thy name, and is thine antidote ;

And not of such the strain my Thomson sung,
 Dilicious dreams inspiring by his note,
 What time to Indolence his harp he strung ;—
 Oh ! might my lay be rank'd that happier list among !

Each hath his refuge whom thy cares assail.
 For me, I love my study-fire to trim,
 And con right vacantly some idle tale,
 Displaying on the couch each listless limb,
 Till on the drowsy page the lights grow dim,
 And doubtful slumber half supplies the theme ;
 While antique shapes of knight and giant grim,
 Damsel and dwarf, in long procession gleam,
 And the Romancer's tale becomes the Reader's dream.

'Tis thus my malady I well may bear,
 Albeit outstretch'd, like Pope's own Paridel,
 Upon the rack of a too-easy chair ;
 And find, to cheat the time, a powerful spell
 In old romaunts of errantry that tell,
 Or later legends of the Fairy-folk,
 Or Oriental tale of Afrite fell,
 Of Genii, Talisman, and broad-wing'd Roc,
 Though taste may blush and frown, and sober reason mock

Oft at such season, too, will rhymes unsought
 Arrange themselves in some romantic lay ;
 The which, as things unfitting graver thought,
 Are burnt or blotted on some wiser day.—
 These few survive—and proudly let me say,
 Court not the critic's smile, nor dread his frown ;
 They well may serve to while an hour away,
 Nor does the volume ask for more renown,
 Than Ennui's yawning smile, what time she drops it down.

CANTO FIRST.

I.

LIST to the valorous deeds that were done
 By Harold the Dauntless, Count Witikind's son !
 Count Witikind came of a regal strain,
 And roved with his Norsemen the land and the main.

Woe to the realms which he coasted ! for there
 Was shedding of blood, and rending of hair,
 Rape of maiden, and slaughter of priest,
 Gathering of ravens and wolves to the feast :
 When he hoisted his standard black,
 Before him was battle, behind him wrack,
 And he burn'd the churches, that heathen Dane,
 To light his band to their barks again.

II.

On Erin's shores was his outrage known,
 The winds of France had his banners blown ;
 Little was there to plunder, yet still
 His pirates had foray'd on Scottish hill :
 But upon merry England's coast
 More frequent he sail'd, for he won the most.
 So wide and so far his ravage they knew,
 If a sail but gleam'd white 'gainst the welkin blue,
 Trumpet and bugle to arms did call,
 Burghers hasten'd to man the wall,
 Peasants fled inland his fury to 'scape,
 Beacons were lighted on headland and cape,
 Bells were toll'd out, and aye as they rung,
 Fearful and faintly the gray brothers sung,
 " Bless us, St. Mary, from flood and from fire,
 From famine and pest, and Count Witikind's ire ! "

III.

He liked the wealth of fair England so well,
 That he sought in her bosom as native to dwell.
 He enter'd the Humber in fearful hour,
 And disembark'd with his Danish power.
 Three Earls came against him with all their train,—
 Two hath he taken, and one hath he slain.
 Count Witikind left the Humber's rich strand,
 And he wasted and warr'd in Northumberland.
 But the Saxon King was a sire in age,
 Weak in battle, in council sage ;
 Peace of that heathen leader he sought,
 Gifts he gave, and quiet he bought ;
 And the Count took upon him the peaceable style
 Of a vassal and liegeman of Britain's broad isle.

IV.

Time will rust the sharpest sword,
 Time will consume the strongest cord ;
 That which moulders hemp and steel,
 Mortal arm and nerve must feel.
 Of the Danish band, whom Count Witikind led,
 Many wax'd aged, and many were dead :
 Himself found his armour full weighty to bear,
 Wrinkled his brows grew, and hoary his hair ;
 He lean'd on a staff, when his step went abroad,
 And patient his palfrey, when steed he bestrode.
 As he grew feebler, his wildness ceased,
 He made himself peace with prelate and priest,—
 Made his peace, and, stooping his head,
 Patiently listed the counsel they said :
 Saint Cuthbert's Bishop was holy and grave,
 Wise and good was the counsel he gave.

V.

“ Thou hast murder'd, robb'd, and spoil'd,
 Time it is thy poor soul were assoil'd ;
 Priests didst thou slay, and churches burn,
 Time it is now to repentance to turn ;
 Fiends hast thou worshipp'd, with fiendish rite,
 Leave now the darkness, and wend into light :
 O ! while life and space are given,
 Turn thee yet, and think of Heaven ! ”
 That stern old heathen his head he raised,
 And on the good prelate he stedfastly gazed ;
 “ Give me broad lands on the Wear and the Tyne,
 My faith I will leave, and I'll cleave unto thine.”

VI.

Broad lands he gave him on Tyne and Wear,
 To be held of the church by bridle and spear ;
 Part of Monkwearmouth, of Tynedale part,
 To better his will, and to soften his heart :
 Count Witikind was a joyful man,
 Less for the faith than the lands that he wan.
 The high church of Durham is dress'd for the day,
 The clergy are rank'd in their solemn array :

There came the Count, in a bear-skin warm,
 Leaning on Hilda his concubine's arm.
 He kneel'd before Saint Cuthbert's shrine,
 With patience unwonted at rites divine ;
 He abjured the gods of heathen race,
 And he bent his head at the font of grace.
 But such was the grisly old proselyte's look,
 That the priest who baptized him grew pale and shook ;
 And the old monks mutter'd beneath their hood,
 "Of a stem so stubborn can never spring good !"

VII.

Up then arose that grim convertite,
 Homeward he hied him when ended the rite :
 The Prelate in honour will with him ride,
 And feast in his castle on Tyne's fair side.
 Banners and banderols danced in the wind,
 Monks rode before them, and spearmen behind ;
 Onward they pass'd, till fairly did shine
 Pennon and cross on the bosom of Tyne ;
 And full in front did that fortress lower,
 In darksome strength with its buttress and tower :
 At the castle gate was young Harold there,
 Count Witikind's only offspring and heir.

VIII.

Young Harold was fear'd for his hardihood,
 His strength of frame, and his fury of mood.
 Rude he was and wild to behold,
 Wore neither collar nor bracelet of gold,
 Cap of vair nor rich array,
 Such as should grace that festal day :
 His doublet of bull's hide was all unbraced,
 Uncover'd his head, and his sandal unlaced :
 His shaggy black locks on his brow hung low,
 And his eyes glanced through them a swarthy glow ;
 A Danish club in his hand he bore,
 The spikes were clotted with recent gore ;
 At his back a she-wolf, and her wolf-cubs twain,
 In the dangerous chase that morning slain.
 Rude was the greeting his father he made,
 None to the Bishop,—while thus he said :—

IX.

"What priest-led hypocrite art thou,
 With thy humbled look and thy monkish brow,
 Like a shaveling who studies to cheat his vow?
 Can'st thou be Witikind the Waster known,
 Royal Eric's fearless son,
 Haughty Gunhilda's haughtier lord,
 Who won his bride by the axe and sword;
 From the shrine of St. Peter the chalice who tore,
 And melted to bracelets for Freya and Thor;
 With one blow of his gauntlet who burst the skull,
 Before Odin's stone, of the Mountain Bull?
 Then ye worshipp'd with rites that to war-gods belong,
 With the deed of the brave, and the blow of the strong;
 And now, in thine age to dotage sunk,
 Wilt thou patter thy crimes to a shaven monk,—
 Lay down thy mail-shirt for clothing of hair,—
 Fasting and scourge, like a slave, wilt thou bear?
 Or, at best, be admitted in slothful bower
 To batten with priest and with paramour?
 Oh! out upon thine endless shame!
 Each Scald's high harp shall blast thy fame,
 And thy son will refuse thee a father's name!"

X.

Ireful wax'd old Witikind's look,
 His faltering voice with fury shook:—
 "Hear me, Harold of harden'd heart!
 Stubborn and wilful ever thou wert.
 Thine outrage insane I command thee to cease,
 Fear my wrath and remain at peace:—
 Just is the debt of repentance I've paid,
 Richly the church has a recompense made,
 And the truth of her doctrines I prove with my blade,
 But reckoning to none of my actions I owe,
 And least to my son such accounting will show.
 Why speak I to thee of repentance or truth,
 Who ne'er from thy childhood knew reason or ruth?
 Hence! to the wolf and the bear in her den;
 These are thy mates, and not rational men."

XI.

Grimly smiled Harold, and coldly replied,
 "We must honour our sires, if we fear when they chide.
 For me, I am yet what thy lessons have made,
 I was rock'd in a buckler and fed from a blade ;
 An infant, was taught to clasp hands and to shout
 From the roofs of the tower when the flame had broke out ;
 In the blood of slain foemen my finger to dip,
 And tinge with its purple my cheek and my lip.—
 'Tis thou know'st not truth, that hast barter'd in eld,
 For a price, the brave faith that thine ancestors held.
 When this wolf,"—and the carcass he flung on the plain,—
 "Shall awake and give food to her nurslings again,
 The face of his father will Harold review ;
 Till then, aged Heathen, young Christian, adieu !"

XII.

Priest, monk, and prelate, stood aghast,
 As through the pageant the heathen pass'd.
 A cross-bearer out of his saddle he flung,
 Laid his hand on the pommel, and into it sprung.
 Loud was the shriek, and deep the groan,
 When the holy sign on the earth was thrown !
 The fierce old Count unsheathed his brand,
 But the calmer Prelate stay'd his hand.
 "Let him pass free !—Heaven knows its hour,—
 But he must own repentance's power,
 Pray and weep, and penance bear,
 Ere he hold land by the Tyne and the Wear."
 Thus in scorn and in wrath from his father is gone
 Young Harold the Dauntless, Count Witikind's son.

XIII.

High was the feasting in Witikind's hall,
 Revell'd priests, soldiers, and pagans, and all ;
 And e'en the good Bishop was fain to endure
 The scandal, which time and instruction might cure :
 It were dangerous, he deem'd, at the first to restrain,
 In his wine and his wassail, a half-christen'd Dane.
 The mead flow'd around, and the ale was drain'd dry,
 Wild was the laughter, the song, and the cry ;

With Kyrie Eleison, came clamorously in
 The war-songs of Danesmen, Norwayn, and Finn,
 Till man after man the contention gave o'er,
 Outstretch'd on the rushes that strew'd the hall floor ;
 And the tempest within, having ceased its wild rout,
 Gave place to the tempest that thunder'd without.

XIV.

Apart from the wassail, in turret alone,
 Lay flaxen-hair'd Gunnar, old Ermengarde's son ;
 In the train of Lord Harold that Page was the first,
 For Harold in childhood had Ermengarde nursed ;
 And grieved was young Gunnar his master should roam,
 Unhoused and unfriended, an exile from home.
 He heard the deep thunder, the plashing of rain,
 He saw the red lightning through shot-hole and pane ;
 " And oh ! " said the Page, " on the shelterless wold
 Lord Harold is wandering in darkness and cold !
 What though he was stubborn, and wayward, and wild,
 He endured me because I was Ermengarde's child,—
 And often from dawn till the set of the sun,
 In the chase, by his stirrup, unbidden I run ;
 I would I were older, and knighthood could bear,
 I would soon quit the banks of the Tyne and the Wear :
 For my mother's command, with her last parting breath,
 Bade me follow her nursling in life and to death.

XV.

" It pours and it thunders, it lightens amain,
 As if Lok, the Destroyer, had burst from his chain !
 Accursed by the Church, and expell'd by his sire,
 Nor Christian nor Dane give him shelter or fire,
 And this tempest what mortal may houseless endure ?
 Unaided, unmantled, he dies on the moor !
 Whate'er comes of Gunnar, he tarries not here."
 He leapt from his couch and he grasp'd to his spear ;
 Sought the hall of the feast. Undisturb'd by his tread.
 The wassailers slept fast as the sleep of the dead :
 " Ungrateful and bestial ! " his anger broke forth,
 " To forget 'mid your goblets the pride of the North !
 And you, ye cowl'd priests, who have plenty in store,
 Must give Gunnar for ransom a palfrey and ore."

XVI.

Then, heeding full little of ban or of curse,
 He has seized on the Prior of Jorvaux's purse :
 Saint Meneholt's Abbot next morning has miss'd
 His mantle, deep furr'd from the cape to the wrist ;
 The Seneschal's keys from his belt he has ta'en,
 (Well drench'd on that eve was old Hildebrand's brain.)
 To the stable-yard he made his way,
 And mounted the Bishop's palfrey gay,
 Castle and hamlet behind him has cast,
 And right on his way to the moorland has pass'd.
 Sore snorted the palfrey, unused to face
 A weather so wild at so rash a pace ;
 So long he snorted, so loud he neigh'd,
 There answer'd a steed that was bound beside,
 And the red flash of lightning show'd there where lay
 His master, Lord Harold, outstretch'd on the clay.

XVII.

Up he started, and thunder'd out, "Stand!"
 And raised the club in his deadly hand.
 The flaxen-hair'd Gunnar his purpose told,
 Show'd the palfrey and proffer'd the gold.
 "Back, back, and home, thou simple boy!
 Thou canst not share my grief or joy :
 Have I not mark'd thee wail and cry
 When thou hast seen a sparrow die?
 And canst thou, as my follower should,
 Wade ankle-deep through foeman's blood,
 Dare mortal and immortal foe,
 The gods above, the fiends below,
 And man on earth, more hateful still,
 The very fountain-head of ill?
 Desperate of life, and careless of death,
 Lover of bloodshed, and slaughter, and scathe,
 Such must thou be with me to roam,
 And such thou canst not be—back, and home!"

XVIII.

Young Gunnar shook like an aspen bough,
 As he heard the harsh voice and beheld the dark brow,
 And half he repented his purpose and vow.

But now to draw back were bootless shame,
 And he loved his master, so urged his claim :
 " Alas ! if my arm and my courage be weak,
 Bear with me a while for old Ermengarde's sake ;
 Nor deem so lightly of Gunnar's faith,
 As to fear he would break it for peril of death.
 Have I not risk'd it to fetch thee this gold,
 This surcoat and mantle to fence thee from cold ?
 And, did I bear a baser mind,
 What lot remains if I stay behind ?
 The priests' revenge, thy father's wrath,
 A dungeon, and a shameful death."

XIX.

With gentler look Lord Harold eyed
 The Page, then turned his head aside ;
 And either a tear did his eyelash stain,
 Or it caught a drop of the passing rain.
 " Art thou an outcast, then ? " quoth he ;
 " The meeter page to follow me."
 'Twere bootless to tell what climes they sought,
 Ventures achieved, and battles fought ;
 How oft with few, how oft alone,
 Fierce Harold's arm the field hath won.
 Men swore his eye, that flash'd so red
 When each other glance was quench'd with dread,
 Bore oft a light of deadly flame,
 That ne'er from mortal courage came.
 Those limbs so strong, that mood so stern,
 That loved the couch of heath and fern,
 Afar from hamlet, tower, and town,
 More than to rest on driven down ;
 That stubborn frame, that sullen mood,
 Men deem'd must come of aught but good ;
 And they whisper'd, the great Master Fiend was at one
 With Harold the Dauntless, Count Witikind's son.

XX.

Years after years had gone and fled,
 The good old Prelate lies lapp'd in lead ;
 In the chapel still is shown
 His sculptured form on a marble stone,

With staff and ring and scapulaire,
 And folded hands in the act of prayer.
 Saint Cuthbert's mitre is resting now
 On the haughty Saxon, bold Aldingar's brow ;
 The power of his crozier he loved to extend
 O'er whatever would break, or whatever would bend ;
 And now hath he clothed him in cope and in pall,
 And the Chapter of Durham has met at his call.
 "And hear ye not, brethren," the proud Bishop said,
 "That our vassal, the Danish Count Witikind's dead ?
 All his gold and his goods hath he given
 To holy Church for the love of Heaven,
 And hath founded a chantry with stipend and dole,
 That priests and that beadsmen may pray for his soul :
 Harold his son is wandering abroad,
 Dreaded by man and abhorr'd by God ;
 Meet it is not, that such should heir
 The lands of the Church on the Tyne and the Wear,
 And at her pleasure, her hallow'd hands
 May now resume these wealthy lands."

XXI.

Answer'd good Eustace, a canon old,—
 "Harold is tameless, and furious, and bold ;
 Ever Renown blows a note of fame,
 And a note of fear, when she sounds his name :
 Much of bloodshed and much of scathe
 Have been their lot who have waked his wrath,
 Leave him these lands and lordships still,
 Heaven in its hour may change his will ;
 But if rest of gold, and of living bare,
 An evil counsellor is despair."
 More had he said, but the Prelate frown'd,
 And murmur'd his brethren who sate around,
 And with one consent have they given their doom,
 That the Church should the lands of Saint Cuthbert resume.
 So will'd the Prelate ; and canon and dean
 Gave to his judgment their loud amen.

CANTO SECOND.

I.

'Tis merry in greenwood,—thus runs the old lay,—
 In the gladsome month of lively May,
 When the wild birds' song on stem and spray
 Invites to forest bower ;
 Then rears the ash his airy crest,
 Then shines the birch in silver vest,
 And the beech in glistening leaves is drest,
 And dark between shows the oak's proud breast,
 Like a chieftain's frowning tower ;
 Though a thousand branches join their screen,
 Yet the broken sunbeams glance between,
 And tip the leaves with lighter green,
 With brighter tints the flower :
 Dull is the heart that loves not then
 The deep recess of the wildwood glen,
 Where roe and red-deer find sheltering den,
 When the sun is in his power.

II.

Less merry, perchance, is the fading leaf
 That follows so soon on the gather'd sheaf,
 When the greenwood loses the name ;
 Silent is then the forest bound,
 Save the redbreast's note, and the rustling sound
 Of frost-nipt leaves that are dropping round
 Or the deep-mouth'd cry of the distant hound
 That opens on his game :
 Yet then, too, I love the forest wide,
 Whether the sun in splendour ride,
 And gild its many-colour'd side ;
 Or whether the soft and silvery haze,
 In vapoury folds, o'er the landscape strays,
 And half involves the woodland maze,
 Like an early widow's veil,
 Where wimpling tissue from the gaze
 The form half hides, and half betrays,
 Of beauty wan and pale.

III.

Fair Metelill was a woodland maid,
 Her father a rover of greenwood shade,
 By forest statutes undismay'd,
 Who lived by bow and quiver ;
 Well known was Wulfstane's archery,
 By merry Tyne both on moor and lea,
 Through wooded Weardale's glens so free,
 Well beside Stanhope's wildwood tree,
 And well on Ganlesse river.
 Yet free though he trespass'd on woodland game.
 More known and more fear'd was the wizard fame
 Of Jutta of Rookhope, the Outlaw's dame,
 Fear'd when she frown'd was her eye of flame,
 More fear'd when in wrath she laugh'd ;
 For then, 'twas said, more fatal true
 To its dread aim her spell-glance flew,
 Than when from Wulfstane's bended yew
 Sprung forth the gray-goose shaft.

IV.

Yet had this fierce and dreaded pair,
 So Heaven decreed, a daughter fair,
 None brighter crown'd the bed,
 In Britain's bounds, of peer or prince,
 Nor hath, perchance, a lovelier since
 In this fair isle been bred.
 And nought of fraud, or ire, or ill,
 Was known to gentle Metelill,—
 A simple maiden she ;
 The spells in dimpled smile that lie,
 And a downcast blush, and the darts that fly
 With the sidelong glance of a hazel eye,
 Were her arms and witchery.
 So young, so simple was she yet,
 She scarce could childhood's joys forget,
 And still she loved, in secret set
 Beneath the greenwood tree,
 To plait the rushy coronet,
 And braid with flowers her locks of jet,
 As when in infancy ;—

Yet could that heart, so simple, prove
 The early dawn of stealing love :
 Ah ! gentle maid, beware !
 The power who, now so mild a guest,
 Gives dangerous yet delicious zest
 To the calm pleasures of thy breast,
 Will soon, a tyrant o'er the rest,
 Let none his empire share.

V.

One morn, in kirtle green array'd,
 Deep in the wood the maiden stray'd,
 And, where a fountain sprung,
 She sate her down, unseen, to thread
 The scarlet berry's mimic braid
 And while the beads she strung,
 Like the blithe lark, whose carol gay
 Gives a good-morrow to the day,
 So lightsomely she sung.

VI.

Song.

“ Lord William was born in gilded bower,
 The heir of Wilton's lofty tower ;
 Yet better loves Lord William now
 To roam beneath wild Rookhope's brow ;
 And William has lived where ladies fair
 With gawds and jewels deck their hair,
 Yet better loves the dewdrops still
 That pearl the locks of Metelill.

“ The pious Palmer loves, I wis,
 Saint Cuthbert's hallow'd beads to kiss ;
 But I, though simple girl I be,
 Might have such homage paid to me ;
 For did Lord William see me suit
 This necklace of the bramble's fruit,
 He fain—but must not have his will—
 Would kiss the beads of Metelill.

“ My nurse has told me many a tale,
 How vows of love are weak and frail ;

My mother says that courtly youth
 By rustic maid means seldom sooth.
 What should they mean? it cannot be,
 That such a warning's meant for me,
 For nought—oh! nought of fraud or ill
 Can William mean to Metelil!"

VII.

Sudden she stops—and starts to feel
 A weighty hand, a glove of steel,
 Upon her shrinking shoulders laid;
 Fearful she turn'd, and saw, dismay'd,
 A Knight in plate and mail array'd,
 His crest and bearing worn and fray'd,
 His surcoat soil'd and riven,
 Form'd like that giant race of yore,
 Whose long-continued crimes outwore
 The sufferance of Heaven.
 Stern accents made his pleasure known,
 Though then he used his gentlest tone:
 "Maiden," he said, "sing forth thy glee.
 Start not—sing on—it pleases me."

VIII.

Secured within his powerful hold,
 To bend her knee, her hands to fold,
 Was all the maiden might;
 And "Oh! forgive," she faintly said,
 "The terrors of a simple maid,
 If thou art mortal wight!
 But if—of such strange tales are told—
 Uncarthy warrior of the wold,
 Thou comest to chide mine accents bold,
 My mother, Jutta, knows the spell,
 At noon and midnight pleasing well
 The disembodied ear,
 Oh! let her powerful charms atone
 For aught my rashness may have done,
 And cease thy grasp of fear."
 Then laugh'd the Knight—his laughter's sound
 Half in the hollow helmet drown'd;
 His barred visor then he raised,
 And steady on the maiden gazed.

He smooth'd his brows, as best he might,
 To the dread calm of autumn night,
 When sinks the tempest roar ;
 Yet still the cautious fishers eye
 The clouds, and fear the gloomy sky,
 And haul their barks on shore.

IX.

"Damsel," he said, "be wise, and learn
 Matters of weight and deep concern :
 From distant realms I come,
 And, wanderer long, at length have plann'd
 In this my native Northern land
 To seek myself a home.
 Not that alone—a mate I seek ;
 She must be gentle, soft, and meek,—
 No lordly dame for me ;
 Myself am something rough of mood,
 And feel the fire of royal blood,
 And therefore do not hold it good
 To match in my degree.
 Then, since coy maidens say my face
 Is harsh, my form devoid of grace,
 For a fair lineage to provide,
 'Tis meet that my selected bride
 In lineaments be fair ;
 I love thine well—till now I ne'er
 Look'd patient on a face of fear,
 But now that tremulous sob and tear
 Become thy beauty rare.
 One kiss—nay, damsel, coy it not !—
 And now go seek thy parents' cot,
 And say, a bridegroom soon I come,
 To woo my love, and bear her home."

X.

Home sprung the maid without a pause,
 As leveret 'scaped from greyhound's jaws ;
 But still she lock'd, howe'er distress'd,
 The secret in her boding breast ;
 Dreading her sire, who oft forbade
 Her steps should stray to distant glade.

Night came—to her accustom'd nook
 Her distaff aged Jutta took,
 And by the lamp's imperfect glow,
 Rough Wulfstane trimm'd his shafts and bow,
 Sudden and clamorous, from the ground
 Upstarted slumbering brach and hound ;
 Loud knocking next the lodge alarms,
 And Wulfstane snatches at his arms,
 When open flew the yielding door,
 And that grim Warrior press'd the floor.

XI.

“ All peace be here—What ! none replies ?
 Dismiss your fears and your surprise.
 'Tis I—that Maid hath told my tale,—
 Or, trembler, did thy courage fail ?
 It recks not—it is I demand
 Fair Metelill in marriage band ;
 Harold the Dauntless I ; whose name
 Is brave men's boast and caitiffs' shame.”
 The parents sought each other's eyes,
 With awe, resentment, and surprise :
 Wulfstane, to quarrel prompt, began
 The stranger's size and thewes to scan ;
 But as he scann'd, his courage sunk,
 And from unequal strife he shrunk,
 Then forth, to blight and blemish, flies
 The harmful curse from Jutta's eyes ;
 Yet, fatal howsoe'er, the spell
 On Harold innocently fell !
 And disappointment and amaze
 Were in the witch's wilder'd gaze.

XII.

But soon the wit of woman woke,
 And to the Warrior mild she spoke :
 “ Her child was all too young.”—“ A toy,
 The refuge of a maiden coy.”—
 Again, “ A powerful baron's heir
 Claims in her heart an interest fair.”—
 “ A trifle—whisper in his ear,
 That Harold is a suitor here !”—

Baffled at length she sought delay :
 "Would not the Knight till morning stay?
 Late was the hour—he there might rest
 Till morn, their lodge's honour'd guest."
 Such were her words,—her craft might cast,
 Her honour'd guest should sleep his last :
 "No, not to-night—but soon," he swore,
 "He would return, nor leave them more."
 The threshold then his huge stride crost,
 And soon he was in darkness lost.

XIII.

Appall'd a while the parents stood,
 Then changed their fear to angry mood,
 And foremost fell their words of ill
 On unresisting Metelill :
 Was she not caution'd and forbid,
 Forewarn'd, implored, accused and chid,
 And must she still to greenwood roam,
 To marshal such misfortune home?
 "Hence, minion—to thy chamber hence—
 There prudence learn, and penitence."
 She went—her lonely couch to steep
 In tears which absent lovers weep ;
 Or if she gain'd a troubled sleep,
 Fierce Harold's suit was still the theme
 And terror of her feverish dream.

XIV.

Scarce was she gone, her dame and sire
 Upon each other bent their ire ;
 "A woodsman thou, and hast a spear,
 And couldst thou such an insult bear?"
 Sullen he said, "A man contends
 With men, a witch with sprites and fiends,
 Not to mere mortal wight belong
 Yon gloomy brow and frame so strong.
 But thou—is this thy promise fair,
 That your Lord William, wealthy heir
 To Ulrick, Baron of Witton-le-Wear,
 Should Metelill to altar bear?
 Do all the spells thou boast'st as thine
 Serve but to slay some peasant's kine,

His grain in autumn's storms to steep,
 Or thorough fog and fen to sweep,
 And hag-ride some poor rustic's sleep?
 Is such mean mischief worth the fame
 Of sorceress and witch's name?
 Fame, which with all men's wish conspires,
 With thy deserts and my desires,
 To damn thy corpse to penal fires?
 Out on thee, witch! aroint! aroint!
 What now shall put thy schemes in joint?
 What save this trusty arrow's point,
 From the dark dingle when it flies,
 And he who meets it gasps and dies."

XV.

Stern she replied, "I will not wage
 War with thy folly or thy rage;
 But ere the morrow's sun be low,
 Wulfstane of Rookhope, thou shalt know,
 If I can venge me on a foe.
 Believe the while, that whatso'er
 I spoke, in ire, of bow and spear,
 It is not Harold's destiny
 The death of pilfer'd deer to die.
 But he, and thou, and yon pale moon,
 (That shall be yet more pallid soon,
 Before she sink behind the dell,
 Thou, she, and Harold too, shall tell
 What Jutta knows of charm or spell."
 Thus muttering, to the door she bent
 Her wayward steps, and forth she went,
 And left alone the moody sire,
 To cherish or to slake his ire.

XVI.

Far faster than belong'd to age
 Has Jutta made her pilgrimage.
 A priest has met her as she pass'd,
 And cross'd himself and stood aghast:
 She traced a hamlet—not a cur
 His throat would ope, his foot would stir;
 By crouch, by trembling, and by groan,
 They made her hated presence known!

But when she trode the sable fell,
 Were wilder sounds her way to tell,—
 For far was heard the fox's yell,
 The black-cock waked and faintly crew,
 Scream'd o'er the moss the scared curlew ;
 Where o'er the cataract the oak
 Lay slant, was heard the raven's croak ;
 The mountain-cat, which sought his prey,
 Glared, scream'd, and started from her way.
 Such music cheer'd her journey lone
 To the deep dell and rocking stone :
 There, with unhallow'd hymn of praise,
 She called a God of heathen days.

XVII.

Invocation.

“ From thy Pomeranian throne,
 Hewn in rock of living stone,
 Where, to thy godhead faithful yet,
 Bend Esthonian, Finn, and Lett,
 And their swords in vengeance whet,
 That shall make thine altars wet,
 Wet and red for ages more
 With the Christian's hated gore,—
 Hear me ! Sovereign of the Rock,
 Hear me ! mighty Zerneck !

“ Mightiest of the mighty known,
 Here thy wonders have been shown ;
 Hundred tribes in various tongue
 Oft have here thy praises sung ;
 Down that stone with Runic seam'd,
 Hundred victims' blood hath stream'd !
 Now one woman comes alone,
 And but wets it with her own,
 The last, the feeblest of thy flock,—
 Hear—and be present, Zerneck !

“ Hark ! he comes ! the night-blast cold
 Wilder sweeps along the wold ;
 The cloudless moon grows dark and dim,
 And bristling hair and quaking limb

Proclaim the Master Demon nigh,—
 Those who view his form shall die !
 Lo ! I stoop and veil my head ;
 Thou who ridest the tempest dread,
 Shaking hill and rending oak—
 Spare me ! spare me ! Zerneck.

“ He comes not yet ! Shall cold delay
 Thy votaress at her need repay ?
 Thou—shall I call thee god or fiend ?—
 Let others on thy mood attend
 With prayer and ritual—Jutta’s arms
 Are necromantic words and charms ;
 Mine is the spell, that, utter’d once,
 Shall wake Thy Master from his trance.
 Shake his red mansion-house of pain,
 And burst his seven-times-twisted chain !—
 So ! com’st thou ere the spell is spoke ?
 I own thy presence, Zerneck.”—

XVIII.

“ Daughter of dust,” the Deep Voice said,
 —Shook while it spoke the vale for dread,
 Rock’d on the base that massive stone,
 The Evil Deity to own,—
 “ Daughter of dust ! not mine the power
 Thou seek’st on Harold’s fatal hour.
 ’Twixt heaven and hell there is a strife
 Waged for his soul and for his life,
 And fain would we the combat win,
 And snatch him in his hour of sin.
 There is a star now rising red,
 That threatens him with an influence dread :
 Woman, thine arts of malice whet,
 To use the space before it set.
 Involve him with the church in strife,
 Push on adventurous chance his life ;
 Ourselves will in the hour of need,
 As best we may thy counsels speed.”
 So ceased the Voice ; for seven leagues round
 Each hamlet started at the sound ;
 But slept again, as slowly died
 Its thunders on the hill’s brown side.

XIX.

"And is this all," said Jutta stern,
 "That thou can'st teach and I can learn?
 Hence! to the land of fog and waste,
 There fittest is thine influence placed,
 Thou powerless, sluggish Deity!
 But ne'er shall Briton bend the knee
 Again before so poor a god."
 She struck the altar with her rod;
 Slight was the touch, as when at need
 A damsel stirs her tardy steed;
 But to the blow the stone gave place,
 And, starting from its balanced base,
 Roll'd thundering down the moonlight dell,—
 Re-echo'd moorland, rock, and fell;
 Into the moonlight tarn it dash'd,
 Their shores the sounding surges lash'd,
 And there was ripple, rage, and foam;
 But on that lake, so dark and lone,
 Placid and pale the moonbeam shone
 As Jutta hied her home.

CANTO THIRD.

I.

GREY towers of Durham! there was once a time
 I view'd your battlements with such vague hope,
 As brightens life in its first dawning prime;
 Not that e'en then came within fancy's scope
 A vision vain of mitre, throne, or cope;
 Yet, gazing on the venerable hall,
 Her flattering dreams would in perspective ope
 Some reverend room, some prebendary's stall—
 And thus Hope me deceived as she deceiveth all.

Well yet I love thy mix'd and massive piles,
 Half church of God, half castle 'gainst the Scot,
 And long to roam these venerable aisles,
 With records stored of deeds long since forgot;
 There might I share my Surtees' happier lot,
 Who leaves at will his patrimonial field
 To ransack every crypt and hallow'd spot,

And from oblivion rend the spoils they yield,
Restoring priestly chant and clang of knightly shield.

Vain is the wish—since other cares demand
Each vacant hour, and in another clime ;
But still that northern harp invites my hand,
Which tells the wonder of thine earlier time ;
And fain its numbers would I now command
To paint the beauties of that dawning fair,
When Harold, gazing from its lofty stand
Upon the western heights of Beaurepaire,
Saw Saxon Eadmer's towers begirt by winding Wear.

II.

Fair on the half-seen streams the sunbeams danced
Betraying it beneath the woodland bank,
And fair between the Gothic turrets glanced
Broad lights, and shadows fell on front and flank,
Where tower and buttress rose in martial rank,
And girdled in the massive donjon Keep,
And from their circuit peal'd o'er bush and bank
The matin bell with summons long and deep,
And echo answer'd still with long-resounding sweep.

III.

The morning mists rose from the ground,
Each merry bird awaken'd round,
As if in revelry ;
Afar the bugles' clanging sound
Call'd to the chase the lagging hound ;
The gale breathed soft and free,
And seem'd to linger on its way
To catch fresh odours from the spray,
And waved it in its wanton play
So light and gamesomely.
The scenes which morning beams reveal,
Its sounds to hear, its gales to feel
In all their fragrance round him steal,
It melted Harold's heart of steel,
And, hardly wotting why,
He doff'd his helmet's gloomy pride,
And hung it on a tree beside,
Laid mace and falchion by,

And on the greensward sate him down,
 And from his dark habitual frown
 Relax'd his rugged brow—
 Whoever hath the doubtful task
 From that stern Dane a boon to ask,
 Were wise to ask it now.

IV.

His place beside young Gunnar took,
 And mark'd his master's softening look,
 And in his eye's dark mirror spied
 The gloom of stormy thoughts subside,
 And cautious watch'd the fittest tide
 To speak a warning word.
 So when the torrent's billows shrink,
 The timid pilgrim on the brink
 Waits long to see them wave and sink,
 Ere he dare brave the ford,
 And often, after doubtful pause,
 His step advances or withdraws :
 Fearful to move the slumbering ire
 Of his stern lord, thus stood the squire,
 Till Harold raised his eye,
 That glanced as when athwart the shroud
 Of the dispersing tempest-cloud
 The bursting sunbeams fly.

V.

“Arouse thee, son of Ermengarde,
 Offspring of prophetess and bard !
 Take harp, and greet this lovely prime
 With some high strain of Runic rhyme,
 Strong, deep, and powerful ! Peal it round
 Like that loud bell's sonorous sound,
 Yet wild by fits, as when the lay
 Of bird and bugle hail the day.
 Such was my grandsire Eric's sport,
 When dawn gleam'd on his martial court.
 Heymar the Scald, with harp's high sound,
 Summon'd the chiefs who slept around ;
 Couch'd on the spoils of wolf and bear,
 They roused like lions from their lair,

Then rush'd in emulation forth
 To enhance the glories of the North.—
 Proud Eric, mightiest of thy race,
 Where is thy shadowy resting-place?
 In wild Valhalla hast thou quaff'd
 From foeman's skull metheglin draught,
 Or wanderest where thy cairn was piled
 To frown o'er oceans wide and wild?
 Or have the milder Christians given
 Thy refuge in their peaceful heaven?
 Where'er thou art, to thee are known
 Our toils endured, our trophies won,
 Our wars, our wanderings, and our woes."
 He ceased, and Gunnar's song arose.

VI.

Song.

"Hawk and osprey scream'd for joy
 O'er the beetling cliffs of Hoy,
 Crimson foam the beach o'erspread,
 The heath was dyed with darker red,
 When o'er Eric, Inguar's son,
 Dane and Northman piled the stone;
 Singing wild the war-song stern,
 'Rest thee, Dweller of the Cairn!'
 "Where eddying currents foam and boil
 By Bersa's burgh and Græmsay's isle,
 The seaman sees a martial form
 Half-mingled with the mist and storm.
 In anxious awe he bears away
 To moor his bark in Stromna's bay,
 And murmurs from the bounding stern,
 'Rest thee, Dweller of the Cairn!'

"What cares disturb the mighty dead?
 Each honour'd rite was duly paid;
 No daring hand thy helm unlaced,
 Thy sword, thy shield, were near thee placed,—
 Thy flinty couch no tear profaned,
 Without, with hostile blood was stain'd;
 Within, 'twas lined with moss and fern,—
 Then rest thee, Dweller of the Cairn!—

“He may not rest : from realms afar
Comes voice of battle and of war,
Of conquest wrought with bloody hand
On Carmel’s cliffs and Jordan’s strand,
When Odin’s warlike son could daunt
The turban’d race of Termagaunt.”—

VII.

“Peace,” said the Knight, “the noble Scald
Our warlike fathers’ deeds recall’d,
But never strove to soothe the son
With tales of what himself had done.
At Odin’s board the bard sits high
Whose harp ne’er stoop’d to flattery ;
But highest he whose daring lay
Hath dared unwelcome truths to say.”
With doubtful smile young Gunnar eyed
His master’s looks, and nought replied—
But well that smile his master led
To construe what he left unsaid.
“Is it to me, thou timid youth,
Thou fear’st to speak unwelcome truth ?
My soul no more thy censure grieves
Than frosts rob laurels of their leaves.
Say on—and yet—beware the rude
And wild distemper of my blood ;
Loth were I that mine ire should wrong
The youth that bore my shield so long,
And who, in service constant still,
Though weak in frame, art strong in will.”—
“Oh !” quoth the page, “even there depends
My counsel—there my warning tends—
Oft seems as of my master’s breast
Some demon were the sudden guest ;
Then at the first misconstrued word
His hand is on the mace and sword,
From her firm seat his wisdom driven,
His life to countless dangers given.—
O ! would that Gunnar could suffice
To be the fiend’s last sacrifice,
So that, when gluttoned with my gore,
He fled and tempted thee no more !”

VIII.

Then waved his hand, and shook his head
 The impatient Dane, while thus he said :
 " Profane not, youth—it is not thine
 To judge the spirit of our line—
 The bold Berserker's rage divine,
 Through whose inspiring, deeds are wrought
 Past human strength and human thought.
 When full upon his gloomy soul
 The champion feels the influence roll,
 He swims the lake, he leaps the wall—
 Heeds not the depth, nor plumbs the fall—
 Unshielded, mail-less, on he goes
 Singly against a host of foes ;
 Their spears he holds like wither'd reeds,
 Their mail like maiden's silken weeds ;
 One 'gainst a hundred will he strive,
 Take countless wounds, and yet survive.
 Then rush the eagles to his cry
 Of slaughter and of victory,—
 And blood he quaffs like Odin's bowl,
 Deep drinks his sword,—deep drinks his soul ;
 And all that meet him in his ire
 He gives to ruin, rout, and fire ;
 Then, like gorged lion, seeks some den,
 And couches till he's man agen.—
 Thou know'st the signs of look and limb,
 When 'gins that rage to overbrim—
 Thou know'st when I am moved, and why ;
 And when thou see'st me roll mine eye,
 Set my teeth thus, and stamp my foot,
 Regard thy safety and be mute ;
 But else speak boldly out whate'er
 Is fitting that a knight should hear.
 I love thee, youth. Thy lay has power
 Upon my dark and sullen hour ;—
 So Christian monks are wont to say
 Demons of old were charm'd away ;
 Then fear not I will rashly deem
 Ill of thy speech, whate'er the theme."

IX.

As down some strait in doubt and dread
 The watchful pilot drops the lead,

And, cautious in the midst to steer,
 The shoaling channel sounds with fear ;
 So, lest on dangerous ground he swerved,
 The Page his master's brow observed,
 Pausing at intervals to fling
 His hand o'er the melodious string,
 And to his moody breast apply
 The soothing charm of harmony,
 While hinted half, and half exprest,
 This warning song convey'd the rest.—

Song.

I.

“ Ill fares the bark with tackle riven,
 And ill when on the breakers driven,—
 Ill when the storm-sprite shrieks in air,
 And the scared mermaid tears her hair ;
 But worse when on her helm the hand
 Of some false traitor holds command.

2.

“ Ill fares the fainting Palmer, placed
 'Mid Hebron's rocks or Rana's waste,—
 Ill when the scorching sun is high,
 And the expected font is dry,—
 Worse when his guide o'er sand and heath,
 The barbarous Copt, has plann'd his death.

3.

“ Ill fares the Knight with buckler cleft,
 And ill when of his helm bereft,—
 Ill when his steed to earth is flung,
 Or from his grasp his falchion wrung ;
 But worse, if instant ruin token,
 When he lists rede by woman spoken.”—

X.

“ How now, fond boy?—Canst thou think ill,”
 Said Harold, “ of fair Metelill? ”—
 “ She may be fair,” the Page replied,

As through the strings he ranged,—
 “She may be fair; but yet,” he cried,
 And then the strain he changed,—

Song.

1.

“She may be fair,” he sang, “but yet
 Far fairer have I seen
 Than she, for all her locks of jet,
 And eyes so dark and sheen.
 Were I a Danish knight in arms,
 As one day I may be,
 My heart should own no foreign charms,—
 A Danish maid for me.

2.

“I love my fathers’ northern land,
 Where the dark pine-trees grow,
 And the bold Baltic’s echoing strand
 Looks o’er each grassy oe.
 I love to mark the lingering sun,
 From Denmark loth to go,
 And leaving on the billows bright,
 To cheer the short-lived summer night,
 A path of ruddy glow.

3.

“But most the northern maid I love,
 With breast like Denmark’s snow,
 And form as fair as Denmark’s pine,
 Who loves with purple heath to twine
 Her locks of sunny glow;
 And sweetly blend that shade of gold
 With the cheek’s rosy hue,
 And Faith might for her mirror hold
 That eye of matchless blue.

4.

“’Tis hers the many sports to love
 That southern maidens fear,

To bend the bow by stream and grove,
 And lift the hunter's spear.
 She can her chosen champion's flight
 With eye undazzled see,
 Clasp him victorious from the strife,
 Or on his corpse yield up her life,—
 A Danish maid for me !”

XI.

Then smiled the Dane—“Thou canst so well
 The virtues of our maidens tell,
 Half could I wish my choice had been
 Blue eyes, and hair of golden sheen,
 And lofty soul ;—yet what of ill
 Hast thou to charge on Metelill ?”—
 “Nothing on her,” young Gunnar said,
 “But her base sire's ignoble trade.
 Her mother, too—the general fame
 Hath given to Jutta evil name,
 And in her gray eye is a flame
 Art cannot hide, nor fear can tame.—
 That sordid woodman's peasant cot
 Twice have thine honour'd footsteps sought,
 And twice return'd with such ill rede
 As sent thee on some desperate deed.”—

XII.

“Thou errest ; Jutta wisely said,
 He that comes suitor to a maid,
 Ere link'd in marriage, should provide
 Lands and a dwelling for his bride—
 My father's, by the Tyne and Wear,
 I have reclaim'd.”—“O, all too dear,
 And all too dangerous the prize,
 E'en were it won,” young Gunnar cries ;—
 “And then this Jutta's fresh device,
 That thou shouldst seek, a heathen Dane
 From Durham's priests a boon to gain,
 When thou hast left their vassals slain
 In their own halls !”—Flash'd Harold's eye,
 Thunder'd his voice—“False Page, you lie !

The castle, hall and tower, is mine,
 Built by old Witikind on Tyne.
 The wild-cat will defend his den,
 Fights for her nest the timid wren ;
 And think'st thou I'll forego my right
 For dread of monk or monkish knight?—
 Up and away, that deepening bell
 Doth of the Bishop's conclave tell.
 Thither will I, in manner due,
 As Jutta bade, my claim to sue ;
 And, if to right me they are loth,
 Then woe to church and chapter both !”
 Now shift the scene, and let the curtain fall,
 And our next entry be Saint Cuthbert's hall.

CANTO FOURTH.

I.

FULL many a bard hath sung the solemn gloom
 Of the long Gothic aisle and stone-ribb'd roof
 O'er-canopying shrine, and gorgeous tomb,
 Carved screen, and altar glimmering far aloof,
 And blending with the shade—a matchless proof
 Of high devotion, which hath now wax'd cold ;
 Yet legends say, that Luxury's brute hoof
 Intruded oft within such sacred fold,
 Like step of Bel's false priest, track'd in his fane of old.

Well pleased am I, howe'er, that when the route
 Of our rude neighbours whilome deign'd to come,
 Uncall'd, and eke unwelcome, to sweep out
 And cleanse our chancel from the rags of Rome,
 They spoke not on our ancient fane the doom
 To which their bigot zeal gave o'er their own,
 But spared the martyr'd saint and storied tomb,
 Though papal miracles had graced the stone,
 And though the aisles still loved the organ's swelling tone.

And deem not, though 'tis now my part to paint
 A Prelate sway'd by love of power and gold,
 That all who wore the mitre of our Saint
 Like to ambitious Aldingar I hold ;

Since both in modern times and days of old
 It sate on those whose virtues might atone
 Their predecessors' frailties trebly told :
 Matthew and Morton we as such may own—
 And such (if fame speak truth) the honour'd Barrington.

II.

But now to earlier and to ruder times,
 As subject meet, I tune my rugged rhymes,
 Telling how fairly the chapter was met,
 And rood and books in seemly order set ;
 Huge brass-clasp'd volumes, which the hand
 Of studious priest but rarely scann'd,
 Now on fair carved desk display'd,
 'Twas theirs the solemn scene to aid
 O'erhead with many a scutcheon graced,
 And quaint devices interlaced,
 A labyrinth of crossing rows,
 The roof in lessening arches shows ;
 Beneath its shade placed proud and high,
 With footstool and with canopy,
 Sate Aldingar,—and prelate ne'er
 More haughty graced Saint Cuthbert's chair ;
 Canons and deacons were placed below,
 In due degree and lengthen'd row.
 Unmoved and silent each sat there,
 Like image in his oaken chair ;
 Nor head, nor hand, nor foot they stirr'd,
 Nor lock of hair, nor tress of beard ;
 And of their eyes severe alone
 The twinkle show'd they were not stone.

III.

The Prelate was to speech address'd,
 Each head sunk reverent on each breast ;
 But ere his voice was heard—without
 Arose a wild tumultuous shout,
 Offspring of wonder mix'd with fear,
 Such as in crowded streets we hear
 Hailing the flames, that, bursting out,
 Attract yet scare the rabble rout.
 Ere it had ceased, a giant hand
 Shook oaken door and iron band,

Till oak and iron both gave way,
 Clash'd the long bolts, the hinges bray,
 And, ere upon angel or saint they can call,
 Stands Harold the Dauntless in midst of the hall.

IV.

“Now save ye, my masters, both rocket and rood,
 From Bishop with mitre to Deacon with hood!
 For here stands Count Harold, old Witikind's son,
 Come to sue for the lands which his ancestors won.”
 The Prelate look'd round him with sore troubled eye,
 Unwilling to grant, yet afraid to deny;
 While each Canon and Deacon who heard the Dane speak
 To be safely at home would have fasted a week:—
 Then Aldingar roused him, and answer'd again,
 “Thou suest for a boon which thou canst not obtain;
 The Church hath no fiefs for an unchristen'd Dane.
 Thy father was wise, and his treasure hath given,
 That the priests of a chantry might hymn him to heaven;
 And the fiefs which whilome he possess'd as his due,
 Have lapsed to the Church, and been granted anew
 To Anthony Conyers and Alberic Vere.
 For the service Saint Cuthbert's bless'd banner to bear,
 When the bands of the North come to foray the Wear;
 Then disturb not our conclave with wrangling or blame,
 But in peace and in patience pass hence as ye came.”

V.

Loud laugh'd the stern Pagan,—“They're free from the care
 Of fief and of service, both Conyers and Vere,—
 Six feet of your chancel is all they will need,
 A buckler of stone and a corslet of lead.—
 Ho, Gunnar!—the tokens”;—and, sever'd anew,
 A head and a hand on the altar he threw.
 Then shudder'd with terror both Canon and Monk,
 They knew the glazed eye and the countenance shrunk,
 And of Anthony Conyers the half-grizzled hair,
 And the scar on the hand of Sir Alberic Vere.
 There was not a churchman or priest that was there,
 But grew pale at the sight, and betook him to prayer.

VI.

Count Harold laugh'd at their looks of fear ;
 " Was this the hand should your banner bear
 Was that the head should wear the casque
 In battle at the Church's task ?
 Was it to such you gave the place
 Of Harold with the heavy mace ?
 Find me between the Wear and Tyne
 A knight will wield this club of mine,—
 Give him my fiefs, and I will say
 There's wit beneath the cowl of gray."
 He raised it, rough with many a stain,
 Caught from crush'd skull and spouting brain ;
 He wheel'd it that it shrilly sung,
 And the aisles echo'd as it swung,
 Then dash'd it down with sheer descent,
 And split King Osric's monument.—
 " How like ye this music ? How trow ye the hand
 That can wield such a mace may be reft of its land ?
 No answer ?—I spare ye a space to agree,
 And Saint Cuthbert inspire you, a saint if he be.
 Ten strides through your chancel, ten strokes on your bell,
 And again I am with you—grave fathers, farewell."

VII.

He turn'd from their presence, he clash'd the oak door,
 And the clang of his stride died away on the floor ;
 And his head from his bosom the Prelate uprears
 With a ghost-seer's look when the ghost disappears.
 " Ye Priests of Saint Cuthbert, now give me your rede,
 For never of counsel had Bishop more need !
 Were the arch-fiend incarnate in flesh and in bone,
 The language, the look, and the laugh were his own.
 In the bounds of Saint Cuthbert there is not a knight
 Dare confront in our quarrel yon goblin in fight ;
 Then rede me aright to his claim to reply,
 'Tis unlawful to grant, and 'tis death to deny."

VIII.

On ven'son and malmsie that morning had fed
 The Cellarer Vinsauf—'twas thus that he said :
 " Delay till to-morrow the Chapter's reply ;
 Let the feast be spread fair, and the wine be pour'd high :

If he's mortal he drinks,—if he drinks, he is ours—
 His bracelets of iron,—his bed in our towers.”
 This man had a laughing eye,
 Trust not, friends, when such you spy ;
 A beaker's depth he well could drain,
 Revel, sport, and jest amain—
 The haunch of the deer and the grape's bright dye
 Never bard loved them better than I ;
 But sooner than Vinsauf filled me my wine,
 Pass'd me his jest, and laugh'd at mine,
 Though the buck were of Bearpark, of Bourdeaux the vine,
 With the dullest hermit I'd rather dine
 On an oaten cake and a draught of the Tyne.

IX.

Walwayn the leech spoke next—he knew
 Each plant that loves the sun and dew,
 But special those whose juice can gain
 Dominion o'er the blood and brain ;
 The peasant who saw him by pale moonbeam
 Gathering such herbs by bank and stream,
 Deem'd his thin form and soundless tread
 Were those of wanderer from the dead.—
 “Vinsauf, thy wine,” he said, “hath power,
 Our gyves are heavy, strong our tower ;
 Yet three drops from this flask of mine,
 More strong than dungeons, gyves, or wine,
 Shall give him prison under ground
 More dark, more narrow, more profound.
 Short rede, good rede, let Harold have—
 A dog's death and a heathen's grave.”
 I have lain on a sick man's bed,
 Watching for hours for the leech's tread,
 As if I deem'd that his presence alone
 Were of power to bid my pain begone ;
 I have listed his words of comfort given,
 As if to oracles from heaven ;
 I have counted his steps from my chamber door,
 And bless'd them when they were heard no more ;—
 But sooner than Walwayn my sick couch should nigh,
 My choice were, by leech-craft unaided, to die.

X.

“Such service done in fervent zeal
 The Church may pardon and conceal,”
 The doubtful Prelate said, “but ne'er
 The counsel ere the act should hear.—
 Anselm of Jarrow, advise us now,
 The stamp of wisdom is on thy brow;
 Thy days, thy nights, in cloister pent,
 Are still to mystic learning lent;—
 Anselm of Jarrow, in thee is my hope.
 Thou well mayst give counsel to Prelate or Pope.”

XI.

Answer'd the Prior—“'Tis wisdom's use
 Still to delay what we dare not refuse;
 Ere granting the boon he comes hither to ask,
 Shape for the giant gigantic task;
 Let us see how a step so sounding can tread
 In paths of darkness, danger, and dread;
 He may not, he will not, impugn our decree,
 That calls but for proof of his chivalry;
 And were Guy to return, or Sir Bevis the Strong,
 Our wilds have adventure might cumber them long—
 The Castle of Seven Shields——” “Kind Anselm, no more!
 The step of the Pagan approaches the door.”
 The churchmen were hush'd.—In his mantle of skin,
 With his mace on his shoulder, Count Harold strode in.
 There was foam on his lips, there was fire in his eye,
 For, chafed by attendance, his fury was nigh.
 “Ho! Bishop,” he said, “dost thou grant me my claim?
 Or must I assert it by falchion and flame?”—

XII.

“On thy suit, gallant Harold,” the Bishop replied,
 In accents which trembled, “we may not decide,
 Until proof of your strength and your valour we saw—
 'Tis not that we doubt them, but such is the law.”—
 “And would you, Sir Prelate, have Harold make sport
 For the cowls and the shavelings that herd in thy court?
 Say what shall he do?—From the shrine shall he tear
 The lead bier of thy patron, and heave it in air,

And through the long chancel make Cuthbert take wing,
 With the speed of a bullet dismiss'd from the sling?"—
 "Nay, spare such probation," the Cellarer said,
 "From the mouth of our minstrels thy task shall be read.
 While the wine sparkles high in the goblet of gold,
 And the revel is loudest, thy task shall be told ;
 And thyself, gallant Harold, shall, hearing it, tell
 That the Bishop, his cowls, and his shavelings, meant
 well."

XIII.

Loud revell'd the guests, and the goblets loud rang,
 But louder the minstrel, Hugh Meneville, sang ;
 And Harold, the hurry and the pride of whose soul,
 E'en when verging to fury, own'd music's control,
 Still bent on the harper his broad sable eye,
 And often untasted the goblet pass'd by ;
 Than wine, or than wassail, to him was more dear
 The minstrel's high tale of enchantment to hear :
 And the Bishop that day might of Vinsauf complain
 That his art had but wasted his wine-casks in vain.

XIV.

The Castle of the Seven Shields.

A BALLAD.

THE Druid Urien had daughters seven,
 Their skill could call the moon from heaven ;
 So fair their forms and so high their fame,
 That seven proud kings for their suitors came.

King Mador and Rhys came from Powis and Wales,
 Unshorn was their hair, and unpruned were their nails ;
 From Strath-Clywyde was Ewain, and Ewain was lame,
 And the red-bearded Donald from Galloway came.

Lot, King of Lodon, was hunch back'd from youth ;
 Dunmail of Cumbria had never a tooth ;
 But Adolf of Bambrough, Northumberland's heir,
 Was gay and was gallant, was young and was fair.

There was strife 'mongst the sisters for each one would have
For husband King Adolf, the gallant and brave ;
And envy bred hate, and hate urged them to blows,
When the firm earth was cleft, and the Arch-fiend arose !

He swore to the maidens their wish to fulfil—
They swore to the foe they would work by his will.
A spindle and distaff to each hath he given
“ Now hearken my spell,” said the Outcast of heaven.

“ Ye shall ply these spindles at midnight hour,
And for every spindle shall rise a tower,
Where the right shall be feeble, the wrong shall have power,
And there shall ye dwell with your paramour.”

Beneath the pale moonlight they sate on the wold,
And the rhymes which they chanted must never be told ;
And as the black wool from the distaff they sped,
With blood from their bosom they moisten'd the thread.

As light danced the spindles beneath the cold gleam,
The castle arose like the birth of a dream—
The seven towers ascended like mist from the ground,
Seven portals defend them, seven ditches surround.

Within that dread castle seven monarchs were wed,
But six of the seven ere the morning lay dead ;
With their eyes all on fire, and their daggers all red.
Seven damsels surround the Northumbrian's bed.

“ Six kingly bridegrooms to death we have done,
Six gallant kingdoms King Adolf hath won,
Six lovely brides all his pleasure to do,
Or the bed of the seventh shall be husbandless too.”

Well chanced it that Adolf the night when he wed
Had confess'd and had sain'd him ere boune to his bed ;
He sprung from the couch and his broadsword he drew,
And there the seven daughters of Urien he slew.

The gate of the castle he bolted and seal'd,
And hung o'er each arch-stone a crown and a shield ;

To the cells of Saint Dunstan then wended his way,
And died in his cloister an anchorite gray.

Seven monarchs' wealth in that castle lies stow'd,
The foul fiends brood o'er them like raven and toad,
Whoever shall guessten these chambers within,
From curfew till matins, that treasure shall win.

But manhood grows faint as the world waxes old!
There lives not in Britain a champion so bold,
So dauntless of heart, and so prudent of brain,
As to dare the adventure that treasure to gain.

The waste ridge of Cheviot shall wave with the rye,
Before the rude Scots shall Northumberland fly,
And the flint cliffs of Bambro' shall melt in the sun,
Before that adventure be peril'd and won.

XV.

"And is this my probation?" wild Harold he said,
"Within a lone castle to press a lone bed?—
Good even, my Lord Bishop,—Saint Cuthbert to borrow,
The Castle of Seven Shields receives me to-morrow."

CANTO FIFTH.

I.

DENMARK'S sage courtier to her princely youth,
Granting his cloud an ouzel or a whale,
Spoke, though unwittingly, a partial truth;
For Fantasy embroiders Nature's veil.
The tints of ruddy eye, or dawning pale,
Of the swart thunder-cloud, or silver haze,
Are but the ground-work of the rich detail,
Which Fantasy with pencil wild portrays,
Blending what seems and is, in the rapt muser's gaze.

Nor are the stubborn forms of earth and stone
Less to the Sorceress's empire given;
For not with unsubstantial hues alone,
Caught from the varying surge, or vacant heaven,
From bursting sunbeam, or from flashing levin,

She limns her pictures : on the earth, as air,
 Arise her castles, and her car is driven ;
 And never gazed the eye on scene so fair,
 But of its boasted charms gave Fancy half the share.

II.

Up a wild pass went Harold, bent to prove,
 Hugh Meneville, the adventure of thy lay ;
 Gunnar pursued his steps in faith and love,
 Ever companion of his master's way.
 Midward their path, a rock of granite gray
 From the adjoining cliff had made descent,—
 A barren mass—yet with her drooping spray
 Had a young birch-tree crown'd its battlement,
 Twisting her fibrous roots through cranny, flaw, and rent.

This rock and tree could Gunnar's thought engage
 Till Fancy brought the tear-drop to his eye,
 And at his master ask'd the timid Page,
 "What is the emblem that a bard shou'd spy
 In that rude rock and its green canopy?"
 And Harold said, "Like to the helmet brave
 Of warrior slain in fight it seems to lie,
 And these same drooping boughs do o'er it wave
 Not all unlike the plume his lady's favour gave."—

"Ah, no!" replied the Page; "the ill-starr'd love
 Of some poor maid is in the emblem shown,
 Whose fates are with some hero's interwove,
 And rooted on a heart to love unknown :
 And as the gentle dews of heaven alone
 Nourish those drooping boughs, and as the scathe
 Of the red lightning rends both tree and stone,
 So fares it with her unrequited faith,—
 Her sole relief is tears—her only refuge death."—

III.

"Thou art a fond fantastic boy,"
 Harold replied, "to females coy
 Yet prating still of love ;
 Even so amid the clash of war
 I know thou lovest to keep afar,

Though destined by thy evil star
 With one like me to rove,
 Whose business and whose joys are found
 Upon the bloody battle-ground.
 Yet, foolish trembler as thou art
 Thou hast a nook of my rude heart,
 And thou and I will never part ;—
 Harold would wrap the world in flame
 Ere injury on Gunnar came !”

IV.

The grateful Page made no reply,
 But turn'd to Heaven his gentle eye,
 And clasp'd his hands, as one who said,
 “ My toils—my wanderings are o'erpaid !”
 Then in a gayer, lighter strain,
 Compell'd himself to speech again ;
 And, as they flow'd along,
 His words took cadence soft and slow,
 And liquid, like dissolving snow.
 They melted into song.

V.

“ What though through fields of carnage wide
 I may not follow Harold's stride,
 Yet who with faithful Gunnar's pride
 Lord Harold's feats can see ?
 And dearer than the couch of pride,
 He loves the bed of gray wolf's hide,
 When slumbering by Lord Harold's side
 In forest, field, or lea.”—

VI.

“ Break off !” said Harold, in a tone
 Where hurry and surprise were shown,
 With some slight touch of fear,—
 ‘ Break off, we are not here alone ;
 A Palmer form comes slowly on !
 By cowl, and staff, and mantle known,
 My monitor is near.
 Now mark him, Gunnar, heedfully ;
 He pauses by the blighted tree—

Dost see him, youth?—Thou couldst not see
 When in the vale of Galilee
 I first beheld his form,
 Nor when we met that other while
 In Cephalonia's rocky isle,
 Before the fearful storm,—
 Dost see him now?"—The Page, distraught,
 With terror, answer'd, "I see nought,
 And there is nought to see,
 Save that the oak's scathed boughs fling down
 Upon the path a shadow brown,
 That, like a pilgrim's dusky gown,
 Waves with the waving tree."

VII.

Count Harold gazed upon the oak
 As if his eyestrings would have broke,
 And then resolvedly said,—
 "Be what it will you phantom gray—
 Nor heaven, nor hell, shall ever say
 That for their shadows from his way
 Count Harold turn'd dismay'd :
 I'll speak him, though his accents fill
 My heart with that unwonted thrill
 Which vulgar minds call fear.
 I will subdue it!"—Forth he strode,
 Paused where the blighted oak-tree show'd
 Its sable shadow on the road,
 And, folding on his bosom broad
 His arms, said, "Speak—I hear."

VIII.

The Deep Voice said, "O wild of will,
 Furious thy purpose to fulfil—
 Heart-scar'd and unrepentant still,
 How long, O Harold, shall thy tread
 Disturb the slumbers of the dead?
 Each step in thy wild way thou makest,
 The ashes of the dead thou wakest ;
 And shout in triumph o'er thy path
 The fiends of bloodshed and of wrath.
 In this thine hour, yet turn and hear !
 For life is brief and judgment near."

IX.

Then ceased The Voice.—The Dane replied
 In tones where awe and inborn pride
 For mastery strove,—“ In vain ye chide
 The wolf for ravaging the flock,
 Or with its hardness taunt the rock,—
 I am as they—my Danish strain
 Sends streams of fire through every vein.
 Amid thy realms of goule and ghost,
 Say, is the fame of Eric lost,
 Or Witikind's the Waster, known
 Where fame or spoil was to be won ;
 Whose galleys ne'er bore off a shore
 They left not black with flame?—
 He was my sire,—and, sprung of him,
 That rover merciless and grim,
 Can I be soft and tame?
 Part hence, and with my crimes no more upbraid me,
 I am that Waster's son, and am but what he made me.”

X.

The Phantom groan'd ;—the mountain shook around,
 The fawn and wild-doe started at the sound,
 The gorse and fern did wildly round them wave,
 As if some sudden storm the impulse gave.
 All thou hast said is truth—Yet on the head
 Of that bad sire let not the charge be laid,
 That he, like thee, with unrelenting pace,
 From grave to cradle ran the evil race :—
 Relentless in his avarice and ire,
 Churches and towns he gave to sword and fire ;
 Shed blood like water, wasted every land,
 Like the destroying angel's burning brand ;
 Fulfill'd whate'er of ill might be invented,
 Yes—all these things he did—he did, but he REPENTED !
 Perchance it is part of his punishment still,
 That his offspring pursues his example of ill.
 But thou, when thy tempest of wrath shall next shake thee,
 Gird thy loins for resistance, my son, and awake thee ;
 If thou yield'st to thy fury, how tempted soever,
 The gate of repentance shall ope for thee NEVER !”—

XI.

"He is gone," said Lord Harold, and gazed as he spoke ;
 "There is nought on the path but the shade of the oak.
 He is gone, whose strange presence my feeling oppress'd,
 Like the night-hag that sits on the slumberer's breast.
 My heart beats as thick as a fugitive's tread,
 And cold dews drop from my brow and my head.—
 Ho! Gunnar, the flasket yon almoner gave ;
 He said that three drops would recall from the grave.
 For the first time Count Harold owns leech-craft has power,
 Or, his courage to aid, lacks the juice of a flower !
 The page gave the flasket, which Walwayn had fill'd
 With the juice of wild roots that his art had distill'd—
 So baneful their influence on all that had breath,
 One drop had been frenzy, and two had been death.
 Harold took it, but drank not ; for jubilee shrill,
 And music and clamour were heard on the hill,
 And down the steep pathway, o'er stock and o'er stone,
 The train of a bridal came blithesomely on ;
 There was song, there was pipe, there was timbrel, and still
 The burden was, "Joy to the fair Metelill !

XII.

Harold might see from his high stance,
 Himself unseen, that train advance
 With mirth and melody ;—
 On horse and foot a mingled throng,
 Measuring their steps to bridal song
 And bridal minstrelsy ;
 And ever when the blithesome rout
 Lent to the song their choral shout,
 Redoubling echoes roll'd about,
 While echoing cave and cliff sent out
 The answering symphony
 Of all those mimic notes which dwell
 In hollow rock and sounding dell.

XIII.

Joy shook his torch above the band,
 By many a various passion fann'd ;—
 As elemental sparks can feed
 On essence pure and coarsest weed,
 Gentle, or stormy, or refined,

Joy takes the colours of the mind.
 Lightsome and pure, but unrepress'd,
 He fired the bridegroom's gallant breast ;
 More feebly strove with maiden fear,
 Yet still joy glimmer'd through the tear
 On the bride's blushing cheek, that shows
 Like dewdrop on the budding rose ;
 While Wulfstane's gloomy smile declared
 The glee that selfish avarice shared,
 And pleased revenge and malice high
 Joy's semblance took in Jutta's eye.
 On dangerous adventure sped,
 The witch deem'd Harold with the dead,
 For thus that morn her Demon said :—
 " If, ere the set of sun, be tied
 The knot 'twixt bridegroom and his bride,
 The Dane shall have no power of ill
 O'er William and o'er Metelill."
 And the pleased witch made answer, " Then
 Must Harold have pass'd from the paths of men !
 Evil repose may his spirit have,—
 May hemlock and mandrake find root in his grave,—
 May his death-sleep be dogged by dreams of dismay,
 And his waking be worse at the answering day."

