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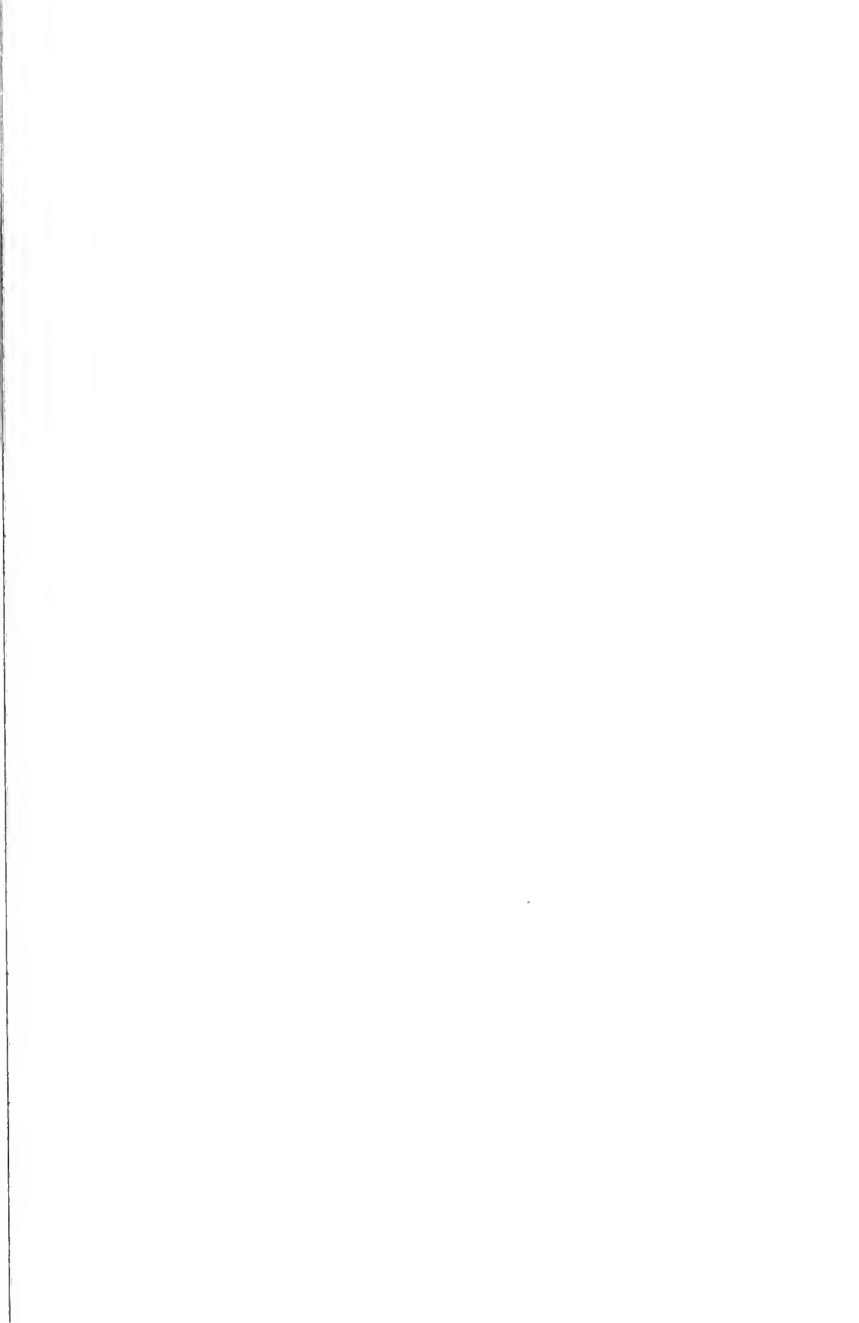
William Scott



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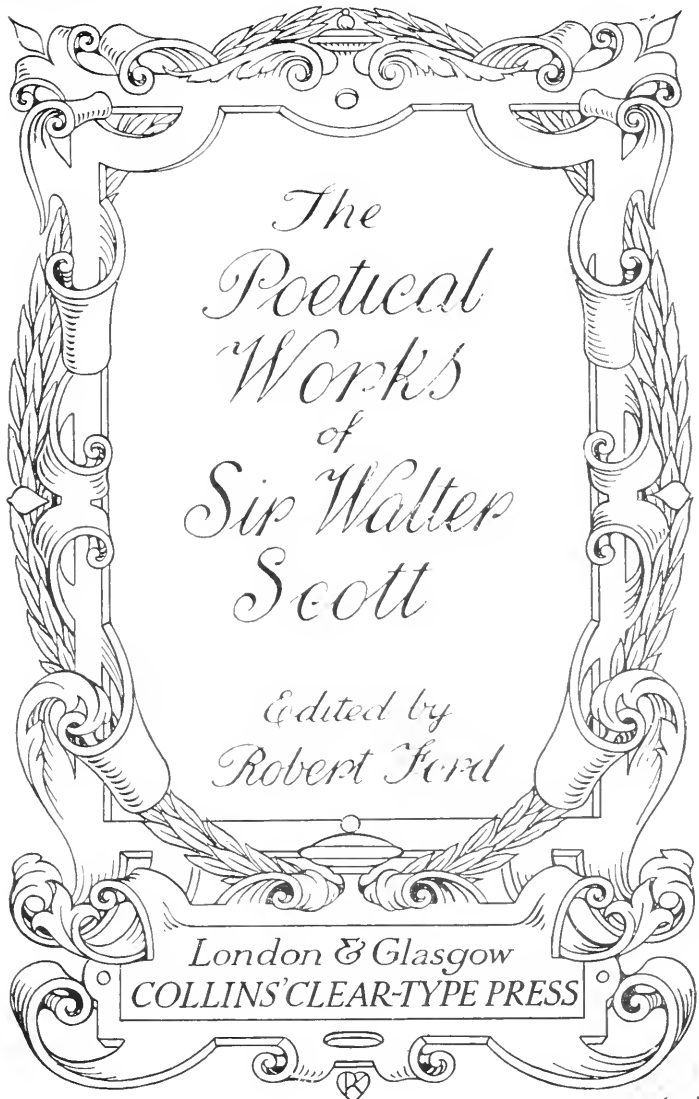
SCOTT'S POETICAL WORKS





Walter Scott

W. E. S. A. P. P. M.



*The
Poetical
Works
of
Sir Walter
Scott*

*Edited by
Robert Ford*

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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 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 ;

sc.

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,

1

▲

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 sup-
plied ;

And, while his harp responsive
rung,

'Twas thus the LATEST MINSTREL
sung.

CANTO FIRST.

I.

THE feast was over in Branksome
tower,¹

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 house-
hold 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 Brank-
some-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 Buc-
cleuch.

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 saddle-
 bow ;³
 A hundred more fed free in
 stall :—
 Such was the custom of Brank-
 some-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 fal-
 chions 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 Lady 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 dis-
 dain,

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 slaugh-
 ter'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 Lady 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 ærial 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 be-
strode,

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 Cumber-
land ;
Five times outlawed had he been,
By England's King, and Scot-
land'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 Tweed-
side ;
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 Hairi-
bee.”

XXV.

Soon in his saddle sate he fast,
And soon the steep descent he
past,
Soon cross'd the sounding barbi-
can,
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 watch-
men 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 Teviot-
 side,
 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.

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-crags 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 daggled by the dashing
 spray;
 Yet, through good heart, and Our
 Lady'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 pen-
 ance drie,
 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 foliaged 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 unquench-
 ably,
 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
baldric 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 clas'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 peer-
 less 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,³⁴
 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 Cran-
 stoun'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 orslain,
 An it had not been for his
 ministry.
 All between Home and Hermi-
 tage,
 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 :³⁵
 The trysting place was New-
 ark 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 Yar-
 row 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 morn-
 ing'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 prick-
ing 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 girth-
 ing 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 dis-
 may'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 Ladye'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 man-
fully,
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, hoy !

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,
And born in Lancashire.

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 scanty 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 :⁴⁹
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 de-
gree."—

XIX.

" Yes ! I am come of high degree,
For I am the heir of bold
Bucleuch ;

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 over-
 threw ;
 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 hack-
 buteer.
 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 salv'd 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 haw-
 thorns 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 waver-
 ing 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 redden'd 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 Priest-
 haughswire ;
 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 battle-
 ment ;
 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 hackbutmen,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 or 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 Etrick 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 Murdie-
 ston.⁵⁴
 Wide lay his lands round Oak-
 wood 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 Tod-
 shawhill ;
 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 sohighly 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 Brank-
some gate.

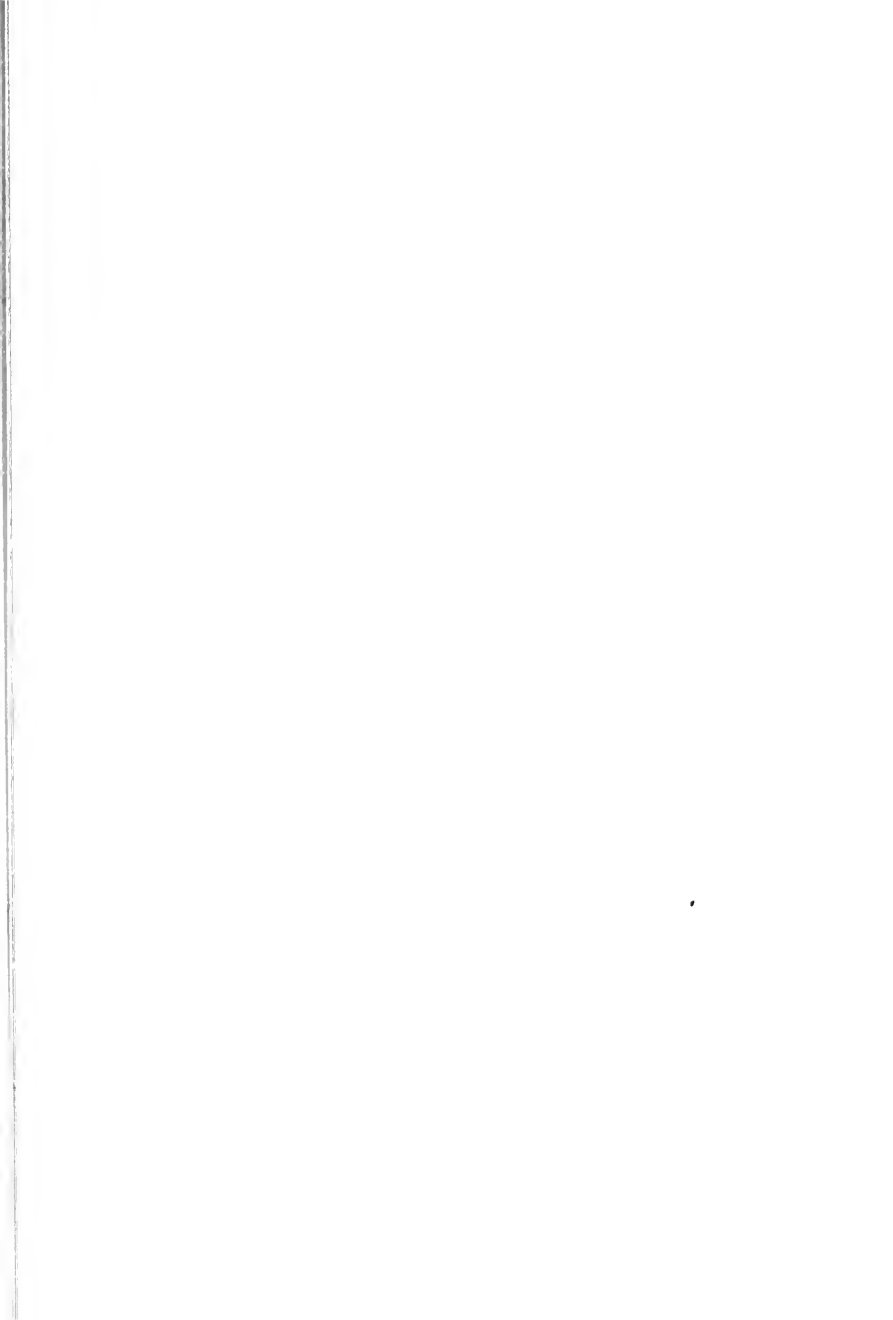
XI.

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 Beattis-
sons' 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 !



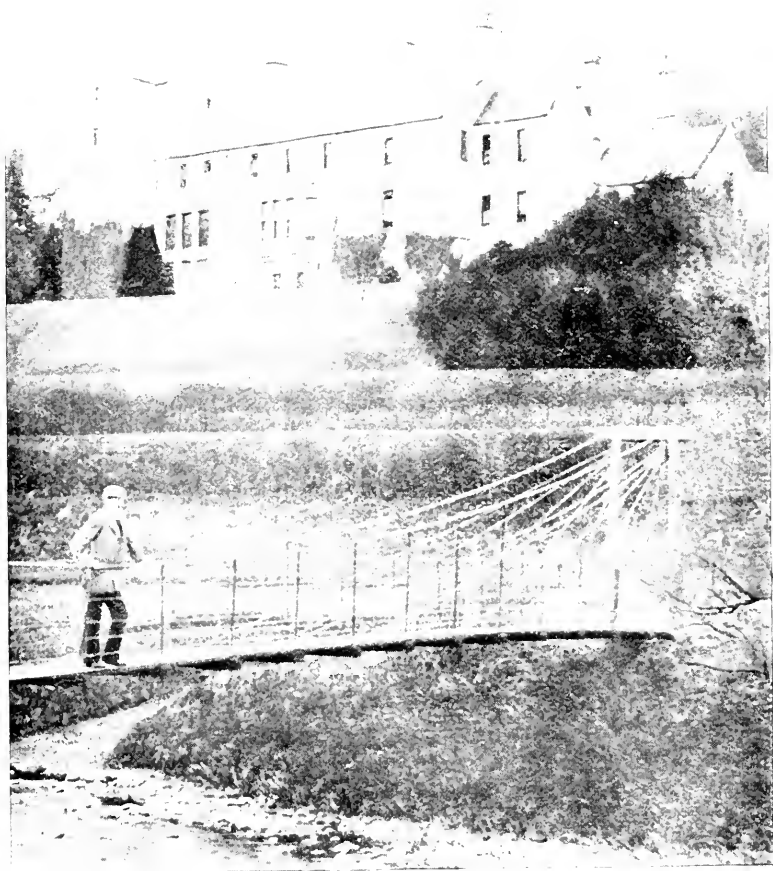


Photo by Volcanov, 1890.

80

Branksome—At the present time.

B

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 Head-
 shaw came,
 And warriors more than I may
 name ;
 From Yarrow-cleugh to Hind-
 haugh-swair,
 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.

sc.

“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 !”

B

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 con-
 quer'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 green-
wood 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 ladye-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 Scot-
 land?

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, Sit
 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 Buc-
 cleuch.

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
 emprise,
 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 Cumberland 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 Brank-
 some'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 breath-
 less 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 Lauder-
 dale
 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, Brank-
 some'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
 giansay'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 Brank-
 some'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 glitter-
 ing 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 bands, so fair together
 ranged,
 Those hands, so frankly inter-
 changed,
 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 Brank-
 some 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 yester-
 day ;

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 Thirle-
staine :
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
 Buecleuch,
 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 toul 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 Mus-
 grave, 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 ghostly 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 fore-
go,

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 mid-
 night 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
 tell :

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 with-
 stood,

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 bowing back to Cumber-
 land.
 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 un-
sung.

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 Brank-
some 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 cleuch 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.

Theysought, 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 venge-
 ance 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.

FITZTRAVER.

'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 de-
 fined, 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 strug-
 gling 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 vale,
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 green-
wood 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 Rosa-
belle.

—“ 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 Ravens-
heuch :

Why cross the gloomy firth
to-day ? ” —

“ 'Tis not because Lord Linde-
say'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 Lindsay 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 Haw-
thornden.

Seem'd all on fire that chapel
proud,
Where Roslin's chiefs uncoffin'd
lie,
Each Baron, for a sable shroud,
Sheathed 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.⁸⁸

Blazed battlement and pinnet
high,
Blazed every rose-carved but-
tress 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
chappelle ;
Each one the holy vault doth
hold—
But the sea holds lovely Rosa-
belle !

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 neigh-
bour'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 baldric
 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 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 Lady 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
uneath,

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
due,
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 thro'tles sung in Harehead-
 shaw,
 And corn was green on Carter-
 haugh,
 And flourish'd, broad, Black-
 andro'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 apprise 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.

ASHESTIEL, 1808.

INTRODUCTION TO CANTO FIRST.

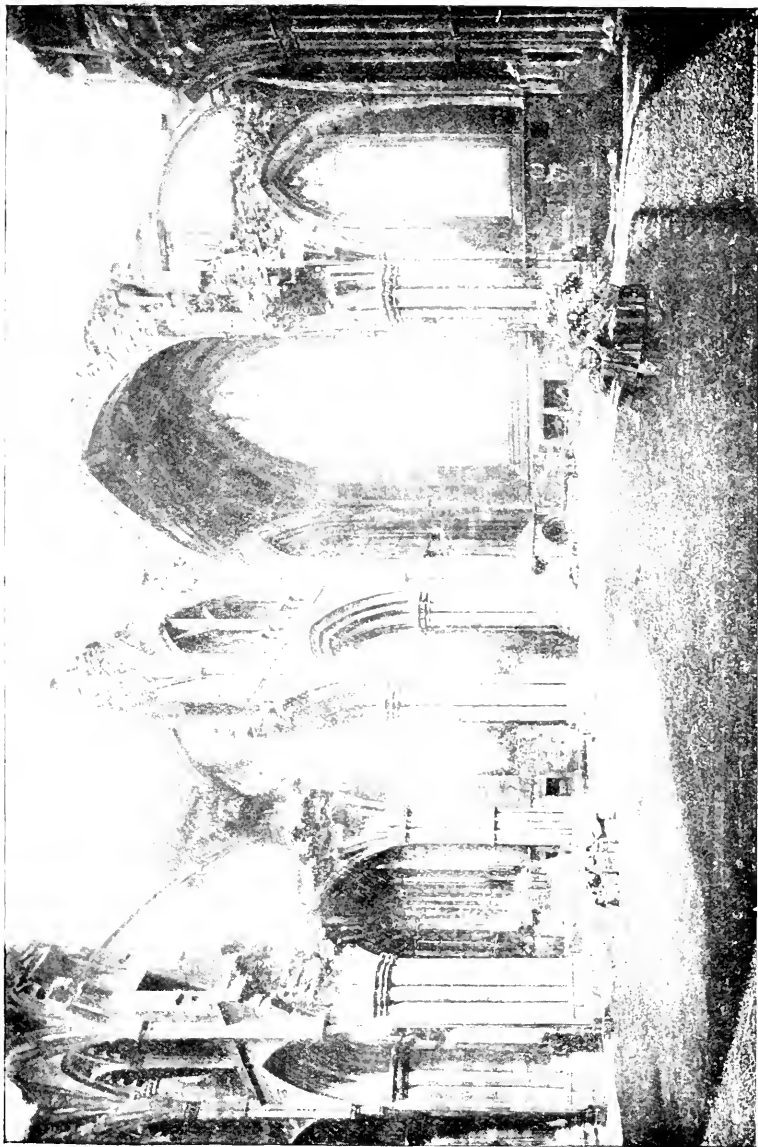
TO

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,



Chancel and East Window, Melrose Abbey.

Photo. by Valentine & Sons, Ltd.

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 ;
sc.

Their summer gambols tell, and
mourn,
And anxious ask,—Will spring
return,
And birds and lambs again be gay,
And blossoms clothe the haw-
thorn 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
emprize,
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 freeman'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 sup-
 press'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 deathless 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,
 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 harplings 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 cap-
 tives 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 Hornclyff-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 saddle-
 bow ;
 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 for-
 ward 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.**⁹³
 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 Scrivelbaye,
 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.¹⁰¹
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 while a Northern harper
rude
Chanted a rhyme of deadly feud,
*"How the fierce Thirwalls, and
Ridleys all,¹⁰²
Stout Willimondswick,
And Hardriding Dick,
And Hughie of Harwdon, and
Will o' the Wall,
Have set on Sir Albany Feather-
stonhaugh,
And taken his life at the Dead-
man's-shaw."*
Scantily 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 pilgrim-
age ? ”—

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 ad-
dress'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 counter-
feit,

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 Lauder-
dale;
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 wisè 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
 sworn,
 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 dark-
 ness, given.
 He shows Saint James's cockle-
 shell ;
 Of fair Montserrat, too, can tell ;
 And of that Grot where Olives
 nod,
 Where, darling or 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 Mar-
mion,
“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, per-
chance 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, how-
e’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 com-
pany.
So please you, gentle youth, to
call
This Palmer¹⁰⁸ 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 solemn 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'erholt 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 Carter-
 haugh ;
 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 fre-
 quently,
 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 im-
 press'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, you 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 Moffat-
 dale.

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 spark-
 ling 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 seem-
 ing 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 care-
 less 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 dis-
 tress'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, suc-
 cessive 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 Wans-
 beck floods
 Rush to the sea through sound-
 ing 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 un-
subdued.

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 flutter-
ings 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
reap ;
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 Northumber-
 land.

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 gather-
 ing 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 sculp-
 tured 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 splash, 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 motion-
 less ;
 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 ;
'Twi'x 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
check,
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
Successless 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 fore-
swore,

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 attains 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
 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 !"

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Norham Castle.

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
oell
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 ;
sc.

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 princedoms reft, and
 scutcheons riven,
 And birthrights to usurpers given;
 Thy land's, thy children's wrongs
 to feel,
 And witness woes thou couldst
 not heal!
 On thee relenting Heaven bestows
 For honour'd life an honour'd
 close;
 And when revolves, in time's sure
 change,
 The hour of Germany's revenge,
 When, breathing fury for her sake,
 Some new Arminius shall awake,
 Her champion, ere he strike,
 shall come
 To whet his sword on BRUNSWICK'S
 tomb.

“Or of the Red-Cross hero
 teach,
 Dauntless in dungeon as on
 breach:
 Alike to him the sea, the shore,
 The brand, the bridle, or the oar:
 Alike to him the war that calls
 Its votaries to the shatter'd walls,
 Which the grim Turk, besmear'd
 with blood,
 Against the Invincible made good;
 Or that, whose thundering voice
 could wake
 The silence of the polar lake,
 When stubborn Russ, and metal'd
 Swede,
 On the warp'd wave their death-
 game play'd;
 Or that, where Vengeance and
 Affright
 How'd round the father of the
 fight,

Who snatch'd, on Alexandria's
 sand,
 The conqueror's wreath with
 dying hand.

“Or, if to touch such chord be
 thine,
 Restore the ancient tragic line,
 And emulate the notes that
 rung
 From the wild harp, which silent
 hung
 By silver Avon's holy shore,
 Till twice an hundred years roll'd
 o'er;
 When she, the bold Enchantress,
 came,
 With fearless hand and heart on
 flame!
 From the pale willow snatch'd
 the treasure,
 And swept it with a kindred
 measure,
 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 judg-
 ment wronging,
 With praises not to me belonging,
 In task more meet for mightiest
 powers,
 Wouldst thou engage my thrift-
 less 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 you 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
 lay.
 Then rise those crags, that
 mountain tower,
 Which charm'd my fancy's waken-
 ing 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
 spurr'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 High-
 land 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 neigh-
 bours 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 eglan-
 tine :
 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 low-
 land 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 unclose,
 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 ;¹²⁸
 Its cheerful fire and hearty food
 Might well relieve his train.

Down from their seats the horse-
men 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 yoeman, 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 rejoind'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
scantly brook,
Even from his King, a haughty
look;
Whose accent of command con-
troll'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;
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, up-
braid;
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 dis-
 guise,
 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 man-
 date 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 contend-
 ing 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 Norwegian 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 night¹³⁴
When yawning graves, and dying
groan,
Proclaim'd hell's empire over-
thrown,—
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 cower'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 Dunferm-
 line'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 Elf
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 with-
 drew:
 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 inter-
 vene:
 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
Ettrick 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 tem-
pest 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 stream-
ing 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 buglesblew,
 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 plaints
 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 Mar-
 mion's mind :
 Perchance to show his lore de-
 sign'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, Roth-
say, came,

In painted tabards, proudly
showing
Gules, Argent, Or, and Azure
glowing,

Attendant on a King-at-arms,
Whose hand the armorial trun-
cheon 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.

Sobright 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 Mar-
mion'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 com-
mand,

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 Castle¹⁴⁰
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 marshal'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-bells¹⁴² 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 judged
 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 un-
 fold
 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 threaten-
 ing 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 vizor raised, did
 stare
 A human warrior, with a glare
 So grimly and so ghastr.
 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 re-
 count
 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 Auchna-
 slaid,
 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 chim-
 ing brook.
 To me they make a heavy moan,
 Of early friendships past and
 gone.

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 ad-
 vance,
 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 de-
 scribed
 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 cum-
 brous fold,



Long Beach, Ca.
SC.

“The whitening breakers sound so near,
Where, boiling through the rocks, they roar.”

Page 88.

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 land-
scape bright,—
He view'd it with a chief's de-
light,—
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 dis-
suade
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.”

SC.

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,

E

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 sun-
 beam 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 re-
 nown'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 ap-
 proved,
 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 ap-
proved?

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 poisoning 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
 Lingering 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 town-
ships 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 glistering
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 Mountain-
eer.

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 Lindsay 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 Scot-
 land's crown,
 The thistle brave, of old renown :
 His trusty blade, Toledo right,
 Descended from a baldric 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, ever-
more,

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 South-
ron 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 Holy-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 daunt-
less 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 dang-
 ling 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 Loch-
 invar.

There was mounting 'mong
 Græmes of the Netherby
 clan ;

Forsters, Fenwicks, and Mus-
 graves, 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 daunt-
 less 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 parch-
ment broad,
Which Marmion's high commis-
sion 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 vassals
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,
Huge-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 blazon o'er his towers dis-
 play'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 carries
 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 as-
 sign'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 moon-
beam 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 dis-
close.

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 compli-
ment.

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 unob-
served ;

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 char-
acter.

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 im-
pure,

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 Scriverbaye ;
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 com-
 mand,
 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 pro-
 voke,
 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 re-
 moved,
 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 Lambie 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 pre-
 pare
 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-Claire."

XXX.

The startled Abbess loud ex-
 claim'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 plebeian 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
 performe."—

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 clamor-
 ous 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 stretch-
 ing 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
 descrie
 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
 Etall, 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 Northumber-
 land :

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 Northumber-
 land,

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 lol 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
 hie,
 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
 trowls.
 There the huge sirloin reek'd ;
 hard by
 Plum-porridge stood, and Christ-
 mas 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 lists may in their mumming
see

Traces of ancient mystery ;¹⁶⁹
White shirts supplied the mas-
querade,

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 em-
brace :—

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 mid-
 night'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-languaged
 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 clay-
 more
 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 Franché-
 mont,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 blood-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 Conjurer'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, Scot-
 land'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.”¹⁷⁴

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 manly 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 ex-
 tending,
 Alternate conquering, shifting,
 blending,
 Till all, fatigued, the conflict
 yield,
 And mighty Love retains the field.



"Soon as they heard his turrets strong,
The maiden raised Saint Hilda's song."

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 beads-
 man'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 match-
 less pair?—

Menials, and friends, and kins-
 men 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.
 SC.

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.

Oit 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 con-
 quer'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.

“ 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 com-
 mand,
 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 slum-
 bering 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,
 how'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!"¹⁷⁷
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 Stan-
rig-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 dis-
 proved 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 tne 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 disap-
 pearing ;
 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 Bannock-
bourne!—

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,
 Did all the field command.

XXIII.

Hence might they see the full
 array
 Of either host, for deadly fray ;¹⁸⁰
 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 ;¹⁸¹

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!” Mar-
mion 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 moun-
taineer
Rush'd with bare bosom on the
spear,
And flung the feeble targe aside,
And with both hands the broad-
sword plied.
'Twas vain :—But Fortune, on the
right,
With fickle smile, cheer'd Scot-
land'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 Mar-
mion ! . . .

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 spot-
 less 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 havoc 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 squad-
rons 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 perried 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 com-
 mands
 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 cease-
 less 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 pro-
 long :
 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 mistrust-
 fully,
 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,
 Besem'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 mis-
ta'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
Oozes 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 presumptu-
 ous 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 LADY OF THE LAKE.

A POEM IN SIX CANTOS.

TO THE
MOST NOBLE

JOHN JAMES MARQUIS OF ABERCORN,

&c. &c. &c.

THIS POEM IS INSCRIBED BY
THE AUTHOR.

ARGUMENT.

The Scene of the following Poem is laid chiefly in the Vicinity of Loch Katrine, in the Western Highlands of Perthshire. The time of Action includes Six Days, and the transactions of each Day occupy a Canto.

CANTO FIRST.

The Chase.

HARP of the North ! that mouldering long hast hung
On the witch-elm that shades Saint Fillan's spring,
And down the fitful breeze thy numbers flung,
Till envious ivy did around thee cling,
Muffling with verdant ringlet every string,—
O minstrel Harp, still must thine accents sleep?
Mid rustling leaves and fountains murmuring,
Still must thy sweeter sounds their silence keep,
Nor bid a warrior smile, nor teach a maid to weep?
Not thus, in ancient days of Caledon,
Was thy voice mute amid the festal crowd,

When lay of hopeless love, or glory won,
Aroused the fearful, or subdued the proud.
At each according pause, was heard aloud
Thine ardent symphony sublime and high !
Fair dames and crested chiefs attention bow'd ;
For still the burden of thy minstrelsy
Was Knighthood's dauntless deed, and Beauty's matchless eye.

O wake once more ! how rude soe'er the hand
That ventures o'er thy magic maze to stray ;
O wake once more ! though scarce my skill command
Some feeble echoing of thine earlier lay :
Though harsh and faint, and soon to die away,

And all unworthy of thy nobler
strain,
Yet if one heart throb higher at
its sway,
The wizard note has not been
touch'd in vain.
Then silent be no more ! Enchant-
ress, wake again !

I.

THE stag at eve had drunk his
fill,
Where danced the moon on
Monan's rill,
And deep his midnight lair had
made
In lone Glenartney's hazel shade ;
But, when the sun his beacon red
Had kindled on Benvoirlich's
head,
The deep-mouth'd bloodhound's
heavy bay
Resounded up the rocky way,
And faint, from farther distance
borne,
Were heard the clanging hoof and
horn.

II.

As Chief, who hears his warder
call,
" To arms ! the foemen storm the
wall,"
The antler'd monarch of the waste
Sprung from his heathery couch
in haste.
But, ere his fleet career he took,
The dew-drops from his flanks he
shook ;
Like crested leader proud and
high,
Toss'd his beam'd frontlet to the
sky ;

A moment gazed adown the dale,
A moment snuff'd the tainted gale,
A moment listen'd to the cry,
That thicken'd as the chase drew
nigh ;
Then, as the headmost foes ap-
pear'd,
With one brave bound the copse
he clear'd,
And, stretching forward free and
far,
Sought the wild heaths of Uam-
Var.

III.

Yell'd on the view the opening
pack ;
Rock, glen, and cavern, paid them
back ;
To many a mingled sound at once
The awaken'd mountain gave
response.
A hundred dogs bay'd deep and
strong,
Clatter'd a hundred steeds along,
Their peal the merry horns rung
out,
A hundred voices join'd the shout ;
With hark and whoop and wild
halloo,
No rest Benvoirlich's echoes knew.
Far from the tumult fled the roe,
Close in her covert cower'd the
doe,
The falcon, from her cairn on
high,
Cast on the rout a wondering eye,
Till far beyond her piercing ken
The hurricane had swept the glen.
Faint and more faint, its failing
din
Return'd from cavern, cliff, and
linn,
And silence settled, wide and still,
On the lone wood and mighty hill.

IV.

Less loud the sounds of silvan
 war
 Disturb'd the heights of Uam-
 Var,
 And roused the cavern, where 'tis
 told,
 A giant made his den of old ;¹⁸⁴
 For ere that steep ascent was
 won,
 High in his pathway hung the
 sun,
 And many a gallant, stay'd per-
 force,
 Was fain to breathe his faltering
 horse,
 And of the trackers of the deer,
 Scarce half the lessening pack
 was near ;
 So shrewdly on the mountain
 side
 Had the bold burst their mettle
 tried.

V.

The noble stag was pausing now,
 Upon the mountain's southern
 brow,
 Where broad extended, far be-
 neath,
 The varied realms of fair Menteith.
 With anxious eye he wander'd
 o'er
 Mountain and meadow, moss and
 moor,
 And ponder'd refuge from his toil,
 By far Lochard or Aberfoyle.
 But nearer was the copsewood
 grey,
 That waved and wept on Loch-
 Achray,
 And mingled with the pine-trees
 blue
 On the bold cliffs of Benvenue.

Fresh vigour with the hope
 return'd,
 With flying foot the heath he
 spurn'd,
 Held westward with unwearied
 race,
 And left behind the panting chase.

VI.

'Twere long to tell what steeds
 gave o'er,
 As swept the hunt through
 Cambus-more ;
 What reins were tighten'd in
 despair,
 When rose Benledi's ridge in air ;
 Who flagg'd upon Bochastle's
 heath,
 Who shunn'd to stem the flooded
 Teith,—
 For twice that day, from shore to
 shore,
 The gallant stag swam stoutly
 o'er.
 Few were the stragglers, following
 far,
 That reach'd the lake of Ven-
 nachar ;
 And when the Brigg of Turk was
 won,
 The headmost horseman rode
 alone.

VII.

Alone, but with unabated zeal,
 That horseman plied the scourge
 and steel ;
 For jaded now, and spent with
 toil,
 Emboss'd with foam, and dark
 with soil,
 While every gasp with sobs he
 drew,
 The labouring stag strain'd full
 in view.

Two dogs of black Saint Hubert's
breed,

Unmatch'd for courage, breath,
and speed,¹⁸⁵

Fast on his flying traces came
And all but won that desperate
game ;

For, scarce a spear's length from
his haunch,

Vindictive toil'd the bloodhounds
stanch ;

Nor nearer might the dogs attain,
Nor farther might the quarry
strain.

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

VIII.

The Hunter mark'd that mountain
high,

The lone lake's western boundary,
And deem'd the stag must turn
to bay,

Where that huge rampart barr'd
the way ;

Already glorying in the prize,
Measured his antlers with his
eyes ;

For the death-wound and death-
halloo,

Muster'd his breath, his whinyard
drew ;—¹⁸⁶

But thundering as he came pre-
pared,

With ready arm and weapon
bared,

The wily quarry shunn'd the shock,
And turn'd him from the opposing
rock ;

Then, dashing down a darksome
glen,

Soon lost to hound and hunter's
ken,

In the deep Trosach's wildest
nook

His solitary refuge took.
There, while close couch'd, the
thicket shed

Cold dews and wild-flowers on
his head,

He heard the baffled dogs in vain
Rave through the hollow pass
amain,

Chiding the rocks that yell'd
again.

IX.

Close on the hounds the hunter
came,

To cheer them on the vanish'd
game ;

But, stumbling in the rugged
dell,

The gallant horse exhausted fell.
The impatient rider strove in
vain

To rouse him with the spur and
rein,

For the good steed, his labours
o'er,

Stretch'd his stiff limbs, to rise
no more ;

Then, touch'd with pity and
remorse,

He sorrow'd o'er the expiring
horse.

“ I little thought, when first thy
rein

I slack'd upon the banks of
Seine,

That Highland eagle e'er should
feed

On thy fleet limbs, my matchless
steed !

Woe worth the chase, woe worth
the day,

That costs thy life, my gallant
grey !”

X.

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

XI

The western waves of ebbing day
Roll'd o'er the glen their level
way ;
Each purple peak, each flinty
spire,
Was bathed in floods of living
fire.
But not a setting beam could
glow
Within the dark ravines below,
Where twined the path in shadow
hid,
Round many a rocky pyramid,

Shooting abruptly from the dell
Its thunder-splinter'd pinnacle ;
Round many an insulated mass,
The native bulwarks of the
pass,
Huge as the tower which builders
vain
Presumptuous piled on Shinar's
plain.
The rocky summits, split and
rent,
Form'd turret, dome, or battle-
ment,
Or seem'd fantastically set
With cupola or minaret,
Wild crests as pagod ever deck'd,
Or mosque of Eastern architect.
Nor were these earth-born castles
bare,
Nor lack'd they many a banner
fair ;
For, from their shiver'd brows
display'd,
Far o'er the unfathomable glade,
All twinkling with the dewdrops
sheen,
The brier-rose fell in streamers
green,
And creeping shrubs, of thousand
dyes,
Waved in the west-wind's summer
sighs.

XII

Boon nature scatter'd, free and
wild,
Each plant or flower, the moun-
tain's child.
Here eglantine embalm'd the air,
Hawthorn and hazel mingled
there ;
The primrose pale and violet
flower,
Found in each cliff a narrow
bower ;

Fox-glove and night-shade, side
by side,
Emblems of punishment and pride,
Group'd their dark hues with
every stain
The weather-beaten crags retain.
With boughs that quaked at
every breath,
Grey birch and aspen wept be-
neath;
Aloft, the ash and warrior oak
Cast anchor in the rifted rock;
And, higher yet, the pine-tree
hung
His shatter'd trunk, and frequent
flung,
Where seem'd the cliffs to meet
on high,
His boughs athwart the narrow'd
sky.
Highest of all, where white peaks
glanced,
Where glist'ning streamers waved
and danced,
The wanderer's eye could barely
view
The summer heaven's delicious
blue;
So wondrous wild, the whole
might seem
The scenery of a fairy dream.

XIII.

Onward, amid the copse 'gan
peep
A narrow inlet, still and deep,
Affording scarce such breadth of
brim,
As served the wild duck's brood
to swim.
Lost for a space, through thickets
veering,
But broader when again appear-
ing,

Tall rocks and tufted knolls their
face
Could on the dark-blue mirror
trace;
And farther as the hunter stray'd,
Still broader sweep its channels
made.
The shaggy mounds no longer
stood,
Emerging from entangled wood,
But, wave-encircled, seem'd to
float,
Like castle girdled with its moat;
Yet broader floods extending still
Divide them from their parent
hill,
Till each, retiring, claims to be
An islet in an inland sea.

XIV.

And now, to issue from the glen,
No pathway meets the wanderer's
ken,
Unless he climb, with footing
nice,
A far projecting precipice.¹⁸⁷
The broom's tough roots his ladder
made,
The hazel saplings lent their aid;
And thus an airy point he won,
Where, gleaming with the setting
sun,
One burnish'd sheet of living
gold,
Loch Katrine lay beneath him
roll'd,
In all her length far winding lay,
With promontory, creek, and bay,
And islands that, empurpled
bright,
Floated amid the livelier light,
And mountains, that like giants
stand,
To sentinel enchanted land.

High on the south, huge Benvenue
 Down on the lake in masses threw
 Craggs, knolls and mounds, confusedly hurl'd,
 The fragments of an earlier world ;
 A wildering forest feather'd o'er
 His ruin'd sides and summit hoar,
 While on the north, through
 middle air,
 Ben-an heaved high his forehead
 bare.

XV.

From the steep promontory gazed
 The stranger, raptur'd and
 amazed.

And, "What a scene were here,"
 he cried,

"For princely pomp, or church-
 man's pride !

On this bold brow, a lordly tower ;
 In that soft vale, a lady's bower ;
 On yonder meadow, far away,
 The turrets of a cloister grey ;
 How blithely might the bugle-
 horn

Chide, on the lake, the lingering
 morn !

How sweet, at eve, the lover's lute
 Chime, when the groves were
 still and mute !

And, when the midnight moon
 should lave

Her forehead in the silver wave,
 How solemn on the ear would
 come

The holy matins' distant hum,
 While the deep peal's commanding
 tone

Should wake, in yonder islet lone,
 A sainted hermit from his cell,
 To drop a bead with every knell—
 And bugle, lute, and bell, and all,

Should each bewilder'd stranger
 call
 To friendly feast, and lighted hall.

XVI.

"Blithe were it then to wander
 here !

But now,—beshrew yon nimble
 deer,—

Like that same hermit's, thin and
 spare,

The copse must give my evening
 fare ;

Some mossy bank my couch must
 be,

Some rustling oak my canopy.

Yet pass we that ; the war and
 chase

Give little choice of resting-
 place ;—

A summer night, in greenwood
 spent,

Were but to-morrow's merriment :
 But hosts may in these wilds
 abound,

Such as are better miss'd than
 found ;

To meet with Highland plunderers
 here,

Were worse than loss of steed or
 deer.¹⁸⁸

I am alone ;—my bugle-strain

May call some straggler of the
 train ;

Or, fall the worst that may betide,
 Ere now this falchion has been
 tried."

XVII.

But scarce again his horn he
 wound,

When lo ! forth starting at the
 sound,

From underneath an aged oak,
 That slanted from the islet rock,

A damsel guider of its way,
 A little skiff shot to the bay,
 That round the promontory steep
 Led its deep line in graceful
 sweep,
 Eddying, in almost viewless wave,
 The weeping willow-twigg to lave,
 And kiss, with whispering sound
 and slow,
 The beach of pebbles bright as
 snow.
 The boat had touch'd this silver
 strand,
 Just as the Hunter left his stand,
 And stood conceal'd amid the
 brake,
 To view this Lady of the Lake.
 The maiden paused, as if again
 She thought to catch the distant
 strain.
 With head up-raised, and look
 intent,
 And eye and ear attentive bent,
 And locks flung back, and lips
 apart,
 Like monument of Grecian art,
 In listening mood, she seem'd to
 stand,
 The guardian Naiad of the strand.

XVIII.

And ne'er did Grecian chisel
 trace
 A Nymph, a Naiad, or a Grace,
 Of finer form, or lovelier face!
 What though the sun, with ardent
 frown,
 Had slightly tinged her cheek
 with brown,—
 The sportive toil, which, short and
 light,
 Had dyed her glowing hue so
 bright,

Served too in hastier swell to
 show
 Short glimpses of a breast of
 snow:
 What though no rule of courtly
 grace
 To measured mood had train'd
 her pace,—
 A foot more light, a step more
 true,
 Ne'er from the heath-flower dash'd
 the dew;
 E'en the slight harebell raised its
 head,
 Elastic from her airy tread:
 What though upon her speech
 there hung
 The accents of the mountain
 tongue,—
 Those silver sounds, so soft, so
 dear,
 The listener held his breath to
 hear!

XIX.

A Chieftain's daughter seem'd the
 maid;
 Her satin snood, her silken plaid,
 Her golden brooch, such birth
 betray'd.
 And seldom was a snood amid
 Such wild luxuriant ringlets hid,
 Whose glossy black to shame
 might bring
 The plumage of the raven's wing;
 And seldom o'er a breast so fair,
 Mantled a plaid with modest care,
 And never brooch the folds com-
 bined
 Above a heart more good and
 kind.
 Her kindness and her worth to
 spy,
 You need but gaze on Ellen's eye;

Not Katrine, in her mirror blue,
 Gives back the shaggy banks
 more true,
 Than every free-born glance con-
 fess'd
 The guileless movements of her
 breast ;
 Whether joy danced in her dark
 eye,
 Or woe or pity claim'd a sigh,
 Or filial love was glowing there,
 Or meek devotion pour'd a prayer,
 Or tale of injury call'd forth
 The indignant spirit of the North.
 One only passion unreveal'd,
 With maiden pride the maid
 conceal'd,
 Yet not less purely felt the
 flame ;—
 O need I tell that passion's name !

XX.

Impatient of the silent horn,
 Now on the gale her voice was
 borne :—
 "Father !" she cried ; the rocks
 around
 Loved to prolong the gentle
 sound.
 A while she paused, no answer
 came,—
 "Malcolm, was thine the blast ?"
 the name
 Less resolutely utter'd fell,
 The echoes could not catch the
 swell.
 "A stranger I," the Huntsman
 said,
 Advancing from the hazel shade.
 The maid, alarmed, with hasty
 oar,
 Push'd her light shallop from the
 shore,

And when a space was gain'd
 between,
 Closer she drew her bosom's
 screen ;
 (So forth the startled swan would
 swing,
 So turn to prune his ruffled wing.)
 Then safe, though flutter'd and
 amazed,
 She paused, and on the stranger
 gazed.
 Not his the form, nor his the eye,
 That youthful maidens wont to fly.

XXI.

On his bold visage middle age
 Had slightly press'd its signet
 sage
 Yet had not quench'd the open
 truth
 And fiery vehemence of youth ;
 Forward and frolic glee was there,
 The will to do, the soul to dare,
 The sparkling glance, soon blown
 to fire,
 Of hasty love, or headlong ire.
 His limbs were cast in manly
 mould,
 For hardy sports or contest bold ;
 And though in peaceful garb
 array'd,
 And weaponless, except his blade,
 His stately mien as well implied
 A high-born heart, a martial pride,
 As if a Baron's crest he wore,
 And sheathed in armour trode the
 shore.
 Slighting the petty need he
 show'd,
 He told of his benighted road ;
 His ready speech flow'd fair and
 free,
 In phrase of gentlest courtesy ;

Yet seem'd that tone, and gesture
 bland,
 Less used to sue than to command.

XXII.

A while the maid the stranger
 eyed,
 And, reassured, at length replied,
 That Highland halls were open
 still

To wilder'd wanderers of the hill.
 "Nor think you unexpected come
 To yon lone isle, our desert home ;
 Before the heath had lost the dew,
 This morn, a couch was pull'd for
 you ;

On yonder mountain's purple
 head
 Have ptarmigan and heath-cock
 bled,

And our broad nets have swept
 the mere,
 To furnish forth your evening
 cheer."—

"Now, by the rood, my lovely
 maid,
 Your courtesy has err'd," he
 said ;

"No right have I to claim,
 misplaced,
 The welcome of expected guest.
 A wanderer, here by fortune tost,
 My way, my friends, my courser
 lost,

I ne'er before, believe me, fair,
 Have ever drawn your mountain
 air,

Till on this lake's romantic strand,
 I found a fay in fairy land !"—

XXIII.

"I well believe," the maid replied,
 As her light skiff approach'd the
 side,—

"I well believe, that ne'er before
 Your foot has trod Loch
 Katrine's shore ;

But yet, as far as yesternight,
 Old Allan-Bane foretold your
 plight,—

A grey-hair'd sire, whose eye
 intent

Was on the vision'd future
 bent.¹⁸⁹

He saw your steed, a dappled
 grey,

Lie dead beneath the birchen way ;
 Painted exact your form and
 mien,

Your hunting suit of Lincoln
 green,

That tassell'd horn so gaily gilt,
 That falchion's crooked blade and
 hilt,

That cap with heron plumage
 trim,

And yon two hounds so dark and
 grim.

He bade that all should ready be,
 To grace a guest of fair degree ;
 But light I held his prophecy,
 And deem'd it was my father's
 horn,

Whose echoes o'er the lake were
 borne."

XXIV.

The stranger smiled :—"Since to
 your home

A destined errant-knight I come,
 Announced by prophet sooth and
 old,

Doom'd, doubtless, for achieve-
 ment bold,

I'll lightly front each high emprise,
 For one kind glance of those
 bright eyes.

Permit me, first, the task to guide
 Your fairy frigate o'er the tide."

The maid, with smile suppress'd
and sly,
The toil unwonted saw him try ;
For seldom sure, if e'er before,
His noble hand had grasp'd an
oar :
Yet with main strength his strokes
he drew,
And o'er the lake the shallop
flew ;
With heads erect, and whimper-
ing cry,
The hounds behind their passage
ply.
Nor frequent does the bright oar
break
The dark'ning mirror of the
lake,
Until the rocky isle they reach,
And moor their shallop on the
beach.

XXV.

The stranger view'd the shore
around,
'Twas all so close with copsewood
bound,
Nor track nor pathway might
declare
That human foot frequented
there,
Until the mountain-maiden show'd
A clambering unsuspected road,
That winded through the tangled
screen,
And open'd on a narrow green,
Where weeping birch and willow
round
With their long fibres swept the
ground.
Here, for retreat in dangerous
hour,
Some chief had framed a rustic
bower.¹⁹⁰

XXVI.

It was a lodge of ample size,
But strange of structure and
device ;
Of such materials, as around
The workman's hand had readiest
found.
Lopp'd off their boughs, their
hoar trunks bared,
And by the hatchet rudely
squared,
To give the walls their destined
height,
The sturdy oak and ash unite ;
While moss and clay and leaves
combined
To fence each crevice from the
wind.
The lighter pine-trees, over-head,
Their slender length for rafters
spread,
And wither'd heath and rushes
dry
Supplied a russet canopy.
Due westward, fronting to the
green,
A rural portico was seen,
Aloft on native pillars borne,
Of mountain fir, with bark un-
shorn,
Where Ellen's hand had taught
to twine
The ivy and Idæan vine,
The clematis, the favour'd flower
Which boasts the name of virgin-
bower,
And every hardy plant could bear
Loch Katrine's keen and search-
ing air.
An instant in this porch she staid,
And gaily to the stranger said,
" On heaven and on thy lady
call,
And enter the enchanted hall ! "

XXVII.

"My hope, my heaven, my trust
 must be,
 My gentle guide, in following
 thee."
 He cross'd the threshold—and a
 clang
 Of angry steel that instant rang.
 To his bold brow his spirit rush'd,
 But soon for vain alarm he
 blush'd,
 When on the floor he saw display'd,
 Cause of the din, a naked blade
 Dropp'd from the sheath, that
 careless flung
 Upon a stag's huge antlers
 swung ;
 For all around, the walls to
 grace,
 Hung trophies of the fight or
 chase :
 A target there, a bugle here,
 A battle-axe, a hunting-spear,
 And broadswords, bows, and
 arrows store,
 With the tusk'd trophies of the
 boar.
 Here grins the wolf as when he
 died,
 And there the wild-cat's brindled
 hide
 The frontlet of the elk adorns,
 Or mantles o'er the bison's horns ;
 Pennons and flags defaced and
 stain'd,
 That blackening streaks of blood
 retain'd,
 And deer-skins, dappled, dun,
 and white,
 With otter's fur and seal's unite,
 In rude and uncouth tapestry
 all,
 To garnish forth the silvan hall.

XXVIII.

The wondering stranger round
 him gazed,
 And next the fallen weapon
 raised :—
 Few were the arms whose sinewy
 strength
 Sufficed to stretch it forth at
 length,
 And as the brand he poised and
 sway'd,
 "I never knew but one," he said,
 "Whose stalwart arm might
 brook to wield
 A blade like this in battle-field."
 She sigh'd, then smiled and took
 the word :
 "You see the guardian cham-
 pion's sword :
 As light it trembles in his hand,
 As in my grasp a hazel wand ;
 My sire's tall form might grace
 the part
 Of Ferragus or Ascart ;¹⁹¹
 But in the absent giant's hold
 Are women now, and menials
 old."

XXIX.

The mistress of the mansion
 came,
 Mature of age, a graceful dame ;
 Whose easy step and stately port
 Had well become a princely court,
 To whom, though more than
 kindred knew,
 Young Ellen gave a mother's due.
 Meet welcome to her guest she
 made,
 And every courteous rite was
 paid,
 That hospitality could claim,
 Though all unask'd his birth and
 name.¹⁹²

Such then the reverence to a
 guest,
 That fellest foe might join the
 feast,
 And from his deadliest foeman's
 door
 Unquestion'd turn, the banquet
 o'er.
 At length his rank the stranger
 names,
 "The Knight of Snowdoun, James
 Fitz-James ;
 Lord of a barren heritage,
 Which his brave sires, from age
 to age,
 By their good swords had held
 with toil ;
 His sire had fallen in such turmoil,
 And he, God wot, was forced to
 stand
 Oft for his right with blade in
 hand.
 This morning, with Lord Moray's
 train,
 He chased a stalwart stag in vain,
 Outstripp'd his comrades, miss'd
 the deer,
 Lost his good steed, and wander'd
 here."

XXX.

Fain would the Knight in turn
 require
 The name and state of Ellen's sire.
 Well show'd the elder lady's
 mien,
 That courts and cities she had
 seen ;
 Ellen, though more her looks
 display'd
 The simple grace of silvan maid,
 In speech and gesture, form and
 face,
 Show'd she was come of gentle
 race.

'Twere strange, in ruder rank to
 find,
 Such looks, such manners, and
 such mind.
 Each hint the Knight of Snow-
 doun gave,
 Dame Margaret heard with silence
 grave ;
 Or Ellen, innocently gay,
 Turn'd all inquiry light away :—
 "Weird women we ! by dale and
 down
 We dwell, afar from tower and
 town.
 We stem the flood, we ride the
 blast,
 On wandering knights our spells
 we cast ;
 While viewless minstrels touch
 the string,
 'Tis thus our charmed rhymes we
 sing."
 She sung, and still a harp unseen
 Fill'd up the symphony be-
 tween.¹⁹³

XXXI.

SONG.

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



"A stranger to the Himmian sea,
A woman from the East is she."

“No rude sound shall reach thine
 ear,
 Armour’s clang, or war-steed
 champng,
 Trump nor pibroch summon here
 Mustering clan, or squadron
 trampng.
 Yet the lark’s shrill fife may come
 At the day-break from the
 fallow,
 And the bittern sound his drum.
 Booming from the sedgy
 shallow.
 Ruder sounds shall none be near
 Guards nor warders challenge
 here,
 Here’s no war-steeds neigh and
 champng,
 Shouting clans, or squadrons
 stampng.”

XXXII.

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

SONG CONTINUED.

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

Huntsman, rest! thy chase is
 done,
 Think not of the rising sun,
 For at dawning to assail ye,
 Here no bugles sound reveillé.”

XXXIII.

The hall was clear’d—the
 stranger’s bed
 Was there of mountain heather
 spread,
 Where oft a hundred guests had
 lain,
 And dream’d their forest sports
 again.
 But vainly did the heath-flower
 shed
 Its moorland fragrance round his
 head;
 Not Ellen’s spell had lull’d to rest
 The fever of his troubled breast.
 In broken dreams the image rose
 Of varied perils, pains, and woes:
 His steed now flounders in the
 brake,
 Now sinks his barge upon the
 lake;
 Now leader of a broken host,
 His standard falls, his honour’s
 lost.
 Then,—from my couch may
 heavenly might
 Chase that worst phantom of the
 night!—
 Again return’d the scenes of youth,
 Of confident undoubting truth;
 Again his soul he interchanged
 With friends whose hearts were
 long estranged.
 They come, in dim procession led,
 The cold, the faithless, and the
 dead;
 As warm each hand, each brow
 as gay,
 As if they parted yesterday.

And doubt distracts him at the
view,
O were his senses false or true !
Dream'd he of death, or broken
vow,
Or is it all a vision now !

XXXIV.

At length, with Ellen in a grove
He seem'd to walk, and speak of
love ;
She listen'd with a blush and sigh,
His suit was warm, his hopes
were high.
He sought her yielded hand to
clasp,
And a cold gauntlet met his grasp :
The phantom's sex was changed
and gone,
Upon its head a helmet shone ;
Slowly enlarged to giant size,
With darken'd cheek and threat-
ening eyes,
The grisly visage, stern and hoar,
To Ellen still a likeness bore.—
He woke, and, panting with
affright,
Recall'd the vision of the night.
The hearth's decaying brands were
red,
And deep and dusky lustre shed,
Half showing, half concealing, all
The uncouth trophies of the hall.
Mid those the stranger fix'd his
eye,
Where that huge falchion hung
on high,
And thoughts on thoughts, a
countless throng,
Rush'd, chasing countless
thoughts along,
Until, the giddy whirl to cure,
He rose, and sought the moon-
shine pure.

XXXV.

The wild-rose, eglantine, and
broom,
Wasted around their rich perfume :
The birch-trees wept in fragrant
balm,
The aspens slept beneath the
calm ;
The silver light, with quivering
glance,
Play'd on the water's still ex-
panse,—
Wild were the heart whose
passions' sway
Could rage beneath the sober
ray !
He felt its calm, that warrior
guest,
While thus he communed with
his breast :—
“ Why is it, at each turn I trace
Some memory of that exiled race ?
Can I not mountain-maiden spy,
But she must bear the Douglas
eye ?
Can I not view a Highland brand,
But it must match the Douglas
hand ?
Can I not frame a fever'd dream,
But still the Douglas is the
theme ?
I'll dream no more—by manly
mind
Not even in sleep is will resign'd.
My midnight orisons said o'er,
I'll turn to rest, and dream no
more.”
His midnight orisons he told,
A prayer with every bead of gold,
Consign'd to heaven his cares
and woes,
And sunk in undisturb'd repose ;
Until the heath-cock shrilly crew,
And morning dawn'd on Benvenue.

CANTO SECOND.

The Island.

I.

AT morn the black-cock trims his
 jetty wing,
 'Tis morning prompts the
 linnet's blithest lay,
 All Nature's children feel the
 matin spring
 Of life reviving, with reviving
 day ;
 And while yon little bark glides
 down the bay,
 Wafting the stranger on his
 way again,
 Morn's genial influence roused a
 minstrel grey,¹⁹⁴
 And sweetly o'er the lake was
 heard thy strain,
 Mix'd with the sounding harp, O
 white-hair'd Allan-Bane !

II.

SONG.

“Not faster yonder rowers' might
 Flings from their oars the spray,
 Not faster yonder rippling bright,
 That tracks the shallop's course
 in light,
 Melts in the lake away,
 Than men from memory erase
 The benefits of former days ;
 Then, stranger, go ! good speed
 the while,
 Nor think again of the lonely isle.

“High place to thee in royal court,
 High place in battle line,
 Good hawk and hound for silvan
 sport,
 Where beauty sees the brave
 resort,
 The honour'd meed be thine !

True be thy sword, thy friend
 sincere,
 Thy lady constant, kind, and dear,
 And lost in love and friendship's
 smile
 Be memory of the lonely isle.

III.

SONG CONTINUED.

“But if beneath yon southern sky
 A plaided stranger roam,
 Whose drooping crest and stifled
 sigh,
 And sunken cheek and heavy eye,
 Pine for his Highland home ;
 Then, warrior, then be thine to
 show
 The care that soothes a wanderer's
 woe ;
 Remember then thy hap ere while,
 A stranger in the lonely isle.

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

IV.

As died the sounds upon the tide,
 The shallop reach'd the mainland
 side,
 And ere his onward way he took,
 The stranger cast a lingering look,
 Where easily his eye might reach
 The Harper on the islet beach,

Reclined against a blighted tree,
 As wasted, grey, and worn as he.
 To minstrel meditation given,
 His reverend brow was raised to
 heaven,
 As from the rising sun to claim
 A sparkle of inspiring flame.
 His hand, reclined upon the wire,
 Seem'd watching the awakening
 fire ;
 So still he sate, as those who wait
 Till judgment speak the doom
 of fate ;
 So still, as if no breeze might dare
 To lift one lock of hoary hair ;
 So still, as life itself were fled,
 In the last sound his harp had
 sped.

V.

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

VI.

While yet he loiter'd on the spot,
 It seem'd as Ellen mark'd him
 not ;
 But when he turn'd him to the
 glade,
 One courteous parting sign she
 made ;
 And after, oft the knight would
 say,
 That not when prize of festal
 day
 Was dealt him by the brightest
 fair,
 Who e'er wore jewel in her hair,
 So highly did his bosom swell,
 As at that simple mute farewell.
 Now with a trusty mountain-
 guide,
 And his dark stag-hounds by his
 side,
 He parts—the maid, unconscious
 still,
 Watch'd him wind slowly round
 the hill ;
 But when his stately form was
 hid,
 The guardian in her bosom chid—
 “Thy Malcolm ! vain and selfish
 maid !”
 ’Twas thus upbraiding conscience
 said,—
 Not so had Malcolm idly hung
 On the smooth phrase of southern
 tongue ;
 “Not so had Malcolm strain'd
 his eye,
 Another step than thine to spy.
 Wake, Allan-Bane,” aloud she
 cried,
 To the old Minstrel by her side,—
 “Arouse thee from thy moody
 dream !
 I'll give thy harp heroic theme,

And warm thee with a noble
name ;
Pour forth the glory of the
Græme !”¹⁹⁵
Scarce from her lip the word had
rush'd,
When deep the conscious maiden
blush'd ;
For of his clan, in hall and
bower,
Young Malcolm Græme was held
the flower.

VII.

The Minstrel waked his harp—
three times
Arose the well-known martial
chimes,
And thrice their high heroic pride
In melancholy murmurs died.
“Vainly thou bid'st, O noble
maid,”
Clasping his wither'd hands, he
said,
“Vainly thou bid'st me wake the
strain,
Though all unwont to bid in vain.
Alas ! than mine a mightier hand
Has tuned my harp, my strings
has spann'd !
I touch the chords of joy, but low
And mournful answer notes of
woe ;
And the proud march, which
victors tread,
Sinks in the wailing for the dead.
O well for me, if mine alone
That dirge's deep prophetic tone !
If, as my tuneful fathers said,
This harp, which erst Saint
Modan sway'd,¹⁹⁶
Can thus its master's fate fore-
tell,
Then welcome be the minstrel's
knell !

VIII.

“But ah ! dear lady, thus it sigh'd
The eve thy sainted mother died ;
And such the sounds which,
while I strove
To wake a lay of war or love,
Came marring all the festal mirth,
Appalling me who gave them
birth,
And, disobedient to my call,
Wail'd loud through Bothwell's
banner'd hall,
Ere Douglasses, to ruin driven,¹⁹⁷
Were exiled from their native
heaven.—
Oh ! if yet worse mishap and woe,
My master's house must undergo,
Or aught but weal to Ellen fair,
Brood in these accents of despair,
No future bard, sad Harp ! shall
fling
Triumph or rapture from thy
string ;
One short, one final strain shall
flow,
Fraught with unutterable woe,
Then shiver'd shall thy fragments
lie,
Thy master cast him down and
die !”

IX.

Soothing she answer'd him,
“Assuage,
Mine honour'd friend, the fears of
age ;
All melodies to thee are known,
That harp has rung, or pipe has
blown,
In Lowland vale or Highland glen,
From Tweed to Spey—what
marvel, then,
At times, unbidden notes should
rise,
Confusedly bound in memory's ties,

Entangling, as they rush along,
The war-march with the funeral
song?—

Small ground is now for boding
fear;

Obscure, but safe, we rest us here.
My sire, in native virtue great,
Resigning lordship, lands, and
state,

Not then to fortune more resign'd,
Than yonder oak might give the
wind;

The graceful foliage storms may
reave,

The noble stem they cannot grieve.
For me,"—she stoop'd, and,
looking round,

Pluck'd a blue hare-bell from the
ground,—

"For me, whose memory scarce
conveys

An image of more splendid days,
This little flower, that loves the
lea,

May well my simple emblem be;
It drinks heaven's dew as blithe
as rose

That in the king's own garden
grows;

And when I place it in my hair,
Allan, a bard is bound to swear
He ne'er saw coronet so fair."

Then playfully the chaplet wild
She wreath'd in her dark locks,
and smiled.

X.

Her smile, her speech, with
winning sway,

Wiled the old harper's mood away.
With such a look as hermits
throw,

When angels stoop to soothe their
woe,

He gazed, till fond regret and
pride

Thrill'd to a tear, then thus
replied:

"Loveliest and best! thou little
know'st

The rank, the honours, thou hast
lost!

O might I live to see thee grace,
In Scotland's court, thy birth-
right place.

To see my favourite's step
advance,

The lightest in the courtly dance,
The cause of every gallant's sigh,
And leading star of every eye,

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

XI.

"Fair dreams are these," the
maiden cried,

(Light was her accent, yet she
sigh'd;)

"Yet is this mossy rock to me
Worth splendid chair and canopy;
Nor would my footsteps spring
more gay

In courtly dance than blithe strath-
spey,

Nor half so pleased mine ear
incline

To royal minstrel's lay as thine.
And then for suitors proud and
high,

To bend before my conquering
eye,—

Thou, flattering bard! thyself
wilt say,

That grim Sir Roderick owns its
sway.

The Saxon scourge, Clan-Alpine's
pride,

The terror of Loch Lomond's side,

Would, at my suit, thou know'st,
 delay
 A Lennox foray—for a day."

XII.

The ancient bard his glee
 repress'd :

"Ill hast thou chosen theme for
 jest !

For who, through all this western
 wild,

Named Black Sir Roderick e'er,
 and smiled !

In Holy-Rood a knight he
 slew ;¹⁹⁸

I saw, when back the dirk he
 drew,

Courtiers give place before the
 stride

Of the undaunted homicide ;

And since, though outlaw'd, hath
 his hand

Full sternly kept his mountain
 land.

Who else dared give—ah ! woe
 the day,

That I such hated truth should
 say—

The Douglas, like a stricken deer,
 Disown'd by every noble peer,¹⁹⁹

Even the rude refuge we have
 here ?

Alas, this wild marauding Chief
 Alone might hazard our relief,

And now thy maiden charms
 expand,

Looks for his guerdon in thy
 hand ;

Full soon may dispensation
 sought,

To back his suit, from Rome be
 brought.

Then, though an exile on the hill,
 Thy father, as the Douglas, still

Be held in reverence and fear ;
 And though to Roderick thou'rt
 so dear,

That thou mightst guide with
 silken thread,

Slave of thy will, this chieftain
 dread ;

Yet, O loved maid, thy mirth
 refrain !

Thy hand is on a lion's mane."

XIII.

"Minstrel," the maid replied,
 and high

Her father's soul glanced from
 her eye,

"My debts to Roderick's house I
 know :

All that a mother could bestow,

To Lady Margaret's care I owe,

Since first an orphan in the wild

She sorrow'd o'er her sister's
 child ;

To her brave chieftain son, from ire

Of Scotland's king who shrouds
 my sire,

A deeper, holier debt is owed ;

And, could I pay it with my blood,

Allan ! Sir Roderick should com-
 mand

My blood, my life,—but not my
 hand.

Rather will Ellen Douglas dwell

A votaress in Maronnan's cell ;²⁰⁰

Rather through realms beyond
 the sea,

Seeking the world's cold charity,
 Where ne'er was spoke a Scottish
 word,

And ne'er the name of Douglas
 heard,

An outcast pilgrim will she rove,

Than wed the man she cannot
 love.

XIV.

"Thou shakest, good friend, thy
 tresses grey,—
 That pleading look, what can it
 say
 But what I own?—I grant him
 brave,
 But wild as Bracklinn's thunder-
 ing wave ;²⁰¹
 And generous—save vindictive
 mood,
 Or jealous transport, chafe his
 blood :
 I grant him true to friendly band,
 As his claymore is to his hand ;
 But O ! that very blade of steel
 More mercy for a foe would
 feel :
 I grant him liberal, to fling
 Among his clan the wealth they
 bring,
 When back by lake and glen they
 wind,
 And in the Lowland leave behind,
 Where once some pleasant hamlet
 stood
 A mass of ashes slaked with blood.
 The hand that for my father
 fought,
 I honour, as his daughter ought ;
 But can I clasp it reeking red,
 From peasants slaughter'd in
 their shed
 No ! wildly while his virtues
 gleam,
 They make his passions darker
 seem,
 And flash along his spirit high,
 Like lightning o'er the midnight
 sky.
 While yet a child,—and children
 know,
 Instinctive taught, the friend and
 foe,

I shudder'd at his brow of gloom,
 His shadowy plaid, and sable
 plume ;
 A maiden gown, I ill could bear
 His haughty mien and lordly air :
 But, if thou join'st a suitor's
 claim,
 In serious mood, to Roderick's
 name,
 I thrill with anguish ! or, if e'er
 A Douglas knew the word, with
 fear.
 To change such odious theme
 were best,—
 What think'st thou of our
 stranger guest ?"

XV.

"What think I of him?—woe the
 while
 That brought such wanderer to
 our isle !
 Thy father's battle-brand, of yore
 For Tine-man forged by fairy
 lore,²⁰²
 What time he leagued, no longer
 foes,
 His Border spears with Hotspur's
 bows,
 Did, self-uncabbarred, foreshow
 The footstep of a secret foe.²⁰³
 If courtly spy hath harbour'd here,
 What may we for the Douglas
 fear ?
 What for this island, deem'd of
 old
Clan - Alpine's last and surest
 hold ?
 If neither spy nor foe, I pray
 What yet may jealous Roderick
 say ?
 —Nay, wave not thy disdainful
 head,
 Bethink thee of the discord dread

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

XVI.

Far up the lengthen'd lake were
 spied
 Four darkening specks upon the
 tide,
 That, slow enlarging on the view,
 Four mann'd and masted barges
 grew,
 And, bearing downwards from
 Glengyle,
 Steer'd full upon the lonely isle ;
 The point of Brianchoil they
 pass'd,
 And, to the windward as they
 cast,
 Against the sun they gave to
 shine
 The bold Sir Roderick's banner'd
 Pine.
 Nearer and nearer as they bear,
 Spears, pikes, and axes flash in air.

Now might you see the tartans
 brave,
 And plaids and plumage dance
 and wave :
 Now see the bonnets sink and
 rise,
 As his tough oar the rower plies ;
 See, flashing at each sturdy
 stroke,
 The wave ascending into smoke ;
 See the proud pipers on the bow,
 And mark the gaudy streamers
 flow
 From their loud chanter's down,
 and sweep
 The furrow'd bosom of the deep,
 As, rushing through the lake
 amain,
 They plied the ancient Highland
 strain.

XVII.

Ever, as on they bore, more loud
 And louder rung the pibroch
 proud.
 At first the sound, by distance
 tame,
 Mellow'd along the waters came,
 And, lingering long by cape and
 bay,
 Wail'd every harsher note away ;
 Then bursting bolder on the ear,
 The clan's shrill Gathering they
 could hear ;
 Those thrilling sounds, that call
 the might
 Of old Clan-Alpine to the fight.²⁰⁴
 Thick beat the rapid notes, as
 when
 The mustering hundreds shake
 the glen,
 And, hurrying at the signal dread,
 The batter'd earth returns their
 tread.

Then prelude light, of livelier tone,
Express'd their merry marching
on,
Ere peal of closing battle rose,
With mingled outcry, shrieks, and
blows ;
And mimic din of stroke and
ward,
As broad sword upon target
jarr'd ;
And groaning pause, ere yet
again,
Condensed, the battle yell'd
amain ;
The rapid charge, the rallying
shout,
Retreat borne headlong into rout.
And bursts of triumph, to declare
Clan-Alpine's conquest—all were
there.
Nor ended thus the strain ; but
slow,
Sunk in a moan prolong'd and
low,
And changed the conquering
clarion swell,
For wild lament o'er those that
fell.

XVIII.

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

In such wild cadence, as the
breeze
Makes through December's leafless
trees.
The chorus first could Allan
know,
" Roderick Vich Alpine, ho ! iro !"
And near, and nearer as they
row'd,
Distinct the martial ditty flow'd.

XIX.

BOAT SONG.

Hail to the Chief who in triumph
advances !
Honour'd and bless'd be the
evergreen Pine !
Long may the tree, in his banner
that glances,
Flourish, the shelter and grace
of our line !
Heaven send it happy dew,
Earth lend it sap anew,
Gayly to bourgeon, and broadly
to grow,
While every Highland glen
Sends our shout back agen,
" Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu, ho !
ieroe !"²⁰⁵
Ours is no sapling, chance-sown
by the fountain,
Blooming at Beltane, in winter
to fade ;
When the whirlwind has stripp'd
every leaf on the mountain,
The more shall Clan-Alpine
exult in her shade.
Moor'd in the rifted rock,
Proof to the tempest's
shock,
Firmer he roots him the ruder
it blow ;

Menteith and Breadalbane,
 then,
 Echo his praise agen,
 "Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu,
 ho! ieroe!"

XX.

Proudly our pibroch has thrill'd in
 Glen Fruin,
 And Bannochar's groans to
 our slogan replied;
 Glen Luss and Ross-dhu, they are
 smoking in ruin,
 And the best of Loch Lomond
 lie dead on her side.²⁰⁶
 Widow and Saxon maid
 Long shall lament our raid,
 Think of Clan-Alpine with fear
 and with woe;
 Lennox and Leven-glen
 Shake when they hear
 agen,
 "Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu,
 ho! ieroe!"

Row, vassals, row, for the pride
 of the Highlands!
 Stretch to your oars, for the
 evergreen Pine!
 O! that the rose-bud that graces
 yon islands,
 Were wreathed in a garland
 around him to twine!
 O that some seedling gem,
 Worthy such noble stem,
 Honour'd and bless'd in their
 shadow might grow!
 Loud should Clan-Alpine
 then
 Ring from the deepest
 glen,
 "Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu,
 ho! ieroe!"

XXI.

With all her joyful female band,
 Had Lady Margaret sought the
 strand.
 Loose on the breeze their tresses
 flew,
 And high their snowy arms they
 threw,
 As echoing back with shrill
 acclaim,
 And chorus wild, the Chieftain's
 name;
 While, prompt to please, with
 mother's art,
 The darling passion of his heart,
 The Dame call'd Ellen to the
 strand,
 To greet her kinsman ere he land:
 "Come, loiterer, come! a Douglas
 thou,
 And shun to wreathe a victor's
 brow?"
 Reluctantly and slow, the maid
 The unwelcome summoning
 obey'd,
 And, when a distant bugle rung,
 In the mid-path aside she
 sprung:—
 "List, Allan-Bane! From main-
 land cast,
 I hear my father's signal blast.
 Be ours," she cried, "the skiff to
 guide,
 And waft him from the mountain
 side."
 Then, like a sunbeam, swift and
 bright
 She darted to her shallop light,
 And, eagerly while Roderick
 scann'd,
 For her dear form, his mother's
 band.
 The islet far behind her lay,
 And she had landed in the bay.

XXII.

Some feelings are to mortals
 given,
 With less of earth in them than
 heaven :
 And if there be a human tear
 From passion's dross refined and
 clear,
 A tear so limpid and so meek,
 It would not stain an angel's
 cheek,
 'Tis that which pious fathers shed
 Upon a duteous daughter's head !
 And as the Douglas to his breast
 His darling Ellen closely press'd,
 Such holy drops her tresses
 steep'd,
 Though 'twas an hero's eye that
 weep'd.
 Nor while on Ellen's faltering
 tongue
 Her filial welcomes crowded hung,
 Mark'd she, that fear (affection's
 proof)
 Still held a graceful youth aloof ;
 No ! not till Douglas named his
 name,
 Although the youth was Malcolm
 Graeme.

XXIII.

Allan, with wistful look the while,
 Mark'd Roderick landing on the
 isle ;
 His master piteously he eyed,
 Then gazed upon the Chieftain's
 pride.
 Then dash'd, with hasty hand,
 away
 From his dimm'd eye the gather-
 ing spray ;
 And Douglas, as his hand he laid

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

XXIV

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

XXV.

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

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

XXVI.

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

XXVII.

Sir Roderick, who to meet them
 came,
 Redden'd at sight of Malcolm
 Græme,

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

XXVIII.

"Short be my speech;—nor time
 affords,
 Nor my plain temper, glozing
 words.
 Kinsman and father,—if such
 name
 Douglas vouchsafe to Roderick's
 claim;
 Mine honour'd mother;—Ellen—
 why,

My cousin, turn away thine
 eye?—
 And Græme; in whom I hope to
 know
 Full soon a noble friend or foe,
 When age shall give thee thy
 command,
 And leading in thy native land,—
 List all!—The King's vindictive
 pride
 Boasts to have tamed the Border-
 side,²⁰⁷
 Where chiefs, with hound and
 hawk who came
 To share their monarch's silvan
 game,
 Themselves in bloody toils were
 snared;
 And when the banquet they
 prepared,
 And wide their loyal portals flung,
 O'er their own gateway struggling
 hung.
 Loud cries their blood from
 Meggat's mead,
 From Yarrow braes, and banks
 of Tweed,
 Where the lone streams of
 Ettrick glide,
 And from the silver Teviot's
 side;
 The dales, where martial clans
 did ride,
 Are now one sheep-walk, waste
 and wide.
 This tyrant of the Scottish
 throne,
 So faithless and so ruthless
 known,
 Now hither comes; his end the
 same,
 The same pretext of silvan
 game.
 What grace for Highland Chiefs,
 judge ye

By fate of Border chivalry.²⁰⁸
 Yet more; amid Glenfinlas
 green,
 Douglas, thy stately form was
 seen.
 This by espial sure I know;
 Your counsel in the streight I
 show."

XXIX.

Ellen and Margaret fearfully
 Sought comfort in each other's
 eye,
 Then turn'd their ghastly look,
 each one,
 This to her sire—that to her son.
 The hasty colour went and came
 In the bold cheek of Malcolm
 Græme;
 But from his glance it well
 appear'd
 'Twas but for Ellen that he
 fear'd;
 While, sorrowful, but undismay'd,
 The Douglas thus his counsel
 said:—
 "Brave Roderick, though the
 tempest roar,
 It may but thunder and pass
 o'er;
 Nor will I here remain an hour,
 To draw the lightning on thy
 bower;
 For well thou know'st, at this
 grey head
 The royal bolt were fiercest sped.
 For thee, who, at thy King's
 command,
 Canst aid him with a gallant
 band,
 Submission, homage, humbled
 pride,
 Shall turn the Monarch's wrath
 aside.

Poor remnants of the Bleeding
Heart,
Ellen and I will seek, apart,
The refuge of some forest cell,
There, like the hunted quarry,
dwell,
Till on the mountain and the
moor,
The stern pursuit be pass'd and
o'er."—

XXX.

"No, by mine honour," Roderick
said,
"So help me, heaven, and my
good blade!
No, never! Blasted be yon Pine,
My fathers' ancient crest and
mine,
If from its shade in danger part
The lineage of the Bleeding
Heart!
Hear my blunt speech: Grant
me this maid
To wife, thy counsel to mine aid;
To Douglas, leagued with
Roderick Dhu,
Will friends and allies flock
enow;
Like cause of doubt, distrust,
and grief,
Will bind to us each Western
Chief.
When the loud pipes my bridal
tell,
The Links of Forth shall hear
the knell,
The guards shall start in Stirling's
porch;
And, when I light the nuptial
torch,
A thousand villages in flames,
Shall scare the slumbers of King
James!

—Nay, Ellen, blench not thus
away,
And, mother, cease these signs,
I pray;
I meant not all my heart might
say.—
Small need of inroad, or of fight,
When the sage Douglas may
unite
Each mountain clan in friendly
band,
To guard the passes of their land,
Till the foil'd king, from pathless
glen,
Shall bootless turn him home
agen."

XXXI.