XIV.

Such was their various mood of glee
 Blent in one shout of ecstasy.
 But still when Joy is brimming highest,
 Of Sorrow and Misfortune nighest,
 Of terror with her ague cheek,
 And lurking Danger, sages speak :—
 These haunt each path, but chief they lay
 Their snares beside the primrose way.—
 Thus found that bridal band their path
 Beset by Harold in his wrath.
 Trembling beneath his maddening mood,
 High on a rock the giant stood ;
 His shout was like the doom of death
 Spoke o'er their heads that pass'd beneath.
 His destined victims might not spy
 The reddening terrors of his eye,—
 The frown of rage that writhed his face,—

The lip that foam'd like boar's in chase ;—
 But all could see—and, seeing, all
 Bore back to shun the threaten'd fall—
 The fragment which their giant foe
 Rent from the cliff and heaved to throw.

XV.

Backward they bore ;—yet are there two
 For battle who prepare :
 No pause of dread Lord William knew
 Ere his good blade was bare ;
 And Wulfstane bent his fatal yew,
 But ere the silken cord he drew,
 As hurl'd from Hecla's thunder, flew
 That ruin through the air !
 Full on the outlaw's front it came,
 And all that late had human name,
 And human face, and human frame,
 That lived, and moved, and had free will
 To choose the path of good or ill,
 Is to its reckoning gone ;
 And nought of Wulfstane rests behind,
 Save that beneath that stone,
 Half-buried in the dinted clay,
 A red and shapeless mass there lay
 Of mingled flesh and bone !

XVI.

As from the bosom of the sky
 The eagle darts amain,
 Three bounds from yonder summit high
 Placed Harold on the plain.
 As the scared wild-fowl scream and fly,
 So fled the bridal train ;
 As 'gainst the eagle's peerless might
 The noble falcon dares the fight,
 But dares the fight in vain,
 So fought the bridegroom ; from his hand
 The Dane's rude mace has struck his brand,
 Its glittering fragments strew the sand,
 Its lord lies on the plain.
 Now, Heaven ! take noble William's part,
 And melt that yet unmelted heart,

Or, ere his bridal hour depart,
The hapless bridegroom's slain !

XVII.

Count Harold's frenzied rage is high,
There is a death-fire in his eye,
Deep furrows on his brow are trench'd,
His teeth are set, his hand is clench'd,
The foam upon his lip is white,
His deadly arm is up to smite !
But, as the mace aloft he swung,
To stop the blow young Gunnar sprung,
Around his master's knees he clung

And cried, " In mercy spare !

O, think upon the words of fear
Spoke by that visionary Seer,
The crisis he foretold is here,—

Grant mercy,—or despair ! "

This word suspended Harold's mood,
Yet still with arm upraised he stood,
And visage like the headsman's rude

That pauses for the sign.

" O mark thee with the blessed rood,"
The Page implored ; " Speak word of good,
Resist the fiend, or be subdued ! "

He sign'd the cross divine—

Instant his eye hath human light,
Less red, less keen, less fiercely bright ;
His brow relax'd the obdurate frown,
The fatal mace sinks gently down,

He turns and strides away ;

Yet oft, like revellers who leave
Unfinish'd feast, looks back to grieve,
As if repenting the reprieve

He granted to his prey.

Yet still of forbearance one sign hath he given,
And fierce Witikind's son made one step towards heaven.

XVIII.

But though his dreaded footsteps part,
Death is behind and shakes his dart ;
Lord William on the plain is lying,
Beside him Metelill seems dying !—

Bring odours—essences in haste—
 And lo! a flasket richly chased,—
 But Jutta the elixir proves
 Ere pouring it for those she loves—
 Then Walwayn's potion was not wasted,
 For when three drops the hag had tasted,
 So dismal was her yell,
 Each bird of evil omen woke,
 The raven gave his fatal croak,
 And shriek'd the night-crow from the oak;
 The screech-owl from the thicket broke,
 And flutter'd down the dell!
 So fearful was the sound and stern,
 The slumbers of the full-gorged erne
 Were startled, and from furze and fern
 Of forest and of fell,
 The fox and famish'd wolf replied
 (For wolves then prowld the Cheviot side).
 From mountain head to mountain head
 The unhallow'd sounds around were sped;
 But when their latest echo fled,
 The sorceress on the ground lay dead.

XIX.

Such was the scene of blood and woes,
 With which the bridal morn arose
 Of William and of Metelill;
 But oft, when dawning 'gins to spread,
 The summer morn peeps dim and red
 Above the eastern hill,
 Ere, bright and fair, upon his road
 The King of Splendour walks abroad;
 So, when this cloud had pass'd away,
 Bright was the noontide of their day,
 And all serene its setting ray.

CANTO SIXTH.

I.

WELL do I hope that this minstrel tale
 Will tempt no traveller from southern fields,
 Whether in tilbury, barouche, or mail,
 To view the Castle of these Seven Proud Shields,

Small confirmation its condition yields
 To Meneville's high lay,—No towers are seen
 On the wild heath, but those that Fancy builds,
 And, save a fosse that tracks the moor with green,
 Is nought remains to tell of what may there have been.

And yet grave authors, with the no small waste
 Of their grave time, have dignified the spot
 By theories, to prove the fortress placed
 By Roman bands, to curb the invading Scot.
 Hutchinson, Horsley, Camden, I might quote,
 But rather choose the theory less civil
 Of boors, who, origin of things forgot,
 Refer still to the origin of evil,
 And for their master mason choose that master-fiend the
 Devil.

II.

Therefore, I say, it was on fiend-built towers
 That stout Count Harold bent his wondering gaze,
 When evening dew was on the heather flowers,
 And the last sunbeams made the mountain blaze,
 And tinged the battlements of other days
 With the bright level light ere sinking down.—
 Illumined thus, the Dauntless Dane surveys
 The Seven Proud Shields that o'er the portal frown,
 And on their blazons traced high marks of old renown.

A wolf North Wales had on his armour coat,
 And Rhys of Powis-land a couchant stag ;
 Strath-Ciwyde's strange emblem was a stranded boat,
 Donald of Galloway's a trotting nag ;
 A corn-sheaf gilt was fertile Lodon's brag ;
 A dudgeon-dagger was by Dunmail worn ;
 Northumbrian Adolf gave a sea-beat crag
 Surmounted by a cross—such signs were borne
 Upon these antique shields, all wasted now and worn.

III.

These scann'd, Count Harold sought the castle-door
 Whose ponderous bolts were rusted to decay ;
 Yet till that hour adventurous knight forbore
 The unobstructed passage to essay.

More strong than armed warders in array,
 And obstacle more sure than bolt or bar,
 Sate in the portal Terror and Dismay,
 While Superstition, who forbade to war
 With foes of other mould than mortal clay,
 Cast spells across the gate, and barr'd the onward way.

Vain now those spells; for soon with heavy clank
 The feebly-fasten'd gate was inward push'd,
 And, as it oped, through that emblazon'd rank
 Of antique shields, the wind of evening rush'd
 With sound most like a groan, and then was hush'd.
 Is none who on such spot such sounds could hear
 But to his heart the blood had faster rush'd;
 Yet to bold Harold's breast that throb was dear—
 It spoke of danger nigh, but had no touch of fear.

IV.

Yet Harold and his Page no signs have traced
 Within the castle, that of danger show'd;
 For still the halls and courts were wild and waste,
 As through their precincts the adventurers trode.
 The seven huge towers rose stately, tall, and broad,
 Each tower presenting to their scrutiny
 A hall in which a king might make abode,
 And fast beside, garnish'd both proud and high,
 Was placed a bower for rest in which a king might lie.

As if a bridal there of late had been,
 Deck'd stood the table in each gorgeous hall;
 And yet it was two hundred years, I ween,
 Since date of that unhallow'd festival.
 Flagons, and ewers, and standing cups, were all
 Of tarnish'd gold, or silver nothing clear,
 With throne begilt, and canopy of pall,
 And tapestry clothed the walls with fragments sear--
 Frail as the spider's mesh did that rich woof appear.

V

In every bower, as round a hearse, was hung
 A dusky crimson curtain o'er the bed,
 And on each couch in ghastly wise were flung
 The wasted relics of a monarch dead;

Barbaric ornaments around were spread,
 Vests twined with gold, and chains of precious stone,
 And golden circlets, meet for monarch's head ;
 While grinn'd, as if in scorn amongst them thrown,
 The wearer's fleshless skull, alike with dust bestrown.

For these were they who, drunken with delight,
 On pleasure's opiate pillow laid their head,
 For whom the bride's shy footstep, slow and light,
 Was changed ere morning to the murderer's tread.
 For human bliss and woe in the frail thread
 Of human life are all so closely twined,
 That till the shears of Fate the texture shred,
 The close succession cannot be disjoin'd,
 Nor dare we, from one hour, judge that which come behind.

VI.

But where the work of vengeance had been done,
 In that seventh chamber, was a sterner sight ;
 There of the witch-brides lay each skeleton,
 Still in the posture as to death when dight.
 For this lay prone, by one blow slain outright ;
 And that, as one who struggled long in dying ;
 One bony hand held knife, as if to smite ;
 One bent on fleshless knees, as mercy crying ;
 One lay across the door, as kill'd in act of flying.

The stern Dane smiled this charnel-house to see,—
 For his chafed thought return'd to Metelill ;—
 And "Well," he said, "hath woman's perfidy,
 Empty as air, as water volatile,
 Been here avenged—The origin of ill
 Through woman rose, the Christian doctrine saith :
 Nor deem I, Gunnar, that thy minstrel skill
 Can show example where a woman's breath
 Hath made a true-love vow, and, tempted, kept her faith."

VII.

The minstrel-boy half smiled, half sigh'd,
 And his half-filling eyes he dried,
 And said, "The theme I should but wrong,
 Unless it were my dying song

(Our Scalds have said, in dying hour
 The Northern harp has treble power),
 Else could I tell of woman's faith,
 Defying danger, scorn, and death.
 Firm was that faith,—as diamond stone
 Pure and unflaw'd,—her love unknown,
 And unrequited;—firm and pure,
 Her stainless faith could all endure;
 From clime to clime,—from place to place,
 Through want, and danger, and disgrace,
 A wanderer's wayward steps could trace.—
 All this she did, and guerdon none
 Required, save that her burial-stone
 Should make at length the secret known,
 'Thus hath a faithful woman done.'—
 Not in each breast such truth is laid,
 But Eivir was a Danish maid."—

VIII.

"Thou art a wild enthusiast," said
 Count Harold, "for thy Danish maid;
 And yet, young Gunnar, I will own
 Hers were a faith to rest upon.
 But Eivir sleeps beneath her stone,
 And all resembling her are gone.
 What maid e'er show'd such constancy
 In plighted faith, like thine to me?
 But couch thee, boy; the darksome shade
 Falls thickly round, nor be dismay'd
 Because the dead are by.
 They were as we; our little day
 O'erspent, and we shall be as they.
 Yet near me, Gunnar, be thou laid,
 Thy couch upon my mantle made,
 That thou mayst think, should fear invade,
 Thy master slumbers nigh."
 Thus couch'd they in that dread abode,
 Until the beams of dawning glow'd.

IX.

An alter'd man Lord Harold rose,
 When he beheld that dawn unclose—
 There's trouble in his eyes,

And traces on his brow and cheek
 Of mingled awe and wonder speak :
 " My page," he said, " arise ;—
 Leave we this place, my page."—No more
 He utter'd till the castle door
 They cross'd—but there he paused and said,
 " My wildness hath awaked the dead—
 Disturb'd the sacred tomb !
 Methought this night I stood on high,
 Where Hecla roars in middle sky,
 And in her cavern'd gulfs could spy
 The central place of doom ;
 And there before my mortal eye
 Souls of the dead came flitting by,
 Whom fiends, with many a fiendish cry,
 Bore to that evil den !
 My eyes grew dizzy, and my brain
 Was wilder'd, as the elvish train,
 With shriek and howl, dragg'd on amain
 Those who had late been men.

X.

" With haggard eyes and streaming hair,
 Jutta the Sorceress was there,
 And there pass'd Wulfstane, lately slain,
 All crush'd and foul with bloody stain.—
 More had I seen, but that uprose
 A whirlwind wild, and swept the snows ;
 And with such sound as when at need
 A champion spurs his horse to speed,
 Three arm'd knights rush on, who lead
 Caparison'd a sable steed.
 Sable their harness, and there came
 Through their closed visors sparks of flame.
 The first proclaim'd, in sounds of fear,
 ' Harold the Dauntless, welcome here !'
 The next cried, ' Jubilee ! we've won'
 Count Witikind the Waster's son !
 And the third rider sternly spoke,
 ' Mount, in the name of Zernebock !—
 From us, O Harold, were thy powers,—
 Thy strength, thy dauntlessness, are ours ;
 Nor think, a vassal thou of hell

With hell can strive.' The fiend spoke true!
 My inmost soul the summons knew,
 As captives know the knell
 That says the headsman's sword is bare,
 And, with an accent of despair,
 Commands them quit their cell.
 I felt resistance was in vain,
 My foot had that fell stirrup ta'en,
 My hand was on the fatal mane,
 When to my rescue sped
 That Palmer's visionary form,
 And—like the passing of a storm—
 The demons yell'd and fled!

XI.

“His sable cowl, flung back, reveal'd
 The features it before conceal'd;
 And, Gunnar, I could find
 In him whose counsels strove to stay
 So oft my course on wilful way,
 My father Witikind!
 Doom'd for his sins, and doom'd for mine,
 A wanderer upon earth to pine
 Until his son shall turn to grace,
 And smooth for him a resting-place.—
 Gunnar, he must not haunt in vain
 This world of wretchedness and pain:
 I'll tame my wilful heart to live
 In peace—to pity and forgive—
 And thou, for so the Vision said,
 Must in thy Lord's repentance aid.
 Thy mother was a prophetess,
 He said, who by her skill could guess
 How close the fatal textures join
 Which knit thy thread of life with mine;
 Then, dark, he hinted of disguise
 She framed to cheat too curious eyes,
 That not a moment might divide
 Thy fated footsteps from my side.
 Methought while thus my sire did teach,
 I caught the meaning of his speech,
 Yet seems its purport doubtful now.”
 His hand then sought his thoughtful brow,

Then first he mark'd, that in the tower
His glove was left at waking hour.

XII.

Trembling at first, and deadly pale,
Had Gunnar heard the vision'd tale ;
But when he learn'd the dubious close,
He blush'd like any opening rose,
And, glad to hide his tell-tale cheek,
Hied back that glove of mail to seek ;
When soon a shriek of deadly dread
Summon'd his master to his aid.

XIII.

What sees Count Harold in that bower,
So late his resting-place ?—
The semblance of the Evil Power,
Adored by all his race !
Odin in living form stood there,
His cloak the spoils of Polar bear ;
For plummy crest a meteor shed
Its gloomy radiance o'er his head,
Yet veil'd its haggard majesty
To the wild lightnings of his eye.
Such height was his, as when in stone
O'er Upsal's giant altar shown :
So flow'd his hoary beard ;
Such was his lance of mountain-pine,
So did his sevenfold buckler shine ;—
But when his voice he rear'd,
Deep, without harshness, slow and strong,
The powerful accents roll'd along,
And, while he spoke, his hand was laid
On captive Gunnar's shrinking head.

XIV.

“ Harold,” he said, “ what rage is thine,
To quit the worship of thy line,
To leave thy Warrior-God ?—
With me is glory or disgrace,
Mine is the onset and the chase,
Embattled hosts before my face
Are wither'd by a nod.

Wilt thou then forfeit that high seat
 Deserved by many a dauntless feat,
 Among the heroes of thy line,
 Eric and fiery Thorarine?—
 Thou wilt not. Only I can give
 The joys for which the valiant live,
 Victory and vengeance—only I
 Can give the joys for which they die,
 The immortal tilt—the banquet full,
 The brimming draught from foeman's skull.
 Mine art thou, witness this thy glove,
 The faithful pledge of vassal's love."

XV.

"Tempter," said Harold, firm of heart,
 "I charge thee, hence! whate'er thou art,
 I do defy thee—and resist
 The kindling frenzy of my breast,
 Waked by thy words; and of my mail,
 Nor glove, nor buckler, spient, nor nail,
 Shall rest with thee—that youth release,
 And God, or Demon, part in peace."—
 "Eivir," the Shape replied, "is mine,
 Mark'd in the birth-hour with my sign.
 Think'st thou that priest with drops of spray
 Could wash that blood-red mark away?
 Or that a borrow'd sex and name
 Can abrogate a Godhead's claim?"
 Thrill'd this strange speech through Harold's brain,
 He clenched his teeth in high disdain,
 For not his new-born faith subdued
 Some tokens of his ancient mood.—
 "Now, by the hope so lately given
 Of better trust and purer heaven,
 I will assail thee, fiend!"—Then rose
 His mace, and with a storm of blows
 The mortal and the Demon close.

XVI.

Smoke roll'd above, fire flash'd around,
 Darken'd the sky and shook the ground;
 But not the artillery of hell,

The bickering lightning, nor the rock
 Of turrets to the earthquake's shock,
 Could Harold's courage quell.
 Sternly the Dane his purpose kept,
 And blows on blows resistless heap'd,
 Till quail'd that Demon Form,
 And—for his power to hurt or kill
 Was bounded by a higher will—
 Evanish'd in the storm.
 Nor paused the Champion of the North,
 But raised, and bore his Eivir forth,
 From that wild scene of fiendish strife,
 To light, to liberty, and life !

XVII.

He placed her on a bank of moss,
 A silver runnel bubbled by,
 And new-born thoughts his soul engross,
 And tremors yet unknown across
 His stubborn sinews fly,
 The while with timid hand the dew
 Upon her brow and neck he threw,
 And mark'd how life with rosy hue
 On her pale cheek revived anew,
 And glimmer'd in her eye.
 Inly he said, "That silken tress,—
 What blindness mine that could not guess !
 Or how could page's rugged dress
 That bosom's pride belie ?
 O, dull of heart, through wild and wave
 In search of blood and death to rave,
 With such a partner nigh !"

XVIII.

Then in the mirror'd pool he peer'd,
 Blamed his rough locks and shaggy beard.
 The stains of recent conflict clear'd,—
 And thus the Champion proved,
 That he fears now who never fear'd,
 And loves who never loved.
 And Eivir—life is on her cheek,
 And yet she will not move or speak,
 Nor will her eyelid fully ope ;

Perchance it loves, that half-shut eye,
 Through its long fringe, reserved and shy,
 Affection's opening dawn to spy ;
 And the deep blush, which bids its dye
 O'er cheek, and brow, and bosom fly,
 Speaks shame-facedness and hope.

XIX.

But vainly seems the Dane to seek
 For terms his new-born love to speak,—
 For words, save those of wrath and wrong,
 Till now were strangers to his tongue ;
 So, when he raised the blushing maid,
 In blunt and honest terms he said,
 ('Twere well that maids, when lovers woo,
 Heard none more soft, were all as true,)
 " Eivir ! since thou for many a day
 Hast follow'd Harold's wayward way,
 It is but meet that in the line
 Of after-life I follow thine.
 To-morrow is Saint Cuthbert's tide,
 And we will grace his altar's side,
 A Christian knight and Christian bride ;
 And of Witikind's son shall the marvel be said,
 That on the same morn he was christen'd and wed."

CONCLUSION.

AND now, Ennui, what ails thee, weary maid ?
 And why these listless looks of yawning sorrow ?
 No need to turn the page, as it 'twere lead,
 Or fling aside the volume till to-morrow.—
 Be cheer'd—'tis ended—and I will not borrow,
 To try thy patience more, one anecdote
 From Bartholine, or Perinskiold, or Snorro.
 Then pardon thou thy minstrel, who hath wrote
 A Tale six cantos long, yet scorn'd to add a note.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO MINSTRELSY OF THE SCOTTISH BORDER.

IMITATIONS OF THE ANCIENT BALLAD.

THOMAS THE RHYMER.

IN THREE PARTS.

PART FIRST.—ANCIENT.

FEW personages are so renowned in tradition as Thomas or Ercildoune, known by the appellation of *The Rhymer*. Uniting, or supposing to unite, in his person, the powers of poetical composition, and of vaticination, his memory, even after the lapse of five hundred years, is regarded with veneration by his countrymen. To give anything like a certain history of this remarkable man would be indeed difficult; but the curious may derive some satisfaction from the particulars here brought together.

It is agreed on all hands, that the residence, and probably the birthplace, of this ancient bard, was Ercildoune, a village situated upon the Leader, two miles above its junction with the Tweed. The ruins of an ancient tower are still pointed out as the Rhymer's castle. The uniform tradition bears, that his surname was Lermont, or Learmont; and that the appellation of *The Rhymer* was conferred on him in consequence of his poetical compositions. There remains, nevertheless, some doubt upon the subject. In a charter, which is subjoined at length, the son of our poet designed himself "Thomas of Ercildoun, son and heir of Thomas Rymour of Ercildoun," which seems to imply that the father did not bear the hereditary name of Learmont; or, at least, was better known and distinguished by the epithet, which he had acquired by his personal accomplishments. I must, however, remark that, down to a very late period, the practice of distinguishing the parties, even in formal writings, by the epithets which had been bestowed on them from personal circumstances, instead of the proper surnames of their families, was common, and indeed necessary, among the Border clans. So early as the end of the thirteenth century, when surnames were hardly introduced in Scotland, this custom must have been universal. There is,

therefore, nothing inconsistent in supposing our poet's name to have been actually Learmont, although, in this charter, he is distinguished by the popular appellation of *The Rhymer*.

We are better able to ascertain the period at which Thomas of Ercildoune lived, being the latter end of the thirteenth century. I am inclined to place his death a little farther back than Mr. Pinkerton, who supposes that he was alive in 1300 (*List of Scottish Poets*), which is hardly, I think, consistent with the charter already quoted, by which his son, in 1299, for himself and his heirs, conveys to the convent of the Trinity of Soltra, the tenement which he possessed by inheritance (*hereditarie*) in Ercildoune, with all claim which he or his predecessors could pretend thereto. From this we may infer, that the Rhymer was now dead, since we find the son disposing of the family property. Still, however, the argument of the learned historian will remain unimpeached as to the time of the poet's birth. For if, as we learn from Barbour, his prophecies were held in reputation as early as 1306, when Bruce slew the Red Cummin, the sanctity, and (let me add to Mr. Pinkerton's words) the uncertainty of antiquity, must have already involved his character and writings. In a charter of Peter de Haga de Bemersyde, which unfortunately wants a date, the Rhymer, a near neighbour, and, if we may trust tradition, a friend of the family, appears as a witness.—*Chartulary of Melrose*.

It cannot be doubted, that Thomas of Ercildoune was a remarkable and important person in his own time, since, very shortly after his death, we find him celebrated as a prophet and as a poet. Whether he himself made **any** pretensions to the first of these characters, or whether it was gratuitously conferred upon him by the credulity of posterity, it seems difficult to decide. If we may believe Mackenzie, Learmont only versified the prophecies delivered by Eliza, an inspired nun of a convent at Haddington. But of this there seems not to be the most distant proof. On the contrary, all ancient authors, who quote the Rhymer's prophecies, uniformly suppose them to have been emitted by himself. Thus, in Winton's *Chronicle*—

Of this fycht quilum spak Thomas
Of Ercyldoune, that sayd in derne,
There suld meit stalwartly, starke and sterne.
He sayd it in his prophecy;
But how he wist it was *ferly*.

Book viii. chap. 32.

There could have been no *ferly* (marvel) in Winton's eyes at least, how Thomas came by his knowledge of future events, had he ever heard of the inspired nun of Haddington, which, it cannot be doubted, would have been a solution of the mystery, much to the taste of the Prior of Lochleven.

Whatever doubts, however, the learned might have, as to the source of the Rhymer's prophetic skill, the vulgar had no hesitation to ascribe the whole to the intercourse between the bard and the Queen of Faëry. The popular tale bears, that Thomas was carried off, at an early age, to the Fairy Land, where he acquired all the knowledge which made him afterwards so famous. After seven years' residence, he was permitted to return to the earth, to enlighten and astonish his countrymen by his prophetic powers; still, however, remaining bound to return to his royal mistress, when she should intimate her pleasure. Accordingly, while Thomas was making merry with his friends in the Tower of Ercildoune, a person came running in, and told, with marks of fear and astonishment, that a hart and hind had left the neighbouring forest, and were, composedly and slowly, parading the street of the village. The prophet instantly arose, left his habitation, and followed the wonderful animals to the forest, whence he was never seen to return. According to the popular belief, he still "drees his weird" in Fairy Land, and is one day expected to revisit earth. In the meanwhile, his memory is held in the most profound respect. The Eildon Tree, from beneath the shade of which he delivered his prophecies, now no longer exists; but the spot is marked by a large stone, called Eildon Tree Stone. A neighbouring rivulet takes the name of the Bogle Burn (Goblin Brook) from the Rhymer's supernatural visitants. The veneration paid to his dwelling-place even attached itself in some degree to a person who, within the memory of man, chose to set up his residence in the ruins of Learmont's tower. The name of this man was Murray, a kind of herbalist, who, by dint of some knowledge in simples, the possession of a musical clock, an electrical machine, and a stuffed alligator, added to a supposed communication with Thomas the Rhymer, lived for many years in very good credit as a wizard.

It seemed to the Editor unpardonable to dismiss a person so important in Border tradition as the Rhymer, without some farther notice than a simple commentary upon the following ballad. It is given from a copy, obtained from a lady residing not far from Ercildoune, corrected and enlarged by one in Mrs. Brown's MSS. The former copy, however, as might be expected, is far more minute as to local description. To this old tale the Editor has ventured to add a Second Part, consisting of a kind of cento, from the printed prophecies vulgarly ascribed to the Rhymer; and a Third Part, entirely modern, founded upon the tradition of his having returned with the hart and hind, to the Land of Faëry. To make his peace with the more severe antiquaries, the Editor has prefixed to the Second Part some remarks on Learmont's prophecies.

TRUE THOMAS lay on Huntlie bank ;
 A ferlie he spied wi' his ee ;
 And there he saw a ladye bright,
 Come riding down by the Eildon Tree.

Her shirt was o' the grass-green silk,
 Her mantle o' the velvet fyne ;
 At ilka tett of her horse's mane,
 Hung fifty siller bells and nine.

True Thomas, he pull'd aff his cap,
 And louted low down to his knee,
 "All hail, thou mighty Queen of Heaven !
 For thy peer on earth I never did see."—

"O no, O no, Thomas," she said,
 "That name does not belang to me ;
 I am but the Queen of fair Elfland,
 That am hither come to visit thee.

"Harp and carp, Thomas," she said ;
 "Harp and carp along wi' me ;
 And if ye dare to kiss my lips,
 Sure of your bodie I will be."—

"Betide me weal, betide me woe,
 That weird shall never daunton me."—
 Syne he has kiss'd her rosy lips,
 All underneath the Eildon Tree.

"Now, ye maun go wi' me," she said ;
 "True Thomas, ye maun go wi' me ;
 And ye maun serve me seven years,
 Thro' weal or woe as may chance to be."

She mounted on her milk-white steed ;
 She's ta'en true Thomas up behind :
 And aye, whene'er her bridle rung,
 The steed flew swifter than the wind.

O they rade on, and farther on ;
 The steed gaed swifter than the wind ;
 Until they reach'd a desert wide,
 And living land was left behind.

“Light down, light down, now, true Thomas,
 And lean your head upon my knee ;
 Abide and rest a little space,
 And I will shew you ferlies three.

“O see ye not yon narrow road,
 So thick beset with thorns and briers ?
 That is the path of righteousness,
 Though after it but few enquires.

“And see ye not that braid braid road,
 That lies across that lily leven ?
 That is the path of wickedness,
 Though some call it the road to heaven.

“And see not ye that bonny road,
 That winds about the fernie brae ?
 That is the road to fair Elfland,
 Where thou and I this night maun gae.

“But, Thomas, ye maun hold your tongue,
 Whatever ye may hear or see ;
 For, if ye speak word in Elflyn land,
 Ye'll ne'er get back to your ain countrie.”

O they rade on, and farther on,
 And they waded through rivers aboon the knee,
 And they saw neither sun nor moon,
 But they heard the roaring of the sea.

It was mirk mirk night, and there was nae stern light,
 And they waded through red blude to the knee ;
 For a' the blude that's shed on earth
 Rins through the springs o' that countrie.

Syne they came on to a garden green,
 And she pu'd an apple frae a tree—
 “Take this for thy wages, true Thomas ;
 It will give thee the tongue that can never lie.”—

“My tongue is mine ain,” true Thomas said ;
 “A gudely gift ye wad gie to me !
 I neither dought to buy nor sell,
 At fair or tryst where I may be.

“ I dought neither speak to prince or peer,
 Nor ask of grace from fair ladye.”—
 “ Now hold thy peace !” the lady said,
 “ For as I say, so must it be.”—

He has gotten a coat of the even cloth,
 And a pair of shoes of velvet green ;
 And till seven years were gane and past,
 True Thomas on earth was never seen.

PART SECOND.—ALTERED FROM ANCIENT PROPHECIES.

THE prophecies, ascribed to Thomas of Ercildoune, have been the principal means of securing to him remembrance “ amongst the sons of his people.” The author of *Sir Tristrem* would long ago have joined, in the vale of oblivion, “ Clerk of Tranent, who wrote the adventure of *Schir Gawain*,” if, by good hap, the same current of ideas respecting antiquity, which causes Virgil to be regarded as a magician by the Lazaroni of Naples, had not exalted the bard of Ercildoune to the prophetic character. Perhaps, indeed, he himself affected it during his life. We know, at least, for certain, that a belief in his supernatural knowledge was current soon after his death. His prophecies are alluded to by Barbour, by Winton, and by Henry the Minstrel, or *Blind Harry*, as he is usually termed. None of these authors, however, give the words of any of the Rhymer’s vaticinations, but merely narrate, historically, his having predicted the events of which they speak. The earliest of the prophecies ascribed to him, which is now extant, is quoted by Mr. Pinkerton from a MS. It is supposed to be a response from Thomas of Ercildoune to a question from the heroic Countess of March, renowned for the defence of the Castle of Dunbar against the English, and termed, in the familiar dialect of her time, *Black Agnes* of Dunbar. This prophecy is remarkable, in so far as it bears very little resemblance to any verses published in the printed copy of the Rhymer’s supposed prophecies. The verses are as follows :—

*La Countesse de Donbar demande a Thomas de Essedoune quant la guerre
 d’Escoce prendreit fyn. E yl l’a repoundy et dyt.*

When man is mad a kyng of a capped man ;
 When man is levere other mones thyng than his owen ;
 When londe thouys forest, ant forest is felde ;
 When hares kendles o’ the her’stane ;
 When Wyt and Wille werres togedere ;

When mon makes stables of kyrkes, and steles castels with stye ;
 When Rokesboroughe nys no burgh ant market is at Forwyleye ;
 When Bambourne is donged with dede men ;
 When men ledes men in ropes to buyen and to sellen ;
 When a quarter of whaty whete is chaunged for a colt of ten markes ;
 When prude (pride) prikes and pees is leyd in prisoun ;
 When a Scot ne me hym hude ase hare in forme that the English ne shall hym
 fynde ;
 When rycht ant wronge astente the togedere ;
 When laddes weddeth love dies ;
 When Scottes flen so faste, that, for faute of shep, ny drowneth hemselfe ;
 When shall this be ?
 Nouthr in thine tyme ne inmine ;
 Ah comen ant gone
 Withinne twenty winter's ant one.

PINKERTON'S *Poems*, from MAITLAND MSS. quoting from *Harl. Lib.*
 2253, F. 127.

WHEN seven years were come and gane,
 The sun blink'd fair on pool and stream ;
 And Thomas lay on Huntlie bank,
 Like one awaken'd from a dream.

He heard the trampling of a steed,
 He saw the flash of armour flee,
 And he beheld a gallant knight
 Come riding down by the Eildontrec.

He was a stalwart knight, and strong ;
 Of giant make he 'pear'd to be :
 He stirr'd his horse, as he were wode,
 Wi' gilded spurs, of faushion free.

Says—" Well met, well met, true Thomas !
 Some uncouth ferlies show to me."—
 Says—" Christ thee save, Corspatrick brave !
 Thrice welcume, good Dunbar, to me !

" Light down, light down, Corspatrick brave !
 And I will show thee curses three,
 Shall gar fair Scotland greet and grane,
 And change the green to the black livery.

" A storm shall roar this very hour,
 From Ross's hills to Solway sea."—
 " Ye lied, ye lied, ye warlock hoar !
 For the sun shines sweet on fauld and lee."—

He put his hand on the **Earlie's** head ;
 He show'd him a rock beside the sea,
 Where a king lay stiff beneath his steed,
 And steel-dight nobles wiped their ee.

“ The neist curse lights on **Branxton** hills :
 By **Flodden's** high and heathery side,
 Shall wave a banner red as blude,
 And chieftains throng wi' meikle pride.

“ A **Scottish King** shall come full keen,
 The ruddy lion beareth he ;
 A feather'd arrow sharp, I ween,
 Shall make him wink and warre to see.

“ When he is bloody, and all to bledde,
 Thus to his men he still shall say—
 ‘ For God's sake, turn ye back again,
 And give yon southern folk a fray !
 Why should I lose the right is mine ?
 My doom is not to die this day.’

“ Yet turn ye to the eastern hand,
 And woe and wonder ye sall see
 How forty thousand spearmen stand,
 Where yon rank river meets the sea.

“ There shall the lion lose the gylte,
 And the libbards bear it clean away ;
 At **Pinkyn Cleuch** there shall be spilt
 Much gentil bluid that day.”—

“ Enough, enough, of curse and ban ;
 Some blessings show thou now to me,
 Or, by the faith o' my bodie,” **Corspatrick** said,
 “ Ye shall rue the day ye e'er saw me !”—

“ The first of blessings I shall thee show,
 Is by a **burn**, that's call'd of bread ;
 Where **Saxon** men shall tine the bow,
 And find their arrows lack the head.

“ Beside that brigg, out ower that **burn**,
 Where the water bickereth bright and sneen.

Shall many a fallen courser spurn,
And knights shall die in battle keen.

“ Beside a headless cross of stone,
The libbards there shall lose the gree :
The raven shall come, the erne shall go,
And drink the Saxon bluid sae free.
The cross of stone they shall not know,
So thick the corses there shall be.”—

“ But tell me now,” said brave Dunbar,
“ True Thomas, tell now unto me,
What man shall rule the isle Britain,
Even from the north to the southern sea ? ”—

“ A French Queen shall bear the son,
Shall rule all Britain to the sea ;
He of the Bruce’s blood shall come,
As near as in the ninth degree.

“ The waters worship shall his race ;
Likewise the waves of the farthest sea ;
For they shall ride over ocean wide,
With hempen bridles, and horse of tree.”

PART THIRD.—MODERN.

BY WALTER SCOTT.

THOMAS THE RHYMER was renowned among his contemporaries, as the author of the celebrated romance of *Sir Tristrem*. Of this once-admired poem only one copy is now known to exist, which is in the Advocates’ Library. The Editor, in 1804, published a small edition of this curious work ; which, if it does not revive the reputation of the bard of Ercildoune, is at least the earliest specimen of Scottish poetry hitherto published. Some account of this romance has already been given to the world in Mr. ELLIS’S *Specimens of Ancient Poetry*, vol. i. p. 165, iii. p. 410 ; a work to which our predecessors and our posterity are alike obliged ; the former, for the preservation of the best-selected examples of their poetical taste ; and the latter, for a history of the English language, which will only cease to be interesting with the existence of our mother-tongue, and all that genius and learning have recorded in it. It is sufficient here to mention, that so great was the reputation of the romance of

Sir Tristrem, that few were thought capable of reciting it after the manner of the author—a circumstance alluded to by Robert de Brunne, the annalist :—

I see in song, in sedgeyng tale,
Of Erceldoun, and of Kendale,
Now thame says as they thame wrought,
And in thare saying it semes nocht.
That thou may here in *Sir Tristrem*,
Over gestes it has the steme,
Over all that is or was ;
If men it said as made Thomas, &c.

It appears, from a very curious MS. of the thirteenth century, penes Mr. Douce of London, containing a French metrical romance of *Sir Tristrem*, that the work of our Thomas the Rhymer was known, and referred to, by the minstrels of Normandy and Bretagne. Having arrived at a part of the romance where reciters were wont to differ in the mode of telling the story, the French bard expressly cites the authority of the poet of Ercildoune :

*Plusurs de nos granter ne volent,
Co que del naim dire se solent,
Ki femme Kaherdin dut aimer,
Li naim redut Tristram narrer,
E entusché par grant engin,
Quant il afole Kaherdin ;
Par cest plu e par cest mal,
Enveiad Tristram Guvernal,
En Engleterre par Ysolt :
THOMAS ico granter ne volt,
Et si volt par raisun mostrer,
Qu' ico ne put pas esteer, &c.*

The tale of *Sir Tristrem*, as narrated in the Edinburgh MS., is totally different from the voluminous romance in prose, originally compiled on the same subject by Rusticien de Puise, and analysed by M. de Tressan ; but agrees in every essential particular with the metrical performance just quoted, which is a work of much higher antiquity.

The following attempt to commemorate the Rhymer's poetical fame, and the traditional account of his marvellous return to Fairy Land, being entirely modern, would have been placed with greater propriety among the class of Modern Ballads, had it not been for its immediate connection with the first and second parts of the same story.

WHEN seven years more were come and gone,
Was war through Scotland spread,
And Ruberslaw show'd high Dunyon
His beacon blazing red.

Then all by bonny Coldingknow,
 Pitch'd palliouns took their room,
 And crested helms, and spears a rowe,
 Glanced gaily through the broom.

The Leader, rolling to the Tweed,
 Resounds the ensenzie ;
 They roused the deer from Caddenhead,
 To distant Torwoodlee.

The feast was spread in Ercildoune,
 In Learmont's high and ancient hall :
 And there were knights of great renown,
 And ladies, laced in pall.

Nor lacked they, while they sat at dine,
 The music nor the tale,
 Nor goblets of the blood-red wine
 Nor mantling quaighs of ale.

True Thomas rose, with harp in hand,
 When as the feast was done :
 (In minstrel strife, in Fairy Land,
 The elfin harp he won.)

Hush'd were the throng, both limb and tongue,
 And harpers for envy pale ;
 And armed lords lean'd on their swords,
 And hearken'd to the tale.

In numbers high, the witching tale
 The prophet pour'd along ;
 No after bard might e'er avail
 Those numbers to prolong.

Yet fragments of the lofty strain
 Float down the tide of years,
 As, buoyant on the stormy main,
 A parted wreck appears.

He sung King Arthur's Table Round :
 The Warrior of the Lake ;
 How courteous Gawaine met the wound,
 And bled for ladies' sake.

But chief, in gentle Tristrem's praise,
 The notes melodious swell ;
 Was none excell'd in Arthur's days,
 The knight of Lionelle.

For Marke, his cowardly uncle's right,
 A venom'd wound he bore ;
 When fierce Morholde he slew in fight,
 Upon the Irish shore.

No art the poison might withstand ;
 No medicine could be found,
 Till lovely Isolde's lily hand
 Had probed the rankling wound.

With gentle hand and soothing tongue
 She bore the leech's part ;
 And, while she o'er his sick-bed hung
 He paid her with his heart.

O fatal was the gift, I ween !
 For, doom'd in evil tide,
 The maid must be rude Cornwall's queen,
 His cowardly uncle's bride.

Their loves, their woes, the gifted bard
 In fairy tissue wove ;
 Where lords, and knights, and ladies bright,
 In gay confusion strove.

The Garde Joyeuse, amid the tale,
 High rear'd its glittering head ;
 And Avalon's enchanted vale
 In all its wonders spread.

Brangwain was there, and Segramore,
 And fiend-born Merlin's gramarye ;
 Of that famed wizard's mighty lore,
 O who could sing but he ?

Through many a maze the winning song
 In changeful passion led,
 Till bent at length the listening throng
 O'er Tristrem's dying bed.

His ancient wounds their scars expand,
 With agony his heart is wrung :
 O where is Isolde's lilye hand,
 And where her soothing tongue ?

She comes ! she comes !—like flash of flame
 Can lovers' footsteps fly :
 She comes ! she comes !—she only came
 To see her Tristrem die.

She saw him die : her latest sigh
 Join'd in a kiss his parting breath,
 The gentlest pair, that Britain bare,
 United are in death.

There paused the harp : its lingering sound
 Died slowly on the ear ;
 The silent guests still bent around,
 For still they seem'd to hear.

Then woe broke forth in murmurs weak :
 Nor ladies heaved alone the sigh ;
 But, half ashamed, the rugged cheek
 Did many a gauntlet dry.

On Leader's stream, and Learmont's tower,
 The mists of evening close ;
 In camp, in castle, or in bower,
 Each warrior sought repose,

Lord Douglas, in his lofty tent,
 Dream'd o'er the woeful tale ;
 When footsteps light, across the bent,
 The warrior's ears assail.

He starts, he wakes ;—“What, Richard, ho !
 Arise, my page, arise !
 What venturous wight, at dead of night,
 Dare step where Douglas lies !”—

Then forth they rush'd : by Leader's tide,
 A selcouth sight they see—
 A hart and hind pace side by side,
 As white as snow on Fairnalie.

Beneath the moon, with gesture proud,
 They stately move and slow ;
 Nor scare they at the gathering crowd,
 Who marvel as they go.

To Learmont's tower a message sped,
 As fast as page might run ;
 And Thomas started from his bed,
 And soon his clothes did on.

First he woxe pale, and then woxe red ;
 Never a word he spake but three ;—
 " My sand is run ; my thread is spun ;
 This sign regardeth me."

The elfin harp his neck around,
 In minstrel guise, he hung ;
 And on the wind, in doleful sound,
 Its dying accents rung.

Then forth he went ; yet turn'd him oft
 To view his ancient hall :
 On the gray tower, in lustre soft,
 The autumn moonbeams fall ;

And Leader's waves, like silver sheen,
 Danced shimmering in the ray ;
 In deepening mass, at distance seen,
 Broad Soltra's mountains lay.

" Farewell, my fathers' ancient tower !
 A long farewell," said he :
 " The scene of pleasure, pomp, or power,
 Thou never more shalt be.

" To Learmont's name no foot of earth
 Shall here again belong,
 And, on thy hospitable hearth,
 The hare shall leave her young.

" Adieu ! adieu !" again he cried,
 All as he turn'd him roun'—
 " Farewell to Leader's silver tide !
 Farewell to Ercildoune !"

The hart and hind approach'd the place,
 As lingering yet he stood ;
 And there, before Lord Douglas' face,
 With them he cross'd the flood.

Lord Douglas leap'd on his berry-brown steed,
 And spurr'd him the Leader o'er ;
 But, though he rode with lightning speed,
 He never saw them more.

Some said to hill, and some to glen,
 Their wondrous course had been ;
 But ne'er in haunts of living men
 Again was Thomas seen.

GLENFINLAS ;

OR,

LORD RONALD'S CORONACH.

THE simple tradition, upon which the following stanzas are founded, runs thus : While two Highland hunters were passing the night in a solitary *bothy* (a hut, built for the purpose of hunting), and making merry over their venison and whisky, one of them expressed a wish that they had pretty lasses to complete their party. The words were scarcely uttered, when two beautiful young women, habited in green, entered the hut, dancing and singing. One of the hunters was seduced by the siren who attached herself particularly to him, to leave the hut : the other remained, and, suspicious of the fair seducers, continued to play upon a trump, or Jew's harp, some strain, consecrated to the Virgin Mary. Day at length came, and the temptress vanished. Searching in the forest, he found the bones of his unfortunate friend, who had been torn to pieces and devoured by the fiend into whose toils he had fallen. The place was from thence called the Glen of the Green Women.

Glenfinlas is a tract of forest-ground, lying in the Highlands of Perthshire, not far from Callender in Menteith. It was formerly a royal forest, and now belongs to the Earl of Moray. This country, as well as the adjacent district of Balquidder, was, in times of yore, chiefly inhabited by the Macgregors. To the west of the Forest of Glenfinlas lies Loch Katrine, And its romantic avenue, called the Troshachs, Benledi ;

Benmore, and Benvoirlich, are mountains in the same district, and at no great distance from Glenfinlas. The river Teith passes Callender and the Castle of Doune, and joins the Forth near Stirling. The Pass of Lenny is immediately above Callender, and is the principal access to the Highlands, from that town. Glenartney is a forest, near Benvoirlich. The whole forms a sublime tract of Alpine scenery.

For them the viewless forms of air obey,
 Their bidding heed, and at their beck repair;
 They know what spirit brews the stormful day,
 And heartless oft, like moody madness stare,
 To see the phantom-train their secret work prepare.

COLLINS.

“O HONE a rie’ ! O hone a rie’ !
 The pride of Albin’s line is o’er,
 And fall’n Glenartney’s stateliest tree ;
 We ne’er shall see Lord Ronald more !”—

O, sprung from great Macgillianore,
 The chief that never fear’d a foe,
 How matchless was thy broad claymore,
 How deadly thine unerring bow !

Well can the Saxon widows tell,
 How, on the Teith’s resounding shore,
 The boldest Lowland warriors fell,
 As down from Lenny’s pass you bore.

But o’er his hills, in festal day,
 How blazed Lord Ronald’s beltane-tree, ²¹⁹
 While youths and maids the light strathspey
 So nimbly danced with Highland glee !

Cheer’d by the strength of Ronald’s shell,
 E’en age forgot his tresses hoar ;
 But now the loud lament we swell,
 O ne’er to see Lord Ronald more !

From distant isles a chieftain came,
 The joys of Ronald’s halls to find,
 And chase with him the dark-brown game,
 That bounds o’er Albin’s hills of wind.

'Twas Moy ; whom in Columba's isle,
 The seer's prophetic spirit found,²²⁰
 As, with a minstrel's fire the while,
 He waked his harp's harmonious sound.

Full many a spell to him was known,
 Which wandering spirits shrink to hear ;
 And many a lay of potent tone,
 Was never meant for mortal ear.

For there, 'tis said, in mystic mood,
 High converse with the dead they hold,
 And oft espy the fated shroud,
 That shall the future corpse enfold.

O so it fell, that on a day,
 To rouse the red deer from their den,
 The Chiefs have ta'en their distant way,
 And scour'd the deep Glenfinlas glen.

No vassals wait their sports to aid,
 To watch their safety, deck their board ;
 Their simple dress, the Highland plaid,
 Their trusty guard, the Highland sword.

Three summer days, through brake, and dell,
 Their whistling shafts successful flew ;
 And still, when dewy evening fell,
 The quarry to their hut they drew.

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

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

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

Now in their hut, in social guise,
 Their sylvan fare the Chiefs enjoy ;
 And pleasure laughs in Ronald's eyes,
 As many a pledge he quaffs to Moy.

“ What lack we here to crown our bliss,
 While thus the pulse of joy beats high ?
 What, but fair woman's yielding kiss,
 Her panting breath and melting eye ?

“ To chase the deer of yonder shades,
 This morning left their father's pile
 The fairest of our mountain maids,
 The daughters of the proud Glengyle.

“ Long have I sought sweet Mary's heart,
 And dropp'd the tear, and heaved the sigh :
 But vain the lover's wily art,
 Beneath a sister's watchful eye.

“ But thou mayst teach that guardian fair,
 While far with Mary I am flown,
 Of other hearts to cease her care,
 And find it hard to guard her own.

“ Touch but thy harp, thou soon shalt see
 The lovely Flora of Glengyle,
 Unmindful of her charge and me,
 Hang on thy notes, 'twixt tear and smile.

“ Or, if she choose a melting tale,
 All underneath the greenwood bough,
 Will good St. Oran's rule prevail,²²¹
 Stern huntsman of the rigid brow ” ? —

“ Since Enrick's fight, since Morna's death,
 No more on me shall rapture rise,
 Responsive to the panting breath,
 Or yielding kiss, or melting eyes.

“ E'en then, when o'er the heath of woe,
 Where sunk my hopes of love and fame,
 I bade my harp's wild wailings flow,
 On me the Seer's sad spirit came.

“The last dread curse of angry heaven,
 With ghastly sights and sounds of woe,
 To dash each glimpse of joy was given—
 The gift, the future ill to know.

“The bark thou saw’st, yon summer morn,
 So gaily part from Oban’s bay,
 My eye beheld her dash’d and torn,
 Far on the rocky Colonsay.

“Thy Fergus too—thy sister’s son,
 Thou saw’st, with pride, the gallant’s power,
 As marching ’gainst the Lord of Downe,
 He left the skirts of huge Benmore.

“Thou only saw’st their tartans wave,
 As down Benvoirlich’s side they wound,
 Heard’st but the pibroch, answering brave
 To many a target clanking round.

“I heard the groans, I mark’d the tears,
 I saw the wound his bosom bore,
 When on the serried Saxon spears
 He pour’d his clan’s resistless roar.

“And thou, who bidst me think of bliss,
 And bidst my heart awake to glee,
 And court, like thee, the wanton kiss—
 That heart, O Ronald, bleeds for thee !

“I see the death-damps chill thy brow ;
 I hear thy Warning Spirit cry ;
 The corpse-lights dance—they’re gone, and now . . .
 No more is given to gifted eye ! ”—

“Alone enjoy thy dreary dreams,
 Sad prophet of the evil hour !
 Say, should we scorn joy’s transient beams,
 Because to-morrow’s storm may lour ?

“Or false, or sooth, thy words of woe,
 Clangillian’s Chieftain ne’er shall fear ;
 His blood shall bound at rapture’s glow,
 Though doom’d to stain the Saxon spear.

“E'en now, to meet me in yon dell,
 My Mary's buskins brush the dew.”
 He spoke, nor bade the Chief farewell,
 But called his dogs, and gay withdrew.

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

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

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

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

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

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

With maiden blush, she softly said,
 “O gentle huntsman, hast thou seen,
 In deep Glenfinlas' moonlight glade,
 A lovely maid in vest of green :

“With her a chief in Highland pride ;
 His shoulders bear the hunter's bow,
 The mountain dirk adorns his side,
 Far on the wind his tartans flow ?”—

“And who art thou? and who are they?”

All ghastly gazing, Moy replied :

“And why, beneath the moon’s pale ray,
Dare ye thus roam Glenfinlas’ side?”—

“Where wild Loch Katrine pours her tide,
Blue, dark, and deep, round many an isle,
Our father’s towers o’erhang her side,
The castle of the bold Glengyle.

“To chase the dun Glenfinlas deer,
Our woodland course this morn we bore,
And haply met, while wandering here,
The son of great Macgillianore.

“O aid me, then, to seek the pair,
Whom, loitering in the woods, I lost ;
Alone, I dare not venture there,
Where walks, they say, the shrieking ghost.”—

“Yes, many a shrieking ghost walks there ;
Then, first, my own sad vow to keep,
Here will I pour my midnight prayer,
Which still must rise when mortals sleep.”—

“O first, for pity’s gentle sake,
Guide a lone wanderer on her way !
For I must cross the haunted brake,
And reach my father’s towers ere day.”—

“First, three times tell each Ave-bead,
And thrice a Pater-noster say ;
Then kiss with me the holy rede ;
So shall we safely wend our way.”—

“O shame to knighthood, strange and foul !
Go, doff the bonnet from thy brow,
And shroud thee in the monkish cowl,
Which best befits thy sullen vow.

“Not so, by high Dunlathmon’s fire,
Thy heart was froze to love and joy,
When gaily rung thy raptured lyre
To wanton Morna’s melting eye.”

Wild stared the minstrel's eyes of flame,
 And high his sable locks arose,
 And quick his colour went and came,
 As fear and rage alternate rose.

“And thou ! when by the blazing oak
 I lay, to her and love resign'd,
 Say, rod' ve on the eddying smoke,
 Or sail'd a ye on the midnight wind ;

“Not thine a race of mortal blood,
 Nor old Glengyle's pretended line ;
 Thy dame, the Lady of the Flood—
 Thy sire, the Monarch of the Mine. ’

He muttered thrice St. Oran's rhyme,
 And thrice St. Fillan's powerful prayer ;²²²
 Then turn'd him to the eastern clime,
 And sternly shook his coal-black hair.

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

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

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

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

The voice of thunder shook the wood,
 As ceased the more than mortal yell ;
 And, spattering foul, a shower of blood
 Upon the hissing firebrands fell.

Next dropp'd from high a mangled arm ;
 The fingers strain'd an half-drawn blade :
 And last, the life-blood streaming warm,
 Torn from the trunk, a gasping head.

Oft o'er that head, in battling field,
 Stream'd the proud crest of high Benmore ;
 That arm the broad claymore could wield,
 Which dyed the Teith with Saxon gore.

Woe to Moneira's sullen rills !
 Woe to Glenfinlas' dreary glen !
 There never son of Albin's hills
 Shall draw the hunter's shaft agen !

E'en the tired pilgrim's burning feet
 At noon shall shun that sheltering den,
 Lest, journeying in their rage, he meet
 The wayward Ladies of the Glen.

And we—behind the Chieftain's shield,
 No more shall we in safety dwell ;
 None leads the people to the field—
 And we the loud lament must swell.

O hone a rie' ! O hone a rie' !
 The pride of Albin's line is o'er !
 And fall'n Glenartney's stateliest tree ;
 We ne'er shall see Lord Ronald more !

THE EVE OF ST. JOHN.

SMAYLHO'ME, or Smallholm Tower, the scene of the following ballad, is situated on the northern boundary of Roxburghshire, among a cluster of wild rocks, called Sandiknow-Crags, the property of Hugh Scott, Esq., of Harden. The tower is a high square building, surrounded by an outer wall, now ruinous. The circuit of the outer court, being defended on three sides, by a precipice and morass, is accessible only from the west, by a steep and rocky path. The apartments, as is usual in a Border keep, or fortress, are placed one above another, and communicate by a narrow stair ; on the roof are two bartisans, or platforms, for defence or pleasure. The

inner door of the tower is wood, the outer an iron gate; the distance between them being nine feet, the thickness, namely, of the wall. From the elevated situation of Smaylholme Tower, it is seen many miles in every direction. Among the crags by which it is surrounded, one, more eminent, is called the *Watchfold*, and is said to have been the station of a beacon, in the times of war with England. Without the tower-court is a ruined chapel. Brotherstone is a heath, in the neighbourhood of Smaylho'me Tower.

This ballad was first printed in Mr. Lewis's *Tales of Wonder*. It is here published, with some additional illustrations, particularly an account of the battle of Ancram Moor; which seemed proper in a work upon Border antiquities. The catastrophe of the tale is founded upon a well-known Irish tradition. This ancient fortress and its vicinity formed the scene of the Editor's infancy, and seemed to claim from him this attempt to celebrate them in a Border tale.

THE Baron of Smaylho'me rose with day,
He spurr'd his courser on,
Without stop or stay, down the rocky way,
That leads to Brotherstone.

He went not with the bold Buccleuch,
His banner broad to rear;
He went not 'gainst the English yew,
To lift the Scottish spear.

Yet his plate-jack was braced, and his helmet was laced,
And his vaunt-brace of proof he wore;
At his saddle-gerthe was a good steel sperthe,
Full ten pound weight and more.

The Baron return'd in three days' space,
And his looks were sad and sour;
And weary was his courser's pace,
As he reach'd his rocky tower.

He came not from where Ancram Moor²²⁸
Ran red with English blood;
Where the Douglas true, and the bold Buccleuch,
'Gainst keen Lord Evers stood.

Yet was his helmet hack'd and hew'd,
His acton pierced and tore,

His axe and his dagger with blood imbrued,—
But it was not English gore.

He lighted at the Chapellage,
He held him close and still ;
And he whistled thrice for his little foot-page,
His name was English Will.

“Come thou hither, my little foot-page,
Come hither to my knee ;
Though thou art young, and tender of age,
I think thou art true to me.

“Come, tell me all that thou hast seen,
And look thou tell me true !
Since I from Smaylho'me tower have been,
What did thy lady do !”—

“My lady, each night, sought the lonely light,
That burns on the wild Watchfold ;
For, from height to height, the beacons bright
Of the English foemen told.

“The bittern clamour'd from the moss,
The wind blew loud and shrill ;
Yet the craggy pathway she did cross
To the eiry Beacon Hill.

“I watch'd her steps, and silent came
Where she sat her on a stone ;—
No watchman stood by the dreary flame,
It burned all alone.

“The second night I kept her in sight,
Till to the fire she came,
And, by Mary's might I an Armed Knight
Stood by the lonely flame.

“And many a word that warlike lord
Did speak to my lady there ;
But the rain fell fast, and loud blew the blast,
And I heard not what they were.

“The third night there the sky was fair,
And the mountain-blast was still.

As again I watch'd the secret pair,
On the lonesome Beacon Hill.

And I heard her name the midnight hour,
And name this holy eve ;
And say, 'Come this night to thy lady's bower ;
Ask no bold Baron's leave.

" 'He lifts his spear with the bold Buccleuch ;
His lady is all alone ;
The door she'll undo, to her knight so true,
On the eve of good St. John.'—

" 'I cannot come ; I must not come ;
I dare not come to thee ;
On the eve of St. John I must wander alone :
In thy bower I may not be.'—

" 'Now, out on thee, faint-hearted knight !
Thou shouldst not say me nay ;
For the eve is sweet, and when lovers meet,
Is worth the whole summer's day.

" 'And I'll chain the blood-hound, and the warder shall not
sound,
And rushes shall be strew'd on the stair ;
So, by the black rood-stone, and by holy St. John,
I conjure thee, my love, to be there !'—

" 'Though the blood-hound be mute, and the rush beneath
my foot,
And the warder his bugle should not blow,
Yet there sleepeth a priest in the chamber to the east,
And my footstep he would know.'—

" 'O fear not the priest, who sleepeth to the east !
For to Dryburgh the way he has ta'en ;
And there to say mass, till three days do pass,
For the soul of a knight that is slayne.'—

" He turn'd him around, and grimly he frown'd ;
Then he laugh'd right scornfully—
" He who says the mass-rite for the soul of that knight
May as well say mass for me :

“ ‘ At the lone midnight hour, when bad spirits have power,
In thy chamber will I be.’—

With that he was gone, and my lady left alone,
And no more did I see.”

Then changed, I trow, was that bold Baron’s brow,
From the dark to the blood-red high ;

“ Now, tell me the mien of the knight thou hast seen,
For, by Mary, he shall die ! ”—

“ His arms shone full bright, in the beacon’s red light :
His plume it was scarlet and blue ;

On his shield was a hound, in a silver leash bound,
And his crest was a branch of the yew.”—

“ Thou liest, thou liest, thou little foot-page,
Loud dost thou lie to me !

For that knight is cold, and low laid in the mould,
All under the Eildon-Tree.”—

“ Yet hear but my word, my noble lord !

For I heard her name his name ;
And that lady bright, she called the knight
Sir Richard of Coldinghame.”—

The bold Baron’s brow then changed, I trow,
From high blood-red to pale—

“ The grave is deep and dark—and the corpse is stiff and
stark—

So I may not trust thy tale.

“ Where fair Tweed flows round holy Melrose,
And Eildon slopes to the plain,

Full three nights ago, by some secret foe,
That gay gallant was slain.

“ The varying light deceived thy sight,
And the wild winds drown’d the name ;

For the Dryburgh bells ring, and the white monks do
sing,

For Sir Richard of Coldinghame ! ”

He pass’d the court-gate, and he oped the tower-gate,
And he mounted the narrow stair,

To the bartizan-seat, where, with maids that on her wait,
He found his lady fair.

That lady sat in mournful mood ;
Look'd over hill and vale ;
Over Tweed's fair flood, and Mertoun's wood,
And all down Teviotdale.

"Now hail, now hail, thou lady bright!"—
"Now hail, thou Baron true!
What news, what news, from Ancram fight?
What news from the bold Buccleuch?"—

"The Ancram Moor is red with gore,
For many a southron fell ;
And Buccleuch has charged us, evermore,
To watch our beacons well."—

The lady blush'd red, but nothing she said :
Nor added the Baron a word :
Then she stepp'd down the stair to her chamber fair,
And so did her moody lord.

In sleep the lady mourn'd, and the Baron tossed and
turn'd,
And oft to himself he said,—
"The worms around him creep, and his bloody grave is
deep . . .
It cannot give up the dead!"—

It was near the ringing of matin-bell,
The night was wellnigh done,
When a heavy sleep on that Baron fell,
On the eve of good St. John.

The lady look'd through the chamber fair,
By the light of a dying flame ;
And she was aware of a knight stood there—
Sir Richard of Coldinghame !

"Alas ! away, away !" she cried,
"For the holy Virgin's sake !"—
"Lady, I know who sleeps by thy side ;
But, lady, he will not awake.

“ By Eildon-Tree, for long nights three,
 In bloody grave have I lain ;
 The mass and the death-prayer are said for me,
 But, lady, they are said in vain.

“ By the Baron’s brand, near Tweed’s fair strand,
 Most foully slain, I fell :
 And my restless sprite on the beacon’s height,
 For a space is doom’d to dwell.

“ At our trysting-place, for a certain space,
 I must wander to and fro :
 But I had not had power to come to thy bower
 Had’st thou not conjured me so.”—

Love master’d fear—her brow she cross’d ;
 “ How, Richard, hast thou sped ?
 And art thou saved, or art thou lost ? ”—
 The vision shook his head !

“ Who spilleth life, shall forfeit life ;
 So bid thy lord believe :
 That lawless love is guilt above,
 This awful sign receive.”

He laid his left palm on an oaken beam ;
 His right upon her hand ;
 The lady shrunk, and fainting sunk,
 For it scorch’d like a fiery brand.

The sable score, of fingers four,
 Remains on that board impress’d ;
 And for evermore that lady wore
 A covering on her wrist.

There is a nun in Dryburgh bower,
 Ne’er looks upon the sun ;
 There is a monk in Melrose tower,
 He speaketh word to none.

That nun, who ne’er beholds the day,²²⁴
 That monk, who speaks to none—
 That nun was Smaylho’me’s Lady gay
 That monk the bold Baron.

BALLADS,

TRANSLATED, OR IMITATED, FROM
THE GERMAN, ETC.

WILLIAM AND HELEN.

[1796.]

IMITATED FROM THE "LENORE" OF BURGER.

I.

FROM heavy dreams fair Helen rose,
And eyed the dawning red :
"Alas, my love, thou tarriest long !
O art thou false or dead ?"—

II.

With gallant Fred'rick's princely power
He sought the bold Crusade ;
But not a word from Judah's wars
Told Helen how he sped.

III.

With Paynim and with Saracen
At length a truce was made,
And every knight return'd to dry
The tears his love had shed.

IV.

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

V.

And old and young, and sire and son,
To meet them crowd the way,
With shouts, and mirth, and melody,
The debt of love to pay.

VI.

Full many a maid her true-love met,
 And sobb'd in his embrace,
 And flutt'ring joy in tears and smiles
 Array'd full many a face.

VII.

Nor joy nor smile for Helen sad ;
 She sought the host in vain ;
 For none could tell her William's fate,
 If faithless, or if slain.

VIII.

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

IX.

" O rise, my child," her mother said,
 " Nor sorrow thus in vain ;
 A perjured lover's fleeting heart
 No tears recall again."—

X.

" O mother, what is gone, is gone,
 What's lost for ever lorn :
 Death, death alone can comfort me ;
 O had I ne'er been born !

XI.

" O break, my heart,—O break at once !
 Drink my life-blood, Despair !
 No joy remains on earth for me,
 For me in heaven no share."—

XII.

" O enter not in judgment, Lord !"
 The pious mother prays ;
 " Impute not guilt to thy frail child !
 She knows not what she says.

XIII.

“ O say thy pater noster, child !
 O turn to God and grace !
 His will, that turn'd thy bliss to bale,
 Can change thy bale to bliss.”—

XIV.

“ O mother, mother, what is bliss ?
 O mother, what is bale ?
 My William's love was heaven on earth,
 Without it earth is hell.

XV.

“ Why should I pray to ruthless Heaven,
 Since my loved William's slain ?
 I only pray'd for William's sake,
 And all my prayers were vain.”

XVI.

“ O take the sacrament, my child,
 And check these tears that flow ;
 By resignation's humble prayer,
 O hallow'd be thy woe !”—

XVII.

“ No sacrament can quench this fire,
 Or slake this scorching pain ;
 No sacrament can bid the dead
 Arise and live again.

XVIII.

“ O break, my heart,—O break at once !
 Be thou my god, Despair !
 Heaven's heaviest blow has fallen on me,
 And vain each fruitless prayer.”—

XIX.

“ O enter not in judgment, Lord,
 With thy frail child of clay !
 She knows not what her tongue has spoke ;
 Impute it not, I pray !

XX.

“Forbear, my child, this desperate woe,
 And turn to God and grace ;
 Well can devotion’s heavenly glow
 Convert thy bale to bliss.”—

XXI.

“O mother, mother, what is bliss ?
 O mother, what is bale ?
 Without my William what were heaven.
 Or with him what were hell ?”—

XXII.

Wild she arraigns the eternal doom,
 Upbraids each sacred power,
 Till, spent, she sought her silent room,
 All in the lonely tower.

XXIII.

She beat her breast, she wrung her hands,
 Till sun and day were o’er,
 And through the glimmering lattice shone
 The twinkling of the star.

XXIV.

Then, crash ! the heavy drawbridge fell
 That o’er the moat was hung ;
 And, clatter ! clatter ! on its boards
 The hoof of courser rung.

XXV.

The clank of echoing steel was heard
 As off the rider bounded ;
 And slowly on the winding stair
 A heavy footstep sounded.

XXVI.

And hark ! and hark ! a knock—Tap ! tap !
 A rustling stifled noise ;—
 Door-latch and tinkling staples ring ;—
 At length a whispering voice.

XXVII.

Awake, awake, arise, my love !
 How, Helen, dost thou fare ?
 Wak'st thou, or sleep'st ? laugh'st thou, or weep'st ?
 Hast thought on me, my fair ?"—

XXVIII.

" My love ! my love !—so late by night !—
 I waked, I wept for thee !
 Much have I borne since dawn of morn ;
 Where, William, couldst thou be ?"—

XXIX.

We saddle late—from Hungary
 I rode since darkness fell ;
 And to its bourne we both return
 Before the matin-bell."—

XXX.

" O rest this night within my arms,
 And warm thee in their fold !
 Chill howls through hawthorn bush the wind :—
 My love is deadly cold."

XXXI.

" Let the wind howl through hawthorn bush !
 This night we must away ;
 The steed is wight, the spur is bright ;
 I cannot stay till day.

XXXII.

" Busk, busk, and boune ! Thou mount'st behind
 Upon my black barb steed :
 O'er stock and stile, a hundred miles,
 We haste to bridal bed."—

XXXIII.

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

XXXIV.

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

XXXV.

The black barb snorts, the bridle rings .
 Haste, busk, and boune, and seat thee !
 The feast is made, the chamber spread,
 The bridal guests await thee.”—

XXXVI.