There are who have, at midnight
hour,
In slumber scaled a dizzy tower,
And, on the verge that beetled
o'er
The ocean-tide's incessant roar,
Dream'd calmly out their danger-
ous dream,
Till waken'd by the morning
beam;
When, dazzled by the eastern
glow,
Such startler cast his glance
below,
And saw unmeasured depth
around,
And heard unintermitted sound,
And thought the battled fence so
frail,
It waved like cobweb in the
gale;—
Amid his senses' giddy wheel,
Did he not desperate impulse
feel,
Headlong to plunge himself
below,

And meet the worst his fears
foreshow?—
Thus, Ellen, dizzy and astound,
As sudden ruin yawn'd around,
By crossing terrors wildly toss'd
Still for the Douglas fearing
most,
Could scarce the desperate
thought withstand
To buy his safety with her hand.

XXXII.

Such purpose dread could
Malcolm spy
In Ellen's quivering lip and eye,
And eager rose to speak—but ere
His tongue could hurry forth his
fear,
Had Douglas mark'd the hectic
strife,
Where death seem'd combating
with life ;
For to her cheek, in feverish
flood,
One instant rush'd the throbbing
blood,
Then ebbing back, with sudden
sway,
Left its domain as wan as clay.
“Roderick, enough! enough!”
he cried,
“My daughter cannot be thy
bride ;
Not that the blush to wooer dear,
Nor paleness that of maiden fear.
It may not be—forgive her, Chief,
Nor hazard aught for our relief.
Against his sovereign, Douglas
ne'er
Will level a rebellious spear.
'Twas I that taught his youthful
hand
To rein a steed and wield a
brand ;

I see him yet, the princely boy !
Not Ellen more my pride and joy ;
I love him still, despite my
wrongs,
By hasty wrath, and slanderous
tongues.
O seek the grace you well may
find,
Without a cause to mine com-
bined.”

XXXIII.

Twice through the hall the
Chieftain strode ;
The waving of his tartans broad,
And darken'd brow, where
wounded pride
With ire and disappointment
vied,
Seem'd, by the torch's gloomy
light,
Like the ill Demon of the night,
Stooping his pinions' shadowy
sway
Upon the nighted pilgrim's way :
But, unrequited Love ! thy dart
Plunged deepest its envenom'd
smart,
And Roderick, with thine anguish
stung,
At length the hand of Douglas
wrung,
While eyes, that mock'd at tears
before,
With bitter drops were running
o'er.
The death-pangs of long-cherish'd
hope
Scarce in that ample breast had
scope,
But, struggling with his spirit
proud,
Convulsive heaved its chequer'd
shroud,

While every sob—so mute were
all—

Was heard distinctly through the
hall.

The son's despair, the mother's
look,

Ill might the gentle Ellen brook;
She rose, and to her side there
came,

To aid her parting steps, the
Græme.

XXXIV.

Then Roderick from the Douglas
broke—

As flashes flame through sable
smoke,

Kindling its wreaths, long, dark,
and low,

To one broad blaze of ruddy
glow,

So the deep anguish of despair
Burst, in fierce jealousy, to air.

With stalwart grasp his hand he
laid

On Malcolm's breast and belted
plaid:

"Back, beardless boy!" he
sternly said,

"Back, minion! hold'st thou
thus at naught

The lesson I so lately taught?

This roof, the Douglas, and that
maid,

Thank thou for punishment
delay'd."

Eager as greyhound on his game,
Fiercely with Roderick grappled
Græme.

"Perish my name, if aught afford
Its Chieftain safety save his
sword!"

Thus as they strove, their
desperate hand

Griped to the dagger or the
brand,

And death had been—but Douglas
rose,

And thrust between the strug-
gling foes

His giant strength:—"Chief-
tains, forego!

I hold the first who strikes, my
foe.—

Madmen, forbear your frantic jar!
What! is the Douglas fall'n so

far,
His daughter's hand is doom'd
the spoil

Of such dishonourable broil!"

Sullen and slowly they unclasp,
As struck with shame, their

desperate grasp,
And each upon his rival glared,

With foot advanced, and blade
half bared.

XXXV.

Ere yet the brands aloft were
flung,

Margaret on Roderick's mantle
hung,

And Malcolm heard his Ellen's
scream,

As, faltered through terrific
dream.

Then Roderick plunged in sheath
his sword,

And veil'd his wrath in scornful
word.

"Rest safe till morning; pity
'twere

Such cheek should feel the
midnight air!²⁰⁹

Then mayest thou to James Stuart
tell,

Roderick will keep the lake and
fell,

Nor lackey, with his freeborn
clan,

The pageant pomp of earthly
man.

More would he of Clan-Alpine
know,

Thou canst our strength and
passes show.—

Malise, what ho!"—his hench-
man came; ²¹⁰

"Give our safe-conduct to the
Gràme."

Young Malcolm answer'd, calm
and bold,

"Fear nothing for thy favourite
hold;

The spot, an angel deigned to
grace,

Is bless'd, though robbers haunt
the place.

Thy churlish courtesy for those
Reserve, who fear to be thy foes.

As safe to me the mountain way
At midnight as in blaze of day,

Though with his boldest at his
back

Even Roderick Dhu beset the
track.—

Brave Douglas,—lovely Ellen,—
nay,

Nought here of parting will I say.
Earth does not hold a lonesome

glen,
So secret, but we meet agen.—

Chieftain! we too shall find an
hour."—

He said, and left the silvan
bower.

XXXVI.

Old Allan follow'd to the strand,
(Such was the Douglas's com-
mand,)

And anxious told, how, on the
morn,

The stern Sir Roderick deep had
sworn,

The Fiery Cross should circle o'er
Dale, glen, and valley, down,

and moor.

Much were the peril to the
Gràme,

From those who to the signal
came;

Far up the lake 'twere safest
land,

Himself would row him to the
strand.

He gave his counsel to the wind,
While Malcolm did, unheeding,

bind,

Round dirk and pouch and
broadsword roll'd,

His ample plaid in tighten'd fold,
And stripp'd his limbs to such

array,

As best might suit the watery
way,—

XXXVII.

Then spoke abrupt: "Farewell
to thee,

Pattern of old fidelity!"

The Minstrel's hand he kindly
press'd,—

"O! could I point a place of
rest!

My sovereign holds in ward my
land,

My uncle leads my vassal band;
To tame his foes, his friends to

aid,

Poor Malcolm has but heart and
blade.

Yet, if there be one faithful
Gràme,

Who loves the Chieftain of his
 name,
 Not long shall honour'd Douglas
 dwell,
 Like hunted stag in mountain
 cell ;
 Nor, ere yon pride-swoll'n robber
 dare,—
 I may not give the rest to air !
 Tell Roderick Dhu, I owed him
 nought,
 Not the poor service of a boat,
 To waft me to yon mountain-
 side.”
 Then plunged he in the flashing
 tide.
 Bold o'er the flood his head he
 bore,
 And stoutly steer'd him from the
 shore ;
 And Allan strain'd his anxious eye,
 Far 'mid the lake his form to spy.
 Darkening across each puny
 wave,
 To which the moon her silver gave,
 Fast as the cormorant could
 skim,
 The swimmer plied each active
 limb ;
 Then landing in the moonlight
 dell,
 Loud shouted of his weal to tell.
 The Minstrel heard the far halloo,
 And joyful from the shore with-
 drew.

CANTO THIRD.

The Gathering.

I.

TIME rolls his ceaseless course.
 The race of yore,
 Who danced our infancy upon
 their knee,

And told our marvelling boyhood
 legends store,
 Of their strange ventures
 happ'd by land or sea,
 How are they blotted from the
 things that be !
 How few, all weak and
 wither'd of their force,
 Wait on the verge of dark
 eternity,
 Like stranded wrecks, the tide
 returning hoarse,
 To sweep them from our sight !
 Time rolls his ceaseless
 course.

Yet live there still who can
 remember well,
 How, when a mountain chief
 his bugle blew,
 Both field and forest, dingle, cliff,
 and dell,
 And solitary heath, the signal
 knew ;
 And fast the faithful clan around
 him drew,
 What time the warning note
 was keenly wound,
 What time aloft their kindred
 banner flew,
 While clamorous war-pipes
 yell'd the gathering sound,
 And while the Fiery Cross
 glanced, like a meteor,
 round.²¹¹

II.

The summer dawn's reflected
 hue,
 To purple changed Loch Katrine
 blue ;
 Mildly and soft the western ~~hue~~
 breeze
 Just kiss'd the Lake, just stirr'd
 the trees,

And the pleased lake, like maiden
 coy,
 Trembled but dimpled not for
 joy ;
 The mountain-shadows on her
 breast
 Were neither broken nor at rest ;
 In bright uncertainty they lie,
 Like future joys to Fancy's eye.
 The water-lily to the light
 Her chalice rear'd of silver
 bright ;
 The doe awoke, and to the lawn,
 Begemm'd with dew-drops, led
 her fawn ;
 The grey mist left the mountain
 side,
 The torrent show'd its glistening
 pride ;
 Invisible in flecked sky,
 The lark sent down her revelry ;
 The blackbird and the speckled
 thrush
 Good-morrow gave from brake
 and bush ;
 In answer coo'd the cushat dove
 Her notes of peace, and rest,
 and love.

III.

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

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

IV.

A heap of wither'd boughs was
 piled,
 Of juniper and rowan wild,
 Mingled with shivers from the
 oak,
 Rent by the lightning's recent
 stroke.
 Brian, the Hermit, by it stood,
 Barefooted, in his frock and
 hood.
 His grisled beard and matted
 hair
 Obscured a visage of despair ;
 His naked arms and legs, seam'd
 o'er,
 The scars of frantic penance
 bore.
 That monk, of savage form and
 face,²¹²
 The impending danger of his race

Had drawn from deepest solitude,
 Far in Benharrow's bosom rude.
 Not his the mien of Christian
 priest,
 But Druid's, from the grave
 released,
 Whose harden'd heart and eye
 might brook
 On human sacrifice to look ;
 And much, 'twas said, of heathen
 lore
 Mix'd in the charms he mutter'd
 o'er.
 The hallow'd creed gave only
 worse
 And deadlier emphasis of curse ;
 No peasant sought that Hermit's
 prayer,
 His cave the pilgrim shunn'd
 with care,
 (The eager huntsman knew his
 bound,
 And in mid chase call'd off his
 hound ;
 Or if, in lonely glen or strath,
 The desert-dweller met his path,
 He pray'd, and sign'd the cross
 between,
 While terror took devotion's
 mien.

V.

Of Brian's birth strange tales
 were told.²¹³
 His mother watch'd a midnight
 fold,
 Built deep within a dreary glen,
 Where scatter'd lay the bones
 of men,
 In some forgotten battle slain,
 And bleach'd by drifting wind
 and rain.
 It might have tamed a warrior's
 heart,

To view such mockery of his
 art !
 The knot-grass fetter'd there the
 hand,
 Which once could burst an iron
 band ;
 Beneath the broad and ample
 bone,
 That buckler'd heart to fear
 unknown,
 A feeble and a timorous guest,
 The field-fare framed her lowly
 nest ;
 There the slow blind-worm left
 his slime
 On the fleet limbs that mock'd
 at time ;
 And there, too, lay the leader's
 skull,
 Still wreathed with chaplet,
 flush'd and full,
 For heath-bell with her purple
 bloom,
 Supplied the bonnet and the
 plume.
 All night, in this sad glen, the
 maid
 Sate, shrouded in her mantle's
 shade :
 —She said, no shepherd sought
 her side,
 No hunter's hand her snood
 untied,
 Yet ne'er again to braid her hair
 The virgin snood did Alice
 wear ;²¹⁴
 Gone was her maiden glee and
 sport,
 Her maiden girdle all too short,
 Nor sought she, from that fatal
 night,
 Or holy church or blessed rite,
 But lock'd her secret in her
 breast,
 And died in travail, unconfess'd.

VI.

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

VII.

The desert gave him visions wild,
 Such as might suit the spectre's child.²¹⁵
 Where with black cliffs the torrents toil,
 He watch'd the wheeling eddies boil,
 Till, from their foam, his dazzled eyes
 Beheld the River Demon rise ;
 The mountain mist took form and limb,
 Of noontide hag, or goblin grim ;
 The midnight wind came wild and dread,
 Swell'd with the voices of the dead ;
 Far on the future battle-heath
 His eye beheld the ranks of death :
 Thus the lone Seer, from man-kind hurl'd,
 Shaped forth a disembodied world.
 One lingering sympathy of mind
 Still bound him to the mortal kind ;
 The only parent he could claim
 Of ancient Alpine's lineage came.
 Late had he heard, in prophet's dream,
 The fatal Ben-Shie's boding scream ;²¹⁶
 Sounds, too, had come in midnight blast,
 Of charging steeds, careering fast
 Along Benharrow's shingly side,
 Where mortal horseman ne'er might ride ;²¹⁷
 The thunderbolt had split the pine,—
 All augur'd ill to Alpine's line.

He girt his loins, and came to
show
The signals of impending woe,
And now stood prompt to bless
or ban,
As bade the Chieftain of his
clan.

VIII.

'Twas all prepared;—and from
the rock,
A goat, the patriarch of the
flock,
Before the kindling pile was
laid,
And pierced by Roderick's ready
blade.
Patient the sickening victim eyed
The life-blood ebb in crimson
tide,
Down his clogg'd beard and
shaggy limb,
Till darkness glazed his eyeballs
dim.
The grisly priest, with murmur-
ing prayer,
A slender crosslet form'd with
care,
A cubit's length in measure
due:
The shaft and limbs were rods of
yew,
Whose parents in Inch-Cailliach
wave ²¹⁸
Their shadows o'er Clan-Alpine's
grave,
And, answering Lomond's breezes
deep,
Soothe many a chieftain's endless
sleep.
The Cross, thus form'd, he held
on high,
With wasted hand, and haggard
eye,

And strange and mingled feelings
woke,
While his anathema he spoke.

IX.

“Woe to the clansman, who
shall view
This symbol of sepulchral yew,
Forgetful that its branches grew
Where weep the heavens their
holiest dew
On Alpine's dwelling low!
Deserter of his Chieftain's trust,
He ne'er shall mingle with their
dust,
But, from his sires and kindred
thrust,
Each clansman's execration just
Shall doom him wrath and
woe.”
He paused;—the word the vassals
took,
With forward step and fiery
look,
On high their naked brands they
shook,
Their clattering targets wildly
strook;
And first in murmur low,
Then, like the billow in his course,
That far to seaward finds his
source,
And flings to shore his muster'd
force,
Burst, with loud roar, their
answer hoarse,
“Woe to the traitor, woe!”
Ben-an's grey scalp the accents
knew,
The joyous wolf from covert drew,
The exulting eagle scream'd
afar,—
They knew the voice of Alpine's
war.

X.

The shout was hush'd on lake
and fell,
The monk resumed his mutter'd
spell :
Dismal and low its accents came,
The while he scathed the Cross
with flame ;
And the few words that reach'd
the air,
Although the holiest name was
there,
Had more of blasphemy than
prayer.
But when he shook above the
crowd
Its kindled points, he spoke
aloud :—
“Woe to the wretch who fails
to rear
At this dread sign the ready
spear !
For, as the flames this symbol
sear,
Her home, the refuge of his
fear,
A kindred fate shall know ;
Far o'er its roof the volumed
flame
Clan - Alpine's vengeance shall
proclaim ;
While maids and matrons on his
name
Shall call down wretchedness and
shame,
And infamy and woe.”
Then rose the cry of females,
shrill
As goss-hawk's whistle on the
hill,
Denouncing misery and ill,
Mingled with childhood's babbling
trill
Of curses stammer'd slow ;

Answering, with imprecation
dread,
“Sunk be his home in embers
red !
And cursed be the meanest shed
That e'er shall hide the houseless
head,
We doom to want and woe !”
A sharp and shrieking echo gave,
Coir-Uriskin, thy goblin cave !
And the grey pass where birches
wave,
On Beala-nam-bo.

XI.

Then deeper paused the priest
anew,
And hard his labouring breath he
drew,
While, with set teeth and clenched
hand,
And eyes that glow'd like fiery
brand,
He meditated curse more dread,
And deadlier, on the clansman's
head,
Who, summon'd to his Chieftain's
aid,
The signal saw and disobey'd.
The crosslet's points of sparkling
wood,
He quench'd among the bubbling
blood,
And, as again the sign he rear'd,
Hollow and hoarse his voice was
heard :
“When flits this Cross from man
to man,
Vich-Alpine's summons to his
clan,
Burst be the ear that fails to
heed !
Palsied the foot that shuns to
speed !

May ravens tear the careless eyes,
 Wolves make the coward heart
 their prize !
 As sinks that blood-stream in the
 earth,
 So may his heart's-blood drench
 his hearth !
 As dies in hissing gore the spark,
 Quench thou his light, Destruction
 dark,
 And be the grace to him denied,
 Bought by this sign to all beside !"
 He ceased ; no echo gave agen
 The murmur of the deep Amen.

XII.

Then Roderick, with impatient
 look,
 From Brian's hand the symbol
 took :
 " Speed, Malise, speed ! " he said,
 and gave
 The crosslet to his henchman
 brave.
 " The muster-place be Lanrick
 mead—
 Instant the time—speed, Malise,
 speed ! "
 Like heath-bird, when the hawks
 pursue,
 A barge across Loch Katrine
 flew ;
 High stood the henchman on the
 prow ;
 So rapidly the barge-men row,
 The bubbles, where they launch'd
 the boat,
 Were all unbroken and afloat,
 Dancing in foam and ripple still,
 When it had near'd the mainland
 hill ;
 And from the silver beach's side
 Still was the prow three fathom
 wide,

When lightly bounded to the land
 The messenger of blood and
 brand.

XIII.

Speed, Malise, speed ! the dun
 deer's hide
 On fleeter foot was never tied.²¹⁹
 Speed, Malise, speed ! such cause
 of haste
 Thine active sinews never braced.
 Bend 'gainst the steepy hill thy
 breast,
 Burst down like torrent from its
 crest ;
 With short and springing foot-
 step pass
 The trembling bog and false
 morass ;
 Across the brook like roebuck
 bound,
 And thread the brake like quest-
 ing hound ;
 The crag is high, the scaur is
 deep,
 Yet shrink not from the desperate
 leap :
 Parch'd are thy burning lips and
 brow,
 Yet by the fountain pause not
 now ;
 Herald of battle, fate, and fear,
 Stretch onward in thy fleet career !
 The wounded hind thou track'st
 not now,
 Pursuest not maid through green-
 wood bough,
 Nor pliest thou now thy flying
 pace,
 With rivals in the mountain race ;
 But danger, death, and warrior
 deed,
 Are in thy course—speed, Malise,
 speed !

XIV.

Fast as the fatal symbol flies,
 In arms the huts and hamlets
 rise ;
 From winding glen, from upland
 brown,
 They pour'd each hardy tenant
 down.
 Nor slack'd the messenger his
 pace ;
 He show'd the sign, he named the
 place,
 And, pressing forward like the
 wind,
 Left clamour and surprise behind.
 The fisherman forsook the strand,
 The swarthy smith took dirk and
 brand ;
 With changed cheer, the mower
 blithe
 Left in the half-cut swathe the
 scythe ;
 The herds without a keeper
 stray'd,
 The plough was in mid-furrow
 staid,
 The falc'ner toss'd his hawk away,
 The hunter left the stag at bay ;
 Prompt at the signal of alarms,
 Each son of Alpine rush'd to
 arms ;
 So swept the tumult and affray
 Along the margin of Achray.
 Alas, thou lovely lake ! that
 e'er
 Thy banks should echo sounds of
 fear !
 The rocks, the bosky thickets,
 sleep
 So stilly on thy bosom deep,
 The lark's blithe carol, from the
 cloud,
 Seems for the scene too gaily
 loud.

XV.

Speed, Malise, speed ! the lake
 is past,
 Duncraggan's huts appear at last,
 And peep, like moss-grown rocks,
 half seen,
 Half hidden in the copse so green ;
 There mayest thou rest, thy labour
 done,
 Their Lord shall speed the signal
 on.—
 As stoops the hawk upon his prey,
 The henchman shot him down the
 way.
 —What woeful accents load the
 gale ?
 The funeral yell, the female wail !
 A gallant hunter's sport is o'er,
 A valiant warrior fights no more.
 Who, in the battle or the chase,
 At Roderick's side shall fill his
 place !—
 Within the hall, where torches'
 ray
 Supplies the excluded beams of
 day,
 Lies Duncan on his lowly bier,
 And o'er him streams his widow's
 tear.
 His stripling son stands mourn-
 ful by,
 His youngest weeps, but knows
 not why ;
 The village maids and matrons
 round
 The dismal coronach resound.²²⁰

XVI.

Coronach.

He is gone on the mountain,
 He is lost to the forest,
 Like a summer-dried fountain,
 When our need was the sorest.

The font, reappearing,
 From the rain - drops shall
 borrow,
 But to us comes no cheering,
 To Duncan no morrow !
 The hand of the reaper
 Takes the ears that are hoary,
 But the voice of the weeper
 Wails manhood in glory.
 The autumn winds rushing
 Waft the leaves that are searest,
 But our flower was in flushing,
 When blighting was nearest.

Fleet foot on the correi,
 Sage counsel in cumber,
 Red hand in the foray,
 How sound is thy slumber !
 Like the dew on the mountain,
 Like the foam on the river,
 Like the bubble on the fountain,
 Thou art gone, and for ever !

XVII.

See Stumah, who, the bier
 beside,
 His master's corpse with wonder
 eyed,
 Poor Stumah ! whom his least
 halloo
 Could send like lightning o'er
 the dew,
 Bristles his crest, and points his
 ears,
 As if some stranger step he
 hears.
 'Tis not a mourner's muffled
 tread,
 Who comes to sorrow o'er the
 dead,
 But headlong haste, or deadly
 fear,
 Urge the precipitate career.
 All stand aghast :—unheeding all,

The henchman bursts into the
 hall ;
 Before the dead man's bier he
 stood ;
 Held forth the Cross besmear'd
 with blood ;
 "The muster-place is Lanrick
 mead ;
 Speed forth the signal ! clans-
 men, speed !"

XVIII.

Angus, the heir of Duncan's line,
 Sprung forth and seized the
 fatal sign,
 In haste the stripling to his side
 His father's dirk and broadsword
 tied ;
 But when he saw his mother's
 eye
 Watch him in speechless agony,
 Back to her open'd arms he flew,
 Press'd on her lips a fond adieu—
 "Alas !" she sobb'd,—“and yet,
 be gone,
 And speed thee forth, like
 Duncan's son !”
 One look he cast upon the bier,
 Dash'd from his eye the gather-
 ing tear,
 Breathed deep to clear his
 labouring breast,
 And toss'd aloft his bonnet crest,
 Then, like the high-bred colt,
 when, freed,
 First he essays his fire and
 speed,
 He vanish'd, and o'er moor and
 moss
 Sped forward with the Fiery
 Cross.
 Suspended was the widow's tear,
 While yet his footsteps she could
 hear ;

And when she mark'd the
 henchman's eye
 Wet with unwonted sympathy,
 "Kinsman," she said, "his race
 is run,
 That should have sped thine
 errand on ;
 The oak has fall'n—the sapling
 bough
 Is all Duncraggan's shelter now.
 Yet trust I well, his duty done,
 The orphan's God will guard my
 son.—
 And you, in many a danger true,
 At Duncan's hest your blades
 that drew,
 To arms, and guard that
 orphan's head !
 Let babes and women wail the
 dead."
 Then weapon-clang, and martial
 call,
 Resounded through the funeral
 hall,
 While from the walls the
 attendant band
 Snatch'd sword and targe, with
 hurried hand ;
 And short and flitting energy
 Glanced from the mourner's
 sunken eye,
 As if the sounds to warrior
 dear,
 Might rouse her Duncan from
 his bier.
 But faded soon that borrow'd
 force ;
 Grief claim'd his right, and tears
 their course.

XIX.

Benledi saw the Cross of Fire,
 It glanced like lightning up
 Strath-Ire.²²¹

O'er dale and hill the summons
 flew,
 Nor rest nor pause young Angus
 knew ;
 The tear that gather'd in his
 eye
 He left the mountain breeze to
 dry ;
 Until, where Teith's young
 waters roll,
 Betwixt him and a wooded knoll,
 That graced the sable strath with
 green,
 The chapel of St. Bride was
 seen.
 Swoln was the stream, remote
 the bridge,
 But Angus paused not on the
 edge ;
 Though the dark waves danced
 dizzily,
 Though reel'd his sympathetic
 eye,
 He dash'd amid the torrent's
 roar :
 His right hand high the crosslet
 bore,
 His left the pole-axe grasp'd, to
 guide
 And stay his footing in the tide.
 He stumbled twice—the foam
 splash'd high,
 With hoarser swell the stream
 raced by ;
 And had he fall'n,—for ever
 there,
 Farewell Duncraggan's orphan
 heir !
 But still, as if in parting life,
 Firmer he grasp'd the Cross of
 strife,
 Until the opposing bank he
 gain'd,
 And up the chapel pathway
 strain'd.

XX.

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

XXI.

Who meets them at the church-
 yard gate ?
 The messenger of fear and fate !
 Haste in his hurried accent lies,
 And grief is swimming in his
 eyes.
 All dripping from the recent
 flood,
 Panting and travel-soil'd he
 stood,
 The fatal sign of fire and sword
 Held forth, and spoke the
 appointed word :
 " The muster-place is Lanrick
 mead ;
 Speed forth the signal ! Norman,
 speed ! "

And must he change so soon the
 hand,
 Just link'd to his by holy band,
 For the fell Cross of blood and
 brand ?
 And must the day, so blithe that
 rose,
 And promised rapture in the
 close,
 Before its setting hour, divide
 The bridegroom from the
 plighted bride ?
 O fatal doom ! — it must ! it
 must !
 Clan-Alpine's cause, her Chief-
 tain's trust,
 Her summons dread, brook no
 delay ;
 Stretch to the race — away !
 away !

XXII.

Yet slow he laid his plaid aside,
 And, lingering, eyed his lovely
 bride,

Until he saw the starting tear
 Speak woe he might not stop to
 cheer ;
 Then, trusting not a second look,
 In haste he sped him up the brook,
 Nor backward glanced, till on
 the heath
 Where Lubnaig's lake supplies
 the Teith.
 —What in the racer's bosom
 stirr'd ?
 The sickening pang of hope
 deferr'd,
 And memory, with a torturing
 train
 Of all his morning visions vain.
 Mingled with love's impatience,
 came
 The manly thirst for martial fame ;
 The stormy joy of mountaineers,
 Ere yet they rush upon the spears ;
 And zeal for Clan and Chieftain
 burning,
 And hope, from well-fought field
 returning,
 With war's red honours on his
 crest,
 To clasp his Mary to his breast.
 Stung by such thoughts, o'er
 bank and brae,
 Like fire from flint he glanced
 away,
 While high resolve, and feeling
 strong,
 Burst into voluntary song.

XXIII.

Song.

The heath this night must be my
 bed,
 The bracken curtain for my head,
 My lullaby the warder's tread,
 Far, far, from love and thee,
 Mary ;

To-morrow eve, more stilly laid,
 My couch may be my bloody
 plaid,
 My vesper song, thy wail, sweet
 maid !
 It will not waken me, Mary !
 I may not, dare not, fancy now
 The grief that clouds thy lovely
 brow,
 I dare not think upon thy vow,
 And all it promised me,
 Mary.
 No fond regret must Norman
 know ;
 When bursts Clan-Alpine on the
 foe,
 His heart must be like bended
 bow,
 His foot like arrow free,
 Mary.

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

XXIV.

Not faster o'er thy heathery
 braes,
 Balquidder, speeds the midnight
 blaze,²²²
 Rushing, in conflagration strong,
 Thy deep ravines and dells along,

Wrapping thy cliffs in purple
 glow,
 And reddening the dark lakes
 below ;
 Nor faster speeds it, nor so far,
 As o'er thy heaths the voice of
 war.

The signal roused to martial coil
 The sullen margin of Loch Voil,
 Waked still Loch Doine, and to
 the source
 Alarm'd, Balvaig, thy swampy
 course ;

Thence southward turn'd its
 rapid road
 Adown Strath-Gartney's valley
 broad,
 Till rose in arms each man might
 claim

A portion in Clan-Alpine's name,
 From the grey sire, whose
 trembling hand
 Could hardly buckle on his
 brand,
 To the raw boy, whose shaft
 and bow

Were yet scarce terror to the
 crow.

Each valley, each sequester'd
 glen,
 Muster'd its little horde of men,
 That met as torrents from the
 height

In Highland dales their streams
 unite,
 Still gathering, as they pour
 along,

A voice more loud, a tide more
 strong,
 Till at the rendezvous they stood
 By hundreds prompt for blows
 and blood ;

Each train'd to arms since life
 began,

(Owning no tie but to his clan,

(No oath, but by his chieftain's
 hand,
 No law, but Roderick Dhu's
 command.²²³)

XXV.

That summer morn had Roderick
 Dhu

Survey'd the skirts of Benvenue,
 And sent his scouts o'er hill and
 heath,

To view the frontiers of Menteith.
 All backward came the news of
 truce ;

Still lay each martial Græme and
 Bruce,

In Rednoch courts no horsemen
 wait,

No banner waved on Cardross
 gate,

On Duchray's towers no beacon
 shone,

Nor scared the herons from Loch
 Con ;

All seem'd at peace.—Now, wot
 ye why

The Chieftain, with such anxious
 eye,

Ere to the muster he repair,
 This western frontier scann'd
 with care?—

In Benvenue's most darksome
 cleft,

A fair, though cruel, pledge was
 left ;

For Douglas, to his promise true,
 That morning from the isle
 withdrew,

And in a deep sequester'd dell
 Had sought a low and lonely cell.
 By many a bard, in Celtic
 tongue,

Has Coir - nan - Uriskin been
 sung ;²²⁴



Holyrood Palace.

Photo. by Valentine & Sons, Ltd.

A softer name the Saxons gave,
And call'd the grot the Goblin-
cave.

XXVI.

It was a wild and strange retreat,
As e'er was trod by outlaw's feet.
The dell, upon the mountain's
crest,
Yawn'd like a gash on warrior's
breast ;
Its trench had staid full many a
rock,
Hurl'd by primeval earthquake
shock
From Benvenue's grey summit
wild,
And here, in random ruin piled,
They frown'd incumbent o'er the
spot,
And form'd the rugged silvan
grot.
The oak and birch, with mingled
shade,
At noontide there a twilight
made,
Unless when short and sudden
shone
Some straggl'ing beam on cliff or
stone,
With such a glimpse as prophet's
eye
Gains on thy depth, Futurity.
No murmur waked the solemn
still,
Save tinkling of a fountain rill ;
But when the wind chafed with
the lake,
A sullen sound would upward
break,
With dashing hollow voice, that
spoke
The incessant war of wave and
rock.
sc.

Suspended cliffs, with hideous
sway,
Seem'd nodding o'er the cavern
grey.
From such a den the wolf had
sprung,
In such the wild-cat leaves her
young ;
Yet Douglas and his daughter
fair
Sought for a space their safety
there.
Grey Superstition's whisper
dread
Debarr'd the spot to vulgar
tread ;
For there, she said, did fays
resort,
And satyrs hold their silvan
court,
By moonlight tread their mystic
maze,
And blast the rash beholder's
gaze.

XXVII.

Now eve, with western shadows
long,
Floated on Katrine bright and
strong,
When Roderick, with a chosen
few,
Repass'd the heights of Benvenue.
Above the Goblin-cave they go,
Through the wild pass of Beal-
nam-bo : ²²⁵
The prompt retainers speed
before,
To launch the shallop from the
shore,
For cross Loch Katrine lies his
way
To view the passes of Achray,
And place his clansmen in array.

Yet lags the Chief in musing
mind,

Unwonted sight, his men behind.
A single page, to bear his sword,
Alone attended on his lord ;²²⁶

The rest their way through
thickets break,
And soon await him by the
lake.

It was a fair and gallant sight,
To view them from the neigh-
bouring height,

By the low-levell'd sunbeams
light !

For strength and stature, from
the clan

Each warrior was a chosen man,
As even afar might well be seen,
By their proud step and martial
mien.

Their feathers dance, their tartans
float,

Their targets gleam, as by the
boat

A wild and warlike group they
stand,

That well became such mountain-
strand.

XXVIII.

Their Chief, with step reluctant,
still

Was lingering on the craggy
hill,

Hard by where turn'd apart the
road

To Douglas's obscure abode.

It was but with that dawning
morn,

That Roderick Dhu had proudly
sworn

To drown his love in war's wild
roar,

Nor think of Ellen Douglas more ;

But he who stems a stream with
sand,

And fetters flame with flaxen
band,

Has yet a harder task to prove—
By firm resolve to conquer love !

Eve finds the Chief, like restless
ghost,

Still hovering near his treasure
lost ;

For though his haughty heart
deny

A parting meeting to his eye,
Still fondly strains his anxious

ear,
The accents of her voice to hear,

And inly did he curse the breeze
That waked to sound the rustling

trees.
But hark ! what mingles in the

strain ?

It is the harp of Allan-Bane,
That wakes its measure slow and
high,

Attuned to sacred minstrelsy.
What melting voice attends the

strings ?
'Tis Ellen, or an angel, sings.

XXIX.

Hymn to the Virgin.

Ave Maria! maiden mild !

Listen to a maiden's prayer !
Thou canst hear though from
the wild,

Thou canst save amid despair.
Safe may we sleep beneath thy
care,

Though banish'd, outcast, and
reviled—

Maiden ! hear a maiden's prayer ;
Mother, hear a suppliant child !

Ave Maria!

Ave Maria! undefiled!

The flinty couch we now must
share

Shall seem with down of eider
piled,

If thy protection hover there.

The murky cavern's heavy air

Shall breathe of balm if thou
hast smiled;

Then, Maiden! hear a maiden's
prayer;

Mother, list a suppliant child!

Ave Maria!

Ave Maria! stainless styled!

Foul demons of the earth and
air,

From this their wonted haunt
exiled,

Shall flee before thy presence
fair.

We bow us to our lot of care,

Beneath thy guidance recon-
ciled;

Hear for a maid a maiden's
prayer,

And for a father hear a child!

Ave Maria!

XXX.

Died on the harp the closing
hymn—

Unmoved in attitude and limb,

As list'ning still, Clan-Alpine's
lord

Stood leaning on his heavy
sword,

Until the page, with humble sign,
Twice pointed to the sun's
decline.

Then while his plaid he round
him cast,

"It is the last time—'tis the
last,"

He mutter'd thrice,—“the last
time e'er

That angel voice shall Roderick
hear!”

It was a goading thought—his
stride

Hied hastier down the mountain-
side;

Sullen he flung him in the boat,

And instant 'cross the lake it shot.

They landed in that silvery bay,

And eastward held their hasty way,

Till, with the latest beams of
light,

The band arrived on Lanrick
height,

Where muster'd, in the vale
below,

Clan-Alpine's men in martial
show.

XXXI.

A various scene the clansmen
made,

Some sate, some stood, some
slowly stray'd;

But most with mantles folded
round,

Were couch'd to rest upon the
ground,

Scarce to be known by curious
eye,

From the deep heather where
they lie,

So well was match'd the tartan
screen

With heath-bell dark and
brackens green;

Unless where, here and there,
a blade,

Or lance's point, a glimmer
made,

Like glow-worm twinkling
through the shade.

But when, advancing through
 the gloom,
 They saw the Chieftain's eagle
 plume,
 Their shout of welcome, shrill
 and wide,
 Shook the steep mountain's
 steady side.
 Thrice it arose, and lake and fell
 Three times return'd the martial
 yell:
 It died upon Bochastle's plain,
 And Silence claim'd her evening
 reign.

CANTO FOURTH.

The Prophecy.

I.

“THE rose is fairest when 'tis
 budding new,
 And hope is brightest when it
 dawns from fears;
 The rose is sweetest wash'd with
 morning dew,
 And love is loveliest when
 embalm'd in tears.
 O wilding rose, whom fancy thus
 endears,
 I bid your blossoms in my
 bonnet wave,
 Emblem of hope and love through
 future years!”
 Thus spoke young Norman, heir
 of Armandave,
 What time the sun arose on
 Vennachar's broad wave.

II.

Such fond conceit, half said, half
 sung,
 Love prompted to the bride-
 groom's tongue.

All while he stripp'd the wild-
 rose spray,
 His axe and bow beside him
 lay,
 For on a pass 'twixt lake and
 wood,
 A wakeful sentinel he stood.
 Hark! on the rock a footstep
 rung,
 And instant to his arms he
 sprung.
 “Stand, or thou diest!—What,
 Malise?—soon
 Art thou return'd from Braes of
 Doune.
 By thy keen step and glance I
 know,
 Thou bring'st us tidings of the
 foe.”—
 (For while the Fiery Cross hied
 on,
 On distant scout had Malise
 gone.)
 “Where sleeps the Chief?” the
 henchman said.—
 “Apart, in yonder misty glade;
 To his lone couch I'll be your
 guide.”—
 Then call'd a slumberer by his
 side,
 And stirr'd him with his slacken'd
 bow—
 “Up, up, Glentarkin! rouse
 thee, ho!
 We seek the Chieftain; on the
 track,
 Keep eagle watch till I come
 back.”

III.

Together up the pass they
 sped:
 “What of the foemen?” Norman
 said.—

"Varying reports from near and
 far ;
 This certain,—that a band of war
 Has for two days been ready
 boune,
 At prompt command, to march
 from Doune ;
 King James, the while, with
 princely powers,
 Holds revelry in Stirling towers.
 Soon will this dark and gathering
 cloud
 Speak on our glens in thunder
 loud.
 Inured to bide such bitter bout,
 The warrior's plaid may bear it
 out ;
 But, Norman, how wilt thou
 provide
 A shelter for thy bonny bride?"—
 "What! know ye not that
 Roderick's care
 To the lone isle hath caused repair
 Each maid and matron of the
 clan,
 And every child and aged man
 Unfit for arms; and given his
 charge,
 Nor skiff nor shallop, boat nor
 barge,
 Upon these lakes shall float at
 large,
 But all beside the islet moor,
 That such dear pledge may rest
 secure?"—

IV.

"'Tis well advised—the Chief-
 tain's plan
 Bespeaks the father of his clan.
 But wherefore sleeps Sir Roderick
 Dhu
 Apart from all his followers
 true?"—

"It is, because last evening-tide
 Brian an augury hath tried,
 Of that dread kind which must
 not be
 Unless in dread extremity,
 The Taghairm call'd; by which,
 afar,
 Our sires foresaw the events of
 war.²²⁷
 Duncraggan's milk-white bull
 they slew."

MALISE.

"Ah! well the gallant brute I
 knew!
 The choicest of the prey we
 had,
 When swept our merry-men
 Gallangad.²²⁸
 His hide was snow, his horns
 were dark,
 His red eye glow'd like fiery
 spark;
 So fierce, so tameless, and so
 fleet,
 Sore did he cumber our retreat,
 And kept our stoutest kernes in
 awe,
 Even at the pass of Beal 'maha.
 But steep and flinty was the road,
 And sharp the hurrying pike-
 men's goad,
 And when we came to Dennan's
 Row,
 A child might scatheless stroke
 his brow."—

V.

NORMAN.

"That bull was slain: his
 reeking hide
 They stretch'd the cataract
 beside,

Whose waters their wild tumult
 toss
 Adown the black and craggy boss
 Of that huge cliff, whose ample
 verge
 Tradition calls the Hero's
 Targe.²²⁹
 Couch'd on a shelve beneath its
 brink,
 Close where the thundering
 torrents sink,
 Rocking beneath their headlong
 sway,
 And drizzled by the ceaseless
 spray,
 Midst groan of rock, and roar of
 stream,
 The wizard waits prophetic
 dream.
 Nor distant rests the Chief;—
 but hush!
 See, gliding slow through mist
 and bush,
 The hermit gains yon rock, and
 stands
 To gaze upon our slumbering
 bands.
 Seems he not, Malise, like a
 ghost,
 That hovers o'er a slaughter'd
 host?
 Or raven on the blasted oak,²³⁰
 That, watching while the deer is
 broke,
 His morsel claims with sullen
 croak?"

MALISE.

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

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

VI.

And, as they came, with Alpine's
 Lord
 The Hermit Monk held solemn
 word:—
 "Roderick! it is a fearful strife,
 For man endow'd with mortal
 life,
 Whose shroud of sentient clay
 can still
 Feel feverish pang and fainting
 chill,
 Whose eye can stare in stony
 trance,
 Whose hair can rouse like
 warrior's lance,—
 'Tis hard for such to view,
 unfurl'd,
 The curtain of the future world.
 Yet, witness every quaking limb,
 My sunken pulse, my eyeballs
 dim,
 My soul with harrowing anguish
 torn,—
 This for my Chieftain have I
 borne!—
 The shapes that sought my
 fearful couch,
 An human tongue may ne'er
 avouch;
 No mortal man,—save he, who,
 bred
 Between the living and the dead,
 Is gifted beyond nature's law,—
 Had e'er survived to say he saw.

At length the fatal answer came,
 In characters of living flame!
 Not spoke in word, nor blazed
 in scroll,
 But borne and branded on my
 soul;—
 WHICH SPILLS THE FOREMOST
 FOEMAN'S LIFE,
 THAT PARTY CONQUERS IN THE
 STRIFE!"—²³¹

VII.

"Thanks, Brian, for thy zeal and
 care!
 Good is thine augury, and fair.
 Clan-Alpine ne'er in battle stood,
 But first our broadswords tasted
 blood.
 A surer victim still I know,
 Self-offer'd to the auspicious blow:
 A spy has sought my land this
 morn,—
 No eve shall witness his return!
 My followers guard each pass's
 mouth,
 To east, to westward, and to
 south;
 Red Murdoch, bribed to be his
 guide,
 Has charge to lead his steps aside,
 Till, in deep path or dingle brown,
 He light on those shall bring
 him down.
 —But see, who comes his news
 to show!
 Malise! what tidings of the
 foe?"—

VIII.

"At Doune, o'er many a spear
 and glaive
 Two Barons proud their banners
 wave.

I saw the Moray's silver star,
 And mark'd the sable pale of
 Mar."—
 "By Alpine's soul, high tidings
 those!
 I love to hear of worthy foes.
 When move they on?"—"To-
 morrow's noon
 Will see them here for battle
 boune."—
 "Then shall it see a meeting
 stern!—
 But, for the place—say, couldst
 thou learn
 Nought of the friendly clans of
 Earn?
 Strengthen'd by them, we well
 might bide
 The battle on Benledi's side.
 Thou couldst not?—Well! Clan-
 Alpine's men
 Shall man the Trosach's shaggy
 glen;
 Within Loch Katrine's gorge
 we'll fight,
 All in our maids' and matrons'
 sight,
 Each for his hearth and household
 fire,
 Father for child, and son for
 sire,—
 Lover for maid beloved!—But
 why—
 Is it the breeze affects mine
 eye?
 Or dost thou come, ill-omen'd
 tear!
 A messenger of doubt or fear?
 No! sooner may the Saxon
 lance
 Unfix Benledi from his stance,
 Than doubt or terror can pierce
 through
 The unyielding heart of Roderick
 Dhu!

'Tis stubborn as his trusty
targe.—
Each to his post!—all know their
charge.”
The pibroch sounds, the bands
advance,
The broadswords gleam, the
banners dance,
Obedient to the Chieftain's
glance.
—I turn me from the martial
roar,
And seek Coir-Uriskin once
more.

IX.

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

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

X.

ELLEN.

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

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

XI.

“Nay, lovely Ellen!—dearest,
 nay!
 If aught should his return delay,
 He only named yon holy fane
 As fitting place to meet again.
 Be sure he's safe; and for the
 Græme,—
 Heaven's blessing on his gallant
 name!—
 My vision'd sight may yet prove
 true,
 Nor bode of ill to him or you.
 When did my gifted dream
 beguile?
 Think of the stranger at the isle,

And think upon the harpings
 slow,
 That presaged this approaching
 woe!
 Sooth was my prophecy of fear;
 Believe it when it augurs cheer.
 Would we had left this dismal
 spot!
 Ill luck still haunts a fairy grot.
 Of such a wondrous tale I
 know—
 Dear lady, change that look of
 woe,
 My harp was wont thy grief to
 cheer.”—

ELLEN.

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

XII.

Ballad.

ALICE BRAND.²³²

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

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

“ O Alice, 'twas all for thy locks
so bright,
And 'twas all for thine eyes so
blue,
That on the night of our luckless
flight,
Thy brother bold I slew.

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

“ And for vest of pall, thy fingers
small,
That wont on harp to stray,
A cloak must sheer from the
slaughter'd deer,
To keep the cold away.”—

“ O Richard ! if my brother died,
'Twas but a fatal chance ;
For darkling was the battle tried,
And fortune sped the lance.

“ If pall and vair no more I wear,
Nor thou the crimson sheen,
As warm, we'll say, is the russet
grey,
As gay the forest-green.

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

XIII.

Ballad continued.

'Tis merry, 'tis merry, in good
greenwood,
So blithe Lady Alice is singing ;
On the beech's pride, and oak's
brown side,
Lord Richard's axe is ringing.

Up spoke the moody Elfin King,
Who won'd within the hill,—²³³
Like wind in the porch of a ruin'd
church,
His voice was ghostly shrill.

“ Why sounds yon stroke on
beech and oak,²³⁴
Our moonlight circle's screen ?
Or who comes here to chase the
deer,
Beloved of our Elfin Queen ?
Or who may dare on wold to
wear
The fairies fatal green ?²³⁵

“ Up, Urgan, up ! to yon mortal
hie,
For thou wert christen'd
man ;²³⁶
For cross or sign thou wilt not
fly,
For mutter'd word or ban.

“ Lay on him the curse of the
wither'd heart,
The curse of the sleepless eye ;
Till he wish and pray that his
life would part,
Nor yet find leave to die.”

XIV.

Ballad continued.

'Tis merry, 'tis merry, in good
greenwood,
Though the birds have still'd
their singing ;
The evening blaze doth Alice
raise,
And Richard is fagots bringing.

Up Urgan starts, that hideous
dwarf,
Before Lord Richard stands,

And, as he cross'd and bless'd
himself,
"I fear not sign," quoth the
grisly elf,
"That is made with bloody
hands."

But out then spoke she, Alice
Brand,
That woman, void of fear,—
"And if there's blood upon his
hand,
'Tis but the blood of deer."—

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

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

"And I conjure thee, Demon elf,
By Him whom Demons fear,
To show us whence thou art
thyself,
And what thine errand
here?"—

XV.

Ballad continued.

"'Tis merry, 'tis merry in Fairy-
land,
When fairy birds are singing,
When the court doth ride by
their monarch's side,
With bit and bridle ringing :

"And gaily shines the Fairy-
land,
But all is glistening show,²³⁷
Like the idle gleam that Decem-
ber's beam
Can dart on ice and snow.

"And fading, like that varied
gleam,
Is our inconstant shape,
Who now like knight and lady
seem,
And now like dwarf and ape.

"It was between the night and
day,
When the Fairy King has
power,
That I sunk down in a sinful
fray,
And, 'twixt life and death, was
snatch'd away
To the joyless Elfin bower.²³⁸

"But wist I of a woman bold,
Who thrice my brow durst
sign,
I might regain my mortal mold,
As fair a form as thine."

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

She cross'd him thrice, that lady
bold ;
He rose beneath her hand
The fairest knight on Scottish
mold,
Her brother, Ethert Brand !

Merry it is in good greenwood,
 When the mavis and merle
 are singing,
 But merrier were they in Dun-
 fermline grey,
 When all the bells were ringing.

XVI.

Just as the minstrel sounds were
 staid,
 A stranger climb'd the steepy
 glade :
 His martial step, his stately
 mien,
 His hunting suit of Lincoln
 green,
 His eagle glance, remembrance
 claims—
 'Tis Snowdown's Knight, 'tis
 James Fitz-James.
 Ellen beheld as in a dream,
 Then, starting, scarce suppress'd
 a scream :
 "O stranger! in such hour of
 fear,
 What evil hap has brought thee
 here?"—
 "An evil hap how can it be,
 That bids me look again on
 thee?
 By promise bound, my former
 guide
 Met me betimes this morning
 tide,
 And marshall'd, over bank and
 bourne,
 The happy path of my return."—
 "The happy path!—what! said
 he nought
 Of war, of battle to be fought,
 Of guarded pass?"—"No, by
 my faith!
 Nor saw I aught could augur
 scathe."—

"O haste thee, Allan, to the
 kern,
 —Yonder his tartans I discern ;
 Learn thou his purpose, and
 conjure
 That he will guide the stranger
 sure!—
 What prompted thee, unhappy
 man?
 The meanest serf in Roderick's
 clan
 Had not been bribed by love or
 fear,
 Unknown to him to guide thee
 here."—

XVII.

"Sweet Ellen, dear my life must
 be,
 Since it is worthy care from thee ;
 Yet life I hold but idle breath,
 When love or honour's weigh'd
 with death.
 Then let me profit by my chance,
 And speak my purpose bold at
 once.
 I come to bear thee from a wild,
 Where ne'er before such blossom
 smiled ;
 By this soft hand to lead thee far
 From frantic scenes of feud and
 war.
 Near Bochastle my horses wait ;
 They bear us soon to Stirling
 gate.
 I'll place thee in a lovely bower,
 I'll guard thee like a tender
 flower"——
 "O! hush, Sir Knight! 'twere
 female art,
 To say I do not read thy heart ;
 Too much, before, my selfish ear
 Was idly soothed my praise to
 hear.

That fatal bait hath lured thee
back,
In deathful hour, o'er dangerous
track ;
And how, O how, can I atone
The wreck my vanity brought
on !—

One way remains—I'll tell him
all—

Yes ! struggling bosom, forth it
shall !

Thou, whose light folly bears the
blame,

Buy thine own pardon with thy
shame !

But first—my father is a man
Outlaw'd and exiled, under ban ;
The price of blood is on his head,
With me 'twere infamy to wed.—
Still wouldst thou speak ?—then
hear the truth !

Fitz-James, there is a noble
youth,—

If yet he is !—exposed for me
And mine to dread extremity—
Thou hast the secret of my heart ;
Forgive, be generous, and
depart !”

XVIII.

Fitz-James knew every wily train
A lady's fickle heart to gain ;
But here he knew and felt them
vain.

There shot no glance from Ellen's
eye,
To give her steadfast speech the
lie ;

In maiden confidence she stood,
Though mantled in her cheek the
blood,

And told her love with such a
sigh
Of deep and hopeless agony,

As death had seal'd her
Malcolm's doom,
And she sat sorrowing on his
tomb.

Hope vanish'd from Fitz-James's
eye,

But not with hope fled sympathy.
He proffer'd to attend her side,
As brother would a sister guide.—

“O ! little know'st thou Roderick's heart !

Safer for both we go apart.

O haste thee, and from Allan
learn,

If thou may'st trust you wily
kern.”

With hand upon his forehead
laid,

The conflict of his mind to
shade,

A parting step or two he made ;
Then, as some thought had
cross'd his brain,

He paused, and turn'd, and came
again.

XIX.

“Hear, lady, yet, a parting
word !—

It chanced in fight that my poor
sword

Preserved the life of Scotland's
lord.

This ring the grateful Monarch
gave,

And bade, when I had boon to
crave,

To bring it back, and boldly
claim

The recompense that I would
name.

Ellen, I am no courtly lord,
But one who lives by lance and
sword,

Whose castle is his helm and
shield,

His lordship the embattled field.
What from a prince can I
demand,

Who neither reck of state nor
land?

Ellen, thy hand—the ring is
thine ;

Each guard and usher knows the
sign.

Seek thou the king without
delay ;

This signet shall secure thy way ;
And claim thy suit, whate'er it be,

As ransom of his pledge to me.”
He placed the golden circlet on,
Paused—kiss'd her hand—and
then was gone.

The aged Minstrel stood aghast,
So hastily Fitz-James shot past.

He join'd his guide, and wending
down

The ridges of the mountain brown,
Across the stream they took their
way,

That joins Loch Katrine to
Achray.

XX.

All in the Trosach's glen was
still,

Noontide was sleeping on the hill :
Sudden his guide whoop'd loud
and high—

“Murdoch! was that a signal
cry?”—

He stammer'd forth,—“I shout
to scare

Yon raven from his dainty fare.”
He look'd—he knew the raven's

prey,
His own brave steed:—“Ah! I
gallant grey,

For thee—for me, perchance—
'twere well

We ne'er had seen the Trosach's
dell.—

Murdoch, move first—but silently ;
Whistle or whoop, and thou shalt
die !”

Jealous and sullen on they fared,
Each silent, each upon his guard.

XXI.

Now wound the path its dizzy
ledge

Around a precipice's edge,
When lo! a wasted female form,
Blighted by wrath of sun and
storm,

In tatter'd weeds and wild array,
Stood on a cliff beside the way,
And glancing round her restless
eye,

Upon the wood, the rock, the
sky,
Seem'd nought to mark, yet all
to spy.

Her brow was wreath'd with
gaudy broom ;

With gesture wild she waved a
plume
Of feathers, which the eagles
fling

To crag and cliff from dusky
wing ;

Such spoils her desperate step
had sought,

Where scarce was footing for the
goat.

The tartan plaid she first descried,
And shriek'd till all the rocks
replied ;

As loud she laugh'd when near
they drew,

For then the Lowland garb she
knew ;

And then her hands she wildly
 wrung,
 And then she wept, and then she
 sung—
 She sung!—the voice, in better
 time,
 Perchance to harp or lute might
 chime ;
 And now, though strain'd and
 roughen'd, still
 Rung wildly sweet to dale and
 hill.

XXII.

Song.

They bid me sleep, they bid me
 pray,
 They say my brain is warp'd
 and wrung—
 I cannot sleep on Highland brae,
 I cannot pray in Highland
 tongue.
 But were I now where Allan
 glides,
 Or heard my native Devan's tides,
 So sweetly would I rest, and
 pray
 That Heaven would close my
 wintry day!

'Twas thus my hair they bade me
 braid,
 They made me to the church
 repair ;
 It was my bridal morn they
 said,
 And my true love would meet
 me there.
 But woe betide the cruel guile,
 That drown'd in blood the morn-
 ing smile !
 And woe betide the fairy dream !
 I only waked to sob and scream.

XXIII.

“Who is this maid? what means
 her lay?
 She hovers o'er the hollow way,
 And flutters wide her mantle grey,
 As the lone heron spreads his
 wing,
 By twilight, o'er a haunted
 spring.”—
 “'Tis Blanche of Devan,” Mur-
 doch said,
 “A crazed and captive Lowland
 maid,
 Ta'en on the morn she was a
 bride,
 When Roderick foray'd Devan-
 side.
 The gay bridegroom resistance
 made,
 And felt our Chief's unconquer'd
 blade ;
 I marvel she is now at large,
 But oft she 'scapes from Maudlin's
 charge.—
 Hence, brain-sick fool!”— He
 raised his bow :—
 “Now, if thou strikest her but
 one blow,
 I'll pitch thee from the cliff as
 far
 As ever peasant pitch'd a bar!”—
 “Thanks, champion, thanks!”
 the Maniac cried,
 And press'd her to Fitz-James's
 side.
 “See the grey pennons I prepare,
 To seek my true-love through the
 air?
 I will not lend that savage groom,
 To break his fall, one downy
 plume !
 No!—deep amid disjointed stones,
 The wolves shall batten on his
 bones,

And then shall his detested plaid,
By bush and brier in mid-air
staid,
Wave forth a banner fair and
free,
Meet signal for their revelry.”—

XXIV.

“Hush thee, poor maiden, and be
still!”—

“O! thou look’st kindly, and I
will.—

Mine eye has dried and wasted
been,

But still it loves the Lincoln
green;

And, though mine ear is all un-
strung,

Still, still it loves the Lowland
tongue.

“For O my sweet William was
forester true,

He stole poor Blanche’s heart
away!

His coat it was all of the green-
wood hue,

And so blithely he trill’d the
Lowland lay!

“It was not that I meant to
tell . . .

But thou art wise and guessest
well.”

Then, in a low and broken tone,
And hurried note, the song went
on.

Still on the Clansman, fearfully,
She fix’d her apprehensive eye;

Then turn’d it on the Knight, and
then

Her look glanced wildly o’er the
glen.

XXV.

“The toils are pitch’d, and the
stakes are set,

Ever sing merrily, merrily;

The bows they bend, and the
knives they whet,

Hunters live so cheerily.

“It was a stag, a stag of ten,
Bearing its branches sturdily;

He came stately down the glen,
Ever sing hardily, hardily.

“It was there he met with a
wounded doe,

She was bleeding deathfully;

She warn’d him of the toils below,
O, so faithfully, faithfully!

“He had an eye, and he could
heed,

Ever sing warily, warily;

He had a foot, and he could
speed—

Hunters watch so narrowly.”

XXVI.

Fitz-James’s mind was passion-
toss’d,

When Ellen’s hints and fears were
lost;

But Murdoch’s shout suspicion
wrought,

And Blanche’s song conviction
brought.—

(Not like a stag that spies the
snare,

But lion of the hunt aware,
He waved at once his blade on
high,

“Disclose thy treachery, or die!”
Forth at full speed the Clansman
flew,

But in his race his bow he drew.

The shaft just grazed Fitz-James's
 crest,
 And thrill'd in Blanche's faded
 breast,—
 Murdoch of Alpine! prove thy
 speed,
 For ne'er had Alpine's son such
 need!
 With heart of fire, and foot of
 wind,
 The fierce avenger is behind!
 Fate judges of the rapid strife—
 The forfeit death—the prize is
 life!
 Thy kindred ambush lies before,
 Close couch'd upon the heathery
 moor;
 Them couldst thou reach!—it
 may not be—
 Thine ambush'd kin thou ne'er
 shalt see,
 The fiery Saxon gains on thee!
 —Resistless speeds the deadly
 thrust,
 As lightning strikes the pine to
 dust;
 With foot and hand Fitz-James
 must strain,
 Ere he can win his blade again.
 Bent o'er the fall'n, with falcon
 eye,
 He grimly smiled to see him
 die;
 Then slower wended back his
 way,
 Where the poor maiden bleeding
 lay.

XXVII.

She sate beneath the birchen-tree,
 Her elbow resting on her knee;
 She had withdrawn the fatal shaft,
 And gazed on it, and feebly
 laugh'd;

Her wreath of broom and feathers
 grey,
 Daggled with blood, beside her
 lay.
 The Knight to stanch the life-
 stream tried,—
 "Stranger, it is in vain!" she
 cried.
 "This hour of death has given
 me more
 Of reason's power than years
 before;
 For, as these ebbing veins decay,
 My frenzied visions fade away.
 A helpless injured wretch I die,
 And something tells me in thine
 eye,
 That thou wert mine avenger
 born.—
 Seest thou this tress?—O! still
 I've worn
 This little tress of yellow hair,
 Through danger, frenzy, and
 despair!
 It once was bright and clear as
 thine,
 But blood and tears have dimm'd
 its shine.
 I will not tell thee when 'twas
 shred,
 Nor from what guiltless victim's
 head—
 My brain would turn!—but it
 shall wave
 Like plumage on thy helmet brave,
 Till sun and wind shall bleach the
 stain,
 And thou wilt bring it me again.—
 I waver still.—O God! more
 bright
 Let reason beam her parting
 light!—
 O! by thy knighthood's honour'd
 sign,
 And for thy life preserved by mine,

When thou shalt see a darksome
man,
Who boasts him Chief of Alpine's
Clan,
With tartans broad and shadowy
plume,
And hand of blood, and brow of
gloom,
Be thy heart bold, thy weapon
strong,
And wreak poor Blanche of
Devan's wrong!
They watch for thee by pass and
fell . . .
Avoid the path . . . O God! . . .
farewell."

XXVIII.

A kindly heart had brave Fitz-
James;
Fast pour'd his eyes at pity's
claims,
And now with mingled grief and
ire,
He saw the murder'd maid expire.
"God, in my need, be my relief,
As I wreak this on yonder Chief!"
A lock from Blanche's tresses fair
He blended with her bridegroom's
hair;
The mingled braid in blood he
dyed,
And placed it on his bonnet-side:
"By Him whose word is truth! I
swear,
No other favour will I wear,
Till this sad token I imbrue
In the best blood of Roderick Dhu!
—But hark! what means yon faint
halloo?
The chase is up,—but they shall
know,
(The stag at bay's a dangerous
foe."

Barr'd from the known but
guarded way,
Through copse and cliffs Fitz-
James must stray,
And oft must change his desperate
track,
By stream and precipice turn'd
back.
Heartless, fatigued, and faint, at
length,
From lack of food and loss of
strength,
He couch'd him in a thicket hoar,
And thought his toils and perils
o'er:—
"Of all my rash adventures past,
This frantic feat must prove the
last!
Who e'er so mad but might have
guess'd,
That all this Highland hornet's
nest
Would muster up in swarms so
soon
As e'er they heard of bands at
Doune?—
(Like bloodhounds now they search
me out,—
Hark, to the whistle and the
shout!—
If farther through the wilds I go,
I only fall upon the foe:
I'll crouch me here till evening
grey,
Then darkling try my dangerous
way."

XXIX.

The shades of eve come slowly
down,
The woods are wrapt in deeper
brown,
The owl awakens from her dell,
The fox is heard upon the fell;

Enough remains of glimmering
light
To guide the wanderer's steps
aright.
Yet not enough from far to
show
His figure to the watchful foe.
With cautious step, and ear
awake,
He climbs the crag and threads
the brake;
And not the summer solstice,
there,
Temper'd the midnight mountain
air,
But every breeze, that swept the
wold,
Benumb'd his drenched limbs with
cold.
In dread, in danger, and alone,
Famish'd and chill'd, through
ways unknown,
Tangled and steep, he journey'd
on;
Till, as a rock's huge point he
turn'd,
A watch-fire close before him
burn'd.

XXX.

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

“Art thou a friend to Roderick?”
—“No.”—
“Thou darrest not call thyself a
foe?”—
“I dare! to him and all the band
He brings to aid his murderous
hand.”—
“Bold words!—but, though the
beast of game
The privilege of chase may claim,
Though space and law the stag
we lend,
Ere hound we slip, or bow we
bend,
Who ever reck'd, where, how, or
when,
The prowling fox was trapp'd or
slain?²³⁹
Thus treacherous scouts, — yet
sure they lie,
Who say thou camest a secret
spy!”—
“They do, by Heaven!—Come
Roderick Dhu,
And of his clan the boldest two,
And let me but till morning rest,
I write the falsehood on their
crest.”—

“If by the blaze I mark aright,
Thou bear'st the belt and spur of
Knight.”—
“Then by these tokens mayest
thou know
Each proud oppressor's mortal
foe.”—
“Enough, enough; sit down and
share
A soldier's couch, a soldier's fare.”

XXXI.

He gave him of his Highland
cheer,
The harden'd flesh of mountain
deer;²⁴⁰

Dry fuel on the fire he laid,
 And bade the Saxon share his
 plaid.
 He tended him like welcome
 guest,
 Then thus his farther speech
 address'd.
 "Stranger, I am to Roderick
 Dhu
 A clansman born, a kinsman
 true ;
 Each word against his honour
 spoke,
 Demands of me avenging stroke ;
 Yet more,—upon thy fate, 'tis
 said,
 A mighty augury is laid.
 It rests with me to wind my
 horn,—
 Thou art with numbers over-
 borne ;
 It rests with me, here, brand to
 brand,
 Worn as thou art, to bid thee
 stand :
 But, not for clan, nor kindred's
 cause,
 Will I depart from honour's laws ;
 To assail a wearied man were
 shame,
 And stranger is a holy name ;
 Guidance and rest, and food and
 fire,
 In vain he never must require.
 Then rest thee here till dawn of
 day ;
 Myself will guide thee on the
 way,
 O'er stock and stone, through
 watch and ward,
 Till past Clan-Alpine's outmost
 guard,
 As far as Coilantogle's ford ;
 From thence thy warrant is thy
 sword."—

"I take thy courtesy, by heaven,
 As freely as 'tis nobly given !"—
 "Well, rest thee ; for the
 bittern's cry
 Sings us the lake's wild lullaby."
 With that he shook the gather'd
 heath,
 And spread his plaid upon the
 wreath ;
 And the brave foemen, side by
 side,
 Lay peaceful down, like brothers
 tried,
 And slept until the dawning beam
 Purpled the mountain and the
 stream.

CANTO FIFTH.

The Combat.

I.

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

II.

That early beam, so fair and
 sheen,
 Was twinkling through the
 hazel screen,

When, rousing at its glimmer
 red,
 The warriors left their lowly
 bed,
 Look'd out upon the dappled
 sky,
 Mutter'd their soldier matins
 by,
 And then awak'd their fire, to
 steal,
 As short and rude, their soldier
 meal.
 That o'er, the Gael around him
 threw
 His graceful plaid of varied hue,
 And, true to promise, led the
 way,
 By thicket green and mountain
 grey.
 A wildering path!—they winded
 now
 Along the precipice's brow,
 Commanding the rich scenes
 beneath,
 The windings of the Forth and
 Teith,
 And all the vales beneath that
 lie,
 Till Stirling's turrets melt in
 sky;
 Then, sunk in copse, their
 farthest glance
 Gain'd not the length of horse-
 man's lance.
 'Twas oft so steep, the foot was
 fain
 Assistance from the hand to
 gain;
 So tangled oft, that, bursting
 through,
 Each hawthorn shed her showers
 of dew,—
 That diamond dew, so pure and
 clear,
 It rivals all but Beauty's tear!

III.

At length they came where, stern
 and steep,
 The hill sinks down upon the
 deep.
 Here Vennachar in silver flows,
 There, ridge on ridge, Benledi
 rose;
 Ever the hollow path twined on,
 Beneath steep bank and threaten-
 ing stone;
 An hundred men might hold the
 post
 With hardihood against a host.
 The rugged mountain's scanty
 cloak
 Was dwarfish shrubs of birch
 and oak,
 With shingles bare, and cliffs
 between,
 And patches bright of bracken
 green,
 And heather black, that waved
 so high,
 It held the copse in rivalry.
 But where the lake slept deep
 and still,
 Dank osiers fringed the swamp
 and hill;
 And oft both path and hill were
 torn,
 Where wintry torrents down had
 borne,
 And heap'd upon the cumber'd
 land
 Its wreck of gravel, rocks, and
 sand.
 So toilsome was the road to
 trace,
 The guide, abating of his pace,
 Led slowly through the pass's
 jaws,
 And ask'd Fitz-James, by what
 strange cause

He sought these wilds? traversed
 by few,
 Without a pass from Roderick
 Dhu.

Or, if a path be dangerous
 known,
 The danger's self is lure
 alone."—

IV.

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

V.

"Thy secret keep, I urge thee
 not ;—
 Yet, ere again ye sought this spot,
 Say, heard ye nought of Low-
 land war,
 Against Clan-Alpine, raised by
 Mar?"—
 —"No, by my word ;—of bands
 prepared
 To guard King James's sports I
 heard ;
 Nor doubt I aught, but, when
 they hear
 This muster of the mountaineer,
 Their pennons will abroad be
 flung,
 Which else in Doune had
 peaceful hung."—
 "Free be they flung!—for we
 were loth
 Their silken folds should feast
 the moth.
 Free be they flung!—as free
 shall wave
 Clan-Alpine's pine in banner
 brave.
 But, Stranger, peaceful since you
 came,
 Bewilder'd in the mountain
 game,
 Whence the bold boast by which
 you show
 Vich-Alpine's vow'd and mortal
 foe?"—
 "Warrior, but yester-morn, I
 knew
 Nought of thy Chieftain, Roderick
 Dhu,

Save as an outlaw'd desperate
 man,
 The chief of a rebellious clan,
 Who, in the Regent's court and
 sight,
 With ruffian dagger stabb'd a
 knight :
 Yet this alone might from his
 part
 Sever each true and loyal heart."

VI.

Wrothful at such arraignment
 foul,
 Dark lower'd the clansman's
 sable scowl.
 A space he paused, then sternly
 said,
 "And heard'st thou why he drew
 his blade?
 Heard'st thou that shameful
 word and blow
 Brought Roderick's vengeance
 on his foe?
 What reck'd the Chieftain if he
 stood
 On Highland heath, or Holy-
 Rood?
 He rights such wrong where it
 is given,
 If it were in the court of
 heaven."—
 "Still was it outrage ;—yet, 'tis
 true,
 Not then claim'd sovereignty his
 due ;
 While Albany, with feeble hand,
 Held borrow'd truncheon of
 command,²⁴¹
 The young King, mew'd in
 Stirling tower,
 Was stranger to respect and
 power.

But then, thy Chieftain's robber
 life !—
 Winning mean prey by causeless
 strife,
 Wrenching from ruin'd Lowland
 swain
 His herds and harvest rear'd in
 vain.—
 Methinks a soul, like thine,
 should scorn
 The spoils from such foul foray
 borne."

VII.

The Gael beheld him grim the
 while,
 And answer'd with disdainful
 smile,—
 "Saxon, from yonder mountain
 high,
 I mark'd thee send delighted
 eye,
 Far to the south and east, where
 lay,
 Extended in succession gay,
 Deep waving fields and pastures
 green,
 With gentle slopes and groves
 between :—
 These fertile plains, that soften'd
 vale,
 Were once the birthright of the
 Gael ;
 The stranger came with iron
 hand,
 And from our fathers reft the
 land.
 Where dwell we now ! See,
 rudely swell
 Crag over crag, and fell o'er
 fell.
 Ask we this savage hill we tread,
 For fatten'd steer or household
 bread ;

Ask we for flocks these shingles dry,
 And well the mountain might reply,—
 ‘To you, as to your sires of yore,
 Belong the target and claymore !
 I give you shelter in my breast,
 Your own good blades must win the rest.’
 Pent in this fortress of the North,
 Think’st thou we will not sally forth,
 To spoil the spoiler as we may,
 And from the robber rend the prey ?
 Ay, by my soul !—While on yon plain
 The Saxon rears one shock of grain ;
 While, of ten thousand herds, there strays
 But one along yon river’s maze,—
 The Gael, of plain and river heir,
 Shall, with strong hand, redeem his share.²⁴²
 Where live the mountain Chiefs who hold,
 That plundering Lowland field and fold
 Is aught but retribution true ?
 Seek other cause ’gainst Roderick Dhu.”—

VIII.

Answer’d Fitz-James,—“ And, if I sought,
 Think’st thou no other could be brought ?
 What deem ye of my path way-laid ?
 My life given o’er to ambuscade ? ”—

“ As of a meed to rashness due :
 Hadst thou sent warning fair and true,—
 I seek my hound, or falcon stray’d,
 I seek, good faith, a Highland maid,—
 Free hadst thou been to come and go ;
 But secret path marks secret foe.
 Nor yet, for this, even as a spy,
 Hadst thou, unheard, been doom’d to die,
 Save to fulfil an augury.”—
 “ Well, let it pass ; nor will I now
 Fresh cause of enmity avow,
 To chafe thy mood and cloud thy brow.
 Enough, I am by promise tied
 To match me with this man of pride :
 Twice have I sought Clan-Alpine’s glen
 In peace ; but when I come agen,
 I come with banner, braud, and bow,
 As leader seeks his mortal foe.
 For love-lorn swain, in lady’s bower,
 Ne’er panted for the appointed hour,
 As I, until before me stand
 This rebel Chieftain and his band ! ”—

IX.

“ Have, then, thy wish ! ”—he whistled shrill,
 And he was answer’d from the hill ;
 Wild as the scream of the curlew,
 From crag to crag the signal flew.

Instant, through copse and heath,
 arose
 Bonnets and spears and bended
 bows ;
 On right, on left, above, below,
 Sprung up at once the lurking
 foe ;
 From shingles grey their lances
 start,
 The bracken bush sends forth the
 dart,
 The rushes and the willow-wand
 Are bristling into axe and brand,
 And every tuft of broom gives life
 To plaided warrior arm'd for
 strife.
 That whistle garrison'd the glen
 At once with full five hundred
 men,
 As if the yawning hill to heaven
 A subterranean host had given.
 Watching their leader's beck and
 will,
 All silent there they stood, and
 still.
 Like the loose crags, whose
 threatening mass
 Lay tottering o'er the hollow pass,
 As if an infant's touch could urge
 Their headlong passage down
 the verge,
 With step and weapon forward
 flung,
 Upon the mountain-side they
 hung.
 The Mountaineer cast glance of
 pride
 Along Benledi's living side,
 Then fix'd his eye and sable brow
 Full on Fitz-James,—“Howsay'st
 thou now ?
 These are Clan-Alpine's warriors
 true ;
 And, Saxon,—I am Roderick
 Dhu !”

X.

Fitz-James was brave :—Though
 to his heart
 The life-blood thrill'd with sudden
 start,
 He mann'd himself with daunt-
 less air,
 Return'd the Chief his haughty
 stare,
 His back against a rock he bore,
 And firmly placed his foot be-
 fore :—
 “Come one, come all ! this rock
 shall fly
 From its firm base as soon as I.”
 Sir Roderick mark'd—and in his
 eyes
 Respect was mingled with sur-
 prise,
 And the stern joy which warriors
 feel
 In foemen worthy of their steel.
 Short space he stood—then waved
 his hand :
 Down sunk the disappearing
 band ;
 Each warrior vanish'd where he
 stood,
 In broom or bracken, heath or
 wood ;
 Sunk brand and spear and bended
 bow,
 In osiers pale and copses low ;
 It seem'd as if their mother Earth
 Had swallow'd up her warlike
 birth.
 The wind's last breath had toss'd
 in air,
 Pennon, and plaid, and plumage
 fair,—
 The next but sweet a lone hill-
 side,
 Where heath and fern were
 waving wide :

The sun's last glance was glinted
back,
From spear and glaive, from
targe and jack,—
The next, all unreflected, shone
On bracken green, and cold grey
stone.

XI.

Fitz-James look'd round — yet
scarce believed
The witness that his sight re-
ceived ;
Such apparition well might seem
Delusion of a dreadful dream.
Sir Roderick in suspense he eyed,
And to his look the Chief replied,
“ Fear nought—nay, that I need
not say—
But—doubt not aught from mine
array.
Thou art my guest ;—I pledged
my word
As far as Coilantogle ford :
Nor would I call a clansman's
brand
For aid against one valiant hand,
Though on our strife lay every
vale
Rent by the Saxon from the Gael.
So move we on ;—I only meant
To show the reed on which you
leant,
Deeming this path you might
pursue
Without a pass from Roderick
Dhu.”²⁴³
They moved :—I said Fitz-James
was brave,
As ever knight that belted glaive ;
Yet dare not say, that now his
blood
Kept on its wont and temper'd
flood,

As, following Roderick's stride,
he drew
That seeming lonesome pathway
through,
Which yet, by fearful proof, was rife
With lances, that, to take his life,
Waited but signal from a guide,
So late dishonour'd and defied.
Ever, by stealth, his eye sought
round
The vanish'd guardians of the
ground,
And still, from copse and heather
deep,
Fancy saw spear and broadsword
peep,
And in the plover's shrilly strain,
The signal whistle heard again.
Nor breathed he free till far be-
hind
The pass was left ; for then they
wind
Along a wide and level green,
Where neither tree nor tuft was
seen,
Nor rush nor bush of broom was
near,
To hide a bonnet or a spear.

XII.

The Chief in silence strode before,
And reach'd that torrent's sound-
ing shore,
Which, daughter of three mighty
lakes,
From Vennachar in silver breaks,
Sweeps through the plain, and
ceaseless mines
On Bochastle the mouldering
lines,
Where Rome, the Empress of
the world,
Of yore her eagle wings un-
furl'd.²⁴⁴

And here his course the Chieftain
 staid,
 Threw down his target and his
 plaid,
 And to the Lowland warrior
 said :—
 “Bold Saxon! to his promise
 just,
 Vich-Alpine has discharged his
 trust.
 This murderous Chief, this ruth-
 less man,
 This head of a rebellious clan,
 Hath led thee safe, through watch
 and ward,
 Far past Clan-Alpine’s outmost
 guard.
 Now, man to man, and steel to
 steel,
 A Chieftain’s vengeance thou
 shalt feel.
 See here, all vantageless I stand,
 Arm’d, like thyself, with single
 brand : ²⁴⁵
 For this is Coilantogle ford,
 And thou must keep thee with
 thy sword.”

XIII.

The Saxon paused :—“I ne’er
 delay’d,
 When foeman bade me draw my
 blade ;
 Nay, more, brave Chief, I vow’d
 thy death ;
 Yet sure thy fair and generous
 faith,
 And my deep debt for life pre-
 served,
 A better meed have well deserved :
 Can nought but blood our feud
 atone ?
 Are there no means ? ”—“No,
 Stranger, none !

And hear,—to fire thy flagging
 zeal,—
 The Saxon cause rests on thy
 steel ;
 For thus spoke Fate, by prophet
 bred
 Between the living and the dead ;
 ‘Who spills the foremost foe-
 man’s life,
 His party conquers in the
 strife.’ ”—
 “Then, by my word,” the Saxon
 said,
 “The riddle is already read.
 Seek yonder brake beneath the
 cliff,—
 There lies Red Murdoch, stark
 and stiff.
 Thus Fate has solved her prophecy,
 Then yield to Fate, and not to
 me.
 To James, at Stirling, let us go,
 When, if thou wilt be still his foe,
 Or if the King shall not agree
 To grant thee grace and favour
 free,
 I plight mine honour, oath, and
 word,
 That, to thy native strengths
 restored,
 With each advantage shalt thou
 stand,
 That aids thee now to guard thy
 land.”

XIV.

Dark lightning flash’d from
 Roderick’s eye—
 “Soars thy presumption, then,
 so high,
 Because a wretched kern ye
 slew,
 Homage to name to Roderick
 Dhu ?

He yields not, he, to man nor
 Fate!
 Thou add'st but fuel to my
 hate:—
 My clansman's blood demands
 revenge.
 Not yet prepared?—By heaven,
 I change
 My thought, and hold thy valour
 light
 As that of some vain carpet
 knight,
 Who ill deserved my courteous
 care,
 And whose best boast is but to
 wear
 A braid of his fair lady's hair."—
 "I thank thee, Roderick, for the
 word!
 It nerves my heart, it steels my
 sword;
 For I have sworn this braid to
 stain
 In the best blood that warms thy
 vein.
 Now, truce, farewell! and, ruth,
 begone!—
 Yet think not that by thee alone,
 Proud Chief! can courtesy be
 shown;
 Though not from copse, or heath,
 or cairn,
 Start at my whistle clansmen
 stern,
 Of this small horn one feeble
 blast
 Would fearful odds against thee
 cast.
 But fear not—doubt not—which
 thou wilt—
 We try this quarrel hilt to hilt."—
 Then each at once his falchion
 drew,
 Each on the ground his scabbard
 threw,

Each look'd to sun, and stream,
 and plain,
 As what they ne'er might see
 again;
 Then foot, and point, and eye
 opposed,
 In dubious strife they darkly
 closed.