Strong love prevail'd : She busks, she bounes,
 She mounts the barb behind,
 And round her darling William's waist
 Her lily arms she twined.

XXXVII.

And, hurry ! hurry ! off they rode,
 As fast as fast might be ;
 Spurn'd from the courser's thundering heels
 The flashing pebbles flee.

XXXVIII.

And on the right, and on the left,
 Ere they could snatch a view,
 Fast, fast each mountain, mead, and plain,
 And cot, and castle, flew.

XXXIX.

“ Sit fast—dost fear ?—The moon shines clear—
 Fleet goes my barb—keep hold !
 Fear'st thou ? ”—“ O no ! ” she faintly said ;
 “ But why so stern and cold ?

XL.

“ What yonder rings ? what yonder sings ?
 Why shrieks the owlet gray ? ”—
 “ 'Tis death-bells' clang, 'tis funeral song,
 The body to the clay.

XLI.

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

XLII.

“ Come with thy choir, thou coffin’d guest,
 To swell our nuptial song !
 Come, priest, to bless our marriage feast !
 Come all, come all along ! ”—

XLIII.

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

XLIV.

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

XLV.

“ O William, why this savage haste ?
 And where thy bridal bed ? ”
 “ ’Tis distant far, low, damp, and chill,
 And narrow, trustless maid. ”—

XLVI.

“ No room for me ? ”—“ Enough for both ;—
 Speed, speed, my barb, thy course ! ”
 O’er thundering bridge, through boiling surge
 He drove the furious horse.

XLVII.

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

XLVIII.

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

XLIX.

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

L.

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

LI.

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

LII.

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

LIII.

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

LIV.

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

LV.

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

LVI.

“Barb! Barb! methinks I hear the cock;
 The sand will soon be run:
 Barb! Barb! I smell the morning air;
 The race is wellnigh done.”—

LVII.

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

LVIII.

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

LIX.

Reluctant on its rusty hinge
 Revolved an iron door,
 And by the pale moon's setting beam
 Were seen a church and tower.

LX.

With many a shriek and cry whiz round
 The birds of midnight, scared;
 And rustling like autumnal leaves
 Unhallow'd ghosts were heard.

LXI.

O'er many a tomb and tombstone pale
 He spurr'd the fiery horse,
 Till sudden at an open grave
 He check'd the wondrous course.

LXII.

The falling gauntlet quits the rein,
 Down drops the casque of steel,
 The cuirass leaves his shrinking side,
 The spur his gory heel.

LXIII.

The eyes desert the naked skull,
 The mould'ring flesh the bone,
 Till Helen's lily arms entwine
 A ghastly skeleton.

LXIV.

The furious barb snorts fire and foam,
 And, with a fearful bound,
 Dissolves at once in empty air,
 And leaves her on the ground.

LXV.

Half seen by fits, by fits half heard,
 Pale spectres flit along,
 Wheel round the maid in dismal dance,
 And howl the funeral song ;

LXVI.

“E'en when the heart's with anguish cleft,
 Revere the doom of Heaven,
 Her soul is from her body reft ;
 Her spirit be forgiven !”

THE WILD HUNTSMAN.

[1796.]

THIS is a translation, or rather an imitation, of the *Wilde Jäger* of the German poet Bürger. The tradition upon which it is founded bears, that formerly a Wildgrave, or keeper of a royal forest, named Faulkenburg, was so much addicted to the pleasures of the chase, and otherwise so extremely profligate and cruel, that he not only followed this unhallowed amusement on the Sabbath, and other days consecrated to religious duty, but accompanied it with the most unheard

of oppression upon the poor peasants, who were under his vassalage. When this second Nimrod died, the people adopted a superstition, founded probably on the many various uncouth sounds heard in the depth of a German forest, during the silence of the night. They conceived they still heard the cry of the Wildgrave's hound; and the well-known cheer of the deceased hunter, the sounds of his horses' feet, and the rustling of the branches before the game, the pack, and the sportsmen, are also distinctly discriminated; but the phantoms are rarely, if ever, visible. Once, as a benighted *Chasseur* heard this infernal chase pass by him, at the sound of the halloo, with which the Spectre Huntsman cheered his hounds, he could not refrain from crying, "*Gluck zu Falkenburgh!*" [Good sport to ye, Falkenburgh!] "Dost thou wish me good sport?" answered a hoarse voice; "thou shalt share the game"; and there was thrown at him what seemed to be a huge piece of foul carrion. The daring *Chasseur* lost two of his best horses soon after, and never perfectly recovered the personal effects of this ghostly greeting. This tale, though told with some variations, is universally believed all over Germany.

The French had a similar tradition concerning an aërial hunter, who infested the forest of Fountainbleau. He was sometimes visible; when he appeared as a huntsman, surrounded with dogs, a tall grisly figure. Some account of him may be found in "Sully's Memoirs," who says he was called *Le Grand Veneur*. At one time he chose to hunt so near the palace, that the attendants, and, if I mistake not, Sully himself, came out into the court, supposing it was the sound of the king returning from the chase. This phantom is elsewhere called Saint Hubert.

THE Wildgrave winds his bugle-horn,
To horse, to horse! halloo, halloo!
His fiery courser snuffs the morn,
And thronging serfs their lord pursue.

The eager pack, from couples freed,
Dash through the bush, the brier, the brake;
While answering hound, and horn, and steed,
The mountain echoes startling wake.

The beams of God's own hallow'd day
Had painted yonder spire with gold,
And, calling sinful man to pray,
Loud, long, and deep the bell had toll'd:

But still the Wildgrave onward rides ;
 Halloo, halloo ! and, hark again !
 When, spurring from opposing sides,
 Two Stranger Horsemen join the train.

Who was each Stranger, left and right,
 Well may I guess, but dare not tell ;
 The right-hand steed was silver white,
 The left, the swarthy hue of hell.

The right-hand Horseman, young and fair,
 His smile was like the morn of May ;
 The left, from eye of tawny glare,
 Shot midnight lightning's lurid ray.

He waved his huntsman's cap on high,
 Cried, " Welcome, welcome, noble lord !
 What sport can earth, or sea, or sky,
 To match the princely chase, afford !"—

" Cease thy loud bugle's changing knell,"
 Cried the fair youth, with silver voice ;
 " And for devotion's choral swell,
 Exchange the rude unhallow'd noise.

" To-day the ill-omen'd chase forbear,
 Yon bell yet summons to the fane ;
 To-day the Warning Spirit hear,
 To-morrow thou mayst mourn in vain."—

" Away, and sweep the glades along !"
 The Sable Hunter hoarse replies ;
 " To muttering monks leave matin-song,
 And bells, and books, and mysteries."

The Wildgrave spurr'd his ardent steed,
 And, launching forward with a bound,
 " Who, for thy drowsy priestlike rede,
 Would leave the jovial horn and hound ?

" Hence, if our manly sport offend !
 With pious fools go chant and pray :—
 Well hast thou spoke, my dark-brow'd friend ;
 Halloo, halloo ! and, hark away !"

The Wildgrave spurr'd his courser light,
 O'er moss and moor, o'er holt and hill ;
 And on the left and on the right,
 Each Stranger Horseman follow'd still.

Up springs, from yonder tangled thorn,
 A stag more white than mountain snow ;
 And louder rung the Wildgrave's horn,
 " Hark forward, forward ! holla, ho ! "

A heedless wretch has cross'd the way ;
 He gasps the thundering hoofs below ;—
 But, live who can, or die who may,
 Still, " Forward, forward ! " on they go.

See, where yon simple fences meet,
 A field with Autumn's blessings crown'd ;
 See, prostrate at the Wildgrave's feet,
 A husbandman with toil embrown'd :

" O mercy, mercy, noble lord !
 Spare the poor's pittance," was his cry,
 " Earn'd by the sweat these brows have pour'd,
 In scorching hour of fierce July."—

Earnest the right-hand Stranger pleads,
 The left still cheering to the prey ;
 The impetuous Earl no warning heeds,
 But furious holds the onward way.

" Away, thou hound ! so basely born,
 Or dread the scourge's echoing blow ! "—
 Then loudly rung his bugle-horn,
 " Hark forward, forward, holla, ho ! "

So said, so done :—A single bound
 Clears the poor labourer's humble pale ;
 Wild follows man, and horse, and hound,
 Like dark December's stormy gale.

And man and horse, and hound and horn,
 Destructive sweep the field along ;
 While, joying o'er the wasted corn,
 Fell Famine marks the maddening throng.

Again uproused, the timorous prey
 Scours moss and moor, and holt and hill ;
 Hard run, he feels his strength decay,
 And trusts for life his simple skill.

Too dangerous solitude appear'd ;
 He seeks the shelter of the crowd ;
 Amid the flock's domestic herd
 His harmless head he hopes to shroud.

O'er moss and moor, and holt and hill,
 His track the steady blood-hounds trace ;
 O'er moss and moor, unwearied still,
 The furious Earl pursues the chase.

Full lowly did the herdsman fall ;
 " O spare, thou noble Baron, spare
 These herds, a widow's little all ;
 These flocks, an orphan's fleecy care ! "

Earnest the right-hand Stranger pleads,
 The left still cheering to the prey ;
 The Earl nor prayer nor pity heeds,
 But furious keeps the onward way.

" Unmanner'd dog ! To stop my sport
 Vain were thy cant and beggar whine,
 Though human spirits, of thy sort,
 Were tenants of these carrion kine ! "—

Again he winds his bugle-horn,
 " Hark forward, forward, holla, ho ! "
 And through the herd, in ruthless scorn,
 He cheers his furious hounds to go.

In heaps the throttled victims fall ;
 Down sinks their mangled herdsman near ;
 The murderous cries the stag appal,—
 Again he starts, new-nerved by fear.

With blood besmear'd, and white with foam,
 While big the tears of anguish pour,
 He seeks, amid the forest's gloom,
 The humble hermit's hallow'd bower.

But man and horse, and horn and hound,
 Fast rattling on his traces go ;
 The sacred chapel rung around
 With, "Hark away ! and, holla, ho !"

All mild, amid the rout profane,
 The holy hermit pour'd his prayer ;
 "Forbear with blood God's house to stain ;
 Revere his altar, and forbear !"

"The meanest brute has rights to plead,
 Which, wrong'd by cruelty, or pride,
 Draw vengeance on the ruthless head :—
 Be warn'd at length, and turn aside."

Still the Fair Horseman anxious pleads ;
 The Black, wild whooping, points the prey
 Alas ! the Earl no warning heeds,
 But frantic keeps the forward way.

"Holy or not, or right or wrong,
 Thy altar, and its rites, I spurn ;
 Not sainted martyrs' sacred song,
 Not God himself, shall make me turn !"

He spurs his horse, he winds his horn,
 "Hark forward, forward, holla, ho !"—
 But off, on whirlwind's pinions borne,
 The stag, the hut, the hermit, go.

And horse and man, and horn and hound,
 And clamour of the chase, was gone ;
 For hoofs, and howls, and bugle-sound,
 A deadly silence reign'd alone.

Wild gazed the affrighted Earl around ;
 He strove in vain to wake his horn,
 In vain to call : for not a sound
 Could from his anxious lips be borne.

He listens for his trusty hounds ;
 No distant baying reach'd his ears :
 His courser, rooted to the ground,
 The quickening spur unmindful bears.

Still dark and darker frown the shades,
 Dark as the darkness of the grave ;
 And not a sound the still invades,
 Save what a distant torrent gave.

High o'er the sinner's humbled head
 At length the solemn silence broke ;
 And, from a cloud of swarthy red,
 The awful voice of thunder spoke.

“ Oppressor of creation fair !
 Apostate Spirits' harden'd tool !
 Scornor of God ! Scourge of the poor !
 The measure of thy cup is full.

“ Be chased for ever through the wood ;
 For ever roam the affrighted wild ;
 And let thy fate instruct the proud,
 God's meanest creature is his child.”

'Twas hush'd :—One flash, of sombre glare,
 With yellow tinged the forests brown ;
 Uprose the Wildgrave's bristling hair,
 And horror chill'd each nerve and bone.

Cold pour'd the sweat in freezing rill ;
 A rising wind began to sing ;
 And louder, louder, louder still,
 Brought storm and tempest on its wing.

Earth heard the call ;—her entrails rend ;
 From yawning rifts, with many a yell,
 Mix'd with sulphureous flames, ascend
 The misbegotten dogs of hell.

What ghastly Huntsman next arose,
 Well may I guess, but dare not tell ;
 His eye like midnight lightning glows,
 His steed the swarthy hue of hell.

The Wildgrave flies o'er bush and thorn,
 With many a shriek of helpless woe ;
 Behind him hound, and horse, and horn,
 And, “ Hark away, and holla, ho !”

With wild despair's reverted eye,
 Close, close behind, he marks the throng,
 With bloody fangs and eager cry ;
 In frantic fear he scours along.—

Still, still shall last the dreadful chase,
 Till time itself shall have an end ;
 By day, they scour earth's cavern'd space,
 At midnight's witching hour, ascend.

This is the horn, and hound, and horse
 That oft the lated peasant hears ;
 Appall'd, he signs the frequent cross,
 When the wild din invades his ears.

The wakeful priest oft drops a tear
 For human pride, for human woe,
 When, at his midnight mass, he hears
 The infernal cry of, "Holla, ho!"

THE FIRE KING.

The blessings of the evil Genii, which are curses, were upon him.
Eastern Tale.

[1801.]

This ballad was written at the request of MR. LEWIS, to be inserted in his "Tales of Wonder." It is the third in a series of four ballads, on the subject of Elementary Spirits. The story is, however, partly historical; for it is recorded, that, during the struggles of the Latin kingdom of Jerusalem, a Knight-Templar, called Saint-Alban, deserted to the Saracens, and defeated the Christians in many combats, till he was finally routed and slain, in a conflict with King Baldwin, under the walls of Jerusalem.

BOLD knights and fair dames, to my harp give an ear,
 Of love, and of war, and of wonder to hear ;
 And you haply may sigh, in the midst of your glee,
 At the tale of Count Albert, and fair Rosalie.

O see you that castle, so strong and so high ?
 And see you that lady, the tear in her eye ?

And see you that palmer, from Palestine's land,
The shell on his hat, and the staff in his hand?—

“ Now palmer, gray palmer, O tell unto me,
What news bring you home from the Holy Countrie?
And how goes the warfare by Galilee's strand?
And how fare our nobles, the flower of the land? ”—

“ O well goes the warfare by Galilee's wave,
For Gilead, and Nablous, and Ramah we have;
And well fare our nobles by Mount Lebanon,
For the Heathen have lost, and the Christians have won.”

A fair chain of gold 'mid her ringlets there hung;
O'er the palmer's gray locks the fair chain has she flung:
“ O palmer, gray palmer, this chain be thy fee,
For the news thou hast brought from the Holy Countrie.

“ And palmer, good palmer, by Galilee's wave,
O saw ye Count Albert, the gentle and brave?
When the Crescent went back, and the Red-cross rush'd on,
O saw ye him foremost on Mount Lebanon? ”—

“ O lady, fair lady, the tree green it grows;
O lady, fair lady, the stream pure it flows;
Your castle stands strong, and your hopes soar on high;
But, lady, fair lady, all blossoms to die.

“ The green boughs they wither, the thunderbolt falls,
It leaves of your castle but levin-scorch'd walls;
The pure stream runs muddy; the gay hope is gone;
Count Albert is prisoner on Mount Lebanon.”

O she's ta'en a horse, should be fleet at her speed;
And she's ta'en a sword, should be sharp at her need;
And she has ta'en shipping for Palestine's land,
To ransom Count Albert from Soldanrie's hand.

Small thought had Count Albert on fair Rosalie,
Small thought on his faith, or his knighthood, had he:
A heathenish damsel his light heart had won,
The Soldan's fair daughter of Mount Lebanon.

“ O Christian, brave Christian, my love wouldst thou be,
Three things must thou do ere I hearken to thee :
Our laws and our worship on thee shalt thou take ;
And this thou shalt first do for Zulema's sake.

“ And, next, in the cavern, where burns evermore
The mystical flame which the Curdmans adore,
Alone, and in silence, three nights shalt thou wake ;
And this thou shalt next do for Zulema's sake.

“ And, last, thou shalt aid us with counsel and hand,
To drive the Frank robber from Palestine's land ;
For my lord and my love then Count Albert I'll take,
When all this is accomplish'd for Zulema's sake.”

He has thrown by his helmet, and cross-handled sword,
Renouncing his knighthood, denying his Lord ;
He has ta'en the green caftan, and turban put on,
For the love of the maiden of fair Lebanon.

And in the dread cavern, deep deep under ground,
Which fifty steel gates and steel portals surround,
He has watch'd until daybreak, but sight saw he none,
Save the flame burning bright on its altar of stone.

Amazed was the princess, the Soldan amazed,
Sore murmur'd the priests as on Albert they gazed ;
They search'd all his garments, and, under his weeds,
They found, and took from him, his rosary beads.

Again in the cavern, deep deep under ground,
He watch'd the lone night, while the winds whistled round ;
Far off was their murmur, it came not more nigh,
The flame burn'd unmoved, and nought else did he spy.

Loud murmur'd the priests, and amazed was the King,
While many dark spells of their witchcraft they sing ;
They search'd Albert's body, and, lo ! on his breast
Was the sign of the Cross, by his father impress'd.

The priests they erase it with care and with pain,
And the recreant return'd to the cavern again ;
But, as he descended, a whisper there fell :
It was his good angel, who bade him farewell !

High bristled his hair, his heart flutter'd and beat,
And he turn'd him five steps, half resolved to retreat;
But his heart it was harden'd, his purpose was gone,
When he thought of the Maiden of fair Lebanon.

Scarce pass'd he the archway, the threshold scarce trode,
When the winds from the four points of heaven were abroad,
They made each steel portal to rattle and ring,
And, borne on the blast, came the dread Fire-King.

Full sore rock'd the cavern whene'er he drew nigh,
The fire on the altar blazed bickering and high;
In volcanic explosions the mountains proclaim
The dreadful approach of the Monarch of Flame.

Unmeasured in height, undistinguish'd in form,
His breath it was lightning, his voice it was storm;
I ween the stout heart of Count Albert was tame,
When he saw in his terrors the Monarch of Flame.

In his hand a broad falchion blue-glimmer'd through smoke,
And Mount Lebanon shook as the monarch he spoke:
"With this brand shalt thou conquer, thus long, and no
more,
Till thou bend to the Cross, and the Virgin adore."

The cloud-shrouded Arm gives the weapon; and see!
The recreant receives the charm'd gift on his knee:
The thunders growl distant, and faint gleam the fires,
As, borne on the whirlwind, the phantom retires.

Count Albert has arm'd him the Paynim among,
Though his heart it was false, yet his arm it was strong;
And the Red-cross wax'd faint, and the Crescent came on,
From the day he commanded on Mount Lebanon.

From Lebanon's forests to Galilee's wave,
The sands of Samaar drank the blood of the brave;
Till the Knights of the Temple, and Knights of Saint John,
With Salem's King Baldwin, against him came on.

The war-cymbals clatter'd, the trumpets replied,
The lances were couch'd, and they closed on each side;
And horsemen and horses Count Albert o'erthrew,
Till he pierced the thick tumult King Baldwin unto.

Against the charm'd blade which Count Albert did wield,
The fence had been vain of the King's Red-cross shield ;
But a Page thrust him forward the monarch before,
And cleft the proud turban the renegade wore.

So fell was the dint, that Count Albert stoop'd low
Before the cross'd shield, to his steel saddlebow ;
And scarce had he bent to the Red-cross his head,—
“ *Bonne Grace, Notre Dame!* ” he unwittingly said.

Sore sigh'd the charm'd sword, for its virtue was o'er,
It sprung from his grasp, and was never seen more ;
But true men have said, that the lightning's red wing
Did waft back the brand to the dread Fire-King.

He clench'd his set teeth, and his gauntleted hand ;
He stretch'd, with one buffet, that Page on the strand.
As back from the stripling the broken casque roll'd,
You might see the blue eyes, and the ringlets of gold.

Short time had Count Albert in horror to stare
On those death-swimming eyeballs, and blood-clotted hair ;
For down came the Templars, like Cedron in flood,
And dyed their long lances in Saracen blood.

The Saracens, Curdmans, and Ishmaelites yield
To the scallop, the saltier, and crossleted shield ;
And the eagles were gorged with the infidel dead,
From Bethsaida's fountains to Naphthali's head.

The battle is over on Bethsaida's plain.—
Oh, who is yon Paynim lies stretch'd 'mid the slain ?
And who is yon Page lying cold at his knee ?—
Oh, who but Count Albert and fair Rosalie !

The Lady was buried in Salem's bless'd bound,
The Count he was left to the vulture and hound ;
Her soul to high mercy Our Lady did bring ;
His went on the blast to the dread Fire-King.

Yet many a minstrel, in harping, can tell,
How the Red-cross it conquer'd, the Crescent it fell :
And lords and gay ladies have sigh'd, 'mid their glee
At the tale of Count Albert and fair Rosalie.

SONGS AND VERSES

FROM THE WAVERLEY NOVELS.

FROM WAVERLEY.

BRIDAL SONG.

AND did ye not hear of a mirth befel
The morrow after a wedding day,
And carrying a bride at home to dwell?
And away to Tewin, away, away?

The quintain was set, and the garlands were made,
'Tis pity old customs should ever decay;
And woe be to him that was horsed on a jade,
For he carried no credit away, away.

We met a concert of fiddle-de-dees;
We set them a cockhorse, and made them play
The winning of Bullen, and Upseyfrees,
And away to Tewin, away, away!

There was ne'er a lad in all the parish
That would go to the plough that day;
But on his fore-horse his wench he carries,
And away to Tewin, away, away!

The butler was quick, and the ale he did tap,
The maidens did make the chamber full gay;
The servants did give me a fuddling cup,
And I did carry't away, away.

The smith of the town his liquor so took,
That he was persuaded that the ground look'd blue;
And I dare boldly be sworn on a book,
Such smiths as he there's but a few.

A posset was made, and the women did sip,
And simpering said, they could eat no more;
Full many a maiden was laid on the lip,—
I'll say no more, but give o'er, (give o'er).

APPENDIX TO GENERAL PREFACE.

BY CAPTAIN WAVERLEY,

ON RECEIVING HIS COMMISSION IN COLONEL GARDINER'S
REGIMENT.

LATE, when the autumn evening fell
On Mirkwood-Mere's romantic dell,
The lake return'd, in chasten'd gleam,
The purple cloud, the golden beam :
Reflected in the crystal pool,
Headland and bank lay fair and cool ;
The weather-tinted rock and tower,
Each drooping tree, each fairy flower,
So true, so soft, the mirror gave,
As if there lay beneath the wave,
Secure from trouble, toil, and care,
A world than earthly world more fair.

But distant winds began to wake,
And roused the Genius of the Lake !
He heard the groaning of the oak,
And donn'd at once his sable cloak,
As warrior, at the battle cry,
Invests him with his panoply :
Then, as the whirlwind nearer press'd,
He 'gan to shake his foamy crest
O'er furrow'd brow and blacken'd cheek,
And bade his surge in thunder speak.
In wild and broken eddies whirl'd,
Flitted that fond ideal world ;
And, to the shore in tumult tost,
The realms of fairy bliss were lost.

Yet, with a stern delight and strange,
I saw the spirit-stirring change.
As warr'd the wind with wave and wood,
Upon the ruin'd tower I stood,
And felt my heart more strongly bound,
Responsive to the lofty sound,
While, joying in the mighty roar,
I mourn'd that tranquil scene no more.

So, on the idle dreams of youth,
Breaks the loud trumpet-call of truth,

Bids each fair vision pass away,
 Like landscape on the lake that lay,
 As fair, as flitting, and as frail,
 As that which fled the autumn-gale—
 For ever dead to fancy's eye
 Be each gay form that glided by,
 While dreams of love and lady's charms
 Give place to honour and to arms!

Chap. v.

DAVIE GELLATLEY'S SONGS.

FALSE love, and hast thou play'd me this
 In summer among the flowers?
 I will repay thee back again
 In winter among the showers.
 Unless again, again, my love,
 Unless you turn again;
 As you with other maidens rove,
 I'll smile on other men.

THE Knight's to the mountain
 His bugle to wind;
 The Lady's to greenwood
 Her garland to bind.
 The bower of Burd Ellen
 Has moss on the floor,
 That the step of Lord William
 Be silent and sure.

Chap. ix.

IN LUCKIE MACLEARY'S TAVERN.

BARON BRADWARDINE *sings* :—

MON cœur volage, dit-elle,
 N'est pas pour vous, garçon;
 Mais pour un homme de guerre,
 Qui a barbe au menton.

Lon, Lon, Laridon.

Qui porte chapeau à plume,
 Soulier à rouge talon,
 Qui joue de la flûte,
 Aussi du violon.

Lon, Lon, Laridon.

BALMAWHAPPLE *sings* :—

It's up Glenbarchan's braes I gaed,
And o'er the bent of Killiebraid,
And mony a weary cast I made,
To cuittle the moor-fowl's tail.

If up a bonny black-cock should spring,
To whistle him down wi' a slug in his wing,
And strap him on to my lunzie string,
Right seldom would I fail.
Chap. xi.

DAVIE GELLATLEY'S SONG.

HIE AWAY.

HIE away, hie away,
Over bank and over brae,
Where the copsewood is the greenest,
Where the fountains glisten sheenest,
Where the lady-fern grows strongest,
Where the morning dew lies longest,
Where the black-cock sweetest sips it,
Where the fairy latest trips it :
Hie to haunts right seldom seen,
Lovely, lonesome, cool, and green,
Over bank and over brae,
Hie away, hie away.
Chap. xii.

ST. SWITHIN'S CHAIR.

ON Hallow-Mass Eve, ere you boune ye to rest,
Ever beware that your couch be bless'd ;
Sign it with cross, and sain it with bead,
Sing the Ave, and say the Creed.

For on Hallow-Mass Eve the Night-Hag will ride,
And all her nine-fold sweeping on by her side,
Whether the wind sing lowly or loud,
Sailing through moonshine or swath'd in the cloud.

The Lady she sate in Saint Swithin's Chair,
 The dew of the night has damp'd her hair :
 Her cheek was pale—but resolved and high
 Was the word of her lip and the glance of her eye.

She mutter'd the spell of Swithin bold,
 When his naked foot traced the midnight wold,
 When he stopp'd the Hag as she rode the night,
 And bade her descend, and her promise plight.

He that dare sit on Saint Swithin's Chair,
 When the Night-Hag wings the troubled air,
 Questions three, when he speaks the spell,
 He may ask, and she must tell.

The Baron has been with King Robert his liege,
 These three long years, in battle and siege ;
 News are there none of his weal or his woe,
 And fain the Lady his fate would know.

She shudders and stops as the charm she speaks ;—
 Is it the moody owl that shrieks ?
 Or is that sound, betwixt laughter and scream,
 The voice of the Demon who haunts the stream ?

The moan of the wind sunk silent and low,
 And the roaring torrent had ceased to flow ;
 The calm was more dreadful than raging storm,
 When the cold gray mist brought the ghastly form !

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 Chap. xiii.

DAVIE GELLATLEY'S SONG.

YOUNG men will love thee more fair and more fast ;
Heard ye so merry the little bird sing ?
 Old men's love the longest will last,
And the throstle-cock's head is under his wing.

The young man's wrath is like light straw on fire ;
Heard ye so merry the little bird sing ?
 But like red-hot steel is the old man's ire,
And the throstle-cock's head is under his wing.

The young man will brawl at the evening board ;
Heard ye so merry the little bird sing ?
 But the old man will draw at the dawning the sword,
And the throstle-cock's head is under his wing.
 Chap. xiv.

FLORA MACIVOR'S SONG.

THERE is mist on the mountain, and night on the vale,
 But more dark is the sleep of the sons of the Gael.
 A stranger commanded—it sunk on the land,
 It has frozen each heart, and benumb'd every hand !

The dirk and the target lie sordid with dust,
 The bloodless claymore is but redden'd with rust ;
 On the hill or the glen if a gun should appear,
 It is only to war with the heath-cock or deer.

The deeds of our sires if our bards should rehearse,
 Let a blush or a blow be the meed of their verse !
 Be mute every string, and be hush'd every tone,
 That shall bid us remember the fame that is flown.

But the dark hours of night and of slumber are past,
 The morn on our mountains is dawning at last ;
 Glenaladale's peaks are illumed with the rays,
 And the streams of Glenfinnan leap bright in the blaze.

O high-minded Moray !—the exiled—the dear !—
 In the blush of the dawning the STANDARD uprear !
 Wide, wide on the winds of the north let it fly,
 Like the sun's latest flash when the tempest is nigh !

Ye sons of the strong, when that dawning shall break,
 Need the harp of the aged remind you to wake ?
 That dawn never beam'd on your forefathers' eye,
 But it roused each high chieftain to vanquish or die.

O, sprung from the kings who in Islay kept state,
 Proud chiefs of Clan-Ranald, Glengarry, and Slea !
 Combine like three streams from one mountain of snow,
 And resistless in union rush down on the foe.

True son of Sir Evan, undaunted Lochiel,
Place thy targe on thy shoulder and burnish thy steel !
Rough Keppoch, give breath to thy bugle's bold swell,
Till far Coryarrick resound to the knell !

Stern son of Lord Kenneth, high chief of Kintail,
Let the stag in thy standard bound wild in the gale !
May the race of Clan-Gillean, the fearless and free,
Remember Glenlivat, Harlaw, and Dundee !

Let the clan of gray Fingon, whose offspring has given
Such heroes to earth, and such martyrs to heaven,
Unite with the race of renown'd Rorri More,
To launch the long galley, and stretch to the oar !

How Mac-Shimei will joy when their chief shall display
The yew-crested bonnet o'er tresses of gray !
How the race of wrong'd Alpine and murder'd Glencoe
Shall shout for revenge when they pour on the foe !

Ye sons of brown Dermid, who slew the wild boar,
Resume the pure faith of the great Callum-More !
Mac-Niel of the Islands, and Moy of the Lake,
For honour, for freedom, for vengeance awake !

Awake on your hills, on your islands awake,
Brave sons of the mountain, the frith, and the lake !
'Tis the bugle—but not for the chase is the call ;
'Tis the pibroch's shrill summons—but not to the hall.

'Tis the summons of heroes for conquest or death,
When the banners are blazing on mountain and heath ;
They call to the dirk, the claymore, and the targe,
To the march and the muster, the line and the charge.

Be the brand of each chieftain like Fin's in his ire !
May the blood through his veins flow like currents of fire !
Burst the base foreign yoke as your sires did of yore !
Or die, like your sires, and endure it no more !

FERGUS *sings* :—

O LADY of the desert, hail !
That lovest the harping of the Gael,
Through fair and fertile regions borne,
Where never yet grew grass or corn.

FERGUS again :—

O VOUS, qui buvez à tasse pleine,
A cette heureuse fontaine,
Où on ne voit sur le rivage
Que quelques vilains troupeaux,
Suivis de nymphes de village,
Qui les escortent sans sabots—
Chap. xxiii.

TO AN OAK TREE,

IN THE CHURCHYARD OF —, IN THE HIGHLANDS
OF SCOTLAND, SAID TO MARK THE GRAVE OF
CAPTAIN WOGAN, KILLED IN 1649.

EMBLEM of England's ancient faith,
Full proudly may thy branches wave,
Where loyalty lies low in death,
And valour fills a timeless grave.

And thou, brave tenant of the tomb !
Repine not if our clime deny,
Above thine honour'd sod to bloom,
The flowrets of a milder sky.

These owe their birth to genial May ;
Beneath a fiercer sun they pine,
Before the winter storm decay—
And can their worth be type of thine ?

No ! for, 'mid storms of Fate opposing,
Still higher swell'd thy dauntless heart,
And, while Despair the scene was closing,
Commenced thy brief but brilliant part.

'Twas then thou sought'st on Albyn's hill
 (When England's sons the strife resign'd)
 A rugged race, resisting still,
 And unsubdued, though unrefined,

Thy death's hour heard no kindred wail,
 No holy knell thy requiem rung ;
 Thy mourners were the plaided Gael,
 Thy dirge the clamorous pibroch sung.

Yet who, in Fortune's summer-shine
 To waste life's longest term away,
 Would change that glorious dawn of thine,
 Though darken'd ere its noontide day?

Be thine the Tree whose dauntless boughs
 Brave summer's drought and winter's gloom !
 Rome bound with oak her patriots' brows,
 As Albyn shadows Wogan's tomb.
 Chap. xxix.

GELLATLEY *sings* :—

THEY came upon us in the night,
 And brake my bower and slew my knight ;
 My servants a' for life did flee
 And left us in extremitie.

They slew my knight to me sae dear ;
 They slew my knight, and drave his gear ;
 The moon may set, the sun may rise,
 But a deadly sleep has closed his eyes.

But follow, follow me,
 While glow-worms light the lea,
 I'll show ye where the dead should be—
 Each in his shroud,
 While winds pipe loud,
 And the red moon peeps dim through the cloud.

Follow, follow me ;
 Brave should he be
 'That treads by night the dead man's lea.
 Chap. lxiii.

FROM GUY MANNERING.

NATIVITY OF HARRY BERTRAM.

MEG MERRILIES *sings* :—

CANNY moment, lucky fit ;
Is the lady lighter yet ?
Be it lad, or be it lass,
Sign wi' cross, and sain wi' mass.

Trefoil, vervain, John's-wort, dill,
Hinders witches of their will ;
Weel is them, that weel may
Fast upon Saint Andrew's day.

Saint Bride and her brat,
Saint Colme and her cat,
Saint Michael and his spear,
Keep the house frae reif and wear,
Chap. iii.

TWIST YE, TWINE YE.

MEG MERRILIES *sings* :—

Twist ye, twine ye ! even so
Mingle shades of joy and woe,
Hope, and fear, and peace, and strife,
In the thread of human life.

While the mystic twist is spinning,
And the infant's life beginning,
Dimly seen through twilight bending,
Lo, what varied shapes attending !

Passions wild, and follies vain,
Pleasures soon exchanged for pain ;
Doubt, and jealousy, and fear,
In the magic dance appear.

Now they wax, and now they dwindle,
Whirling with the whirling spindle.
Twist ye, twine ye! even so
Mingle human bliss and woe.

Chap. iv.

THE DYING GIPSY SMUGGLER.

MEG MERRILIES *sings* :—

WASTED, weary, wherefore stay,
Wrestling thus with earth and clay?
From the body pass away ;—
Hark! the mass is singing.

From thee doff thy mortal weed,
Mary Mother be thy speed,
Saints to help thee at thy need ;—
Hark! the knell is ringing.

Fear not snowdrift driving fast,
Sleet, or hail, or levin blast ;
Soon the shroud shall lap thee fast,
And the sleep be on thee cast
That shall ne'er know waking.

Haste thee, haste thee, to be gone,
Earth flits fast, and time draws on,—
Gasp thy gasp, and groan thy groan,
Day is near the breaking.

Open locks, end strife,
Come death, and pass life.

Chap. xxvii.

THE PROPHECY.

MEG MERRILIES *sings* :—

THE dark shall be light,
And the wrong made right,
When Bertram's right and Bertram's might
Shall meet on Ellangowan's height.

Chap. xli.

GLOSSIN'S SONG.

GIN by pailfuls, wine in rivers,
 Dash the window-glass to shivers,
 For three wild lads were we, brave boys,
 And three wild lads were we ;
 Thou on the land, and I on the sand,
 And Jack on the gallows-tree !
 Chap. xxxiv.

FROM THE ANTIQUARY.

TIME.

“WHY sit'st thou by that ruin'd hall,
 Thou aged carle so stern and gray ?
 Dost thou its former pride recall,
 Or ponder how it pass'd away ?”—

“Know'st thou not me ?” the Deep Voice cried ;
 “So long enjoy'd, so oft misused—
 Alternate, in thy fickle pride,
 Desired, neglected, and accused !

“Before my breath, like blazing flax,
 Man and his marvels pass away !
 And changing empires wane and wax,
 Are founded, flourish, and decay.

“Redeem mine hours—the space is brief—
 While in my glass the sand-grains shiver.
 And measureless thy joy or grief
 When TIME and thou shall part for ever
 Chap. x.

EPITAPH ON JOHN O' YE GIRNELL.

HEIR lyeth John o' ye Girnell ;
 Erth has ye nit and heuen ye kirnell.
 In hys tyme ilk wyfe's hennis clokit,
 Ilk gud mannis herth wi' bairnis was stokit.
 He deled a boll o' bear in firloittis fyve,
 Four for ye halie kirke and ane for pure mennis wyvis.
 Chap. xi.

ELSPETH'S BALLAD.

“THE herring loves the merry moonlight,
 The mackerel loves the wind,
 But the oyster loves the dredging sang,
 For they come of a gentle kind.”

.

Now haud your tongue, baith wife and carle,
 And listen, great and sma',
 And I will sing of Glenallan's Earl
 That fought on the red Harlaw.

The cronach's cried on Bennachie,
 And down the Don and a',
 And hieland and lawland may mournfu' be
 For the sair field of Harlaw.

They saddled a hundred milk-white steeds,
 They hae bridled a hundred black,
 With a chafron of steel on each horse's head,
 And a good knight upon his back.

They hadna ridden a mile, a mile,
 A mile, but barely ten,
 When Donald came branking down the brae
 Wi' twenty thousand men.

Their tartans they were waving wide,
 Their glaives were glancing clear,
 The pibrochs rung frae side to side,
 Would deafen ye to hear.

The great Earl in his stirrups stood,
 That Highland host to see ;
 Now here a knight that's stout and good
 May prove a jeopardie :

“What would'st thou do, my squire so gay,
 That rides beside my reyne,
 Were ye Glenallan's Earl the day,
 And I were Roland Cheyne ?

“To turn the rein were sin and shame,
 To fight were wond’rous peril ;
 What would ye do now, Roland Cheyne,
 Were ye Glenallan’s Earl ?”

“Were I Glenallan’s Earl this tide,
 And ye were Roland Cheyne,
 The spur should be in my horse’s side,
 And the bridle upon his mane.

“If they hae twenty thousand blades,
 And we twice ten times ten,
 Yet they hae but their tartan plaids,
 And we are mail-clad men.

“My horse shall ride through ranks sae rude,
 As through the moorland fern,—
 Then ne’er let the gentle Norman blude
 Grow cauld for Highland kerne.”

He turn’d him right and round again,
 Said—“Scorn na at my mither ;
 Light loves I may get mony a ane,
 But minnie ne’er anither.”
 Chap. xl.

MOTTOES.

I KNEW Anselmo. He was shrewd and prudent,
 Wisdom and cunning had their shares of him ;
 But he was shrewish as a wayward child,
 And pleased again by toys which childhood please ;
 As—book of fables graced with print of wood,
 Or else the jingling of a rusty medal,
 Or the rare melody of some old ditty,
 That first was sung to please King Pepin’s cradle.

ADVERTISEMENT.

“Be brave,” she cried, “you yet may be our guest.
 Our haunted room was ever held the best :
 If, then, your valour can the fight sustain
 Of rustling curtains, and the clinking chain ;

If your courageous tongue have powers to talk
 When round your bed the horrid ghost shall walk ;
 If you dare ask it why it leaves its tomb,
 I'll see your sheets well air'd, and show the room."
True Story.

Chap. ix.

HERE has been such a stormy encounter
 Betwixt my cousin Captain, and this soldier,
 About I know not what !—nothing, indeed ;
 Competitions, degrees, and comparatives
 Of soldiership !

A Faire Quarrel.

Chap. xix.

IF you fail honour here,
 Never presume to serve her any more ;
 Bid farewell to the integrity of arms,
 And the honourable name of soldier
 Fall from you, like a shiver'd wreath of laurel
 By thunder struck from a desertlesse forehead.

A Faire Quarrel.

Chap. xx.

THE Lord Abbot had a soul
 Subtile and quick, and searching as the fire :
 By magic stairs he went as deep as hell,
 And if in devils' possession gold be kept,
 He brought some sure from thence—'tis hid in caves,
 Known, save to me, to none.

The Wonder of a Kingdome.

Chap. xxi.

WHO is he ?—One that for the lack of land
 Shall fight upon the water—he hath challenged
 Formerly the grand whale ; and by his titles
 Of Leviathan, Behemoth, and so forth.
 He tilted with a sword-fish—Marry, sir,
 Th' aquatic had the best—the argument
 Still galls our champion's breech.

Old Play.

Chap. xxx.

TELL me not of it, friend—when the young weep,
 Their tears are lukewarm brine ;—from our old eyes
 Sorrow falls down like hail-drops of the North,
 Chilling the furrows of our wither'd cheeks,
 Cold as our hopes, and harden'd as our feeling :
 Theirs, as they fall, sink sightless—ours recoil,
 Heap the fair plain, and bleaken all before us.

Old Play.

Chap. xxxi.

REMORESE—she ne'er forsakes us !—
 A bloodhound stanch—she tracks our rapid step
 Through the wild labyrinth of youthful frenzy,
 Unheard, perchance, until old age hath tamed us ;
 Then in our lair, when Time hath chill'd our joints,
 And maim'd our hope of combat, or of flight,
 We hear her deep-mouth'd bay, announcing all,
 Of wrath, and woe, and punishment, that bides us.

Old Play.

Chap. xxxiii.

STILL in his dead hand clench'd remain the strings
 That thrill his father's heart—e'en as the limb,
 Lopp'd off and laid in grave, retains, they tell us,
 Strange commerce with the mutilated stump,
 Whose nerves are twingeing still in maim'd existence.

Old Play.

Chap. xxxiv.

LIFE, with you,
 Glows in the brain and dances in the arteries ;
 'Tis like the wine some joyous guest hath quaff'd,
 That glads the heart and elevates the fancy :
 Mine is the poor residuum of the cup,
 Vapid, and dull, and tasteless, only soiling
 With its base dregs the vessel that contains it.

Old Play.

Chap. xxxv.

YES ! I love Justice well—as well as you do—
 But, since the good dame's blind, she shall excuse me
 If, time and reason fitting, I prove dumb ;—

The breath I utter now shall be no means
To take away from me my breath in future.

Old Play.

Chap. xxxvii.

WELL, well, at worst, 'tis neither theft nor coinage,
Granting I knew all that you charge me with.
What tho' the tomb hath born a second birth,
And given the wealth to one that knew not on't,
Yet fair exchange was never robbery,
Far less pure bounty.

Old Play.

Chap. xxxviii.

LIFE ebbs from such old age, unmark'd and silent,
As the slow neap-tide leaves yon stranded galley.
Late she rock'd merrily at the least impulse
That wind or wave could give; but now her keel
Is settling on the sand, her mast has ta'en
An angle with the sky, from which it shifts not.
Each wave receding shakes her less and less,
Till, bedded on the strand, she shall remain
Useless as motionless.

Old Play.

Chap. xl.

So, while the Goose, of whom the fable told,
Incumbent, brooded o'er her eggs of gold,
With hand outstretch'd, impatient to destroy,
Stole on her secret nest the cruel Boy,
Whose gripe rapacious changed her splendid dream,
For wings vain fluttering, and for dying scream.

The Loves of the Sea-Weeds.

Chap. xli.

LET those go see who will—I like it not—
For, say he was a slave to rank and pomp,
And all the nothings he is now divorced from
By the hard doom of stern necessity;
Yet it is sad to mark his alter'd brow,
Where Vanity adjusts her flimsy veil
O'er the deep wrinkles of repentant anguish.

Old Play.

Chap. xlii.

FORTUNE, you say, flies from us ; she but circles
 Like the fleet sea-bird round the fowler's skiff,—
 Lost in the mist one moment, and the next
 Brushing the white sail with her whiter wing,
 As if to court the aim.—Experience watches,
 And has her on the wheel.

Chap. xliii.

Old Play.

NAY, if she love me not, I care not for her :
 Shall I look pale because the maiden blooms ?
 Or sigh because she smiles—and smiles on others ?
 Not I, by Heaven !—I hold my peace too dear,
 To let it, like the plume upon her cap,
 Shake at each nod that her caprice shall dictate.

Chap. xliv.

Old Play.

FROM THE BLACK DWARF.

WHEN the devil was sick, the devil a monk would be,
 When the devil was well, the devil a monk was he.

Chap. iv.

MOTTOES.

So spak the knight ; the geaunt sed—
 “ Lead forth with thé the sely maid,
 And mak me quite of thé and sche ;
 For glaunsing ee, or brow so brent,
 Or cheek with rose and lilje blent,
 Me-lists not fecht with thé.”

Chap. ix.

I LEFT my ladye's bower last night,
 It was clad in wreaths of snaw ;
 I'll seek it when the sun is bright
 And sweet the roses blaw.

Chap. x.

Old Ballad.

'Twas time and griefs
 That framed him thus : Time, with his fairer hand,
 Offering the fortunes of his former days,
 The former man may make him : bring us to him,
 And chance it as it may.

Chap. xvi.

Old Play.

FROM OLD MORTALITY.

MAJOR BELLENDEN'S SONG.

AND what though winter will pinch severe
 Through locks of gray and a cloak that's old,
 Yet keep up thy heart, bold cavalier,
 For a cup of sack shall fence the cold.

For time will rust the brightest blade,
 And years will break the strongest bow ;
 Was never wight so starkly made,
 But time and years would overthrow.
 Chap. xix.

VERSES FOUND IN BOTHWELL'S
POCKET-BOOK.

THY hue, dear pledge, is pure and bright,
 As in that well-remember'd night
 When first thy mystic braid was wove,
 And first my Agnes whisper'd love.

Since then how often hast thou press'd
 The torrid zone of this wild breast,
 Whose wrath and hate have sworn to dwell
 With the first sin which peopled hell,
 A breast whose blood's a troubled ocean,
 Each throb the earthquake's wild commotion !—
 O, if such clime thou canst endure,
 Yet keep thy hue unstain'd and pure,
 What conquest o'er each erring thought
 Of that fierce realm had Agnes wrought !
 I had not wander'd wild and wide,
 With such an angel for my guide ;
 Nor heaven nor earth could then reprove me,
 If she had lived, and lived to love me.

Not then this world's wild joys had been
 To me one savage hunting scene,
 My sole delight the headlong race,
 And frantic hurry of the chase ;
 To start, pursue, and bring to bay,

Rush in, drag down, and rend my prey,
 Then—from the carcass turn away!
 Mine ireful mood had sweetness tamed,
 And soothed each wound which pride inflamed!
 Yes, God and man might now approve me,
 If thou hadst lived, and lived to love me.
 Chap. xxiii.

EPITAPH ON BALFOUR OF BURLEY.

HERE lyes ane saint to prelates surly,
 Being John Balfour, sometime of Burley,
 Who, stirred up to vengeance take,
 For Solemn League and Cov'nant's sake
 Upon the Magus Moor in Fife
 Did tak James Sharpe the apostate's life;
 By Dutchman's hands was hacked and shot,
 And drowned in Clyde near this saam spot.
 Chap. xlv.

MOTTOES.

AROUSE thee, youth!—it is no common call,—
 God's Church is leaguer'd—haste to man the wall;
 Haste where the Red-cross banners wave on high,
 Signals of honour'd death or victory.

James Duff.

Chap. v.

My hounds may a' rin maisterless,
 My hawks may fly frae tree to tree,
 My Lord may grip my vassal lands,
 For there again maun I never be!

Old Ballad.

Chap. xiv.

SOUND, sound the clarion, fill the fife!
 To all the sensual world proclaim,
 One crowded hour of glorious life
 Is worth an age without a name.

Anonymous.

Chap. xxxiv.

FROM ROB ROY.

FRANCIS OSBALDISTONE'S LINES TO THE
MEMORY OF EDWARD THE BLACK PRINCE.

O FOR the voice of that wild horn,
 On Fontarabian echoes borne,
 The dying hero's call,
 That told imperial Charlemagne
 How Paynim sons of swarthy Spain
 Had wrought his champion's fall.

Sad over earth and ocean sounding,
 And England's distant cliffs astounding,
 Such are the notes should say
 How Britain's hope, and France's fear,
 Victor of Cressy and Poitier,
 In Bordeaux dying lay.

"Raise my faint head, my squires," he said,
 "And let the casement be display'd,
 That I may see once more
 The splendour of the setting sun
 Glean on thy mirror'd wave, Garonne,
 And Blay's empurpled shore.

"Like me, he sinks to Glory's sleep,
 His fall the dews of evening steep,
 As if in sorrow shed.
 So soft shall fall the trickling tear,
 When England's maids and matrons hear
 Of their Black Edward dead.

"And though my sun of glory set,
 Nor France nor England shall forget
 The terror of my name ;
 And oft shall Britain's heroes rise,
 New planets in these southern skies,
 Through clouds of blood and flame."
 Chap. ii.

TRANSLATION FROM ARIOSTO.

LADIES, and knights, and arms, and love's fair flame,
 Deeds of emprise and courtesy, I sing ;
 What time the Moors from sultry Africk came,
 Led on by Agramant, their youthful king--
 Him whom revenge and hasty ire did bring
 O'er the broad wave, in France to waste and war ;
 Such ills from old Trojano's death did spring,
 Which to avenge he came from realms afar,
 And menaced Christian Charles, the Roman Emperor.

Of dauntless Roland, too, my strain shall sound,
 In import never known in prose or rhyme,
 How he, the chief of judgment deem'd profound,
 For luckless love was crazed upon a time—
 Chap. xvi.

MOTTOES.

IN the wide pile, by others heeded not,
 Hers was one sacred solitary spot,
 Whose gloomy aisles and bending shelves contain,
 For moral hunger food, and cures for moral pain.
Anonymous.
 Chap. x.

DIRE was his thought, who first in poison steep'd
 The weapon form'd for slaughter—direr his,
 And worthier of damnation, who instill'd
 The mortal venom in the social cup,
 To fill the veins with death instead of life.
Anonymous
 Chap. xiii.

YON lamp its line of quivering light
 Shoots from my lady's bower ;
 But why should Beauty's lamp be bright
 At midnight's lonely hour ?
Old Ballad.
 Chap. xiv.

LOOK round thee, young Astolpho : Here's the place
Which men (for being poor) are sent to starve in,—
Rude remedy, I trow, for sore disease.
Within these walls, stifled by damp and stench,
Doth Hope's fair torch expire ; and at the snuff,
Ere yet 'tis quite extinct, rude, wild, and wayward,
The desperate revelries of wild despair,
Kindling their hell-born cressets, light to deeds
That the poor captive would have died ere practised,
Till bondage sunk his soul to his condition.

The Prison, Act i. Sc. iii.

Chap. xxii.

FAR as the eye could reach no tree was seen,
Earth, clad in russet, scorn'd the lively green ;
No birds, except as birds of passage, flew ;
No bee was heard to hum, no dove to coo ;
No streams, as amber smooth, as amber clear,
Were seen to glide, or heard to warble here.

Prophecy of Famine.

Chap. xxvii.

"WOE to the vanquish'd !" was stern Brenno's word,
When sunk proud Rome beneath the Gallic sword—
"Woe to the vanquish'd !" when his massive blade
Bore down the scale against her ransom weigh'd,
And on the field of foughten battle still,
Who knows no limit save the victor's will.

The Gaulliad.

Chap. xxxi.

AND be he safe restored ere evening set,
Or, if there's vengeance in an injured heart,
And power to wreck it in an armed hand,
Your land shall ache for't.

Old Play.

Chap. xxxii.

FAREWELL to the land where the clouds love to rest,
Like the shroud of the dead on the mountain's cold breast ;
To the cataract's roar where the eagles reply,
And the lake her lone bosom expands to the sky.

Chap. xxxvi.

FROM THE HEART OF MIDLOTHIAN.

MADGE WILDFIRE'S SONGS.

WHEN the glede's in the blue cloud,
 The lavrock lies still ;
 When the hound's in the greenwood
 The hind keeps the hill.

O SLEEP ye sound, Sir James, she said,
 When ye suld rise and ride !
 There's twenty men, wi' bow and blade,
 Are seeking where ye hide.

I GLANCE like the wildfire through country and town ;
 I'm seen on the causeway—I'm seen on the down ;
 The lightning that flashes so bright and so free,
 Is scarcely so blithe or so bonny as me.

WHAT did ye wi' the bridal ring, bridal ring, bridal ring ?
 What did ye wi' your wedding ring, ye little cutty quean, O ?
 I gied it till a sodger, a sodger, a sodger,
 I gied it till a sodger, an auld true love o' mine, O.

GOOD even, good fair moon, good even to thee ;
 I prithee, dear moon, now show to me
 The form and the features, the speech and degree,
 Of the man that true lover of mine shall be.

It is the bonny butcher lad
 That wears the sleeves of blue,
 He sells the flesh on Saturday,
 On Friday that he slew.

THERE'S a bloodhound ranging Tinwald Wood,
 There's harness glancing sheen ;
 There's a maiden sits on Tinwald brae,
 And she sings loud between.

IN the bonnie cells of Bedlam,
 Ere I was ane and twenty,
 I had hempen bracelets strong,
 And merry whips, ding-dong,
 And prayer and fasting plenty.

My banes are buried in yon kirk-yard
 Sae far ayont the sea,
 And it is but my blithesome ghaist
 That's speaking now to thee.

I'm Madge of the country, I'm Madge of the town,
 And I'm Madge of the lad I am blithest to own—
 The Lady of Beever in diamonds may shine,
 But has not a heart half so lightsome as mine.
 I am Queen of the Wake, and I'm Lady of May,
 And I lead the blithe ring round the May-pole to-day;
 The wildfire that flashes so fair and so free
 Was never so bright, or so bonnie as me.

OUR work is over—over now,
 The goodman wipes his weary brow,
 The last long wain wends slow away,
 And we are free to sport and play.

The night comes on when sets the sun,
 And labour ends when day is done.
 When Autumn's gone, and Winter's come,
 We hold our jovial harvest-home.

WHEN the fight of grace is fought,
 When the marriage vest is wrought,
 When Faith has chased cold Doubt away,
 And Hope but sickens at delay,
 When Charity, imprisoned here,
 Longs for a more expanded sphere,—
 Doff thy robes of sin and clay,
 Christian, rise, and come away.

CAULD is my bed, Lord Archibald,
 And sad my sleep of sorrow :
 But thine sall be as sad and cauld,
 My fause true-love ! to-morrow.

And weep ye not, my maidens free,
 Though death your mistress borrow ;
 For he for whom I die to-day,
 Shall die for me to-morrow.

PROUD Maisie is in the wood,
Walking so early ;
Sweet Robin sits on the bush,
Singing so rarely.

“Tell, me, thou bonny bird,
When shall I marry me ?”
“When six braw gentlemen
Kirkward shall carry ye.”

“Who makes the bridal bed,
Birdie, say truly ?”
“The gray-headed sexton
That delves the grave duly.

“The glow-worm o'er grave and stone
Shall light thee steady.
The owl from the steeple sing,
'Welcome, proud lady.'”
Chaps. xv.-xl.

MOTTOES.

LAW, take thy victim !—May she find the mercy
In yon mild heaven which this hard world denies her !
Chap. xxiv.

AND Need and Misery, Vice and Danger, bind
In sad alliance, each degraded mind.
Chap. xxix.

I BESEECH you,
These tears beseech you, and these chaste hands woo you,
That never yet were heaved but to things holy—
Things like yourself. You are a God above us ;
Be as a God, then, full of saving mercy !

The Bloody Brother.

Chap. xxxvii.

FROM THE BRIDE OF LAMMERMOOR.

LUCY ASHTON'S SONG.

Look not thou on beauty's charming,
 Sit thou still when kings are arming,
 Taste not when the wine-cup glistens,
 Speak not when the people listens,
 Stop thine ear against the singer,
 From the red gold keep thy finger ;
 Vacant heart and hand and eye,
 Easy live and quiet die.

Chap. iii.

NORMAN THE FORESTER'S SONG.

THE monk must arise when the matins ring,
 The abbot may sleep to their chime ;
 But the yeoman must start when the bugles sing,
 'Tis time, my hearts, 'tis time.

There's bucks and raes on Billhope braes,
 There's a herd on Shortwood Shaw ;
 But a lily-white doe in the garden goes,
 She's fairly worth them a'.

Chap. iii.

THE PROPHECY.

WHEN the last Laird of Ravenswood to Ravenswood
 shall ride,
 And woo a dead maiden to be his bride,
 He shall stable his steed in the Kelpie's flow,
 And his name shall be lost for evermoe !

Chap. xviii.

MOTTOES.

AY, and when huntsmen wind the merry horn,
 And from its covert starts the fearful prey,
 Who, warm'd with youth's blood in his swelling veins,
 Would, like a lifeless clod, outstretchèd lie,
 Shut out from all the fair creation offers ?

Chap. ix.

Ethwald, Act i. Sc. i.

LET them have meat enough, woman—half a hen !
 There be old rotten pilchards—put them off too !
 'Tis but a little new anointing of them,
 And a strong onion that confounds the savour.

Chap. xi.

Love's Pilgrimage.

SHOULD I take aught of you ? 'tis true I begg'd now ;
 And, what is worse than that, I stole a kindness ;
 And, what is worst of all, I lost my way in't.

Chap. xiii.

Wit without Money.

AS, to the Autumn breeze's bugle-sound,
 Various and vague the dry leaves dance their round ;
 Or, from the garner-door, on ether borne,
 The chaff flies devious from the winnow'd corn ;
 So vague, so devious, at the breath of heaven,
 From their fix'd aim are mortal counsels driven.

Chap. xiv.

Anonymous.

HERE is a father now

Will truck his daughter for a foreign venture,
 Make her the stop-gap to some canker'd feud,
 Or fling her o'er, like Jonah, to the fishes,
 To appease the sea at highest.

Chap. xvii.

Anonymous.

SIR, stay at home and take an old man's counsel :
 Seek not to bask you by a stranger's hearth ;
 Our own blue smoke is warmer than their fire.
 Domestic food is wholesome, though 'tis homely,
 And foreign dainties poisonous, though tasteful.

Chap. xviii.

The French Courtezan.

I do too ill in this,

And must not think but that a parent's plaint
 Will move the heavens to pour forth misery
 Upon the head of disobedience.
 Yet reason tells us parents are o'erseen
 When with too strict a rein they do hold in
 Their child's affection, and control that love
 Which the High Powers Divine inspire them with.

Chap. xix.

The Hog hath lost his Pearl.

AND soon they spied the merry-men green,
And eke the coach-and-four.

Duke upon Duke.

Chap. xxii.

WHY, now I have Dame Fortune by the forelock,
And if she 'scapes my grasp, the fault is mine ;
He that hath buffeted with stern adversity
Best knows to shape his course to favouring breezes.

Old Play.

Chap. xxvii.

FROM THE LEGEND OF MONTROSE.

ANCIENT GAELIC MELODY.

ANNOT LYLE *sings* :—

BIRDS of omen dark and foul,
Night-crow, raven, bat, and owl,
Leave the sick man to his dream—
All night long he heard your scream.
Haste to cave and ruin'd tower,
Ivy tod, or dinged-bower,
There to wink and mope, for, hark !
In the mild air sings the lark.

Hie to moorish gill and rocks,
Prowling wolf and wily fox ;
Hie ye fast, nor turn your view,
Though the lamb bleats to the ewe.
Couch your trains, and speed your flight,
Safety parts with parting night ;
And on distant echo borne,
Comes the hunter's early horn.

The moon's wan crescent scarcely gleams,
Ghost-like she fades in morning beams :
Hie hence, each peevish imp and fay
That scare the pilgrim on his way.
Quench, kelpie ! quench, in bog and fen,
Thy torch, that cheats benighted men ;
Thy dance is o'er, thy reign is done,
For Ben-y-glow hath seen the sun.

Wild thoughts that, sinful, dark, and deep,
 O'erpower the passive mind in sleep,
 Pass from the slumberer's soul away,
 Like night-mists from the brow of day :
 Foul hag, whose blasted visage grim
 Smothers the pulse, unnerves the limb,
 Spur thy dark palfrey, and begone !
 Thou dar'st not face the godlike sun.
 Chap. vi.

THE ORPHAN MAID.

ANNOT LYLE *sings* :—

NOVEMBER'S hail-cloud drifts away,
 November's sunbeam wan
 Looks coldly on the castle gray,
 When forth comes Lady Anne.

The orphan by the oak was set,
 Her arms, her feet, were bare ;
 The hail-drops had not melted yet,
 Amid her raven hair.

"And, dame," she said, "by all the ties
 That child and mother know,
 Aid one who never knew these joys,
 Relieve an orphan's woe."

The lady said, "An orphan's state
 Is hard and sad to bear ;
 Yet worse the widow'd mother's fate,
 Who mourns both lord and heir.

"Twelve times the rolling year has sped,
 Since, when from vengeance wild
 Of fierce Strathallan's Chief I fled,
 Forth's eddies whelm'd my child."

"Twelve times the year its course has borne,"
 The wandering maid replied ;
 "Since fishers on Saint Bridget's morn
 Drew nets on Campsie side.

“Saint Bridget sent no scaly spoil ;
 An infant, wellnigh dead,
 They saved, and rear’d in want and toil,
 To beg from you her bread.”

That orphan maid the lady kiss’d,—
 “My husband’s looks you bear ;
 Saint Bridget and her morn be bless’d !
 You are his widow’s heir.”

They’ve robed that maid, so poor and pale,
 In silk and sandals rare ;
 And pearls, for drops of frozen hail,
 Are glistening in her hair.
 Chap. ix.

MOTTOES.

DARK on their journey lour’d the gloomy day,
 Wild were the hills, and doubtful grew the way ;
 More dark, more gloomy, and more doubtful,
 show’d
 The mansion which received them from the road.
The Travellers. a Romance.

Chap. x.

Is this thy castle, Baldwin ? Melancholy
 Displays her sable banner from the donjon,
 Dark’ning the foam of the whole surge beneath.
 Were I a habitant, to see this gloom
 Pollute the face of nature, and to hear
 The ceaseless sound of wave and sea-bird’s scream,
 I’d wish me in the hut that poorest peasant
 E’er framed to give him temporary shelter.
Brown.

Chap. xi.

THIS was the entry, then, these stairs — but
 whither after ?
 Yet he that’s sure to perish on the land
 May quit the nicety of card and compass,
 And trust the open sea without a pilot.
Tragedy of Brennovalt.

Chap. xiv.

FROM IVANHOE.

THE CRUSADER'S RETURN.

HIGH deeds achieved of knightly fame,
 From Palestine the champion came ;
 The cross upon his shoulders borne,
 Battle and blast had dimm'd and torn.
 Each dint upon his batter'd shield
 Was token of a foughten field ;
 And thus, beneath his lady's bower,
 He sung, as fell the twilight hour :

“ Joy to the fair !—thy knight behold,
 Return'd from yonder land of gold ;
 No wealth he brings, nor wealth can need,
 Save his good arms and battle-steed ;
 His spurs to dash against a foe,
 His lance and sword to lay him low ;
 Such all the trophies of his toil,
 Such—and the hope of Tekla's smile !

“ Joy to the fair ! whose constant knight
 Her favour fired to feats of might !
 Unnoted shall she not remain
 Where meet the bright and noble train ;
 Minstrel shall sing, and herald tell—
 ‘ Mark yonder maid of beauty well,
 ’Tis she for whose bright eyes was won
 The listed field of Ascalon !

“ ‘ Note well her smile !—it edged the blade
 Which fifty wives to widows made,
 When, vain his strength and Mahound's spell,
 Iconium's turban'd Soldan fell.
 See'st thou her locks, whose sunny glow
 Half shows, half shades, her neck of snow ?
 Twines not of them one golden thread,
 But for its sake a Paynim bled.’

“ Joy to the fair !—my name unknown,
 Each deed, and all its praise, thine own ;
 Then, oh ! unbar this churlish gate,
 The night-dew falls, the hour is late.

Inured to Syria's glowing breath,
 I feel the north breeze chill as death ;
 Let grateful love quell maiden shame,
 And grant him bliss who brings thee fame!"

Chap. xvii.

THE BAREFOOTED FRIAR.

I'LL give thee, good fellow, a twelvemonth or twain,
 To search Europe through from Byzantium to Spain ;
 But ne'er shall you find, should you search till you tire,
 So happy a man as the Barefooted Friar.

Your knight for his lady pricks forth in career,
 And is brought home at even-song prick'd through with a
 spear ;

I confess him in haste—for his lady desires
 No comfort on earth save the Barefooted Friar's.

Your monarch?—Pshaw ! many a prince has been known
 To barter his robes for our cowl and our gown ;
 But which of us e'er felt the idle desire
 To exchange for a crown the gray hood of a Friar ?

The Friar has walk'd out, and where'er he has gone,
 The land and its fatness is mark'd for his own ;
 He can roam where he lists, he can stop when he tires,
 For every man's house is the Barefooted Friar's.

He's expected at noon, and no wight, till he comes,
 May profane the great chair, or the porridge of plums ;
 For the best of the cheer, and the seat by the fire,
 Is the undenied right of the Barefooted Friar.

He's expected at night, and the pasty's made hot,
 They broach the brown ale, and they fill the black pot ;
 And the goodwife would wish the goodman in the mire,
 Ere he lack'd a soft pillow, the Barefooted Friar.

Long flourish the sandal, the cord, and the cope,
 The dread of the devil and trust of the Pope !
 For to gather life's roses, unscathed by the brier,
 Is granted alone to the Bare-footed Friar.

Chap. xvii.

NORMAN.

NORMAN saw on English oak,
 On English neck a Norman yoke,
 Norman spoon in English dish,
 And England ruled as Normans wish ;
 Blithe world in England never will be more,
 Till England's rid of all the four.

Chap. xxvii.

ULRICA'S WAR-SONG.

WHET the bright steel,
 Sons of the White Dragon !
 Kindle the torch,
 Daughter of Hengist !
 The steel glimmers not for the carving of the banquet,
 It is hard, broad, and sharply pointed ;
 The torch goeth not to the bridal chamber,
 It steams and glitters blue with sulphur.
 Whet the steel, the raven croaks !
 Light the torch, Zerneck is yelling !
 Whet the steel, sons of the Dragon !
 Kindle the torch, daughter of Hengist !

The black clouds are low over the thane's castle :
 The eagle screams—he rides on their bosom.
 Scream not, gray rider of the sable cloud,
 Thy banquet is prepared !
 The maidens of Valhalla look forth,
 The race of Hengist will send them guests.
 Shake your black tresses, maidens of Valhalla !
 And strike your loud timbrels for joy !
 Many a haughty step bends to your halls,
 Many a helmed head.

Dark sits the evening upon the thane's castle,
 The black clouds gather round ;
 Soon shall they be red as the blood of the valiant !
 The destroyer of forests shall shake his red crest against
 them ;
 He, the bright consumer of palaces,
 Broad waves be his blazing banner,

Red, wide, and dusky,
 Over the strife of the valiant ;
 His joy is in the clashing swords and broken bucklers ;
 He loves to lick the hissing blood as it bursts warm from
 the wound !