XV.

Ill fared it then with Roderick
 Dhu,
 That on the field his targe he
 threw,²⁴⁶
 Whose brazen studs and tough
 bull-hide
 Had death so often dash'd aside;
 For, train'd abroad his arms to
 wield,
 Fitz-James's blade was sword
 and shield.
 He practised every pass and
 ward,
 To thrust, to strike, to feint, to
 guard;
 While less expert, though
 stronger far,
 The Gael maintain'd unequal war.
 Three times in closing strife they
 stood,
 And thrice the Saxon blade drank
 blood;
 No stinted draught, no scanty
 tide,
 The gushing flood the tartans
 dyed.
 Fierce Roderick felt the fatal
 drain,
 And shower'd his blows like
 wintry rain;
 And, as firm rock, or castle-
 roof,
 Against the winter shower is
 proof,

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

XVI.

“ Now, yield thee, or by Him
 who made
 The world, thy heart's blood dyes
 my blade ! ”
 “ Thy threats, thy mercy, I defy !
 Let recreant yield, who fears to
 die.” ²⁴⁷
 — Like adder darting from his
 coil,
 Like wolf that dashes through
 the toil,
 Like mountain-cat who guards
 her young,
 Full at Fitz-James's throat he
 sprung ;
 Received, but reck'd not of a
 wound,
 And lock'd his arms his foeman
 round.—
 Now, gallant Saxon, hold thine
 own !
 No maiden's hand is round thee
 thrown !
 That desperate grasp thy frame
 might feel,
 Through bars of brass and triple
 steel !—
 They tug, they strain ! down,
 down they go,
 The Gael above, Fitz-James
 below.

The Chieftain's gripe his throat
 compress'd,
 His knee was planted in his
 breast ;
 His clotted locks he backward
 threw,
 Across his brow his hand he
 drew,
 From blood and mist to clear his
 sight,
 Then gleam'd aloft his dagger
 bright !—
 — But hate and fury ill supplied
 The stream of life's exhausted
 tide,
 And all too late the advantage
 came,
 To turn the odds of deadly game ;
 For, while the dagger gleam'd
 on high,
 Reel'd soul and sense, reel'd
 brain and eye.
 Down came the blow ! but in the
 heath
 The erring blade found bloodless
 sheath.
 The struggling foe may now
 unclasp
 The fainting Chief's relaxing
 grasp ;
 Unwounded from the dreadful
 close,
 But breathless all, Fitz-James
 arose.

XVII.

He falter'd thanks to Heaven for
 life,
 Redeem'd, unhop'd, from des-
 perate strife ;
 Next on his foe his look he
 cast,
 Whose every gasp appear'd his
 last ;

In Roderick's gore he dipt the
 braid,—
 "Poor Blanche! thy wrongs are
 dearly paid:
 Yet with thy foe must die, or
 live,
 The praise that Faith and Valour
 give."
 With that he blew a bugle-note,
 Undid the collar from his throat,
 Unbonneted, and by the wave
 Sate down his brow and hands to
 lave.
 Then faint afar are heard the feet
 Of rushing steeds in gallop fleet;
 The sounds increase, and now
 are seen
 Four mounted squires in Lincoln
 green;
 Two who bear lance, and two
 who lead,
 By loosen'd rein, a saddled steed;
 Each onward held his headlong
 course,
 And by Fitz-James rein'd up his
 horse,—
 With wonder view'd the bloody
 spot—
 —"Exclaim not, gallants! ques-
 tion not.—
 You, Herbert and Luffness,
 alight,
 And bind the wounds of yonder
 knight;
 Let the grey palfrey bear his
 weight,
 We destined for a fairer freight,
 And bring him on to Stirling
 straight;
 I will before at better speed,
 To seek fresh horse and fitting
 weed.
 The sun rides high;—I must be
 boune,
 To see the archer-game at noon;

But lightly Bayard clears the
 lea.—
 De Vaux and Herries, follow me.

XVIII.

"Stand, Bayard, stand!"—the
 steed obey'd,
 With arching neck and bended
 head,
 And glancing eye and quivering
 ear
 As if he loved his lord to hear.
 No foot Fitz-James in stirrup
 staid,
 No grasp upon the saddle laid,
 But wreath'd his left hand in the
 mane,
 And lightly bounded from the
 plain,
 Turn'd on the horse his armed
 heel,
 And stirr'd his courage with the
 steel.
 Bounded the fiery steed in air,
 The rider sate erect and fair,
 Then like a bolt from steel cross-
 bow
 Forth launch'd, along the plain
 they go.
 They dash'd that rapid torrent
 through,
 And up Carhonie's hill they flew;
 Still at the gallop prick'd the
 Knight,
 His merry-men follow'd as they
 might.
 Along thy banks, swift Teith!
 they ride,
 And in the race they mock thy
 tide;
 Torry and Lendrick now are
 past,
 And Deanstown lies behind them
 cast;

They rise, the banner'd towers of
 Doune,
 They sink in distant woodland
 soon ;
 Blair-Drummond sees the hoofs
 strike fire,
 They sweep like breeze through
 Ochertyre ;
 They mark just glance and
 disappear
 The lofty brow of ancient Kier ;
 They bathe their courser's swelter-
 ing sides,
 Dark Forth ! amid thy sluggish
 tides,
 And on the opposing shore take
 ground,
 With splash, with scramble, and
 with bound.
 Right-hand they cleave thy cliffs,
 Craig-Forth !
 And soon the bulwark of the
 North,
 Grey Stirling, with her towers
 and town,
 Upon their fleet career look'd
 down.

XIX.

As up the flinty path they strain'd
 Sudden his steed the leader
 rein'd ;
 A signal to his squire he flung,
 Who instant to his stirrup
 sprung :—
 “ Seest thou, De Vaux, yon
 woodsman grey,
 Who town-ward holds the rocky
 way,
 Of stature tall and poor array ?
 Mark'st thou the firm, yet active
 stride,
 With which he scales the moun-
 tain-side ?

Know'st thou from whence he
 comes, or whom ? ”—
 “ No, by my word ;—a burly
 groom
 He seems, who in the field or
 chase
 A baron's train would nobly
 grace.”—
 “ Out, out, De Vaux ! can fear
 supply,
 And jealousy, no sharper eye ?
 Far, ere to the hill he drew,
 That stately form and step I
 knew ;
 Like form in Scotland is not
 seen,
 Treads not such step on Scottish
 green.
 'Tis James of Douglas, by Saint
 Serle !
 The uncle of the banish'd Earl.
 Away, away, to court, to show
 The near approach of dreaded foe :
 The King must stand upon his
 guard ;
 Douglas and he must meet
 prepared.”
 Then right-hand wheel'd their
 steeds, and straight
 They won the castle's postern
 gate.

XX.

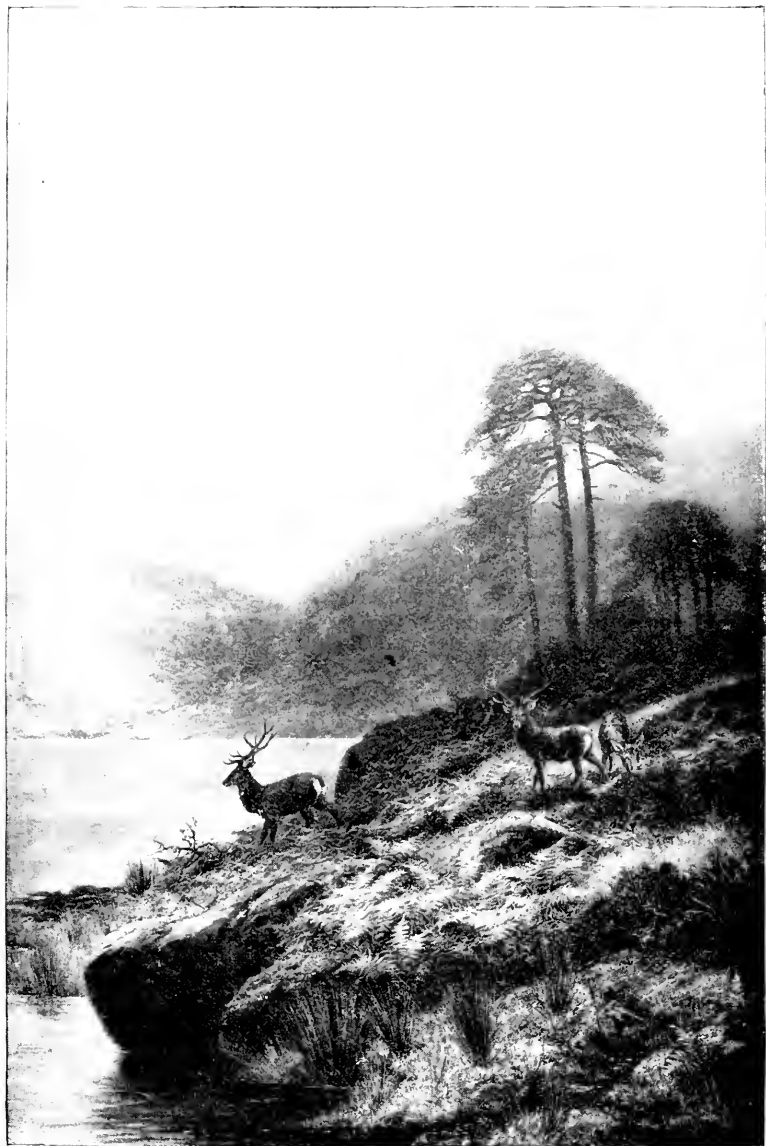
The Douglas, who had bent his
 way
 From Cambus-Kenneth's abbey
 grey,
 Now, as he climb'd the rocky
 shelf,
 Held sad communion with him-
 self :—
 “ Yes ! all is true my fears could
 frame ;
 A prisoner lies the noble Græme,

And fiery Roderick soon will
 feel
 The vengeance of the royal steel.
 I, only I, can ward their fate,—
 God grant the ransom come not
 late!
 The Abbess hath her promise
 given,
 My child shall be the bride of
 Heaven;—
 —Be pardon'd one repining tear!
 For He, who gave her, knows
 how dear,
 How excellent! but that is by,
 And now my business is—to
 die.
 —Ye towers! within whose
 circuit dread
 A Douglas by his sovereign
 bled;
 And thou, O sad and fatal
 mound!²⁴⁸
 That oft hast heard the death-
 axe sound,
 As on the noblest of the land
 Fell the stern headman's bloody
 hand—
 The dungeon, block, and name-
 less tomb
 Prepare—for Douglas seeks his
 doom!
 —But hark! what blithe and
 jolly peal
 Makes the Franciscan steeple
 reel?
 And see! upon the crowded
 street,
 In motley groups what masquers
 meet!
 Banner and pageant, pipe and
 drum,
 And merry morrice-dancers come.
 I guess, by all this quaint array,
 The burghers hold their sports
 to-day.²⁴⁹

James will be there; he loves
 such show,
 Where the good yeoman bends
 his bow,
 And the tough wrestler foils his
 foe,
 As well as where, in proud
 career,
 The high-born tilter shivers
 spear.
 I'll follow to the Castle-park,
 And play my prize;—King
 James shall mark,
 If age has tamed these sinews
 stark,
 Whose force so oft, in happier
 days,
 His boyish wonder loved to
 praise."

XXI.

The Castle gates were open
 flung,
 The quivering drawbridge rock'd
 and rung,
 And echo'd loud the flinty street
 Beneath the coursers' clattering
 feet,
 As slowly down the steep descent
 Fair Scotland's King and nobles
 went,
 While all along the crowded
 way
 Was jubilee and loud huzza.
 And ever James was bending
 low,
 To his white jennet's saddle-
 bow,
 Doffing his cap to city dame,
 Who smiled and blush'd for
 pride and shame.
 And well the simperer might be
 vain,—
 He chose the fairest of the train.



Gravely he greets each city sire,
 Commends each pageant's quaint
 attire,
 Gives to the dancers thanks
 aloud,
 And smiles and nods upon the
 crowd,
 Who rend the heavens with their
 acclaims,
 "Long live the Commons' King,
 King James!"
 Behind the King throug'd peer
 and knight,
 And noble dame and damsel
 bright,
 Whose fiery steeds ill brook'd
 the stay
 Of the steep street and crowded
 way.
 —But in the train you might
 discern
 Dark lowering brow and visage
 stern;
 There nobles mourn'd their pride
 restrain'd,
 And the mean burgher's joys
 disdain'd;
 And chiefs, who, hostage for
 their clan,
 Were each from home a banish'd
 man,
 There thought upon their own
 grey tower,
 Their waving woods, their feudal
 power,
 And deem'd themselves a shame-
 ful part
 Of pageant which they cursed in
 heart.

XXII.

Now, in the Castle-park, drew out
 Their chequer'd bands the joyous
 rout.

sc

There morricers, with bell at heel,
 And blade in hand, their mazes
 wheel;
 But chief, beside the butts, there
 stand
 Bold Robin Hood²⁵⁰ and all his
 band,—
 Friar Tuck with quarterstaff and
 cowl,
 Old Scathelocke with his surly
 scowl,
 Maid Marion, fair as ivory bone,
 Scarlet, and Mutch, and Little
 John;
 Their bugles challenge all that
 will,
 In archery to prove their skill.
 The Douglas bent a bow of
 might,—
 His first shaft centered in the
 white,
 And when in turn he shot again,
 His second split the first in
 twain.
 From the King's hand must
 Douglas take
 A silver dart, the archer's stake;
 Fondly he watch'd, with watery
 eye,
 Some answering glance of
 sympathy,—
 No kind emotion made reply!
 Indifferent as to archer wight,
 The monarch gave the arrow
 bright.²⁵¹

XXIII.

Now, clear the ring! for, hand
 to hand,
 The manly wrestlers take their
 stand.
 Two o'er the rest superior rose,
 And proud demanded mightier
 foes,

Nor call'd in vain ; for Douglas
came.

—For life is Hugh of Larbert
lame ;

Scarce better John of Alloa's
fare,

Whom senseless home his
comrades bear.

Prize of the wrestling match,
the King

To Douglas gave a golden
ring,²⁵²

While coldly glanced his eye of
blue,

As frozen drop of wintry
dew.

Douglas would speak, but in his
breast

His struggling soul his words
suppress'd ;

Indignant then he turn'd him
where

Their arms the brawny yeomen
bare,

To hurl the massive bar in
air.

When each his utmost strength
had shown,

The Douglas rent an earth-fast
stone

From its deep bed, then heaved
it high,

And sent the fragment through
the sky,

A rood beyond the farthest
mark ;—

And still in Stirling's royal
park,

The grey-hair'd sires, who know
the past,

To strangers point the Douglas-
cast,

And moralise on the decay

Of Scottish strength in modern
day.

XXIV.

The vale with loud applauses
rang,

The Ladies' Rock sent back the
clang.

The King, with look unmoved,
bestow'd

A purse well-fill'd with pieces
broad.

Indignant smiled the Douglas
proud,

And threw the gold among the
crowd,

Who now, with anxious wonder,
scan,

And sharper glance, the dark
grey man ;

Till whispers rose among the
throng,

That heart so free, and hand so
strong,

Must to the Douglas blood
belong ;

The old men mark'd, and shook
the head,

To see his hair with silver
spread,

And wink'd aside, and told each
son,

Of feats upon the English done,
Ere Douglas of the stalwart hand

Was exiled from his native land.
The women praised his stately

form,
Though wreck'd by many a

winter's storm ;
The youth with awe and wonder

saw
His strength surpassing Nature's

law.
Thus judged, as is their wont,

the crowd,
Till murmur rose to clamours

loud.

But not a glance from that proud
ring
Of peers who circled round the
King,
With Douglas held communion
kind,
Or call'd the banish'd man to
mind ;
(No, not from those who, at the
chase,
Once held his side the honour'd
place,
Begirt his board, and, in the
field,
Found safety underneath his
shield ;
For he, whom royal eyes disown,
When was his form to courtiers
known !

XXV.

The Monarch saw the gambols
flag,
And bade let loose a gallant
stag,
Whose pride, the holiday to
crown,
Two favourite greyhounds should
pull down,
That venison free, and Bourdeaux
wine,
Might serve the archery to dine.
But Lufra,—whom from Douglas'
side
Nor bribe nor threat could e'er
divide,
The fleetest hound in all the
North,—
Brave Lufra saw, and darted
forth.
She left the royal hounds mid-
way,
And dashing on the antler'd
prey,
Sunk her sharp muzzle in his
flank,
And deep the flowing life-blood
drank.
The King's stout huntsman saw
the sport
By strange intruder broken
short,
Came up, and with his leash
unbound,
In anger struck the noble hound.
—The Douglas had endured,
that morn,
The King's cold look, the nobles'
scorn,
And last, and worst to spirit
proud,
Had borne the pity of the
crowd ;
But Lufra had been fondly
bred,
To share his board, to watch his
bed,
And oft would Ellen Lufra's
neck
In maiden glee with garlands
deck ;
They were such playmates, that
with name
Of Lufra, Ellen's image came.
His stifled wrath is brimming
high,
In darken'd brow and flashing
eye ;
As waves before the dark divide,
The crowd gave way before his
stride ;
Needs but a buffet and no
more,
The groom lies senseless in his
gore.
Such blow no other hand could
deal,
Though gauntleted in glove of
steel.

XXVI.

Then clamour'd loud the royal
train,
And brandish'd swords and staves
again.
But stern the Baron's warning—
“Back!
Back, on your lives, ye menial
pack!
Beware the Douglas.—Yes!
behold,
King James! the Douglas doom'd
of old,
And vainly sought for near and
far,
A victim to atone the war,
A willing victim, now attends,
Nor craves thy grace but for his
friends.”—
“Thus is my clemency repaid?
Presumptuous lord!” the Mon-
arch said;
“Of thy mis-proud ambitious
clan,
Thou, James of Bothwell, wert
the man,
The only man, in whom a foe
My woman-mercy would not
know:
But shall a Monarch's presence
brook
Injurious blow, and haughty
look?—
What ho! the Captain of our
Guard!
Give the offender fitting ward.—
Break off the sports!”—for
tumult rose,
And yeomen 'gan to bend their
bows,—
“Break off the sports!” he said,
and frown'd,
“And bid our horsemen clear
the ground.”

XXVII.

Then uproar wild and misarray
Marr'd the fair form of festal
day.
The horsemen prick'd among the
crowd,
Repell'd by threats and insult
loud;
To earth are borne the old and
weak,
The timorous fly, the women
shriek;
With flint, with shaft, with staff,
with bar,
The hardier urge tumultuous war.
At once round Douglas darkly
sweep
The royal spears in circle deep,
And slowly scale the pathway
steep;
While on the rear in thunder
pour
The rabble with disorder'd roar.
With grief the noble Douglas saw
The Commons rise against the
law,
And to the leading soldier said,—
“Sir John of Hyndford! 'twas
my blade
That knighthood on thy shoulder
laid;
For that good deed, permit me
then
A word with these misguided
men.

XXVIII.

“Hear, gentle friends! ere yet
for me,
Ye break the bands of fealty.
My life, my honour, and my
cause,
I tender free to Scotland's laws.

Are these so weak as must
require

The aid of your misguided ire ?

Or, if I suffer causeless wrong,
Is then my selfish rage so strong,
My sense of public weal so low,
That, for mean vengeance on a
foe,

Those cords of love I should
unbind,

Which knit my country and my
kind ?

Oh no ! Believe, in yonder tower
It will not soothe my captive
hour,

To know those spears our foes
should dread,

For me in kindred gore are red ;

To know, in fruitless brawl
begun,

For me, that mother wails her
son ;

For me, that widow's mate
expires ;

For me, that orphans weep their
sires ;

That patriots mourn insulted
laws,

And curse the Douglas for the
cause.

O let your patience ward such
ill,

And keep your right to love me
still !”

XXIX.

The crowd's wild fury sunk
again

In tears, as tempests melt in
rain.

With lifted hands and eyes, they
pray'd

For blessings on his generous
head,

Who for his country felt alone,
And prized her blood beyond his
own.

Old men, upon the verge of life,
Bless'd him who staid the civil
strife ;

And mothers held their babes on
high,

The self-devoted chief to spy,
Triumphant over wrongs and
ire,

To whom the prattlers owed a
sire :

Even the rough soldier's heart
was moved ;

As if behind some bier beloved,
With trailing arms and drooping
head,

The Douglas up the hill he led,
And at the Castle's battled verge,

With sighs resign'd his honour'd
charge.

XXX.

The offended Monarch rode
apart,

With bitter thought and swelling
heart,

And would not now vouchsafe
again

Through Stirling streets to lead
his train.

“ O Lennox, who would wish to
rule

This changeling crowd, this
common fool ?

Hear'st thou,” he said, “ the
loud acclaim,

With which they shout the
Douglas name ?

With like acclaim, the vulgar
throat

Strain'd for King James their
morning note ;

With like acclaim they hail'd the day
 When first I broke the Douglas' sway ;
 And like acclaim would Douglas greet,
 If he could hurl me from my seat.
 Who o'er the herd would wish to reign,
 Fantastic, fickle, fierce, and vain !
 Vain as the leaf upon the stream,
 And fickle as a changeful dream ;
 Fantastic as a woman's mood,
 And fierce as Frenzy's fever'd blood.
 Thou many-headed monster-thing,
 O who would wish to be thy king !

XXXI.

“ But soft ! what messenger of speed
 Spurs hitherward his panting steed ?
 I guess his cognizance afar—
 What from our cousin, John of Mar ? ”—
 “ He prays, my liege, your sports keep bound
 Within the safe and guarded ground :
 For some foul purpose yet unknown,—
 Most sure for evil to the throne,—
 The outlaw'd Chieftain, Roderick Dhu,
 Has summon'd his rebellious crew ;
 'Tis said, in James of Bothwell's aid
 These loose banditti stand array'd.

The Earl of Mar, this morn, from Doune,
 To break their muster march'd, and soon
 Your grace will hear of battle fought ;
 But earnestly the Earl besought,
 Till for such danger he provide,
 With scanty train you will not ride.”—

XXXII.

“ Thou warn'st me I have done amiss,—
 I should have earlier look'd to this :
 I lost it in this bustling day.
 —Retrace with speed thy former way ;
 Spare not for spoiling of thy steed,
 The best of mine shall be thy need.
 Say to our faithful Lord of Mar,
 We do forbid the intended war :
 Roderick, this morn, in single fight,
 Was made our prisoner by a knight ;
 And Douglas hath himself and cause
 Submitted to our kingdom's laws.
 The tidings of their leaders lost
 Will soon dissolve the mountain host,
 Nor would we that the vulgar feel,
 For their Chief's crimes, avenging steel.
 Bear Mar our message, Braco : fly ! ”—
 He turn'd his steed,—“ My liege, I hie,—

Yet, ere I cross this lily lawn,
I fear the broadswords will be
drawn."
The turf the flying courser
spurn'd,
And to his towers the King
return'd.

XXXIII.

Ill with King James's mood that
day,
Suited gay feast and minstrel
lay;
Soon were dismiss'd the courtly
throng,
And soon cut short the festal
song.
Nor less upon the sadden'd
town
The evening sunk in sorrow
down.
The burghers spoke of civil jar,
Of rumour'd feuds and mountain
war,
Of Moray, Mar, and Roderick
Dhu,
All up in arms:—the Douglas
too,
They mourn'd him pent within
the hold,
“Where stout Earl William was
of old”—
And there his word the speaker
staid,
And finger on his lip he laid,
Or pointed to his dagger blade.
But jaded horsemen, from the
west,
At evening to the Castle press'd;
And busy talkers said they bore
Tidings of fight on Katrine's
shore;
At noon the deadly fray begun,
And lasted till the set of sun.

Thus giddy rumour shook the
town,
Till closed the Night her pennons
brown.

CANTO SIXTH.

The Guard-Room.

I.

THE sun, awakening, through
the smoky air
Of the dark city casts a sullen
glance,
Rousing each caitiff to his task
of care,
Of sinful man the sad inherit-
ance;
Summoning revellers from the
lagging dance,
Scaring the prowling robber
to his den;
Gilding on battled tower the
warder's lance,
And warning student pale to
leave his pen,
And yield his drowsy eyes to the
kind nurse of men.

What various scenes, and, O!
what scenes of woe,
Are witness'd by that red and
struggling beam!
The fever'd patient, from his
pallet low,
Through crowded hospital
beholds its stream;
The ruin'd maiden trembles at
its gleam,
The debtor wakes to thought
of gyve and jail,
The love-lorn wretch starts from
tormenting dream;

The wakeful mother, by the
glimmering pale,
Trims her sick infant's couch,
and soothes his feeble wail.

II.

At dawn the towers of Stirling
rang
With soldier-step and weapon-
clang,
While drums, with rolling note,
foretell
Relief to weary sentinel.
Through narrow loop and case-
ment barr'd,
The sunbeams sought the Court
of Guard,
And, struggling with the smoky
air,
Deaden'd the torches' yellow
glare.
In comfortless alliance shone
The lights through arch of
blacken'd stone,
And show'd wild shapes in garb
of war,
Faces deform'd with beard and
scar,
All haggard from the midnight
watch,
And fever'd with the stern
debauch ;
For the oak table's massive
board,
Flooded with wine, with frag-
ments stored,
And beakers drain'd, and cups
o'erthrown,
Show'd in what sport the night
had flown.
Some, weary, snored on floor
and bench ;
Some labour'd still their thirst
to quench ;

Some, chill'd with watching,
spread their hands
O'er the huge chimney's dying
brands,
While round them, or beside
them flung,
At every step their harness rung.

III.

These drew not for their fields
the sword,
Like tenants of a feudal lord,
Nor own'd the patriarchal claim
Of Chieftain in their leader's name ;
Adventurers they, from far who
roved,
To live by battle which they
loved.²⁵³
There the Italian's clouded face,
The swarthy Spaniard's there
you trace ;
The mountain-loving Switzer
there
More freely breathed in mountain-
air ;
The Fleming there despised the
soil,
That paid so ill the labourer's toil ;
Their rolls show'd French and
German name ;
And merry England's exiles
came,
To share, with ill-conceal'd dis-
dain,
Of Scotland's pay the scanty gain.
All brave in arms, well train'd
to wield
The heavy halberd, brand, and
shield ;
In camps licentious, wild, and
bold ;
In pillage fierce and uncontroll'd ;
And now, by holytide and feast,
From rules of discipline released.

IV.

They held debate of bloody
 fray,
 Fought 'twixt Loch Katrine and
 Achray.
 Fierce was their speech, and,
 'mid their words,
 Their hands oft grappled to their
 swords ;
 Nor sunk their tone to spare the
 ear
 Of wounded comrades groaning
 near,
 Whose mangled limbs, and
 bodies gored,
 Bore token of the mountain
 sword,
 Though, neighbouring to the
 Court of Guard,
 Their prayers and feverish wails
 were heard ;
 Sad burden to the ruffian
 joke,
 And savage oath by fury spoke !—
 At length up-started John of
 Brent,
 A yeoman from the banks of
 Trent ;
 A stranger to respect or fear,
 In peace a chaser of the
 deer,
 In host a hardy mutineer,
 But still the boldest of the
 crew,
 When deed of danger was to
 do.
 He grieved, that day, their games
 cut short,
 And marr'd the dicer's brawling
 sport,
 And shouted loud, " Renew the
 bowl !
 And, while a merry catch I
 troll,

Let each the buxom chorus bear,
 Like brethren of the brand and
 spear."

V.

Soldier's Song.

Our vicar still preaches that
 Peter and Poule
 Laid a swinging long curse on
 the bonny brown bowl,
 That there's wrath and despair in
 the jolly black-jack,
 And the seven deadly sins in a
 flagon of sack ;
 Yet whoop, Barnaby ! off with
 thy liquor,
 Drink upsees out, and a fig for
 the vicar !

Our vicar he calls it damnation
 to sip
 The ripe ruddy dew of a woman's
 dear lip,
 Says, that Beelzebub lurks in her
 kerchief so sly,
 And Apollyon shoots darts from
 her merry black eye ;
 Yet whoop, Jack ! kiss Gillian
 the quicker,
 Till she bloom like a rose, and a
 fig for the vicar !

Our vicar thus preaches—and
 why should he not ?
 For the dues of his cure are the
 placket and pot ;
 And 'tis right of his office poor
 laymen to lurch,
 Who infringe the domains of our
 good Mother Church.
 Yet whoop, bully-boys ! off with
 your liquor,
 Sweet Marjorie's the word, and a
 fig for the vicar !

VI.

The warder's challenge, heard
 without,
 Staid in mid-roar the merry shout.
 A soldier to the portal went,—
 "Here is old Bertram, sirs, of
 Ghent ;
 And,—beat for jubilee the drum !
 A maid and minstrel with him
 come."
 Bertram, a Fleming, grey and
 scarr'd,
 Was entering now the Court of
 Guard,
 A harper with him, and in
 plaid
 All muffled close, a mountain
 maid,
 Who backward shrunk to 'scape
 the view
 Of the loose scene and boisterous
 crew.
 "What news?" they roared :—
 "I only know,
 From noon till eve we fought
 with foe,
 As wild and as untameable
 As the rude mountains where
 they dwell ;
 On both sides store of blood is
 lost,
 Nor much success can either
 boast."—
 "But whence thy captives,
 friend? such spoil
 As theirs must needs reward thy
 toil.
 Old dost thou wax, and wars
 grow sharp ;
 Thou now hast glee-maiden and
 harp !
 Get thee an ape, and trudge the
 land,
 The leader of a juggler band."—²⁵⁴

VII.

"No, comrade ;—no such fortune
 mine,
 After the fight these sought our
 line,
 That aged harper and the girl,
 And, having audience of the Earl,
 Mar bade I should purvey them
 steed,
 And bring them hitherward with
 speed.
 Forbear your mirth and rude
 alarm,
 For none shall do them shame
 or harm."—
 "Hear ye his boast?" cried John
 of Brent,
 Ever to strife and jangling bent ;
 "Shall he strike doe beside our
 lodge,
 And yet the jealous niggard
 grudge
 To pay the forester his fee?
 I'll have my share, howe'er it
 be,
 Despite of Moray, Mar, or thee."
 Bertram his forward step with-
 stood ;
 And, burning in his vengeful mood,
 Old Allan, though unfit for stri'e,
 Laid hand upon his dagger-knife ;
 But Ellen boldly stepp'd between,
 And dropp'd at once the tartan
 screen :—
 So, from his morning cloud,
 appears
 The sun of May, through summer
 tears.
 The savage soldiery, amazed,
 As on descended angel gazed ;
 Even hardy Brent, abash'd and
 tamed,
 Stood half admiring, half
 ashamed

VIII.

Boldly she spoke,—“Soldiers,
attend!
My father was the soldier’s
friend;
Cheer’d him in camps, in marches
led,
And with him in the battle bled.
Not from the valiant, or the
strong,
Should exile’s daughter suffer
wrong.”—
Answer’d De Brent, most forward
still
In every feat or good or ill,—
“I shame me of the part I play’d:
And thou an outlaw’s child, poor
maid!
An outlaw I by forest laws,
And merry Needwood knows the
cause.
Poor Rose,—if Rose be living
now,”—
He wiped his iron eye and brow,—
“Must bear such age, I think, as
thou.—
Hear ye, my mates;—I go to call
The Captain of our watch to hall:
There lies my halberd on the floor;
And he that steps my halberd
o’er,
To do the maid injurious part,
My shaft shall quiver in his
heart!—
Beware loose speech, or jesting
rough:
Ye all know John de Brent.
Enough.”

IX.

Their Captain came, a gallant
young.—
(Of Tullibardine’s house he
sprung),

Nor wore he yet the spurs of
knight;
Gay was his mien, his humour
light,
And, though by courtesy con-
troll’d,
Forward his speech, his bearing
bold.
The high-born maiden ill could
brook
The scanning of his curious look
And dauntless eye;—and yet, in
sooth,
Young Lewis was a generous
youth;
But Ellen’s lovely face and mien,
Ill suited to the garb and scene,
Might lightly bear construction
strange,
And give loose fancy scope to
range.
“Welcome to Stirling towers,
fair maid!
Come ye to seek a champion’s
aid,
On palfrey white, with harper
hoar,
Like errant damosel of yore?
Does thy high quest a knight
require,
Or may the venture suit a
squire?”—
Her dark eye flash’d;—she
paused and sigh’d,—
“O what have I to do with
pride!—
Through scenes of sorrow,
shame, and strife,
A suppliant for a father’s life,
I crave an audience of the King.
Behold, to back my suit, a ring,
The royal pledge of grateful
claims,
Given by the Monarch to Fitz-
James.”

X.

The signet - ring young Lewis
 took,
 With deep respect and alter'd
 look ;
 And said, — “ This ring our
 duties own ;
 And pardon, if to worth un-
 known,
 In semblance mean obscurely
 veil'd,
 Lady, in aught my folly fail'd.
 Soon as the day flings wide his
 gates,
 The King shall know what suitor
 waits.
 Please you, meanwhile, in fitting
 bower
 Repose you till his waking hour ;
 Female attendance shall obey
 Your hest, for service or array.
 Permit I marshall you the way.”
 But, ere she followed, with the
 grace
 And open bounty of her race,
 She bade her slender purse be
 shared
 Among the soldiers of the guard.
 The rest with thanks their
 guerdon took ;
 But Brent, with shy and awk-
 ward look,
 On the reluctant maiden's hold
 Forced bluntly back the proffer'd
 gold ;—
 “ Forgeive a haughty English
 heart,
 And O forget its ruder part !
 The vacant purse shall be my
 share,
 Which in my barret-cap I'll bear,
 Perchance, in jeopardy of war,
 Where gayer crests may keep
 afar.”

With thanks—'twas all she could
 —the maid
 His rugged courtesy repaid.

XI.

When Ellen forth with Lewis
 went,
 Allan made suit to John of
 Brent :—
 “ My lady safe, O let your grace
 Give me to see my master's face !
 His minstrel I, — to share his
 doom
 Bound from the cradle to the
 tomb.
 Tenth in descent, since first my
 sires
 Waked for his noble house their
 lyres,
 Nor one of all the race was
 known
 But prized its weal above their
 own.
 With the Chief's birth begins
 our care ;
 Our harp must soothe the infant
 heir,
 Teach the youth tales of fight,
 and grace
 His earliest feat of field or chase ;
 In peace, in war, our rank we
 keep,
 We cheer his board, we soothe
 his sleep,
 Nor leave him till we pour our
 verse—
 A doleful tribute ! — o'er his
 hearse.
 Then let me share his captive lot ;
 It is my right—deny it not !”—
 “ Little we reck,” said John of
 Brent,
 “ We Southern men, of long
 descent ;

Nor wot we how a name—a
word—
Makes clansmen vassals to a
lord :
Yet kind my noble landlord's
part,—
God bless the house of Beau-
desert !
And, but I loved to drive the deer,
More than to guide the labouring
steer,
I had not dwelt an outcast here.
Come, good old Minstrel, follow
me ;
Thy Lord and Chieftain shalt
thou see."

XII.

Then, from a rusted iron hook,
A bunch of ponderous keys he
took,
Lighted a torch, and Allan led
Through grated arch and passage
dread.
Portals they pass'd, where, deep
within,
Spoke prisoner's moan, and
fettors' din ;
Through rugged vaults, where,
loosely stored,
Lay wheel, and axe, and head-
man's sword,
And many an hideous engine
grim,
For wrenching joint, and crush-
ing limb,
By artist form'd, who deem'd it
shame
And sin to give their work a
name.
They halted at a low-brow'd
porch,
And Brent to Allan gave the
torch,

While bolt and chain he back-
ward roll'd,
And made the bar unhasp its
hold.
They enter'd :—'twas a prison-
room
Of stern security and gloom,
Yet not a dungeon ; for the day
Through lofty gratings found its
way,
And rude and antique garniture
Deck'd the sad walls and oaken
floor ;
Such as the rugged days of old
Deem'd fit for captive noble's
hold.

"Here," said De Brent, "thou
mayst remain
Till the Leech visit him again.
Strict is his charge, the warders
tell,
To tend the noble prisoner well."
Retiring then, the bolt he drew,
And the lock's murmurs growl'd
anew.
Roused at the sound, from lowly
bed
A captive feebly raised his head ;
The wondering Minstrel look'd,
and knew—
Not his dear lord, but Roderick
Dhu !
For, come from where Clan-
Alpine fought,
They, erring, deem'd the Chief
he sought.

XIII.

As the tall ship, whose lofty
prore
Shall never stem the billows
more,
Deserted by her gallant band,
Amid the breakers lies astrand,—

So, on his couch, lay Roderick
Dhu!

And oft his fever'd limbs he
threw

In toss abrupt, as when her sides
Lie rocking in the advancing
tides,

That shake her frame with cease-
less beat,

Yet cannot heave her from her
seat ;—

O! how unlike her course at
sea!

Or his free step on hill and
lea!—

Soon as the Minstrel he could
scan,

“What of thy lady?—of my
clan?—

My mother?—Douglas?—tell me
all.

Have they been ruin'd in my
fall?

Ah, yes! or wherefore art thou
here?

Yet speak,—speak boldly,—do
not fear.”—

(For Allan, who his mood well
knew,

Was choked with grief and
terror too.)—

“Who fought—who fled?—Old
man, be brief;—

Some might—for they had lost
their Chief.

Who basely live?—who bravely
died?”—

“O, calm thee, Chief!” the
Minstrel cried,

“Ellen is safe;”—“For that,
thank Heaven!”—

“And hopes are for the Douglas
given;—

The Lady Margaret, too, is well;
And, for thy clan,—on field or fell,

Has never harp of minstrel
told,

Of combat fought so true and
bold.

Thy stately Pine is yet unbent,
Though many a goodly bough
is rent.”

XIV.

The Chieftain rear'd his form on
high,

And fever's fire was in his eye;

But ghastly, pale, and livid
streaks

Chequer'd his swarthy brow and
cheeks.

—“Hark, Minstrel! I have heard
thee play,

With measure bold, on festal
day,

In yon lone isle, . . . again
where ne'er

Shall harper play, or warrior
hear! . . .

That stirring air that peals on
high,²⁵⁵

O'er Dermid's race our victory.—
Strike it!—and then, (for well

thou caust,) Free from thy minstrel-spirit
glanced,

Fling me the picture of the
fight,

When met my clan the Saxon
might.

I'll listen, till my fancy hears
The clang of swords, the crash

of spears!

These grates, these walls, shall
vanish then,

For the fair field of fighting
men,

And my free spirit burst away,
As if it soar'd from battle fray.”

The trembling Bard with awe
obey'd,—
Slow on the harp his hand he laid;
But soon remembrance of the
sight
He witness'd from the mountain's
height,
With what old Bertram told at
night,
Awaken'd the full power of song,
And bore him in career along ;—
As shallop launch'd on river's tide,
That slow and fearful leaves the
side,
But, when it feels the middle
stream,
Drives downward swift as
lightning's beam.

XV.

Battle of Béal an Duine.²⁵⁶

“The Minstrel came once more
to view
The eastern ridge of Benvenue,
For, ere he parted, he would say
Farewell to lovely Loch Achray—
Where shall he find, in foreign
land,
So lone a lake, so sweet a strand !
There is no breeze upon the
fern,
Nor ripple on the lake,
Upon her eery nods the erne,
The deer has sought the
brake ;
The small birds will not sing
aloud,
The springing trout lies still,
So darkly glooms yon thunder
cloud,
That swathes, as with a purple
shroud,
Benledi's distant hill.