All must perish !
 The sword cleaveth the helmet ;
 The strong armour is pierced by the lance :
 Fire devoureth the dwelling of princes,
 Engines break down the fences of the battle.
 All must perish !
 The race of Hengist is gone—
 The name of Horsa is no more !
 Shrink not then from your doom, sons of the sword !

Let your blades drink blood like wine ;
 Feast ye in the banquet of slaughter,
 By the light of the blazing halls !
 Strong be your swords while your blood is warm,
 And spare neither for pity nor fear,
 For vengeance hath but an hour ;
 Strong hate itself shall expire !
 I also must perish.

Chap. xxxi.

REBECCA'S HYMN.

WHEN Israel, of the Lord beloved,
 Out from the land of bondage came,
 Her fathers' God before her moved,
 An awful guide in smoke and flame.
 By day, along the astonish'd lands
 The cloudy pillar glided slow ;
 By night, Arabia's crimson'd sands
 Return'd the fiery column's glow.

There rose the choral hymn of praise,
 And trump and timbrel answer'd keen,
 And Zion's daughters pour'd their lays,
 With priest's and warrior's voice between
 No portents now our foes amaze,
 Forsaken Israel wanders lone :
 Our fathers would not know Thy ways,
 And Thou hast left them to their own.

But present still, though now unseen !
 When brightly shines the prosperous day,
 Be thoughts of Thee a cloudy screen
 To temper the deceitful ray.
 And oh, when stoops on Judah's path
 In shade and storm the frequent night,
 Be Thou, long-suffering, slow to wrath,
 A burning and a shining light !

Our harps we left by Babel's streams,
 The tyrant's jest, the Gentile's scorn ;
 No censer round our altar beams,
 And mute are timbrel, harp, and horn.
 But Thou hast said, The blood of goat,
 The flesh of rams I will not prize ;
 A contrite heart, a humble thought,
 Are mine accepted sacrifice.

Chap. xxxix.

THE BLACK KNIGHT'S SONG.

ANNA-MARIE, love, up is the sun,
 Anna-Marie, love, morn is begun,
 Mists are dispersing, love, birds singing free,
 Up in the morning, love, Anna-Marie.
 Anna-Marie, love, up in the morn,
 The hunter is winding blithe sounds on his horn,
 The echo rings merry from rock and from tree,
 'Tis time to arouse thee, love, Anna-Marie.

WAMBA :—

O Tybalt, love, Tybalt, awake me not yet,
 Around my soft pillow while softer dreams flit ;
 For what are the joys that in waking we prove,
 Compared with these visions, O Tybalt ! my love ?
 Let the birds to the rise of the mist carol shrill,
 Let the hunter blow out his loud horn on the hill,
 Softer sounds, softer pleasures, in slumber I prove,
 But think not I dream'd of thee, Tybalt, my love.

Chap. xl.

KNIGHT AND WAMBA :—

THERE came three merry men from south, west, and north,
 Ever more sing the roundelay ;
 To win the Widow of Wycombe forth,
 And where was the widow might say them nay ?

The first was a knight and from Tynedale he came,
 Ever more sing the roundelay ;
 And his fathers, God save us, were men of great fame,
 And where was the widow might say him nay ?

Of his father the laird, of his uncle the squire,
 He boasted in rhyme and in roundelay ;
 She bade him go bask by his sea-coal fire,
 For she was the widow would say him nay.

WAMBA :—

The next that came forth, swore by blood and by nails,
 Merrily sing the roundelay ;
 Hur's a gentleman, God wot, and hur's lineage was of
 Wales,
 And where was the widow might say him nay ?

Sir David ap Morgan ap Griffith ap Hugh
 Ap Tudor ap Rhice, quoth his roundelay ;
 She said that one widow for so many was too few,
 And she bade the Welshman wend his way.

But then next came a yeoman, a yeoman of Kent,
 Jollily singing his roundelay ;
 He spoke to the widow of living and rent,
 And where was the widow could say him nay ?

BOTH :—

So the knight and the squire were both left in the mire,
 There for to sing their roundelay ;
 For a yeoman of Kent, with his yearly rent,
 There ne'er was a widow could say him nay.

DIRGE FOR ATHELSTANE.

DUST into dust,
 To this all must ;
 The tenant hath resign'd
 The faded form
 To waste and worm—
 Corruption claims her kind.

Through paths unknown
 Thy soul hath flown,
 To seek the realms of woe,
 Where fiery pain
 Shall purge the stain
 Of actions done below.

In that sad place
 By Mary's grace,
 Brief may thy dwelling be !
 Till prayers and alms,
 And holy psalms,
 Shall set the captive free.

Chap. xiii.

MOTTOES.

AWAY ! our journey lies through dell and dingle,
 Where the blithe fawn trips by its timid mother,
 Where the broad oak, with intercepting boughs,
 Chequers the sunbeam in the greensward alley—
 Up and away !—for lovely paths are these
 To tread, when the glad sun is on his throne ;
 Less pleasant, and less safe, when Cynthia's lamp
 With doubtful glimmer lights the dreary forest.

Ettrick Forest.

Chap. xviii.

A TRAIN of armèd men, some noble dame
 Escorting (so their scatter'd words discover'd,
 As unperceiv'd I hung upon their rear),
 Are close at hand, and mean to pass the night
 Within the castle.

Orra, a Tragedy.

Chap. xix.

WHEN autumn nights were long and drear,
 And forest walks were dark and dim,
 How sweetly on the pilgrim's ear
 Was wont to steal the hermit's hymn !

Devotion borrows Music's tone,
 And Music took Devotion's wing,
 And, like the bird that hails the sun,
 They soar to heaven, and soaring sing.
 Chap. xx. *The Hermit of St. Clement's Well.*

ALAS ! how many hours and years have pass'd
 Since human forms have round this table sate,
 Or lamp or taper on its surface gleam'd !
 Methinks I hear the sound of time long past
 Still murmuring o'er us in the lofty void
 Of these dark arches, like the ling'ring voices
 Of those who long within their graves have slept.
 Chap. xxi. *Orra, a Tragedy.*

THE hottest horse will oft be cool,
 The dullest will show fire ;
 The friar will often play the fool,
 The fool will play the friar.
 Chap. xxvi. *Old Song.*

THIS wandering race, sever'd from other men,
 Boast yet their intercourse with human arts ;
 The seas, the woods, the deserts which they haunt,
 Find them acquainted with their secret treasures ;
 And unregarded herbs, and flowers, and blossoms,
 Display undream'd-of powers when gather'd by them.
 Chap. xxviii. *The Jew.*

APPROACH the chamber, look upon his bed.
 His is the passing of no peaceful ghost,
 Which, as the lark arises to the sky,
 'Mid morning's sweetest breeze and softest dew,
 Is wing'd to heaven by good men's sighs and tears !
 Anselm parts otherwise.
 Chap. xxx. *Old Play.*

TRUST me, each state must have its policies :
 Kingdoms have edicts, cities have their charters ;
 Even the wild outlaw, in his forest-walk,
 Keeps yet some touch of civil discipline.
 For not since Adam wore his verdant apron
 Hath man with man in social union dwelt,
 But laws were made to draw that union closer.

Chap. xxxii.

Old Play.

AROUSE the tiger of Hyrcanian deserts,
 Strive with the half-starved lion for his prey ;
 Lesser the risk, than rouse the slumbering fire
 Of wild Fanaticism.

Chap. xxxv.

Anonymous.

SAY not my art is fraud—all live by seeming.
 The beggar begs with it, and the gay courtier
 Gains land and title, rank and rule, by seeming :
 The clergy scorn it not, and the bold soldier
 Will eke with it his service. All admit it,
 All practise it ; and he who is content
 With showing what he is, shall have small credit
 In church, or camp, or state. So wags the world.

Chap. xxxvi.

Old Play.

STERN was the law which bade its vot'ries leave
 At human woes with human hearts to grieve ;
 Stern was the law, which at the winning wile
 Of frank and harmless mirth forbade to smile ;
 But sterner still, when high the iron rod
 Of tyrant power she shook, and call'd that power of God.

Chap. xxxvii.

The Middle Ages.

FROM THE MONASTERY.

Ne sit ancillae, etc.

TAKE thou no scorn
 Of fiction born,
 Fair fiction's muse to woo ;
 Old Homer's theme
 Was but a dream,
 Himself a fiction too.

Answer to the Introductory Epistle.

SONGS OF THE WHITE LADY OF AVENEL.

MERRILY swim we, the moon shines bright,
 Both current and ripple are dancing in light :
 We have roused the night raven, I heard him croak
 As we plashed along beneath the oak
 That flings its broad branches so far and so wide,
 Their shadows are dancing in midst of the tide.
 "Who wakens my nestlings?" the raven he said,
 "My beak shall ere morn in his blood be red !
 For a blue swollen corpse is a dainty meal,
 And I'll have my share with the pike and the eel."

MERRILY swim we, the moon shines bright,
 There's a golden gleam on the distant height :
 There's a silver shower on the alders dank,
 And the drooping willows that wave on the bank.
 I see the Abbey, both turret and tower,
 It is all astir for the vesper hour ;
 The monks for the chapel are leaving each cell,
 But where's Father Philip should toll the bell ?

MERRILY swim we, the moon shines bright,
 Downward we drift through shadow and light ;
 Under yon rock the eddies sleep,
 Calm and silent, dark and deep.
 The Kelpy has risen from the fathomless pool,
 He has lighted his candle of death and of dool :
 Look, Father, look, and you'll laugh to see
 How he gapes and glares with his eyes on thee !

GOOD luck to your fishing, whom watch ye to-night ?
 A man of mean or a man of might ?
 Is it layman or priest that must float in your cove,
 Or lover who crosses to visit his love ?
 Hark ! heard ye the Kelpy reply as we pass'd,—
 "God's blessing on the warder, he lock'd the bridge fast !
 All that come to my cove are sunk,
 Priest or layman, lover or monk."

Landed—landed ! the black book hath won,
 Else had you seen Berwick with morning sun !
 Sain ye, and save ye, and blithe mot ye be,
 For seldom they land that go swimming with me.

TO THE SUB-PRIOR.

THE WHITE LADY *sings* :—

GOOD evening, Sir Priest, and so late as you ride,
With your mule so fair, and your mantle so wide ;
But ride you through valley, or ride you o'er hill,
There is one that has warrant to wait on you still.

Back, back,

The volume black !

I have a warrant to carry it back.

What, ho ! Sub-Prior, and came you but here
To conjure a book from a dead woman's bier ?
Sain you, and save you, be wary and wise,
Ride back with the book, or you'll pay for your prize.

Back, back,

There's death in the track !

In the name of my master, I bid thee bear back.

That which is neither ill nor well,
That which belongs not to heaven nor to hell,
A wreath of the mist, a bubble of the stream,
'Twixt a waking thought and a sleeping dream ;

A form that men spy

With the half-shut eye

In the beams of the setting sun, am I.

Vainly, Sir Prior, wouldst thou bar me my right !
Like the star when it shoots, I can dart through the night ;
I can dance on the torrent, and ride on the air,
And travel the world with the bonny night-mare.

Again, again,

At the crook of the glen,

Where bickers the burnie, I'll meet thee again.

Men of good are bold as sackless,¹
Men of rude are wild and reckless.

Lie thou still

In the nook of the hill,

For those be before thee that wish thee ill.

Chap. ix.

¹ *Sackless*—Innocent.

THE WHITE LADY *sings* :—

THANK the holly-bush
That nods on thy brow ;
Or with this slender rush
I had strangled thee now.

Chap. x.

TO THE WHITE LADY.

HALBERT *sings* :—

THRICE to the holly brake,
Thrice to the well—
I bid thee awake,
White Maid of Avenel !

Noon gleams on the lake,
Noon glows on the fell,—
Wake thee, O wake,
White Maid of Avenel.

Chap. xi.

TO HALBERT.

THE WHITE LADY *sings or speaks* :—

YOUTH of the dark eye, wherefore didst thou call me ?
Wherefore art thou here, if terrors can appal thee ?
He that seeks to deal with us must know no fear nor failing ;
To coward and churl our speech is dark, our gifts are
unavailing.

The breeze that brought me hither now must sweep
Egyptian ground,
The fleecy cloud on which I ride for Araby is bound ;
The fleecy cloud is drifting by, the breeze sighs for my stay,
For I must sail a thousand miles before the close of day.

WHAT I am I must not show—
What I am thou couldst not know—
Something betwixt heaven and hell—
Something that neither stood nor fell—
Something that through thy wit or will
May work thee good—may work thee ill.
Neither substance quite, nor shadow,
Haunting lonely moor and meadow,

Dancing by the haunted spring,
 Riding on the whirlwind's wing ;
 Aping in fantastic fashion
 Every change of human passion,
 While o'er our frozen minds they pass
 Like shadows from the mirror'd glass.
 Wayward, fickle, is our mood,
 Hovering betwixt bad and good,
 Happier than brief-dated man,
 Living twenty times his span ;
 Far less happy, for we have
 Help nor hope beyond the grave !
 Man awakes to joy or sorrow ;
 Ours the sleep that knows no morrow.
 This is all that I can show—
 This is all that thou may'st know.

Ay ! and I taught thee the word and the spell,
 To waken me here by the Fairies' Well :
 But thou hast loved the heron and hawk,
 More than to seek my haunted walk ;
 And thou hast loved the lance and the sword,
 More than good text and holy word ;
 And thou hast loved the deer to track,
 More than the lines and the letters black ;
 And thou art a ranger of moss and of wood,
 And scornest the nurture of gentle blood.

THY craven fear my truth accused ;
 Thine idlehood my trust abused ;
 He that draws to harbour late,
 Must sleep without, or burst the gate.
 There is a star for thee which burn'd,
 Its influence wanes, its course is turn'd ;
 Valour and constancy alone
 Can bring thee back the chance that's flown.

WITHIN that awful volume lies
 The mystery of mysteries !
 Happiest they of human race,
 To whom God has granted grace
 To read, to fear, to hope, to pray,
 To lift the latch, and force the way ;
 And better had they ne'er been born,
 Who read to doubt, or read to scorn.

MANY a fathom dark and deep
 I have laid the book to sleep ;
 Ethereal fires around it glowing—
 Ethereal music ever flowing—
 The sacred pledge of Heav'n
 All things revere,
 Each in his sphere,
 Save man for whom 'twas giv'n :
 Lend thy hand, and thou shalt spy
 Things ne'er seen by mortal eye.

FEAREST thou to go with me ?
 Still it is free to thee
 A peasant to dwell ;
 Thou may'st drive the dull steer,
 And chase the king's deer,
 But never more come near
 This haunted well.

HERE lies the volume thou boldly hast sought ;
 Touch it, and take it,—'twill dearly be bought.

RASH thy deed,
 Mortal weed
 To immortal flames applying ;
 Rasher trust
 Has thing of dust,
 On his own weak worth relying :
 Strip thee of such fences vain,
 Strip, and prove thy luck again.

MORTAL warp and mortal woof
 Cannot brook this charmed roof ;
 All that mortal art hath wrought
 In our cell returns to nought.
 The molten gold returns to clay,
 The polish'd diamond melts away ;
 All is altered, all is flown,
 Nought stands fast but truth alone.
 Not for that thy quest give o'er :
 Courage ! prove thy chance once more.

ALAS! alas!

Not ours the grace

These holy characters to trace :

Idle forms of painted air,

Not to us is given to share

The boon bestow'd on Adam's race.

With patience bide,

Heaven will provide

The fitting time, the fitting guide.

Chap. xii.

THIS is the day when the fairy kind

Sit weeping alone for their hopeless lot,

And the wood-maiden sighs to the sighing wind,

And the mermaiden weeps in her crystal grot ;

For this is a day that the deed was wrought,

In which we have neither part nor share,

For the children of clay was salvation bought,

But not for the forms of sea or air !

And ever the mortal is most forlorn,

Who meeteth our race on the Friday morn.

DARING youth ! for thee it is well,

Here calling me in haunted dell,

That thy heart has not quail'd,

Nor thy courage fail'd,

And that thou couldst brook

The angry look

Of Her of Avenel.

Did one limb shiver,

Or an eyelid quiver,

Thou wert lost for ever.

Though I am form'd from the ether blue,

And my blood is of the unfallen dew,

And thou art framed of mud and dust,

'Tis thine to speak, reply I must.

A MIGHTIER wizzard far than I

Wields o'er the universe his power ;

Him owns the eagle in the sky,

The turtle in the bower.

Changeful in shape, yet mightiest still,

He wields the heart of man at will,

From ill to good, from good to ill,

In cot and castle-tower.

Ask thy heart, whose secret cell
 Is fill'd with Mary Avenel !
 Ask thy pride, why scornful look
 In Mary's view it will not brook ?
 Ask it, why thou seek'st to rise
 Among the mighty and the wise ?
 Why thou spurn'st thy lowly lot ?
 Why thy pastimes are forgot ?
 Why thou wouldst in bloody strife
 Mend thy luck or lose thy life ?
 Ask thy heart, and it shall tell,
 Sighing from its secret cell,
 'Tis for Mary Avenel.

Do not ask me ;
 On doubts like these thou canst not task me.
 We only see the passing show
 Of human passion's ebb and flow ;
 And view the pageant's idle glance
 As mortals eye the northern dance,
 When thousand streamers, flashing bright,
 Career it o'er the brow of night,
 And gazers mark their changeeful gleams,
 But feel no influence from their beams.

By ties mysterious link'd, our fated race
 Holds strange connexion with the sons of men.
 The star that rose upon the House of Avenel,
 When Norman Ulric first assumed the name,
 That star, when culminating in its orbit,
 Shot from its sphere a drop of diamond dew,
 And this bright font received it—and a Spirit
 Rose from the fountain, and her date of life
 Hath co-existence with the House of Avenel,
 And with the star that rules it.

Look on my girdle—on this thread of gold—
 'Tis fine as web of lightest gossamer,
 And, but there is a spell on't, would not bind,
 Light as they are, the folds of my thin robe.
 But when 'twas donn'd, it was a massive chain,
 Such as might bind the champion of the Jews,
 Even when his locks were longest : it hath dwindled,
 [Hath 'minish'd in its substance and its strength,

As sunk the greatness of the House of Avenel.
 When this frail thread gives way, I to the elements
 Resign the principles of life they lent me.
 Ask me no more of this !—the stars forbid it.

DIM burns the once bright star of Avenel,
 Dim as the beacon when the morn is nigh,
 And the o'er-wearied warder leaves the light-house ;
 There is an influence sorrowful and fearful,
 That dogs its downward course. Disastrous passion,
 Fierce hate and rivalry, are in the aspect
 That lowers upon its fortunes.

COMPLAIN not on me, child of clay,
 If to thy harm I yield the way.
 We, who soar thy sphere above,
 Know not aught of hate or love ;
 As will or wisdom rules thy mood,
 My gifts to evil turn or good.

WHEN Piercie Shafton boasteth high,
 Let this token meet his eye.
 The sun is westering from the dell,
 Thy wish is granted—fare thee well !
 Chap. xvii.

SIR PIERCIE SHAFTON *sings* :—

WHAT tongue can her perfections tell,
 On whose each part all pens may dwell.

 Of whose high praise and praiseful bliss,
 Goodness the pen, Heaven paper is ;
 The ink immortal fame doth send :
 As I began so I must end.

THE WHITE LADY *chants* :—

HE whose heart for vengeance sued
 Must not shrink from shedding blood ;
 The knot that thou hast tied with word,
 Thou must loose by edge of sword.

YOU have summon'd me once, you have summon'd me twice.
 And without e'er a summons I come to you thrice ;
 Unask'd for, unsued for, you come to my glen ;
 Unsued and unask'd, I am with you agen.
 Chap. xx.

BORDER MARCH.

MARCH, march, Ettrick, and Teviotdale,
 Why the deil dinna ye march forward in order ?
 March, march, Eskdale and Liddesdale,
 All the Blue Bonnets are bound for the Border.
 Many a banner spread,
 Flutters above your head,
 Many a crest that is famous in story.
 Mount and make ready then,
 Sons of the mountain glen,
 Fight for the Queen and our old Scottish glory.

Come from the hills where your hirsels are grazing,
 Come from the glen of the buck and the roe ;
 Come to the crag where the beacon is blazing,
 Come with the buckler, the lance, and the bow.
 Trumpets are sounding,
 War-steeds are bounding,
 Stand to your arms, and march in good order ;
 England shall many a day
 Tell of the bloody fray,
 When the Blue Bonnets came over the Border.
 Chap. xxv.

THE WHITE LADY TO MARY AVENEL.

MAIDEN, whose sorrows wail the living dead,
 Whose eyes shall commune with the dead alive,
 Maiden, attend ! Beneath my foot lies hid
 The word, the law, the path which thou dost strive
 To find, and canst not find. Could Spirits shed
 Tears for their lot, it were my lot to weep,
 Showing the road which I shall never tread,
 Though my foot points it. Sleep, eternal sleep,



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"Lancer and guard and cuirassier."

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Dark, long, and cold forgetfulness my lot !

But do not thou at human ills repine ;
Secure there lies full guerdon in this spot

For all the woes that wait frail Adam's line ;
Stoop then and make it yours—I may not make it mine !

Chap. xxx.

THE WHITE LADY TO EDWARD.

THOU who seek'st my fountain lone,
With thoughts and hopes thou dar'st not own ;
Whose heart within leap'd wildly glad,
When most his brow seem'd dark and sad ;
Hie thee back, thou find'st not here
Corpse or coffin, grave or bier ;
The dead alive is gone and fled—
Go thou, and join the living dead !

The living dead, whose sober brow
Oft shrouds such thoughts as thou hast now,
Whose hearts within are seldom cured
Of passions by their vows abjured ;
Where, under sad and solemn show,
Vain hopes are nursed, wild wishes glow.
Seek the convent's vaulted room,
Prayer and vigil be thy doom ;
Doff the green, and don the gray,
To the cloister hence away !

Chap. xxvii.

THE WHITE LADY'S FAREWELL.

FARE thee well, thou Holly green !
Thou shalt seldom now be seen,
With all thy glittering garlands bending,
As to greet my slow descending,
Startling the bewilder'd hind,
Who sees thee wave without a wind.

Farewell, Fountain ! now not long
Shalt thou murmur to my song,
While thy crystal bubbles glancing,
Keep the time in mystic dancing.

Rise and swell, are burst and lost,
Like mortal schemes by fortune cross'd.

The knot of fate at length is tied,
The Churl is Lord, the Maid is Bride !
Vainly did my magic sleight
Send the lover from her sight ;
Wither bush, and perish well,
Fall'n is lofty Avenel !

Chap. xxxvii.

MOTTOES.

O AY ! the Monks, the Monks, they did the mischief !
Theirs all the grossness, all the superstition
Of a most gross and superstitious age.
May He be praised that sent the healthful tempest,
And scatter'd all these pestilential vapours ;
But that we owed them *all* to yonder Harlot
Throned on the seven hills with her cup of gold,
I will as soon believe, with kind Sir Roger,
That old Moll White took wing with cat and broomstick,
And raised the last night's thunder.

Old Play.

Chap. i.

IN yon lone vale his early youth was bred,
Not solitary then—the bugle-horn
Of fell Alecto often waked its windings,
From where the brook joins the majestic river,
To the wild northern bog, the curlew's haunt,
Where oozes forth its first and feeble streamlet.

Old Play.

Chap. ii.

A PRIEST, ye cry, a priest !—lame shepherds they,
How shall they gather in the straggling flock ?
Dumb dogs which bark not, how shall they compel
The loitering vagrants to the Master's fold ?
Fitter to bask before the blazing fire,
And snuff the mess neat-handed Phillis dresses,
Than on the snow-wreath battle with the wolf.

The Reformation.

Chap. v.

Now let us sit in conclave. That these weeds
 Be rooted from the vineyard of the Church,
 That these foul tares be sever'd from the wheat,
 We are, I trust, agreed. Yet how to do this,
 Nor hurt the wholesome crop and tender vine-plants,
 Craves good advisement.

Chap. vi.

The Reformation.

NAY, dally not with time, the wise man's treasure,
 Though fools are lavish on't; the fatal Fisher
 Hooks souls, while we waste moments.

Chap. viii.

Old Play.

You call this education, do you not?
 Why, 'tis the forced march of a herd of bullocks
 Before a shouting drover. The glad van
 Move on at ease, and pause a while to snatch
 A passing morsel from the dewy green-sward,
 While all the blows, the oaths, the indignation,
 Fall on the croupe of the ill-fated laggard
 That cripples in the rear.

Chap. xi.

Old Play.

THERE'S something in that ancient superstition,
 Which, erring as it is, our fancy loves.
 The spring that, with its thousand crystal bubbles,
 Bursts from the bosom of some desert rock
 In secret solitude, may well be deem'd
 The haunt of something purer, more refined,
 And mightier than ourselves.

Chap. xii.

Old Play.

NAY, let me have the friends who eat my victuals
 As various as my dishes. The feast's naught,
 Where one huge plate predominates. John Plaintext,
 He shall be mighty beef, our English staple;
 The worthy Alderman, a butter'd dumpling;
 Yon pair of whisker'd Cornets, ruffs and rees;
 Their friend the Dandy, a green goose in sippets.
 And so the board is spread at once and fill'd
 On the same principle—Variety.

Chap. xiv.

New Play.

HE strikes no coin, 'tis true, but coins new phrases,
And vends them forth as knaves vend gilded counters,
Which wise men scorn, and fools accept in payment.

Chap. xv.

Old Play.

Now choose thee, gallant, betwixt wealth and honour ;
There lies the pelf, in sum to bear thee through
The dance of youth, and the turmoil of manhood,
Yet leave enough for age's chimney-corner ;
But an thou grasp to it, farewell Ambition !
Farewell each hope of bettering thy condition,
And raising thy low rank above the churls
That till the earth for bread !

Chap. xix.

Old Play.

I HOPE you'll give me cause to think you noble,
And do me right with your sword, sir, as becomes
One gentleman of honour to another ;
All this is fair, sir—let us make no days on't,
I'll lead your way.

Chap. xx.

Love's Pilgrimage.

INDIFFERENT, but indifferent—pshaw! he doth it not
Like one who is his craft's master—ne'ertheless
I have seen a clown confer a bloody coxcomb
On one who was a master of defence.

Chap. xxi.

Old Play.

YES, life hath left him ; every busy thought,
Each fiery passion, every strong affection,
The sense of outward ill and inward sorrow,
Are fled at once from the pale trunk before me ;
And I have given that which spoke and moved,
Thought, acted, suffer'd, as a living man,
To be a ghastly form of bloody clay,
Soon the foul food for reptiles.

Chap. xxii.

Old Play.

'TIS when the wound is stiffening with the cold,
The warrior first feels pain ; 'tis when the heat
And fiery fever of his soul is past,
The sinner feels remorse.

Chap. xxiii.

Old Play.

I'LL walk on tiptoe ; arm my eye with caution,
My heart with courage, and my hand with weapon
Like him who ventures on a lion's den.

Chap. xxiv.

Old Play.

Now, by Our Lady, Sheriff, 'tis hard reckoning,
That I, with every odds of birth and barony,
Should be detain'd here for the casual death
Of a wild forester, whose utmost having
Is but the brazen buckle of the belt
In which he sticks his hedge-knife.

Chap. xxvii.

Old Play.

You call it an ill angel—it may be so ;
But sure I am, among the ranks which fell,
'Tis the first fiend ere counsell'd man to rise,
And win the bliss the sprite himself had forfeited.

Chap. xxx.

Old Play.

At school I knew him—a sharp-witted youth,
Grave, thoughtful, and reserved amongst his mates,
Turning the hours of sport and food to labour,
Starving his body to inform his mind.

Chap. xxxi.

Old Play.

THEN in my gown of sober gray,
Along the mountain-path I'll wander,
And wind my solitary way
To the sad shrine that courts me yonder.

There in the calm monastic shade,
All injuries may be forgiven ;
And there for thee, obdurate maid,
My orisons shall rise to heaven.

The Cruel Lady of the Mountains.

Chap. xxxii.

Now on my faith this gear is all entangled,
Like to the yarn-clew of the drowsy knitter,
Dragg'd by the frolic kitten through the cabin,
While the good dame sits nodding o'er the fire.
Masters, attend ; 'twill crave some skill to clear it.

Chap. xxxiii.

Old Play.

It is not texts will do it : Church artillery
 Are silenced soon by real ordnance,
 And canons are but vain opposed to cannon.
 Go, coin your crosier, melt your church plate down,
 Bid the starved soldier banquet in your halls,
 And quaff your long-saved hogsheads ; turn them out
 Thus primed with your good cheer, to guard your wall,
 And they will venture for't.

Chap. xxxiv.

Old Play.

FROM THE ABBOT.

THE PARDONER'S ADVERTISEMENT.

LISTNETH, gode people, everiche one,
 For in the londe of Babylone,
 Far eastward I wot it lyeth,
 And is the first londe the sonne espieth,
 Ther, as he cometh fro out the sé ;
 In this ilk londe, as thinketh me,
 Right as holie legendes tell,
 Snottreth from a roke a well,
 And falleth into ane bath of ston,
 Wher chast Susanne in times long gon,
 Was wont to wash her body and lim—
 Mickle vertue hath that streme,
 As ye shall se er that ye pas,
 Ensample by this little glas—
 Through nightés cold and dayés hote,
 Hiderward I have it brought ;
 Hath a wife made slip or slide,
 Or a maiden stepp'd aside ;
 Putteth this water under her nese,
 Wold she nold she, she shall snese.

Chap. xxvii.

MOTTOES.

IN the wild storm,
 The seaman hews his mast down, and the merchant
 Heaves to the billows wares he once deem'd precious :
 So prince and peer, 'mid popular contentions,
 Cast off their favourites.

Chap. v.

Old Play.

THOU hast each secret of the household, Francis.
 I dare be sworn thou hast been in the buttery
 Steeping thy curious humour in fat ale,
 And in the butler's tattle—ay, or chatting
 With the glib waiting-woman o'er her comfits :
 These bear the key to each domestic mystery.

Chap. vi.

Old Play.

THE sacred tapers' lights are gone,
 Gray moss has clad the altar stone,
 The holy image is o'erthrown,
 The bell has ceased to toll.

The long ribb'd aisles are burst and shrunk,
 The holy shrines to ruin sunk,
 Departed is the pious monk,—
 God's blessing on his soul!

Chap. viii.

Rediviva.

KNEEL with me, swear it ! 'Tis not in words I trust,
 Save when they're fenced with an appeal to Heaven.

Chap. ix.

Old Play.

LIFE hath its May, and all is mirthful then :
 The woods are vocal, and the flowers all odour ;
 Its very blast has mirth in't,—and the maidens,
 The while they don their cloaks to screen their kirtles,
 Laugh at the rain that wets them.

Chap. xi.

Old Play.

NAY, hear me, brother ; I am elder, wiser,
 And holier than thou ; and age, and wisdom,
 And holiness, have peremptory claims,
 And will be listen'd to.

Chap. xii.

Old Play.

WHAT ! Dagon up again ? I thought we had hurled him
 Down on the threshold never more to rise.
 Bring wedge and axe ; and, neighbours, lend your hands,
 And rive the idol into winter fagots !

Chap. xiii.

Athelstane, or the Converted Dane.

Not the wild billow, when it breaks its barrier—
 Not the wild wind, escaping from its cavern—
 Not the wild fiend, that mingles both together,
 And pours their rage upon the ripening harvest,
 Can match the wild freaks of this mirthful meeting—
 Comic, yet fearful, droll, and yet destructive.

Chap. xiv.

The Conspiracy.

YOUTH ! thou wear'st to manhood now
 Darker lip and darker brow,
 Statelier step, more pensive mien,
 In thy face and gait are seen :
 Thou must now brook midnight watches,
 Take thy food and sport by snatches !
 For the gambol and the jest,
 Thou wert wont to love the best,
 Graver follies must thou follow,
 But as senseless, false, and hollow.

Chap. xvi.

Life, a Poem.

THE sky is clouded, Gaspard,
 And the vexed ocean sleeps a troubled sleep
 Beneath a lurid gleam of parting sunshine.
 Such slumber hangs o'er discontented lands,
 While factions doubt, as yet, if they have strength
 To front the open battle.

Chap. xviii.

Albion, a Poem.

It is and is not ; 'tis the thing I sought for,
 Have kneel'd for, pray'd for, risk'd my life and fame for ;
 And yet it is not—no more than the shadow
 Upon the hard, cold, flat, and polish'd mirror,
 Is the warm, graceful, rounded, living substance
 Which it presents in form and lineament.

Chap. xix.

Old Play.

Now have you reft me from my staff, my guide,
 Who taught my youth, as men teach untamed falcons,
 To use my strength discreetly : I am reft
 Of comrade and of counsel.

Chap. xx.

Old Play.

GIVE me a morsel on the greensward rather,
 Coarse as you will the cooking; let the fresh spring
 Bubble beside my napkin, and the free birds,
 Twittering and chirping, hop from bough to bough,
 To claim the crumbs I leave for perquisites:
 Your prison-feasts I like not.

The Woodsman, a Drama.

Chap. xxiii.

'Tis a weary life this—
 Vaults overhead, and grates and bars around me,
 And my sad hours spent with as sad companions,
 Whose thoughts are brooding o'er their own mischances,
 Far, far too deeply to take part in mine.

The Woodsman.

Chap. xxiv.

AND when Love's torch hath set the heart in flame,
 Comes Signor Reason, with his saws and cautions,
 Giving such aid as the old gray-beard Sexton,
 Who from the church-vault drags his crazy engine,
 To ply its dribbling ineffectual streamlet
 Against a conflagration.

Old Play.

Chap. xxv.

YES, it is she whose eyes look'd on thy childhood,
 And watch'd with trembling hope thy dawn of youth,
 That now, with these same eye-balls, dimn'd with age,
 And dimmer yet with tears, sees thy dishonour.

Old Play.

Chap. xxviii.

IN some breasts passion lies conceal'd and silent,
 Like war's swart powder in a castle vault,
 Until occasion, like the linstock, lights it;
 Then comes at once the lightning and the thunder,
 And distant echoes tell that all is rent asunder.

Old Play.

Chap. xxx.

DEATH distant?—No, alas! he's ever with us,
 And shakes the dart at us in all our actings:
 He lurks within our cup while we're in health;
 Sits by our sick-bed, mocks our medicines;

We cannot walk, or sit, or ride, or travel,
But Death is by to seize us when he lists.

Chap. xxxiii.

The Spanish Father.

AY, Pedro? Come you hear with mask and lantern,
Ladder of ropes, and other moonshine tools?
Why, youngster, thou may'st cheat the old Duenna,
Flatter the waiting-woman, bribe the valet;
But know, that I her father play the Gryphon,
Tameless and sleepless, proof to fraud or bribe,
And guard the hidden treasure of her beauty.

Chap. xxxiv.

The Spanish Father.

It is a time of danger, not of revel,
When churchmen turn to masquers.

Chap. xxxv.

The Spanish Father.

AY, sir—our ancient crown, in these wild times,
Oft stood upon a cast; the gamester's ducat,
So often staked, and lost, and then regain'd,
Scarce knew so many hazards.

Chap. xxxvii.

The Spanish Father.

FROM KENILWORTH.

GOLDTHRED'S SONG.

OF all the birds on bush or tree,

Commend me to the owl,

Since he may best ensample be

To those the cup that trowl.

For when the sun hath left the west,

He chooses the tree that he loves the best,

And he whoops out his song, and he laughs at
his jest.

Then, though hours be late, and weather foul,

We'll drink to the health of the bonny, bonny owl.

The lark is but a bumpkin fowl,

He sleeps in his nest till morn;

But my blessing upon the jolly owl,

That all night blows his horn.

Then up with your cup till you stagger in speech,
 And match me this catch, till you swagger and screech,
 And drink till you wink, my merry men each ;
 For, though hours be late, and weather be foul,
 We'll drink to the health of the bonny, bonny owl.
 Chap. ii.

THE WARDER'S WELCOME TO KENILWORTH.

WHAT stir, what turmoil, have we for the nones ?
 Stand back, my masters, or beware your bones !
 Sirs, I'm a warder, and no man of straw ;
 My voice keeps order, and my club gives law.

Yet soft ! nay stay—what vision have we here ?
 What dainty darling's this ? what peerless peer ?
 What loveliest face, that lovely ranks unfold,
 Like brightest diamond chased in purest gold ?

Dazzled and blind, mine office I forsake,
 My club, my key, my knee, my homage take.
 Bright paragon, pass on in joy and bliss ;
 Beshrew the gate that opes not wide at such a sight as this !
 Chap. xxx.

MOTTOES.

NAY, I'll hold touch ; the game shall be play'd out ;
 It ne'er shall stop for me, this merry wager :
 That which I say when gamesome, I'll avouch
 In my most sober mood—ne'er trust me else.
 Chap. iii. *The Hazard-Table.*

NOT serve two masters ?—Here's a youth will try it,
 Would fain serve God, yet give the devil his due ;
 Says grace before he doth a deed of villany,
 And returns his thanks devoutly when 'tis acted.
 Chap. iv. *Old Play.*

HE was a man
 Versed in the world as pilot in his compass.
 The needle pointed ever to that interest
 Which was his loadstar, and he spread his sails
 With vantage to the gale of others' passion.
 Chap. v. *The Deceiver, a Tragedy.*

THIS is He

Who rides on the court-gale ; controls its tides ;
Knows all their secret shoals and fatal eddies ;
Whose frown abases, and whose smile exalts.
He shines like any rainbow—and, perchance,
His colours are as transient.

Chap. vii.

Old Play.

THIS is rare news thou tell'st me, my good fellow ;
There are two bulls fierce battling on the green
For one fair heifer—if the one goes down,
The dale will be more peaceful, and the herd,
Which have small interest in their bru ziment,
May pasture there in peace.

Chap. xiv.

Old Play.

WELL, then, our course is chosen : spread the sail,—
Heave oft the lead, and mark the soundings well ;
Look to the helm, good master ; many a shoal
Marks this stern coast, and rocks where sits the siren,
Who, like ambition, lures men to their ruin.

Chap. xvii.

The Shipwreck.

Now God

Be good to me in this wild pilgrimage !
All hope in human aid I cast behind me.
Oh, who would be a woman ? who that fool,
A weeping, pining, faithful, loving woman ?
She hath hard measure still where she hopes kindest,
And all her bounties only make her ingrates.

Chap. xxiii.

Love's Pilgrimage.

HARK ! the bells summon, and the bugle calls,
But she the fairest answers not ; the tide
Of nobles and of ladies throngs the halls,
But she the loveliest must in secret hide.
What eyes were thine, proud Prince, which in the gleam
Of yon gay meteors lost that better sense,
That o'er the glow-worm doth the star esteem,
And merit's modest blush o'er courtly insolence ?

Chap. xxv.

The Glass Slipper.

WHAT, man ! ne'er lack a draught when the full can
 Stands at thine elbow, and craves emptying !—
 Nay, fear not me, for I have no delight
 To watch men's vices, since I have myself
 Of virtue nought to boast of. I'm a striker,
 Would have the world strike with me, pell-mell all.

Chap. xxviii.

Pandaemonium.

Now fare thee well, my master ! if true service
 Be guerdon'd with hard looks, e'en cut the tow-line,
 And let our barks across the pathless flood
 Hold different courses.

Chap. xxix.

Shipwreck.

Now bid the steeple rock—she comes, she comes !
 Speak for us, bells ! speak for us, shrill-tongued tuckets !
 Stand to the linstock, gunner ; let thy cannon
 Play such a peal, as if a Paynim foe
 Came stretch'd in turban'd ranks to storm the ramparts.
 We will have pageants too ; but that craves wit,
 And I'm a rough-hewn soldier.

Chap. xxx.

The Virgin Queen, a Tragi-Comedy.

THE wisest sovereigns err like private men,
 And royal hand has sometimes laid the sword
 Of chivalry upon a worthless shoulder,
 Which better had been branded by the hangman.
 What then ? Kings do their best,—and they and we
 Must answer for the intent, and not the event.

Chap. xxxii.

Old Play.

HERE stands the victim—there the proud betrayer,
 E'en as the hind pull'd down by strangling dogs
 Lies at the hunter's feet, who courteous proffers
 To some high dame, the Dian of the chase,
 To whom he looks for guerdon, his sharp blade,
 To gash the sobbing throat.

Chap. xxxiii.

The Woodsman.

HIGH o'er the eastern steep the sun is beaming,
 And darkness flies with her deceitful shadows ;
 So truth prevails o'er falsehood.

Chap. xl.

Old Play.

FROM THE PIRATE.

THE SONG OF THE TEMPEST.

STERN eagle of the far north-west,
 Thou that bearest in thy grasp the thunderbolt,
 Thou whose rushing pinions stir ocean to madness,
 Thou the destroyer of herds, thou the scatterer of navies,
 Amidst the scream of thy rage,
 Amidst the rushing of thy onward wings,
 Though thy scream be loud as the cry of a perishing nation,
 Though the rushing of thy wings be like the roar of ten
 thousand waves,
 Yet hear, in thine ire and thy haste,
 Hear thou the voice of the Reim-kennar.

Thou hast met the pine-trees of Drontheim,
 Their dark-green heads lie prostrate beside their up-rooted
 stems ;
 Thou hast met the rider of the ocean,
 The tall, the strong bark of the fearless rover,
 And she has struck to thee the topsail
 That she had not veil'd to a royal armada.
 Thou hast met the tower that bears its crest among the
 clouds,
 The battled massive tower of the Jarl of former days,
 And the cope-stone of the turret
 Is lying upon its hospitable hearth ;
 But thou too shalt stoop, proud compeller of clouds,
 When thou hearest the voice of the Reim-kennar.

There are verses that can stop the stag in the forest,
 Ay, and when the dark-colour'd dog is opening on his
 track ;
 There are verses can make the wild hawk pause on the wing,
 Like the falcon that wears the hood and the jesses,
 And who knows the shrill whistle of the fowler.
 Thou who canst mock at the scream of the drowning mariner,
 And the crash of the ravaged forest,
 And the groan of the overwhelmed crowds,

When the church hath fallen in the moment of prayer ;
 There are sounds which thou also must list,
 When they are chanted by the voice of the Reim-kennar.

Enough of woe hast thou wrought on the ocean.
 The widows wring their hands on the beach ;
 Enough of woe hast thou wrought on the land,
 The husbandman folds his arms in despair ;
 Cease thou the waving of thy pinions,
 Let the ocean repose in her dark strength ;
 Cease thou the flashing of thine eye,
 Let the thunderbolt sleep in the armoury of Odin ;
 Be thou still at my bidding, viewless racer of the north-
 western heaven,—
 Sleep thou at the voice of Norna the Reim-kennar.

Eagle of the far north-western waters,
 Thou hast heard the voice of the Reim-kennar,
 Thou hast closed thy wide sails at her bidding,
 And folded them in peace by thy side.
 My blessing be on thy retiring path ;
 When thou stoopest from thy place on high,
 Soft be thy slumbers in the caverns of the unknown ocean,
 Rest till destiny shall again awaken thee ;
 Eagle of the north-west, thou hast heard the voice of
 the Reim-kennar.

Chap. vi.

CLAUD HALCRO'S SONG.

MARY.

FAREWELL to Northmaven,
 Gray Hillswicke, farewell !
 To the calms of thy haven,
 The storms on thy fell,
 To each breeze that can vary
 The mood of thy main,
 And to thee, bonny Mary !
 We meet not again !

Farewell the wild ferry,
 Which Hacon could brave,
 When the peaks of the Skerry
 Were white in the wave.

There's a maid may look over
 These wild waves in vain,—
 For the skiff of her lover—
 He comes not again !

The vows thou hast broke,
 On the wild currents fling them ;
 On the quicksand and rock
 Let the mermaidens sing them ;
 New sweetness they'll give her
 Bewildering strain ;
 But there's one who will never
 Believe them again.

O were there an island,
 Though ever so wild,
 Where woman could smile, and
 No man be beguiled—
 Too tempting a snare
 To poor mortals were given ;
 And the hope would fix there,
 That should anchor in heaven.
 Chap. xii.

THE SONG OF HAROLD HARFAGER.

THE sun is rising dimly red,
 The wind is wailing low and dread ;
 From his cliff the eagle sallies,
 Leaves the wolf his darksome valleys,
 In the mist the ravens hover,
 Peep the wild dogs from the cover,
 Screaming, croaking, baying, yelling,
 Each in his wild accents telling,
 " Soon we feast on dead and dying,
 Fair-hair'd Harold's flag is flying."

Many a crest on air is streaming,
 Many a helmet darkly gleaming,
 Many an arm the axe uprears,
 Doom'd to hew the wood of spears.
 All along the crowded ranks
 Horses neigh and armour clanks ;

Chiefs are shouting, clarions ringing,
 Louder still the bard is singing,
 "Gather footmen, gather horsemen,
 To the field, ye valiant Norsemen !

"Halt ye not for food or slumber,
 View not vantage, count not number :
 Jolly reapers, forward still ;
 Grow the crop on vale or hill,
 Thick or scatter'd, stiff or lithe,
 It shall down before the scythe.
 Forward with your sickles bright,
 Reap the harvest of the fight ;
 Onward footmen, onward horsemen,
 To the charge ye gallant Norsemen !

"Fatal Choosers of the Slaughter,
 O'er you hovers Odin's daughter ;
 Hear the choice she spreads before ye,—
 Victory, and wealth, and glory ;
 Or old Valhalla's roaring hail,
 Her ever-circling mead and ale,
 Where for eternity unite
 The joys of wassail and of fight.
 Headlong forward, foot and horsemen,
 Charge and fight, and die like Norsemen !"
 Chap. xv.

SONG OF THE MERMAIDS AND MERMEN.

MERMAID.

FATHOMS deep beneath the wave,
 Stringing beads of glistening pearl,
 Singing the achievements brave
 Of many an old Norwegian earl ;
 Dwelling where the tempest's raving,
 Falls as light upon our ear,
 As the sigh of lover, craving
 Pity from his lady dear,
 Children of wild Thule, we,
 From the deep caves of the sea,
 As the lark springs from the lea,
 Hither come, to share your glee.

MERMAN.

From reining of the water-horse,
 That bounded till the waves were foaming,
 Watching the infant tempest's course,
 Chasing the sea-snake in his roaming ;
 From winding charge-notes on the shell,
 When the huge whale and sword-fish duel,
 Or tolling shroudless seamen's knell,
 When the winds and waves are cruel ;
 Children of wild Thule, we
 Have plough'd such furrows on the sea,
 As the steer draws on the lea,
 And hither we come to share your glee.

MERMAIDS AND MERMEN.

We heard you in our twilight caves,
 A hundred fathom deep below,
 For notes of joy can pierce the waves,
 That drown each sound of war and woe.

Those who dwell beneath the sea
 Love the sons of Thule well ;
 Thus, to aid your mirth, bring we
 Dance, and song, and sounding shell.
 Children of dark Thule, know,
 Those who dwell by haaf and voe,
 Where your daring shallops row,
 Come to share the festal show.
 Chap. xvi.

NORNA'S SONG.

FOR leagues along the watery way,
 Through gulf and stream my course has been ;
 The billows know my Runic lay,
 And smooth their crests to silent green.
 The billows know my Runic lay,—
 The gulf grows smooth, the stream is still ;
 But human hearts, more wild than they,
 Know but the rule of wayward will.
 One hour is mine, in all the year,
 To tell my woes,—and one alone ;
 When gleams this magic lamp, 'tis here,—
 When dies the mystic light, 'tis gone.

Daughters of northern Magnus, hail !
 The lamp is lit, the flame is clear,—
 To you I come to tell my tale,
 Awake, arise, my tale to hear !

NORNA'S INVOCATION.

DWELLERS of the mountain, rise,
 Trolld the powerful, Haims the wise !
 Ye who taught weak woman's tongue
 Words that sway the wise and strong ;
 Ye who taught weak woman's hand
 How to wield the magic wand,
 And wake the gales on Foùlah's steep
 Or lull wild Sumburgh's waves to sleep !
 Still live ye yet? Not yours the pow'r
 Ye knew in Odin's mightier hour.
 What are ye now but empty names,
 Powerful Trolld, sagacious Haims,
 That, lightly spoken, lightly heard,
 Float on the air like thistle's beard ?

TROLLD'S REPLY.

A THOUSAND winters dark have flown
 Since o'er the threshold of my Stone
 A votress pass'd, my power to own.

Visitor bold

Of the mansion of Trolld,

Maiden, haughty of heart,

Who hast hither presum'd,—

Ungifted, undoom'd,

Thou shalt not depart !

The power thou dost covet

O'er tempest and wave,

Shall be thine, thou proud maiden !

By beach and by cave,

By stack and by skerry, by noup and by voe,

By air and by wick, and by helyer and gio,

And by every wild shore which the northern winds know

And the northern tides lave.

But tho' this shall be given thee, thou desperately brave,

I doom thee that never the gift thou shalt have

Till thou reave thy life's giver of the gift which he gave.

NORNA'S ANSWER.

DARK are thy words, and severe,
 Thou Dweller in the Stone ;
 But trembling and fear
 To her are unknown
 Who hath sought thee here,
 In thy dwelling lone.

Come what comes soever,
 The worst I can endure :
 Life is but a short fever,
 And Death's the cure.
 Chap. xix.

CLAUD HALCRO AND NORNA.

CLAUD HALCRO.

MOTHER darksome, Mother dread,
 Dweller on the Fitful-head,
 Thou canst see what deeds are done
 Under the never-setting sun.
 Look through sleet, and look through frost,
 Look to Greenland's caves and coast,—
 By the ice-berg is a sail
 Chasing of the swarthy whale ;
 Mother doubtful, Mother dread,
 Tell us, has the good ship sped ?

NORNA.

The thought of the aged is ever on gear,
 On his fishing, his furrow, his flock, and his steer ;
 But thrive may his fishing, flock, furrow, and herd,
 While the aged for anguish shall tear his gray beard.
 The ship, well-laden as bark need be,
 Lies deep in the furrow of the Iceland sea ;
 The breeze for Zetland blows fair and soft,
 And gaily the garland is fluttering aloft :
 Seven good fishes have spouted their last,
 And their jaw-bones are hanging to yard and mast ;
 Two are for Lerwick, and two for Kirkwall,
 Three for Burgh Westra, the choicest of all.

CLAUD HALCRO.

Mother doubtful, Mother dread,
 Dweller of the Fitful-head,
 Thou hast conn'd full many a rhyme,
 That lives upon the surge of time :
 Tell me, shall my lays be sung,
 Like Hacon's of the golden tongue,
 Long after Halcro's dead and gone?
 Or, shall Hialtland's minstrel own
 One note to rival glorious John?

NORNA.

The infant loves the rattle's noise ;
 Age, double childhood, hath its toys ;
 But different far the descant rings,
 As strikes a different hand the strings.
 The eagle mounts the polar sky—
 The Imber-goose, unskill'd to fly,
 Must be content to glide along,
 Where seal and sea-dog list his song.

CLAUD HALCRO.

Be mine the Imber-goose to play,
 And haunt lone cave and silent bay ;
 The archer's aim so shall I shun—
 So shall I 'scape the levell'd gun—
 Content my verses' tuneless jingle,
 With Thule's sounding tides to mingle,
 While, to the ear of wondering wight,
 Upon the distant headland's height,
 Soften'd by murmur of the sea,
 The rude sounds seem like harmony !

Mother doubtful, Mother dread,
 Dweller of the Fitful-head,
 A gallant bark from far abroad,
 Saint Magnus hath her in his road,
 With guns and firelocks not a few—
 A silken and a scarlet crew

Deep stored with precious merchandise,
Of gold, and goods of rare device—
What interest hath our comrade bold
In bark and crew, in goods and gold?

NORNA.

Gold is ruddy, fair, and free,
Blood is crimson, and dark to see;
I look'd out on Saint Magnus Bay,
And I saw a falcon that struck her prey,—
A gobbet of flesh in her beak she bore,
And talons and singles are dripping with gore;
Let him that asks after them look on his hand,
And if there is blood on't, he's one of their band.

CLAUD HALCRO.

Mother doubtful, Mother dread,
Dweller of the Fitful-head,
Well thou know'st it is thy task
To tell what Beauty will not ask;
Then steep thy words in wine and milk,
And weave a doom of gold and silk,—
For we would know, shall Brenda prove
In love, and happy in her love?

NORNA.

Untouch'd by love, the maiden's breast
Is like the snow on Rona's crest,
High seated in the middle sky,
In bright and barren purity;
But by the sunbeam gently kiss'd,
Scarce by the gazing eye 'tis miss'd,
Ere, down the lonely valley stealing,
Fresh grass and growth its course revealing,
It cheers the flock, revives the flower,
And decks some happy shepherd's bower.

MAGNUS TROIL.

Mother speak, and do not tarry,
Here's a maiden fain would marry.
Shall she marry, ay or not?
If she marry, what's her lot?

NORNA.

Untouch'd by love, the maiden's breast
 Is like the snow on Rona's crest ;
 So pure, so free from earthy dye,
 It seems, whilst leaning on the sky,
 Part of the heaven to which 'tis nigh ;
 But passion, like the wild March rain,
 May soil the wreath with many a stain.
 We gaze—the lovely vision's gone—
 A torrent fills the bed of stone,
 That hurrying to destruction's shock,
 Leaps headlong from the lofty rock.
 Chap. xxi.

SONG OF THE ZETLAND FISHERMAN.

FAREWELL, merry maidens, to song, and to laugh,
 For the brave lads of Westra are bound to the Haaf ;
 And we must have labour, and hunger, and pain,
 Ere we dance with the maids of Dunrossness again.

For now, in our trim boats of Norway deal,
 We must dance on the waves, with the porpoise and seal ;
 The breeze it shall pipe, so it pipe not too high,
 And the gull be our songstress whene'er she flits by.

Sing on, my brave bird, while we follow, like thee,
 By bank, shoal, and quicksand, the swarms of the sea ;
 And when twenty-score fishes are straining our line,
 Sing louder, brave bird, for their spoils shall be thine.

We'll sing while we bait, and we'll sing while we haul
 For the deeps of the Haaf have enough for us all :
 There is torsk for the gentle, and skate for the carle,
 And there's wealth for bold Magnus, the son of the earl.

Huzza ! my brave comrades, give way for the Haaf,
 We shall sooner come back to the dance and the laugh ;
 For light without mirth is a lamp without oil ;
 Then, mirth and long life to the bold Magnus Troil !

Chap. xxii

CLEVELAND'S SONGS.

LOVE wakes and weeps
 While Beauty sleeps !
 O for music's softest numbers,
 To prompt a theme,
 For Beauty's dream,
 Soft as the pillow of her slumbers !

Through groves of palm
 Sigh gales of balm,
 Fire-flies on the air are wheeling ;
 While through the gloom
 Comes soft perfume,
 The distant beds of flowers revealing.

O wake and live !
 No dream can give
 A shadow'd bliss, the real excelling ;
 No longer sleep,
 From lattice peep,
 And list the tale that Love is telling.

FAREWELL ! Farewell ! the voice you hear
 Has left its last soft tone with you ;
 Its next must join the seaward cheer,
 And shout among the shouting crew.

The accents which I scarce could form
 Beneath your frown's controlling check,
 Must give the word, above the storm,
 To cut the mast, and clear the wreck.

The timid eye I dared not raise,
 The hand, that shook when press'd to thine,
 Must point the guns upon the chase—
 Must bid the deadly cutlass shine.

To all I love, or hope, or fear,
 Honour, or own, a long adieu !
 To all that life has soft and dear,
 Farewell ! save memory of you !

LYRICAL
AND
MISCELLANEOUS PIECES.

ARRANGED IN THE ORDER OF THEIR COMPOSITION.

JUVENILE LINES.

FROM VIRGIL.

1782.—ÆTAT. 11.

IN awful ruins Ætna thunders nigh,
And sends in pitchy whirlwinds to the sky
Black clouds of smoke, which, still as they aspire,
From their dark sides there bursts the glowing fire ;
At other times huge balls of fire are toss'd,
That lick the stars, and in the smoke are lost :
Sometimes the mount, with vast convulsions torn,
Emits huge rocks, which instantly are borne
With loud explosions to the starry skies,
The stones made liquid as the huge mass flies,
Then back again with greater weight recoils,
While Ætna thundering from the bottom boils.

ON A THUNDER STORM.

1783.—ÆT. 12.

LOUD o'er my head though awful thunders roll,
And vivid lightnings flash from pole to pole,
Yet 'tis thy voice, my God, that bids them fly,
Thy arm directs those lightnings through the sky,
Then let the good thy mighty name revere,
And harden'd sinners thy just vengeance fear.

ON THE SETTING SUN.

1783.

THESE evening clouds, that setting ray,
 And beauteous tints, serve to display
 Their great Creator's praise ;
 Then let the short-lived thing call'd man,
 Whose life's comprised within a span,
 To him his homage raise.

We often praise the evening clouds,
 And tints so gay and bold,
 But seldom think upon our God,
 Who tinged these clouds with gold !

THE VIOLET.

1797.

THE violet in her green-wood bower,
 Where birchen boughs with hazels mingle,
 May boast itself the fairest flower
 In glen, or copse, or forest dingle.

Though fair her gems of azure hue,
 Beneath the dew-drop's weight reclining ;
 I've seen an eye of lovelier blue,
 More sweet through wat'ry lustre shining.

The summer sun that dew shall dry,
 Ere yet the day be past its morrow ;
 Nor longer in my false love's eye
 Remain'd the tear of parting sorrow.

TO A LADY.

WITH FLOWERS FROM A ROMAN WALL.

1797.

TAKE these flowers which, purple waving,
 On the ruin'd rampart grew,
 Where, the sons of freedom braving,
 Rome's imperial standards flew.

Warriors from the breach of danger
 Pluck no longer laurels there ;
 They but yield the passing stranger
 Wild-flower wreathes for Beauty's hair.

BOTHWELL CASTLE.

A FRAGMENT.

1799.

WHEN fruitful Clydesdale's apple-bowers
 Are mellowing in the noon ;
 When sighs round Pembroke's ruin'd towers
 The sultry breath of June ;

When Clyde, despite his sheltering wood,
 Must leave his channel dry ;
 And vainly o'er the limpid flood
 The angler guides his fly ;

If chance by Bothwell's lovely braes
 A wanderer thou hast been,
 Or hid thee from the summe r's blaze
 In Blantyre's bowers of green,

Full where the copsewood opens wild
 Thy pilgrim step hath staid,
 Where Bothwell's towers, in ruin piled,
 O'erlook the verdant glade ;

And many a tale of love and fear
 Hath mingled with the scene—
 Of Bothwell's banks that bloom'd so dear,
 And Bothwell's bonny Jean.

O, if with rugged minstrel lays
 Unsated be thy ear,
 And thou of deeds of other days
 Another tale wilt hear.—

Then all beneath the spreading beech,
 Flung careless on the lea,
 The Gothic muse the tale shall teach
 Of Bothwell's sisters three.

Wight Wallace stood on Deckmont head,
 He blew his bugle round,
 Till the wild bull in Cadyow wood
 Has started at the sound.

St. George's cross, o'er Bothwell hung,
 Was waving far and wide,
 And from the lofty turret flung
 Its crimson blaze on Clyde ;

And rising at the bugle blast
 That marked the Scottish foe,
 Old England's yeomen muster'd fast,
 And bent the Norman bow.

Tall in the midst Sir Aylmer rose,
 Proud Pembroke's Earl was he—
 While "——"

THE SHEPHERD'S TALE.

1799.

.
 And ne'er but once, my son, he says,
 Was yon sad cavern trod,
 In persecution's iron days,
 When the land was left by God.

From Bewlie bog, with slaughter red,
 A wanderer hither drew,
 And oft he stopt and turn'd his head,
 As by fits the night wind blew ;

For trampling round by Cheviot edge
 Were heard the troopers keen,
 And frequent from the Whitelaw ridge
 The death-shot flash'd between.

The moonbeams through the misty shower
 On yon dark cavern fell .
 Through the cloudy night the snow gleam'd white,
 Which sunbeam ne'er could quell.

“Yon cavern dark is rough and rude,
And cold its jaws of snow ;
But more rough and rude are the men of blood,
That hunt my life below !

“Yon spell-bound den, as the aged tell,
Was hewn by demon's hand ;
But I had loured melle with the fiends of hell,
Than with Clavers and his band.”

He heard the deep-mouth'd bloodhound bark,
He heard the horses neigh,
He plunged him in the cavern dark,
And downward sped his way.

Now faintly down the winding path
Came the cry of the faulting hound,
And the mutter'd oath of baulked wrath
Was lost in hollow sound.

He threw him on the flinted floor,
And held his breath for fear ;
He rose and bitter cursed his foes,
As the sounds died on his ear.

“O bare thine arm, thou battling Lord,
For Scotland's wandering band ;
Dash from the oppressor's grasp the sword,
And sweep him from the land !

“Forget not thou thy people's groans
From dark Dunnottar's tower,
Mix'd with the seafowl's shrilly moans,
And ocean's bursting roar !

“O, in fell Clavers' hour of pride,
Even in his mightiest day,
As bold he strides through conquest's tide,
O stretch him on the clay !

“His widow and his little ones,
O may their tower of trust
Remove its strong foundation stones,
And crush them in the dust !”—

“ Sweet prayers to me,” a voice replied.
 “ Thrice welcome, guest of mine ! ”
 And glimmering on the cavern side,
 A light was seen to shine.

An aged man, in amice brown,
 Stood by the wanderer's side,
 By powerful charm, a dead man's arm
 The torch's light supplied.

From each stiff finger, stretch'd upright,
 Arose a ghastly flame,
 That waned not in the blast of night
 Which through the cavern came.

O, deadly blue was that taper's hue,
 That flamed the cavern o'er,
 But more deadly blue was the ghastly hue
 Of his eyes who the taper bore.

He laid on his head a hand like lead,
 As heavy, pale, and cold—
 “ Vengeance be thine, thou guest of mine,
 If thy heart be firm and bold.

“ But if faint thy heart, and caitiff fear
 Thy recreant sinews know,
 The mountain erne thy heart shall tear,
 Thy nerves the hooded crow.”

The wanderer raised him undismay'd :
 “ My soul, by dangers steel'd,
 Is stubborn as my border blade,
 Which never knew to yield.

“ And if thy power can speed the hour
 Of vengeance on my foes,
 Theirs be the fate, from bridge and gate,
 To feed the hooded crows.”

The Brownie look'd him in the face,
 And his colour fled with speed—
 “ I fear me,” quoth he, “ uneth it will be
 To match thy word and deed.

“In ancient days when English bands
Sore ravaged Scotland fair,
The sword and shield of Scottish land
Was valiant Halbert Kerr.

“A warlock loved the warrior well,
Sir Michael Scott by name,
And he sought for his sake a spell to make,
Should the Southern foemen tame.

“‘Look thou,’ he said, ‘from Cessford head,
As the July sun sinks low,
And when glimmering white on Cheviot’s height
Thou shalt spy a wreath of snow,
The spell is complete which shall bring to thy feet
The haughty Saxon foe.’

“For many a year wrought the wizard here,
In Cheviot’s bosom low,
Till the spell was complete, and in July’s heat
Appear’d December’s snow ;
But Cessford’s Halbert never came
The wondrous cause to know.

“For years before in Bowden aisle
The warrior’s bones had lain,
And after short while, by female guile,
Sir Michael Scott was slain.

“But me and my brethren in this cell
His mighty charms retain,—
And he that can quell the powerful spell
Shall o’er broad Scotland reign.”

He led him through an iron door
And up a winding stair,
And in wild amaze did the wanderer gaze
On the sight which open’d there.

Through the gloomy night flash’d ruddy light,—
A thousand torches glow ;
The cave rose high, like the vaulted sky,
O’er stalls in double row.

In every stall of that endless hall
 Stood a steed in barbing bright ;
At the foot of each steed, all arm'd save the head,
 Lay stretch'd a stalwart knight.

In each mail'd hand was a naked brand ;
 As they lay on the black bull's hide,
Each visage stern did upwards turn,
 With eyeballs fix'd and wide.

A launcegay strong, full twelve ells long,
 By every warrior hung ;
At each pommel there, for battle yare,
 A Jedwood axe was slung.

The casque hung near each cavalier ;
 The plumes waved mournfully
At every tread which the wanderer made
 Through the hall of gramarye.

The ruddy beam of the torches' gleam
 That glared the warriors on,
Reflected light from armour bright,
 In noontide splendour shone.

And onward seen in lustre sheen,
 Still lengthening on the sight,
Through the boundless hall stood steeds in stall,
 And by each lay a sable knight.

Still as the dead lay each horseman dread,
 And moved nor limb nor tongue ;
Each steed stood stiff as an earthfast cliff,
 Nor hoof nor bridle rung.

No sounds through all the spacious hall
 The deadly still divide,
Save where echoes aloof from the vaulted roof
 To the wanderer's step replied.

At length before his wondering eyes,
 On an iron column borne,
Of antique shape, and giant size,
 Appear'd a sword and horn.

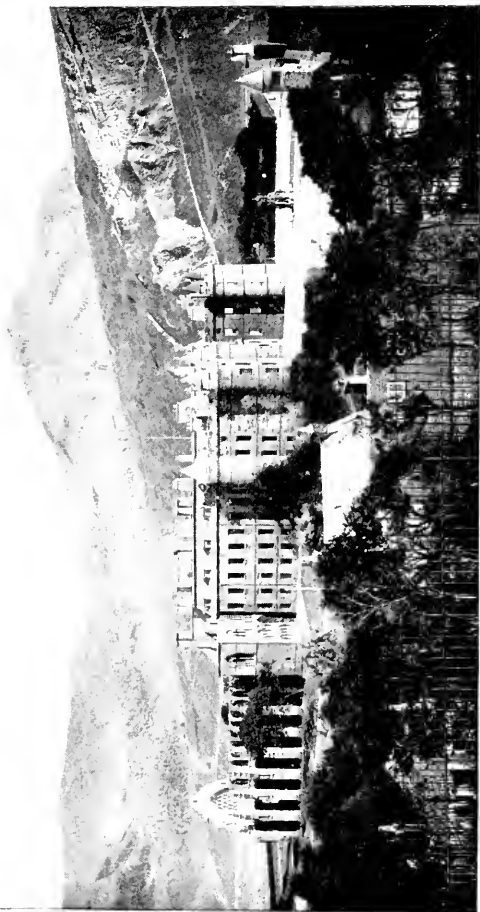


Photo: Valentine & Sons, Ltd.

Holyrood Palace.

“Now choose thee here,” quoth his leader,
“Thy venturous fortune try ;
Thy woe and weal, thy boot and bale,
In yon brand and bugle lie.”

To the fatal brand he mounted his hand,
But his soul did quiver and quail ;
The life-blood did start to his shuddering heart,
And left him wan and pale.

The brand he forsook, and the horn he took
To 'say a gentle sound ;
But so wild a blast from the bugle brast,
That the Cheviot rock'd around.