Is it the thunder's solemn
sound
That mutters deep and
dread,
Or echoes from the groaning
ground
The warrior's measured
tread?
Is it the lightning's quivering
glance
That on the thicket streams,
Or do they flash on spear and
lance
The sun's retiring beams?
—I see the dagger-crest of
Mar,
I see the Moray's silver star,
Wave o'er the cloud of Saxon
war,
That up the lake comes winding
far !
To hero bound for battle-strife,
Or bard of martial lay,
'Twere worth ten years of peace-
ful life,
One glance at their array !

XVI.

“Their light-arm'd archers far
and near
Survey'd the tangled ground,
Their centre ranks, with pike
and spear,
A twilight forest frown'd,
Their barbed horsemen, in the
rear,
The stern battalia crown'd.
No cymbal clash'd, no clarion
rang,
Still were the pipe and drum ;
Save heavy tread, and armour's
clang,
The sudden march was dumb.

There breathed no wind their
 crests to shake,
 Or wave their flags abroad ;
 Scarce the frail aspen seem'd
 to quake,
 That shadow'd o'er their
 road.
 Their vaward scouts no tidings
 bring,
 Can rouse no lurking foe,
 Nor spy a trace of living thing,
 Save when they stirr'd the
 roe ;
 The host moves, like a deep-sea
 wave,
 Where rise no rocks its pride to
 brave,
 High - swelling, dark, and
 slow.
 The lake is pass'd, and now they
 gain
 A narrow and a broken plain,
 Before the Trosach's rugged
 jaws ;
 And here the horse and spear-
 men pause,
 While, to explore the dangerous
 glen,
 Dive through the pass the archer-
 men.

XVII.

“At once there rose so wild a
 yell
 Within that dark and narrow
 dell,
 As all the fiends, from heaven
 that fell,
 Had peal'd the banner-cry of hell !
 Forth from the pass in tumult
 driven,
 Like chaff before the wind of
 heaven,
 The archery appear ;

For life ! for life ! their plight
 they ply—
 And shriek, and shout, and
 battle-cry,
 And plaids and bonnets waving
 high,
 And broadswords flashing to the
 sky,
 Are maddening in the rear.
 Onward they drive, in dreadful
 race,
 Pursuers and pursued ;
 Before that tide of flight and
 chase,
 How shall it keep its rooted
 place,
 The spearmen's twilight
 wood ?—
 ‘Down, down,’ cried Mar,
 ‘your lances down !
 Bear back both friend and
 foe !’—
 Like reeds before the tempest's
 frown,
 That serried grove of lances
 brown
 At once lay levell'd low ;
 And closely shouldering side to
 side,
 The bristling ranks the onset
 bide.—
 ‘We'll quell the savage moun-
 taineer,
 As their Tinchel cows the
 game !
 They come as fleet as forest
 deer,
 We'll drive them back as
 tame.’—

XVIII.

“Bearing before them, in their
 course,
 The relics of the archer force,

Like wave with crest of sparkling
foam,
Right onward did Clan-Alpine
come.
Above the tide, each broad-
sword bright
Was brandishing like beam of
light,
Each targe was dark below ;
And with the ocean's mighty
swing,
When heaving to the tempest's
wing,
They hurl'd them on the foe.
I heard the lance's shivering
crash,
As when the whirlwind rends the
ash,
I heard the broadsword's deadly
clang,
As if an hundred anvils rang !
But Moray wheel'd his rearward
rank
Of horsemen on Clan-Alpine's
flank,
—'My banner-man, advance !
I see,' he cried, 'their column
shake.—
Now, gallants ! for your ladies'
sake,
Upon them with the lance !'—
The horsemen dash'd among
the rout,
As deer break through the
broom ;
Their steeds are stout, their
swords are out,
They soon make lightsome
room.
Clan-Alpine's best are backward
borne—
Where, where was Roderick
then !
One blast upon his bugle-horn.
Were worth a thousand men !

And refluent through the pass
of fear
The battle's tide was pour'd ;
Vanish'd the Saxon's struggling
spear,
Vanish'd the mountain-
sword.
As Bracklinn's chasm, so black
and steep,
Receives her roaring linn,
As the dark caverns of the deep
Suck the wild whirlpool in,
So did the deep and darksome pass
Devour the battle's mingled mass :
None linger now upon the plain,
Save those who ne'er shall fight
again.

XIX.

“ Now westward rolls the battle's
din,
That deep and doubling pass
within,
—Minstrel, away, the work of
fate
Is bearing on : its issue wait,
Where the rude Trosach's dread
defile
Opens on Katrine's lake and
isle.—
Grey Benvenue I soon repass'd,
Loch Katrine lay beneath me cast.
The sun is set ;—the clouds are
met,
The lowering scowl of heaven
An inky view of vivid blue
To the deep lake has given ;
Strange gusts of wind from
mountain-glen
Swept o'er the lake, then sunk
agen.
I heeded not the eddying surge,
Mine eye but saw the Trosach's
gorge,

Mine ear but heard the sullen
 sound,
 Which like an earthquake shook
 the ground,
 And spoke the stern and desperate
 strife
 That parts not but with parting
 life,
 Seeming, to minstrel ear, to toll
 The dirge of many a passing
 soul.
 Nearer it comes—the dim-wood
 glen
 The martial flood disgorged agen,
 But not in mingled tide ;
 The plaided warriors of the North
 High on the mountain thunder
 forth
 And overhang its side ;
 While by the lake below appears
 The dark'ning cloud of Saxon
 spears.
 At weary bay each shatter'd band,
 Eyeing their foemen, sternly
 stand ;
 Their banners stream like tatter'd
 sail,
 That flings its fragments to the
 gale,
 And broken arms and disarray
 Mark'd the fell havoc of the day.

XX.

“Viewing the mountain's ridge
 askance,
 The Saxon stood in sullen trance,
 Till Moray pointed with his lance,
 And cried—‘ Behold yon isle !—
 See ! none are left to guard its
 strand,
 But women weak, that wring the
 hand :
 'Tis there of yore the robber band
 Their booty wont to pile ;—

My purse, with bonnet-pieces
 store,
 To him will swim a bow-shot
 o'er,
 And loose a shallop from the
 shore.
 Lightly we'll tame the war-wolf
 then,
 Lords of his mate, and brood,
 and den.”
 Forth from the ranks a spearman
 sprung,
 On earth his casque and corslet
 rung,
 He plunged him in the wave :—
 All saw the deed—the purpose
 knew,
 And to their clamours Benvenue
 A mingled echo gave ;
 The Saxons shout, their mate to
 cheer,
 The helpless females scream for
 fear,
 And yells for rage the moun-
 taineer.
 'Twas then, as by the outcry
 riven,
 Pour'd down at once the lowering
 heaven ;
 A whirlwind swept Loch Katrine's
 breast,
 Her billows rear'd their snowy
 crest.
 Well for the swimmer swell'd
 they high,
 To mar the Highland marksman's
 eye ;
 For round him shower'd, 'mid
 rain and hail,
 The vengeful arrows of the
 Gael.—
 In vain—He nears the isle—and
 lo !
 His hand is on the shallop's
 bow.

—Just then a flash of lightning
 came,
 It tinged the waves and strand
 with flame ;—
 I mark'd Duncraggan's widow'd
 dame,
 Behind an oak I saw her stand,
 A naked dirk gleam'd in her
 hand :
 It darken'd,—but, amid the moan
 Of waves, I heard a dying groan ;
 Another flash !—the spearman
 floats
 A weltering corse beside the
 boats,
 And the stern matron o'er him
 stood,
 Her hand and dagger streaming
 blood.

XXI.

“ ‘Revenge ! revenge !’ the
 Saxons cried,
 The Gaels' exulting shout replied.
 Despite the elemental rage,
 Again they hurried to engage ;
 But, ere they closed in desperate
 fight,
 Bloody with spurring came a
 knight,
 Sprung from his horse, and, from
 a crag,
 Waved 'twixt the hosts a milk-
 white flag.
 Clarion and trumpet by his side
 Rung forth a truce-note high and
 wide,
 While, in the Monarch's name,
 afar
 An herald's voice forbade the war,
 For Bothwell's lord, and Roderick
 bold,
 Were both, he said, in captive
 hold.”

—But here the lay made sudden
 stand !—
 The harp escaped the Minstrel's
 hand !—
 Oft had he stolen a glance, to spy
 How Roderick brook'd his
 minstrelsy :
 At first, the Chieftain, to the
 chime,
 With lifted hand, kept feeble
 time ;
 That motion ceased,—yet feeling
 strong
 Varied his look as changed the
 song ;
 At length, no more his deafen'd
 ear
 The minstrel melody can hear ;
 His face grows sharp,—his hands
 are clenched,
 As if some pang his heart-strings
 wrench'd ;
 Set are his teeth, his fading eye
 Is sternly fix'd on vacancy ;
 Thus, motionless, and moanless,
 drew
 His parting breath, stout
 Roderick Dhu !—
 Old Allan-Bane look'd on aghast,
 While grim and still his spirit
 pass'd :
 But when he saw that life was
 fled,
 He pour'd his wailing o'er the
 dead.

XXII.

Lament.

“And art thou cold and lowly
 laid,
 Thy foeman's dread, thy people's
 aid,
 Breadalbane's boast, Clan-
 Alpine's shade

For thee shall none a requiem
say?

— For thee, — who loved the
minstrel's lay,

For thee, of Bothwell's house the
stay,

The shelter of her exiled line,
E'en in this prison-house of
thine,

I'll wail for Alpine's honour'd
Pine!

“What groans shall yonder
valleys fill!

What shrieks of grief shall rend
yon hill!

What tears of burning rage
shall thrill,

When mourns thy tribe thy
battles done,

Thy fall before the race was won,
Thy sword ungirt ere set of sun!

There breathes not clansman of
thy line,

But would have given his life for
thine.—

O woe for Alpine's honour'd
Pine!

“Sad was thy lot on mortal
stage!—

The captive thrush may brook
the cage,

The prison'd eagle dies for rage.

Brave spirit, do not scorn my
strain!

And, when its notes awake again,
Even she, so long beloved in
vain,

Shall with my harp her voice
combine,

And mix her woe and tears with
mine,

To wail Clan-Alpine's honour'd
Pine.”—

XXIII.

Ellen, the while, with bursting
heart,

Remain'd in lordly bower apart,
Where play'd with many-colour'd
gleams,

Through storied pane the rising
beams.

In vain on gilded roof they fall,
And lighten'd up a tapestried
wall,

And for her use a menial train
A rich collation spread in vain.

The banquet proud, the chamber
gay,

Scarce drew one curious glance
astray;

Or, if she look'd, 'twas but to
say,

With better omen dawn'd the
day

In that lone isle, where waved
on high

The dun-deer's hide for canopy;
Where oft her noble father
shared

The simple meal her care pre-
pared,

While Lufra, crouching by her
side,

Her station claim'd with jealous
pride,

And Douglas, bent on woodland
game,

Spoke of the chase to Malcolm
Græme,

Whose answer, oft at random
made,

The wandering of his thoughts
betray'd.—

Those who such simple joys have
known,

Are taught to prize them when
they're gone.

But sudden, see, she lifts her
head!
The window seeks with cautious
tread.
What distant music has the
power
To win her in this woful hour!
'Twas from a turret that o'erhung
Her latticed bower, the strain
was sung.

XXIV.

Lay of the Imprisoned Huntsman.

“My hawk is tired of perch and
hool,
My idle greyhound loathes his
food,
My horse is weary of his stall,
And I am sick of captive thrall.
I wish I were, as I have been,
Hunting the hart in forest green,
With bended bow and blood-
hound free,
For that's the life is meet for me.
I hate to learn the ebb of time,
From yon dull steeple's drowsy
chime,
Or mark it as the sunbeams
crawl,
Inch after inch, along the wall.
The lark was wont my matins
ring,
The sable rook my vespers sing;
These towers, although a king's
they be,
Have not a hall of joy for me.
No more at dawning morn I
rise,
And sun myself in Ellen's eyes,
Drive the fleet deer the forest
through,
And homeward wend with evening
dew;

A blithesome welcome blithely
meet,
And lay my trophies at her feet,
While fled the eve on wing of
glee,—
That life is lost to love and
me!”

XXV.

The heart-sick lay was hardly
said,
The list'ner had not turn'd her
head,
It trickled still, the starting
tear,
When light a footstep struck her
ear,
And Snowdown's graceful knight
was near.
She turn'd the hastier, lest
again
The prisoner should renew his
strain.—
“O welcome, brave Fitz-James!”
she said;
“How may an almost orphan
maid
Pay the deep debt”——“O say
not so!
To me no gratitude you owe.
Not mine, alas! the boon to
give,
And bid thy noble father live;
I can but be thy guide, sweet
maid,
With Scotland's king thy suit
to aid.
No tyrant he, though ire and
pride
May lay his better mood aside.
Come, Ellen, come! 'tis more
than time,
He holds his court at morning
prime.”

With beating heart, and bosom wrung,
 As to a brother's arm she clung.
 Gently he dried the falling tear,
 And gently whisper'd hope and cheer ;
 Her faltering steps half led, half staid,
 Through gallery fair, and high arcade,
 Till, at its touch, its wings of pride
 A portal arch unfolded wide.

XXVI.

Within 'twas brilliant all and light,
 A thronging scene of figures bright ;
 It glow'd on Ellen's dazzled sight,
 As when the setting sun has given
 Ten thousand hues to summer even,
 And from their tissue, fancy frames
 Aërial knights and fairy dames.
 Still by Fitz-James her footing staid ;
 A few faint steps she forward made,
 Then slow her drooping head she raised,
 And fearful round the presence gazed ;
 For him she sought, who own'd this state,
 The dreaded prince whose will was fate.
 She gazed on many a princely port,
 Might well have ruled a royal court ;

On many a splendid garb she gazed,
 Then turn'd bewilder'd and amazed,
 For all stood bare ; and, in the room,
 Fitz-James alone wore cap and plume.
 To him each lady's look was lent ;
 On him each courtier's eye was bent ;
 Midst furs, and silks, and jewels sheen,
 He stood, in simple Lincoln green,
 The centre of the glittering ring.
 And Snowdown's Knight is Scotland's King !²⁵⁷

XXVII.

As wreath of snow, on mountain-breast,
 Slides from the rock that gave it rest,
 Poor Ellen glided from her stay,
 And at the Monarch's feet she lay ;
 No word her choking voice commands,—
 She show'd the ring, she clasp'd her hands.
 O ! not a moment could he brook,
 The generous prince, that suppliant look !
 Gently he raised her ; and, the while,
 Check'd with a glance the circle's smile ;
 Graceful, but grave, her brow he kiss'd,
 And bade her terrors be dismiss'd :—

"Yes, Fair ; the wandering poor
 Fitz-James
 The fealty of Scotland claims.
 To him thy woes, thy wishes,
 bring ;
 He will redeem his signet
 ring.
 Ask nought for Douglas ; yester
 even,
 His prince and he have much
 forgiven.
 Wrong hath he had from slander-
 ous tongue,
 I, from his rebel kinsmen, wrong.
 We would not, to the vulgar
 crowd,
 Yield what they craved with
 clamour loud ;
 Calmly we heard and judged his
 cause,
 Our council aided, and our
 laws.
 I stanch'd thy father's death-feud
 stern,
 With stout De Vaux and Grey
 Glencairn ;
 And Bothwell's Lord henceforth
 we own
 The friend and bulwark of our
 Throne.
 But, lovely infidel, how now ?
 What clouds thy misbelieving
 brow ?
 Lord James of Douglas, lend
 thine aid ;
 Thou must confirm this doubting
 maid."

XXVIII.

Then forth the noble Douglas
 sprung,
 And on his neck his daughter
 hung.

The Monarch drank, that happy
 hour,
 The sweetest, holiest draught of
 Power,—
 When it can say, with godlike
 voice,
 Arise, sad Virtue, and rejoice !
 Yet would not James the general
 eye
 On Nature's raptures long should
 pry ;
 He stepp'd between—"Nay,
 Douglas, nay,
 Steal not my proselyte away !
 The riddle 'tis my right to
 read,
 That brought this happy chance
 to speed.
 Yes, Ellen, when disguised I
 stray
 In life's more low but happier
 way,
 'Tis under name which veils my
 power,
 Nor falsely veils—for Stirling's
 tower
 Of yore the name of Snowdown
 claims.²⁵³
 And Normans call me James
 Fitz-James.
 Thus watch I o'er insulted
 laws,
 Thus learn to right the injured
 cause."—
 Then, in a tone apart and
 low,—
 "Ah, little traitress ! none must
 know
 What idle dream, what lighter
 thought,
 What vanity full dearly bought,
 Join'd to thine eye's dark witch-
 craft, drew
 My spell-bound steps to Ben-
 venue,

In dangerous hour, and all but
 gave
 Thy Monarch's life to mountain
 glaive!"—
 Aloud he spöke—"Thou still
 dost hold
 That little talisman of gold,
 Pledge of my faith, Fitz-James's
 ring—
 What seeks fair Ellen of the
 King?"

XXIX.

Full well the conscious maiden
 guess'd
 He probed the weakness of her
 breast;
 But, with that consciousness,
 there came
 A lightening of her fears for
 Græme,
 And more she deem'd the
 Monarch's ire
 Kindled 'gainst him, who, for her
 sire,
 Rebellious broadsword boldly
 drew;
 And, to her generous feeling
 true,
 She craved the grace of Roderick
 Dhu.
 "Forbear thy suit:—the King of
 Kings
 Alone can stay life's parting
 wings,
 I know his heart, I know his
 hand,
 Have shared his cheer, and
 proved his brand:—
 My fairest earldom would I
 give
 To bid Clan-Alpine's Chieftain
 live!—

Hast thou no other boon to
 crave?
 No other captive friend to save?"
 Blushing, she turn'd her from the
 King,
 And to the Douglas gave the
 ring,
 As if she wish'd her sire to speak
 The suit that stain'd her glowing
 cheek.—
 "Nay, then, my pledge has lost
 its force,
 And stubborn justice holds her
 course.—
 Malcolm, come forth!"—And, at
 the word,
 Down kneel'd the Græme to
 Scotland's Lord.
 "For thee, rash youth, no sup-
 pliant sues,
 From thee may Vengeance claim
 her dues,
 Who, nurtured underneath our
 smile,
 Hast paid our care by treacherous
 wile,
 And sought amid thy faithful clan,
 A refuge for an outlaw'd man,
 Dishonouring thus thy loyal
 name.—
 Fetters and warder for the
 Græme!"—
 His chain of gold the King un-
 strung,
 The links o'er Malcolm's neck he
 flung,
 Then gently drew the glittering
 band,
 And laid the clasp on Ellen's
 hand.

HARP of the North, farewell!
 The hills grow dark,
 On purple peaks a deeper shade
 descending;

In twilight copse the glow-worm
lights her spark,
The deer, half-seen, are to the
covert wending.

Resume thy wizard elm! the
fountain lending,
And the wild breeze, thy wilder
minstrelsy ;

Thy numbers sweet with Nature's
vespers blending,
With distant echo from the fold
and lea,
And herd-boy's evening pipe, and
hum of housing bee.

Yet, once again, farewell, thou
Minstrel harp!

Yet, once again, forgive my
feeble sway,
And little reck I of the censure
sharp

May idly cavil at an idle lay.
Much have I owed thy strains on
life's long way,
Through secret woes the world
has never known,

When on the weary night dawn'd
wearier day,
And bitterer was the grief
devour'd alone.

That I o'erlive such woes, En-
chantress! is thine own.

Hark! as my lingering footsteps
slow retire,
Some Spirit of the Air has
waked thy string!

'Tis now a seraph bold, with
touch of fire,

'Tis now the brush of Fairy's
frolic wing.

Receding now, the dying numbers
ring

Fainter and fainter down the
rugged dell,

And now the mountain breezes
scarcely bring

A wandering witch-note of the
distant spell—

And now, 'tis silent all!—En-
chantress, fare thee well!

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.

EDINBURGH, 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 free-
 dom 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 Cattrath's glens with
 voice of triumph rung,
 And mystic Merlin harp'd, and
 grey-hair'd Llywarch
 sung !²⁵⁹

V.

O! if your wilds such minstrelsy
 retain,
 As sure your changeful gales
 seem oft to say,
 When sweeping wild and sink-
 ing 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 tradi-
 tion grey,
 That floats your solitary
 wastes along,
 And with affection vain gave them
 new voice in song.

VI.

For not till now, how oft soe'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 Minch-
 more's haunted spring :²⁶⁰
 Save where their legends grey-
 hair'd shepherds sing,
 That now scarce win a listen-
 ing 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 spontaneous ²⁶¹
 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,²⁶²
 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, thynobles'
 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.

III.

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 inter-
 cept 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 be-
 tween.

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 mace,
 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 ? ”²⁶³
 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 Pre-
late 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 falter-
ing 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.

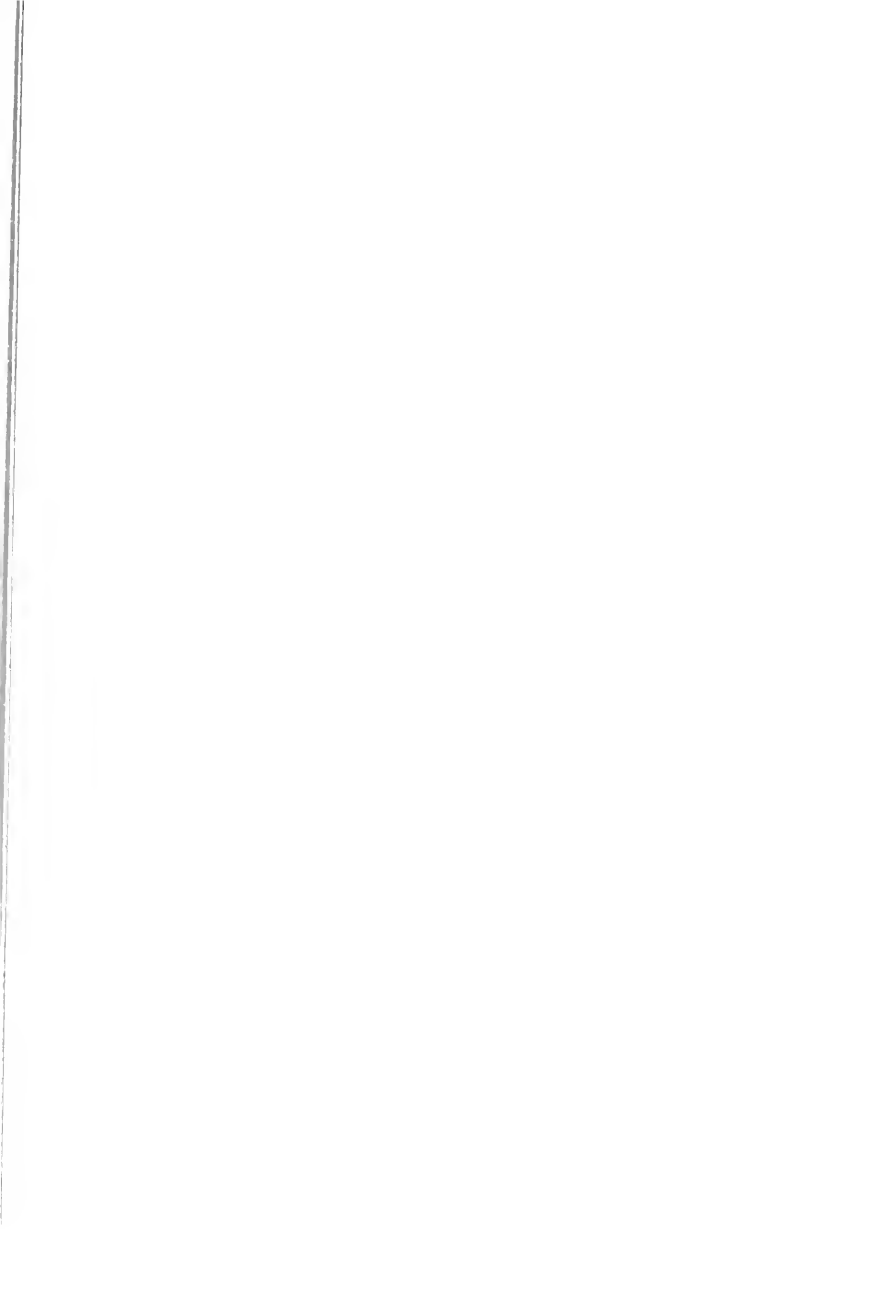
Then kindled the dark Tyrant
 in his mood,
 And to his brow return'd its
 dauntless gloom;
 "And welcome then," he cried,
 "be blood for blood,
 For treason treachery, for
 dishonour doom!
 Yet will I know whence come
 they, or by whom.
 Show, for thou canst—give
 forth the fated key,
 And guide me, Priest, to that
 mysterious room,²⁶⁴
 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 aveng-
 ing 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.





Henry Graves & Co.
SC.

The antler'd monarch of the waste
Sprung from his heathery couch in haste.

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K.

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.
 sc.

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 be-
tween.

XIX.

First shrill'd an unrepeat'd
female shriek !—
It seem'd as if Don Roderick
knew the call,
For the bold blood was blanch-
ing 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,²⁶⁵
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 mis-
believing 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 pre-
 vail! 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!²⁶⁶
 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 mis-
 believing 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 ex-
 plosive 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 Anchorite'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 grati-
 tude and praise ;
 And at his word the choral
 hymns awake,
 And many a hand the silver
 censers 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 con-
 found 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,²⁶⁷
 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 open-
 ing 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 re-
 morse 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 unmask'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!"²⁶⁸
 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 sub-
 stituted 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, sweep-
 ing 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,²⁶⁹
 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 beams 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 with-
 out 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 with-
 drew
 And when at length stern
 fate decreed thy doom,
 They won not Zaragoza, but
 her children's bloody
 tomb.²⁷⁰

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 con-
 flagration'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 land-
 ward 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'n-
 ing 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 or m 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 ! tame-
 less, 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 ²⁷¹ 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,²⁷²
 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 worthless
 lay.

VIII.

But thou unfoughten wilt
 thou yield to Fate,
 Minion of Fortune, now
 miscall'd in vain!
 Can vantage-ground no con-
 fidence create,
 Marcella's pass, nor Guarda's
 mountain-chain?
 Vainglorious fugitive!²⁷³ 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!²⁷⁴
 And what avails thee that, for
 CAMERON slain,
 Wild from his plaided ranks
 the yell was given—²⁷⁵
 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,²⁷⁶
 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 GREME!
 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,²⁷⁷
 Who brought a race regener-
 ate 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!²⁷⁸

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.

ROKEBY.

A POEM IN SIX CANTOS.

TO

JOHN B. S. MORRITT, Esq.,

THIS POEM,

THE SCENE OF WHICH IS LAID IN HIS BEAUTIFUL DEMESNE OF ROKEBY,
IS INSCRIBED, IN TOKEN OF SINCERE FRIENDSHIP, BY

WALTER SCOTT.

ADVERTISEMENT.

The Scene of this Poem is laid at Rokeby, near Greta Bridge, in Yorkshire and shifts to the adjacent fortress of Barnard Castle, and to other places in that Vicinity.

The Time occupied by the Action is a space of Five Days, Three of which are supposed to elapse between the end of the Fifth and beginning of the Sixth Canto.

The date of the supposed events is immediately subsequent to the great Battle of Marston Moor, 3d July, 1644. This period of public confusion has been chosen, without any purpose of combining the Fable with the Military or Political Events of the Civil War, but only as affording a degree of probability to the Fictitious Narrative now presented to the Public.

CANTO FIRST.

I.

THE Moon is in her summer
glow,
But hoarse and high the breezes
blow,
And, racking o'er her face, the
cloud
Varies the tincture of her shroud ;
On Barnard's towers, and Tees's
stream,²⁷⁹
She changes as a guilty dream,
When conscience, with remorse
and fear,
Goads sleeping fancy's wild
career.
Her light seems now the blush of
shame,
Seems now fierce anger's darker
flame,

Shifting that shade, to come and
go,
Like apprehension's hurried
glow ;
Then sorrow's livery dims the
air,
And dies in darkness, like de-
spair.
Such varied hues the warder sees
Reflected from the woodland
Tees,
Then from old Baliol's tower
looks forth,
Sees the clouds mustering in the
north,
Hears, upon turret-roof and wall,
By fits the plashing rain-drop
fall,
Lists to the breezes boding sound,
And wraps his shaggy mantle
round.

II.

Those towers, which in the
 changeful gleam
 Throw murky shadows on the
 stream,
 Those towers of Barnard hold a
 guest,
 The emotions of whose troubled
 breast,
 In wild and strange confusion
 driven,
 Rivals the flitting rack of heaven.
 Ere sleep stern OSWALD'S senses
 tied,
 Oft had he changed his weary
 side,
 Composed his limbs, and vainly
 sought
 By effort strong to banish thought.
 Sleep came at length, but with a
 train
 Of feelings true and fancies vain,
 Mingling, in wild disorder cast,
 The expected future with the
 past.
 Conscience, anticipating time,
 Already rues the enacted crime,
 And calls her furies forth, to
 shake
 The sounding scourge and hissing
 snake ;
 While her poor victim's outward
 throes
 Bear witness to his mental woes,
 And show what lesson may be
 read
 Beside a sinner's restless bed.

III.

Thus Oswald's labouring feelings
 trace
 Strange changes in his sleeping
 face,

Rapid and ominous as these
 With which the moonbeams tinge
 the Tees.
 There might be seen of shame
 the blush,
 There anger's dark and fiercer
 flush,
 While the perturbed sleeper's
 hand
 Seem'd grasping dagger-knife,
 or brand.
 Relax'd that grasp, the heavy
 sigh,
 The tear in the half-opening eye,
 The pallid cheek and brow, con-
 fess'd
 That grief was busy in his breast ;
 Nor paused that mood—a sudden
 start
 Impell'd the life-blood from the
 heart :
 Features convulsed, and mutter-
 ings dread,
 Show terror reigns in sorrow's
 stead.
 That pang the painful slumber
 broke,
 And Oswald with a start awoke.

IV.

He woke, and fear'd again to
 close
 His eyelids in such dire repose ;
 He woke—to watch the lamp,
 and tell
 From hour to hour the castle-
 bell.
 Or listen to the owlet's cry,
 Or the sad breeze that whistles
 by
 Or catch, by fits, the tuneless
 rhyme
 With which the warder cheats
 the time,

And envying think, how, when the
sun
Bids the poor soldier's watch be
done,
Couch'd on his straw, and fancy-
free,
He sleeps like careless infancy.

V.

Far town-ward sounds a distant
tread,
And Oswald, starting from his
bed,
Hath caught it, though no human
ear,
Unsharpen'd by revenge and fear,
Could e'er distinguish horse's
clank,
Until it reach'd the castle bank.²⁸⁰
Now nigh and plain the sound
appears,
The warder's challenge now he
hears,
Then clanking chains and levers
tell,
That o'er the moat the draw-
bridge fell,
And, in the castle court below,
Voices are heard, and torches
glow,
As marshalling the stranger's
way,
Straight for the room where
Oswald lay;
The cry was—"Tidings from
the host,
Of weight—a messenger comes
post."
Stifling the tumult of his breast,
His answer Oswald thus ex-
press'd—
"Bring food and wine, and
trim the fire;
Admit the stranger, and retire."

VI.

The stranger came with heavy
stride,
The morion's plumes his visage
hide,
And the buff-coat, an ample
fold,
Mantles his form's gigantic
mould.²⁸¹
Full slender answer deigned he
To Oswald's anxious courtesy,
But mark'd, by a disdainful
smile,
He saw and scorn'd the petty
wile,
When Oswald changed the
torch's place,
Anxious that on the soldier's
face
Its partial lustre might be
thrown,
To show his looks, yet hide his
own.
His guest, the while, laid low
aside
The ponderous cloak of tough
bull's hide,
And to the torch glanced broad
and clear
The corslet of a cuirassier;
Then from his brows the casque
he drew,
And from the dank plume
dash'd the dew,
From gloves of mail relieved
his hands,
And spread them to the kindling
brands,
And, turning to the genial
board,
Without a health, or pledge, or
word
Of meet and social reverence said,
Deeply he drank, and fiercely fed;

As free from ceremony's sway,
As famish'd wolf that tears his
prey.

VII.

With deep impatience, tinged
with fear,
His host beheld him gorge his
cheer,
And quaff the full carouse, that
lent
His brow a fiercer hardiment.
Now Oswald stood a space
aside,
Now paced the room with hasty
stride
In feverish agony to learn
Tidings of deep and dread
concern,
Cursing each moment that his
guest
Protracted o'er his ruffian feast.
Yet, viewing with alarm, at last,
The end of that uncouth repast,
Almost he seem'd their haste
to rue,
As, at his sign, his train withdrew,
And left him with the stranger,
free
To question of his mystery.
Then did his silence long
proclaim
A struggle between fear and
shame.

VIII.

Much in the stranger's mien
appears,
To justify suspicious fears.
On his dark face a scorching
clime,
And toil, had done the work of
time,²⁸²

Roughen'd the brow, the temples
bared,
And sable hairs with silver
shared,
Yet left—what age alone could
tame—
The lip of pride, the eye of
flame;
The full-drawn lip that upward
curl'd,
The eye, that seem'd to scorn
the world.
That lip had terror never
blench'd;
Ne'er in that eye had tear-drop
quench'd
The flash severe of swarthy
glow,
That mock'd at pain, and knew
not woe.
Inured to danger's direst form,
Tornado and earthquake, flood
and storm,
Death had he seen by sudden
blow,
By wasting plague, by tortures
slow,
By mine or breach, by steel or
ball,
Knew all his shapes, and scorn'd
them all.

IX.

But yet, though BERTRAM'S
harden'd look,
Unmoved, could blood and
danger brook,
Still worse than apathy had
place
On his swart brow and callous
face;
For evil passions, cherish'd long,
Had plough'd them with im-
pressions strong.

All that gives gloss to sin, all gay
 Light folly, past with youth away,
 But rooted stood, in manhood's
 hour,
 The weeds of vice without their
 flower.
 And yet the soil in which they
 grew,
 Had it been tamed when life was
 new,
 Had depth and vigour to bring
 forth
 The hardier fruits of virtuous
 worth.
 Not that, e'en then, his heart had
 known
 The gentler feelings' kindly tone ;
 But lavish waste had been refined
 To bounty in his chasten'd mind,
 And lust of gold, that waste to
 feed,
 Been lost in love of glory's meed,
 And, frantic then no more, his
 pride
 Had ta'en fair virtue for its guide.

X.

Even now, by conscience un-
 restrain'd,
 Clogg'd by gross vice, by
 slaughter stain'd,
 Still knew his daring soul to soar,
 And mastery o'er the mind he
 bore ;
 For meaner guilt, or heart less
 hard,
 Quail'd beneath Bertram's bold
 regard.
 And this felt Oswald, while in vain
 He strove, by many a winding
 train,
 To lure his sullen guest to show,
 Unask'd, the news he long'd to
 know,

While on far other subject hung
 His heart, than falter'd from his
 tongue.
 Yet nought for that his guest did
 deign
 To note or spare his secret pain,
 But still, in stern and stubborn
 sort,
 Return'd him answer dark and
 short,
 Or started from the theme, to
 range
 In loose digression wild and
 strange,
 And forced the embarrass'd host
 to buy,
 By query close, direct reply.

XI.

A while he glozed upon the cause
 Of Commons, Covenant, and
 Laws,
 And Church Reform'd—but felt
 rebuke
 Beneath grim Bertram's sneering
 look,
 Then stammer'd—"Has a field
 been fought ?
 Has Bertram news of battle
 brought ?
 For sure a soldier, famed so far
 In foreign fields for feats of war,
 On eve of fight ne'er left the host,
 Until the field were won and lost."
 "Here, in your towers by circling
 Tees,
 You, Oswald Wycliffe, rest at
 ease ;
 Why deem it strange that others
 come
 To share such safe and easy home,
 From fields where danger, death,
 and toil,
 Are the reward of civil broil ?"—

“Nay, mock not, friend! since
 well we know
 The near advances of the foe,
 To mar our northern army's work,
 Encamp'd before beleagur'd
 York;
 Thy horse with valiant Fairfax
 lay,
 And must have fought—how went
 the day?”

XII.

“Wouldst hear the tale?—On
 Marston heath²⁸³
 Met, front to front, the ranks of
 death;
 Flourish'd the trumpets fierce,
 and now
 Fired was each eye, and flush'd
 each brow;
 On either side loud clamours ring,
 ‘God and the Cause!’—‘God
 and the King!’
 Right English all, they rush'd to
 blows,
 With nought to win, and all to
 lose.
 I could have laugh'd—but lack'd
 the time—
 To see, in phrenesy sublime,
 How the fierce zealots fought and
 bled,
 For king or state, as humour
 led;
 Some for a dream of public good,
 Some for church-tippet, gown
 and hood,
 Draining their veins, in death to
 claim
 A patriot's or a martyr's name.—
 Led Bertram Risingham the
 hearts,
 That counter'd there on adverse
 parts,

No superstitious fool had I
 Sought El Dorados in the sky!
 Chili had heard me through her
 states,
 And Lima oped her silver gates,
 Rich Mexico I had march'd
 through,
 And sack'd the splendours of
 Peru,
 Till sunk Pizarro's daring name,
 And, Cortez, thine, in Bertram's
 fame.”—

“Still from the purpose wilt thou
 stray!
 Good gentle friend, how went the
 day?”

XIII.

“Good am I deem'd at trumpet-
 sound,
 And good where goblets dance
 the round,
 Though gentle ne'er was join'd,
 till now,
 With rugged Bertram's breast
 and brow.—
 But I resume. The battle's rage
 Was like the strife which currents
 wage,
 Where Orinoco, in his pride,
 Rolls to the main no tribute tide,
 But 'gainst broad ocean urges
 far
 A rival sea of roaring war;
 While, in ten thousand eddies
 driven,
 The billows fling their foam to
 heaven,
 And the pale pilot seeks in vain,
 Where rolls the river, where the
 main.
 Even thus upon the bloody field,
 The eddying tides of conflict
 wheel'd

Ambiguous, till that heart of
 flame,
 Hot Rupert, on our squadrons
 came,
 Hurling against our spears a
 line
 Of gallants, fiery as their wine ;
 Then ours, though stubborn in
 their zeal,
 In zeal's despite began to reel.
 What wouldst thou more?—in
 tumult tost,
 Our leaders fell, our ranks were
 lost.
 A thousand men, who drew the
 sword
 For both the Houses and the
 Word,
 Preach'd forth from hamlet,
 grange, and down,
 To curb the crosier and the
 crown,
 Now, stark and stiff, lie stretch'd
 in gore,
 And ne'er shall rail at mitre
 more.—
 Thus fared it, when I left the
 fight,
 With the good Cause and
 Commons' right.”—

XIV.

“Disastrous news!” dark
 Wycliffe said ;
 Assumed despondence bent his
 head.
 While troubled joy was in his
 eye,
 The well-feign'd sorrow to
 belie.—
 “Disastrous news!—when needed
 most,
 Told ye not that your chiefs were
 lost?