From Forth to Tees, from seas to seas,
The awful bugle rung ;
On Carlisle wall, and Berwick withal,
To arms the warders sprung.

With clank and clang the cavern rang,
The steeds did stamp and neigh ;
And loud was the yell as each warrior fell
Sterte up with hoop and cry.

“Woe, woe,” they cried, “thou caitiff coward,
That ever thou wert born !
Why drew ye not the knightly sword
Before ye blew the horn ?”

The morning on the mountain shone,
And on the bloody ground
Hurl'd from the cave with shiver'd bone,
The mangled wretch was found.

And still beneath the cavern dread,
Among the glidders gray,
A shapeless stone with lichens spread
Marks where the wanderer lay.

CHEVIOT.

A FRAGMENT.

[1799.]

• • • • • •

Go sit old Cheviot's crest below,
 And pensive mark the lingering snow
 In all his scaurs abide,
 And slow dissolving from the hill
 In many a sightless, soundless rill,
 Feed sparkling Bowmont's tide.

Fair shines the stream by bank and lea,
 As wimpling to the eastern sea
 She seeks Till's sullen bed,
 Indenting deep the fatal plain,
 Where Scotland's noblest, brave in vain,
 Around their monarch bled.

And westward hills on hills you see,
 Even as old Ocean's mightiest sea
 Heaves high her waves of foam,
 Dark and snow-ridged from Cutsfeld's wold
 To the proud foot of Cheviot roll'd,
 Earth's mountain billows come.

• • • • •

JOY TO THE VICTORS!

FROM "THE HOUSE OF ASPEN."

[ABOUT 1800.]

Joy to the victors ! the sons of old Aspen !
 Joy to the race of the battle and scar !
 Glory's proud garland triumphantly grasping ;
 Generous in peace, and victorious in war.
 Honour acquiring,
 Valour inspiring,
 Bursting, resistless, through foemen they go :

War-axes wielding,
 Broken ranks yielding,
 Till from the battle proud Roderic retiring,
 Yields in wild rout the fair palm to his foe.

Joy to each warrior, true follower of Aspen!
 Joy to the heroes that gain'd the bold day!
 Health to our wounded, in agony gasping;
 Peace to our brethren that fell in the fray!
 Boldly this morning,
 Roderic's power scorning,
 Well for their chieftain their blades did they wield:
 Joy blest them dying,
 As Maltingen flying,
 Low laid his banners, our conquest adorning,
 Their death-clouded eyeballs descried on the field!

Now to our home, the proud mansion of Aspen,
 Bend we, gay victors, triumphant away;
 There each fond damsel, her gallant youth clasping,
 Shall wipe from his forehead the stains of the fray.
 Listening the prancing
 Of horses advancing;
 E'en now on the turrets our maidens appear.
 Love our hearts warming,
 Songs the night charming,
 Round goes the grape in the goblet gay dancing;
 Love, wine, and song, our blithe evening shall cheer!

RHEIN-WEIN LIED.

FROM "THE HOUSE OF ASPEN."

[ABOUT 1800.]

WHAT makes the troopers' frozen courage muster?
 The grapes of juice divine.
 Upon the Rhine, upon the Rhine they cluster:
 Oh, blessed be the Rhine!

Let fringe and furs, and many a rabbit-skin, sirs,
 Bedeck your Saracen:
 He'll freeze without warms our hearts within, sirs,
 When the night-frost crusts the fen.

But on the Rhine, but on the Rhine they cluster,
 The grapes of juice divine
 That make our troopers' frozen courage muster :
 Oh, blessed be the Rhine !

THE REIVER'S WEDDING.

[1802.]

O WILL ye hear a mirthful bourd ?
 Or will ye hear of courtesie ?
 Or will hear how a gallant lord
 Was wedded to a gay ladye ?

“Ca' out the kye,” quo' the village herd,
 As he stood on the knowe,
 “Ca' this ane's nine and that ane's ten,
 And bauld Lord William's cow.”—

“Ah ! by my sooth,” quoth William then,
 “And stands it that way now,
 When knave and churl have nine and ten,
 That the Lord has but his cow ?

“I swear by the light of the Michaelmas moon,
 And the might of Mary high,
 And by the edge of my braidsword brown,
 They shall soon say Harden's kye.”

He took a bugle frae his side,
 With names carved o'er and o'er—
 Full many a chief of meikle pride
 That Border bugle bore—

He blew a note baith sharp and hie,
 Till rock and water rang around—
 Three score of moss-troopers and three
 Have mounted at that bugle sound.

The Michaelmas moon had enter'd then,
 And ere she wan the full,
 Ye might see by her light in Harden glen
 A bow o' kye and a bassen'd bull.

And loud and loud in Harden tower
 The quaigh gaed round wi' meikle glee ;
 For the English beef was brought in bower
 And the English ale flow'd merrilie.

And mony a guest from Teviotside
 And Yarrow's Braes was there ;
 Was never a lord in Scotland wide
 That made more dainty fare.

They ate, they laugh'd, they sang and quaff'd,
 Till nought on board was seen,
 When knight and squire were boune to dine,
 But a spur of silver sheen.

Lord William has ta'en his berry brown steed—
 A sore shent man was he ;
 " Wait ye, my guests, a little speed—
 Weel feasted ye shall be."

He rode him down by Falsehope burn,
 His cousin dear to see,
 With him to take a riding turn—
 Wat-draw-the-sword was he.

And when he came to Falsehope glen,
 Beneath the trysting-tree,
 On the smooth green was carved plain,
 " To Lochwood bound are we."

" O if they be gane to dark Lochwood
 To drive the Warden's gear,
 Betwixt our names, I ween, there's feud ;
 I'll go and have my share :

" For little reck I for Johnstone's feud,
 The Warden though he be."
 So Lord William is away to dark Lochwood,
 With riders barely three.

The Warden's daughters in Lochwood sate,
 Were all both fair and gay,
 All save the Lady Margaret,
 And she was wan and wae.

The sister, Jean, had a full fair skin,
 And Grace was bauld and braw ;
 But the leal-fast heart her breast within
 It weel was worth them a'.

Her father's pranked her sisters twa
 With meikle joy and pride ;
 But Margaret maun seek Dundrennan's wa'—
 She ne'er can be a bride.

On spear and casque by gallants gent
 Her sisters' scarfs were borne,
 But never at tilt or tournament
 Were Margaret's colours worn.

Her sisters rode to Thirlstane bower,
 But she was left at hame
 To wander round the gloomy tower,
 And sigh young Harden's name.

“ Of all the knights, the knight most fair,
 From Yarrow to the Tyne,”
 Soft sigh'd the maid, “ is Harden's heir,
 But ne'er can he be mine ;

“ Of all the maids, the foulest maid
 From Teviot to the Dee,
 Ah ! ” sighing sad, that lady said,
 “ Can ne'er young Harden's be.”—

She looked up the briery glen,
 And up the mossy brae,
 And she saw a score of her father's men
 Yclad in the Johnstone gray.

O fast and fast they downwards sped
 The moss and briers among,
 And in the midst the troopers led
 A shackled knight along.

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THE BARD'S INCANTATION

WRITTEN UNDER THE THREAT OF INVASION IN THE
AUTUMN OF 1804.

THE forest of Glenmore is drear,
It is all of black pine and the dark oak-tree;
And the midnight wind, to the mountain deer,
Is whistling the forest lullaby :
The moon looks through the drifting storm,
But the troubled lake reflects not her form,
For the waves roll whitening to the land,
And dash against the shelvy strand.
There is a voice among the trees,
That mingles with the groaning oak—
That mingles with the stormy breeze,
And the lake-waves dashing against the rock ;—
There is a voice within the wood,
The voice of the bard in fitful mood ;
His song was louder than the blast,
As the bard of Glenmore through the forest past.

“ Wake ye from your sleep of death,
Minstrels and bards of other days !
For the midnight wind is on the heath,
And the midnight meteors dimly blaze :
The Spectre with his Bloody Hand,
Is wandering through the wild woodland ;
The owl and the raven are mute for dread,
And the time is meet to awake the dead !

“ Souls of the mighty, wake and say,
To what high strain your harps were strung,
When Lochlin plow'd her billowy way,
And on your shores her Norsemen flung ?
Her Norsemen train'd to spoil and blood,
Skill'd to prepare the Raven's food,
All, by your harpings, doom'd to die
On bloody Largs and Loncarty.

“ Mute are ye all ? No murmurs strange
Upon the midnight breeze sail by ;
Nor through the pines, with whistling change
Mimic the harp's wild harmony !

Mute are ye now?—Ye ne'er were mute,
 When Murder with his bloody foot,
 And Rapine with his iron hand,
 Were hovering near yon mountain strand.

“O yet awake the strain to tell,
 By every deed in song enroll'd,
 By every chief who fought or fell,
 For Albion's weal in battle bold :—
 From Coilgach, first who roll'd his car
 Through the deep ranks of Roman war,
 To him, of veteran memory dear,
 Who victor died on Aboukir.

“By all their swords, by all their scars,
 By all their names, a mighty spell!
 By all their wounds, by all their wars,
 Arise, the mighty strain to tell!
 For fiercer than fierce Hengist's strain,
 More impious than the heathen Dane,
 More grasping than all-grasping Rome,
 Gaul's ravening legions hither come!”
 The wind is hush'd, and still the lake—
 Strange murmurs fill my tinkling ears,
 Bristles my hair, my sinews quake,
 At the dread voice of other years—
 “When targets clash'd, and bugles rung,
 And blades round warriors' heads were flung,
 The foremost of the band were we,
 And hymn'd the joys of Liberty!”

HELLVELLYN.

[1805.]

In the spring of 1805, a young gentleman of talents, and of a most amiable disposition, perished by losing his way on the mountain Helvellyn. His remains were not discovered till three months afterwards, when they were found guarded by a faithful terrier-bitch, his constant attendant during frequent solitary rambles through the wilds of Cumberland and Westmoreland.

I CLIMB'D the dark brow of the mighty Helvellyn,
 Lakes and mountains beneath me gleam'd misty and wide :

All was still, save by fits, when the eagle was yelling,
 And starting around me the echoes replied.
 On the right, Striden-edge round the Red-tarn was bending,
 And Catchedicam its left verge was defending,
 One huge nameless rock in the front was ascending,
 When I mark'd the sad spot where the wanderer had died.

Dark green was that spot 'mid the brown mountain-
 heather,

Where the Pilgrim of Nature lay stretch'd in decay,
 Like the corpse of an outcast abandon'd to weather,
 Till the mountain winds wasted the tenantless clay.
 Nor yet quite deserted, though lonely extended,
 For, faithful in death, his mute favourite attended,
 The much-loved remains of her master defended,
 And chased the hill-fox and the raven away.

How long didst thou think that his silence was slumber?
 When the wind waved his garment, how oft didst thou
 start?

How many long days and long weeks didst thou number,
 Ere he faded before thee, the friend of thy heart?
 And, oh, was it meet, that—no requiem read o'er him—
 No mother to weep, and no friend to deplore him,
 And thou, little guardian, alone stretch'd before him—
 Unhonour'd the Pilgrim from life should depart?

When a Prince to the fate of the Peasant has yielded,
 The tapestry waves dark round the dim-lighted hall;
 With scutcheons of silver the coffin is shielded,
 And pages stand mute by the canopied pall:
 Through the courts, at deep midnight, the torches are
 gleaming;
 In the proudly-arch'd chapel the banners are beaming,
 Far adown the long aisle sacred music is streaming,
 Lamenting a Chief of the people should fall.

But meeter for thee, gentle lover of nature,
 To lay down thy head like the meek mountain lamb,
 When, wilder'd, he drops from some cliff huge in stature
 And draws his last sob by the side of his dam.
 And more stately thy couch by this desert lake lying,
 Thy obsequies sung by the gray plover flying,
 With one faithful friend but to witness thy dying,
 In the arms of Hellvellyn and Catchedicam.

THE DYING BARD.

[1806.]

The Welsh tradition bears, that a Bard, on his death-bed, demanded his harp, and played the air to which these verses are adapted; requesting that it might be performed at his funeral.

I.

DINAS EMLINN, lament; for the moment is nigh,
When mute in the woodlands thine echoes shall die:
No more by sweet Teivi Cadwallon shall rave,
And mix his wild notes with the wild dashing wave.

II.

In spring and in autumn thy glories of shade
Unhonour'd shall flourish, unhonour'd shall fade;
For soon shall be lifeless the eye and the tongue,
That view'd them with rapture, with rapture that sung.

III.

Thy sons, Dinas Emlinn, may march in their pride,
And chase the proud Saxon from Prestatyn's side;
But where is the harp shall give life to their name?
And where is the bard shall give heroes their fame?

IV.

And oh, Dinas Emlinn! thy daughters so fair,
Who heave the white bosom, and wave the dark hair;
What tuneful enthusiast shall worship their eye,
When half of their charms with Cadwallon shall die?

V.

Then adieu, silver Teivi! I quit thy loved scene,
To join the dim choir of the bards who have been;
With Lewarch, and Meilor, and Merlin the Old,
And sage Taliessin, high harping to hold.

VI.

And adieu, Dinas Emlinn ! still green be thy shades,
 Unconquer'd thy warriors, and matchless thy maids !
 And thou, whose faint warblings my weakness can tell,
 Farewell, my loved Harp ! my last treasure, farewell !

THE NORMAN HORSE-SHOE.

[1806.]

The Welsh, inhabiting a mountainous country, and possessing only an inferior breed of horses, were usually unable to encounter the shock of the Anglo-Norman cavalry. Occasionally, however, they were successful in repelling the invaders; and the following verses are supposed to celebrate a defeat of CLARE, Earl of Striguil and Pembroke, and of NEVILLE, Baron of Chepstow, Lords-Marchers of Monmouthshire. Rymny is a stream which divides the counties of Monmouth and Glamorgan: Caerphili, the scene of the supposed battle, is a vale upon its banks, dignified by the ruins of a very ancient castle.

I.

RED glows the forge in Striguil's bounds,
 And hammers din, and anvil sounds,
 And armourers, with iron toil,
 Barb many a steed for battle's broil.
 Foul fall the hand which bends the steel
 Around the courser's thundering heel,
 That e'er shall dint a sable wound
 On fair Glamorgan's velvet ground !

II.

From Chepstow's towers, ere dawn of morn,
 Was heard afar the bugle-horn ;
 And forth, in banded pomp and pride,
 Stout Clare and fiery Neville ride.
 They swore, their banners broad should gleam,
 In crimson light, on Rymny's stream ;
 They vow'd, Caerphili's sod should feel
 The Norman charger's spurning heel.

III.

And sooth they swore—the sun arose,
 And Rymny's wave with crimson glows ;
 For Clare's red banner, floating wide,
 Roll'd down the stream to Severn's tide !
 And sooth they vow'd—the trampled green
 Show'd where hot Neville's charge had been :
 In every sable hoof-tramp stood
 A Norman horseman's curdling blood !

IV.

Old Chepstow's brides may curse the toil,
 That arm'd stout Clare for Cambrian broil ;
 Their orphans long the art may rue,
 For Neville's war-horse forged the shoe.
 No more the stamp of armed steed
 Shall dint Glamorgan's velvet mead ;
 Nor trace be there, in early spring,
 Save of the Fairies' emerald ring.

THE MAID OF TORO.

[1806.]

O, Low shone the sun on the fair lake of Toro,
 And weak were the whispers that waved the dark wood,
 All as a fair maiden, bewilder'd in sorrow,
 Sorely sigh'd to the breezes, and wept to the flood.
 "O saints ! from the mansions of bliss lowly bending ;
 Sweet Virgin ! who hearest the suppliant's cry,
 Now grant my petition, in anguish ascending,
 My Henry restore, or let Eleanor die !"

All distant and faint were the sounds of the battle,
 With the breezes they rise, with the breezes they fail,
 Till the shout, and the groan, and the conflict's dread
 rattle,
 And the chase's wild clamour, came loading the gale.
 Breathless she gazed on the woodlands so dreary ;
 Slowly approaching a warrior was seen ;
 Life's ebbing tide mark'd his footsteps so weary,
 Cleft was his helmet, and woe was his mien.

"O save thee, fair maid, for our armies are flying!
 O save thee, fair maid, for thy guardian is low!
 Deadly cold on yon heath thy brave Henry is lying,
 And fast through the woodland approaches the foe."
 Scarce could he falter the tidings of sorrow,
 And scarce could she hear them, benumb'd with despair:
 And when the sun sank on the sweet lake of Toro,
 For ever he set to the Brave and the Fair.

THE PALMER.

[1806.]

"O OPEN the door, some pity to show,
 Keen blows the northern wind!
 The glen is white with the drifted snow,
 And the path is hard to find.

"No outlaw seeks your castle gate,
 From chasing the King's deer,
 Though even an outlaw's wretched state
 Might claim compassion here.

"A weary Palmer, worn and weak,
 I wander for my sin;
 O open, for Our Lady's sake!
 A pilgrim's blessing win!

"I'll give you pardons from the Pope,
 And reliques from o'er the sea;
 Or if for these you will not ope,
 Yet open for charity.

"The hare is crouching in her form,
 The hart beside the hind;
 An aged man, amid the storm,
 No shelter can I find.

"You hear the Ettrick's sullen roar,
 Dark, deep, and strong is he,
 And I must ford the Ettrick o'er,
 Unless you pity me.

“The iron gate is bolted hard,
 At which I knock in vain ;
 The owner’s heart is closer barr’d,
 Who hears me thus complain.

“Farewell, farewell ! and Mary grant,
 When old and frail you be,
 You never may the shelter want,
 That’s now denied to me.”

The Ranger on his couch lay warm,
 And heard him plead in vain ;
 But oft amid December’s storm,
 He’ll hear that voice again :

For lo, when through the vapours dank,
 Morn shone on Ettrick fair,
 A corpse amid the alder’s rank,
 The Palmer welter’d there.

THE MAID OF NEIDPATH.

[1806.]

There is a tradition in Tweeddale, that, when Neidpath Castle, near Peebles, was inhabited by the Earls of March, a mutual passion subsisted between a daughter of that noble family, and a son of the Laird of Tushielaw, in Ettrick Forest. As the alliance was thought unsuitable by her parents, the young man went abroad. During his absence, the lady fell into a consumption ; and at length, as the only means of saving her life, her father consented that her lover should be recalled. On the day when he was expected to pass through Peebles, on the road to Tushielaw, the young lady, though much exhausted, caused herself to be carried to the balcony of a house in Peebles, belonging to the family, that she might see him as he rode past. Her anxiety and eagerness gave such force to her organs, that she is said to have distinguished his horse’s footsteps at an incredible distance. But Tushielaw, unprepared for the change in her appearance, and not expecting to see her in that place, rode on without recognising her, or even slackening his pace. The lady was unable to support the shock ; and, after a short struggle, died in the arms of her attendants. There is an incident similar to this traditional tale in Count Hamilton’s “Fleur d’Epine.”

O LOVERS' eyes are sharp to see,
 And lovers' ears in hearing ;
 And love, in life's extremity,
 Can lend an hour of cheering.
 Disease had been in Mary's bower,
 And slow decay from mourning,
 Though now she sits on Neidpath's tower,
 To watch her love's returning.

All sunk and dim her eyes so bright,
 Her form decay'd by pining,
 Till through her wasted hand, at night,
 You saw the taper shining ;
 By fits, a sultry hectic hue
 Across her cheek were flying ;
 By fits, so ashy pale she grew,
 Her maidens thought her dying.

Yet keenest powers to see and hear,
 Seem'd in her frame residing ;
 Before the watch-dog prick'd his ear,
 She heard her lover's riding ;
 Ere scarce a distant form was ken'd,
 She knew, and waded to greet him ;
 And o'er the battlement did bend,
 As on the wing to meet him.

He came—he pass'd—an heedless gaze,
 As o'er some stranger glancing ;
 Her welcome, spoke in faltering phrase,
 Lost in his courser's prancing—
 The castle arch, whose hollow tone
 Returns each whisper spoken,
 Could scarcely catch the feeble moan,
 Which told her heart was broken.

WANDERING WILLIE.

[1806.]

ALL joy was bereft me the day that you left me,
 And climb'd the tall vessel to sail yon wide sea :
 O weary betide it ! I wander'd beside it,
 And bann'd it for parting my Willie and me.

Far o'er the wave hast thou follow'd thy fortune,
 Oft fought the squadrons of France and of Spain ;
 Ae kiss of welcome's worth twenty at parting,
 Now I hae gotten my Willie again.

When the sky it was mirk, and the winds they were wailing,
 I sat on the beach wi' the tear in my ee,
 And thought o' the bark where my Willie was sailing,
 And wish'd that the tempest could a' blaw on me.

Now that thy gallant ship rides at her mooring,
 Now that my wanderer's in safety at hame,
 Music to me were the wildest winds' roaring,
 That e'er o'er Inch-Keith drove the dark ocean faem.

When the lights they did blaze, and the guns they did rattle,
 And blithe was each heart for the great victory,
 In secret I wept for the dangers of battle,
 And thy glory itself was scarce comfort to me.

But now shalt thou tell, while I eagerly listen,
 Of each bold adventure, and every brave scar ;
 And trust me, I'll smile, though my een they may glisten ;
 For sweet after danger's the tale of the war.

And oh, how we doubt when there's distance 'tween lovers,
 When there's naething to speak to the heart thro' the ce ;
 How often the kindest and warmest prove rovers,
 And the love of the faithfulest ebbs like the sea.

Till, at times—could I help it?—I pined and I ponder'd,
 If love could change notes like the bird on the tree—
 Now I'll ne'er ask if thine eyes may hae wander'd,
 Enough, thy leal heart has been constant to me.

Welcome, from sweeping o'er sea and through channel,
 Hardships and danger despising for fame,
 Furnishing story for glory's bright annal,
 Welcome, my wanderer, to Jeanie and hame !

Enough, now thy story in annals of glory
 Has humbled the pride of France, Holland, and Spain ;
 No more shalt thou grieve me, no more shalt thou leave me,
 I never will part with my Willie again.

HEALTH TO LORD MELVILLE.

[1806.]

“The impeachment of Lord Melville was among the first measures of the new (Whig) Government; and personal affection and gratitude graced as well as heightened the zeal with which Scott watched the issue of this, in his eyes, vindictive proceeding; but, though the ex-minister's ultimate acquittal was, as to all the charges involving his personal honour complete, it must now be allowed that the investigation brought out many circumstances by no means creditable to his discretion; and the rejoicings of his friends ought not, therefore, to have been scornfully jubilant. Such they were, however—at least in Edinburgh; and Scott took his share in them by inditing a song, which was sung by James Ballantyne, and received with clamorous applauses, at a public dinner given in honour of the event, on the 27th of June 1806.”—*Lockhart's Life*, vol. ii., p. 322.

SINCE here we are set in array round the table,
 Five hundred good fellows well met in a hall,
 Come listen, brave boys, and I'll sing as I'm able
 How innocence triumph'd and pride got a fall.
 But push round the claret—
 Come, stewards, don't spare it—
 With rapture you'll drink to the toast that I give:
 Here, boys,
 Off with it merrily—
 MELVILLE for ever, and long may he live!

What were the Whigs doing, when boldly pursuing,
 PITT banish'd Rebellion, gave Treason a string?
 Why, they swore on their honour, for ARTHUR O'CONNOR,
 And fought hard for DESPARD against country and king.
 Well, then, we knew, boys,
 PITT and MELVILLE were true boys,
 And the tempest was raised by the friends of Reform.
 Ah, woe!
 Weep to his memory;
 Low lies the pilot that weather'd the storm!

And pray, don't you mind when the Blues first were raising,
 And we scarcely could think the house safe o'er our heads?

When villains and coxcombs, French politics praising,
 Drove peace from our tables and sleep from our beds?
 Our hearts they grew bolder
 When, musket on shoulder,
 Stepp'd forth our old Statesmen example to give.
 Come, boys, never fear,
 Drink the Blue grenadier—
 Here's to old HARRY, and long may he live!

They would turn us adrift; though rely, sir, upon it—
 Our own faithful chronicles warrant us that
 The free mountaineer and his bonny blue bonnet
 Have oft gone as far as the regular's hat.
 We laugh at their taunting,
 For all we are wanting
 Is licence our life for our country to give.
 Off with it merrily,
 Horse, foot, and artillery,
 Each loyal Volunteer, long may he live!

'Tis not us alone, boys—the Army and Navy
 Have each got a slap 'mid their politic pranks;
 CORNWALLIS cashier'd, that watch'd winters to save ye,
 And the Cape call'd a bauble, unworthy of thanks.
 But vain is their taunt,
 No soldier shall want
 The thanks that his country to valour can give:
 Come, boys,
 Drink it off merrily,—
 SIR DAVID and POPHAM, and long may they live!

And then our revenue—Lord knows how they view'd it,
 While each petty statesman talk'd lofty and big;
 But the beer-tax was weak, as if Whitbread had brew'd it,
 And the pig-iron duty a shame to a pig.
 In vain is their vaunting,
 Too surely there's wanting
 What judgment, experience, and steadiness give:
 Come, boys,
 Drink about merrily,—
 Health to sage MELVILLE, and long may he live!

Our King, too—our Princess—I dare not say more,
 sir,—
 May Providence watch them with mercy and might!

While there's one Scottish hand that can wag a claymore, sir,
 They shall ne'er want a friend to stand up for their right.
 Be damn'd he that dare not,—
 For my part, I'll spare not
 To beauty afflicted a tribute to give :
 Fill it up steadily,
 Drink it off readily—
 Here's to the Princess, and long may she live !

And since we must not set Auld Reekie in glory,
 And make her brown visage as light as her heart ;
 Till each man illumine his own upper story,
 Nor law-book nor lawyer shall force us to part.
 In GRENVILLE and SPENCER,
 And some few good men, sir,
 High talents we honour, slight difference forgive ;
 But the Brewer we'll hoax,
 Tallyho to the Fox,
 And drink MELVILLE for ever, as long as we live !"—

HUNTING SONG.

[1808.]

WAKEN, lords and ladies gay,
 On the mountain dawns the day,
 All the jolly chase is here,
 With hawk, and horse, and hunting-spear !
 Hounds are in their couples yelling,
 Hawks are whistling, horns are knelling,
 Merrily, merily, mingle they,
 "Waken, lords and ladies gay."

Waken, lords and ladies gay,
 The mist has left the mountain gray,
 Springlets in the dawn are steaming,
 Diamonds on the brake are gleaming ;
 And foresters have busy been,
 To track the buck in thicket green ;
 Now we come to chant our lay,
 "Waken, lords and ladies gay."

Waken, lords and ladies gay,
 To the green-wood haste away ;
 We can show you where he lies,
 Fleet of foot, and tall of size ;
 We can show the marks he made,
 When 'gainst the oak his antlers fray'd ;
 You shall see him brought to bay,
 " Waken, lords and ladies gay."

Louder, louder chant the lay,
 Waken, lords and ladies gay !
 Tell them youth, and mirth, and glee,
 Run a course as well as we ;
 Time, stern huntsman ! who can baulk,
 Stanch as hound, and fleet as hawk ;
 Think of this, and rise with day,
 Gentle lords and ladies gay.

THE RESOLVE.

IN IMITATION OF AN OLD ENGLISH POEM.

[1808.]

My wayward fate I needs must plain,
 Though bootless be the theme ;
 I loved, and was beloved again,
 Yet all was but a dream :
 For, as her love was quickly got,
 So it was quickly gone ;
 No more I'll bask in flame so hot,
 But coldly dwell alone.

Not maid more bright than maid was e'er
 My fancy shall beguile,
 By flattering word, or feigned tear,
 By gesture, look, or smile :
 No more I'll call the shaft fair shot,
 Till it has fairly flown,
 Nor scorch me at a flame so hot ;—
 I'll rather freeze alone.

Each ambush'd Cupid I'll defy,
 In cheek, or chin, or brow,

And deem the glance of woman's eye
 As weak as woman's vow :
 I'll lightly hold the lady's heart,
 That is but lightly won ;
 I'll steel my breast to beauty's art,
 And learn to live alone.

The flaunting torch soon blazes out,
 The diamond's ray abides ;
 The flame its glory hurls about,
 The gem its lustre hides ;
 Such gem I fondly deem'd was mine,
 And glow'd a diamond stone,
 But, since each eye may see it shine,
 I'll darkling dwell alone.

No waking dream shall tinge my thought
 With dyes so bright and vain,
 No silken net, so slightly wrought,
 Shall tangle me again :
 No more I'll pay so dear for wit,
 I'll live upon mine own,
 Nor shall wild passion trouble it,—
 I'll rather dwell alone.

And thus I'll hush my heart to rest,—
 “ Thy loving labour's lost ;
 Thou shalt no more be wildly blest,
 To be so strangely crost ;
 The widow'd turtles mateless die,
 The phoenix is but one ;
 They seek no loves—no more will I—
 I'll rather dwell alone.”

EPITAPH,

DESIGNED FOR A MONUMENT IN LICHFIELD CATHEDRAL,
 THE BURIAL-PLACE OF THE FAMILY OF MISS SEWARD.

[1808.]

AMID these aisles, where once his precepts show'd
 The Heavenward pathway which in life he trod,
 This simple tablet marks a Father's bier,
 And those he loved in life, in death are near ;

For him, for them, a Daughter bade it rise,
 Memorial of domestic charities.
 Still wouldst thou know why o'er the marble spread,
 In female grace the willow droops her head ;
 Why on her branches, silent and unstrung,
 The minstrel harp is emblematic hung ;
 What poet's voice is smother'd here in dust
 Till waked to join the chorus of the just, —
 Lo ! one brief line an answer sad supplies,
 Honour'd, beloved, and mourn'd, here SEWARD lies.
 Her worth, her warmth of heart, let friendship say, —
 Go seek her genius in her living lay.

PROLOGUE,

TO MISS BAILLIE'S PLAY OF THE FAMILY LEGEND.

[1809.]

'Tis sweet to hear expiring Summer's sigh,
 Through forests tinged with russet, wail and die ;
 'Tis sweet and sad the latest notes to hear
 Of distant music, dying on the ear ;
 But far more sadly sweet, on foreign strand,
 We list the legends of our native land,
 Link'd as they come with every tender tie,
 Memorials dear of youth and infancy.

Chief, thy wild tales, romantic Caledon,
 Wake keen remembrance in each hardy son.
 Whether on India's burning coasts he toil,
 Or till Acadia's winter-fetter'd soil,
 He hears with throbbing heart and moisten'd eyes,
 And, as he hears, what dear illusions rise !
 It opens on his soul his native dell,
 The woods wild waving, and the water's swell ;
 Tradition's theme, the tower that threatens the plain,
 The mossy cairn that hides the hero slain ;
 The cot, beneath whose simple porch were told,
 By gray-hair'd patriarch, the tales of old,
 The infant group, that hush'd their sports the while,
 And the dear maid who listen'd with a smile.
 The wanderer, while the vision warms his brain,
 Is denizen of Scotland once again.

Are such keen feelings to the crowd confined,
 And sleep they in the Poet's gifted mind?
 Oh no! For She, within whose mighty page
 Each tyrant Passion shows his woe and rage,
 Has felt the wizard influence they inspire,
 And to your own traditions tuned her lyre.
 Yourselves shall judge—whoe'er has raised the sail
 By Mull's dark coast, has heard this evening's tale.
 The plaided boatman, resting on his oar,
 Points to the fatal rock amid the roar
 Of whitening waves, and tells whate'er to-night
 Our humble stage shall offer to your sight;
 Proudly preferr'd that first our efforts give
 Scenes glowing from her pen to breathe and live;
 More proudly yet, should Caledon approve
 The filial token of a Daughter's love.

THE POACHER.

WRITTEN IN IMITATION OF CRABBE.

[1809.]

WELCOME, grave Stranger, to our green retreats,
 Where health with exercise and freedom meets!
 Thrice welcome, Sage, whose philosophic plan
 By nature's limits metes the rights of man;
 Generous as he, who now for freedom bawls,
 Now gives full value for true Indian shawls:
 O'er court, o'er customhouse, his shoe who flings,
 Now bilks excisemen, and now bullies kings.
 Like his, I ween, thy comprehensive mind
 Holds laws as mouse-traps baited for mankind:
 Thine eye, applausive, each sly vermin sees,
 That baulks the snare, yet battens on the cheese;
 Thine ear has heard, with scorn instead of awe,
 Our bucksinn'd justices expound the law,
 Wire-draw the acts that fix for wires the pain,
 And for the netted partridge noose the swain;
 And thy vindictive arm would fain have broke
 The last light fetter of the feudal yoke,
 To give the denizens of wood and wild,
 Nature's free race, to each her free-born child.

Hence hast thou mark'd, with grief, fair London's race,
 Mock'd with the boon of one poor Easter chase,
 And long'd to send them forth as free as when
 Pour'd o'er Chantilly the Parisian train,
 When musket, pistol, blunderbuss, combined,
 And scarce the field-pieces were left behind !
 A squadron's charge each leveret's heart dismay'd
 On every covey fired a bold brigade ;
La Douce Humanité approved the sport,
 For great the alarm indeed, yet small the hurt ;
 Shouts patriotic solemnised the day,
 And Seine re-echo'd *Vive la Liberté !*
 But mad *Citoyen*, meek *Monsieur* again,
 With some few added links resumes his chain.
 Then, since such scenes to France no more are known,
 Come, view with me a hero of thine own !
 One, whose free actions vindicate the cause
 Of silvan liberty o'er feudal laws.

Seek we yon glades, where the proud oak o'ertops
 Wild-waving seas of birch and hazel copse,
 Leaving between deserted isles of land,
 Where stunted heath is patch'd with ruddy sand ;
 And lonely on the waste the yew is seen,
 Or straggling hollies spread a brighter green.
 Here, little worn, and winding dark and steep,
 Our scarce mark'd path descends yon dingle deep :
 Follow—but heedful, cautious of a trip,—
 In earthly mire philosophy may slip.
 Step slow and wary o'er that swampy stream,
 Till, guided by the charcoal's smothering steam.
 We reach the frail yet barricaded door
 Of hovel form'd for poorest of the poor ;
 No hearth the fire, no vent the smoke receives,
 The walls are wattles, and the covering leaves ;
 For, if such hut, our forest statutes say,
 Rise in the progress of one night and day,
 (Though placed where still the Conqueror's hosts o'erawe,
 And his son's stirrup shines the badge of law,)
 The builder claims the unenviable boon,
 To tenant dwelling, framed as slight and soon
 As wigwam wild, that shrouds the native frore
 On the bleak coast of frost-barr'd Labrador.

Approach, and through the unlatticed window peep—
 Nay, shrink not back, the inmate is asleep ;
 Sunk 'mid yon sordid blankets, till the sun
 Stoop to the west, the plunderer's toils are done.
 Loaded and primed, and prompt for desperate hand,
 Rifle and fowling-piece beside him stand ;
 While round the hut are in disorder laid
 The tools and booty of his lawless trade ;
 For force or fraud, resistance or escape,
 The crow, the saw, the bludgeon, and the crape.
 His pilfer'd powder in yon nook he hoards,
 And the filch'd lead the church's roof affords—
 (Hence shall the rector's congregation fret,
 That while his sermon's dry his walls are wet.)
 The fish spear-barb'd, the sweeping net are there,
 Doe-hides, and pheasant plumes, and skins of hare,
 Cordage for toils, and wiring for the snare.
 Barter'd for game from chase or warren won,
 Yon cask holds moonlight, run when moon was none ;
 And late-snatch'd spoils lie stow'd in hutch apart,
 To wait the associate higgler's evening cart.

Look on his pallet foul, and mark his rest :
 What scenes perturb'd are acting in his breast !
 His sable brow is wet and wrung with pain,
 And his dilated nostril toils in vain ;
 For short and scant the breath each effort draws,
 And 'twixt each effort Nature claims a pause.
 Beyond the loose and sable neckcloth stretch'd,
 His sinewy throat seems by convulsion twitch'd,
 While the tongue falters, as to utterance loth,
 Sounds of dire import—watchword, threat, and oath.
 Though, stupified by toil, and drugg'd with gin,
 The body sleep, the restless guest within
 Now plies on wood and wold his lawless trade,
 Now in the fangs of justice wakes dismay'd.—

“Was that wild start of terror and despair,
 Those bursting eyeballs, and that wilder'd air,
 Signs of compunction for a murder'd hare ?
 Do the locks bristle and the eyebrows arch,
 For grouse or partridge massacred in March ?”—

No, scoffer, no ! Attend, and mark with awe,
 There is no wicket in the gate of law !
 He, that would e'er so lightly set ajar
 That awful portal, must undo each bar :
 Tempting occasion, habit, passion, pride,
 Will join to storm the breach, and force the barrier wide.

That ruffian, whom true men avoid and dread,
 Whom bruisers, poachers, smugglers, call Black Ned,
 Was Edward Mansell once ;—the lightest heart,
 That ever play'd on holiday his part !
 The leader he in every Christmas game,
 The harvest-feast grew blither when he came,
 And liveliest on the chords the bow did glance,
 When Edward named the tune and led the dance.
 Kind was his heart, his passions quick and strong,
 Hearty his laugh, and jovial was his song ;
 And if he loved a gun, his father swore,
 " 'Twas but a trick of youth would soon be o'er,
 Himself had done the same some thirty years before."

But he whose humours spurn law's awful yoke,
 Must herd with those by whom law's bonds are broke,
 The common dread of justice soon allies
 The clown, who robs the warren, or excise,
 With sterner felons train'd to act more dread,
 Even with the wretch by whom his fellow bled.
 Then, as in plagues the foul contagions pass,
 Leavening and festering the corrupted mass,—
 Guilt leagues with guilt, while mutual motives draw,
 Their hope impunity, their fear the law ;
 Their foes, their friends, their rendezvous the same,
 Till the revenue baulk'd, or pilfer'd game,
 Flesh the young culprit, and example leads
 To darker villany, and direr deeds.

Wild howl'd the wind the forest glades along,
 And oft the owl renew'd her dismal song ;
 Around the spot where erst he felt the wound,
 Red William's spectre walk'd his midnight round.
 When o'er the swamp he cast his blighting look,
 From the green marshes of the stagnant brook
 The bittern's sullen shout the sedges shook !

The waning moon, with storm-presaging gleam,
 Now gave and now withheld her doubtful beam ;
 The old Oak stoop'd his arms, then flung them high,
 Bellowing and groaning to the troubled sky—
 'Twas then, that, couch'd amid the brushwood sere,
 In Malwood-walk young Mansell watch'd the deer :
 The fattest buck received his deadly shot—
 The watchful keeper heard, and sought the spot.
 Stout were their hearts, and stubborn was their strife
 O'erpower'd at length the Outlaw drew his knife.
 Next morn a corpse was found upon the fell—
 The rest his waking agony may tell !

OH, SAY NOT, MY LOVE.

[1812.]

OH, say not, my love, with that mortified air,
 That your spring-time of pleasure is flown,
 Nor bid me to maids that are younger repair,
 For those raptures that still are thine own.

Though April his temples may wreathe with the vine,
 Its tendrils in infancy curl'd,
 'Tis the ardour of August matures us the wine,
 Whose life-blood enlivens the world.

Though thy form, that was fashion'd as light as a fay's,
 Has assumed a proportion more round,
 And thy glance, that was bright as a falcon's at gaze
 Looks soberly now on the ground,—

Enough, after absence to meet me again,
 Thy steps still with ecstasy move ;
 Enough, that those dear sober glances retain
 For me the kind language of love.

THE BOLD DRAGOON ;

OR,

THE PLAIN OF BADAJOS.

[1812.]

'Twas a Maréchal of France, and he fain would honour gain,
And he long'd to take a passing glance at Portugal from
Spain ;

With his flying guns this gallant gay,
And boasted corps d'armée—

O he fear'd not our dragoons, with their long swords, boldly
riding,

Whack, fal de ral, etc.

To Campo Mayor come, he had quietly sat down,
Just a fricassee to pick, while his soldiers sack'd the town,

When, 'twas peste ! morbleu ! mon General,
Hear the English bugle-call !

And behold the light dragoons, with their long swords,
boldly riding,

Whack, fal de ral, etc.

Right about went horse and foot, artillery and all,
And, as the devil leaves a house, they tumbled through the
wall ;

They took no time to seek the door,
But, best foot set before—

O they ran from our dragoons, with their long swords, boldly
riding,

Whack, fal de ral, etc.

Those valiant men of France they had scarcely fled a mile,
When on their flank there sous'd at once the British rank
and file ;

For Long, De Grey, and Otway, then
Ne'er minded one to ten,

But came on like light dragoons, with their long swords,
boldly riding,

Whack, fal de ral, etc.

Three hundred British lads they made three thousand reel,
 Their hearts were made of English oak, their swords of
 Sheffield steel,
 Their horses were in Yorkshire bred,
 And Beresford them led ;
 So huzza for brave dragoons, with their long swords, boldly
 riding,
 Whack, fal de ral, etc.

Then here's a health to Wellington, to Beresford, to Long,
 And a single word of Bonaparte before I close my song :
 The eagles that to fight he brings
 Should serve his men with wings,
 When they meet the bold dragoons, with their long swords,
 boldly riding,
 Whack, fal de ral, etc.

ON THE MASSACRE OF GLENCOE.

[1814.]

“ O TELL me, Harper, wherefore flow
 Thy wayward notes of wail and woe,
 Far down the desert of Glencoe,
 Where none may list their melody ?
 Say, harp'st thou to the mists that fly,
 Or to the dun-deer glancing by,
 Or to the eagle, that from high
 Screams chorus to thy minstrelsy ? ”—

“ No, not to these, for they have rest,—
 The mist-wreath has the mountain-crest,
 The stag his lair, the erne her nest,
 Abode of lone security.
 But those for whom I pour the lay,
 Not wild-wood deep, nor mountain gray,
 Not this deep dell, that shrouds from day,
 Could screen from treach'rous cruelty.

“ Their flag was furl'd, and mute their drum,
 The very household dogs were dumb,
 Unwont to bay at guests that come
 In guise of hospitality.
 His blithest notes the piper plied,
 Her gayest snood the maiden tied,

The dame her distaff flung aside,
To tend her kindly housewifery.

“The hand that mingled in the meal,
At midnight drew the felon steel,
And gave the host’s kind breast to feel
Meed for his hospitality !
The friendly hearth which warm’d that hand,
At midnight arm’d it with the brand,
That bade destruction’s flames expand
Their red and fearful blazonry.

“Then woman’s shriek was heard in vain,
Nor infancy’s unpitied plain,
More than the warrior’s groan, could gain
Respite from ruthless butchery !
The winter wind that whistled shrill,
The snows that night that cloked the hill,
Though wild and pitiless, had still
Far more than Southern clemency.

“Long have my harp’s best notes been gone.
Few are its strings, and faint their tone,
They can but sound in desert lone
Their gray-hair’d master’s misery.
Were each gray hair a minstrel string,
Each chord should imprecations fling,
Till startled Scotland loud should ring,
‘Revenge for blood and treachery !’”

FOR A’ THAT AN’ A’ THAT.

A NEW SONG TO AN OLD TUNE.

[1814.]

THOUGH right be aft put down by strength,
As mony a day we saw that,
The true and leifu’ cause at length
Shall bear the grie for a’ that,
For a’ that an’ a’ that,
Guns, guillotines, and a’ that,
The Fleur-de-lis, that lost her right,
Is queen again for a’ that !

We'll twine her in a friendly knot
 With England's Rose, and a' that ;
 The Shamrock shall not be forgot,
 For Wellington made braw that.
 The Thistle, though her leaf be rude,
 Yet faith we'll no misca' that,
 She shelter'd in her solitude
 The Fleur-de-lis, for a' that.

The Austrian Vine, the Prussian Pine
 (For Blucher's sake, hurra that,)
 The Spanish Olive, too, shall join,
 And bloom in peace for a' that.
 Stout Russia's Hemp, so surely twined
 Around our wreath we'll draw that,
 And he that would the cord unbind,
 Shall have it for his gra-vat !

Or, if to choke sae pair a sot,
 Your pity scorn to thraw that,
 The Devil's elbow be his lot,
 Where he may sit and claw that.
 In spite of slight, in spite of might,
 In spite of brags, an' a' that,
 The lads that battled for the right,
 Have won the day, an' a' that !

There's ae bit spot I had forgot,
 America they ca' that !
 A coward plot her rats had got
 Their father's flag to gnaw that :
 Now see it fly top-gallant high,
 Atlantic winds shall blaw that,
 And Yankee loon, beware your croun,
 There's kames in hand to claw that !

For on the land, or on the sea,
 Where'er the breezes blaw that,
 The British Flag shall bear the grie,
 And win the day for a' that !

SONG,

FOR THE ANNIVERSARY MEETING OF THE PITT CLUB
OF SCOTLAND.

[1814.]

O, DREAD was the time, and more dreadful the omen,
When the brave on Marengo lay slaughter'd in vain,
And beholding broad Europe bow'd down by her foemen,
PITT closed in his anguish the map of her reign !
Not the fate of broad Europe could bend his brave spirit
To take for his country the safety of shame ;
O, then in her triumph remember his merit,
And hallow the goblet that flows to his name.

Round the husbandman's head, while he traces the furrow,
The mists of the winter may mingle with rain,
He may plough it with labour, and sow it in sorrow,
And sigh while he fears he has sow'd it in vain ;
He may die ere his children shall reap in their gladness,
But the blithe harvest-home shall remember his claim ;
And their jubilee-shout shall be soften'd with sadness,
While they hallow the goblet that flows to his name.

Though anxious and timeless his life was expended,
In toils for our country preserved by his care,
Though he died ere one ray o'er the nations ascended,
To light the long darkness of doubt and despair ;
The storms he endured in our Britain's December,
The perils his wisdom foresaw and o'ercame,
In her glory's rich harvest shall Britain remember,
And hallow the goblet that flows to his name.

Nor forget His gray head, who, all dark in affliction,
Is deaf to the tale of our victories won,
And to sounds the most dear to paternal affection,
The shout of his people applauding his SON ;
By his firmness unmoved in success and disaster,
By his long reign of virtue, remember his claim !
With our tribute to PITT join the praise of his Master,
Though a tear stain the goblet that flows to his name.

Yet again fill the wine-cup, and change the sad measure,
 The rites of our grief and our gratitude paid,
 To our Prince, to our Heroes, devote the bright treasure,
 The wisdom that plann'd, and the zeal that obey'd
 Fill WELLINGTON'S cup till it beam like his glory,
 Forget not our own brave DALHOUSIE and GRÆME ;
 A thousand years hence hearts shall bound at their story,
 And hallow the goblet that flows to their fame.

PHAROS LOQUITUR.

[1814.]

FAR in the bosom of the deep,
 O'er these wild shelves my watch I keep ;
 A ruddy gem of changeful light,
 Bound on the dusky brow of night,
 The seaman bids my lustre hail,
 And scorns to strike his timorous sail.

LINES,

ADDRESSED TO RANALD MACDONALD, ESQ., OF STAFFA.

[1814.]

STAFFA, sprung from high Macdonald,
 Worthy branch of old Clan-Ranald !
 Staffa ! king of all kind fellows !
 Well befall thy hills and valleys,
 Lakes and inlets, deeps and shadows—
 Cliffs of darkness, caves of wonder,
 Echoing the Atlantic thunder ;
 Mountains which the gray mist covers,
 Where the Chieftain spirit hovers,
 Pausing while his pinions quiver,
 Stretch'd to quit our land for ever !
 Each kind influence reign above thee !
 Warmer heart, 'twixt this and Staffa
 Beats not, than in heart of Staffa !

LETTER IN VERSE.

TO HIS GRACE THE DUKE OF BUCCLEUCH.

ETC. ETC. ETC.

Lighthouse Yacht in the Sound of Lerwick,
Zetland, 8th August 1814.

HEALTH to the chieftain from his clansman true !
 From her true minstrel, health to fair Buccleuch !
 Health from the isles, where dewy Morning weaves
 Her chaplet with the tints that Twilight leaves ;
 Where late the sun scarce vanish'd from the sight,
 And his bright pathway graced the short-lived night,
 Though darker now as autumn's shades extend,
 The north winds whistle and the mists ascend !
 Health from the land where eddying whirlwinds
 The storm-rock'd *cradle* of the Cape of Noss ;
 On outstretch'd cords the giddy engine slides,
 His own strong arm the bold adventurer guides,
 And he that lists such desperate feat to try,
 May, like the sea-mew, skim 'twixt surf and sky,
 And feel the mid-air gales around him blow,
 And see the billows rage five hundred feet below.

Here, by each stormy peak and desert shore,
 The hardy islesman tugs the daring oar,
 Practised alike his venturous course to keep,
 Through the white breakers or the pathless deep,
 By ceaseless peril and by toil to gain
 A wretched pittance from the niggard main.
 And when the worn-out drudge old ocean leaves,
 What comfort greets him, and what hut receives ?
 Lady ! the worst your presence ere has cheer'd
 (When want and sorrow fled as you appear'd)
 Were to a Zetlander as the high dome
 Of proud Drumlanrig to my humble home.
 Here rise no groves, and here no gardens blow,
 Here even the hardy heath scarce dares to grow ;
 But rocks on rocks, in mist and storm array'd,
 Stretch far to sea their giant colonnade,
 With many a cavern seam'd, the dreary haunt
 Of the dun seal and swarthy cormorant.

Wild round their rifted brows, with frequent cry
 As of lament, the gulls and gannets fly,
 And from their sable base, with sullen sound,
 In sheets of whitening foam the waves rebound.

Yet even these coasts a touch of envy gain
 From those whose land has known oppression's chain ;
 For here the industrious Dutchman comes once more
 To moor his fishing craft by Bressay's shore ;
 Greets every former mate and brother tar,
 marvels how Lerwick 'scaped the rage of war,
 Tells many a tale of Gallic outrage done,
 And ends by blessing God and Wellington.
 Here too the Greenland tar, a fiercer guest,
 Claims a brief hour of riot, not of rest ;
 Proves each wild frolic that in wine has birth,
 And wakes the land with brawls and boisterous mirth.
 A sadder sight on yon poor vessel's prow
 The captive Norseman sits in silent woe,
 And eyes the flags of Britain as they flow.
 Hard fate of war, which lade her terrors sway
 His destined course, and seize so mean a prey ;
 A bark with planks so warp'd and seams so riven,
 She scarce might face the gentlest airs of heaven :
 Pensive he sits, and questions oft if none
 Can list his speech, and understand his moan ;
 In vain—no Islesman now can use the tongue
 Of the bold Norse, from whom their lineage sprung.
 Not thus of old the Norsemen hither came,
 Won by the love of danger or of fame ;
 On every storm-beat cape a shapeless tower
 Tells of their wars, their conquests, and their power ;
 For ne'er for Grecia's vales, nor Latin land,
 Was fiercer strife than for this barren strand ;
 A race severe—the isle and ocean lords,
 Loved for its own delight the strife of swords ;
 With scornful laugh the mortal pang defied,
 And blest their gods that they in battle died.

Such were the sires of Zetland's simple race,
 And still the eye may faint resemblance trace
 In the blue eye, tall form, proportion fair,
 The limbs athletic, and the long light hair—

(Such was the mien, as Scald and Minstrel sings,
Of fair-hair'd Harold, first of Norway's Kings ;)
But their high deeds to scale these crags confined,
Their only warfare is with waves and wind.

Why should I talk of Mousa's castled coast ?
Why of the horrors of the Sumburgh Rost ?
May not these bald disjointed lines suffice,
Penn'd while my comrades whirl the rattling dice—
While down the cabin skylight lessening shine
The rays, and eve is chased with mirth and wine ?
Imagined, while down Mousa's desert bay
Our well-trimm'd vessel urged her nimble way,
While to the freshening breeze she lean'd her side,
And bade her bowsprit kiss the foamy tide ?

Such are the lays that Zetland Isles supply ;
Drench'd with the drizzly spray and dropping sky,
Weary and wet, a sea-sick minstrel I.—W. SCOTT.

POSTSCRIPTUM.

Kirkwall, Orkney. *Aug. 14, 1814.*

IN respect that your Grace has commission'd a Kraken,
You will please be inform'd that they seldom are taken ;
It is January two years, the Zetland folks say,
Since they saw the last Kraken in Scalloway bay ;
He lay in the offing a fortnight or more,
But the devil a Zetlander put from the shore,
Though bold in the seas of the North to assail
The morse and the sea-horse, the grampus and whale.
If your Grace thinks I'm writing the thing that is not,
You may ask at a namesake of ours, Mr. Scott—
(He's not from our clan, though his merits deserve it,
But springs, I'm inform'd, from the Scotts of Scotstarvet ;)¹
He question'd the folks who beheld it with eyes,
But they differ'd confoundedly as to its size.
For instance, the modest and diffident swore
That it seem'd like the keel of a ship, and no more—
Those of eyesight more clear, or of fancy more high,
Said it rose like an island 'twixt ocean and sky—

¹ The Scotts of Scotstarvet, and other families of the name in Fife and elsewhere, claim no kindred with the great clan of the Border,—and their armorial bearings are different.

But all of the hulk had a steady opinion
 That 'twas sure a *live* subject of Neptune's dominion—
 And I think, my Lord Duke, your Grace hardly would wish,
 To cumber your house, such a kettle of fish.
 Had your order related to night-caps or hose,
 Or mittens of worsted, there's plenty of those.
 Or would you be pleased but to fancy a whale?
 And direct me to send it—by sea or by mail?
 The season, I'm told, is nigh over, but still
 I could get you one fit for the lake at Bowhill.
 Indeed, as to whales, there's no need to be thrifty,
 Since one day last fortnight two hundred and fifty,
 Pursued by seven Orkneymen's boats and no more,
 Betwixt Truffness and Luffness were drawn on the shore!
 You'll ask if I saw this same wonderful sight;
 I own that I did not, but easily might—
 For this mighty shoal of leviathans lay
 On our lee-beam a mile, in the loop of the bay,
 And the islesmen of Sanda were all at the spoil,
 And *flinching* (so term it) the blubber to boil;
 (Ye spirits of lavender, drown the reflection
 That awakes at the thoughts of this odorous dissection,
 To see this huge marvel full fain would we go,
 But Wilson, the wind, and the current, said no.
 We have now got to Kirkwall, and needs I must stare
 When I think that in verse I have once call'd it *fair*;
 'Tis a base little borough, both dirty and mean—
 There is nothing to hear, and there's nought to be seen,
 Save a church, where, of old times, a prelate harangued,
 And a palace that's built by an earl that was hang'd.
 But, farewell to Kirkwall—aboard we are going,
 The anchor's a-peak, and the breezes are blowing;
 Our commodore calls all his band to their places,
 And 'tis time to release you—good night to your Graces!

THE AUTHOR OF WAVERLEY.

"No, John, I will not own the book—
 I won't, you Piccaroon.
 When next I try St. Grubby's brook,
 The A. of Wa—shall bait the hook—
 And flat-fish bite as soon,
 As if before them they had got
 The worn-out wriggler

WALTER SCOTT." 6

FAREWELL TO MACKENZIE,
HIGH CHIEF OF KINTAIL.

FROM THE GAELIC.

[1815.]

The original verses are arranged to a beautiful Gaelic air, of which the chorus is adapted to the double pull upon the oars of a galley, and which is therefore distinct from the ordinary jorrams, or boat-songs. They were composed by the Family Bard upon the departure of the Earl of Seaforth, who was obliged to take refuge in Spain, after an unsuccessful effort at insurrection in favour of the Stuart family, in the year 1718.

FAREWELL to Mackenneth, great Earl of the North,
The Lord of Lochcarron, Glenshiel, and Seaforth ;
To the Chieftain this morning his course who began,
Launching forth on the billows his bark like a swan.
For a far foreign land he has hoisted his sail,
Farewell to Mackenzie, High Chief of Kintail !

O swift be the galley, and hardy her crew,
May her captain be skillful, her mariners true,
In danger undaunted, unwearied by toil,
Though the whirlwind should rise, and the ocean should
 boil ;
On the brave vessel's gunnel I drank his bonail,
And farewell to Mackenzie, High Chief of Kintail !

Awake in thy chamber, thou sweet southland gale !
Like the sighs of his people, breathe soft on his sail ;
Be prolong'd as regret, that his vassals must know,
Be fair as their faith, and sincere as their woe :
Be so soft, and so fair, and so faithful, sweet gale,
Wafting onward Mackenzie, High Chief of Kintail

Be his pilot experienced, and trusty, and wise,
To measure the seas and to study the skies :
May he hoist all his canvass from streamer to deck,
But O ! crowd it higher when wafting him back—
Till the cliffs of Skooroora, and Conan's glad vale,
Shall welcome Mackenzie, High Chief of Kintail !

So sung the old Bard, in the grief of his heart,
When he saw his loved Lord from his people depart.
Now mute on thy mountains, O Albyn, are heard
Nor the voice of the song, nor the harp of the bard ;
Or its strings are but waked by the stern winter gale,
As they mourn for Mackenzie, last Chief of Kintail.

From the far Southland Border a Minstrel came forth,
And he waited the hour that some Bard of the north
His hand on the harp of the ancient should cast,
And bid its wild numbers mix high with the blast ;
But no bard was there left in the land of the Gael,
To lament for Mackenzie, last Chief of Kintail.

And shalt thou then sleep, did the Minstrel exclaim,
Like the son of the lowly, unnoticed by fame ?
No, son of Fitzgerald ! in accents of woe,
The song thou hast loved o'er thy coffin shall flow,
And teach thy wild mountains to join in the wail
That laments for Mackenzie, last Chief of Kintail.

In vain, the bright course of thy talents to wrong,
Fate deaden'd thine ear and imprison'd thy tongue ;
For brighter o'er all her obstructions arose
The glow of the genius they could not oppose ;
And who in the land of the Saxon or Gael,
Might match with Mackenzie, High Chief of Kintail ?

Thy sons rose around thee in light and in love,
All a father could hope, all a friend could approve ;
What 'vails it the tale of thy sorrows to tell,—
In the spring-time of youth and of promise they fell !
Of the line of Fitzgerald remains not a male,
To bear the proud name of the Chief of Kintail.

And thou, gentle Dame, who must bear, to thy grief,
For thy clan and thy country the cares of a Chief,
Whom brief rolling moons in six changes have left,
Of thy husband, and father, and brethren bereft,
To thine ear of affection, how sad is the hail,
That salutes thee the Heir of the line of Kintail !

WAR-SONG OF LACHLAN,
HIGH CHIEF OF MACLEAN.

FROM THE GAELIC.

[1815.]

A WEARY month has wander'd o'er
Since last we parted on the shore ;
Heaven ! that I saw thee, Love, once more,
Safe on that shore again !—
'Twas valiant Lachlan gave the word :
Lachlan, of many a galley lord ;
He call'd his kindred bands on board,
And launch'd them on the main.

Clan-Gillian is to ocean gone
Clan-Gillian, fierce in foray known ;
Rejoicing in the glory won
In many a bloody broil :
For wide is heard the thundering fray,
The rout, the ruin, the dismay,
When from the twilight glens away
Clan-Gillian drives the spoil.

Woe to the hills that shall rebound
Our banner'd bag-pipes' maddening sound ;
Clan-Gillian's onset echoing round,
Shall shake their inmost cell.
Woe to the bark whose crew shall gaze,
Where Lachlan's silken streamer plays !
The fools might face the lightning's blaze
As wisely and as well !

AUCHINDRANE ;

OR,

THE AYRSHIRE TRAGEDY.

Cur aliquid vidi? cur noxia lumina feci
 Cur imprudenti cognita culpa mihi est?
 OVIDII *Tristium, Liber Secundus.*

PREFACE.

THERE is not, perhaps, upon record, a tale of horror which gives us a more perfect picture than is afforded by the present, of the violence of our ancestors, or the complicated crimes into which they were hurried, by what their wise, but ill-enforced, laws termed the heathenish and accursed practice of Deadly Feud. The author has tried to extract some dramatic scenes out of it; but he is conscious no exertions of his can increase the horror of that which is in itself so iniquitous. Yet, if we look at modern events, we must not too hastily venture to conclude that our own times have so much the superiority over former days as we might at first be tempted to infer. One great object has indeed been obtained. The power of the laws extends over the country universally, and if criminals at present sometimes escape punishment, this can only be by eluding justice,—not, as of old, by defying it.

But the motives which influence modern ruffians to commit actions at which we pause with wonder and horror, arise, in a great measure, from the thirst of gain. For the hope of lucre, we have seen a wretch seduced to his fate, under the pretext that he was to share in amusement and conviviality; and, for gold, we have seen the meanest of wretches deprived of life, and their miserable remains cheated of the grave.

The loftier, if equally cruel, feelings of pride, ambition, and love of vengeance, were the idols of our forefathers, while the caitiffs of our day bend to Mammon, the meanest of the spirits who fell. The criminals, therefore, of former times, drew their hellish inspiration from a loftier source than is known to modern villains. The fever of unsated ambition, the frenzy of ungratified revenge, the *perfervidum ingenium Scotorum*, stigmatised by our jurists and our legislators, held life but as passing breath; and such enormities as now sound like the acts of a madman, were then the familiar deeds of every offended noble. With these observations we proceed to our story.

John Muir, or Mure, of Auchindrane, the contriver and executor of the following cruelties, was a gentleman of an ancient family and good estate in the west of Scotland; bold, ambitious, treacherous to the last degree, and utterly unconscientious,—a Richard the Third in private life, inaccessible alike to pity and to remorse. His view was to raise the power, and extend the grandeur, of his own family. This gentleman had married the daughter of Sir Thomas Kennedy of Barganie, who was, excepting the Earl of Cassilis, the most important person in all Carrick, the district of Ayrshire which he inhabited, and where the name of Kennedy held so great a sway as to give rise to the popular rhyme,—

'Twixt Wigton and the town of Air,
 Portpatrick and the Cruives of Cree,
 No man need thiak for to bide there,
 Unless he court Saint Kennedie.

Now, Mure of Auchindrane, who had promised himself high advancement by means of his father-in-law Barganie, saw, with envy and resentment, that his influence remained second and inferior to the House of Cassilis, chief of all the Kennedys. The Earl was indeed a minor, but his authority was maintained, and his affairs well managed, by his uncle, Sir Thomas Kennedy of Cullayne, the brother of the deceased Earl, and tutor and guardian to the present. This worthy gentleman supported his nephew's dignity and the credit of the house so effectually, that Barganie's consequence was much thrown into the shade, and the ambitious Auchindrane, his son-in-law, saw no better remedy than to remove so formidable a rival as Cullayne by violent means.

For this purpose, in the year of God 1597, he came with a party of followers to the town of Maybole (where Sir Thomas Kennedy of Cullayne then resided), and lay in ambush in an orchard, through which he knew his destined victim was to pass, in returning homewards from a house where he was engaged to sup. Sir Thomas Kennedy came alone and unattended, when he was suddenly fired upon by Auchindrane and his accomplices, who, having missed their aim, drew their swords, and rushed upon him to slay him. But the party thus assailed at disadvantage had the good fortune to hide himself for that time in a ruinous house, where he lay concealed till the inhabitants of the place came to his assistance.

Sir Thomas Kennedy prosecuted Mure for this assault, who, finding himself in danger from the law, made a sort of apology and agreement with the Lord of Cullayne, to whose daughter he united his eldest son, in testimony of the closest friendship in future. This agreement was sincere on the part of Kennedy

who, after it had been entered into, showed himself Auchindrane's friend and assistant on all occasions. But it was most false and treacherous on that of Mure, who continued to nourish the purpose of murdering his new friend and ally on the first opportunity.

Auchindrane's first attempt to effect this was by means of the young Gilbert Kennedy of Barganie (for old Barganie, Auchindrane's father-in-law, was dead), whom he persuaded to brave the Earl of Cassilis, as one who usurped an undue influence over the rest of the name. Accordingly, this hot-headed youth, at the instigation of Auchindrane, rode past the gate of the Earl of Cassilis, without waiting on his chief, or sending him any message of civility. This led to mutual defiance, being regarded by the Earl, according to the ideas of the time, as a personal insult. Both parties took the field with their followers, at the head of about 250 men on each side. The action which ensued was shorter and less bloody than might have been expected. Young Barganie, with the rashness of headlong courage, and Auchindrane, fired by deadly enmity to the House of Cassilis, made a precipitate attack on the Earl, whose men were strongly posted and under cover. They were received by a heavy fire. Barganie was slain. Mure of Auchindrane, severely wounded in the thigh, became unable to sit his horse, and, the leaders thus slain or disabled, their party drew off without continuing the action. It must be particularly observed, that Sir Thomas Kennedy remained neuter in this quarrel, considering his connection with Auchindrane as too intimate to be broken even by his desire to assist his nephew.

For this temperate and honourable conduct he met a vile reward; for Auchindrane, in resentment of the loss of his relative Barganie, and the downfall of his ambitious hopes, continued his practices against the life of Sir Thomas of Cullayne, though totally innocent of contributing to either. Chance favoured his wicked purpose.

The Knight of Cullayne, finding himself obliged to go to Edinburgh on a particular day, sent a message by a servant to Mure, in which he told him, in the most unsuspecting confidence, the purpose of his journey, and named the road which he proposed to take, inviting Mure to meet him at Duppill, to the west of the town of Ayr, a place appointed, for the purpose of giving him any commissions which he might have for Edinburgh, and assuring his treacherous ally he would attend to any business which he might have in the Scottish metropolis as anxiously as to his own. Sir Thomas Kennedy's message was carried to the town of Maybole, where his messenger, for some trivial reason, had the import committed to writing by a schoolmaster in that town, and despatched it to its destination

by means of a poor student, named Dalrymple, instead of carrying it to the house of Auchindrane in person.

This suggested to Mure a diabolical plot. Having thus received tidings of Sir Thomas Kennedy's motions, he conceived the infernal purpose of having the confiding friend who sent the information waylaid and murdered at the place appointed to meet with him, not only in friendship, but for the purpose of rendering him service. He dismissed the messenger Dalrymple, cautioning the lad to carry back the letter to Maybole, and to say that he had not found him, Auchindrane, in his house. Having taken this precaution, he proceeded to instigate the brother of the slain Gilbert of Barganie, Thomas Kennedy of Drumurghie by name, and Walter Mure of Cloncaird, a kinsman of his own, to take this opportunity of revenging Barganie's death. The fiery young men were easily induced to undertake the crime. They waylaid the unsuspecting Sir Thomas of Cullayne at the place appointed to meet the traitor Auchindrane, and the murderers having in company five or six servants, well mounted and armed, assaulted and cruelly murdered him with many wounds. They then plundered the dead corpse of his purse, containing a thousand merks in gold, cut off the gold buttons which he wore on his coat, and despoiled the body of some valuable rings and jewels.