Complete the woful tale, and
 say,
 Who fell upon that fatal day ;
 What leaders of repute and name
 Bought by their death a deathless
 fame.
 If such my direst foeman's doom,
 My tears shall dew his honour'd
 tomb.—
 No answer?—Friend, of all our
 host,
 Thou know'st whom I should
 hate the most,
 Whom thou too, once, wert wont
 to hate,
 Yet leavest me doubtful of his
 fate.”—
 With look unmoved—“Of friend
 or foe,
 Aught,” answer'd Bertram,
 “would'st thou know
 Demand in simple terms and
 plain,
 A soldier's answer shalt thou
 gain ;—
 For question dark, or riddle
 high,
 I have nor judgment nor reply.”

XV.

The wrath his art and fear
 suppress'd
 Now blazed at once in Wycliffe's
 breast ;
 And brave, from man so meanly
 born,
 Roused his hereditary scorn.
 “Wretch! hast thou paid thy
 bloody debt?
 PHILIP OF MORTHAM, lives he
 yet?
 False to thy patron or thine oath,
 Trait'rous or perjured, one or
 both.

Slave! hast thou kept thy
 promise plight,
 To slay thy leader in the fight?—
 Then from his seat the soldier
 sprung,
 And Wycliffe's hand he strongly
 wrung;
 His grasp, as hard as glove of
 mail,
 Forced the red blood-drop from
 the nail—
 "A health!" he cried; and, ere
 he quaff'd,
 Flung from him Wycliffe's hand,
 and laugh'd:
 —"Now, Oswald Wycliffe,
 speaks thy heart!
 Now play'st thou well thy genuine
 part!
 Worthy, but for thy craven fear,
 Like me to roam a bucanier.
 What reek'st thou of the Cause
 divine,
 If Mortham's wealth and lands
 be thine?
 What carest thou for beleaguer'd
 York,
 If this good hand have done its
 work?
 Or what, though Fairfax and his
 best
 Are reddening Marston's swarthy
 breast,
 If Philip Mortham with them lie,
 Lending his life-blood to the
 dye?—
 Sit, then! and as 'mid comrades
 free
 Carousing after victory,
 When tales are told of blood and
 fear,
 That boys and women shrink to
 hear,
 From point to point I frankly tell
 The deed of death as it befell.

XVI.

"When purposed vengeance I
 forego,
 Term me a wretch, nor deem me
 foe:
 And when an insult I forgive,
 Then brand me as a slave, and
 live!—
 Philip of Mortham is with those
 Whom Bertram Risingham calls
 foes;
 Or whom more sure revenge
 attends,
 If number'd with ungrateful
 friends.
 As was his wont, ere battle
 glow'd,
 Along the marshall'd ranks he
 rode,
 And wore his vizor up the while.
 I saw his melancholy smile,
 When, full opposed in front, he
 knew
 Where ROKEBY's kindred banner
 flew.
 'And thus,' he said, 'will friends
 divide!'—
 I heard, and thought how, side
 by side,
 We two had turn'd the battle's
 tide,
 In many a well-debated field,
 Where Bertram's breast was
 Philip's shield.
 I thought on Darien's deserts pale,
 Where death bestrides the
 evening gale,
 How o'er my friend my cloak I
 threw,
 And fenceless faced the deadly
 dew;
 I thought on Quariana's cliff,
 Where, rescued from our foundering
 skiff,

Through the white breakers' wrath I bore
 Exhausted Mortham to the shore ;
 And when his side an arrow found,
 I suck'd the Indian's venom'd wound.
 These thoughts like torrents rush'd along.
 To sweep away my purpose strong.

XVII.

“Hearts are not flint, and flints are rent ;
 Hearts are not steel, and steel is bent.
 When Mortham bade me, as of yore,
 Be near him in the battle's roar,
 I scarcely saw the spears laid low,
 I scarcely heard the trumpets blow ;
 Lost was the war in inward strife,
 Debating Mortham's death or life.
 'Twas then I thought, how, lured to come,
 As partner of his wealth and home,
 Years of piratic wandering o'er,
 With him I sought our native shore.
 But Mortham's lord grew far estranged
 From the bold heart with whom he ranged ;
 Doubts, horrors, superstitious fears,
 Sadden'd and dimm'd descending years ;

The wily priests their victim sought,
 And damn'd each free-born deed and thought
 Then must I seek another home,
 My license shook his sober dome ;
 If gold he gave, in one wild day
 I revell'd thrice the sum away.
 An idle outcast then I stray'd,
 Unfit for tillage or for trade.
 Deem'd, like the steel of rusted lance,
 Useless and dangerous at once.
 The women fear'd my hardy look,
 At my approach the peaceful shook ;
 The merchant saw my glance of flame,
 And lock'd his boards when Bertram came ;
 Each child of coward peace kept far
 From the neglected son of war.

XVIII.

“But civil discord gave the call,
 And made my trade the trade of all.
 By Mortham urged, I came again
 His vassals to the fight to train.
 What guerdon waited on my care ?
 I could not cant of creed or prayer ;
 Sour fanatics each trust obtain'd.
 And I, dishonour'd and disdain'd,
 Gain'd but the high and happy lot,
 In these poor arms to front the shot !—
 All this thou know'st, thy gestures tell ;
 Yet hear it o'er, and mark it well.

'Tis honour bids me now relate
Each circumstance of Mortham's
fate.

XIX.

"Thoughts, from the tongue that
slowly part,
Glance quick as lightning through
the heart.

As my spur press'd my courser's
side,

Philip of Mortham's cause was
tried,

And, ere the charging squadrons
mix'd,

His plea was cast, his doom was
fix'd.

I watch'd him through the doubt-
ful fray,

That changed as March's moody
day,

Till, like a stream that bursts its
bank,

Fierce Rupert thunder'd on our
flank.

'Twas then, midst tumult, smoke,
and strife,

Where each man fought for
death or life,

'Twas then I fired my petronel,
And Mortham, steed and rider, fell.

One dying look he upward cast,
Of wrath and anguish—'twas his
last.

Think not that there I stopp'd,
to view

What of the battle should ensue;
But ere I clear'd that bloody press,
Our northern horse ran master-
less;

Monckton and Mitton told the
news,²⁸⁴

How troops of roundheads
choked the Ouse,

And many a bonny Scot, aghast,
Spurring his palfrey northward,
past,

Cursing the day when zeal or
meed

First lured their Lesley o'er the
Tweed.

Yet when I reach'd the banks of
Swale,

Had rumour learn'd another tale;
With his barb'd horse, fresh
tidings say,

Stout Cromwell has redeem'd the
day:²⁸⁵

But whether false the news, or
true,

Oswald, I reckon as light as you."

XX.

Not then by Wycliffe might be
shown,

How his pride startled at the
tone

In which his complice, fierce and
free,

Asserted guilt's equality.

In smoothest terms his speech
he wove,

Of endless friendship, faith, and
love;

Promised and vow'd in courteous
sort,

But Bertram broke professions
short.

"Wycliffe, be sure not here I
stay,

No, scarcely till the rising day;
Warn'd by the legends of my
youth,

I trust not an associate's truth.

Do not my native dales pro-
long

Of Percy Rede the tragic
song,²⁸⁶

Train'd forward to his bloody fall,
By Girsonfield, that treacherous
Hall?

Oft, by the Pringle's haunted
side,

The shepherd sees his spectre
glide.

And near the spot that gave me
name,

The moated mound of Rising-
ham,²⁸⁷

Where Reed upon her margin sees
Sweet Woodburne's cottages
and trees,

Some ancient sculptor's art has
shown

An outlaw's image on the stone ;
Unmatch'd in strength, a giant
he,

With quiver'd back, and kirtled
knee.

Ask how he died, that hunter
bold,

The tameless monarch of the
wold,

And age and infancy can tell,
By brother's treachery he fell.

Thus warn'd by legends of my
youth,

I trust to no associate's truth.

XXI.

“ When last we reason'd of this
deed,

Nought, I bethink me, was
agreed,

Or by what rule, or when, or
where,

The wealth of Mortham we
should share ;

Then list, while I the portion
name,

Our differing laws give each to
claim.

Thou, vassal sworn to England's
throne,

Her rules of heritage must own ;
They deal thee, as to nearest heir,

Thy kinsman's lands and livings
fair,

And these I yield :—do thou revere
The statutes of the Bucanier.²⁸⁸

Friend to the sea, and foeman
sworn

To all that on her waves are
borne,

When falls a mate in battle broil,
His comrade heirs his portion'd
spoil ;

When dies in fight a daring foe,
He claims his wealth who struck
the blow :

And either rule to me assigns
Those spoils of Indian seas and
mines,

Hoarded in Mortham's caverns
dark ;

Ingot of gold and diamond
spark,

Chalice and plate from churches
borne,

And gems from shrieking beauty
torn,

Each string of pearl, each silver
bar,

And all the wealth of western
war.

I go to search, where, dark and
deep,

Those Trans-atlantic treasures
sleep.

Thou must along—for, lacking
thee,

The heir will scarce find entrance
free ;

And then farewell. I haste to
try

Each varied pleasure wealth can
buy ;

When cloyed each wish, these wars afford
 Fresh work for Bertram's restless sword."

XXII.

An undecided answer hung
 On Oswald's hesitating tongue.
 Despite his craft, he heard with awe
 This ruffian stabber fix the law ;
 While his own troubled passions veer
 Through hatred, joy, regret, and fear :—
 Joy'd at the soul that Bertram flies,
 He grudged the murderer's mighty prize,
 Hated his pride's presumptuous tone,
 And fear'd to wend with him alone.
 At length, that middle course to steer,

To cowardice and craft so dear,
 "His charge," he said, "would ill allow
 His absence from the fortress now ;
 WILFRID on Bertram should attend,
 His son should journey with his friend."

XXIII.

Contempt kept Bertram's anger down,
 And wreathed to savage smile his frown.
 "Wilfrid, or thou—'tis one to me,
 Whichever bears the golden key.

Yet think not but I mark, and smile
 To mark, thy poor and selfish wile !

If injury from me you fear,
 What, Oswald Wycliffe, shields thee here ?

I've sprung from walls more high than these,
 I've swam through deeper streams than Tees.

Might I not stab thee, ere one yell

Could rouse the distant sentinel ?
 Start not—it is not my design,
 But, if it were, weak fence were thine ;

And, trust me, that, in time of need,

This hand hath done more desperate deed.

Go, haste and rouse thy slumbering son ;

Time calls, and I must needs be gone.

XXIV.

Nought of his sire's ungenerous part

Polluted Wilfrid's gentle heart ;
 A heart too soft from early life
 To hold with fortune needful strife.

His sire, while yet a hardier race

Of numerous sons were Wycliffe's grace,

On Wilfrid set contemptuous brand,

For feeble heart and forceless hand ;

But a fond mother's care and joy

Were centred in her sickly boy.

No touch of childhood's frolic
 mood
 Show'd the elastic spring of
 blood ;
 Hour after hour he loved to
 pore
 On Shakspeare's rich and varied
 lore,
 But turn'd from martial scenes
 and light,
 From Falstaff's feast and Percy's
 fight,
 To ponder Jaques' moral strain,
 And muse with Hamlet, wise in
 vain ;
 And weep himself to soft repose
 O'er gentle Desdemona's woes.

XXV.

In youth he sought not pleasures
 found
 By youth in horse, and hawk,
 and hound,
 But loved the quiet joys that
 wake
 By lonely stream and silent
 lake ;
 In Deepdale's solitude to lie,
 Where all is cliff and copse and
 sky ;
 To climb Catcastle's dizzy peak,
 Or lone Pendragon's mound to
 seek.
 Such was his wont ; and there
 his dream
 Soar'd on some wild fantastic
 theme,
 Of faithful love, or ceaseless
 spring,
 Till contemplation's wearied
 wing
 The enthusiast could no more
 sustain,
 And sad he sunk to earth again.

XXVI.

He loved—as many a lay can
 tell,
 Preserved in Stanmore's lonely
 dell ;
 For his was minstrel's skill, he
 caught
 The art unteachable, untaught ;
 He loved—his soul did nature
 frame
 For love, and fancy nursed the
 flame ;
 Vainly he loved—for seldom
 swain
 Of such soft mould is loved
 again ;
 Silent he loved—in every gaze
 Was passion, friendship in his
 phrase.
 So mused his life away—till died
 His brethren all, their father's
 pride.
 Wilfrid is now the only heir
 Of all his stratagems and care,
 And destined, darkling, to pursue
 Ambition's maze by Oswald's
 clue.

XXVII.

Wilfrid must love and woo the
 bright
 Matilda, heir of Rokeby's knight.
 To love her was an easy hest,
 The secret empress of his breast ;
 To woo her was a harder task
 To one that durst not hope or
 ask.
 Yet all Matilda could, she gave
 In pity to her gentle slave ;
 Friendship, esteem, and fair re-
 gard,
 And praise, the poet's best re-
 ward !

She read the tales his taste ap-
proved,
And sung the lays he framed or
loved ;
Yet, loth to nurse the fatal flame
Of hopeless love in friendship's
name,
In kind caprice she oft withdrew
The favouring glance to friend-
ship due,
Then grieved to see her victim's
pain,
And gave the dangerous smiles
again.

XXVIII.

So did the suit of Wilfrid stand,
When war's loud summons waked
the land.
Three banners, floating o'er the
Tees,
The wo-foreboding peasant sees ;
In concert oft they braved of old
The bordering Scot's incursion
bold ;
Frowning defiance in their pride,
Their vassals now and lords
divide.
From his fair hall on Greta banks,
The Knight of Rokeby led his
ranks,
To aid the valiant northern Earls,
Who drew the sword for royal
Charles.
Mortham, by marriage near
allied—
His sister had been Rokeby's
bride,
Though long before the civil
fray,
In peaceful grave the lady lay,—
Philip of Mortham raised his band,
And march'd at Fairfax's com-
mand ;

While Wycliffe, bound by many
a train
Of kindred art with wily Vane,
Less prompt to brave the bloody
field,
Made Barnard's battlements his
shield,
Secured them with his Lunedale
powers,
And for the Commons held the
towers.

XXIX.

The lovely heir of Rokeby's
Knight
Waits in his halls the event of
fight ;
For England's war revered the
claim
Of every unprotected name,
And spared, amid its fiercest
rage,
Childhood and womanhood and
age.
But Wilfrid, son to Rokeby's foe,
Must the dear privilege forego,
By Greta's side, in evening grey,
To steal upon Matilda's way,
Striving, with fond hypocrisy,
For careless step and vacant eye ;
Calming each anxious look and
glance,
To give the meeting all to chance,
Or framing, as a fair excuse,
The book, the pencil, or the
muse :
Something to give, to sing, to say,
Some modern tale, some ancient
lay.
Then, while the long'd-for minutes
last,—
Ah ! minutes quickly over-past !—
Recording each expression free,
Of kind or careless courtesy,

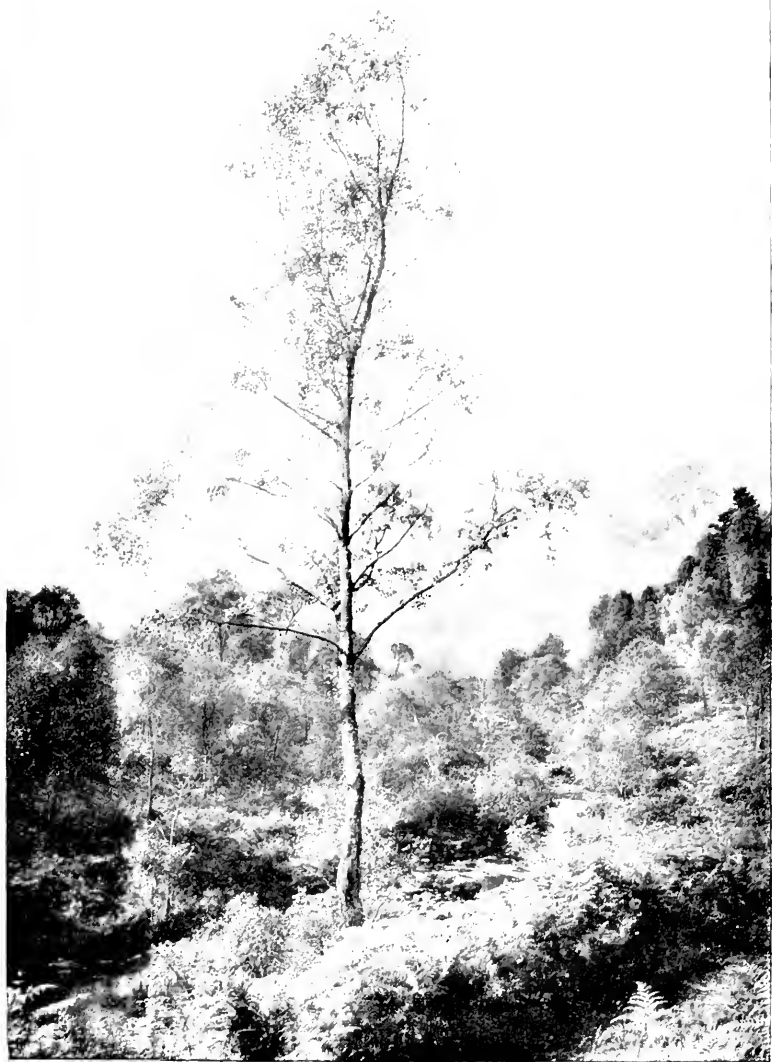


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S.C.

Birch Tree, Trossachs Glen.

Each friendly look, each softer
 tone,
 As food for fancy when alone.
 All this is o'er—but still, unseen,
 Wilfrid may lurk in Eastwood
 green,
 To watch Matilda's wonted round,
 While springs his heart at every
 sound.
 She comes!—'tis but a passing
 sight,
 Yet serves to cheat his weary
 night ;
 She comes not—He will wait the
 hour,
 When her lamp lightens in the
 tower ;
 'Tis something yet, if, as she
 past,
 Her shade is o'er the lattice cast.
 "What is my life, my hope?"
 he said :
 "Alas! a transitory shade."

XXX.

Thus wore his life, though reason
 strove
 For mastery in vain with love,
 Forcing upon his thoughts the
 sum
 Of present woe and ills to come,
 While still he turn'd impatient
 ear
 From Truth's intrusive voice
 severe.
 Gentle, indifferent, and subdued,
 In all but this, unmoved he
 view'd
 Each outward change of ill and
 good :
 But Wilfrid, docile, soft, and
 mild,
 Was Fancy's spoil'd and way-
 ward child ;
 SC.

In her bright car she bade him
 ride,
 With one fair form to grace his
 side,
 Or, in some wild and lone retreat,
 Flung her high spells around his
 seat,
 Bathed in her dew's his languid
 head,
 Her fairy mantle o'er him spread,
 For him her opiates gave to flow,
 Which he who tastes can ne'er
 forego,
 And placed him in her circle, free
 From every stern reality,
 Till, to the Visionary, seem
 Her day-dreams truth, and truth
 a dream.

XXXI.

Woe to the youth whom fancy
 gains,
 Winning from Reason's hand the
 reins,
 Pity and woe! for such a mind
 Is soft, contemplative, and kind ;
 And woe to those who train such
 youth,
 And spare to press the rights of
 truth,
 The mind to strengthen and
 anneal,
 While on the stithy glows the
 steel !
 O teach him, while your lessons
 last,
 To judge the present by the past ;
 Remind him of each wish pur-
 sued,
 How rich it glow'd with promised
 good ;
 Remind him of each wish enjoy'd,
 How soon his hopes possession
 cloy'd !

Tell him, we play unequal game,
 Whene'er we shoot by Fancy's
 aim ;
 And, ere he strip him for her race,
 Show the conditions of the chase.
 Two sisters by the goal are set,
 Cold Disappointment and Regret ;
 One disenchants the winner's
 eyes,
 And strips of all its worth the
 prize.
 While one augments its gaudy
 show,
 More to enhance the loser's woe.
 The victor sees his fairy gold,
 Transform'd, when won, to drossy
 mold,
 But still the vanquish'd mourns
 his loss,
 And rues, as gold, that glittering
 dross.

XXXII.

More wouldst thou know—yon
 tower survey,
 Yon couch unpress'd since part-
 ing day,
 Yon untrimm'd lamp, whose
 yellow gleam
 Is mingling with the cold moon-
 beam,
 And yon thin form!—the hectic red
 On his pale cheek unequal spread ;
 The head reclined, the loosen'd
 hair,
 The limbs relax'd, the mournful
 air.—
 See, he looks up ;— a woful
 smile
 Lightens his wo-worn cheek a
 while,—
 'Tis fancy wakes some idle
 thought,
 To gild the ruin she has wrought ;

For, like the bat of Indian brakes,
 Her pinions fan the wound she
 makes,
 And soothing thus the dreamer's
 pain,
 She drinks his life-blood from the
 vein.
 Now to the lattice turn his eyes,
 Vain hope ! to see the sun arise.
 The moon with clouds is still
 o'er cast,
 Still howls by fits the stormy
 blast :
 Another hour must wear away,
 Ere the East kindle into day,
 And hark ! to waste that weary
 hour,
 He tries the minstrel's magic
 power.

XXXIII.

Song.

TO THE MOON.

Hail to thy cold and clouded
 beam,
 Pale pilgrim of the troubled
 sky !
 Hail, though the mists that o'er
 thee stream
 Lend to thy brow their sullen
 dye !
 How should thy pure and peace-
 ful eye
 Untroubled view our scenes
 below,
 Or how a tearless beam supply
 To light a world of war and
 woe !
 Fair Queen ! I will not blame
 thee now,
 As once by Greta's fairy side ;

Each little cloud that dimm'd thy
 brow
 Did them an angel's beauty hide.
 And of the shades I then could
 chide,
 Still are the thoughts to
 memory dear,
 For, while a softer strain I tried,
 They hid my blush, and calm'd
 my fear.

Then did I swear thy ray serene
 Was form'd to light some
 lonely dell,
 By two fond lovers only seen,
 Reflected from the crystal well,
 Or sleeping on their mossy cell,
 Or quivering on the lattice
 bright,
 Or glancing on their couch, to tell
 How swiftly wanes the summer
 night!

XXXIV.

He starts—a step at this lone
 hour!
 A voice!—his father seeks the
 tower,
 With haggard look and troubled
 sense,
 Fresh from his dreadful confer-
 ence.
 “Wilfrid!—what, not to sleep
 address'd?
 Thou hast no cares to chase thy
 rest.
 Mortham has fall'n on Marston-
 moor;
 Bertram brings warrant to
 secure
 His treasures, bought by spoil
 and blood,
 For the State's use and public
 good.

The menials will thy voice obey;
 Let his commission have its
 way,
 In every point, in every word.”—
 Then, in a whisper—“Take thy
 sword!
 Bertram is—what I must not
 tell.
 I hear his hasty step—farewell!”

CANTO SECOND.

I.

FAR in the chambers of the west,
 The gale had sigh'd itself to
 rest;
 The moon was cloudless now
 and clear,
 But pale, and soon to disappear.
 The thin grey clouds wax dimly
 light
 On Brusleton and Houghton
 height;
 And the rich dale, that eastward
 lay,
 Waited the wakening touch of
 day,
 To give its woods and cultured
 plain,
 And towers and spires, to light
 again.
 But, westward, Stanmore's
 shapeless swell,
 And Lunedale wild, and Kelton-
 fell,
 And rock-begirdled Gilmanscar,
 And Arkingarth, lay dark afar;
 While, as a livelier twilight
 falls,
 Emerge proud Barnard's banner'd
 walls.
 High crown'd he sits, in dawning
 pale,
 The sovereign of the lovely vale.

II.

What prospects, from his watch-
 tower high,
 Gleam gradual on the warder's
 eye!—
 Far sweeping to the east, he sees
 Down his deep woods the course
 of Tees,²⁸⁹
 And tracks his wanderings by
 the steam
 Of summer vapours from the
 stream ;
 And ere he paced his destined hour
 By Brackenbury's dungeon-
 tower,
 These silver mists shall melt
 away,
 And dew the woods with glitter-
 ing spray.
 Then in broad lustre shall be
 shown
 That mighty trench of living
 stone,
 And each huge trunk that, from
 the side,
 Reclines him o'er the darksome
 tide,
 Where Tees, full many a fathom
 low,
 Wears with his rage no common
 foe ;
 For pebbly bank, nor sand-bed
 here,
 Nor clay-mound, checks his
 fierce career,
 Condemn'd to mine a channell'd
 way,
 O'er solid sheets of marble grey.

III.

Nor Tees alone, in dawning
 bright,
 Shall rush upon the ravish'd
 sight ;

But many a tributary stream
 Each from its own dark dell shall
 gleam :
 Staindrop, who, from her silvan
 bowers,
 Salutes proud Raby's battled
 towers ;
 The rural brook of Egliston,
 And Balder, named from Odin's
 son ;
 And Greta, to whose banks ere
 long
 We lead the lovers of the song ;
 And silver Lune, from Stanmore
 wild,
 And fairy Thorsgill's murmuring
 child,
 And last and least, but loveliest
 still,
 Romantic Deepdale's slender rill.
 Who in that dim-wood glen hath
 stray'd,
 Yet long'd for Roslin's magic
 glade ?
 Who, wandering there, hath
 sought to change
 Even for that vale so stern and
 strange,
 Where Cartland's Crag, fan-
 tastic rent,
 Through her green copse like
 spires are sent ?
 Yet, Albin, yet the praise be
 thine,
 Thy scenes and story to com-
 bine !
 Thou bid'st him, who by Roslin
 strays,
 List to the deeds of other days ;
 'Mid Cartland's Crag thou
 show'st the cave,
 The refuge of thy champion
 brave ;
 Giving each rock its storied tale,
 Pouring a lay for every dale,

Knitting, as with a moral band,
Thy native legends with thy land,
To lend each scene the interest
high
Which genius beams from
Beauty's eye.

IV.

Bertram awaited not the sight
Which sun-rise shows from
Barnard's height,
But from the towers, preventing
day,
With Wilfrid took his early
way,
While misty dawn, and moon-
beam pale,
Still mingled in the silent dale.
By Barnard's bridge of stately
stone,
The southern bank of Tees they
won ;
Their winding path then eastward
cast,
And Egliston's grey ruins
pass'd ;²⁹⁰
Each on his own deep visions
bent,
Silent and sad they onward went.
Well may you think that
Bertram's mood,
To Wilfrid savage seem'd and
rude ;
Well may you think bold
Risingham
Held Wilfrid trivial, poor, and
tame ;
And small the intercourse, I ween,
Such uncongenial souls between.

V.

Stern Bertram shunn'd the nearer
way,
Through Rokeby's park and
chase that lay,

And, skirting high the valley's
ridge,
They cross'd by Greta's ancient
bridge
Descending where her waters
wind
Free for a space and unconfined,
As, 'scaped from Brignall's dark-
wood glen,
She seeks wild Mortham's deeper
den.
There, as his eye glanced o'er
the mound,
Raised by that Legion²⁹¹ long
renown'd,
Whose votive shrine asserts their
claim,
Of pious, faithful, conquering
fame,
"Stern sons of war!" sad
Wilfrid sigh'd,
"Behold the boast of Roman
pride !
What now of all your toils are
known ?
A grassy trench, a broken
stone!"—
This to himself ; for moral strain
To Bertram were address'd in
vain.

VI.

Of different mood, a deeper
sigh
Awoke, when Rokeby's turrets
high²⁹²
Were northward in the dawning
seen
To rear them o'er the thicket
green.
O then, though Spenser's self
had stray'd
Beside him through the lovely
glade,

Lending his rich luxuriant glow
 Of fancy, all its charms to show,
 Pointing the stream rejoicing
 free,
 As captive set at liberty,
 Flashing her sparkling waves
 abroad,
 And clamouring joyful on her
 road ;
 Pointing where, up the sunny
 banks,
 The trees retire in scatter'd
 ranks,
 Save where, advanced before the
 rest,
 On knoll or hillock rears his
 crest,
 Lonely and huge, the giant Oak,
 As champions, when their band
 is broke,
 Stand forth to guard the rear-
 ward post,
 The bulwark of the scatter'd
 host—
 All this, and more, might Spenser
 say,
 Yet waste in vain his magic lay,
 While Wilfrid eyed the distant
 tower,
 Whose lattice lights Matilda's
 bower.

VII.

The open vale is soon pass'd
 o'er,
 Rokeby, though nigh, is seen no
 more ;
 Sinking mid Greta's thickets
 deep,
 A wild and darker course they
 keep,
 A stern and lone, yet lovely road,
 As e'er the foot of Minstrel
 trode ! ²⁹³

Broad shadows o'er their passage
 fell,
 Deeper and narrower grew the
 dell ;
 It seem'd some mountain, rent
 and riven,
 A channel for the stream had
 given,
 So high the cliffs of limestone
 grey
 Hung beetling o'er the torrent's
 way,
 Yielding, along their rugged
 base,
 A flinty footpath's niggard
 space,
 Where he, who winds 'twixt
 rock and wave,
 May hear the headlong torrent
 rave,
 And like a steed in frantic fit,
 That flings the froth from curb
 and bit,
 May view her chafe her waves to
 spray,
 O'er every rock that bars her
 way,
 Till foam-globes on her eddies
 ride,
 Thick as the schemes of human
 pride
 That down life's current drive
 amain,
 As frail, as frothy, and as vain !

VIII.

The cliffs that rear their haughty
 head
 High o'er the river's darksome
 bed,
 Were now all naked, wild, and
 grey,
 Now waving all with greenwood
 spray ;

Here trees to every crevice clung,
 And o'er the dell their branches
 hung ;
 And there, all splinter'd and un-
 even,
 The shiver'd rocks ascend to
 heaven ;
 Oft, too, the ivy swath'd their
 breast,
 And wreathed its garland round
 their crest,
 Or from the spires bade loosely
 flare
 Its tendrils in the middle air.
 As pennons wont to wane of old
 O'er the high feast of Baron bold,
 When revell'd loud the feudal
 rout,
 And the arch'd halls return'd
 their shout ;
 Such and more wild is Greta's roar,
 And such the echoes from her
 shore.
 And so the ivied banners gleam,
 Waved wildly o'er the brawling
 stream.

IX.

Now from the stream the rocks
 recede,
 But leave between no sunny
 mead,
 No, nor the spot of pebbly sand,
 Oft found by such a mountain
 strand ;
 Forming such warm and dry
 retreat,
 As fancy deems the lonely seat,
 Where hermit, wandering from
 his cell,
 His rosary might love to tell.
 But here, 'twixt rock and river,
 grew
 A dismal grove of sable yew,

With whose sad tints were
 mingled seen
 The blighted fir's sepulchral green.
 Seem'd that the trees their
 shadows cast,
 The earth that nourish'd them to
 blast ;
 For never knew that swarthy
 grove
 The verdant hue that fairies
 love ;
 Nor wilding green, nor woodland
 flower,
 Arose within its baleful bower :
 The dank and sable earth receives
 Its only carpet from the leaves,
 That, from the withering branches
 cast,
 Bestrew'd the ground with every
 blast.
 Though now the sun was o'er
 the hill,
 In this dark spot 'twas twilight
 still,
 Save that on Greta's farther
 side
 Some straggling beams through
 copsewood glide ;
 And wild and savage contrast
 made
 That dingle's deep and funeral
 shade,
 With the bright tints of early
 day,
 Which, glimmering through the
 ivy spray,
 On the opposing summit lay.

X.

The lated peasant shunn'd the
 dell ;
 For Superstition wont to tell
 Of many a grisly sound and sight,
 Scaring its path at dead of night.

When Christmas logs blaze high
 and wide,
 Such wonders speed the festal
 tide ;
 While Curiosity and Fear,
 Pleasure and Pain, sit crouching
 near,
 Till childhood's cheek no longer
 glows,
 And village maidens lose the
 rose.
 The thrilling interest rises higher,
 The circle closes nigh and nigher,
 And shuddering glance is cast
 behind,
 As louder moans the wintry wind.
 Believe, that fitting scene was
 laid
 For such wild tales in Mortham
 glade ;
 For who had seen, on Greta's
 side,
 By that dim light fierce Bertram
 stride,
 In such a spot, at such an hour,—
 If touch'd by Superstition's power,
 Might well have deem'd that Hell
 had given
 A murderer's ghost to upper
 Heaven,
 While Wilfrid's form had seem'd
 to glide
 Like his pale victim by his side.

XI.

Nor think to village swains alone
 Are these unearthly terrors
 known ;
 For not to rank nor sex confined
 Is this vain ague of the mind :
 Hearts firm as steel, as marble
 hard,
 'Gainst faith, and love, and pity
 barr'd,

Have quaked, like aspen leaves
 in May,
 Beneath its universal sway.
 Bertram had listed many a tale
 Of wonder in his native dale,
 That in his secret soul retain'd
 The credence they in childhood
 gain'd :
 Nor less his wild adventurous
 youth
 Believed in every legend's truth ;
 Learn'd when, beneath the tropic
 gale,
 Full swell'd the vessel's steady
 sail,
 And the broad Indian moon her
 light
 Pour'd on the watch of middle
 night,
 When seamen love to hear and
 tell
 Of portent, prodigy, and spell :
 What gales are sold on Lapland's
 shore,
 How whistle rash bids tempests
 roar,²⁹⁴
 Of witch, of mermaid, and of
 sprite,
 Of Erick's cap and Elmo's
 light ;²⁹⁵
 Or of that Phantom Ship, whose
 form
 Shoots like a meteor through the
 storm ;
 When the dark scud comes
 driving hard,
 And lower'd is every topsail-
 yard,
 And canvass, wove in earthly
 looms,
 No more to brave the storm
 presumes !
 Then, 'mid the war of sea and
 sky,
 Top and top-gallant hoisted high,

Full spread and crowded every sail,
The Demon Frigate braves the
gale ;²⁹⁶
And well the doom'd spectators
know
The harbinger of wreck and woe.

XII.

Then, too, were told, in stifled
tone,
Marvels and omens all their own ;
How, by some desert isle or
key,²⁹⁷
Where Spaniards wrought their
cruelty,
Or where the savage pirate's
mood
Repaid it home in deeds of blood,
Strange nightly sounds of woe
and fear
Appall'd the listening Bucanier,
Whose light - arm'd shallop
anchor'd lay
In ambush by the lonely bay.
The groan of grief, the shriek of
pain,
Ring from the moonlight groves
of cane ;
The fierce adventurer's heart they
scare,
Who wearies memory for a
prayer,
Curses the road-stead, and with
gale
Of early morning lifts the sail,
To give, in thirst of blood and
prey,
A legend for another bay.

XIII.

Thus, as a man, a youth, a child,
Train'd in the mystic and the
wild,

With this on Bertram's soul at
times
Rush'd a dark feeling of his crimes ;
Such to his troubled soul their
form,
As the pale Death-ship to the
storm,
And such their omen dim and
dread,
As shrieks and voices of the
dead,—
That pang, whose transitory force
Hover'd 'twixt horror and re-
morse ;
That pang, perchance, his bosom
press'd,
As Wilfrid sudden he address'd :—
“ Wilfrid, this glen is never trode
Until the sun rides high abroad ;
Yet twice have I beheld to-day
A Form, that seem'd to dog our
way ;
Twice from my glance it seem'd
to flee,
And shroud itself by cliff or tree.
How think'st thou ?—Is our path
way-laid ?
Or hath thy sire my trust be-
tray'd ?
If so——” Ere, starting from
his dream,
That turn'd upon a gentler theme,
Wilfrid had roused him to reply,
Bertram sprang forward, shout-
ing high,
“ Whate'er thou art, thou now
shalt stand ! ”—
And forth he darted, sword in
hand.

XIV.

As bursts the levin in its wrath,
He shot him down the sounding
path ;

Rock, wood, and stream, rang
 wildly out,
 To his loud step and savage
 shout.
 Seems that the object of his
 race
 Hath scaled the cliffs ; his frantic
 chase
 Sidelong he turns, and now 'tis
 bent
 Right up the rock's tall battle-
 ment ;
 Straining each sinew to ascend,
 Foot, hand, and knee, their aid
 must lend.
 Wilfrid, all dizzy with dismay,
 Views from beneath, his dreadful
 way :
 Now to the oak's warp'd roots he
 clings,
 Now trusts his weight to ivy
 strings ;
 Now, like the wild-goat, must he
 dare
 An unsupported leap in air ;
 Hid in the shrubby rain-course
 now,
 You mark him by the crashing
 bough,
 And by his corslet's sullen clank,
 And by the stones spurn'd from
 the bank,
 And by the hawk scared from her
 nest,
 And ravens croaking o'er their
 guest,
 Who deem his forfeit limbs shall
 pay
 The tribute of his bold essay.

XV.

See, he emerges !—desperate now
 All farther course—Yon beetling
 brow,

In craggy nakedness sublime,
 What heart or foot shall dare to
 climb ?

It bears no tendril for his clasp,
 Presents no angle to his grasp :
 Sole stay his foot may rest
 upon,

Is yon earth-bedded jetting stone.
 Balanced on such precarious
 prop,

He strains his grasp to reach the
 top.

Just as the dangerous stretch he
 makes,

By Heaven, his faithless footstool
 shakes !

Beneath his tottering bulk it
 bends,

It sways, . . . it loosens, . . .
 it descends !

And downward holds its headlong
 way,

Crashing o'er rock and copse-
 wood spray.

Loud thunders shake the echoing
 dell !—

Fell it alone ?—alone it fell.

Just on the very verge of fate,
 The hardy Bertram's falling
 weight

He trusted to his sinewy hands,
 And on the top unharm'd he
 stands !—

XVI.

Wilfrid a safer path pursued ;
 At intervals where, roughly
 hew'd,

Rude steps ascending from the
 dell

Render'd the cliffs accessible.

By circuit slow he thus attain'd
 The height that Risingham had
 gain'd,

And when he issued from the
 wood,
 Before the gate of Mortham
 stood.²⁹⁸
 'Twas a fair scene ! the sunbeam
 lay
 On battled tower and portal grey :
 And from the grassy slope he sees
 The Greta flow to meet the Tees ;
 Where, issuing from her dark-
 some bed,
 She caught the morning's eastern
 red,
 And through the softening vale
 below
 Rol'd her bright waves, in rosy
 glow,
 All blushing to her bridal bed,
 Like some shy maid in convent
 bred ;
 While linnet, lark, and blackbird
 gay,
 Sing forth her nuptial roundelay.

XVII.

'Twas sweetly sung that rounde-
 lay ;
 That summer morn shone blithe
 and gay ;
 But morning beam, and wild-
 bird's call,
 Awaked not Mortham's silent
 hall.
 No porter, by the low-brow'd
 gate,
 Took in the wonted niche his
 seat ;
 To the paved court no peasant
 drew ;
 Waked to their toil no menial
 crew ;
 The maiden's carol was not
 heard,
 As to her morning task she fared :

In the void offices around,
 Rung not a hoof, nor bay'd a
 hound ;
 Nor eager steed, with shrilling
 neigh,
 Accused the lagging groom's
 delay ;
 Untrimm'd, undress'd, neglected
 now,
 Was alley'd walk and orchard
 bough ;
 All spoke the master's absent care,
 All spoke neglect and disrepair.
 South of the gate, an arrow flight,
 Two mighty elms their limbs
 unite,
 As if a canopy to spread
 O'er the lone dwelling of the
 dead ;
 For their huge boughs in arches
 bent
 Above a massive monument,
 Carved o'er in ancient Gothic
 wise,
 With many a scutcheon and
 device ;
 There, spent with toil and sunk
 in gloom,
 Bertram stood pondering by the
 tomb.

XVIII.