The revenge due for his uncle's murder was keenly pursued by the Earl of Cassilis. As the murderers fled from trial, they were declared outlaws; which doom, being pronounced by three blasts of a horn, was called "being put to the horn, and declared the king's rebel." Mure of Auchindrane was strongly suspected of having been the instigator of the crime. But he conceived there could be no evidence to prove his guilt if he could keep the boy Dalrymple out of the way, who delivered the letter which made him acquainted with Cullayne's journey, and the place at which he meant to halt. On the contrary, he saw, that if the lad could be produced at the trial, it would afford ground of fatal presumption, since it could be then proved that persons so nearly connected with him as Kennedy and Cloncaird had left his house, and committed the murder at the very spot which Cullayne had fixed for their meeting.

To avoid this imminent danger, Mure brought Dalrymple to his house, and detained him there for several weeks. But the youth tiring of this confinement, Mure sent him to reside with a friend, Montgomery of Skellmorly, who maintained him under a borrowed name, amid the desert regions of the then almost savage island of Arran. Being confident in the absence of this material witness, Auchindrane, instead of flying, like his agents Drumurghie and Cloncaird, presented himself boldly at the bar, demanded a fair trial, and offered his person in combat to the death against any of Lord Cassilis's friends who might impugn

his innocence. This audacity was successful, and he was dismissed without trial.

Still, however, Mure did not consider himself safe, so long as Dalrymple was within the realm of Scotland; and the danger grew more pressing when he learned that the lad had become impatient of the restraint which he sustained in the island of Arran, and returned to some of his friends in Ayrshire. Mure no sooner heard of this than he again obtained possession of the boy's person, and a second time concealed him at Auchindrane, until he found an opportunity to transport him to the Low Countries, where he contrived to have him enlisted in Buccleuch's regiment; trusting, doubtless, that some one of the numerous chances of war might destroy the poor young man whose life was so dangerous to him.

But after five or six years' uncertain safety, bought at the expense of so much violence and cunning, Auchindrane's fears were exasperated into frenzy, when he found this dangerous witness, having escaped from all the perils of climate and battle, had left, or been discharged from, the Legion of Borderers, and had again accomplished his return to Ayrshire. There is ground to suspect that Dalrymple knew the nature of the hold which he possessed over Auchindrane, and was desirous of extorting from his fears some better provision than he had found either in Arran or the Netherlands. But if so, it was a fatal experiment to tamper with the fears of such a man as Auchindrane, who determined to rid himself effectually of this unhappy young man.

Mure now lodged him in a house of his own, called Chapel-donan, tenanted by a vassal and connection of his called James Bannatyne. This man he commissioned to meet him at ten o'clock at night on the sea-sands near Girvan, and bring with him the unfortunate Dalrymple, the object of his fear and dread. The victim seems to have come with Bannatyne without the least suspicion, though such might have been raised by the time and place appointed for the meeting. When Bannatyne and Dalrymple came to the appointed spot, Auchindrane met them, accompanied by his eldest son, James. Old Auchindrane, having taken Bannatyne aside, imparted his bloody purpose of ridding himself of Dalrymple for ever, by murdering him on the spot. His own life and honour were, he said, endangered by the manner in which this inconvenient witness repeatedly thrust himself back into Ayrshire, and nothing could secure his safety but taking the lad's life, in which action he requested James Bannatyne's assistance. Bannatyne felt some compunction, and remonstrated against the cruel expedient, saying it would be better to transport Dalrymple to Ireland, and take precautions against his return. While old Auchindrane seemed disposed to listen to this proposal, his son

concluded that the time was come for accomplishing the purpose of their meeting, and, without waiting the termination of his father's conference with Bannatyne, he rushed suddenly on Dalrymple, beat him to the ground, and, kneeling down on him, with his father's assistance accomplished the crime, by strangling the unhappy object of their fear and jealousy. Bannatyne, the witness, and partly the accomplice, of the murder, assisted them in their attempt to make a hole in the sand, with a spade which they had brought on purpose, in order to conceal the dead body. But as the tide was coming in, the holes which they made filled with water before they could get the body buried, and the ground seemed, to their terrified consciences, to refuse to be accessory to concealing their crime. Despairing of hiding the corpse in the manner they proposed, the murderers carried it out into the sea as deep as they dared wade, and there abandoned it to the billows, trusting that a wind, which was blowing off the shore, would drive these remains of their crime out to sea, where they would never more be heard of. But the sea, as well as the land, seemed unwilling to conceal their cruelty. After floating for some hours, or days, the dead body was, by the wind and tide, again driven on shore, near the very spot where the murder had been committed.

This attracted general attention, and when the corpse was known to be that of the same William Dalrymple whom Auchindrane had so often spirited out of the country, or concealed when he was in it, a strong and general suspicion arose, that this young person had met with foul play from the bold bad man who had shewn himself so much interested in his absence. It was always said or supposed, that the dead body had bled at the approach of a grandchild of Mure of Auchindrane, a girl who, from curiosity, had come to look at a sight which others crowded to see. The bleeding of a murdered corpse at the touch of the murderer, was a thing at that time so much believed, that it was admitted as a proof of guilt; but I know no case, save that of Auchindrane, in which the phenomenon was supposed to be extended to the approach of the innocent kindred; nor do I think that the fact itself, though mentioned by ancient lawyers, was ever admitted to proof in the proceedings against Auchindrane.

It is certain, however, that Auchindrane found himself so much the object of suspicion from this new crime, that he resolved to fly from justice, and suffer himself to be declared a rebel and outlaw rather than face a trial. But his conduct in preparing to cover his flight with another motive than the real one, is a curious picture of the men and manners of the times. He knew well that if he were to shun his trial for the murder of Dalrymple, the whole country would consider him as a man

guilty of a mean and disgraceful crime in putting to death an obscure lad, against whom he had no personal quarrel. He knew, besides, that his powerful friends, who would have interceded for him had his offence been merely burning a house or killing a neighbour, would not plead for or stand by him in so pitiful a concern as the slaughter of this wretched wanderer.

Accordingly, Mure sought to provide himself with some ostensible cause for avoiding law, with which the feelings of his kindred and friends might sympathise; and none occurred to him so natural as an assault upon some friend and adherent of the Earl of Cassilis. Should he kill such a one, it would be indeed an unlawful action, but so far from being infamous, would be accounted the natural consequence of the avowed quarrel between the families. With this purpose Mure, with the assistance of a relative, of whom he seems always to have had some ready to execute his worst purposes, beset Hugh Kennedy of Gerriehorne, a follower of the Earl's, against whom they had especial ill-will, fired their pistols at him, and used other means to put him to death. But Garriehorne, a stout-hearted man, and well armed, defended himself in a very different manner from the unfortunate Knight of Cullayne, and beat off the assailants, wounding young Auchindrane in the right hand, so that he wellnigh lost the use of it.

But though Auchindrane's purpose did not entirely succeed, he availed himself of it to circulate a report, that if he could obtain a pardon for firing upon his feudal enemy with pistols, weapons declared unlawful by act of Parliament, he would willingly stand his trial for the death of Dalrymple, respecting which he protested his total innocence. The King, however, was decidedly of opinion that the Mures, both father and son, were alike guilty of both crimes, and used intercession with the Earl of Abercorn, as a person of power in those western counties, as well as in Ireland, to arrest and transmit them prisoners to Edinburgh. In consequence of the Earl's exertions, old Auchindrane was made prisoner, and lodged in the tolbooth of Edinburgh.

Young Auchindrane no sooner heard that his father was in custody, than he became as apprehensive of Bannatyne, the accomplice in Dalrymple's murder, telling tales, as ever his father had been of Dalrymple. He therefore hastened to him, and prevailed on him to pass over for a while to the neighbouring coast of Ireland, finding him money and means to accomplish the voyage, and engaging in the meantime to take care of his affairs in Scotland. Secure, as they thought, in this precaution, old Auchindrane persisted in his innocence, and his son found security to stand his trial. Both appeared with the same confidence at the day appointed, and braved the

public justice, hoping to be put to a formal trial, in which Auchindrane reckoned upon an acquittal for want of the evidence which he had removed. The trial was, however, postponed, and Mure the elder was dismissed, under high security to return when called for.

But King James, being convinced of the guilt of the accused, ordered young Auchindrane, instead of being sent to trial, to be examined under the force of torture, in order to compel him to tell whatever he knew of the things charged against him. He was accordingly severely tortured; but the result only served to show that such examinations are as useless as they are cruel. A man of weak resolution, or of a nervous habit, would probably have assented to any confession, however false, rather than have endured the extremity of fear and pain to which Mure was subjected. But young Auchindrane, a strong and determined ruffian, endured the torture with the utmost firmness, and by the constant audacity with which, in spite of the intolerable pain, he continued to assert his innocence, he spread so favourable an opinion of his case, that the detaining him in prison, instead of bringing him to open trial, was censured as severe and oppressive. James, however, remained firmly persuaded of his guilt, and by an exertion of authority quite inconsistent with our present laws, commanded young Auchindrane to be still detained in close custody till further light could be thrown on these dark proceedings. He was detained accordingly by the King's express personal command, and against the opinion even of his privy counsellors. This exertion of authority was much murmured against.

In the meanwhile, old Auchindrane, being, as we have seen, at liberty on pledges, skulked about in the west, feeling how little security he had gained by Dalrymple's murder, and that he had placed himself by that crime in the power of Bannatyne, whose evidence concerning the death of Dalrymple could not be less fatal than what Dalrymple might have told concerning Auchindrane's accession to the conspiracy against Sir Thomas Kennedy of Cullayne. But though the event had shown the error of his wicked policy, Auchindrane could think of no better mode in this case than that which had failed in relation to Dalrymple. When any man's life became inconsistent with his own safety, no idea seems to have occurred to this inveterate ruffian, save to murder the person by whom he might himself be in any way endangered. He therefore attempted the life of James Bannatyne by more agents than one. Nay, he had nearly ripened a plan, by which one Pennycuke was to be employed to slay Bannatyne, while, after the deed was done, it was devised that Mure of Auchnull, a connection of Bannatyne, should be instigated to slay Pennycuke; and thus close up this train of murders by one which, flowing in the

ordinary course of deadly feud, should have nothing in it so particular as to attract much attention.

But the justice of Heaven would bear this complicated train of iniquity no longer. Bannatyne, knowing with what sort of men he had to deal, kept on his guard, and, by his caution, disconcerted more than one attempt to take his life, while another miscarried by the remorse of Pennycuke, the agent whom Mure employed. At length Bannatyne, tiring of this state of insecurity, and in despair of escaping such repeated plots, and also feeling remorse for the crime to which he had been accessory, resolved rather to submit himself to the severity of the law, than remain the object of the principal criminal's practices. He surrendered himself to the Earl of Abercorn, and was transported to Edinburgh, where he confessed before the King and council all the particulars of the murder of Dalrymple, and the attempt to hide his body by committing it to the sea.

When Bannatyne was confronted with the two Mures before the Privy Council, they denied with vehemence every part of the evidence he had given, and affirmed that the witness had been bribed to destroy them by a false tale. Bannatyne's behaviour seemed sincere and simple, that of Auchindrane more resolute and crafty. The wretched accomplice fell upon his knees, invoking God to witness that all the land in Scotland could not have bribed him to bring a false accusation against a master whom he had served, loved, and followed in so many dangers, and calling upon Auchindrane to honour God by confessing the crime he had committed. Mure the elder, on the other hand, boldly replied, that he hoped God would not so far forsake him as to permit him to confess a crime of which he was innocent, and exhorted Bannatyne in his turn to confess the practices by which he had been induced to devise such falsehoods against him.

The two Mures, father and son, were therefore put upon their solemn trial, along with Bannatyne, in 1611, and, after a great deal of evidence had been brought in support of Bannatyne's confession, all three were found guilty. The elder Auchindrane was convicted of counselling and directing the murder of Sir Thomas Kennedy of Cullayne, and also of the actual murder of the lad Dalrymple. Bannatyne and the younger Mure were found guilty of the latter crime, and all three were sentenced to be beheaded. Bannatyne, however, the accomplice, received the King's pardon, in consequence of his voluntary surrender and confession. The two Mures were both executed. The younger was affected by the remonstrances of the clergy who attended him, and he confessed the guilt of which he was accused. The father, also, was at length brought to avow the fact, but in other respects died as

impenitent as he had lived;—and so ended this dark and extraordinary tragedy.

The Lord Advocate of the day, Sir Thomas Hamilton, afterwards successively Earl of Melrose and of Haddington, seems to have busied himself much in drawing up a statement of this foul transaction, for the purpose of vindicating to the people of Scotland the severe course of justice observed by King James VI. He assumes the task in a high tone of prerogative law, and, on the whole, seems at a loss whether to attribute to Providence, or to his most sacred Majesty, the greatest share in bringing to light these mysterious villainies, but rather inclines to the latter opinion. There is, I believe, no printed copy of the intended tract, which seems never to have been published; but the curious will be enabled to judge of it, as it appears in the next *fasciculus* of Mr. Robert Pitcairn's very interesting publications from the Scottish Criminal Record.

The family of Auchindrane did not become extinct on the death of the two homicides. The last descendant existed in the eighteenth century, a poor and distressed man. The following anecdote shows that he had a strong feeling of his situation.

There was in front of the old castle a huge ash-tree, called the Dule-tree (*mourning-tree*) of Auchindrane, probably because it was the place where the Baron executed the criminals who fell under his jurisdiction. It is described as having been the finest tree of the neighbourhood. This last representative of the family of Auchindrane had the misfortune to be arrested for payment of a small debt; and, unable to discharge it, was prepared to accompany the messenger (bailiff) to the jail of Ayr. The servant of the law had compassion for his prisoner, and offered to accept of this remarkable tree as of value adequate to the discharge of the debt. "What!" said the debtor, "sell the Dule-tree of Auchindrane! I will sooner die in the worst dungeon of your prison." In this luckless character the line of Auchindrane ended. The family, blackened with the crimes of its predecessors, became extinct, and the estate passed into other hands.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

John Mure of Auchindrane, an Ayrshire Baron. *He has been a follower of the Regent, Earl of Morton, during the Civil Wars, and hides an oppressive, ferocious, and unscrupulous disposition, under some pretences to strictness of life and doctrine, which, however, never influence his conduct. He is in danger from the law, owing to his having been formerly active in the assassination of the Earl of Cassilis.*

Philip Mure, his Son, a wild, debauched Profligate, professing and practising a contempt for his Father's hypocrisy, while he is as fierce and licentious as Auchindrane himself.

Gifford, their Relation, a Courtier.

Quentin Blane, a Youth, educated for a Clergyman, but sent by Auchindrane to serve in a Band of Auxiliaries in the Wars of the Netherlands, and lately employed as Clerk or Comptroller to the Regiment—Disbanded, however, and on his return to his native Country. He is of a mild, gentle, and rather feeble character, liable to be influenced by any person of stronger mind who will take the trouble to direct him. He is somewhat of a nervous temperament, varying from sadness to gaiety, according to the impulse of the moment; an amiable hypochondriac.

Hildebrand, a stout old Englishman, who, by feats of courage, has raised himself to the rank of Sergeant-Major, (then of greater consequence than at present). He, too, has been disbanded, but cannot bring himself to believe that he has lost his command over his Regiment.

Abraham,
Williams,
Jenkin,
And Others, { Privates dismissed from the same Regiment in which Quentin and Hildebrand had served. These are mutinous, and are much disposed to remember former quarrels with their late Officers.

Niel MacLellan, Keeper of Auchindrane Forest and Game.

Earl of Dunbar, commanding an army as Lieutenant of James I., for execution of justice on Offenders.

Guards, Attendants, etc. etc.

Marion, Wife of Niel MacLellan.

Isabel, their Daughter, a Girl of six years old.

Other Children and Peasant Women.

ACT I.—SCENE I.

A rocky Bay on the Coast of Carrick, in Ayrshire, not far from the Point of Turnberry. The Sea comes in upon a bold rocky Shore. The remains of a small half-ruined Tower are seen on the right hand, overhanging the Sea. There is a Vessel at a distance in the offing. A Boat at the bottom of the Stage lands eight or ten Persons, dressed like disbanded, and in one or two cases like disabled Soldiers. They come straggling

forward with their knapsacks and bundles. HILDEBRAND, the Sergeant, belonging to the Party, a stout elderly man, stands by the boat, as if superintending the disembarkation. QUENTIN remains apart.

ABRAHAM. Farewell, the flats of Holland, and right welcome

The cliffs of Scotland! Fare thee well, black beer
And Schiedam gin! and welcome twopenny,
Oatcakes, and usquebaugh!

WILLIAMS (*who wants an arm*) Farewell, the gallant
field, and "Forward, pikemen!"

For the bridge-end, the suburb, and the lane;
And, "Bless your honour, noble gentleman,
Remember a poor soldier!"

ABR. My tongue shall never need to smooth itself
To such poor sounds, while it can boldly say,
"Stand and deliver!"

WIL. Hush, the sergeant hears you!

ABR. And let him hear; he makes a bustle yonder,
And dreams of his authority, forgetting
We are disbanded men, o'er whom his halberd
Has not such influence as the beadle's baton.
We are no soldiers now, but every one
The lord of his own person.

WIL. A wretched lordship—and our freedom such
As that of the old cart-horse, when the owner
Turns him upon the common. I for one
Will still continue to respect the sergeant,
And the comptroller, too,—while the cash lasts.

ABR. I scorn them both. I am too stout a Scotsman
To bear a Southron's rule an instant longer
Than discipline obliges; and for Quentin,
Quentin the quillman, Quentin the comptroller,
We have no regiment now; or, if we had,
Quentin's no longer clerk to it.

WIL. For shame! for shame! What, shall old comrades
jar thus,
And on the verge of parting, and for ever?—
Nay, keep thy temper, Abraham, though a bad one.—
Good Master Quentin, let thy song last night
Give us once more our welcome to old Scotland.

ABR. Ay, they sing light whose task is telling money,
When dollars clink for chorus.

QUE. I've done with counting silver, honest Abraham,
 As thou, I fear, with pouching thy small share on't.
 But, lend your voices, lads, and I will sing
 As blithely yet as if a town were won ;
 As if upon a field of battle gain'd,
 Our banners waved victorious.

[He sings, and the rest bear chorus.]

SONG.

Hither we come,
 Once slaves to the drum,
 But no longer we list to its rattle ;
 Adieu to the wars,
 With their slashes and scars,
 The march, and the storm, and the battle.

There are some of us maim'd,
 And some that are lamed,
 And some of old aches are complaining ;
 But we'll take up the tools,
 Which we flung by like fools,
 Gainst Don Spaniard to go a-campaigning.

Dick Hathorn doth vow
 To return to the plough,
 Jack Steele to his anvil and hammer ;
 The weaver shall find room
 At the wight-wapping loom,
 And your clerk shall teach writing and grammar.

ABR. And this is all that thou canst do, gay Quentin ?
 To swagger o'er a herd of parish brats,
 Cut cheese or dibble onions with thy poniard,
 And turn the sheath into a ferula ?

QUE. I am the prodigal in holy writ ;
 I cannot work,—to beg I am ashamed.
 Besides, good mates, I care not who may know it,
 I'm e'en as fairly tired of this same fighting,
 As the poor cur that's worried in the shambles
 By all the mastiff dogs of all the butchers ;
 Wherefore, farewell sword, poniard, petronel,
 And welcome poverty and peaceful labour.

ABR. Clerk Quentin, if of fighting thou art tired,
By my good word, thou'rt quickly satisfied,
For thou'rt seen but little on't.

WIL. Thou dost belie him—I have seen him fight
Bravely enough for one in his condition.

ABR. What he? that counter-casting, smock-faced boy?
What was he but the colonel's scribbling drudge,
With men of straw to stuff the regiment roll;
With cipherings unjust to cheat his comrades,
And cloak false musters for our noble captain?
He bid farewell to sword and petronel!

He should have said, farewell my pen and standish.
These, with the rosin used to hide erasures,
Were the best friends he left in camp behind him.

QUE. The sword you scoff at is not far, but scorns
The threats of an unmanner'd mutineer.

SER. (*interposes*) We'll have no brawling—Shall it e'er
be said,

That being comrades six long years together,
While gulping down the frowsy fogs of Holland,
We tilted at each other's throats so soon
As the first draught of native air refresh'd them?
No! by Saint Dunstan, I forbid the combat.
You all, methinks, do know this trusty halberd;
For I opine, that every back amongst you
Hath felt the weight of the tough ashen staff,
Endlong or overthwart. Who is it wishes
A remembrancer now? *[Raises his halberd.]*

ABR. Comrades, have you ears
To hear the old man bully? Eyes to see
His staff rear'd o'er your heads, as o'er the hounds
The huntsman cracks his whip?

WIL. Well said—stout Abraham has the right on't.—
I tell thee, sergeant, we do reverence thee,
And pardon the rash humours thou hast caught,
Like wiser men, from thy authority.
'Tis ended, howsoe'er, and we'll not suffer
A word of sergeantry, or halberd-staff,
Nor the most petty threat of discipline.
If thou wilt lay aside thy pride of office,
And drop thy wont of swaggering and commanding,
Thou art our comrade still for good or evil.
Else take thy course apart, or with the clerk there—
A sergeant thou, and he being all thy regiment.

SER. Is't come to this, false knaves? And think you not,
That if you bear a name o'er other soldiers,
It was because you follow'd to the charge
One that had zeal and skill enough to lead you
Where fame was won by danger?

WIL. We grant thy skill in leading, noble sergeant;
Witness some empty boots and sleeves amongst us,
Which else had still been tenanted with limbs
In the full quantity; and for the arguments
With which you used to back our resolution,
Our shoulders do record them. At a word,
Will you conform, or must we part our company?

SER. Conform to you? Base dogs! I would not lead you

A bolt-flight farther to be made a general.
Mean mutineers! when you swill'd off the dregs
Of my poor sea-stores, it was "Noble Sergeant—
Heaven bless old Hildebrand—we'll follow him,
At least, until we safely see him lodged
Within the merry bounds of his own England!"

WIL. Ay, truly, sir; but, mark, the ale was mighty,
And the Geneva potent. Such stout liquor
Makes violent protestations. Skink it round,
If you have any left, to the same tune,
And we may find a chorus for it still.

ABR. We lose our time.—Tell us at once, old man,
If thou wilt march with us, or stay with Quentin?

SER. Out, mutineers! Dishonour dog your heels!

ABR. Wilful will have his way. Adieu, stout Hildebrand!

[The Soldiers go off laughing, and taking leave, with mockery, of the SERGEANT and QUENTIN, who remain on the Stage.]

SER. *(after a pause)* Fly you not with the rest?—fail you to follow

Yon goodly fellowship and fair example?
Come, take your wild-goose flight. I know you Scots,
Like your own sea-fowl, seek your course together.

QUE. Faith, a poor heron I, who wing my flight
In loneliness, or with a single partner;
And right it is that I should seek for solitude,
Bringing but evil luck on them I herd with.

SER. Thou'rt thankless. Had we landed on the coast,
Where our course bore us, thou wert far from home ;
But the fierce wind that drove us round the island,
Barring each port and inlet that we aim'd at,
Hath wafted thee to harbour ; for I judge
This is thy native land we disembark on.

QUE. True, worthy friend. Each rock, each stream I
look on,
Each bosky wood, and every frowning tower,
Awakens some young dream of infancy.

Yet such is my hard hap, I might more safely
Have look'd on Indian cliffs, or Afric's desert,
Than on my native shores. I'm like a babe,
Doom'd to draw poison from my nurse's bosom.

SER. Thou dream'st, young man. Unreal terrors haunt,
As I have noted, giddy brains like thine—
Flighty, poetic, and imaginative—
To whom a minstrel whim gives idle rapture,
And, when it fades, fantastic misery.

QUE. But mine is not fantastic. I can tell thee,
Since I have known thee still my faithful friend,
In part at least the dangerous plight I stand in.

SER. And I will hear thee willingly, the rather
That I would let these vagabonds march on,
Nor join their troop again. Besides, good sooth,
I'm wearied with the toil of yesterday,
And revel of last night.—And I may aid thee,
Yes, I may aid thee, comrade, and perchance
Thou mayst advantage me.

QUE. May it prove well for both !—But note, my friend,
I can but intimate my mystic story.
Some of it lies so secret,—even the winds
That whistle round us must not know the whole—
An oath !—an oath !—

SER. That must be kept, of course
I ask but that which thou mayst freely tell.

QUE. I was an orphan boy, and first saw light
Not far from where we stand—my lineage low,
But honest in its poverty. A lord,
The master of the soil for many a mile,
Dreaded and powerful, took a kindly charge
For my advance in letters, and the qualities
Of the poor orphan lad drew some applause.
The knight was proud of me, and, in his halls,

I had such kind of welcome as the great
 Give to the humble, whom they love to point to
 As objects not unworthy their protection,
 Whose progress is some honour to their patron—
 A cure was spoken of, which I might serve,
 My manners, doctrine, and acquirements fitting.

SER. Hitherto thy luck
 Was of the best, good friend. Few lords had cared
 If thou couldst read thy grammar or thy psalter,
 Thou hadst been valued couldst thou scour a harness,
 And dress a steed distinctly.

QUE. My old master
 Held different doctrine, at least it seem'd so—
 But he was mix'd in many a deadly feud—
 And here my tale grows mystic. I became,
 Unwitting and unwilling, the depositary
 Of a dread secret, and the knowledge on't
 Has wreck'd my peace for ever. It became
 My patron's will, that I, as one who knew
 More than I should, must leave the realm of Scotland,
 And live or die within a distant land.

SER. Ah! thou hast done a fault in some wild raid,
 As you wild Scotsmen call them.

QUE. Comrade, nay;
 Mine was a peaceful part, and happ'd by chance.
 I must not tell you more. Enough, my presence
 Brought danger to my benefactor's house.
 Tower after tower conceal'd me, willing still
 To hide my ill-omen'd face with owls and ravens,
 And let my patron's safety be the purchase
 Of my severe and desolate captivity.
 So thought I, when dark Arran, with its walls
 Of native rock, enclosed me. There I lurk'd,
 A peaceful stranger amid armed clans,
 Without a friend to love or to defend me,
 Where all beside were link'd by close alliances.
 At length I made my option to take service
 In that same legion of auxiliaries
 In which we lately served the Belgian.
 Our leader, stout Montgomery, hath been kind
 Through full six years of warfare, and assign'd me
 More peaceful tasks than the rough front of war,
 For which my education little suited me.

SER. Ay, therein was Montgomery kind indeed ;
Nay, kinder than you think, my simple Quentin.
The letters which you brought to the Montgomery,
Pointed to thrust thee on some desperate service,
Which should most likely end thee.

QUE. Bore I such letters ?—Surely, comrade, no.
Full deeply was the writer bound to aid me.
Perchance he only meant to prove my mettle ;
And it was but a trick of my bad fortune
That gave his letters ill interpretation.

SER. Ay, but thy better angel wrought for good,
Whatever ill thy evil fate designed thee.
Montgomery pitied thee, and changed thy service
In the rough field for labour in the tent,
More fit for thy green years and peaceful habits.

QUE. Even there his well-meant kindness injured me.
My comrades hated, undervalued me,
And whatsoever of service I could do them,
They guerdon'd with ingratitude and envy—
Such my strange doom, that if I serve a man
At deepest risk, he is my foe for ever !

SER. Hast thou worse fate than others if it were so ?
Worse even than me, thy friend, thine officer,
Whom yon ungrateful slaves have pitch'd ashore,
As wild waves heap the sea-weed on the beach,
And left him here, as if he had the pest
Or leprosy, and death were in his company ?

QUE. They think at least you have the worst of plagues,
The worst of leprosies,—they think you poor.

SER. They think like lying villains then, I'm rich,
And they too might have felt it. I've a thought—
But stay—what plans your wisdom for yourself ?

QUE. My thoughts are wellnigh desperate. But I
purpose
Return to my stern patron—there to tell him
That wars, and winds, and waves, have cross'd his pleasure,
And cast me on the shore from whence he banish'd me.
Then let him do his will, and destine for me
A dungeon or a grave.

SER. Now, by the rood, thou art a simple fool !
I can do better for thee. Mark me, Quentin.
I took my license from the noble regiment,
Partly that I was worn with age and warfare,
Partly that an estate of yeomanry,

Of no great purchase, but enough to live on,
 Has call'd me owner since a kinsman's death.
 It lies in merry Yorkshire, where the wealth
 Of fold and furrow, proper to Old England,
 Stretches by streams which walk no sluggish pace.
 But dance as light as yours. Now, good friend Quentin,
 This copyhold can keep two quiet inmates,
 And I am childless. Wilt thou be my son?

QUE. Nay, you can only jest, my worthy friend!
 What claim have I to be a burden to you?

SER. The claim of him that wants, and is in danger,
 On him that has, and can afford protection:
 Thou wouldst not fear a foeman in my cottage,
 Where a stout mastiff slumber'd on the hearth,
 And this good halberd hung above the chimney?
 But come—I have it—thou shalt earn thy bread
 Duly, and honourably, and usefully.

Our village schoolmaster hath left the parish,
 Forsook the ancient schoolhouse with its yew-trees,
 That lurk'd beside a church two centuries older,—
 So long devotion took the lead of knowledge;
 And since his little flock are shepherdless,
 'Tis thou shalt be promoted in his room;
 And rather than thou wantest scholars, man,
 Myself will enter pupil. Better late,
 Our proverb says, than never to do well.
 And look you, on the holydays I'd tell
 To all the wondering boors and gaping children,
 Strange tales of what the regiment did in Flanders,
 And thou shouldst say Amen, and be my warrant,
 That I speak truth to them.

QUE. Would I might take thy offer! But, alas!
 Thou art the hermit who compell'd a pilgrim,
 In name of Heaven and heavenly charity,
 To share his roof and meal, but found too late
 That he had drawn a curse on him and his,
 By sheltering a wretch foredoom'd of heaven!

SER. Thou talk'st in riddles to me.

QUE. If I do,
 'Tis that I am a riddle to myself.
 Thou know'st I am by nature born a friend
 To glee and merriment; can make wild verses;
 The jest or laugh has never stopp'd with me,
 When once 'twas set a rolling.

SER. I have known thee
A blithe companion still, and wonder now
Thou shouldst become thus crest-fallen.

QUE. Does the lark sing her descant when the falcon
Scales the blue vault with bolder wing than hers,
And meditates a stoop? The mirth thou'st noted
Was all deception, fraud—Hated enough
For other causes. I did veil my feelings
Beneath the mask of mirth,—laugh'd, sung, and caroll'd,
To gain some interest in my comrades' bosoms,
Although mine own was bursting.

SER. Thou'rt a hypocrite
Of a new order.

QUE. But harmless as the innoxious snake,
Which bears the adder's form, lurks in his haunts,
Yet neither hath his fang-teeth nor his poison.
Look you, kind Hildebrand, I would seem merry,
Lest other men should, tiring of my sadness,
Expel me from them, as the hunted wether
Is driven from the flock.

SER. Faith, thou hast borne it bravely out.
Had I been ask'd to name the merriest fellow
Of all our muster-roll—that man wert thou.

QUE. See'st thou, my friend, yon brook dance down the
valley,
And sing blithe carols over broken rock
And tiny waterfall, kissing each shrub
And each gay flower it nurses in its passage—
Where, think'st thou, is its source, the bonny brook?—
It flows from forth a cavern, black and gloomy,
Sullen and sunless, like this heart of mine,
Which others see in a false glare of gaiety,
Which I have laid before you in its sadness.

SER. If such wild fancies dog thee, wherefore leave
The trade where thou wert safe 'midst others' dangers.
And venture to thy native land, where fate
Lies on the watch for thee? Had old Montgomery
Been with the regiment, thou hadst had no congé.

QUE. No, 'tis most likely—But I had a hope,
A poor vain hope, that I might live obscurely
In some far corner of my native Scotland,
Which, of all others, splinter'd into districts,
Differing in manners, families, even language,
Seem'd a safe refuge for the humble wretch,

Whose highest hope was to remain unheard of.
 But fate has baffled me—the winds and waves,
 With force resistless, have impell'd me hither—
 Have driven me to the clime most dang'rous to me ;
 And I obey the call, like the hurt deer,
 Which seeks instinctively his native lair,
 Though his heart tells him it is but to die there.

SER. 'Tis false, by Heaven, young man! This same
 despair,

Though showing resignation in its banner,
 Is but a kind of covert cowardice.
 Wise men have said, that though our stars incline,
 They cannot force us—Wisdom is the pilot,
 And if he cannot cross, he may evade them.
 You lend an ear to idle auguries,
 The fruits of our last revels—still most sad
 Under the gloom that follows boisterous mirth,
 As earth looks blackest after brilliant sunshine.

QUE. No, by my honest word. I join'd the revel,
 And aided it with laugh, and song, and shout,
 But my heart revell'd not ; and, when the mirth
 Was at the loudest, on yon galliot's prow
 I stood unmark'd, and gazed upon the land,
 My native land—each cape and cliff I knew.
 “Behold me now,” I said, “your destined victim !”
 So greets the sentenced criminal the headsman,
 Who slow approaches with his lifted axe.
 “Hither I come,” I said, “ye kindred hills,
 Whose darksome outline in a distant land
 Haunted my slumbers ; here I stand, thou ocean,
 Whose hoarse voice, murmuring in my dreams, required me,
 See me now here, ye winds, whose plaintive wail,
 On yonder distant shores, appear'd to call me—
 Summon'd, behold me.” And the winds and waves,
 And the deep echoes of the distant mountain,
 Made answer—“Come, and die !”

SER. Fantastic all ! Poor boy, thou art distracted
 With the vain terrors of some feudal tyrant,
 Whose frown hath been from infancy thy bugbear.
 Why seek his presence ?

QUE. Wherefore does the moth
 Fly to the scorching taper ? Why the bird,
 Dazzled by lights at midnight, seek the net ?

Why does the prey, which feels the fascination
Of the snake's glaring eye, drop in his jaws?

SER. Such wild examples but refute themselves.

Let bird, let moth, let the coil'd adder's prey,
Resist the fascination and be safe.

Thou goest not near this Baron—if thou goest,
I will go with thee. Known in many a field,
Which he in a whole life of petty feud
Has never dream'd of, I will teach the knight
To rule him in this matter—be thy warrant,
'That far from him, and from his petty lordship,
You shall henceforth tread English land, and never
Thy presence shall alarm his conscience more.

QUE. 'Twere desperate risk for both. I will far rather
Hastily guide thee through this dangerous province,
And seek thy school, thy yew-trees, and thy churchyard;—
The last, perchance, will be the first I find.

SER. I would rather face him,
Like a bold Englishman that knows his right,
And will stand by his friend. And yet 'tis lolly—
Fancies like these are not to be resisted;
'Tis better to escape them. Many a presage,
Too rashly braved, becomes its own accomplishment.
Then let us go—but whither? My old head
As little knows where it shall lie to-night,
As yonder mutineers that left their officer,
As reckless of his quarters as these billows,
That leave the withered sea-weed on the beach,
And care not where they pue n.

QUE. Think not for that, good friend. We are in
Scotland,

And if it is not varied from its wont,
Each cot, that sends a curl of smoke to heaven,
Will yield a stranger quarters for the night,
Simply because he needs them.

SER. But are there none within an easy walk
Give lodgings here for hire? for I have left
Some of the Don's piastres (though I kept
The secret from yon gulls), and I had rather
Pay the fair reckoning I can well afford,
And my host takes with pleasure, than I'd cumber
Some poor man's roof with me and all my wants,
And tax his charity beyond discretion.

QUE. Some six miles hence there is a town and hostelry—
But you are wayworn, and it is most likely
Our comrades must have fill'd it.

SER. Out upon them !—
Were there a friendly mastiff who would lend me
Half of his supper, half of his poor kennel,
I would help Honesty to pick his bones,
And share his straw, far rather than I'd sup
On jolly fare with these base varlets !

QUE. We'll manage better ; for our Scottish dogs
Though stout and trusty, are but ill-instructed
In hospitable rights.—Here is a maiden,
A little maid, will tell us of the country,
And sorely it is changed since I have left it,
If we should fail to find a harbourage.

*Enter ISABEL MACLELLAN, a girl of about six years
old, bearing a milk-pail on her head ; she stops
on seeing the SERGEANT and QUENTIN.*

QUE. There's something in her look that doth remind
me—

But 'tis not wonder I find recollections
In all that here I look on.—Pretty maid—

SER. You're slow, and hesitate. I will be spokesman.—
Good even, my pretty maiden—canst thou tell us,
Is there a Christian house would render strangers,
For love or guerdon, a night's meal and lodging ?

ISA. Full surely, sir ; we dwell in yon old house
Upon the cliff—they call it Chapeldonan.

[Points to the building.]

Our house is large enough, and if our supper
Chance to be scant, you shall have half of mine,
For, as I think, sir, you have been a soldier.
Up yonder lies our house ; I'll trip before,
And tell my mother she has guests a-coming ;
The path is something steep, but you shall see
I'll be there first. I must chain up the dogs, too ;
Nimrod and Bloodylass are cross to strangers,
But gentle when you know them.

[Exit, and is seen partially ascending to the Castle]

SER. You have spoke
Your country folk aright, both for the dogs
And for the people.—We had luck to light
On one too young for cunning and for selfishness.—

He's in a reverie—a deep one sure,
 Since the gibe on his country wakes him not.—
 Bestir thee, Quentin !

QUE. 'Twas a wondrous likeness.

SER. Likeness ! of whom ? I'll warrant thee of one
 Whom thou hast loved and lost. Such fantasies
 Live long in brains like thine, which fashion visions
 Of woe and death when they are cross'd in love,
 As most men are or have been.

QUE. Thy guess hath touch'd me, though it is but slightly,
 'Mongst other woes : I knew, in former days,
 A maid that view'd me with some glance of favour,
 But my fate carried me to other shores,
 And she has since been wedded. I did think on't
 But as a bubble burst, a rainbow vanish'd ;
 It adds no deeper shade to the dark gloom
 Which chills the springs of hope and life within me.
 Our guide hath got a trick of voice and feature
 Like to the maid I spoke of—that is all.

SER. She bounds before us like a gamesome doe,
 Or rather as the rock-bred eaglet soars
 Up to her nest, as if she rose by will
 Without an effort. Now a Netherlander,
 One of our Frogland friends, viewing the scene,
 Would take his oath that tower, and rock, and maiden,
 Were forms too light and lofty to be real,
 And only some delusion of the fancy ;
 Such as men dream at sunset. I myself
 Have kept the level ground so many years,
 I have wellnigh forgot the art to climb,
 Unless assisted by thy younger arm.

[*They go off as if to ascend to the Tower, the
 SERGEANT leaning upon QUENTIN.*]

SCENE II.

*Scene changes to the Front of the Old Tower. ISABEL
 comes forward with her Mother, — MARION speaking
 as they advance.*

MAR. I blame thee not, my child, for bidding wanderers
 Come share our food and shelter, if thy father
 Were here to welcome them ; but, Isabel,

He waits upon his lord at Auchindrane,
And comes not home to-night.

ISA. What then, my mother?
The travellers do not ask to see my father;
Food, shelter, rest, is all the poor men want,
And we can give them these without my father.

MAR. Thou canst not understand, nor I explain,
Why a lone female asks not visitants
What time her husband's absent. — (*Apart*) My poor
child,
And if thou'rt wedded to a jealous husband,
Thou'lt know too soon the cause.

ISA. (*partly overhearing what her mother says*) Ay, but
I know already—Jealousy
Is, when my father chides, and you sit weeping.

MAR. Out, little spy! thy father never chides;
Or, if he does, 'tis when his wife deserves it.—
But to our strangers; they are old men, Isabel,
That seek this shelter? are they not?

ISA. One is old—
Old as this tower of ours, and worn like that,
Bearing deep marks of battles long since fought.

MAR. Some remnant of the wars; he's welcome,
surely,
Bringing no quality along with him
Which can alarm suspicion.—Well, the other?

ISA. A young man, gentle-voiced and gentle-eyed,
Who looks and speaks like one the world has frown'd on;
But smiles when you smile, seeming that he feels
Joy in your joy, though he himself is sad.
Brown hair, and downcast looks.

MAR. (*alarmed*) 'Tis but an idle thought—it cannot be!
[*Listens.*]

I hear his accents—It is all too true—
My terrors were prophetic!

I'll compose myself,
And then accost him firmly. Thus it must be.

[*She retires hastily into the Tower.*
[*The voices of the SERGEANT and QUENTIN are heard ascending behind the Scenes.*]

QUE. One effort more—we stand upon the level.
I've seen thee work thee up glacis and cavalier
Steeper than this ascent, when cannon, culverine,
Musket, and hackbut, shower'd their shot upon thee,

And form'd, with ceaseless blaze, a fiery garland
Round the defences of the post you storm'd.

[*They come on the Stage, and at the same time MARION re-enters from the Tower.*

SER. Truly thou speak'st. I am the tardier,
That I, in climbing hither, miss the fire,
Which wont to tell me there was death in loitering.—
Here stands, methinks, our hostess.

[*He goes forward to address MARION. QUENTIN, struck at seeing her, keeps back.*

SER. Kind dame, yon little lass hath brought you
strangers,
Willing to be a trouble, not a charge to you.
We are disbanded soldiers, but have means
Ample enough to pay our journey homeward.

MAR. We keep no house of general entertainment,
But know our duty, sir, to locks like yours,
Whiten'd and thinn'd by many a long campaign.
Ill chances that my husband should be absent—

(*Apart*)—Courage alone can make me struggle through
it—

For in your comrade, though he hath forgot me,
I spy a friend whom I have known in school-days,
And whom I think MacLellan well remembers.

[*She goes up to QUENTIN.*

You see a woman's memory
Is faithfuller than yours; for Quentin Blane
Hath not a greeting left for Marion Harkness.

QUE. (*with effort*) I seek, indeed, my native land, good
Marion,

But seek it like a stranger.—All is changed.
And thou thyself—

MAR. You left a giddy maiden,
And find, on your return, a wife and mother.
Thine old acquaintance, Quentin, is my mate—
Stout Niel MacLellan, ranger to our lord,
The Knight of Auchindrane. He's absent now,
But will rejoice to see his former comrade,
If, as I trust, you tarry his return.

(*Apart*) Heaven grant he understand my words by con-
traries!

He must remember Niel and he were rivals;
He must remember Niel and he were foes;
He must remember Niel is warm of temper,

And think, instead of welcome, I would blithely
Bid him, God speed you. But he is as simple
And void of guile as ever.

QUE. Marion, I gladly rest within your cottage,
And gladly wait return of Niel MacLellan,
To clasp his hand, and wish him happiness.
Some rising feelings might perhaps prevent this—
But 'tis a peevish part to grudge our friends
Their share of fortune because we have miss'd it ;
I can wish others joy and happiness,
Though I must ne'er partake them.

MAR. But if it grieve you—

QUE. No! do not fear. The brightest gleams of hope
That shine on me are such as are reflected
From those which shine on others.

[*The SERGEANT and QUENTIN enter the Tower with
the little Girl.*]

MAR. (*comes forward and speaks in agitation*) Even so!
the simple youth has miss'd my meaning.
I shame to make it plainer, or to say,
In one brief word, Pass on—Heaven guide the bark,
For we are on the breakers! [*Exit into the Tower.*]

ACT II.—SCENE I.

*A withdrawing Apartment in the Castle of Auchindrane.
Servants place a Table, with a Flask of Wine and
Drinking-Cups.*

*Enter MURE of AUCHINDRANE, with ALBERT GIFFORD,
his Relation and Visitor. They place themselves by the
Table after some complimentary ceremony. At some
distance is heard the noise of revelling.*

AUCH. We're better placed for confidential talk,
Than in the hall fill'd with disbanded soldiers,
And fools and fiddlers gather'd on the highway,—
The worthy guests whom Philip crowds my hall with,
And with them spends his evening.

GIF. But think you not, my friend, that your son Philip
Should be participant of these our councils,
Being so deeply mingled in the danger—
Your house's only heir—your only son?

AUCH. Kind cousin Gifford, if thou lack'st good counsel
 At race, at cockpit, or at gambling table,
 Or any freak by which men cheat themselves
 As well of life, as of the means to live,
 Call for assistance upon Philip Mure ;
 But in all serious parley spare invoking him.

GIF. You speak too lightly of my cousin Philip ;
 All name him brave in arms.

AUCH. A second Bevis ;
 But I, my youth bred up in graver fashions,
 Mourn o'er the mode of life in which he spends,
 Or rather dissipates, his time and substance.
 No vagabond escapes his search—The soldier
 Spurn'd from the service, henceforth to be ruffian
 Upon his own account is Philip's comrade ;
 The fiddler, whose crack'd crowd has still three strings on't ;
 The balladeer, whose voice has still two notes left ;
 Whate'er is roguish and whate'er is vile,
 Are welcome to the board of Auchindrane,
 And Philip will return them shout for shout,
 And pledge for jovial pledge, and song for song,
 Until the shamefaced sun peep at our windows,
 And ask. "What have we here ?"

GIF. You take such revel deeply—we are Scotsmen,
 Far known for rustic hospitality,
 That mind not birth or titles in our guests ;
 The harper has his seat beside our hearth,
 The wanderer must find comfort at our board,
 His name unask'd, his pedigree unknown ;
 So did our ancestors, and so must we.

AUCH. All this is freely granted, worthy kinsman ;
 And prithee do not think me churl enough
 To count how many sit beneath my salt.
 I've wealth enough to fill my father's hall
 Each day at noon, and feed the guests who crowd it.
 I am near mate with those whom men call Lord,
 Though a rude western knight. But mark me, cousin,
 Although I feed wayfaring vagabonds,
 I make them not my comrades. Such as I,
 Who have advanced the fortunes of my line,
 And swell'd a baron's turret to a palace,
 Have oft the curse awaiting on our thrift,
 To see, while yet we live, the things which must be
 At our decease—the downfall of our family,

The loss of land and lordship, name and knighthood,
 The wreck of the fair fabric we have built,
 By a degenerate heir. Philip has that
 Of inborn meanness in him, that he loves not
 The company of betters, nor of equals;
 Never at ease, unless he bears the bell,
 And crows the loudest in the company.
 He's mesh'd, too, in the snares of every female
 Who deigns to cast a passing glance on him—
 Licentious, disrespectful, rash, and profligate.

GIF. Come, my good coz, think we too have been
 young,
 And I will swear that in your father's lifetime
 You have yourself been trapp'd by toys like these.

AUCH. A fool I may have been—but not a madman;
 I never play'd the rake among my followers,
 Pursuing this man's sister, that man's wife;
 And therefore never saw I man of mine,
 When summon'd to obey my hest, grow restive,
 Talk of his honour, of his peace destroy'd,
 And, while obeying, mutter threats of vengeance.
 But now the humour of an idle youth,
 Disgusting trusted followers, sworn dependents,
 Plays football with his honour and my safety.

GIF. I'm sorry to find discord in your house,
 For I had hoped, while bringing you cold news,
 To find you arm'd in union 'gainst the danger.

AUCH. What can man speak that I would shrink to hear,
 And where the danger I would deign to shun?

[*He rises.*]

What should appal a man inured to perils,
 Like the bold climber on the crags of Ailsa?
 Winds whistle past him, billows rage below,
 The sea-fowl sweep around, with shriek and clang,
 One single slip, one unadvised pace,
 One qualm of giddiness—and peace be with him!
 But he whose grasp is sure, whose step is firm,
 Whose brain is constant—he makes one proud rock
 The means to scale another, till he stand
 Triumphant on the peak.

GIF. And so I trust
 Thou wilt surmount the danger now approaching,
 Which scarcely can I frame my tongue to tell you,
 Though I rode here on purpose.

AUCH. Cousin, I think thy heart was never coward,
And strange it seems thy tongue should take such
semblance.

I've heard of many a loud-mouth'd, noisy braggart,
Whose hand gave feeble sanction to his tongue ;
But thou art one whose heart can think bold things,
Whose hand can act them—but who shrinks to speak
them !

GIF. And if I speak them not, 'tis that I shame
To tell thee of the calumnies that load thee.
Things loudly spoken at the city Cross—
Things closely whisper'd in our Sovereign's ear—
Things which the plumed lord and flat-capp'd citizen
Do circulate amid their different ranks—
Things false, no doubt ; but, falsehoods while I deem them,
Still honouring thee, I shun the odious topic.

AUCH. Shun it not, cousin ; 'tis a friend's best office
To bring the news we hear unwillingly.
The sentinel, who tells the foe's approach,
And wakes the sleeping camp, does but his duty :
Be thou as bold in telling me of danger,
As I shall be in facing danger told of.

GIF. I need not bid thee recollect the death-feud
That raged so long betwixt thy house and Cassilis ;
I need not bid thee recollect the league,
When royal James himself stood mediator
Between thee and Earl Gilbert.

AUCH. Call you these news?—You might as well have
told me
That old King Coil is dead, and grav'd at Kylesfeld.
I'll help thee out—King James commanded us
Henceforth to live in peace, made us clasp hands too.
O, sir, when such an union hath been made,
In heart and hand conjoining mortal foes,
Under a monarch's royal mediation,
The league is not forgotten. And with this
What is there to be told ? The king commanded—
" Be friends." No doubt we were so—Who dare doubt it ?

GIF. You speak but half the tale.

AUCH. By good Saint Trimon, but I'll tell the whole !
There is no terror in the tale for me—
Go speak of ghosts to children !—This Earl Gilbert
(God sain him) loved Heaven's peace as well as I did,
And we were wondrous friends whene'er we met

At church or market, or in burrows town.
 Midst this, our good Lord Gilbert, Earl of Cassilis,
 Takes purpose he would journey forth to Edinburgh.
 The King was doling gifts of abbey-lands,
 Good things that thrifty house was wont to fish for.
 Our mighty Earl forsakes his sea-wash'd castle,
 Passes our borders some four miles from hence ;
 And, holding it unwholesome to be fasters
 Long after sunrise, lo ! The Earl and train
 Dismount, to rest their nags and eat their breakfast.
 The morning rose, the small birds caroll'd sweetly—
 The corks were drawn, the pasty brooks incision—
 His lordship jests, his train are choked with laughter
 When,—wondrous change of cheer, and most unlook'd for,
 Strange epilogue to bottle and to baked meat !—
 Flash'd from the greenwood half a score of carabines
 And the good Earl of Cassilis, in his breakfast,
 Had nooning, dinner, supper, all at once,
 Even in the morning that he closed his journey ;
 And the grim sexton, for his chamberlain,
 Made him the bed which rests the head for ever.

GIF. Told with much spirit, cousin—some there are
 Would add, and in a tone resembling triumph.
 And would that with these long establish'd facts
 My tale began and ended ! I must tell you,
 That evil-deeming censures of the events,
 Both at the time and now, throw blame on thee—
 Time, place, and circumstance, they say, proclaim thee,
 Alike, the author of that morning's ambush.

AUCH. Ay, 'tis an old belief in Carrick here,
 Where natives do not always die in bed,
 That if a Kennedy shall not attain
 Methuselah's last span, a Mure has slain him.
 Such is the general creed of all their clan.
 Thank Heaven, that they're bound to prove the charge
 They are so prompt in making. They have clamour'd
 Enough of this before, to show their malice.
 But what said these coward pickthanks when I came
 Before the King, before the Justicers,
 Rebutting all their calumnies, and daring them
 To show that I knew aught of Cassilis' journey—
 Which way he meant to travel—where to halt—
 Without which knowledge I possess'd no means
 To dress an ambush for him ? Did I not

Defy the assembled clan of Kennedys
 To show, by proof direct or inferential,
 Wherefore they slander'd me with this foul charge?
 My gauntlet rung before them in the court,
 And I did dare the best of them to lift it,
 And prove such charge a true one—Did I not?

GIF. I saw your gauntlet lie before the Kennedys,
 Who look'd on it as men do on an adder,
 Longing to crush, and yet afraid to grasp it.
 Not a eye sparkled—not a foot advanced—
 No arm was stretch'd to lift the fatal symbol.

AUCH. Then, wherefore do the hildings murmur now?
 Wish they to see again, how one bold Mure
 Can baffle and defy their assembled valour?

GIF. No; but they speak of evidence suppress'd.

AUCH. Suppress'd!—what evidence?—by whom suppress'd?

What Will-o'-Wisp—what idiot of a witness,
 Is he to whom they trace an empty voice,
 But cannot show his person?

GIF. They pretend,
 With the King's leave, to bring it to a trial;
 Averring that a lad, named Quentin Blane,
 Brought thee a letter from the murder'd Earl,
 With friendly greetings, telling of his journey,
 The hour which he set forth, the place he halted at
 Affording thee the means to form the ambush,
 Of which your hatred made the application.

AUCH. A prudent Earl, indeed, if such his practice,
 When dealing with a recent enemy!
 And what should he propose by such strange confidence
 In one who sought it not?

GIF. His purposes were kindly, say the Kennedys—
 Desiring you would meet him where he halted,
 Offering to undertake whate'er commissions
 You listed trust him with, for court or city:
 And, thus apprised of Cassilis' purposed journey,
 And of his halting place, you placed the ambush,
 Prepared the homicides—

AUCH. They're free to say their pleasure. They are men
 Of the new court—and I am but a fragment
 Of stout old Morton's faction. It is reason
 That such as I be rooted from the earth
 That they may have full room to spread their branches.

No doubt, 'tis easy to find strolling vagrants
 To prove whate'er they prompt. This Quentin Blane—
 Did you not call him so?—why comes he now?
 And wherefore not before? This must be answer'd—
 (*abruptly*)—

Where is he now?

GIF. Abroad—they say—kidnapp'd,
 By you kidnapp'd, that he might die in Flanders.
 But orders have been sent for his discharge,
 And his transmission hither.

AUCH. (*assuming an air of composure*) When they pro-
 duce such witness, cousin Gifford,
 We'll be prepared to meet it. In the meanwhile,
 The King doth ill to throw his royal sceptre
 In the accuser's scale, ere he can know
 How justice shall incline it.

GIF. Our sage prince
 Resents, it may be, less the death of Cassilis,
 Than he is angry that the feud should burn,
 After his royal voice had said, "Be quenched:"
 Thus urging prosecution less for slaughter,
 Than that, being done against the King's command,
 Treason is mix'd with homicide.

AUCH. Ha! ha! most true, my cousin.
 Why, well consider'd, 'tis a crime so great
 To slay one's enemy, the King forbidding it,
 Like parricide, it should be held impossible.
 'Tis just as if a wretch retain'd the evil,
 When the King's touch had bid the sores be heal'd;
 And such a crime merits the stake at least.
 What! can there be within a Scottish bosom
 A feud so deadly, that it kept its ground
 When the King said, Be friends! It is not credible.
 Were I King James, I never would believe it:
 I'd rather think the story all a dream,
 And that there was no friendship, feud, nor journey,
 No halt, no ambush, and no Earl of Cassilis,
 Than dream anointed Majesty has wrong!—

GIF. Speak within door, coz.

AUCH. O, true—(*aside*)—I shall betray myself
 Even to this half-bred fool.—I must have room,
 Room for an instant, or I suffocate.—
 Cousin, I prithee call our Philip hither—
 Forgive me; 'twere more meet I summon'd him

Myself; but then the sight of yonder revel
 Would chafe my blood, and I have need of coolness.

GIF. I understand thee—I will bring him straight.

[*Exit.*]

AUCH. And if thou dost, he's lost his ancient trick
 To fathom, as he wont, his five-pint flagons.—
 This space is mine—O for the power to fill it,
 Instead of senseless rage and empty curses,
 With the dark spell which witches learn from fiends,
 That smites the object of their hate afar,
 Nor leaves a token of its mystic action,
 Stealing the soul from out the unscathed body,
 As lightning melts the blade, nor harms the scabbard!
 —'Tis vain to wish for it—Each curse of mine
 Falls to the ground as harmless as the arrows
 Which children shoot at stars! The time for thought,
 If thought could aught avail me, melts away,
 Like to a snowball in a schoolboy's hand,
 That melts the faster the more close he grasps it!--
 If I had time, this Scottish Solomon,
 Whom some call son of David the Musician,
 Might find it perilous work to march to Carrick.
 There's many a feud still slumbering in its ashes,
 Whose embers are yet red. Nobles we have,
 Stout as old Graysteel, and as hot as Bothwell;
 Here too are castles look from crags as high
 On seas as wide as Logan's. So the King—
 Pshaw! He is here again—

Enter GIFFORD.

GIF.

I heard you name

The King, my kinsman; know, he comes not hither.

AUCH. (*affecting indifference*) Nay, then we need not
 broach our barrels, cousin,

Nor purchase us new jerkins.—Comes not Philip?

GIF. Yes, sir. He tarries but to drink a service
 To his good friends at parting.

AUCH. Friends for the beadle or the sheriff-officer.
 Well, let it pass. Who comes, and how attended,
 Since James designs not westward?

GIF. O you shall have, instead, his fiery functionary,
 George Home that was, but now Dunbar's great Earl;
 He leads a royal host, and comes to show you
 How he distributes justice on the Border,

Where judge and hangman oft reverse their office,
 And the noose does its work before the sentence.
 But I have said my tidings best and worst.
 None but yourself can know what course the time
 And peril may demand. To lift your banner,
 If I might be a judge, were desperate game :
 Ireland and Galloway offer your convenience
 For flight, if flight be thought the better remedy ;
 To face the court requires the consciousness
 And confidence of innocence. You alone
 Can judge if you possess these attributes.

[*A noise behind the scenes.*]

AUCH. Philip, I think, has broken up his revels ;
 His ragged regiment are dispersing them,
 Well liquor'd, doubtless. They're disbanded soldiers,
 Or some such vagabonds.—Here comes the gallant.

[*Enter PHILIP. He has a buff-coat and head-piece, wears a sword and dagger, with pistols at his girdle. He appears to be affected by liquor, but to be by no means intoxicated.*]

AUCH. You scarce have been made known to one another.
 Although you sate together at the board.—
 Son Philip, know and prize our cousin Gifford.

PHI. (*tastes the wine on the table*) If you had prized him,
 sir, you had been loth
 To have welcomed him in bastard Alicant :
 I'll make amends, by pledging his good journey
 In glorious Burgundy.—The stirrup-cup, ho !
 And bring my cousin's horses to the court.

AUCH. (*draws him aside*) The stirrup-cup ! He doth not
 ride to-night—
 Shame on such churlish conduct to a kinsman !

PHI. (*aside to his father*) I've news of pressing import.
 Send the fool off.—Stay, I will start him for you.
 (*To GIFF.*) Yes, my kind cousin, Burgundy is better,
 On a night-ride, to those who thread our moors,
 And we may deal it freely to our friends,
 For we came freely by it. Yonder ocean
 Rolls many a purple cask upon our shore,
 Rough with embossed shells and shagged sea-weed,
 When the good skipper and his careful crew
 Have had their latest earthly draught of brine,
 And gone to quench, or to endure their thirst,

Where nectar's plenty, or even water's scarce,
And filter'd to the parched crew by dropsfull.

AUCH. Thou'rt mad, son Philip!—Gifford's no intruder,
That we should rid him hence by such wild rants :
My kinsman hither rode at his own danger,
To tell us that Dunbar is hasting to us,
With a strong force, and with the King's commission,
To enforce against our house a hateful charge,
With every measure of extremity.

PHI. And is this all that our good cousin tells us ?
I can say more, thanks to the ragged regiment,
With whose good company you have upbraided me,
On whose authority, I tell thee, cousin,
Dunbar is here already.

GIF. Already ?

PHI. Yes, gentle coz. And you, my sire, be hasty
In what you think to do.

AUCH. I think thou darest not jest on such a subject.
Where hadst thou these fell tidings ?

PHI. Where you, too, might have heard them, noble
father,

Save that your ears, nail'd to our kinsman's lips,
Would list no coarser accents. O, my soldiers,
My merry crew of vagabonds, for ever !
Scum of the Netherlands, and wash'd ashore
Upon this coast like unregarded sea-weed,
They had not been two hours on Scottish land,
When, lo ! they met a military friend,
An ancient fourier, known to them of old,
Who, warm'd by certain stoups of searching wine,
Inform'd his old companions that Dunbar
Left Glasgow yesterday, come here to-morrow ;
Himself, he said, was sent a spy before,
To view what preparations we were making.

AUCH. (to GIF.) If this be sooth, good kinsman, thou
must claim

To take a part with us for life and death,
Or speed from hence, and leave us to our fortune.

GIF. In such dilemma,
Believe me, friend, I'd choose upon the instant—
But I lack harness, and a steed to charge on,
For mine is overtired, and, save my page,
There's not a man to back me. But I'll hie
To Kyle, and raise my vassals to your aid.

PHI. 'Twill be when the rats,
That on these tidings fly this house of ours,
Come back to pay their rents.—(*apart.*)

AUCH. Courage, cousin—
Thou goest not hence ill mounted for thy need
Full forty coursers feed in my wide stalls,
The best of them is yours to speed your journey.

PHI. Stand not on ceremony, good our cousin,
When safety signs, to shorten courtesy.

GIFF. (*to AUCH.*) Farewell, then cousin, for my tarrying
here
Were ruin to myself, small aid to you ;
Yet loving well your name and family,
I'd fain——

PHI. Be gone?—that is our object, too—
Kinsman, adieu.

[*Exit GIFFORD.* PHILIP *calls after him.*
You yeoman of the stable,

Give Master Gifford there my fleetest steed,
Yon cut-tail'd roan that trembles at a spear.—

[*Trampling of the horse heard going off.*

Hark ! he departs. How swift the dastard rides,
To shun the neighbourhood of jeopardy !

[*He lays aside the appearance of levity which he has
hitherto worn, and says very seriously,*

And now, my father—

AUCH. And now, my son—thou'st ta'en a perilous game
Into thine hands, rejecting elder counsel,—
How dost thou mean to play it ?

PHI. Sir, good gamesters play not
Till they review the cards which fate has dealt them,
Computing thus the chances of the game ;
And wofully they seem to weigh against us.

AUCH. Exile's a passing ill, and may be borne ;
And when Dunbar and all his myrmidons
Are eastward turn'd, we'll seize our own again.

PHI. Would that were all the risk we had to stand to !
But more and worse,—a doom of treason, forfeiture,
Death to ourselves, dishonour to our house,
Is what the stern Justiciary menaces ;
And, fatally for us, he hath the means
To make his threatenings good.

AUCH. It cannot be. I tell thee, there's no force
In Scottish law to raze a house like mine,

Coeval with the time the Lords of Galloway
 Submitted them unto the Scottish sceptre,
 Renouncing rights of Tanistry and Brehon.
 Some dreams they have of evidence ; some suspicion.
 But old Montgomery knows my purpose well,
 And long before their mandate reach the camp
 To crave the presence of this mighty witness,
 He will be fitted with an answer to it.

PHI. Father, what we call great, is often ruin'd
 By means so ludicrously disproportion'd,
 They make me think upon the gunner's linstock,
 Which, yielding forth a light about the size
 And semblance of the glow-worm, yet applied
 To powder, blew a palace into atoms,
 Sent a young King—a young Queen's mate at least—
 Into the air, as high as e'er flew night-hawk,
 And made such wild work in the realm of Scotland,
 As they can tell who heard,—and you were one
 Who saw, perhaps, the night-flight which began it.

AUCH. If thou hast nought to speak but drunken folly,
 I cannot listen longer.

PHI. I will speak brief and sudden.—There is one
 Whose tongue to us has the same perilous force
 Which Bothwell's powder had to Kirk of Field ;
 One whose least tones, and those but peasant accents,
 Could rend the roof from off our fathers' castle,
 Level its tallest turret with its base ;
 And he that doth possess this wondrous power
 Sleeps this same night not five miles distant from us.

AUCH. (*who had looked on PHILIP with much appearance of astonishment and doubt, exclaims*) Then thou
 art mad indeed !—Ha ! ha ! I'm glad on't.
 I'd purchase an escape from what I dread,
 Even by the frenzy of my only son !

PHI. I thank you, but agree not to the bargain.
 You rest on what yon civet cat has said :
 Yon silken doublet, stuff'd with rotten straw,
 Told you but half the truth, and knew no more.
 But my good vagrants had a perfect tale :
 They told me, little judging the importance,
 That Quentin Blane had been discharged with them.
 They told me, that a quarrel happ'd at landing,
 And that the youngster and an ancient sergent
 Had left their company, and taken refuge

In Chapeldonan, where our ranger dwells ;
 They saw him scale the cliff on which it stands,
 Ere they were out of sight ; the old man with him.
 And therefore laugh no more at me as mad ;
 But laugh, if thou hast list for merriment,
 To think he stands on the same land with us,
 Whose absence thou wouldst deem were cheaply purchased
 With thy soul's ransom and thy body's danger.

AUCH. 'Tis then a fatal truth ! Thou art no yelper
 To open rashly on so wild a scent ;
 Thou'rt the young bloodhound, which careers and springs,
 Frolics and fawns, as if the friend of man,
 But seizes on his victim like a tiger.

PHI. No matter what I am—I'm as you bred me ;
 So let that pass till there be time to mend me,
 And let us speak like men, and to the purpose.
 This object of our fear and of our dread,
 Since such our pride must own him, sleeps to-night
 Within our power :—to-morrow in Dunbar's,
 And we are then his victims.

AUCH. He is in *ours* to-night.

PHI. He is. I'll answer that MacLellan's trusty.

AUCH. Yet he replied to you to-day full rudely.

PHI. Yes ! The poor knave has got a handsome wife,
 And is gone mad with jealousy.

AUCH. Fool !—When we need the utmost faith, allegiance,
 Obedience, and attachment in our vassals,
 Thy wild intrigues pour gall into their hearts,
 And turn their love to hatred !

PHI. Most reverend sire, you talk of ancient morals,
 Preach'd on by Knox, and practised by Glencairn ;
 Respectable, indeed, but somewhat musty
 In these our modern nostrils. In our days,
 If a young baron chance to leave his vassal
 The sole possessor of a handsome wife,
 'Tis sign he loves his follower ; and, if not,
 He loves his follower's wife, which often proves
 The surer bond of patronage. Take either case :
 Favour flows in of course, and vassals rise.

AUCH. Philip, this is infamous,
 And, what is worse, impolitic. Take example :
 Break not God's laws or man's for each temptation
 That youth and blood suggest. I am a man—
 A weak and erring man ;—full well thou know'st

That I may hardly term myself a pattern
 Even to my son—yet thus far will I say,
 I never swerved from my integrity,
 Save at the voice of strong necessity,
 Or such o'erpowering view of high advantage
 As wise men liken to necessity,
 In strength and force compulsive. No one saw me
 Exchange my reputation for my pleasure,
 Or do the Devil's work without his wages.
 I practised prudence, and paid tax to virtue,
 By following her behests, save where strong reason
 Compell'd a deviation. Then, if preachers
 At times look'd sour, or elders shook their heads,
 They could not term my walk irregular ;
 For I stood up still for the worthy cause,
 A pillar, though a flaw'd one, of the altar,
 Kept a strict walk, and led three hundred horse.

PHI. Ah, these three hundred horse in such rough times
 Were better commendation to a party
 Than all your efforts at hypocrisy,
 Betray'd so oft by avarice and ambition,
 And dragg'd to open shame. But, righteous father,
 When sire and son unite in mutual crime,
 And join their efforts to the same enormity,
 It is no time to measure other's faults,
 Or fix the amount of each. Most moral father,
 Think if it be a moment now to weigh
 The vices of the Heir of Auchindrane,
 Or take precaution that the ancient house
 Shall have another heir than the sly courtier
 That's gaping for the forfeiture.

AUCH. We'll disappoint him, Philip,—
 We'll disappoint him yet. It is a folly,
 A wilful cheat, to cast our eyes behind,
 When time, and the fast flitting opportunity,
 Call loudly, nay, compel us to look forward :
 Why are we not already at MacLellan's,
 Since there the victim sleeps ?

PHI. Nay, soft, I pray thee.
 I had not made your piety my confessor,
 Nor enter'd in debate on these sage councils,
 Which you're more like to give than I to profit by,
 Could I have used the time more usefully ;
 But first an interval must pass between

The fate of Quentin and the little artifice
That shall detach him from his comrade,
The stout old soldier that I told you of.

AUCH. How work a point so difficult—so dangerous?

PHI. 'Tis cared for. Mark, my father, the convenience
Arising from mean company. My agents
Are at my hand, like a good workman's tools,
And if I mean a mischief, ten to one
That they anticipate the deed and guilt.

Well knowing this, when first the vagrant's tattle
Gave me the hint that Quentin was so near us,
Instant I sent MacLellan, with strong charges
To stop him for the night, and bring me word,
Like an accomplish'd spy, how all things stood,
Lulling the enemy into security.

AUCH. There was a prudent general!

PHI. MacLellan went and came within the hour.
The jealous bee, which buzzes in his nightcap,
Had humm'd to him, this fellow, Quentin Blane,
Had been in schoolboy days an humble lover
Of his own pretty wife—

AUCH. Most fortunate!

The knave will be more prompt to serve our purpose.

PHI. No doubt on't. 'Mid the tidings he brought back
Was one of some importance. The old man
Is flush of dollars; this I caused him tell
Among his comrades, who became as eager
To have him in their company, as e'er
They had been wild to part with him. And in brief space
A letter's framed by an old hand amongst them,
Familiar with such feats. It bore the name
And character of old Montgomery,
Whom he might well suppose at no great distance,
Commanding his old Sergeant Hildebrand,
By all the ties of late authority,
Conjuring him by ancient soldiership,
To hasten to his mansion instantly,
On business of high import, with a charge
To come alone——

AUCH. Well, he sets out, I doubt it not,—what follows?

PHI. I am not curious into others' practices,—
So far I'm an economist in guilt,
As you my sire advise. But on the road
To old Montgomery's he meets his comrades,

They nourish grudge against him and his dollars,
 And things may hap, which counsel, learn'd in law,
 Call Robbery and Murder. Should he live,
 He has seen nought that we would hide from him.

AUCH. Who carries the forged letter to the veteran?

PHI. Why, Niel MacLellan, who, return'd again
 To his own tower, as if to pass the night there.
 They pass'd on him, or tried to pass, a story,
 As if they wish'd the sergeant's company,
 Without the young comptroller's—that is Quentin's,
 And he became an agent of their plot,
 That he might better carry on our own.

AUCH. There's life in it—yes, there is life in't;
 And we will have a mounted party ready
 To scour the moors in quest of the banditti
 That kill'd the poor old man—they shall die instantly.
 Dunbar shall see us use sharp justice here,
 As well as he in Teviotdale. You are sure
 You gave no hint nor impulse to their purpose?

PHI. It needed not. The whole pack oped at once
 Upon the scent of dollars.—But time comes
 When I must seek the tower, and act with Niel
 What farther's to be done.

AUCH. Alone with him thou goest not. He bears grudge—
 Thou art my only son, and on a night
 When such wild passions are so free abroad,
 When such wild deeds are doing, 'tis but natural
 I guarantee thy safety.—I'll ride with thee.

PHI. E'en as you will, my lord. But, pardon me,—
 If you will come, let us not have a word
 Of conscience, and of pity, and forgiveness;
 Fine words to-morrow, out of place to-night.
 Take counsel then, leave all this work to me;
 Call up your household, make fit preparation,
 In love and peace, to welcome this Earl Justiciar,
 As one that's free of guilt. Go, deck the castle
 As for an honour'd guest. Hallow the chapel
 (If they have power to hallow it) with thy prayers.
 Let me ride forth alone, and ere the sun
 Comes o'er the eastern hill, thou shalt accost him:
 "Now do thy worst, thou oft-returning spy,
 Here's nought thou canst discover."

AUCH. Yet goest thou not alone with that MacLellan!
 He deems thou bearest will to injure him,

And seek'st occasion suiting to such will.
 Philip, thou art irreverent, fierce, ill-nurtured,
 Stained with low vices, which disgust a father ;
 Yet ridest thou not alone with yonder man, —
 Come weal come woe, myself will go with thee.

[*Exit, and calls to horse behind the scene.*]

PHI. (*alone*) Now would I give my fleetest horse to know
 What sudden thought roused this paternal care,
 And if 'tis on his own account or mine :
 'Tis true, he hath the deepest share in all
 That's likely now to hap, or which has happen'd.
 Yet strong through Nature's universal reign,
 The link which binds the parent to the offspring :
 The she-wolf knows it, and the tigress owns it.
 So that dark man, who, shunning what is vicious,
 Ne'er turn'd aside from an atrocity,
 Hath still some care left for his hapless offspring.
 Therefore 'tis meet, though wayward, light, and stubborn,
 That I should do for him all that a son
 Can do for sire—and his dark wisdom join'd
 To influence my bold courses, 'twill be hard
 To break our mutual purpose.—Horses there ! [Exit.]

ACT III.—SCENE I.

It is moonlight. The scene is the Beach beneath the Tower which was exhibited in the first scene,—the Vessel is gone from her anchorage. AUCHINDRANE and PHILIP, as if dismounted from their horses, come forward cautiously.

PHI. The nags are safely stow'd. Their noise might scare him ;
 Let them be safe, and ready when we need them,
 The business is but short. We'll call MacLellan,
 To wake him, and in quiet bring him forth,
 If he be so disposed, for here are waters
 Enough to drown, and sand enough to cover him.
 But if he hesitate, or fear to meet us,
 By heaven I'll deal on him in Chapeldonan
 With my own hand !—

AUCH. Too furious boy !—alarm or noise undoes us,
 Our practice must be silent as 'tis sudden.
 Bethink thee that conviction of this slaughter

Confirms the very worst of accusations
 Our foes can bring against us. Wherefore should we,
 Who by our birth and fortune mate with nobles,
 And are allied with them, take this lad's life,—
 His peasant life,—unless to quash his evidence,
 Taking such pains to rid him from the world,
 Who would, if spared, have fix'd a crime upon us?

PHI. Well, I do own me one of those wise folks,
 Who think that when a deed of fate is plann'd,
 The execution cannot be too rapid.
 But do we still keep purpose? Is't determined
 He sails for Ireland—and without a wherry?
 Salt water is his passport—is it not so?

AUCH. I would it could be otherwise.
 Might he not go there while in life and limb
 And breathe his span out in another air?
 Many seek Ulster never to return—
 Why might this wretched youth not harbour there?

PHI. With all my heart. It is small honour to me
 To be the agent in a work like this.—
 Yet this poor caitiff, having thrust himself
 Into the secrets of a noble house
 And twined himself so closely with our safety,
 That we must perish, or that he must die,
 I'll hesitate as little on the action,
 As I would do to slay the animal
 Whose flesh supplies my dinner. 'Tis as harmless,
 That deer or steer, as is this Quentin Blane,
 And not more necessary is its death
 To our accommodation—so we slay it
 Without a moment's pause or hesitation.

AUCH. 'Tis not, my son, the feeling call'd remorse,
 That now lies tugging at this heart of mine,
 Engendering thoughts that stop the lifted hand.
 Have I not heard John Knox pour forth his thunders
 Against the oppressor and the man of blood,
 In accents of a minister of vengeance?
 Were not his fiery eyeballs turn'd on me,
 As if he said expressly, "Thou'rt the man?"
 Yet did my solid purpose, as I listen'd,
 Remain unshaken as that massive rock.

PHI. Well, then, I'll understand 'tis not remorse,—
 As 'tis a foible little known to thee,—
 That interrupts the purpose. What, then, is it?

Is't scorn, or is't compassion? One thing's certain,
 Either the feeling must have free indulgence,
 Or fully be subjected to your reason—
 There is no room for these same treacherous courses,
 Which men call moderate measures,
 We must confide in Quentin, or must slay him.

AUCH. In Ireland he might live afar from us.

PHI. Among Queen Mary's faithful partisans,
 Your ancient enemies, the haughty Hamiltons,
 The stern MacDonnells, the resentful Græmes—
 When these around him, and with Cassilis' death
 Exasperating them against you, think, my father,
 What chance of Quentin's silence.

AUCH. Too true—too true. He is a silly youth too,
 Who had not wit to shift for his own living—
 A bashful lover, whom his rivals laugh'd at—
 Of pliant temper, which companions play'd on—
 A moonlight waker, and a noontide dreamer—
 A torturer of phrases into sonnets,—
 Whom all might lead that chose to praise his rhymes.

PHI. I marvel that your memory has room
 To hold so much on such a worthless subject.

AUCH. Base in himself, and yet so strangely link'd
 With me and with my fortunes, that I've studied
 To read him through and through, as I would read
 Some paltry rhyme of vulgar prophecy,
 Said to contain the fortunes of my house ;
 And, let me speak him truly—He is grateful,
 Kind, tractable, obedient—a child
 Might lead him by a thread—He shall not die !

PHI. Indeed !—then have we had our midnight ride
 To wondrous little purpose.

AUCH. By the blue heaven,
 Thou shalt not murder him, cold selfish sensualist !
 Yon pure vault speaks it—yonder summer moon,
 With its ten million sparklers, cries, Forbear,
 The deep earth sighs it forth—Thou shalt not murder !—
 Thou shalt not mar the image of thy Maker !
 Thou shalt not from thy brother take the life,
 The precious gift which God alone can give !—

PHI. Here is a worthy guerdon now, for stuffing
 His memory with old saws and holy sayings !
 They come upon him in the very crisis,
 And when his resolution should be firmest,

They shake it like a palsy—Let it be,
 He'll end at last by yielding to temptation,
 Consenting to the thing which must be done,
 With more remorse the more he hesitates.—

[*To his Father, who has stood fixed after his last speech.*

Well, sir, 'tis fitting you resolve at last,
 How the young clerk shall be disposed upon ;
 Unless you would ride home to Auchindrane,
 And bid them rear the Maiden in the court-yard,
 That when Dunbar comes, he have nought to do
 But bid us kiss the cushion and the headsman.

AUCH. It is too true—There is no safety for us,
 Consistent with the unhappy wretch's life !
 In Ireland he is sure to find my enemies.
 Arran I've proved—the Netherlands I've tried,
 But wilds and wars return him on my hands.

PHI. Yet fear not, father, we'll make surer work ;
 The land has caves, the sea has whirlpools,
 Where that which they suck in returns no more.

AUCH. I will know nought of it, hard-hearted boy !

PHI. Hard-hearted ! Why—my heart is soft as yours ;
 But then they must not feel remorse at once,
 We can't afford such wasteful tenderness :
 I can mouth forth remorse as well as you.
 Be executioner, and I'll be chaplain,
 And say as mild and moving things as you can ;
 But one of us must keep his steely temper.

AUCH. Do thou the deed—I cannot look on it.

PHI. So be it—walk with me—MacLellan brings him
 The boat lies moor'd within that reach of rock,
 And 'twill require our greatest strength combined
 To launch it from the beach. Meantime, MacLellan
 Brings our man hither.—See the twinkling light
 That glances in the tower.

AUCH. Let us withdraw—for should he spy us suddenly,
 He may suspect us, and alarm the family.

PHI. Fear not, MacLellan has his trust and confidence,
 Bought with a few sweet words and welcomes home.

AUCH. But think you that the Ranger may be trusted ?

PHI. I'll answer for him.—Let's go float the shallop.

[*They go off, and as they leave the Stage, MACLELLAN
 is seen descending from the Tower with QUENTIN.
 The former bears a dark lantern. They come
 upon the Stage.*

MAC. (*showing the light*) So—bravely done—that's the last ledge of rocks,
And we are on the sands.—I have broke your slumbers
Somewhat untimely.

QUE. Do not think so, friend.
These six years past I have been used to stir
When the réveille rung ; and that, believe me,
Chooses the hours for rousing me at random,
And, having given its summons, yields no license
To indulge a second slumber. Nay, more, I'll tell thee
That, like a pleased child, I was e'en too happy
For sound repose.

MAC. The greater fool were you.
Men should enjoy the moments given to slumber ;
For who can tell how soon may be the waking,
Or where we shall have leave to sleep again ?

QUE. The God of Slumber comes not at command.
Last night the blood danced merry through my veins :
Instead of finding this our land of Carrick
The dreary waste my fears had apprehended,
I saw thy wife, MacLellan, and thy daughter,
And had a brother's welcome ;—saw thee, too,
Renew'd my early friendship with you both,
And felt once more that I had friends and country.
So keen the joy that tingled through my system,
Join'd with the searching powers of yonder wine,
That I am glad to leave my feverish lair,
Although my hostess smooth'd my couch herself,
To cool my brow upon this moonlight beach,
Gaze on the moonlight dancing on the waves.
Such scenes are wont to soothe me into melancholy ;
But such the hurry of my spirits now,
That every thing I look on makes me laugh.

MAC. I've seen but few so gamesome, Master Quentin,
Being roused from sleep so suddenly as you were.

QUE. Why, there's the jest on't. Your old castle's
haunted.

In vain the host—in vain the lovely hostess,
In kind addition to all means of rest,
Add their best wishes for our sound repose,
When some hobgoblin brings a pressing message :
Montgomery presently must see his serjeant,
And up gets Hildebrand, and off he trudges.
I can't but laugh to think upon the grin

With which he doff'd the kerchief he had twisted
 Around his brows, and put his morion on—
 Ha ! ha ! ha ! ha !

MAC. I'm glad to see you merry, Quentin.

QUE. Why, faith, my spirits are but transitory,
 And you may live with me a month or more,
 And never see me smile. Then some such trifle
 As yonder little maid of yours would laugh at,
 Will serve me for a theme of merriment—
 Even now, I scarce can keep my gravity ;
 We were so snugly settled in our quarters,
 With full intent to let the sun be high
 Ere we should leave our beds—and first the one
 And then the other's summon'd briefly forth,
 To the old tune, “ Black Bandsmen, up and march ! ”

MAC. Well ! you shall sleep anon—rely upon it—
 And make up time misspent. Meantime, methinks,
 You are so merry on your broken slumbers,
 You ask'd not why I call'd you.

QUE. I can guess,
 You lack my aid to search the weir for seals,
 You lack my company to stalk a deer.
 Think you I have forgot your silvan tasks.
 Which oft you have permitted me to share,
 Till days that we were rivals ?

MAC. You have memory
 Of that too ?—

QUE. Like the memory of a dream,
 Delusion far too exquisite to last.

MAC. You guess not then for what I call you forth,
 It was to meet a friend—

QUE. What friend ? Thyself excepted,
 The good old man who's gone to see Montgomery,
 And one to whom I once gave dearer title,
 I know not in wide Scotland man or woman
 Whom I could name a friend.

MAC. Thou art mistaken,
 There is a Baron, and a powerful one—

QUE. There flies my fit of mirth. You have a grave
 And alter'd man before you.

MAC. Compose yourself, there is no cause for fear,—
 He will and must speak with you.

QUE. Spare me the meeting, Niel, I cannot see him.
 Say, I'm just landed on my native earth ;

Say, that I will not cumber it a day ;
 Say, that my wretched thread of poor existence
 Shall be drawn out in solitude and exile,
 Where never memory of so mean a thing
 Again shall cross his path—but do not ask me
 To see or speak again with that dark man !

MAC. Your fears are now as foolish as your mirth—
 What should the powerful Knight of Auchindrane
 In common have with such a man as thou ?

QUE. No matter what—Enough, I will not seek him.

MAC. He is thy master, and he claims obedience.

QUE. My master ? Ay, my task-master—Ever since
 I could write man, his hand hath been upon me,
 No step I've made but cumber'd with his chain,
 And I am weary on't—I will not see him.

MAC. You must and shall—there is no remedy.

QUE. Take heed that you compel me not to find one.
 I've seen the wars since we had strife together ;
 To put my late experience to the test
 Were something dangerous—Ha, I am betray'd !

*[While the latter part of this dialogue is passing,
 AUCHINDRANE and PHILIP enter on the Stage
 from behind, and suddenly present themselves.]*

AUCH. What says the runagate ?

QUE. *(laying aside all appearance of resistance)* Nothing,
 you are my fate ;

And in a shape more fearfully resistless,
 My evil angel could not stand before me.

AUCH. And so you scruple, slave, at my command,
 To meet me when I deign to ask thy presence ?

QUE. No, sir ; I had forgot—I am your bond-slave ;
 But sure a passing thought of independence,
 For which I've seen whole nations doing battle,
 Was not, in one who has so long enjoy'd it,
 A crime beyond forgiveness.

AUCH. We shall see :

Thou wert my vassal, born upon my land,
 Bred by my bounty—It concern'd me highly,
 Thou know'st it did—and yet against my charge
 Again I find thy worthlessness in Scotland.

QUE. Alas ! the wealthy and the powerful know not
 How very dear to those who have least share in't,
 Is that sweet word of country ! The poor exile
 Feels, in each action of the varied day,

His doom of banishment. The very air
 Cools not his brow as in his native land ;
 The scene is strange, the food is loathly to him ;
 The language, nay, the music jars his ear.
 Why should I, guiltless of the slightest crime,
 Suffer a punishment which, sparing life,
 Deprives that life of all which men hold dear ?

AUCH. Hear ye the serf I bred, begin to reckon
 Upon his rights and pleasure ! Who am I—
 Thou abject, who am I, whose will thou thwartest ?

PHI. Well spoke, my pious sire. There goes remorse !
 Let once thy precious pride take fire, and then,
 MacLellan, you and I may have small trouble.

QUE. Your words are deadly, and your power resistless ;
 I'm in your hands—but, surely, less than life
 May give you the security you seek,
 Without commission of a mortal crime.

AUCH. Who is't would deign to think upon thy life ?
 I but require of thee to speed to Ireland,
 Where thou mayst sojourn for some little space,
 Having due means of living dealt to thee,
 And, when it suits the changes of the times,
 Permission to return.

QUE. Noble my lord,
 I am too weak to combat with your pleasure ;
 Yet, O, for mercy's sake, and for the sake
 Of that dear land which is our common mother,
 Let me not part in darkness from my country !
 Pass but an hour or two, and every cape,
 Headland, and bay, shall gleam with new-born light,
 And I'll take boat as gaily as the bird
 That soars to meet the morning.
 Grant me but this—to show no darker thoughts
 Are on your heart than those your speech expresses !

PHI. A modest favour, friend, is this you ask !
 Are we to pace the beach like watermen,
 Waiting your worship's pleasure to take boat ?
 No, by my faith ! you go upon the instant.
 The boat lies ready, and the ship receives you
 Near to the point of Turnberry.—Come, we wait you ;
 Bestir you !

QUE. I obey.—Then farewell, Scotland,
 And Heaven forgive my sins, and grant that mercy,
 Which mortal man deserves not !

AUCH. (*speaks aside to his Son*) What signal
Shall let me know 'tis done?

PHI. When the light is quench'd,
Your fears for Quentin Blane are at an end.—
(*To QUE.*) Come, comrade, come, we must begin our
voyage.

QUE. But when, O when to end it!

[*He goes off reluctantly with PHILIP and MACLELLAN.*
AUCHINDRANE stands looking after them. *The*
Moon becomes overclouded, and the Stage dark.
AUCHINDRANE, *who has gazed fixedly and eagerly*
after those who have left the Stage, becomes
animated, and speaks.

AUCH. It is no fallacy!—The night is dark,
The moon has sunk before the deepening clouds;
I cannot on the murky beach distinguish
The shallop from the rocks which lie beside it;
I cannot see tall Philip's floating plume,
Nor trace the sullen brow of Niel MacLellan;
Yet still that caitiff's visage is before me,
With chattering teeth, mazed look, and bristling hair,
As he stood here this moment!—Have I changed
My human eyes for those of some night prowler,
The wolf's, the tiger-cat's, or the hoarse bird's,
That spies its prey at midnight? I can see him—
Yes, I can see him, seeing no one else,—
And well it is I do so. In his absence,
Strange thoughts of pity mingled with my purpose,
And moved remorse within me—But they vanish'd
Whene'er he stood a living man before me;
Then my antipathy awaked within me,
Seeing its object close within my reach,
Till I could scarce forbear him.—How they linger!
The boat's not yet to sea!—I ask myself,
What has the poor wretch done to wake my hatred—
Docile, obedient, and in sufferance patient?—
As well demand what evil has the hare
Done to the hound that courses her in sport.
Instinct infallible supplies the reason—
And that must plead my cause.—The vision's gone!
Their boat now walks the waves; a single gleam,
Now seen, now lost, is all that marks her course;
That soon shall vanish too—then all is over!—
Would it were o'er, for in this moment lies

The agony of ages!—Now 'tis gone—
 And all is acted!—no—she breasts again
 The opposing wave, and bears the tiny sparkle
 Upon her crest—(*A faint cry heard as from seaward.*)

Ah! there was fatal evidence,
 All's over now, indeed!—The light is quench'd—
 And Quentin, source of all my fear, exists not.—
 The morning tide shall sweep his corpse to sea,
 And hide all memory of this stern night's work.

[*He walks in a slow and deeply meditative manner towards the side of the Stage, and suddenly meets MARION, the wife of MACLELLAN, who has descended from the Castle.*

Now, how to meet Dunbar—Heaven guard my senses!
 Stand! who goes there?—Do spirits walk the earth
 Ere yet they've left the body!

MAR. Is it you,
 My lord, on this wild beach at such an hour!

AUCH. It is MacLellan's wife, in search of him,
 Or of her lover—of the murderer,
 Or of the murder'd man.—Go to, Dame Marion,
 Men have their hunting-gear to give an eye to,
 Their snares and trackings for their game. But women
 Should shun the night air. A young wife also,
 Still more a handsome one, should keep her pillow
 Till the sun gives example for her wakening.
 Come, dame, go back—back to your bed again.

MAR. Hear me, my lord! there have been sights and
 sounds

That terrified my child and me—Groans, screams,
 As if of dying seamen, came from ocean—
 A corpse-light danced upon the crested waves
 For several minutes' space, then sunk at once.
 When we retired to rest we had two guests,
 Besides my husband Niel—I'll tell your lordship
 Who the men were——

AUCH. Pshaw, woman, can you think
 That I have any interest in your gossips?
 Please your own husband, and that you may please him,
 Get thee to bed, and shut up doors, good dame.
 Were I MacLellan, I should scarce be satisfied
 To find thee wandering here in mist and moonlight,
 When silence should be in thy habitation,
 And sleep upon thy pillow.

MAR. Good my lord,
This is a holyday.—By an ancient custom
Our children seek the shore at break of day,
And gather shells, and dance, and play, and sport them
In honour of the Ocean. Old men say
The custom is derived from heathen times. Our Isabel
Is mistress of the feast, and you may think
She is awake already, and impatient
To be the first shall stand upon the beach,
And bid the sun good-morrow.

AUCH. Ay, indeed?
Linger such dregs of heathendom among you?
And hath Knox preach'd, and Wishart died, in vain?
Take notice, I forbid these sinful practices,
And will not have my followers mingle in them.

MAR. If such your honour's pleasure, I must go
And lock the door on Isabel; she is wilful,
And voice of mine will have small force to keep her
From the amusement she so long has dream'd of.
But I must tell your honour, the old people,
That were survivors of the former race,
Prophesied evil if this day should pass
Without due homage to the mighty Ocean.

AUCH. Folly and Papistry—Perhaps the ocean
Hath had his morning sacrifice already;
Or can you think the dreadful element,
Whose frown is death, whose roar the dirge of navies,
Will miss the idle pageant you prepare for?
I've business for you, too—the dawn advances—
I'd have thee lock thy little child in safety,
And get to Auchindrane before the sun rise;
Tell them to get a royal banquet ready,
As if a king were coming there to feast him.

MAR. I will obey your pleasure. But my husband—

AUCH. I wait him on the beach, and bring him in
To share the banquet.

MAR. But he has a friend,
Whom it would ill become him to intrude
Upon your hospitality.

AUCH. Fear not; his friend shall be made welcome too,
Should he return with Niel.

MAR. He must—he will return—he has no option.

AUCH. (*apart*) Thus rashly do we deem of others'
destiny—

He has indeed no option—but he comes not.
 Begone on thy commission—I go this way
 To meet thy husband.

[MARION goes to her Tower, and after entering it, is seen to come out, lock the door, and leave the Stage, as if to execute AUCHINDRANE'S commission. He, apparently going off in a different direction, has watched her from the side of the Stage, and on her departure speaks.

AUCH. Fare thee well, fond woman,
 Most dangerous of spies—thou prying, prating,
 Spying, and telling woman ! I've cut short
 Thy dangerous testimony—hated word !
 What other evidence have we cut short,
 And by what fated means, this dreary morning !
 Bright lances here and helmets ?—I must shift
 To join the others.

[Exit.

Enter from the other side the SERGEANT, accompanied with an Officer and two Pikemen.

SER. 'Twas in good time you came ; a minute later
 The knaves had ta'en my dollars and my life.

OFF. You fought most stoutly. Two of them were down,
 Ere we came to your aid.

SER. Gramercy, halberd !
 And well it happens, since your leader seeks.
 This Quentin Blane, that you have fall'n on me ;
 None else can surely tell you where he hides,
 Being in some fear, and bent to quit this province.

OFF. 'Twill do our Earl good service. He has sent
 Despatches into Holland for this Quentin.

SER. I left him two hours since in yonder tower,
 Under the guard of one who smoothly spoke,
 Although he look'd but roughly—I will chide him
 For bidding me go forth with yonder traitor.

OFF. Assure yourself 'twas a concerted stratagem.
 Montgomery's been at Holyrood for months,
 And can have sent no letter—'twas a plan
 On you and on your dollars, and a base one,
 To which this Ranger was most likely privy ;
 Such men as he hang on our fiercer barons,
 The ready agents of their lawless will ;
 Boys of the belt, who aid their master's pleasures,
 And in his moods ne'er scruple his injunctions.

But haste, for now we must unkennel Quentin ;
I've strictest charge concerning him.

SER. Go up, then, to the tower.
You've younger limbs than mine—there shall you find him
Lounging and snoring, like a lazy cur
Before a stable door ; it is his practice.

[*The OFFICER goes up to the Tower, and after knocking without receiving an answer, turns the key which MARION had left in the lock, and enters ; ISABEL, dressed as if for her dance, runs out and descends to the Stage ; the OFFICER follows.*

OFF. There's no one in the house, this little maid
Excepted—

ISA. And for me, I'm there no longer,
And will not be again for three hours good :
I'm gone to join my playmates on the sands.

OFF. (*detaining her*) You shall, when you have told to
me distinctly

Where are the guests who slept up there last night.

ISA. Why, there is the old man, he stands beside you,
The merry old man, with the glistening hair ;
He left the tower at midnight, for my iather
Brought him a letter.

SER. In ill hour I left you,
I wish to Heaven that I had stay'd with you ;
There is a nameless horror that comes o'er me.—
Speak, pretty maiden, tell us what chanced next,
And thou shalt have thy freedom.

ISA. After you went last night, my father
Grew moody, and refused to doff his clothes,
Or go to bed, as sometimes he will do
When there is aught to chafe him. Until past midnight,
He wander'd to and fro, then call'd the stranger,
The gay young man, that sung such merry songs,
Yet ever look'd most sadly whilst he sung them,
And forth they went together.

OFF. And you've seen
Or heard nought of them since ?

ISA. Seen surely nothing, and I cannot think
That they have lot or share in what I heard.
I heard my mother praying, for the corpse-lights
Were dancing on the waves ; and at one o'clock,
Just as the Abbey steeple toll'd the knell,
There was a heavy plunge upon the waters,

And some one cried aloud for mercy !—mercy !
 It was the water-spirit, sure, which promised
 Mercy to boat and fisherman, if we
 Perform'd to-day's rites duly. Let me go—
 I am to lead the ring.

OFF. (*to SER.*) Detain her not. She cannot tell us more ;
 To give her liberty is the sure way
 To lure her parents homeward.—Strahan, take two men,
 And should the father or the mother come,
 Arrest them both, or either. Auchindrane
 May come upon the beach ; arrest him also,
 But do not state a cause. I'll back again,
 And take directions from my Lord Dunbar.
 Keep you upon the beach, and have an eye
 To all that passes there. [*Exeunt separately.*]

SCENE II.

Scene changes to a remote and rocky part of the Seabeach.
Enter AUCHINDRANE, meeting PHILIP.

AUCH. The devil's brought his legions to this beach,
 That wont to be so lonely ; morions, lances,
 Show in the morning beam as thick as glowworms
 At summer midnight.

PHI. I'm right glad to see them,
 Be they whoe'er they may, so they are mortal ;
 For I've contended with a lifeless foe,
 And have lost the battle. I would give
 A thousand crowns to hear a mortal steel
 Ring on a mortal harness.

AUCH. How now !—Art mad, or hast thou done the
 turn—
 The turn we came for, and must live or die by ?

PHI. 'Tis done, if man can do it ; but I doubt
 If this unhappy wretch have Heaven's permission
 To die by mortal hands.

AUCH. Where is he ?—where's MacLellan ?

PHI. In the deep—
 Both in the deep, and what's immortal of them
 Gone to the judgment-seat, where we must meet them.

AUCH. MacLellan dead, and Quentin too ?—So be it
 To all that menace ill to Auchindrane,
 Or have the power to injure him !—Thy words

Are full of comfort, but thine eye and look
Have in this pallid gloom a ghastliness,
Which contradicts the tidings of thy tongue.

PHI. Hear me, old man—There *is* a heaven above us,
As you have heard old Knox and Wishart preach,
Though little to your boot. The dreaded witness
Is slain, and silent. But his misused body
Comes right ashore, as if to cry for vengeance ;
It rides the waters like a living thing,
Erect, as if he trode the waves which bear him.

AUCH. Thou speakest frenzy, when sense is most required.

PHI. Hear me yet more !—I say I did the deed
With all the coolness of a practised hunter
When dealing with a stag. I struck him overboard,
And with MacLellan's aid I held his head
Under the waters, while the Ranger tied
The weights we had provided to his feet.
We cast him loose when life and body parted,
And bid him speed for Ireland. But even then,
As in defiance of the words we spoke,
The body rose upright behind our stern,
One half in ocean, and one half in air,
And tided after as in chase of us.

AUCH. It was enchantment !—Did you strike at it ?

PHI. Once and again. But blows avail'd no more
Than on a wreath of smoke, where they may break
The column for a moment, which unites
And is entire again. Thus the dead body
Sunk down before my oar, but rose unharm'd,
And dogg'd us closer still, as in defiance.

AUCH. 'Twas Hell's own work !—

PHI. MacLellan then grew restive
And desperate in his fear, blasphemed aloud,
Cursing us both as authors of his ruin.
Myself was wellnigh frantic while pursued
By this dead shape, upon whose ghastly features
The changeful moonbeam spread a grisly light ;
And, baited thus, I took the nearest way
To ensure his silence, and to quell his noise ;
I used my dagger, and I flung him overboard,
And half expected his dead carcass also
Would join the chase—but he sunk down at once.

AUCH. He had enough of mortal sin about him,
y To sink an argosy.

PHI. But now resolve you what defence to make,
If Quentin's body shall be recognised ;
For 'tis ashore already ; and he bears
Marks of my handiwork ; so does MacLellan.

AUCH. The concourse thickens still—Away, away !
We must avoid the multitude. [*They rush out.*]

SCENE III.

Scene changes to another part of the Beach. Children are seen dancing, and Villagers looking on. ISABEL seems to take the management of the Dance.

VIL. WOM. How well she queens it, the brave little maiden !

VIL. Ay, they all queen it from their very cradle,
These willing slaves of haughty Auchindrane,
But now I hear the old man's reign is ended ;—
'Tis well—he has been tyrant long enough.

SECOND VIL. Finlay, speak low, you interrupt the sports.

THIRD VIL. Look out to sea—There's something coming
yonder,
Bound for the beach, will scare us from our mirth.

FOURTH VIL. Pshaw, it is but a sea-gull on the wing,
Between the wave and sky.

THIRD VIL. Thou art a fool,
Standing on solid land—'tis a dead body.

SECOND VIL. And if it be, he bears him like a live one ;
Not prone and weltering like a drowned corpse,
But bolt erect, as if he trode the waters,
And used them as his path.

FOURTH VIL. It is a merman,
And nothing of this earth, alive or dead.

[By degrees all the Dancers break off from their sport, and stand gazing to seaward, while an object, imperfectly seen, drifts towards the Beach, and at length arrives among the rocks which border the tide.]

THIRD VIL. Perhaps it is some wretch who needs assistance ;
Jasper, make in and see.

SECOND VIL. Not I, my friend ;
E'en take the risk yourself, you'd put on others.

[HILDEBRAND has entered, and heard the two last words.]

SER. What, are you men?
 Fear ye to look on what you must be one day?
 I, who have seen a thousand dead and dying
 Within a flight-shot square, will teach you how in war
 We look upon the corpse when life has left it.

[He goes to the back scene, and seems attempting to turn the body, which has come ashore with its face downwards.]

Will none of you come aid to turn the body?

ISA. You're cowards all.—I'll help thee, good old man.

[She goes to aid the SERGEANT with the body, and presently gives a cry, and faints. HILDEBRAND comes forward. All crowd round him; he speaks with an expression of horror.]

SER. 'Tis Quentin Blane! Poor youth, his gloomy bodings

Have been the prologue to an act of darkness;
 His feet are manacled, his bosom stabb'd,
 And he is foully murder'd. The proud Knight
 And his dark Ranger must have done this deed,
 For which no common ruffian could have motive.

A PEA. Caution were best, old man—Thou art a stranger,
 The Knight is great and powerful.

SER. Let it be so.

Call'd on by Heaven to stand forth an avenger,
 I will not blench for fear of mortal man.
 Have I not seen that when that innocent
 Had placed her hands upon the murder'd body,
 His gaping wounds, that erst were soak'd with brine,
 Burst forth with blood as ruddy as the cloud
 Which now the sun doth rise on?

PEA. What of that?

SER. Nothing that can affect the innocent child,
 But murder's guilt attaching to her father,
 Since the blood musters in the victim's veins
 At the approach of what holds lease from him
 Of all that parents can transmit to children.
 And here comes one to whom I'll vouch the circumstance.

[The EARL OF DUNBAR enters with Soldiers and others, having AUCHINDRANE and PHILIP prisoners.]

DUN. Fetter the young ruffian and his trait'rous father!

[They are made secure.]

AUCH. 'Twas a lord spoke it—I have known a knight,
Sir George of Home, who had not dared to say so.

DUN. 'Tis Heaven, not I, decides upon your guilt.
A harmless youth is traced within your power,
Sleeps in your Ranger's house—his friend at midnight
Is spirited away. Then lights are seen,
And groans are heard, and corpses come ashore
Mangled with daggers, while (*to PHILIP*) your dagger wears
The sanguine livery of recent slaughter :
Here, too, the body of a murder'd victim,
(Whom none but you had interest to remove,)
Bleeds on a child's approach, because the daughter
Of one the abettor of the wicked deed.
All this, and other proofs corroborative,
Call on us briefly to pronounce the doom
We have in charge to utter.

AUCH. If my house perish, Heaven's will be done !
I wish not to survive it ; but, O Philip,
Would one could pay the ransom for us both !

PHI. Father, 'tis fitter that we both should die,
Leaving no heir behind,—The piety
Of a bless'd saint, the morals of an anchorite,
Could not atone thy dark hypocrisy,
Or the wild profligacy I have practised.
Ruin'd our house, and shatter'd be our towers,
And with them end the curse our sins have merited !

NOTES.

THE LAY OF THE LAST MINSTREL.

1. The feast was over in Branksome tower.

IN the reign of James I., Sir William Scott of Buccleuch, chief of the clan bearing that name, exchanged, with Sir Thomas Inglis of Manor, the estate of Murdiestone, in Lanarkshire, for one-half of the barony of Branksome, or Brankholm, lying upon the Teviot, about three miles above Hawick. He was probably induced to this transaction from the vicinity of Branksome to the extensive domain which he possessed in Etrick Forest and in Teviotdale. Tradition imputes the exchange betwixt Scott and Inglis to a conversation, in which the latter complained much of the injuries which he was exposed to from the English Borderers, who frequently plundered his lands of Branksome. Sir William Scott instantly offered him the estate of Murdiestone, in exchange for that which was subject to such egregious inconvenience. When the bargain was completed, he dryly remarked, that the cattle in Cumberland were as good as those of Teviotdale; and proceeded to commence a system of reprisals upon the English, which was regularly pursued by his successors. In the next reign, James II. granted to Sir Walter Scott of Branksome, and to Sir David, his son, the remaining half of the barony of Branksome, to be held in *blanche* for the payment of a red rose.

After the period of the exchange with Sir Thomas Inglis, Branksome became the principal seat of the Buccleuch family.

2. Nine-and-twenty knights of fame Hung their shields in Branksome Hall.

The ancient barons of Buccleuch, both from feudal splendour and from their frontier situation, retained in their household at Branksome a number of gentlemen of their own name, who held lands from their chief, for the military service of watching and warding his castle.

3. . . . with Jedwood-axe at saddlebow.

The Jedwood-axe was a sort of partisan, used by horsemen, as appears from the arms of Jedburgh, which bear a cavalier mounted, and armed with this weapon. It is also called a Jedwood or Jeddart staff.

4. They watch, against Southern force and guile,
Lest Scroop, or Howard, or Percy's powers,
Threaten Branksome's lordly towers,
From Warkworth, or Naworth, or merry Carlisle.

Branksome Castle was continually exposed to the attacks of the English, both from its situation and the restless military disposition of its inhabitants, who were seldom on good terms with their neighbours.

5. Bards long shall tell,
How Lord Walter fell.

Sir Walter Scott of Buccleuch succeeded to his grandfather, Sir David, in 1492. His death was the consequence of a feud betwixt the Scotts and Kerrs.

6. While Cessford owns the rule of Carr,
While Ettrick boasts the line of Scott,
The slaughter'd chiefs, the mortal jar,
The havoc of the feudal war,
Shall never, never be forgot !

Among other expedients resorted to for stanching the feud betwixt the Scotts and the Kerrs, there was a bond executed in 1529, between the heads of each clan, binding themselves to perform reciprocally the four principal pilgrimages of Scotland, for the benefit of the souls of those of the opposite name who had fallen in the quarrel. This indenture is printed in the *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*, vol. i. But either it never took effect, or else the feud was renewed shortly afterwards.

7. With Carr in arms had stood.

The family of Ker, Kerr, or Carr, was very powerful on the Border. Fynes Morrison remarks, in his *Travels*, that their influence extended from the village of Preston-Grange, in Lothian, to the limits of England.

8. Lord Cranstoun.

The Cranstouns, Lord Cranstoun, are an ancient Border family, whose chief seat was at Crailing, in Teviotdale. They were at this time at feud with the clan of Scott ; for it appears that the Lady of Buccleuch, in 1557, beset the Laird of Cranstoun, seeking his life. Nevertheless, the same Cranstoun, or perhaps his son, was married to a daughter of the same lady.

9. Of Bethune's line of Picardie.

The Bethunes were of French origin, and derived their name from a small town in Artois. There were several distinguished families of the Bethunes in the neighbouring province of Picardy; they numbered among their descendants the celebrated Duc de Sully; and the name was accounted among the most noble in France.

10. He learn'd the art that none may name,
In Padua, far beyond the sea.

Padua was long supposed, by the Scottish peasants, to be the principal school of necromancy.

11. His form no darkening shadow traced
Upon the sunny wall!

The shadow of a necromancer is independent of the sun. Glycas informs us that Simon Magus caused his shadow to go before him, making people believe it was an attendant spirit.—HEYWOOD'S *Hierarchy*, p. 475.

12. The viewless forms of air.

The Scottish vulgar, without having any very defined notion of their attributes, believe in the existence of an intermediate class of spirits, residing in the air, or in the waters; to whose agency they ascribe floods, storms, and all such phenomena as their own philosophy cannot readily explain. They are supposed to interfere in the affairs of mortals, sometimes with a malevolent purpose, and sometimes with milder views.

13. A fancied moss-trooper, etc.

This was the usual appellation of the marauders upon the Borders; a profession diligently pursued by the inhabitants on both sides, and by none more actively and successfully than by Buccleuch's clan. Long after the union of the crowns the moss-troopers, although sunk in reputation, and no longer enjoying the pretext of national hostility, continued to pursue their calling.

14. . . . tame the Unicorn's pride,
Exalt the Crescent and the Star.

The arms of the Kerrs of Cessford were, *Vert* on a cheveron, betwixt three unicorns' heads erased *argent*, three mullets

sable; crest, a unicorn's head, erased *proper*. The Scotts of Buccleuch bore, *Or*, on a bend azure; a star of six points betwixt two crescents of the first.

15. William of Deloraine.

The lands of Deloraine are joined to those of Buccleuch in Ettrick Forest. They were immemorially possessed by the Buccleuch family, under the strong title of occupancy, although no charter was obtained from the crown until 1545. Like other possessions, the lands of Deloraine were occasionally granted by them to vassals, or kinsmen, for Border service.

16. By wily turns, by desperate bounds, Had baffled Percy's best blood-hounds.

The lawless life of the Border-riders obliged them to study how to evade the pursuit of blood-hounds.

17. . . . the Moat-hill's mound, Where Druid shades still flitted round.

This is a round artificial mount near Hawick, which, from its name (*Mot. Ang. Sax. Concilium, Conventus*), was probably anciently used as a place for assembling a national council of the adjacent tribes. There are many such mounds in Scotland, and they are sometimes, but rarely, of a square form.

18. . . . the tower of Hazeldean.

The estate of Hazeldean, corruptly Hassendean, belonged formerly to a family of Scotts.

19. On Minto-crag the moonbeams glint.

A romantic assemblage of cliffs, which rise suddenly above the vale of Teviot, in the immediate vicinity of the family-seat, from which Lord Minto takes his title. A small platform, on a projecting crag, commanding a most beautiful prospect, is termed *Barnhills' Bed*.

20. Ancient Riddel's fair domain.

The family of Riddel have been very long in possession of the barony called Riddel, or Ryedale, part of which still bears the latter name. Tradition carries their antiquity to a point extremely remote.

21. But when Melrose he reach'd, 'twas silence all ;
 He meetly stabled his steed in stall,
 And sought the convent's lonely wall.

The ancient and beautiful monastery of Melrose was founded by King David I. Its ruins afford the finest specimen of Gothic architecture and Gothic sculpture which Scotland can boast.

22. When buttress and buttress, alternately,
 Seem framed of ebon and ivory ;
 When silver edges the imagery,
 And the scrolls that teach thee to live and die ;

 Then view St. David's ruin'd pile.

The buttresses ranged along the sides of the ruins of Melrose Abbey are, according to the Gothic style, richly carved and fretted, containing niches for the statues of saints, and labelled with scrolls, bearing appropriate texts of scripture. Most of these statues have been demolished.

23. For mass or prayer can I rarely tarry,
 Save to patter an Ave Mary,
 When I ride on a Border foray.

The Borderers were, as may be supposed, very ignorant about religious matters. But we learn, from Lesley, that, however deficient in real religion, they regularly told their beads, and never with more zeal than when going on a plundering expedition.

24. So had he seen, in fair Castile,
 The youth in glittering squadrons start ;
 Sudden the flying jennet wheel,
 And hurl the unexpected dart.

The use of the dart, or light javelin, in mimic warfare was borrowed by the Castilians from the Moors, among whom it was a favourite weapon.

25. And there the dying lamps did burn,
 Before thy low and lonely urn,
 O gallant Chief of Otterburne !

The famous and desperate battle of Otterburne was fought 15th August 1388, betwixt Henry Percy, called Hotspur, and

James, Earl of Douglas. Both these renowned champions were at the head of a chosen body of troops, and they were rivals in military fame. The issue of the conflict is well known: Percy was made prisoner, and the Scots won the day, dearly purchased by the death of their gallant general, the Earl of Douglas, who was slain in the action. He was buried at Melrose, beneath the high altar.

26. Dark Knight of Liddesdale.

William Douglas, called the Knight of Liddesdale, flourished during the reign of David II., and was so distinguished by his valour, that he was called the Flower of Chivalry. Nevertheless, he tarnished his renown by the cruel murder of Sir Alexander Ramsay of Dalhousie, originally his friend and brother in arms. The King had conferred upon Ramsay the sheriffdom of Teviotdale, to which Douglas pretended some claim. In revenge of this preference, the Knight of Liddesdale came down upon Ramsay, while he was administering justice at Hawick, seized and carried him off to his remote and inaccessible castle of Hermitage, where he threw his unfortunate prisoner, horse and man, into a dungeon, and left him to perish of hunger. Liddesdale was soon after slain, while hunting in Etrick Forest, by his own godson and chieftain, William, Earl of Douglas, in revenge, according to some authors, of Ramsay's murder. His body was carried to Lindean church the first night after his death, and thence to Melrose, where he was interred with great pomp, and where his tomb is still shown.

27. The moon on the east oriel shone.

It is impossible to conceive a more beautiful specimen of the lightness and elegance of Gothic architecture, when in its purity, than the eastern window of Melrose Abbey.

28. The wondrous Michael Scott.

Sir Michael Scott of Balwearie flourished during the 13th century, and was one of the ambassadors sent to bring the Maid of Norway to Scotland upon the death of Alexander III. By a poetical anachronism, he is here placed in a later era. He was a man of much learning, chiefly acquired in foreign countries.

29. Salamanca's cave.

Spain, from the relics, doubtless, of Arabian learning and superstition, was accounted a favourite residence of magicians.

There were public schools, where magic, or rather the sciences supposed to involve its mysteries, were regularly taught, at Toledo, Seville, and Salamanca. In the latter city, they were held in a deep cavern; the mouth of which was walled up by Queen Isabella, wife of King Ferdinand.

30. The bells would ring in Notre Dame.

Michael Scott, according to one of the traditions current concerning him, was chosen to go upon an embassy, to obtain from the King of France satisfaction for certain piracies committed by his subjects upon those of Scotland. Instead of preparing a new equipage and splendid retinue, the ambassador retreated to his study, opened his book, and evoked a fiend in the shape of a huge black horse, mounted upon his back, and forced him to fly through the air towards France. When he arrived at Paris, he tied his horse to the gate of the palace, entered, and boldly delivered his message. An ambassador, with so little of the pomp and circumstance of diplomacy, was not received with much respect, and the King was about to return a contemptuous refusal to his demand, when Michael besought him to suspend his resolution till he had seen his horse stamp three times. The first stamp shook every steeple in Paris, and caused all the bells to ring; the second threw down three of the towers of the palace; and the infernal steed had lifted his hoof to give the third stamp, when the King rather chose to dismiss Michael, with the most ample concessions, than to stand to the probable consequences.

31. The words that cleft Eildon hills in three.

Michael Scott was, once upon a time, much embarrassed by a spirit, for whom he was under the necessity of finding constant employment. He commanded him to build a *cauld*, or dam-head, across the Tweed at Kelso; it was accomplished in one night, and still does honour to the infernal architect. Michael next ordered, that Eildon hill, which was then a uniform cone, should be divided into three. Another night was sufficient to part its summit into the three picturesque peaks which it now bears. At length the enchanter conquered this indefatigable demon, by employing him in the hopeless and endless task of making ropes out of sea-sand.

32. That lamp shall burn unquenchably, Until the eternal doom shall be.

Baptista Porta, and other authors who treat of natural magic, talk much of eternal lamps, pretended to have been

found burning in ancient sepulchres. Fortunius Licetus investigates the subject in a treatise, *De Lucernis Antiquorum Reconditis*, published at Venice, 1621. One of these perpetual lamps is said to have been discovered in the tomb of Tulliola, the daughter of Cicero. The wick was supposed to be composed of asbestos. Kircher enumerates three different recipes for constructing such lamps, and wisely concludes, that the thing is nevertheless impossible,—*Mundus Subterraneus*, p. 72.

33. Then Deloraine, in terror, took
 From the cold hand the Mighty Book,
 He thought, as he took it, the dead man frown'd.

William of Deloraine might be strengthened in this belief by the well-known story of the Cid Ruy Diaz. When the body of that famous Christian champion was sitting in state by the high altar of the cathedral church of Toledo, where it remained for ten years, a certain malicious Jew attempted to pull him by the beard; but he had no sooner touched the formidable whiskers, than the corpse started up, and half un-sheathed his sword. The Israelite fled; and so permanent was the effect of his terror, that he became Christian.

34. The Baron's Dwarf his courser held.

The idea of Lord Cranstoun's Goblin Page is taken from a popular superstition long current on the Borders.

35. But the Ladye of Branksome gather'd a band
 Of the best that would ride at her command.

This attempt is really historical. It took place in 1557.

36. Like a book-bosom'd priest.

In the olden times, in the parish of Ewes, the friars were called *Book-a-bosomes*, from their habit of carrying their mass-books in their bosoms.

37. All was delusion, nought was truth.

Glamour, in the legends of Scottish superstition, means the magic power of imposing on the eyesight of the spectators, so that the appearance of an object shall be totally different from the reality.

38. Now, if you ask who gave the stroke,
I cannot tell, so not I thrive ;
It was not given by man alive.

Dr. Henry More, in a letter prefixed to Glanville's *Saducismus Triumphatus*, mentions a similar phenomenon.

"I remember an old gentleman in the country, of my acquaintance, an excellent justice of peace, and a piece of a mathematician ; but what kind of a philosopher he was, you may understand from a rhyme of his own making, which he commended to me at my taking horse in his yard, which rhyme is this :—

"Ens is nothing till sense finds out :
Sense ends in nothing, so naught goes about.

"Which rhyme of his was so rapturous to himself, that, on the reciting of the second verse, the old man turned himself about upon his toe as nimbly as one may observe a dry leaf whisked round the corner of an orchard-walk by some little whirlwind. With this philosopher I have had many discourses concerning the immortality of the soul and its distinction ; when I have run him quite down by reason, he would but laugh at me, and say this is logic, H. (calling me by my Christian name), to which I replied, this is reason, father L. (for so I used and some others to call him) ; but it seems you are for the new lights, and immediate inspiration, which I confess he was as little for as for the other ; but I said so only in the way of drollery to him in those times, but truth is, nothing but palpable experience would move him : and being a bold man, and fearing nothing, he told me he had used all the magical ceremonies of conjuration he could, to raise the devil or a spirit, and had a most earnest desire to meet with one, but never could do it. But this he told me, when he did not so much as think of it, while his servant was pulling off his boots in the hall, some invisible hand gave him such a clap upon the back, that it made all ring again ; 'so,' thought he now, 'I am invited to the converse of my spirit,' and therefore, so soon as his boots were off, and his shoes on, out he goes into the yard and next field, to find out the spirit that had given him this familiar clap on the back, but found none neither in the yard nor field next to it.

"But though he did not feel this stroke, albeit he thought it afterwards (finding nothing came of it) a mere delusion ; yet not long before his death, it had more force with him than all the philosophical arguments I could use to him, though I could wind him and nonplus him as I pleased ; but yet all my arguments, how solid soever, made no impression upon him ; wherefore, after several reasonings of this nature, whereby

I would prove to him the soul's distinction from the body, and its immortality, when nothing of such subtle consideration did any more execution on his mind than some lightning is said to do, though it melts the sword, on the fuzzy consistency of the scabbard,—'Well,' said I, 'father L., though none of these things move you, I have something still behind, and what yourself has acknowledged to be true, that may do the business :—Do you remember the clap on your back when your servant was pulling off your boots in the hall? Assure yourself, says I, father L., that goblin will be the first to bid you welcome into the other world.' Upon that his countenance changed most sensibly, and he was more confounded with this rubbing up his memory, than with all the rational or philosophical argumentations that I could produce."

39. The running stream dissolved the spell.

It is a firm article of popular faith, that no enchantment can subsist in a living stream. Nay, if you can interpose a brook betwixt you and witches, spectres, or even fiends, you are in perfect safety. Burns's inimitable *Tam o' Shanter* turns entirely upon such a circumstance. The belief seems to be of antiquity.

40. He never counted him a man, Would strike below the knee.

To wound an antagonist in the thigh, or leg, was reckoned contrary to the law of arms.

41. She drew the splinter from the wound, And with a charm she stanch'd the blood.

See several charms for this purpose in Reginald Scott's *Discovery of Witchcraft*, p. 273.

42. But she has ta'en the broken lance, And wash'd it from the clotted gore, And salv'd the splinter o'er and o'er

This so-called cure by sympathy was believed in even at the beginning of the 17th century.

43. On Penchryst glows a bale of fire.

Bale, beacon-fagot. The Border beacons, from their number and position, formed a sort of telegraphic communication with Edinburgh.

44. Our kin, and clan, and friends, to raise.

The speed with which the Borderers collected great bodies of horse is a fact familiar to every reader of Border history.

45. On many a cairn's gray pyramid,
Where urns of mighty chiefs lie hid.

The cairns, or piles of loose stones, which crown the summit of most of our Scottish hills, and are found in other remarkable situations, seem usually, though not universally, to have been sepulchral monuments. Six flat stones are commonly found in the centre, forming a cavity of greater or smaller dimensions, in which an urn is often placed.

46. For pathless marsh, and mountain cell,
The peasant left his lowly shed.

The morasses were the usual refuge of the Border herdsmen, on the approach of an English army.—(*Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*, vol. i. p. 393.) Caves, hewed in the most dangerous and inaccessible places, also afforded an occasional retreat. Such caverns may be seen in the precipitous banks of the Teviot at Sunlaws, upon the Ale at Ancram, upon the Jed at Hundalee, and in many other places upon the Border. The banks of the Eske, at Gorton and Hawthornden, are hollowed into similar recesses.

47. Show'd southern ravage was begun.

Embittered by mutual cruelties, and the personal hatred of the wardens, or leaders, the war waged upon the Borders was not unfrequently of the most sanguinary character.

48. Watt Tinlinn.

This person was, in my younger days, the theme of many a fireside tale. He was a retainer of the Buccleuch family, and held for his Border service a small tower on the frontiers of Liddesdale.

49. Billhope stag.

There is an old rhyme, which thus celebrates the places in Liddesdale remarkable for game :

Billhope braes for bucks and raes,
And Carit haugh for swine,
And Tarras for the good bull-trout,
If he be ta'en in time.

The bucks and roes, as well as the old swine, are now extinct ; but the good bull-trout is still famous.

50. Belted Will Howard.

Lord William Howard, third son of Thomas, Duke of Norfolk, succeeded to Naworth Castle, and a large domain annexed to it, in right of his wife Elizabeth, sister of George Lord Dacre, who died without heirs male, in the 11th of Queen Elizabeth. By a poetical anachronism, he is introduced into the romance a few years earlier than he actually flourished. He was warden of the Western Marches: and, from the rigour with which he repressed the Border excesses, the name of Belted Will Howard is still famous in our traditions.

51. Lord Dacre.

The well-known name of Dacre is derived from the exploits of one of their ancestors at the siege of Acre, or Ptolemais, under Richard Cœur de Lion.

52. The German hackbut-men.

In the wars with Scotland, Henry VIII. and his successors employed numerous bands of mercenary troops. At the battle of Pinky, there were in the English army six hundred hackbutters on foot, and two hundred on horseback, composed chiefly of foreigners.

53. "Ready, aye ready," for the field.

Sir John Scott of Thirlestane flourished in the reign of James V., and possessed the estates of Thirlestane, Gamescleuch, etc., lying upon the river of Ettrick, and extending to St. Mary's Loch, at the head of Yarrow. It appears, that when James had assembled his nobility, and their feudal followers, at Fala, with the purpose of invading England, and was, as is well known, disappointed by the obstinate refusal of his peers, this baron alone declared himself ready to follow the King wherever he should lead. In memory of his fidelity, James granted to his family a charter of arms, entitling them to bear a border of fleurs-de-luce, similar to the tressure in the royal arms, with a bundle of spears for the crest; motto, *Ready, aye ready*.

54. An aged Knight, to danger steel'd,
 With many a moss-trooper, came on ;
 And azure in a golden field,
 The stars and crescent graced his shield,
 Without the bend of Murdieston.

The family of Harden are descended from a younger son of the Laird of Buccleuch, who flourished before the estate of

Murdieston was acquired by the marriage of one of those chieftains with the heiress, in 1296. Hence they bear the cognisance of the Scotts upon the field; whereas those of the Buccleuch are disposed upon a bend dexter, assumed in consequence of that marriage.

55. Scotts of Eskdale, a stalwart band.

In this, and the following stanzas, some account is given of the mode in which the property in the valley of Esk was transferred from the Beattisons, its ancient possessors, to the name of Scott.

56. Their gathering word was Bellenden.

Bellenden is situated near the head of Borthwick water, and being in the centre of the possessions of the Scotts, was frequently used as their place of rendezvous and gathering word.—*Survey of Selkirkshire, in Macfarlane's MSS., Advocates' Library.*

57. The camp their home, their law the sword,
They knew no country, own'd no lord.

The mercenary adventurers, whom, in 1380, the Earl of Cambridge carried to the assistance of the King of Portugal against the Spaniards, mutinied for want of regular pay. At an assembly of their leaders, Sir John Soltier, a natural son of Edward the Black Prince, thus addressed them: "I counsayle, let us be alle of one alliance, and of one accorde, and let us among ourselves reyse up the banner of St. George, and let us be frendes to God, and enemyes to alle the worlde; for without we make ourselfe to be feared, we gete nothyng."

"By my fayth," quod Sir William Helmon, 'ye saye right well, and so let us do.' They all agreed with one voyce, and so regarded among them who shulde be their capitayne. Then they advysed in the case how they coude nat have a better capitayne than Sir John Soltier. For they sulde than have good leyser to do yvel, and they thought he was more metelyer thereto than any other. Then they raised up the penon of St. George, and cried, 'A Soltier! a Soltier! the valyaunt bastarde! frendes to God, and enemies to all the worlde!'"—FROISSART, vol. i. ch. 393.

58. That he may suffer march-treason pain.

Several species of offences, peculiar to the Border, constituted what was called march-treason. Among others, was the crime of riding, or causing to ride, against the opposite country during the time of truce.

59. . . . Deloraine

Will cleanse him, by oath, of march-treason stain.

In dubious cases, the innocence of Border criminals was occasionally referred to their own oath. The form of excusing bills, or indictments, by Border-oath, ran thus: "You shall swear by heaven above you, hell beneath you, by your part of Paradise, by all that God made in six days and seven nights, and by God himself, you are whart out sackless of art, part, way, witting, ridd, kenning, having, or recetting of any of the goods and cattels named 'n this bill. So help you God."

60. Knighthood he took of Douglas' sword.

The dignity of knighthood, according to the original institution, had this peculiarity, that it did not flow from the monarch, but could be conferred by one who himself possessed it, upon any squire who, after due probation, was found to merit the honour of chivalry. Latterly, this power was confined to generals, who were wont to create knights bannerets after or before an engagement.

61. When English blood swell'd Ancram's ford.

The battle of Ancram Moor, or Penielheuch, was fought A.D. 1545. The English, commanded by Sir Ralph Evers, and Sir Brian Latoun, were totally routed, and both their leaders slain in the action. The Scottish army was commanded by Archibald Douglas, Earl of Angus, assisted by the Laird of Buccleuch and Norman Lesley.

62. For who, in field or foray slack,
Saw the blanche lion e'er fail back?

This was the cognisance of the noble house of Howard in all its branches. The crest, or bearing, of a warrior was often used as a *nomme de guerre*.

63. Let Musgrave meet fierce Deloraine
In single fight. . . .

It may easily be supposed, that trial by single combat, so peculiar to the feudal system, was common on the Borders.

64. He, the jovial Harper.

The person here alluded to is one of our ancient Border minstrels, called Rattling Roaring Willie. This *soubriquet* was

probably derived from his bullying disposition ; being, it would seem, such a roaring boy, as is frequently mentioned in old plays.

65. He knew each ordinance and clause
Of Black Lord Archibald's battle-laws,
In the Old Douglas' day.

The title to the most ancient collection of Border regulations runs thus:—"Be it remembered, that, on the 18th day of December, 1468, Earl *William Douglas* assembled the whole lords, freeholders, and eldest Borderers, that best knowledge had, at the college of *Linclouden* ; and there he caused these lords and Borderers bodily to be sworn, the Holy Gospel touched, that they, justly and truly, after their cunning, should decree, discern, deliver, and put in order and writing, the statutes, ordinances, and uses of *marche*, that were ordained in *Black Archibald of Douglas's days*, and Archibald his son's days, in time of warfare ; and they came again to him advisedly with these statutes and ordinances, which were in time of warfare before. The said Earl *William*, seeing the statutes in writing decreed and delivered by the said lords and Borderers, thought them right speedful and profitable to the Borders ; the which statutes, ordinances, and points of warfare, he took, and the whole lords and Borderers he caused bodily to be sworn, that they should maintain and supply him at their goodly power, to do the law upon those that should break the statutes underwritten. Also, the said Earl *William*, and lords, and eldest Borderers, made certain points to be treason in time of warfare to be used, which were no treason before his time, but to be treason in his time, and in all time coming."

66. The Bloody Heart blazed in the van,
Announcing Douglas, dreaded name !

The chief of this potent race of heroes, about the date of the poem, was Archibald Douglas, seventh Earl of Angus, a man of great courage and activity. The Bloody Heart was the well-known cognisance of the House of Douglas, assumed from the time of good Lord James, to whose care Robert Bruce committed his heart, to be carried to the Holy Land.

67. And Swinton laid his lance in rest,
That tamed of yore the sparkling crest,
Of Clarence's Plantagenet.

At the battle of Beaugé, in France, Thomas, Duke of Clarence, brother to Henry V., was unhorsed by Sir John Swinton of Swinton, who distinguished him by a coronet set

with precious stones, which he wore around his helmet. The family of Swinton is one of the most ancient in Scotland, and produced many celebrated warriors.

68. And shouting still, A Home ! a Home !

The Earls of Home, as descendants of the Dunbars, ancient Earls of March, carried a lion rampant, argent ; but, as a difference, changed the colour of the shield from gules to vert, in allusion to Greenlaw, their ancient possession. The slogan, or war-cry, of this powerful family, was, "A Home ! a Home !"

69. And some, with many a merry shout,
In riot, revelry, and rout,
Pursued the foot-ball play.

The foot-ball was anciently a very favourite sport a through Scotland, but especially upon the Borders.

70. 'Twixt truce and war, such sudden change
Was not infrequent, nor held strange,
In the old Border-day.

Notwithstanding the constant wars upon the Borders, and the occasional cruelties which marked the mutual inroads, the inhabitants on either side do not appear to have regarded each other with that violent and personal animosity, which might have been expected.

71. . . . on the darkening plain,
Loud hollo, whoop, or whistle ran,
As bands, their stragglers to regain,
Give the shrill watchword of their clan.

Patten remarks, with bitter censure, the disorderly conduct of the English Borderers, who attended the Protector Somerset on his expedition against Scotland.

72. To see how thou the chase could'st wind,
Cheer the dark blood-hound on his way,
And with the bugle rouse the fray.

The pursuit of Border marauders was followed by the injured party and his friends with blood-hounds and bugle-horn, and was called the *hot-trod*. He was entitled, if his dog could trace the scent, to follow the invaders into the opposite kingdom ; a privilege which often occasioned bloodshed.

73. She wrought not by forbidden spell.

Popular belief, though contrary to the doctrines of the Church, made a favourable distinction betwixt magicians, and necromancers, or wizards; the former were supposed to command the evil spirits, and the latter to serve, or at least to be in league and compact with, those enemies of mankind.

74. A merlin sat upon her wrist
Held by a leash of silken twist.

A merlin, or sparrow-hawk, was actually carried by ladies of rank, as a falcon was, in time of peace, the constant attendant of a knight or baron.

75. And princely peacock's gilded train,
And o'er the boar-head, garnished brave.

The peacock, it is well known, was considered, during the times of chivalry, not merely as an exquisite delicacy, but as a dish of peculiar solemnity. The boar's head was also a usual dish of feudal splendour.

76. Smote, with his gauntlet, stout Hunthill.

The Rutherfords of Hunthill were an ancient race of Border Lairds, whose names occur in history, sometimes as defending the frontier against the English, sometimes as disturbing the peace of their own country. Dickon Draw-the-sword was son to the ancient warrior, called in tradition the Cock of Hunthill, remarkable for leading into battle nine sons, gallant warriors, all sons of the aged champion.

77. Bit his glove.

To bite the thumb, or the glove, seems not to have been considered, upon the Border, as a gesture of contempt, though so used by Shakespeare, but as a pledge of mortal revenge.

78. Since old Buccleuch the name did gain,
When in the cleuch the buck was ta'en.

A tradition preserved by Scott of Satchells, who published, in 1688, *A true History of the Right Honourable name of Scott*, gives the following romantic origin of that name. Two brethren, natives of Galloway, having been banished from that country for a riot, or insurrection, came to Rankleburn, in Ettrick Forest, where the keeper, whose name was Brydone, received them joyfully, on account of their skill in winding the horn, and in the other mysteries of the chase. Kenneth MacAlpin, then

King of Scotland, came soon after to hunt in the royal forest, and pursued a buck from Ettrick-heugh to the glen now called Buckcleuch, about two miles above the junction of Rankleburn with the river Ettrick. Here the stag stood at bay; and the King and his attendants, who followed on horseback, were thrown out by the steepness of the hill and the morass. John, one of the brethren from Galloway, had followed the chase on foot; and, now coming in, seized the buck by the horns, and, being a man of great strength and activity, threw him on his back, and ran with his burden about a mile up the steep hill, to a place called Cracra-Cross, where Kenneth had halted, and laid the buck at the sovereign's feet.

79. . . . old Albert Græme,
The Minstrel of that ancient name.

“John Græme, second son of *Malice*, Earl of *Monteith*, commonly surnamed *John with the Bright Sword*, upon some displeasure risen against him at court, retired with many of his clan and kindred into the English Borders, in the reign of King Henry the Fourth, where they seated themselves; and many of their posterity have continued there ever since.

80. The sun shines fair on Carlisle wall.

This burden is adopted, with some alteration, from an old Scottish song.

81. Who has not heard of Surrey's fame?

The gallant and unfortunate Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey, was unquestionably the most accomplished cavalier of his time; and his sonnets display beauties which would do honour to a more polished age. He was beheaded on Tower Hill in 1546; a victim to the mean jealousy of Henry VIII., who could not bear so brilliant a character near his throne.

The song of the supposed bard is founded on an incident said to have happened to the Earl in his travels. Cornelius Agrippa, the celebrated alchemist, showed him, in a looking-glass, the lovely Geraldine, to whose service he had devoted his pen and his sword. The vision represented her as indisposed, and reclining upon a couch, reading her lover's verses by the light of a waxen taper.

82. . . . The storm-swept Orcades;
Where erst St. Clairs held princely sway
O'er isle and islet, strait and bay.

The St. Clairs are of Norman extraction, being descended from William de St. Clair, second son of Walderne Compte

de St. Clair, and Margaret, daughter to Richard Duke of Normandy. He was called, for his fair deportment, the Seemly St. Clair; and, settling in Scotland during the reign of Malcolm Caenmore, obtained large grants of land in Mid-Lothian.— These domains were increased by the liberality of succeeding monarchs to the descendants of the family, and comprehended the baronies of Rosline, Pentland, Cowsland, Cardaine, and several others.

83. Still nods their palace to its fall,
Thy pride and sorrow, fair Kirkwall.

The Castle of Kirkwall was built by the St. Clairs, while Earls of Orkney. It was dismantled by the Earl of Caithness about 1615, having been garrisoned against the government by Robert Stewart, natural son to the Earl of Orkney.

Its ruins afforded a sad subject of contemplation to John, Master of St. Clair, who, flying from his native country, on account of his share in the insurrection, 1715, made some stay at Kirkwall.

84. Of that Sea-Snake, tremendous curl'd,
Whose monstrous circle girds the world.

The *Jormungandr*, or Snake of the Ocean, whose folds surround the earth, is one of the wildest fictions of the Edda. It was very nearly caught by the God Thor, who went to fish for it with a hook baited with a bull's head. In the battle betwixt the evil demons and the divinities of Odin, which is to precede the *Ragnarockr*, or Twilight of the Gods, this Snake is to act a conspicuous part.

85. Of those dread Maids, whose hideous yell.

These were the *Valcyriur*, or Selectors of the Slain, despatched by Odin from Valhalla, to choose those who were to die, and to distribute the contest. They were well known to the English reader as Gray's Fatal Sisters.

86. Of Chiefs, who, guided through the gloom
By the pale death-lights of the tomb,
Ransack'd the graves of warriors old,
Their falchions wrench'd from corpses' hold.

The northern warriors were usually entombed with their arms, and their other treasures.

87. Castle Ravensheuch.

A large and strong castle, now ruinous, situated betwixt Kirkaldy and Dysart, on a steep crag, washed by the Firth of Forth. It was conferred on Sir William St. Clair as a slight compensation for the earldom of Orkney, by a charter of King James III. dated in 1471, and is now the property of Sir James St. Clair Erskine (now Earl of Rosslyn), representative of the family. It was long a principal residence of the barons of Roslin.

88. Seem'd all on fire within, around,
 Deep sacristy and altar's pale ;
 Shone every pillar foliage-bound,
 And glimmer'd all the dead men's mail.

The beautiful chapel of Roslin was founded in 1446 by William St. Clair, Prince of Orkney, Duke of Oldenburgh, Earl of Caithness and Stratherne, Lord St. Clair, Lord Niddesdale, Lord Admiral of the Scottish Seas, Lord Chief Justice of Scotland, Lord Warden of the three Marches, Baron of Roslin, Pentland, Pentlandmoor, etc., Knight of the Cockle, and of the Garter (as is affirmed), High Chancellor, Chamberlain, and Lieutenant of Scotland. This lofty person, whose titles, says Godscroft, might weary a Spaniard, built the castle of Roslin, where he resided in princely splendour, and founded the chapel, which is in the most rich and florid style of Gothic architecture. Among the profuse carving on the pillars and buttresses, the rose is frequently introduced, in allusion to the name, with which, however, the flower has no connection ; the etymology being Rosslinne, the promontory of the linn, or waterfall. The chapel is said to appear on fire previous to the death of any of his descendants. This superstition, noticed by Slezer, in his *Theatrum Scotiæ*, and alluded to in the text, is probably of Norwegian derivation, and may have been imported by the Earls of Orkney into their Lothian dominions. The tomb-fires of the north are mentioned in most of the sagas.

89. For he was speechless, ghastly, wan,
 Like him of whom the story ran,
 Who spoke the spectre-hound in Man.

In a ruined church at Peeltown, in the Isle of Man, it was reported that a soldier, who had dared to challenge a spectre which appeared in the form of a large black spaniel, died in the extremest agony, without being able to relate what had happened to him.

90. St. Bride of Douglas.

This was a favourite saint of the house of Douglas, and of the Earl of Angus in particular.

MARMION.

91. As when the Champion of the Lake
Enters Morgana's fated house,
Or in the Chapel Perilous,
Despising spells and demons' force,
Holds converse with the unburied corse.

Sir Launcelot, the most renowned of the Knights of the Round Table, whose exploits are recorded in the Romance of Morte Arthur, was the Champion of the Lake. Some of his adventures, and his illicit love for Queen Guenever, or Ganore, are referred to in the text.

92. A sinful man, and unconfess'd,
He took the Sangreal's holy quest,
And, slumbering, saw the vision high,
He might not view with waking eye.

One day, when Arthur was holding a high feast with his Knights of the Round Table, the Sangreal, or vessel out of which the last passover was eaten (a precious relic, which had long remained concealed from human eyes, because of the sins of the land), suddenly appeared to him and all his chivalry. The consequence of this vision was, that all the knights took on them a solemn vow to seek the Sangreal. But, alas! it could only be revealed to a knight at once accomplished in earthly chivalry, and pure and guiltless of evil conversation. All Sir Launcelot's noble accomplishments were therefore rendered vain by his guilty intrigue with Queen Guenever, or Ganore.

93. And Dryden, in immortal strain,
Had raised the Table Round again.

Dryden's melancholy account of his projected Epic Poem, blasted by the selfish and sordid parsimony of his patrons, is contained in an "Essay on Satire," addressed to the Earl of Dorset, and prefixed to the Translation of Juvenal.

94. Their theme the merry minstrels made
Of Ascapart, and Bevis bold.

The "History of Bevis of Hampton" is abridged by my friend Mr. George Ellis, with that liveliness which extracts amusement even out of the most rude and unpromising of our old tales of

chivalry. Ascapart is a most important personage in the romance.

95. Day set on Norham's castled steep,
And Tweed's fair river, broad and deep, etc.

The ruinous castle of Norham (anciently called Ubbanford) is situated on the southern bank of the Tweed, about six miles above Berwick, and where that river is still the boundary between England and Scotland. The extent of its ruins, as well as its historical importance, shows it to have been a place of magnificence, as well as strength. It was repeatedly taken and retaken during the wars between England and Scotland; and, indeed, scarce any happened in which it had not a principal share.

96. The battled towers, the donjon keep.

It is perhaps unnecessary to remind my readers, that the *donjon*, in its proper signification, means the strongest part of a feudal castle; a high square tower, with walls of tremendous thickness, situated in the centre of the other buildings, from which, however, it was usually detached.

97. Well was he arm'd from head to heel,
In mail and plate of Milan steel.

The artists of Milan were famous in the middle ages for their skill in armoury.

98. Who checks at me, to death is dight.

The crest and motto of Marmion are borrowed from the following story:—Sir David de Lindsay, first Earl of Crauford, was, among other gentlemen of quality, attended, during a visit to London, in 1390, by Sir William Dalzell, who was, according to my authority, Bower, not only excelling in wisdom, but also of a lively wit. Chancing to be at the court, he there saw Sir Piers Courtenay, an English knight, famous for skill in tilting, and for the beauty of his person, parading the palace, arrayed in a new mantle, bearing for device an embroidered falcon, with this rhyme:—

I bear a falcon, fairest of flight,
Whoso pinches at her, his death is dight
In graith.

The Scottish knight, being a wag, appeared next day in a dress exactly similar to that of Courtenay, but bearing a

magpie instead of the falcon, with a motto ingeniously contrived to rhyme to the vaunting inscription of Sir Piers :—

I bear a pie picking at a piece,
Whoso picks at her, I shall pick at his nese,
In faith.

This affront could only be expiated by a just with sharp lances. In the course, Dalzell left his helmet unlaced, so that it gave way at the touch of his antagonist's lance, and he thus avoided the shock of the encounter. This happened twice :— in the third encounter, the handsome Courtenay lost two of his front teeth. As the Englishman complained bitterly of Dalzell's fraud in not fastening his helmet, the Scottishman agreed to run six courses more, each champion staking in the hand of the King two hundred pounds, to be forfeited, if, on entering the lists, any unequal advantage should be detected. This being agreed to, the wily Scot demanded that Sir Piers, in addition to the loss of his teeth, should consent to the extinction of one of his eyes, he himself having lost an eye in the fight of Otterburn. As Courtenay demurred to this equalisation of optical powers, Dalzell demanded the forfeit ; which, after much altercation, the King appointed to be paid to him, saying, he surpassed the English both in wit and valour.

99. They hail'd Lord Marmion ;
They hail'd him Lord of Fontenaye,
Of Lutterward, and Scrivelbaye,
Of Tamworth tower and town.

Lord Marmion, the principal character of the present romance, is entirely a fictitious personage. In earlier times, indeed, the family of Marmion, Lords of Fontenay, in Normandy, was highly distinguished, but it became extinct in the person of Philip de Marmion, who died in 20th Edward I. without issue male.

100. Largesse, largesse.

This was the cry with which heralds and pursuivants were wont to acknowledge the bounty received from the knights.

101. Sir Hugh the Heron bold,
Baron of Twisell, and of Ford,
And Captain of the Hold.

Were accuracy of any consequence in a fictitious narrative, this castellan's name ought to have been William ; for William Heron of Ford was husband to the famous Lady Ford, whose

siren charms are said to have cost our James IV. so dear. Moreover, the said William Heron was, at the time supposed, a prisoner in Scotland, being surrendered by Henry VIII., on account of his share in the slaughter of Sir Robert Ker of Cessford. His wife, represented in the text as residing at the Court of Scotland, was, in fact, living in her own Castle at Ford

102. "How the fierce Thirwalls, and Ridleys all," etc.

An old Northumbrian ballad.

103. James back'd the cause of that mock prince,
 Warbeck, that Flemish counterfeit,
 Who on the gibbet paid the cheat.
 Then did I march with Surrey's power,
 What time we razed old Ayton tower.

The story of Perkin Warbeck, or Richard, Duke of York, is well known. In 1496, he was received honourably in Scotland; and James IV., after conferring upon him in marriage his own relation, the Lady Catharine Gordon, made war on England in behalf of his pretensions.

104. . . . I trow
 Norham can find you guides enow,
 For here be some have prick'd as far,
 On Scottish ground, as to Dunbar;
 Have drunk the monks of St. Bothan's ale,
 And driven the beeves of Lauderdale;
 Harried the wives of Greenlaw's goods,
 And given them light to set their hoods.

The garrisons of the English castles of Wark, Norham, and Berwick, were, as may be easily supposed, very troublesome neighbours to Scotland.

105. The priest of Shoreswood—he could rein
 The wildest war-horse in your train.

This churchman seems to have been akin to Welsh, the vicar of St. Thomas of Exeter, a leader among the Cornish insurgents in 1549. "This man," says Hollinshed, "had many good things in him. He was of no great stature, but well set, and mightilie compact: He was a very good wrestler; shot well, both in the long bow and also in the cross-bow; he handled his hand-gun and peece very well; he was a very good woodman, and a hardie, and such a one as would not give his head for the polling, or his beard for the washing."

106. . . . that Grot where Olives nod,
Where, darling of each heart and eye,
From all the youth of Sicily,
Saint Rosalie retired to God.

“Sante Rosalia was of Palermo, and born of a very noble family, and, when very young, abhorred so much the vanities of this world, and avoided the converse of mankind, resolving to dedicate herself wholly to God Almighty, that she, by divine inspiration, forsook her father’s house, and never was more heard of till her body was found in that cleft of a rock, on that almost inaccessible mountain, where now the chapel is built.”

107. Friar John
Himself still sleeps before his beads
Have mark’d ten aves and two creeds.

Friar John understood the soporific virtue of his beads and breviary, as well as his namesake in Rabelais. “But Gargantua could not sleep by any means, on which side soever he turned himself. Whereupon the monk said to him, “I never sleep soundly but when I am at sermon or prayers: Let us therefore begin, you and I, the seven penitential psalms, to try whether you shall not quickly fall asleep.” The conceit pleased Gargantua very well; and beginning the first of these psalms, as soon as they came to *Beati quorum*, they fell asleep, both the one and the other.”

108. The summon’d Palmer came in place.

A *Palmer*, opposed to a *Pilgrim*, was one who made it his sole business to visit different holy shrines; travelling incessantly, and subsisting by charity: whereas the *Pilgrim* retired to his usual home and occupations when he had paid his devotions at the particular spot which was the object of his pilgrimage.

109. To fair St. Andrews bound,
Within the ocean-cave to pray
Where good Saint Rule his holy lay,
From midnight to the dawn of day,
Sung to the billows’ sound.

St. Regulus (*Scotticé*, St. Rule), a monk of *Patræ*, in Achaia, warned by a vision, is said, A.D. 370, to have sailed westward, until he landed at St. Andrews in Scotland, where he founded a chapel and tower. A cave, nearly fronting the ruinous castle of the Archbishops of St. Andrews, bears the name of this religious person.

110. . . . Saint Fillan's blessed well,
Whose spring can frenzied dreams dispel,
And the crazed brain restore.

There were in Perthshire several wells and springs dedicated to St. Fillan, which were held powerful in cases of madness, and which, even in Protestant times, were places of pilgrimage and offerings.

111. The scenes are desert now, and bare,
Where flourish'd once a forest fair.

Ettrick Forest, now a range of mountainous sheep-walks, was anciently reserved for the pleasure of the royal chase.

112. By lone Saint Mary's silent lake.

This beautiful sheet of water forms the reservoir from which the Yarrow takes its source. It is connected with a smaller lake, called the Loch of the Lowes, and surrounded by mountains. Near the lower extremity of the lake are the ruins of Dryhope tower, the birthplace of Mary Scott, daughter of Philip Scott of Dryhope, and famous by the traditional name of the Flower of Yarrow.

113. . . . in feudal strife, a foe,
Hath laid Our Lady's chapel low.

The chapel of St. Mary of the Lowes (*de lacubus*) was situated on the eastern side of the lake, to which it gives name. It was injured by the clan of Scott, in a feud with the Cranstouns; but continued to be a place of worship during the seventeenth century. The vestiges of the building can now scarcely be traced; but the burial-ground is still used as a cemetery.

114. . . . the Wizard's grave;
That Wizard Priest's, whose bones are thrust
From company of holy dust.

At one corner of the burial ground of the demolished chapel, but without its precincts, is a small mound, called *Binram's Corse*, where tradition deposits the remains of a necromantic priest, the former tenant of the chaplainry.

115. Some ruder and more savage scene,
Like that which frowns round dark Loch-skene.

Loch-skene is a mountain lake, of considerable size, at the head of the Moffat-water. The character of the scenery is

uncommonly savage; and the earn, or Scottish eagle, has, for many ages, built its nest yearly upon an islet in the lake. Lochskene discharges itself into a brook, which, after a short and precipitate course, falls from a cataract of immense height, and gloomy grandeur, called, from its appearance, the "Gray Mare's Tail." The "Giant's Grave," afterwards mentioned, is a sort of trench, which bears that name, a little way from the foot of the cataract. It has the appearance of a battery, designed to command the pass.

116. . . . high Whitby's cloister'd pile.

The Abbey of Whitby, in the Archdeaconry of Cleaveland, on the coast of Yorkshire, was founded A.D. 657, in consequence of a vow of Oswy, King of Northumberland. It contained both monks and nuns of the Benedictine order; but contrary to what was usual in such establishments, the abbess was superior to the abbot. The monastery was afterwards ruined by the Danes, and rebuilt by William Percy, in the reign of the Conqueror. There were no nuns there in Henry the Eighth's time, nor long before it. The ruins of Whitby Abbey are very magnificent.

117. . . . St. Cuthbert's Holy Isle.

Lindisfarne, an isle on the coast of Northumberland, was called Holy Island, from the sanctity of its ancient monastery, and from its having been the episcopal seat of the see of Durham during the early ages of British Christianity.

118. Then Whitby's nuns exulting told,
How to their house three Barons bold
Must menial service do.

The following is an account of this curious service. "In the year 1159, the Lord of Uglebarnby, then called William de Bruce; the Lord of Smeaton, called Ralph de Percy; with a gentleman and freeholder called Allatson, did appoint to meet and hunt the wild boar, in a certain wood belonging to the Abbot of Whitby. Then, these young gentlemen being met, with their hounds and boar-staves, in the place before mentioned, and there having found a great wild boar, the hounds ran him well near about the chapel and hermitage of Eskdale-side, where was a monk of Whitby, who was an hermit. The boar, being very sorely pursued, and dead-run, took in at the chapel-door, there laid him down, and presently died. The hermit shut the hounds out of the chapel, and kept himself within at his meditations and prayers, the hounds standing at bay without. The gentlemen, in the thick of the wood, being just behind

their game, followed the cry of their hounds, and so came to the hermitage, calling on the hermit, who opened the door and came forth; and within they found the boar lying dead: for which, the gentlemen, in a very great fury, because the hounds were put from their game, did most violently and cruelly run at the hermit with their boar-staves, whereby he soon after died. Thereupon the gentlemen, knowing that they were in peril of death, took sanctuary at Scarborough; But at that time the abbot, being in very great favour with the King, removed them out of the sanctuary; whereby they came in danger of the law, which was death for death. But the hermit, being a holy and devout man, sent for the abbot, and desired him to send for the gentlemen who had wounded him. The abbot so doing, the gentlemen came; and the hermit, being very sick and weak, said unto them, 'You and yours shall hold your lands of the Abbot of Whitby, and his successors, in this manner: That, upon Ascension-day, you shall come to the wood of the Stray-heads, which is in Eskdale-side, the same day at sun-rising, and there shall the abbot's officer deliver unto you, William de Bruce, ten stakes, eleven strout stowers, and eleven yethers, to be cut by you, with a knife: and you, Ralph de Percy, shall take twenty-one of each sort, to be cut in the same manner; and you, Allatson, shall take nine of each sort, to be cut as aforesaid, and to be taken on your backs and carried to the town of Whitby, and to be there before nine of the clock the same day before mentioned. At the same hour of nine of the clock, if it be full sea, your labour and service shall cease; and if low water, each of you shall set your stakes to the brim, each stake one yard from the other, and so yether them on each side with your yethers; and so stake on each side with your strout stowers, that they may stand three tides without removing by the force thereof. You shall faithfully do this, in remembrance that you did most cruelly slay me; and that you may the better call to God for mercy, repent unfeignedly of your sins, and do good works. The officer of Eskdale-side shall blow. *Out on you! Out on you! Out on you!* for this heinous crime. If you, or your successors, shall refuse this service, you or yours shall forfeit your lands to the Abbot of Whitby, or his successors." Part of the lands charged with the above service were latterly held by a gentleman of the name of Herbert.

119. . . . in their convent cell
 A Saxon princess once did dwell,
 The lovely Edelfled.

She was the daughter of King Oswy, who, in gratitude to Heaven for the great victory which he won in 655, against

Penda, the Pagan King of Mercia, dedicated Edelfleda, then but a year old, to the service of God, in the monastery of Whitby, of which St. Hilda was then abbess. She afterwards adorned the place of her education with great magnificence.

120. . . . of thousand snakes, each one
Was changed into a coil of stone,
When holy Hilda pray'd ;
They told, how sea-fowls' pinions fail,
As over Whitby's towers they sail.

These two miracles are much insisted upon by all ancient writers who have occasion to mention either Whitby or St. Hilda.

121. His body's resting-place of old,
How oft their patron changed, they told.

St. Cuthbert was, in the choice of his sepulchre, one of the most mutable and unreasonable saints in the Calendar. He died A.D. 688, in a hermitage upon the Farne Islands, having resigned the bishopric of Lindisfarne, or Holy Island, about two years before. His body was brought to Lindisfarne, where it remained until a descent of the Danes, about 793, when the monastery was nearly destroyed. The monks fled to Scotland with what they deemed their chief treasure, the relics of St. Cuthbert. They paraded him through Scotland for several years, and came as far west as Whithern, in Galloway, whence they attempted to sail for Ireland, but were driven back by tempests. He at length made a halt at Norham; from thence he went to Melrose, where he remained stationary for a short time, and then caused himself to be launched upon the Tweed, and landed at Tilmouth, in Northumberland. From Tilmouth, Cuthbert wandered into Yorkshire; and at length made a long stay at Chester-le-street, to which the bishop's see was transferred. At length, the Danes continuing to infest the country, the monks removed to Rippon for a season; and it was in return from thence to Chester-le-street, that, passing through a forest called Dunholme, the Saint and his carriage became immovable at a place named Wardlaw, or Wardilaw. Here the Saint chose his place of residence; and all who have seen Durham must admit, that, if difficult in his choice, he evinced taste in at length fixing it.

122. Even Scotland's dauntless king and heir, etc.
Before his standard fled.

Every one has heard, that when David I., with his son Henry, invaded Northumberland in 1136, the English host

marched against them under the holy banner of St. Cuthbert ; to the efficacy of which was imputed the great victory which they obtained in the bloody battle of Northallerton, or Cutonmoor.

123. 'Twas he, to vindicate his reign,
Edged Alfred's falchion on the Dane,
And turn'd the Conqueror back again.

Cuthbert, we have seen, had no great reason to spare the Danes, when opportunity offered. Accordingly, I find, in Simeon of Durham, that the Saint appeared in a vision to Alfred, when lurking in the marshes of Glastonbury, and promised him assistance and victory over his heathen enemies ; a consolation, which, as was reasonable, Alfred, after the victory of Ashendown, rewarded by a royal offering at the shrine of the Saint. As to William the Conqueror, the terror spread before his army, when he marched to punish the revolt of the Northumbrians, in 1096, had forced the monks to fly once more to Holy Island with the body of the Saint. It was, however, replaced before William left the north ; and, to balance accounts, the Conqueror having intimated an indiscreet curiosity to view the Saint's body, he was, while in the act of commanding the shrine to be opened, seized with heat and sickness, accompanied with such a panic terror, that he fled, and never drew his bridle till he got to the river Tees.

124. Saint Cuthbert sits, and toils to frame
The sea-born beads that bear his name.

Although we do not learn that Cuthbert was, during his life, such an artificer as Dunstan, his brother in sanctity, yet, since his death, he has acquired the reputation of forging those *Entrochi* which are found among the rocks of Holy Island, and pass there by the name of St. Cuthbert's Beads.

125. Old Colwulf.

Ceolwulf, or Colwulf, King of Northumberland, flourished in the eighth century. He was a man of some learning ; for the venerable Bede dedicates to him his "Ecclesiastical History." He abdicated the throne about 738, and retired to Holy Island, where he died in the odour of sanctity.

126. Tynemouth's haughty Prioress.

That there was an ancient priory at Tynemouth is certain. Its ruins are situated on a high rocky point ; and, doubtless,

many a vow was made to the shrine by the distressed mariners who drove towards the iron-bound coast of Northumberland in stormy weather. It was anciently a nunnery, but the introduction of nuns at Tynemouth in the reign of Henry VIII. is an anachronism.

127. On those the wall was to enclose,
Alive, within the tomb.

It is well known, that the religious, who broke their vows of chastity, were subjected to the same penalty as the Roman vestals in a similar case. A small niche, sufficient to enclose their bodies, was made in the massive wall of the convent; a slender pittance of food and water was deposited in it, and the awful words, VADE IN PACE, were the signal for immuring the criminal.

128. The village inn.

The Scottish hostlerie, or inn, of the sixteenth century, though the subject of some peculiar enactments of the legislature, appears at best to have afforded but a rude comfort.

129. The death of a dear friend.

Among other omens to which faithful credit is given among the Scottish peasantry, is what is called the "dead-bell," explained by my friend James Hogg, to be that tinkling in the ears which the country people regard as the secret intelligence of some friend's decease.

130. The Goblin-Hall.

A vaulted hall under the ancient castle of Gifford or Yester (for it bears either name indifferently), the construction of which has from a very remote period been ascribed to magic.

131. There floated Haco's banner trim
Above Norwegian warriors grim.

In 1263, Haco, King of Norway, came into the Firth of Clyde with a powerful armament, and made a descent at Largs, in Ayrshire. Here he was encountered and defeated, on the 2nd October, by Alexander III.

132. The wizard habit strange.

"Magicians, as is well known, were very curious in the choice and form of their vestments. Their caps are oval, or like pyramids, with lappets on each side, and fur within.

Their gowns are long, and furred with fox-skins, under which they have a linen garment reaching to the knee. Their girdles are three inches broad, and have many cabalistical names, with crosses, trines, and circles inscribed on them. Their shoes should be of new russet leather, with a cross cut upon them. Their knives are dagger-fashion; and their swords have neither guard nor scabbard."—See these, and many other particulars, in the Discourse concerning Devils and Spirits, annexed to REGINALD SCOTT'S *Discovery of Witchcraft*, edition 1665.

133. Upon his breast a pentacle.

A pentacle is a piece of fine linen, folded with five corners, according to the five senses, and suitably inscribed with characters. This the magician extends towards the spirits which he invokes, when they are stubborn and rebellious, and refuse to be conformable unto the ceremonies and rites of magic.

134. As born upon that blessed night,
When yawning graves, and dying groan,
Proclaim'd hell's empire overthrown.

It is a popular article of faith, that those who are born on Christmas, or Good Friday, have the power of seeing spirits, and even of commanding them. The Spaniards imputed the haggard and downcast looks of their Philip II. to the disagreeable visions to which this privilege subjected him.

135. Yet still the knightly spear and shield
The Elfin warrior doth wield
Upon the brown hill's breast.

The northern champions of old were accustomed peculiarly to search for, and delight in, encounters with such military spectres.

136. Close to the hut, no more his own,
Close to the aid he sought in vain,
The morn may find the stiffen'd swain.

I cannot help here mentioning, that, on the night in which these lines were written, suggested, as they were, by a sudden fall of snow, beginning alter sunset, an unfortunate man perished exactly in the manner here described, and his body was next morning found close to his own house. The accident happened within five miles of the farm of Asbestiel.

137. . . . Forbes.

Sir William Forbes of Pitsligo, Baronet; unequalled, perhaps, in the degree of individual affection entertained for him by his friends, as well as in the general respect and esteem of Scotland at large. His "Life of Beattie," whom he befriended and patronised in life, as well as celebrated after his decease, was not long published, before the benevolent and affectionate biographer was called to follow the subject of his narrative. This melancholy event very shortly succeeded the marriage of the friend, to whom this introduction is addressed, with one of Sir William's daughters.

138. Friar Rush.

Alias, "Will o' the Wisp." This personage is a strolling demon, or *esprit follet*, who, once upon a time, got admittance into a monastery as a scullion, and played the monks many pranks. He was also a sort of Robin Goodfellow, and Jack o' Lantern.

139. Sir David Lindesay of the Mount,
Lord Lion King-at-arms.

I am uncertain if I abuse poetical licence, by introducing Sir David Lindesay in the character of Lion-Herald, sixteen years before he obtained that office. At any rate, I am not the first who has been guilty of the anachronism; for the author of "Flodden Field" despatches *Dallamont*, which can mean nobody but Sir David de la Mont, to France, on the message of defiance from James IV. to Henry VIII. It was often an office imposed on the Lion King-at-arms, to receive foreign ambassadors; and Lindesay himself did this honour to Sir Ralph Sadier, in 1539-40. Indeed, the oath of the Lion, in its first article, bears reference to his frequent employment upon royal messages and embassies.

140. Crichtoun Castle.

A large ruinous castle on the banks of the Tyne, about ten miles from Edinburgh. As indicated in the text, it was built at different times, and with a very differing regard to splendour and accommodation.

141. Earl Adam Hepburn.

He was the second Earl of Bothwell, and fell in the field of Flodden, where he distinguished himself by a furious attempt to retrieve the day.

Adam was grandfather to James, Earl of Bothwell, too well known in the history of Queen Mary.

- 141a. For that a messenger from heaven,
In vain to James had counsel given,
Against the English war.

This story is told by Pitscottie with characteristic simplicity:—“The King, seeing that France could get no support of him for that time, made a proclamation through all the realm of Scotland, to all manner of men between sixty and sixteen years, that they should be ready, within twenty days, to pass with him, with forty days’ victual, and to meet at the Burrow-muir of Edinburgh, and there to pass forward where he pleased.

“The King came to Lithgow, where he happened to be for the time at the Council, very sad and dolorous, making his devotion to God, to send him good chance and fortune in his voyage. In this meantime there came a man, clad in a blue gown, in at the kirk door, and belted about him in a roll of linen cloth; a pair of brotikings on his feet, to the great of his legs; with all other hose and clothes conform thereto: but he had nothing on his head, but syde red yellow hair behind, and on his haffets, which wan down to his shoulders; but his forehead was bald and bare. He seemed to be a man of two-and-fifty years, with a great pike-staff in his hand, and came first forward among the lords, crying and speiring for the King, saying, he desired to speak with him. While, at the last, he came where the King was sitting in the desk at his prayers; but when he saw the King, he made him little reverence or salutation, but leaned down groffling on the desk before him, and said to him in this manner, as after follows. ‘Sir King, my mother hath sent me to you, desiring you not to pass, at this time, where thou art purposed; for if thou does, thou wilt not fare well in thy journey, nor none that passeth with thee. Further, she bade thee mell with no woman, nor use their counsel, nor let them touch thy body, nor thou theirs; for, if thou do it, thou wilt be confounded and brought to shame.’

“By this man had spoken thir words unto the King’s grace, the evening song was near done, and the King paused on thir words, studying to give him an answer; but, in the meantime, before the King’s eyes, and in the presence of all the lords that were about him for the time, this man vanished away, and could no ways be seen or comprehended, but vanished away as he had been a blink of the sun, or a whip of the whirlwind, and could no more be seen.

142. The wild-buck bells.

I am glad of an opportunity to describe the cry of the deer by another word than *braying*, although the latter has been

sanctified by the use of the Scottish metrical translation of the Psalms. *Bell* seems to be an abbreviation of *bellow*. This sylvan sound conveyed great delight to our ancestors, chiefly, I suppose, from association. A gentle knight in the reign of Henry VIII., Sir Thomas Wortley, built Wantley Lodge, in Wancliffe Forest, for the pleasure (as an ancient inscription testifies) of "listening to the hart's *bell*."

143. June saw his father's overthrow.

The rebellion against James III. was signalised by the cruel circumstance of his son's presence in the hostile army. When the King saw his own banner displayed against him and his son in the faction of his enemies, he lost the little courage he had ever possessed, fled out of the field, fell from his horse as it started at a woman and water-pitcher, and was slain, it is not well understood by whom. James IV., after the battle, passed to Stirling, and hearing the monks of the chapel-royal deploring the death of his father, their founder, he was seized with deep remorse, which manifested itself in severe penances. See a following Note on stanza ix. of canto v. The battle of Sauchie-burn, in which James III. fell, was fought 18th June, 1488.

144. The Borough-moor.

The Borough, or Common Moor of Edinburgh, was of very great extent, reaching from the southern walls of the city to the bottom of Braid Hills.

145. Scroll, pennon, pensil, bandrol, there O'er the pavilions flew.

These various ensigns proclaimed the rank of those who displayed them.

146. . . . in proud Scotland's royal shield, The ruddy lion ramp'd in gold.

The well-known arms of Scotland.

147. Caledonia's Queen is changed.

The Old Town of Edinburgh was secured on the north side by a lake, now drained, and on the south by a wall, which there was some attempt to make defensible even so late as 1745. The gates, and the greater part of the wall, have been pulled down, in the course of the late extensive and beautiful enlargement of the city.

148. Since first, when conquering York arose,
To Henry meek she gave repose.

Henry VI., with his Queen, his heir, and the chiefs of his family, fled to Scotland after the fatal battle of Towton.

149. . . . the romantic strain,
Whose Anglo-Norman tones whilere
Could win the royal Henry's ear.

Mr. Ellis, in his Introduction to the "Specimens of Romance," has proved, by the concurring testimony of La Ravallere, Tressan, but especially the Abbé de la Rue, that the courts of our Anglo-Norman Kings, rather than those of the French monarch, produced the birth of Romance literature.

150. The cloth-yard arrows.

This is no poetical exaggeration. In some of the counties of England, distinguished for archery, shafts of this extraordinary length were actually used.

151. To pass, to wheel, the croupe to gain,
And high curvett, that not in vain
The sword sway might descend amain
On foeman's casque below.

"The most useful *air*, as the Frenchmen term it, is *territerr*; the *courbettes*, *cabrioles*, or *un pas et un sault*, being fitter for horses of parade and triumph than for soldiers: yet I cannot deny but a *demivolte* with *courbettes*, so that they be not too high, may be useful in a fight or *meslée*; for, as Labroue hath it, in his Book of Horsemanship, Monsieur de Montmorency having a horse that was excellent in performing the *demivolte*, did, with his sword, strike down two adversaries from their horses in a tourney, where divers of the prime gallants of France did meet; for, taking his time, when the horse was in the height of his *courbette*, and discharging a blow then, his sword fell with such weight and force upon the two cavaliers, one after another, that he struck them from their horses to the ground."—*Lord Herbert of Cherbury's Life*, p. 48.

152. He saw the hardy burghers there
March arm'd on foot with faces bare.

The Scottish burgesses were, like yeomen, appointed to be armed with bows and sheaves, sword, buckler, knife, spear, or a good axe instead of a bow, if worth £100: their armour

to be of white or bright harness. They wore *white hats*, i.e. bright steel caps, without crest or visor.

153. On foot the yeoman too . . .
 Each at his back (a slender store)
 His forty days' provision bore,
 His arms were halbert, axe, or spear.

When the feudal array of the kingdom was called forth, each man was obliged to appear with forty days' provision. When this was expended, which took place before the battle of Flodden, the army melted away of course. Almost all the Scottish forces, except a few knights, men-at-arms, and the Border-prickers, who formed excellent light-cavalry, acted upon foot.

154. A banquet rich, and costly wines,
 To Marmion and his train.

In all transactions of great or petty importance, and among whomsoever taking place, it would seem that a present of wine was a uniform and indispensable preliminary.

155. . . . his iron-belt,
 That bound his breast in penance pain,
 In memory of his father slain.

Few readers need to be reminded of this belt, to the weight of which James added certain ounces every year that he lived.

156. Sir Hugh the Heron's wife.

It has been already noticed [see note to stanza xiii. of canto i.], that King James's acquaintance with Lady Heron of Ford did not commence until he marched into England. Our historians impute to the King's infatuated passion the delays which led to the fatal defeat of Flodden.

157. The fair Queen of France
 Sent him a turquois ring and glove,
 And charged him, as her knight and love,
 For her to break a lance.

A turquois ring, probably this fatal gift, is, with James's sword and dagger, preserved in the College of Heralds. London.

158. Archibald Bell-the-Cat.

Archibald Douglas, Earl of Angus, a man remarkable for strength of body and mind, acquired the popular name of *Bell-the-Cat*, upon the following remarkable occasion:—James the Third, of whom Pitscottie complains, that he delighted more in music, and “policies of building,” than in hunting, hawking, and other noble exercises, was so ill advised, as to make favourites of his architects and musicians, whom the same historian irreverently terms masons and fiddlers. His nobility, who did not sympathise in the King’s respect for the fine arts, were extremely incensed at the honours conferred on those persons, particularly on Cochrane, a mason, who had been created Earl of Mar; and, seizing the opportunity, when, in 1482, the King had convoked the whole array of the country to march against the English, they held a midnight council in the church of Lauder, for the purpose of forcibly removing these minions from the King’s person. When all had agreed on the propriety of this measure, Lord Gray told the assembly the apologue of the Mice, who had formed a resolution, that it would be highly advantageous to their community to tie a bell round the cat’s neck, that they might hear her approach at a distance; but which public measure unfortunately miscarried, from no mouse being willing to undertake the task of fastening the bell. “I understand the moral,” said Angus, “and, that what we propose may not lack execution, I will *bell-the-cat*.”

159. Against the war had Angus stood,
And chafed his royal Lord.

Angus was an old man when the war against England was resolved upon. He earnestly spoke against that measure from its commencement; and, on the eve of the battle of Flodden, remonstrated so freely upon the impolicy of fighting, that the King said to him, with scorn and indignation, “if he was afraid he might go home.” The Earl burst into tears at this insupportable insult, and retired accordingly, leaving his sons George, Master of Angus, and Sir William of Glenbervie, to command his followers.

160. Tantallon Hold.

The ruins of Tantallon Castle occupy a high rock projecting into the German Ocean, about two miles east of North Berwick.

161. Their motto on his blade.

A very ancient sword, in possession of Lord Douglas, bears, among a great deal of flourishing, two hands pointing to a

heart, which is placed betwixt them, and the date 1329, being the year in which Bruce charged the Good Lord Douglas to carry his heart to the Holy Land.

162. Martin Swart.

A German general, who commanded the auxiliaries sent by the Duchess of Burgundy with Lambert Sinsel. He was defeated and killed at Stokefield. The name of this German general is preserved by that of the field of battle, which is called, after him, Swart-moor.

163. Perchance some form was unobserved ;
Perchance in prayer, or faith, he swerved.

It was early necessary for those who felt themselves obliged to believe in the divine judgment being enunciated in the trial by duel, to find salvos for the strange and obviously precarious chances of the combat.

164. . . . The Cross.

The Cross of Edinburgh was an ancient and curious structure. The lower part was an octagonal tower, sixteen feet in diameter, and about fifteen feet high. Above this rose the proper Cross, a column of one stone, upwards of twenty feet high, surmounted with a unicorn. The Magistrates of Edinburgh, in 1756, with consent of the Lords of Session (*proh pudor!*) destroyed this curious monument, under a wanton pretext that it encumbered the street. From the tower of the Cross, so long as it remained, the heralds published the Acts of Parliament.

165. This awful summons came.

This supernatural citation is mentioned by all our Scottish historians. It was, probably, like the apparition at Linlithgow, an attempt, by those averse to the war, to impose upon the superstitious temper of James IV.

166. One of his own ancestry
Drove the Monks forth of Coventry.

This relates to the catastrophe of a real Robert de Marmion, in the reign of King Stephen. This baron, having expelled the Monks from the church of Coventry, was not long of experiencing the divine judgment, as the same monks, no doubt, termed his disaster. Having waged a feudal war with the Earl of Chester, Marmion's horse fell, as he charged in the van of his troop, against a body of the Earl's followers : the rider's thigh

being broken by the fall, his head was cut off by a common foot-soldier, ere he could receive any succour.

167. . . . the savage Dane
At Iol more deep the mead did drain.

The Iol of the heathen Danes (a word still applied to Christmas in Scotland) was solemnised with great festivity. The humour of the Danes at table displayed itself in pelting each other with bones.

168. On Christmas eve.

In Roman Catholic countries, mass is never said at night, except on Christmas eve.

169. Who lists may in their mumming see
Traces of ancient mystery.

It seems certain, that the *Mummers* of England, who (in Northumberland at least) used to go about in disguise to the neighbouring houses, bearing the then useless ploughshare; and the *Guisards* of Scotland, not yet in total disuse, present, in some indistinct degree, a shadow of the old mysteries, which were the origin of the English drama.

170. Where my great-grandsire came of old,
With amber beard and flaxen hair.

The reference is to a cadet of the Harden family, whose veneration for the exiled house of Stuart was so great, that he swore he would not shave his beard until they were restored.

171. The spirit's Blasted Tree.

This passage finds illustration in "*Ceubren yr Ellyll*, or The Spirit's Blasted Tree," a legendary tale, by the Reverend George Warrington.

172. The Highlander
Will, on a Friday morn, look pale,
If ask'd to tell a fairy tale.

The belief in the existence of the *Daoine shi*, or *Men of Peace*, is deeply impressed on the Scottish Highlanders, who think they are particularly offended at mortals who talk of them, who wear their favourite colour, green, or in any respect interfere with their affairs. This is especially to be avoided on Friday, when, whether as dedicated to Venus, with whom,

in Germany, this subterraneous people are held nearly connected, or for a more solemn reason, they are more active, and possessed of greater power.

173. The towers of Franchémont.

The journal of the friend to whom the Fourth Canto of the Poem is inscribed, furnished the material for the legend that follows.

174. The very form of Hilda fair,
Hovering upon the sunny air,
And smiling on her votaries' prayer.

"I shall only produce one instance more of the great veneration paid to Lady Hilda, which still prevails even in these our days; and that is, the constant opinion that she rendered, and still renders, herself visible, on some occasions, in the Abbey of Streanshalh or Whitby, where she so long resided. At a particular time of the year (viz. in the summer months), at ten or eleven in the forenoon, the sunbeams fall in the inside of the northern part of the choir; and 'tis then that the spectators, who stand on the west side of Whitby churchyard, so as just to see the most northerly part of the abbey pass the north end of Whitby church, imagine they perceive, in one of the highest windows there, the resemblance of a woman arrayed in a shroud. Though we are certain this is only a reflection caused by the splendour of the sunbeams, yet fame reports it, and it is constantly believed among the vulgar, to be an appearance of Lady Hilda in her shroud, or rather in a glorified state; before which, I make no doubt, the Papists, even in these our days, offer up their prayers with as much zeal and devotion as before any other image of their most glorified saint."—CHARLTON'S *History of Whitby*.

175. . . . the huge and sweeping brand
Which wont of yore, in battle fray,
His foeman's limbs to shred away,
As wood-knife lops the sapling spray.

The Earl of Angus had strength and personal activity corresponding to his courage.

176. And hoppest thou hence unscathed to go?—
No! by St. Bride of Bothwell, no!
Up drawbridge, grooms!—What, Warder, ho!
Let the portcullis fall.

This ebullition of violence in the potent Earl of Angus is not without its example in the real history of the house of

Douglas, whose chieftains possessed the ferocity, with the heroic virtues, of a savage state.

177. A letter forged!—Saint Jude to speed!
Did ever knight so foul a deed!

Lest the reader should partake of the Earl's astonishment, and consider the crime as inconsistent with the manners of the period, I have to remind him of the numerous forgeries (partly executed by a female assistant) devised by Robert of Artois, to forward his suit against the Countess Matilda; which, being detected, occasioned his flight into England, and proved the remote cause of Edward the Third's memorable wars in France. John Harding, also, was expressly hired by Edward VI. to forge such documents as might appear to establish the claim of fealty asserted over Scotland by the English monarchs.

178. Lennel's convent.

This was a Cistercian house of religion, now almost entirely demolished.

179. Twisel Bridge.

On the evening previous to the memorable battle of Flodden, Surrey's headquarters were at Barmoor Wood, and King James held an inaccessible position on the ridge of Flodden-hill, one of the last and lowest eminences detached from the ridge of Cheviot. The Till, a deep and slow river, winded between the armies. On the morning of the 9th September, 1513, Surrey marched in a north-westerly direction, and crossed the Till, with his van and artillery, at Twisel Bridge, nigh where that river joins the Tweed, his rear-guard column passing about a mile higher, by a ford.

180. Hence might they see the full array,
Of either host, for deadly fray.

The reader cannot here expect a full account of the battle of Flodden; but, so far as is necessary to understand the romance, I beg to remind him, that, when the English army, by their skilful countermarch, were fairly placed between King James and his own country, the Scottish monarch resolved to fight; and, setting fire to his tents, descended from the ridge of Flodden to secure the neighbouring eminence of Brankstone, on which that village is built. Thus the two armies met, almost without seeing each other. The English army advanced in four divisions. On the right, which first engaged, were the sons of Earl Surrey, namely, Thomas Howard, the Admiral of

England, and Sir Edmund, the Knight Marshal of the army. Their divisions were separated from each other; but, at the request of Sir Edmund, his brother's battalion was drawn very near to his own. The centre was commanded by Surrey in person; the left wing by Sir Edward Stanley, with the men of Lancashire, and of the palatinate of Chester. Lord Dacre, with a large body of horse, formed a reserve. When the smoke, which the wind had driven between the armies, was somewhat dispersed, they perceived the Scots, who had moved down the hill in a similar order of battle, and in deep silence. The Earls of Huntley and of Home commanded their left wing, and charged Sir Edmund Howard with such success as entirely to defeat his part of the English right wing. Sir Edmund's banner was beaten down, and he himself escaped with difficulty to his brother's division. The Admiral, however, stood firm; and Dacre, advancing to his support with the reserve of cavalry, probably between the interval of the divisions commanded by the brothers Howard, appears to have kept the victors in effectual check. Home's men, chiefly Borderers, began to pillage the baggage of both armies; and their leader is branded by the Scottish historians with negligence or treachery. On the other hand, Huntley, on whom they bestow many encomiums, is said by the English historians to have left the field after the first charge. Meanwhile the Admiral, whose flank these chiefs ought to have attacked, availed himself of their inactivity, and pushed forward against another large division of the Scottish army in his front, headed by the Earls of Crawford and Montrose, both of whom were slain, and their forces routed. On the left, the success of the English was yet more decisive; for the Scottish right wing, consisting of undisciplined Highlanders, commanded by Lennox and Argyie, was unable to sustain the charge of Sir Edward Stanley, and especially the severe execution of the Lancashire archers. The King and Surrey, who commanded the respective centres or their armies, were meanwhile engaged in close and dubious conflict. James, surrounded by the flower of his kingdom, and impatient of the galling discharge of arrows, supported also by his reserve under Bothwell, charged with such fury, that the standard of Surrey was in danger. At that critical moment, Stanley, who had routed the left wing of the Scottish, pursued his career of victory, and arrived on the right flank, and in the rear of James's division, which, throwing itself into a circle, disputed the battle till night came on. Surrey then drew back his forces; for the Scottish centre not having been broken, and their left wing being victorious, he yet doubted the event of the field. The Scottish army, however, felt their loss, and abandoned the field of battle in disorder, before dawn. They lost, perhaps, from eight to ten thousand men;

but that included the very prime of their nobility, gentry, and even clergy. The English lost also a great number of men, perhaps within one-third of the vanquished, but they were of inferior note.

The spot from which Clara views the battle must be supposed to have been on a hillock commanding the rear of the English right wing, which was defeated, and in which conflict Marmion is supposed to have fallen.

181. . . . Brian Tunstall, stainless knight.

Sir Brian Tunstall, called in the romantic language of the time Tunstall the Undefiled, was one of the few Englishmen of rank slain at Flodden.

182. Reckless of life, he desperate fought,
 And fell on Flodden plain :
 And well in death his trusty brand,
 Firm clench'd within his manly hand,
 Beseem'd the monarch slain.

There can be no doubt that King James fell in the battle of Flodden. He was killed, says the curious French Gazette, within a lance's length of the Earl of Surrey. An unhewn column marks the spot where James fell, still called the King's Stone.

183. The fair cathedral storm'd and took.

This storm of Lichfield cathedral, which had been garrisoned on the part of the King, took place in the Great Civil War. Lord Brook, who, with Sir John Gill, commanded the assailants, was shot with a musket-ball through the visor of his helmet. The royalists remarked, that he was killed by a shot fired from St. Chad's cathedral, and upon St. Chad's Day, and received his death-wound in the very eye with which, he had said, he hoped to see the ruin of all the cathedrals in England.

THE VISION OF DON RODERICK.

184. And Cattræth's glens with voice of triumph rung,
And mystic Merlin harp'd, and gray-hair'd Llywarch
sung!

This locality may startle those readers who do not recollect that much of the ancient poetry preserved in Wales refers less to the history of the Principality to which that name is now limited, than to events which happened in the north-west of England, and south-west of Scotland, where the Britons for a long time made a stand against the Saxons. The battle of Cattræth, lamented by the celebrated Aneurin, is supposed, by the learned Dr. Leyden, to have been fought on the skirts of Ettrick Forest. Llywarch, the celebrated bard and monarch, was Prince of Argood, in Cumberland; and his youthful exploits were performed upon the Border, although in his age he was driven into Powys by the successes of the Anglo-Saxons. As for Merlin Wylt, or the Savage, his name of Caledonia, and his retreat into the Caledonian wood, appropriate him to Scotland.

185. Minchmore's haunted spring.

A belief in the existence and nocturnal revels of the fairies still lingers among the vulgar in Selkirkshire.

186. . . . The rude villager, his labour done,
In verse spontaneous chants some favour'd name.

The flexibility of the Italian and Spanish languages, and perhaps the liveliness of their genius, renders these countries distinguished for the talent of improvisation, which is found even among the lowest of the people.

187. Kindling at the deeds of Græme.

Over a name sacred for ages to heroic verse, a poet may be allowed to exercise some power. I have used the freedom, here and elsewhere, to alter the orthography of the name of my gallant countryman, in order to apprise the Southern reader of its legitimate sound;—Grahame being, on the other side of the Tweed, usually pronounced as a dissyllable.

188. What! will Don Roderick here till morning stay,
 To wear in shrift and prayer the night away?
 And are his hours in such dull penance past,
 For fair Florinda's plunder'd charms to pay?

Almost all the Spanish historians, as well as the voice of tradition, ascribe the invasion of the Moors to the forcible violation committed by Roderick upon Florinda, called by the Moors, Caba or Cava. She was the daughter of Count Julian, one of the Gothic monarch's principal lieutenants, who, when the crime was perpetrated, was engaged in the defence of Ceuta against the Moors. In his indignation at the ingratitude of his sovereign, and the dishonour of his daughter, Count Julian forgot the duties of a Christian and a patriot, and, forming an alliance with Musa, then the Caliph's lieutenant in Africa, he countenanced the invasion of Spain by a body of Saracens and Africans, commanded by the celebrated Tarik; the issue of which was the defeat and death of Roderick, and the occupation of almost the whole peninsula by the Moors.

189. And guide me, Priest, to that mysterious room.

The transition of an incident from history to tradition, and from tradition to fable and romance, becoming more marvellous at each step from its original simplicity, is not ill exemplified in the account of the "Fated Chamber" of Don Roderick, as given by his namesake, the historian of Toledo, contrasted with subsequent and more romantic accounts of the same subterranean discovery.

190. The Tecbir war-cry, and the Lelie's yell.

The Tecbir (derived from the words *Alla acbar*, God is most mighty) was the original war-cry of the Saracens. The *Lelie*, well known to the Christians during the crusades, is the shout of *Alla illa Alla*, the Mahomedan confession of faith.

191. By Heaven, the Moors prevail! the Christians yield!--
 Their coward leader gives for flight the sign!
 The sceptred craven mounts to quit the field—
 Is not yon steed Orelia?—Yes, 'tis mine!

Count Julian, the father of the injured Florinda, with the connivance and assistance of Oppas, Archbishop of Toledo,

invited, in 713, the Saracens into Spain. A considerable army arrived under the command of Tarik, or Tarif. He was joined by Count Julian, ravaged Andalusia, and took Seville. In 714, they returned with a still greater force, and Roderick marched into Andalusia at the head of a great army, to give them battle. The field was chosen near Xeres, and the action resulted in the defeat and flight of the king.

192. When for the light bolero ready stand,
The mozo blithe, with gay muchacha met.

The bolero is a very light and active dance, much practised by the Spaniards, in which castanets are always used. *Mozo* and *muchacha* are equivalent to our phrase of lad and lass.

193. While trumpets rang, and heralds cried "Castile!"

The heralds, at the coronation of a Spanish monarch, proclaim his name three times, and repeat three times the word *Castilla, Castilla, Castilla*; which, with all other ceremonies, was carefully copied in the mock inauguration of Joseph Bonaparte.

194. High blazed the war, and long, and far, and wide.

Those who were disposed to believe that mere virtue and energy are able of themselves to work forth the salvation of an oppressed people, surprised in a moment of confidence, deprived of their officers, armies, and fortresses, who had every means of resistance to seek in the very moment when they were to be made use of, and whom the numerous treasons among the higher orders deprived of confidence in their natural leaders,—those who entertained this enthusiastic but delusive opinion may be pardoned for expressing their disappointment at the protracted warfare in the Peninsula. There are, however, another class of persons, who, having themselves the highest dread or veneration, or something allied to both, for the power of the modern Attila, will nevertheless give the heroic Spaniards little or no credit for the long, stubborn, and unsubdued resistance of three years to a power before whom their former well-prepared, well-armed, and numerous adversaries fell in the course of as many months. While

these gentlemen plead for deference to Bonaparte, it may not be altogether unreasonable to claim some modification of censure upon those who have been long and to a great extent successfully resisting this great enemy of mankind.

195. They won not Zaragoza, but her children's bloody tomb.

The defence of Zaragoza is one of the most heroic incidents in modern history. The inhabitants, led by Palafox, offered the most determined resistance, some 60,000 in all perishing.

196. The Vault of Destiny.

Before finally dismissing the enchanted cavern of Don Roderick, it may be noticed that the legend occurs in one of Calderon's plays, entitled, *La Virgin del Sagrario*. The scene opens with the noise of the chase, and Recisundo, a predecessor of Roderick upon the Gothic throne, enters pursuing a stag. The animal assumes the form of a man, and defies the king to enter the cave, which forms the bottom of the scene, and engage with him in single combat. The king accepts the challenge, and they engage accordingly, but without advantage on either side, which induces the Genie to inform Recisundo, that he is not the monarch for whom the adventure of the enchanted cavern is reserved, and he proceeds to predict the downfall of the Gothic monarchy, and of the Christian religion, which shall attend the discovery of its mysteries. Recisundo, appalled by these prophecies, orders the cavern to be secured by a gate and bolts of iron. In the second part of the same play, we are informed that Don Roderick had removed the barrier, and transgressed the prohibition of his ancestor, and had been apprised by the prodigies which he discovered of the approaching ruin of his kingdom.

197. The rudest sentinel, in Britain born,
With horror paused to view the havoc done,
Gave his poor crust to feed some wretch forlorn.

Even the unexampled gallantry of the British army in the campaign of 1810-11, although they never fought but to conquer, will do them less honour in history than their humanity, attentive to soften to the utmost of their power

the horrors which war, in its mildest aspect, must always inflict upon the defenceless inhabitants of the country in which it is waged, and which, on this occasion, were tenfold augmented by the barbarous cruelties of the French.

198. Vainglorious fugitive !

The French conducted this memorable retreat with much of the *fanfarronade* proper to their country, by which they attempt to impose upon others, and perhaps on themselves, a belief that they are triumphing in the very moment of their discomfiture. On the 30th March, 1811, their rear-guard was overtaken near Pega by the British cavalry. Being well posted, and conceiving themselves safe from infantry (who were indeed many miles in the rear) and from artillery, they indulged themselves in parading their bands of music, and actually performed "God save the King." Their minstrelsy was, however, deranged by the undesired accompaniment of the British horse-artillery, on whose part in the concert they had not calculated. The surprise was sudden, and the rout complete; for the artillery and cavalry did execution upon them for about four miles, pursuing at the gallop as often as they got beyond the range of the guns.

199. Vainly thy squadrons hide Assuava's plain,
And front the flying thunders as they roar.
With frantic charge and tenfold odds, in vain !

In the severe action of Fuentes d'Honoro, upon 5th May, 1811, the grand mass of the French cavalry attacked the right of the British position, covered by two guns of the horse-artillery, and two squadrons of cavalry. After suffering considerably from the fire of the guns, which annoyed them in every attempt at formation, the enemy turned their wrath entirely towards them, distributed brandy among their troopers, and advanced to carry the field-pieces with the desperation of drunken fury. They were in nowise checked by the heavy loss which they sustained in this daring attempt, but closed, and fairly mingled with the British cavalry, to whom they bore the proportion of ten to one. Captain Ramsay, who commanded the two guns, dismissed them at the gallop, and putting himself at the head of the mounted artillerymen, ordered them to fall upon the French, *sabre-in-hand*. This very unexpected conversion of artillerymen into

dragoons contributed greatly to the defeat of the enemy, already disconcerted by the reception they had met from the two British squadrons: and the appearance of some small reinforcements notwithstanding the immense disproportion of force, put them to absolute rout.

200. And what avails thee that, for Cameron slain,
Wild from his plaided ranks the yell was given.

The gallant Colonel Cameron was wounded mortally during the desperate contest in the streets of the village called Fuentes d'Honoro. He fell at the head of his native Highlanders, the 71st and 79th, who raised a dreadful shriek of grief and rage. They charged, with irresistible fury, the finest body of French grenadiers ever seen, being a part of Bonaparte's selected guard. The officer who led the French, a man remarkable for stature and symmetry, was killed on the spot. The Frenchman who stepped out of his rank to take aim at Colonel Cameron was also bayoneted, pierced with a thousand wounds, and almost torn to pieces by the furious Highlanders, who, under the command of Colonel Cadogan, bore the enemy out of the contested ground at the point of the bayonet.

201. But you, ye heroes of that well-fought day, etc.

The *Edinburgh Review* criticised severely the omission of the name of Sir John Moore from this part of the poem.

202. O who shall grudge him Albuera's bays,
Who brought a race regenerate to the field,
Roused them to emulate their fathers' praise,
Temper'd their headlong rage, their courage steel'd,
And raised fair Lusitania's fallen shield.

Nothing during the war of Portugal seems more deserving of praise, than the self-devotion of Field-Marshal Beresford, who was contented to undertake all the hazard of obloquy which might have been founded upon any miscarriage in the highly important experiment of training the Portuguese troops to an improved state of discipline.

203. . . . a race renown'd of old,
Whose war-cry oft has waked the battle-swell.
" . . . the conquering shout of Græme.

This stanza alludes to the various achievements of the warlike family of Græme, or Grahame.

THE BRIDAL OF TRIERMAIN.

204. Like Collins, thread the maze of Fairy land.

Collins, according to Johnson, loved fairies, genii, giants, and monsters; he delighted to rove through the meanders of enchantment, to gaze on the magnificence of golden palaces, to repose by the waterfalls of Elysian gardens.

205. The Baron of Triermain.

Trierman was a fief of the Barony of Gilsland, in Cumberland.

206. He pass'd red Penrith's Table Round.

A circular intrenchment, about half a mile from Penrith, is thus popularly termed. It has been conjectured that the enclosure was designed for the solemn exercise of feats of chivalry, and the embankment around for the convenience of the spectators.

207. Mayburgh's mound and stones of power.

Higher up the river Eamont than Arthur's Round Table is a prodigious enclosure of great antiquity, formed by a collection of stones upon the top of a gently sloping hill, called Mayburgh. In the plain which it encloses there stands erect an unhewn stone of twelve feet in height. Two similar masses are said to have been destroyed during the memory of man. The whole appears to be a monument of Druidical times.

208. The Monarch, breathless and amazed,
Back on the fatal castle gazed —
Nor tower nor donjon could he spy,
Darkening against the morning sky.

In the Vale of St. John's is a massive pile of rocks, which at a distance has so much the real form and resemblance of a castle, that it bears the name of the Castle Rocks of St. John.

209. The flower of Chivalry.

The characters named in the stanza are all of them more or less distinguished in the romances which treat of King Arthur and his Round Table, and their names are strung together according to the established custom of minstrels upon such occasions.

210. Lancelot that ever more
Look'd stolen-wise on the Queen.

An allusion to the guilty intrigue between Sir Lancelot and Guenever, wife of King Arthur.

211. There were two who loved their neighbours' wives,
And one who loved his own.

In which booke (*La Morte d'Arthur*) they be counted the noblest knightes that do kill most men without any quarrell, and commit fowlest adoulteries by sutlest shiftes ; as Sir Launcelot, with the wife of King Arthur, his master ; Sir Tristram, with the wife of King Marke, his uncle ; Sir Lamerocke, with the wife of King Lote, that was his own aunt. This is good stuffe for wise men to laugh at ; or honest men to take pleasure at : yet I know when God's Bible was banished the Court, and *La Morte d'Arthure* received into the Prince's chamber."—*ASCHAM'S Schoolmaster.*

THE FIELD OF WATERLOO.

212. The peasant, at his labour blithe,
Plies the hook'd staff and shorten'd scythe.

The reaper in Flanders carries in his left hand a stick with an iron hook, with which he collects as much grain as he can cut at one sweep with a short scythe, which he holds in his right hand.

213. Pale Brussels ! then what thoughts were thine.

It was affirmed by the prisoners of war, that Bonaparte had promised his army, in case of victory, twenty-four hours' plunder of the city of Brussels.

214. "On ! On !" was still his stern exclaim.

The characteristic obstinacy of Napoleon was never more fully displayed than in what we may be permitted to hope will prove the last of his fields. He would listen to no advice, and allow of no obstacles.

215. The fate their leader shunn'd to share.

It has been reported that Bonaparte charged at the head of his guards, at the last period of this dreadful conflict. This, however, is not accurate. He came down indeed to a hollow part of the high-road, leading to Charleroi, within less than a quarter of a mile of the farm of La Haye Sainte, one of the points most fiercely disputed. Here he harangued the guards, and informed them that his preceding operations had destroyed the British infantry and cavalry, and that they had only to support the fire of the artillery, which they were to attack with the bayonet. This exhortation was received with shouts of *Vive l'Empereur*, which were heard over all our line, and led to an idea that Napoleon was charging in person. But the guards were led on by Ney; nor did Bonaparte approach nearer the scene of action than the spot already mentioned.

216. England shall tell the fight !

In riding up to a regiment which was hard pressed, the Duke called to the men, "Soldiers, we must never be beat,—what will they say in England?" It is needless to say how this appeal was answered.

217. As plies the smith his clanging trade.

A private soldier of the 95th regiment compared the sound which took place immediately upon the British cavalry mingling with those of the enemy, to "*a thousand tinkers at work mending pots and kettles.*"

218. The British shock of levell'd steel.

No persuasion or authority could prevail upon the French troops to stand the shock of the bayonet. The Imperial Guards, in particular, hardly stood till the British were within thirty yards of them, although the French author, already quoted, has put into their mouths the magnanimous sentiment, "The Guards never yield—they die."

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE MINSTRELSY.

219. How blazed Lord Ronald's beltane-tree.

The fires lighted by the Highlanders, on the first of May, in compliance with a custom derived from the Pagan times, are termed *The Beltane-tree*. It is a festival celebrated with various superstitious rites, both in the north of Scotland and in Wales.

220. The seer's prophetic spirit found.

I can only describe the second sight, by adopting Dr. Johnson's definition, who calls it "An impression, either by the mind upon the eye, or by the eye upon the mind, by which things distant and future are perceived and seen as if they were present."

221. Will good St. Oran's rule prevail.

St. Oran was a friend and follower of St. Columba, and was buried at Icolmkill. His pretensions to be a saint were rather dubious. According to the legend, he consented to be buried alive, in order to propitiate certain demons of the soil, who obstructed the attempts of Columba to build a chapel. The chapel, however, and the cemetery, was called *Relig Ouran*; and, in memory of his rigid celibacy, no female was permitted to pay her devotions, or be buried in that place. This is the rule alluded to in the poem.

222. And thrice St. Fillan's powerful prayer.

St. Fillan has given his name to many chapels, holy fountains, etc., in Scotland. He was, according to Camerarius, an Abbot of Pittenweem, in Fife; from which situation he retired, and died a hermit in the wilds of Glenurchy, A.D. 649.

223. Battle of Ancram Moor.

Lord Evers, and Sir Brian Latoun, during the year 1544, committed the most dreadful ravages upon the Scottish frontiers, compelling most of the inhabitants, and especially the men of Liddesdale, to take assurance under the King of England.

224. That nun who ne'er beholds the day.

The circumstance of the nun, "who never saw the day," is not entirely imaginary. About fifty years ago, an unfortunate female wanderer took up her residence in a dark vault, among the ruins of Dryburgh Abbey, which, during the day, she never quitted. When night fell, she issued from this miserable habitation, and went to the house of Mr. Haliburton of Newmains, the Editor's great-grandfather, or to that of Mr. Erskine of Sheilfield, two gentlemen of the neighbourhood. From their charity, she obtained such necessaries as she could be prevailed upon to accept. At twelve, each night, she lighted her candle, and returned to her vault, assuring her friendly neighbours, that, during her absence, her habitation was arranged by a spirit, to whom she gave the uncouth name of *Fatlips*; describing him as a little man, wearing heavy iron shoes, with which he trampled the clay floor of the vault, to dispel the damps. The cause of her adopting this extraordinary mode of life she would never explain. It was, however, believed to have been occasioned by a vow, that, during the absence of a man to whom she was attached, she would never look upon the sun. Her lover never returned.

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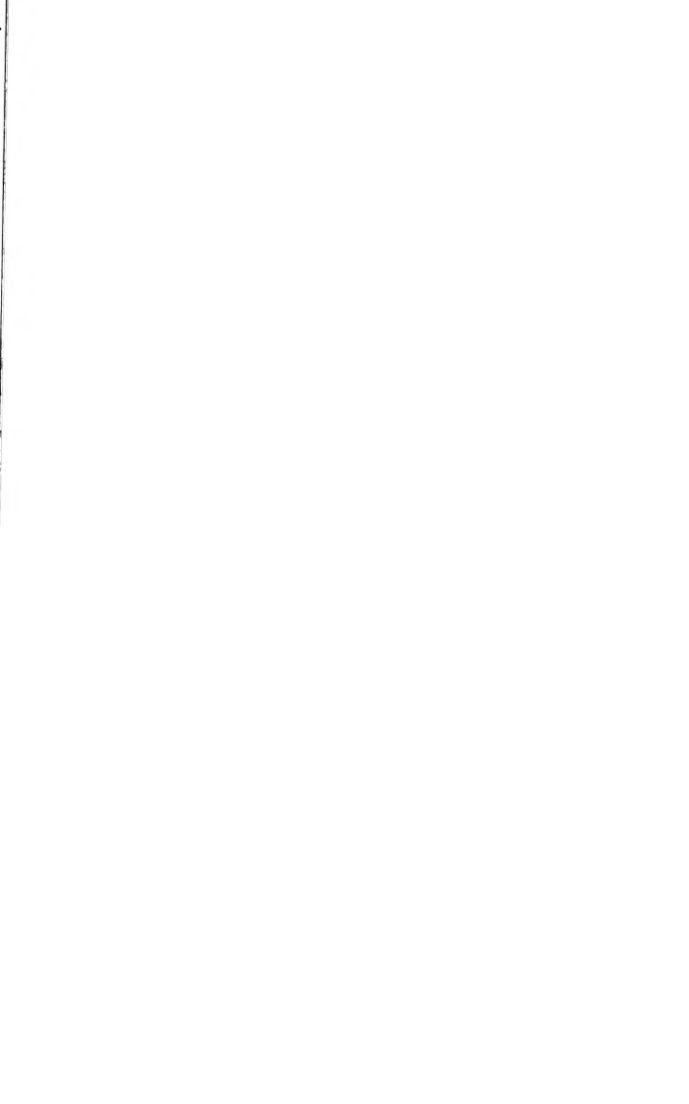
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