“ It vanish'd, like a flitting ghost !
 Behind this tomb,” he said,
 “ 'twas lost—
 This tomb, where oft I deem'd
 lies stored
 Of Mortham's Indian wealth the
 hoard.
 'Tis true, the aged servants said
 Here his lamented wife is laid ;
 But weightier reasons may be
 guess'd
 For their lord's strict and stern
 behest,

That none should on his steps
 intrude,
 Whene'er he sought this soli-
 tude.—
 An ancient mariner I knew,
 What time I sail'd with Morgan's
 crew,
 Who oft, 'mid our carousals,
 spake
 Of Raleigh, Forbisher, and
 Drake ;
 Adventurous hearts ! who
 barter'd, bold,
 Their English steel for Spanish
 gold.
 Trust not, would his experience
 say,
 Captain or comrade with your
 prey ;
 But seek some charnel, when, at
 full,
 The moon gilds skeleton and
 skull :
 There dig, and tomb your precious
 heap ;
 And bid the dead your treasure
 keep ;²⁹⁹
 Sure stewards they, if fitting
 spell
 Their service to the task compel.
 Lacks there such charnel?—kill
 a slave,
 Or prisoner, on the treasure-
 grave ;
 And bid his discontented ghost
 Stalk nightly on his lonely post.—
 Such was his tale. Its truth, I
 ween,
 Is in my morning vision seen.”—

XIX.

Wilfrid, who scorn'd the legend
 wild,
 In mingled mirth and pity smiled,

Much marvelling that a breast
 so bold
 In such fond tale believ'd should
 hold ;
 But yet of Bertram sought to
 know
 The apparition's form and show.—
 The power within the guilty
 breast,
 Oft vanquish'd, never quite sup-
 press'd,
 That unsubdu'd and lurking lies
 To take the felon by surprise,
 And force him, as by magic
 spell,
 In his despite his guilt to tell,—³⁰⁰
 That power in Bertram's breast
 awoke ;
 Scarce conscious he was heard,
 he spoke ;
 “ 'Twas Mortham's form, from
 foot to head !
 His morion, with the plume of red,
 His shape, his mien — 'twas
 Mortham, right
 As when I slew him in the fight.”—
 “ Thou slay him ? — thou ? ” —
 With conscious start
 He heard, then mann'd his
 haughty heart—
 “ I slew him ? — I ! — I had forgot
 Thou, stripling, knew'st not of
 the plot.
 But it is spoken—nor will I
 Deed done, or spoken word,
 deny.
 I slew him ; I ! for thankless
 pride ;
 'Twas by this hand that Mortham
 died ! ”

XX.

Wilfrid, of gentle hand and heart,
 Averse to every active part,

But most averse to martial broil,
 From danger shrunk, and turn'd
 from toil ;
 Yet the meek lover of the lyre
 Nursed one brave spark of noble
 fire,
 Against injustice, fraud, or wrong,
 His blood beat high, his hand
 wax'd strong.
 Not his the nerves that could
 sustain,
 Unshaken, danger, toil, and pain ;
 But, when that spark blazed forth
 to flame,
 He rose superior to his frame.
 And now it came, that generous
 mood :
 And, in full current of his blood,
 On Bertram he laid desperate
 hand,
 Placed firm his foot, and drew
 his brand.
 "Should every fiend, to whom
 thou'rt sold,
 Rise in thine aid, I keep my
 hold.—
 Arouse there, ho ! take spear and
 sword !
 Attach the murderer of your
 Lord !"

XXI.

A moment, fix'd as by a spell,
 Stood Bertram—It seem'd miracle,
 That one so feeble, soft, and
 tame
 Set grasp on warlike Risingham.
 But when he felt a feeble stroke,
 The fiend within the ruffian
 woke !
 To wrench the sword from Wil-
 frid's hand ;
 To dash him headlong on the
 sand,

Was but one moment's work,—
 one more
 Had drench'd the blade in Wil-
 frid's gore ;
 But, in the instant it arose,
 To end his life, his love, his woes,
 A warlike form, that mark'd the
 scene,
 Presents his rapier sheathed be-
 tween,
 Parries the fast-descending blow,
 And steps 'twixt Wilfrid and his
 foe ;
 Nor then unscabbarded his brand,
 But, sternly pointing with his hand,
 With monarch's voice forbade the
 fight,
 And motion'd Bertram from his
 sight.
 "Go, and repent,"—he said,
 "while time
 Is given thee ; add not crime to
 crime."

XXII.

Mute, and uncertain, and amazed,
 As on a vision Bertram gazed !
 'Twas Mortham's bearing, bold
 and high,
 His sinewy frame, his falcon eye,
 His look and accent of command,
 The martial gesture of his hand,
 His stately form, spare-built and
 tall,
 His war-bleach'd locks—'twas
 Mortham all.
 Through Bertram's dizzy brain
 career
 A thousand thoughts, and all of
 fear ;
 His wavering faith received not
 quite
 The form he saw as Mortham's
 sprite,

But more he fear'd it, if it stood
His lord, in living flesh and
blood.—

What spectre can the charnel
send,

So dreadful as an injured friend?
Then, too, the habit of command,

Used by the leader of the band,
When Risingham, for many a
day,

Had march'd and fought beneath
his sway,

Tamed him—and, with reverted
face,

Backwards he bore his sullen
pace ;

Oft stopp'd, and oft on Mortham
stared,

And dark as rated mastiff glared ;
But when the tramp of steeds was
heard,

Plunged in the glen, and dis-
appeared ;—

Nor longer there the Warrior
stood,

Retiring eastward through the
wood ;

But first to Wilfrid warning
gives,

“Tell thou to none that Mortham
lives.”

XXIII.

Still rung these words in Wilfrid's
ear,

Hinting he knew not what of
fear ;

When nearer came the courser's
tread,

And, with his father at their head,
Of horsemen arm'd a gallant
power

Rein'd up their steeds before the
tower.

“Whence these pale looks, my
son !” he said :

“Where's Bertram?—Why that
naked blade ?”

Wilfrid ambiguously replied,
(For Mortham's charge his honour
tied,)

“Bertram is gone—the villain's
word

Avouch'd him murderer of his
lord !

Even now we fought—but, when
your tread

Announced you nigh, the felon
fled.”

In Wycliffe's conscious eye appear
A guilty hope, a guilty fear ;

On his pale brow the dewdrop
broke,

And his lip quiver'd as he spoke. —

XXIV.

“A murderer !—Philip Mortham
died

Amid the battle's wildest tide.

Wilfrid, or Bertram raves, or you !
Yet, grant such strange confes-
sion true,

Pursuit were vain—let him fly
far—

Justice must sleep in civil war.”

A gallant Youth rode near his side,
Brave Rokeby's page, in battle
tried ;

That morn, an embassy of weight
He brought to Barnard's castle
gate,

And follow'd now in Wycliffe's
train,

An answer for his lord to gain.

His steed, whose arch'd and sable
neck

An hundred wreaths of foarn
bedeck,

Chafed not against the curb more
 high
 Than he at Oswald's cold reply ;
 He bit his lip, implored his saint,
 (His the old faith)—then burst
 restraint.

XXV.

“ Yes ! I beheld his bloody fall,
 By that base traitor's dastard ball,
 Just when I thought to measure
 sword,
 Presumptuous hope ! with Mor-
 tham's lord
 And shall the murderer 'scape,
 who slew
 His leader, generous, brave, and
 true ?
 Escape, while on the dew you
 trace
 The marks of his gigantic pace ?
 No ! ere the sun that dew shall
 dry,
 False Risingham shall yield or
 die.—

Ring out the castle 'larum bell !
 Arouse the peasants with the
 knell !
 Meantime disperse — ride,
 gallants, ride !
 Beset the wood on every side.
 But if among you one there be,
 That honours Mortham's memory,
 Let him dismount and follow me !
 Else on your crests sit fear and
 shame,
 And foul suspicion dog your
 name ! ”

XXVI.

Instant to earth young REDMOND
 sprung ;
 Instant on earth the harness rung

Of twenty men of Wycliffe's band,
 Who waited not their lord's com-
 mand.
 Redmond his spurs from buskins
 drew,
 His mantle from his shoulders
 threw,
 His pistols in his belt he placed,
 The green-wood gain'd, the foot-
 steps traced,
 Shouted like huntsman to his
 hounds,
 “ To cover, hark ! ”—and in he
 bounds.
 Scarce heard was Oswald's
 anxious cry,
 “ Suspicion ! yes—pursue him—
 fly—
 But venture not, in useless strife,
 On ruffian desperate of his life,
 Whoever finds him, shoot him
 dead !
 Five hundred nobles for his
 head ! ”

XXVII.

The horsemen gallop'd, to make
 good
 Each path that issued from the
 wood.
 Loud from the thickets rung the
 shout
 Of Redmond and his eager rout ;
 With them was Wilfrid, stung
 with ire,
 And envying Redmond's martial
 fire,
 And emulous of fame.—But where
 Is Oswald, noble Mortham's
 heir ?
 He, bound by honour, law, and
 faith,
 Avenger of his kinsman's
 death ?—

Leaning against the elmin tree,
With drooping head and slacken'd
knee,

And clenched teeth, and close-
clasp'd hands,

In agony of soul he stands !
His downcast eye on earth is bent,
His soul to every sound is lent ;
For in each shout that cleaves the
air,
May ring discovery and despair.

XXVIII.

What 'vail'd it him, that brightly
play'd

The morning sun on Mortham's
glade?

All seems in giddy round to ride,
Like objects on a stormy tide,
Seen eddying by the moonlight
dim,

Imperfectly to sink and swim.

What 'vail'd it, that the fair
domain,

Its battled mansion, hill, and
plain,

On which the sun so brightly
shone,

Envied so long, was now his own?

The lowest dungeon, in that hour,
Of Brackenbury's dismal tower,³⁰²

Had been his choice, could such
a doom

Have open'd Mortham's bloody
tomb!

Forced, too, to turn unwilling
ear

To each surmise of hope or fear,
Murmur'd among the rustics
round,

Who gather'd at the 'larum sound ;
He dared not turn his head away,
E'en to look up to heaven to
pray,

Or call on hell, in bitter mood,
For one sharp death-shot from the
wood !

XXIX.

At length, o'erpast that dreadful
space,

Back straggling came the scatter'd
chase ;

Jaded and weary, horse and man,
Return'd the troopers, one by one.

Wilfrid, the last, arrived to say,
All trace was lost of Bertram's
way,

Though Redmond still, up
Brignal wood,

The hopeless quest in vain pur-
sued.—

O, fatal doom of human race !

What tyrant passions passions
chase !

Remorse from Oswald's brow is
gone,

Avarice and pride resume their
throne ;

The pang of instant terror by,
They dictate thus their slave's
reply :—

XXX.

“ Ay—let him range like hasty
hound !

And if the grim wolf's lair be
found,

Small is my care how goes the
game

With Redmond, or with Rising-
ham.—

Nay, answer not, thou simple
boy !

Thy fair Matilda, all so coy

To thee, is of another mood

To that bold youth of Erin's
blood.





“God and the Cause!”



“God and the King”

Illustration by the artist of the same name.

Thy ditties will she freely praise,
 And pay thy pains with courtly
 phrase ;
 In a rough path will oft com-
 mand—
 Accept at least — thy friendly
 hand ;
 His she avoids, or, urged and
 pray'd,
 Unwilling takes his proffer'd aid,
 While conscious passion plainly
 speaks
 In downcast look and blushing
 cheeks.
 Whene'er he sings, will she glide
 nigh,
 And all her soul is in her eye ;
 Yet doubts she still to tender free
 The wonted words of courtesy.
 These are strong signs !—yet
 wherefore sigh,
 And wipe, effeminate, thine eye ?
 Thine shall she be, if thou attend
 The counsels of thy sire and
 friend.

XXXI.

“ Scarce wert thou gone, when
 peep of light
 Brought genuine news of Mars-
 ton's fight.
 Brave Cromwell turn'd the doubt-
 ful tide,
 And conquest bless'd the right-
 ful side ;
 Three thousand cavaliers lie dead,
 Rupert and that bold Marquis
 fled ;
 Nobles and knights, so proud of
 late,
 Must fine for freedom and estate.
 Of these, committed to my charge,
 Is Rokeby, prisoner at large ;
 Redmond, his page arrived, to say

He reaches Barnard's towers to-
 day.
 Right heavy shall his ransom be,
 Unless that maid compound with
 thee !³⁰²
 Go to her now—be bold of cheer,
 While her soul floats 'twixt hope
 and fear ;
 It is the very change of tide,
 When best the female heart is
 tried—
 Pride, prejudice, and modesty,
 Are in the current swept to sea ;
 And the bold swain, who plies
 his oar,
 May lightly row his bark to
 shore.”

CANTO THIRD.

I.

THE hunting tribes of air and earth
 Respect the brethren of their
 birth ;
 Nature, who loves the claim of
 kind,
 Less cruel chase to each assign'd.
 The falcon, poised on soaring
 wing,
 Watches the wild-duck by the
 spring ;
 The slow-hound wakes the fox's
 lair ;
 The greyhound presses on the
 hare ;
 The eagle pounces on the lamb ;
 The wolf devours the fleecy dam :
 Even tiger fell, and sullen bear,
 Their likeness and their lineage
 spare,
 Man, only, mars kind Nature's
 plan,
 And turns the fierce pursuit on
 man ;

Plying war's desultory trade,
 Incursion, flight, and ambuscade,
 Since Nimrod, Cush's mighty
 son,
 At first the bloody game begun.

II.

The Indian, prowling for his
 prey,
 Who hears the settlers track his
 way,³⁰³
 And knows in distant forest far
 Camp his red brethren of the
 war ;
 He, when each double and dis-
 guise
 To baffle the pursuit he tries,
 Low crouching now his head to
 hide,
 Where swampy streams through
 rushes glide,
 Now covering with the wither'd
 leaves
 The foot-prints that the dew re-
 ceives :
 He, skill'd in every silvan guile,
 Knows not, nor tries, such various
 wile,
 As Risingham, when on the wind
 Arose the loud pursuit behind.
 In Redesdale his youth had heard
 Each art her wily dalesmen
 dared,
 When Rooken-edge, and Red-
 swair high,
 To bugle rung and blood-hound's
 cry,³⁰⁴
 Announcing Jedwood-axe and
 spear,
 And Lid'sdale riders in the rear ;
 And well his venturous life had
 proved,
 The lessons that his childhood
 loved.

III.

Oft had he shown, in climes afar,
 Each attribute of roving war ;
 The sharpen'd ear, the piercing
 eye,
 The quick resolve in danger nigh ;
 The speed, that in the flight or
 chase,
 Outstripp'd the Charib's rapid
 race ;
 The steady brain, the sinewy
 limb,
 To leap, to climb, to dive, to
 swim ;
 The iron frame, inured to bear
 Each dire inclemency of air.
 Nor less confirm'd to undergo
 Fatigue's faint chill, and famine's
 throe.
 These arts he proved, his life to
 save,
 In peril oft by land and wave,
 On Arawaca's desert shore,
 Or where La Plata's billows roar.
 When oft the sons of vengeful
 Spain
 Track'd the marauder's steps in
 vain.
 These arts, in Indian warfare
 tried,
 Must save him now by Greta's
 side.

IV.

'Twas then, in hour of utmost
 need,
 He proved his courage, art, and
 speed.
 Now slow he stalk'd with stealthy
 pace,
 Now started forth in rapid race,
 Oft doubling back in mazy train,
 To blind the trace the dews
 retain ;

Now clombe the rocks projecting
 high,
 To baffle the pursuer's eye ;
 Now sought the stream, whose
 brawling sound
 The echo of his footsteps drown'd.
 But if the forest verge he nears,
 There trample steeds, and
 glimmer spears ;
 If deeper down the copse he drew,
 He heard the rangers' loud halloo,
 Beating each cover while they
 came,
 As if to start the silvan game.
 'Twas then—like tiger close beset
 At every pass with toil and net,
 'Counter'd, where'er he turns his
 glare,
 By clashing arms and torches'
 flare,
 Who meditates, with furious
 bound,
 To burst on hunter, horse, and
 hound,—
 'Twas then that Bertram's soul
 arose,
 Prompting to rush upon his foes :
 But as that crouching tiger, cow'd
 By brandish'd steel and shouting
 crowd,
 Retreats beneath the jungle's
 shroud,
 Bertram suspends his purpose
 stern,
 And couches in the brake and
 fern,
 Hiding his face, lest foemen spy
 The sparkle of his swarthy eye.³⁰⁵

V.

Then Bertram might the bearing
 trace
 Of the bold youth who led the
 chase ;

Who paused to list for every
 sound,
 Climb every height to look
 around,
 Then rushing on with naked
 sword,
 Each dingle's bosky depths ex-
 plored.
 'Twas Redmond — by the azure
 eye ;
 'Twas Redmond — by the locks
 that fly
 Disorder'd from his glowing
 cheek ;
 Mien, face, and form, young
 Redmond speak
 A form more active, light, and
 strong,
 Ne'er shot the ranks of war
 along ;
 The modest, yet the manly
 mien,
 Might grace the court of maiden
 queen
 A face more fair you well might
 find,
 For Redmond's knew the sun
 and wind,
 Nor boasted, from their tinge
 when free,
 The charm of regularity ;
 But every feature had the power
 To aid the expression of the
 hour :
 Whether gay wit, and humour
 sly,
 Danced laughing in his light-blue
 eye ;
 Or bended brow, and glance of
 fire,
 And kindling cheek, spoke Erin's
 ire ;
 Or soft and sadden'd glances
 show
 Her ready sympathy with woe ;

Or in that wayward mood of
 mind,
 When various feelings are combin-
 ed,
 When joy and sorrow mingle
 near,
 And hope's bright wings are
 check'd by fear,
 And rising doubts keep transport
 down,
 And anger lends a short-lived
 frown ;
 In that strange mood which
 maids approve
 Even when they dare not call it
 love ;
 With every change his features
 play'd,
 As aspens show the light and
 shade.

VI.

Well Risingham young Redmond
 knew :
 And much he marvell'd that the
 crew,
 Roused to revenge bold Mortham
 dead,
 Were by that Mortham's foeman
 led ;
 For never felt his soul the woe,
 That wails a generous foeman low,
 Far less that sense of justice
 strong,
 That wrecks a generous foeman's
 wrong.
 But small his leisure now to
 pause ;
 Redmond is first, whate'er the
 cause :
 And twice that Redmond came so
 near
 Where Bertram couch'd like
 hunted deer,

The very boughs his steps dis-
 place,
 Rustled against the ruffian's face,
 Who, desperate, twice prepared
 to start,
 And plunge his dagger in his
 heart !
 But Redmond turn'd a different
 way,
 And the bent boughs resumed
 their sway,
 And Bertram held it wise, unseen,
 Deeper to plunge in coppice green.
 Thus, circled in his coil, the snake,
 When roving hunters beat the
 brake,
 Watches with red and glistening
 eye,
 Prepared, if heedless step draw
 nigh,
 With forked tongue and venom'd
 fang
 Instant to dart the deadly pang ;
 But if the intruders turn aside,
 Away his coils unfolded glide,
 And through the deep savannah
 wind,
 Some undisturb'd retreat to find.

VII.

But Bertram, as he backward
 drew,
 And heard the loud pursuit renew,
 And Redmond's hollo on the wind,
 Oft mutter'd in his savage mind—
 “ Redmond O'Neale ! were thou
 and I
 Alone this day's event to try,
 With not a second here to see,
 But the grey cliff and oaken tree,—
 That voice of thine, that shouts so
 loud,
 Should ne'er repeat its summons
 proud !

No! nor e'er try its melting power
Again in maiden's summer
bower."

Eluded, now behind him die,
Faint and more faint, each hostile
cry ;

He stands in Scargill wood alone,
Nor hears he now a harsher tone
Than the hoarse cushat's plaintive
cry,

Or Greta's sound that murmurs
by ;

And on the dale, so lone and wild,
The summer sun in quiet smiled.

VIII.

He listen'd long with anxious
heart,

Ear bent to hear, and foot to start,
And, while his stretch'd attention
glows,

Refused his weary frame repose.
'Twas silence all—he laid him
down,

Where purple heath profusely
strown,

And throatwort, with its azure
bell,

And moss and thyme his cushion
swell.

There, spent with toil, he listless
eyed

The course of Greta's playful tide ;
Beneath, her banks now eddying
dun,

Now brightly gleaming to the sun,
As, dancing over rock and stone,
In yellow light her currents shone,
Matching in hue the favourite
gem

Of Albin's mountain-diadem.

Then, tired to watch the current's
play,

He turn'd his weary eyes away,

To where the bank opposing
show'd

Its huge, square cliffs through
shaggy wood.

One, prominent above the rest,
Rear'd to the sun its pale gray
breast ;

Around its broken summit grew
The hazel rude, and sable yew ;
A thousand varied lichens dyed
Its waste and weather-beaten side,
And round its rugged basis lay,
By time or thunder rent away,
Fragments, that, from its frontlet
torn,

Were mantled now by verdant
thorn.

Such was the scene's wild majesty,
That fill'd stern Bertram's gazing
eye.

IX.

In sullen mood he lay reclined,
Revolving, in his stormy mind,
The felon deed, the fruitless guilt,
His patron's blood by treason
spilt ;

A crime, it seem'd, so dire and
dread,

That it had power to wake the dead.
Then, pondering on his life
betray'd

By Oswald's art to Redmond's
blade,

In treacherous purpose to with-
hold,

So seem'd it, Mortham's promised
gold,

A deep and full revenge he vow'd
On Redmond, forward, fierce, and
proud ;

Revenge on Wilfrid—on his sire
Redoubled vengeance, swift and
dire !—

If, in such mood, (as legends say,
 And well believed that simple day,)
 The Enemy of Man has power
 To profit by the evil hour,
 Here stood a wretch, prepared to
 change
 His soul's redemption for re-
 venge !³⁰⁶
 But though his vows, with such
 a fire
 Of earnest and intense desire
 For vengeance dark and fell, were
 made,
 As well might reach hell's lowest
 shade,
 No deeper clouds the grove em-
 brown'd,
 No nether thunders shook the
 ground ;—
 The demon knew his vassal's
 heart,
 And spared temptation's needless
 art.

X.

Oft, mingled with the direful
 theme,
 Come Mortham's form—Was it a
 dream ?
 Or had he seen, in vision true,
 That very Mortham whom he
 slew ?
 Or had in living flesh appear'd
 The only man on earth he
 fear'd ?—
 To try the mystic cause intent,
 His eyes, that on the cliff were
 bent,
 'Counter'd at once a dazzling
 glance,
 Like sunbeam flash'd from sword
 or lance.
 At once he started as for fight,
 But not a foeman was in sight ;

He heard the cushat's murmur
 hoarse,
 He heard the river's sounding
 course ;
 The solitary woodlands lay,
 As slumbering in the summer ray.
 He gazed, like lion roused, around,
 Then sunk again upon the ground.
 'Twas but, he thought, some fitful
 beam,
 Glanced sudden from the sparkling
 stream ;
 Then plunged him from his
 gloomy train
 Of ill-connected thoughts again,
 Until a voice behind him cried,
 "Bertram ! well met on Greta
 side."

XI.

Instant his sword was in his hand,
 As instant sunk the ready brand ;
 Yet, dubious still, opposed he
 stood
 To him that issued from the
 wood :
 "Guy Denzil !—is it thou ?" he
 said ;
 "Do we two meet in Scargill
 shade !—
 Stand back a space !—thy purpose
 show,
 Whether thou comest as friend or
 foe.
 Report hath said, that Denzil's
 name
 From Rokeby's band was razed
 with shame."—
 "A shame I owe that hot O'Neale,
 Who told his knight, in peevish
 zeal,
 Of my marauding on the clowns
 Of Calverley and Bradford
 downs.³⁰⁷

I reckon not. In a war to strive,
 Where, save the leaders, none
 can thrive,
 Suits ill my mood; and better
 game
 Awaits us both, if thou'rt the
 same
 Unscrupulous, bold Risingham,
 Who watched with me in mid-
 night dark,
 To snatch a deer from Rokeby-
 park.
 How think'st thou?"—"Speak
 thy purpose out;
 I love not mystery or doubt."—

XII.

"Then, list.—Not far there lurk
 a crew
 Of trusty comrades, stanch and
 true,
 Glean'd from both factions—
 Roundheads, freed
 From cant of sermon and of
 creed;
 And Cavaliers, whose souls, like
 mine,
 Spurn at the bonds of discipline.
 Wiser, we judge, by dale and
 wold,
 A warfare of our own to hold,
 Than breathe our last on battle-
 down,
 For cloak or surplice, mace or
 crown.
 Our schemes are laid, our purpose
 set,
 A chief and leader lack we yet.—
 Thou art a wanderer, it is said;
 For Mortham's death, thy steps
 way-laid,
 Thy head at price—so say our
 spies,
 Who range the valley in disguise.

Join then with us:—though wild
 debate
 And wrangling rend our infant
 state,
 Each to an equal loth to bow,
 Will yield to chief renown'd as
 thou."—

XIII.

"Even now," thought Bertram,
 passion stirr'd,
 "I call'd on hell, and hell has
 heard!
 What lack I, vengeance to com-
 mand,
 But of staunch comrades such a
 band?
 This Denzil, vow'd to every evil,
 Might read a lesson to the devil.
 Well, be it so! each knave and fool
 Shall serve as my revenge's
 tool."—
 Aloud, "I take thy proffer, Guy,
 But tell me where thy comrades
 lie?"
 "Not far from hence," Guy
 Denzil said;
 "Descend, and cross the river's
 bed,
 Where rises yonder cliff so
 grey."—
 "Do thou," said Bertram, "lead
 the way."
 Then mutter'd, "It is best make
 sure;
 Guy Denzil's faith was never
 pure."
 He follow'd down the steep
 descent,
 Then through the Greta's streams
 they went;
 And, when they reach'd the
 farther shore,
 They stood the lonely cliff before.

XIV.

With wonder Bertram heard
within

The flinty rock a murmur'd din ;
But when Guy pull'd the wilding
spray,

And brambles, from its base
away,

He saw, appearing to the air,
A little entrance, low and square,
Like opening cell of hermit lone,
Dark, winding through the living
stone.

Here enter'd Denzil, Bertram
here ;

And loud and louder on their
ear,

As from the bowels of the earth,
Resounded shouts of boisterous
mirth.

Of old, the cavern strait and
rude,

In slaty rock the peasant hew'd ;
And Brignall's woods, and Scar-
gill's, wave,

E'en now, o'er many a sister
cave,³⁰⁸

Where, far within the darksome
rift,

The wedge and lever ply their
thrift.

But war had silenced rural trade,
And the deserted mine was made
The banquet-hall and fortress
too,

Of Denzil and his desperate
crew.—

There Guilt his anxious revel
kept ;

There, on his sordid pallet, slept
Guilt-born Excess, the goblet
drain'd

Still in his slumbering grasp
retain'd ;

Regret was there, his eye still
cast

With vain repining on the
past ;

Among the feasters waited near
Sorrow, and unrepentant Fear,
And Blasphemy, to frenzy driven,
With his own crimes reproaching
heaven ;

While Bertram show'd, amid the
crew,

The Master-Fiend that Milton
drew.

XV.

Hark ! the loud revel wakes
again,

To greet the leader of the train.
Behold the group by the pale
lamp,

That struggles with the earthly
damp.

By what strange features Vice
hath known,

To single out and mark her own !
Yet some there are, whose brows
retain

Less deeply stamp'd her brand
and stain.

See yon pale stripling ! when a
boy,

A mother's pride, a father's
joy !

Now, 'gainst the vault's rude
walls reclined,

An early image fills his mind :
The cottage, once his sire's, he
sees,

Embower'd upon the banks of
Tees ;

He views sweet Winston's wood-
land scene,

And shares the dance on Gain-
ford-green.

A tear is springing—but the zest,
Of some wild tale, or brutal
jest

Hath to loud laughter stirr'd the
rest.

On him they call, the aptest mate
For jovial song and merry feat :
Fast flies his dream—with daunt-
less air,

As one victorious o'er Despair,
He bids the ruddy cup go
round,

Till sense and sorrow both are
drown'd ;

And soon, in merry wassail, he,
The life of all their revelry,
Peals his loud song !—The muse
has found

Her blossoms on the wildest
ground,

'Mid noxious weeds at random
strew'd,

Themselves all profitless and
rude.—

With desperate merriment he
sung,

The cavern to the chorus rung ;
Yet mingled with his reckless
glee

Remorse's bitter agony.

XVI.

Song.

O, Brignall banks are wild and
fair,

And Greta woods are green,
And you may gather garlands
there,

Would grace a sunner queen.

And as I rode by Dalton-hall.

Beneath the turrets high,

A Maiden on the castle wall

Was singing merrily,—

CHORUS.

“O, Brignall banks are fresh and
fair,

And Greta woods are green ;
I'd rather rove with Edmund
there,

Than reign our English
queen.”—

“If, Maiden, thou wouldst wend
with me,

To leave both tower and town,
Thou first must guess what life
lead we,

That dwell by dale and down ?
And if thou canst that riddle read,
As read full well you may,

Then to the greenwood shalt thou
speed,

As blithe as Queen of May.”—

CHORUS.

Yet sung she, “Brignall banks
are fair,

And Greta woods are green ;
I'd rather rove with Edmund
there,

Than reign our English queen.

XVII.

“I read you, by your bugle-
horn,

And by your palfrey good,
I read you for a ranger sworn,
To keep the king's green-
wood.”—

“A Ranger, lady, winds his
horn,

And 'tis at peep of light ;
His blast is heard at merry
morn,

And mine at dead of night.”—

CHORUS.

Yet sung she, "Brignall banks
are fair,
And Greta woods are gay ;
I would I were with Edmund
there,
To reign his Queen of May !

"With burnish'd brand and
musketoon,
So gallantly you come,
I read you for a bold Dragoon,
That lists the tuck of
drum."—

"I list no more the tuck of
drum,
No more the trumpet hear ;
But when the beetle sounds his
hum,
My comrades take the spear.

CHORUS.

"And, O! though Brignall banks,
be fair,
And Greta woods be gay,
Yet mickle must the maiden dare,
Would reign my Queen of
May !

XVIII.

"Maiden ! a nameless life I lead,
A nameless death I'll die !
The fiend, whose lantern lights
the mead,
Were better mate than I !
And when I'm with my comrades
met,
Beneath the greenwood bough,
What once we were we all forget,
Nor think what we are now.

CHORUS.

"Yet Brignall banks are fresh
and fair,
And Greta woods are green,
And you may gather garlands
there
Would grace a summer queen."

When Edmund ceased his simple
song,
Was silence on the sullen
throng,
Till waked some ruder mate their
glee
With note of coarser minstrelsy.
But, far apart, in dark divan,
Denzil and Bertram many a plan,
Of import foul and fierce, design'd,
While still on Bertram's grasping
mind
The wealth of murder'd Mortham
hung ;
Though half he fear'd his daring
tongue,
When it should give his wishes
birth,
Might raise a spectre from the
earth !

XIX.

At length his wondrous tale he
told :
When, scornful, smiled his com-
rade bold ;
For, train'd in license of a
court,
Religion's self was Denzil's
sport ;
Then judge in what contempt he
held
The visionary tales of eld !
His awe for Bertram scarce
repress'd
The unbeliever's sneering jest.

"Twere hard," he said, "for
 sage or seer,
 To spell the subject of your
 fear ;
 Nor do I boast the art renown'd,
 Vision and omen to expound.
 Yet, faith if I must needs afford
 To spectre watching treasured
 board,
 As bandog keeps his master's
 roof,
 Bidding the plunderer stand
 aloof,
 This doubt remains—thy goblin
 gaunt
 Hath chosen ill his ghostly
 haunt ;
 For why his guard on Mortham
 hold,
 When Rokeby castle hath the
 gold
 Thy patron won on Indian soil,
 By stealth, by piracy, and
 spoil?"—

XX.

At this he paused—for angry
 shame
 Lower'd on the brow of Rising-
 ham.
 He blushed to think, that he
 should seem
 Assertor of an airy dream,
 And gave his wrath another
 theme.
 "Denzil," he says, "though
 lowly laid,
 Wrong not the memory of the
 dead ;
 For, while he lived, at Mortham's
 look
 Thy very soul, Guy Denzil,
 shook !

And when he tax'd thy breach of
 word
 To yon fair Rose of Allenford,
 I saw thee crouch like chasten'd
 hound,
 Whose back the huntsman's lash
 hath found.
 Nor dare to call his foreign
 wealth
 The spoil of piracy or stealth ;
 He won it bravely with his brand,
 When Spain waged warfare with
 our land.³⁰⁹
 Mark, too—I brook no idle jeer,
 Nor couple Bertram's name with
 fear ;
 Mine is but half the demon's
 lot,
 For I believe, but tremble not.—
 Enough of this.—Say, why this
 hoard
 Thou deem'st at Rokeby castle
 stored ;
 Or think'st that Mortham would
 bestow
 His treasure with his faction's
 foe?"

XXI.

Soon quench'd was Denzil's ill-
 timed mirth ;
 Rather he would have seen the
 earth
 Give to ten thousand spectres
 birth,
 Than venture to awake to flame
 The deadly wrath of Risingham.
 Submiss he answer'd,—“Mor-
 tham's mind,
 Thou know'st, to joy was ill
 inclined.
 In youth, 'tis said, a gallant free,
 A lusty reveller was he ;
 But since return'd from over sea,

A sullen and a silent mood
Hath numb'd the current of his
blood.

Hence he refused each kindly call
To Rokeby's hospitable hall,
And our stout knight, at dawn of
morn

Who loved to hear the bugle-
horn,

Nor less, when eve his oaks
embrown'd,

To see the ruddy cup go round,
Took umbrage that a friend so
near

Refused to share his chase and
cheer ;

Thus did the kindred barons jar,
Ere they divided in the war.

Yet, trust me, friend, Matilda fair
Of Mortham's wealth is destined
heir."—

XXII.

“Destined to her ! to yon slight
maid !

The prize my life had wellnigh
paid,

When 'gainst Laroche, by Cayo's
wave,

I fought my patron's wealth to
save !—

Denzil, I knew him long, yet
ne'er

Knew him that joyous cavalier,
Whom youthful friends and early
fame

Call'd soul of gallantry and game.
A moody man, he sought our
crew,

Desperate and dark, whom no
one knew ;

And rose, as men with us must
rise,

By scorning life and all its ties.

On each adventure rash he roved,
As danger for itself he loved ;

On his sad brow nor mirth nor
wine

Could e'er one wrinkled knot
untwine ;

Ill was the omen if he smiled,

For 'twas in peril stern and
wild ;

But when he laugh'd, each luck-
less mate

Might hold our fortune desperate.
Foremost he fought in every broil,

Then scornful turned him from
the spoil ;

Nay, often strove to bar the
way

Between his comrades and their
prey ;

Preaching, even then, to such as
we,

Hot with our dear-bought victory,
Of mercy and humanity.

XXIII.

“I loved him well—His fearless
part,

His gallant leading, won my
heart.

And after each victorious fight,
'Twas I that wrangled for his

right,
Redeem'd his portion of the prey

That greedier mates had torn
away :

In field or storm thrice saved his
life,

And once amid our comrades'
strife.—³¹⁰

Yes, I have loved thee ! Well
hath proved

My toil, my danger, how I loved !
Yet will I mourn no more thy fate,

Ingrate in life, in death ingrate.

Rise if thou canst!" he look'd
 around,
 And sternly stamp'd upon the
 ground—
 "Rise, with thy bearing proud
 and high,
 Even as this morn it met mine
 eye,
 And give me, if thou darest, the
 lie!"
 He paused—then, calm and
 passion-freed,
 Bade Denzil with his tale proceed.

XXIV.

"Bertram, to thee I need not
 tell,
 What thou hast cause to wot so
 well,
 How Superstition's nets were
 twined
 Around the Lord of Mortham's
 mind!
 But since he drove thee from his
 tower,
 A maid he found in Greta's
 bower,
 Whose speech, like David's harp,
 had sway,
 To charm his evil fiend away.
 I know not if her features moved
 Remembrance of the wife he
 loved;
 But he would gaze upon her
 eye,
 Till his mood soften'd to a sigh.
 He, whom no living mortal
 sought
 To question of his secret thought,
 Now every thought and care
 confess'd
 To his fair niece's faithful breast;
 Nor was there aught of rich and
 rare,

In earth, in ocean, or in air,
 But it must deck Matilda's hair.
 Her love still bound him unto
 life;
 But then awoke the civil strife,
 And menials bore, by his com-
 mands,
 Three coffers, with their iron
 bands,
 From Mortham's vault, at mid-
 night deep,
 To her lone bower in Rokeby-
 keep,
 Ponderous with gold and plate of
 pride
 His gift, if he in battle died."—

XXV.

"Then Denzil, as I guess, lays
 train,
 These iron-banded chests to gain;
 Else, wherefore should he hover
 here,
 Where many a peril waits him
 near,
 From all his feats of war and
 peace,
 For plunder'd boors, and harts of
 greese?
 Since through the hamlets as he
 fared,
 What hearth has Guy's maraud-
 ing spared,
 Or where the chase that hath not
 rung
 With Denzil's bow, at midnight
 strung?"—
 "I hold my wont—my rangers
 go,
 Even now to track a milk-white
 doe.³¹¹
 By Rokeby-hall she takes her
 lair,
 In Greta wood she harbours fair,

And when my huntsman marks
her way,
What think'st thou, Bertram, of
the prey?
Were Rokeby's daughter in our
power,
We rate her ransom at her
dower."—

XXVI.

"'Tis well!—there's vengeance
in the thought
Matilda is by Wilfrid sought;
And hot-brain'd Redmond, too,
'tis said,
Pays lover's homage to the maid.
Bertram she scorn'd—If met by
chance,
She turn'd from me her shuddering
glance,
Like a nice dame, that will not
brook
On what she hates and loathes to
look;
She told to Mortham she could
ne'er
Behold me without secret fear,
Foreboding evil;—She many rue
To find her prophecy fall true!—
The war has weeded Rokeby's
train,
Few followers in his halls remain;
If thy scheme miss, then, brief
and bold,
We are enow to storm the hold;
Bear off the plunder, and the
dame,
And leave the castle all in
flame."—

XXVII.

"Still art thou Valour's ventur-
ous son!
Yet ponder first the risk to run:

The menials of the castle, true,
And stubborn to their charge,
though few;
The wall to scale—the moat to
cross—
The wicket-grate—the inner
fosse"—
—"Fool! if we blench for toys
like these,
On what fair guerdon can we
seize?
Our hardest venture, to explore
Some wretched peasant's fence-
less door,
And the best prize we bear away,
The earnings of his sordid day."—
"A while thy hasty taunt forbear:
In sight of road more sure and
fair,
Thou wouldst not choose, in
blindfold wrath,
Or wantonness, a desperate path?
List, then;—for vantage or as-
sault,
From gilded vane to dungeon-
vault,
Each pass of Rokeby-house I
know:
There is one postern, dark and
low,
That issues at a secret spot,
By most neglected or forgot.
Now, could a spial of our train
On fair pretext admittance gain,
That sally-port might be unbarr'd:
Then, vain were battlement and
ward!"—

XXVIII.

"Now speak'st thou well:—to
me the same,
If force or art shall urge the game;
Indifferent, if like fox I wind,
Or spring like tiger on the hind.—

But, hark! our merry-men so
 gay
 Troll forth another roundelay."—

Song.

"A weary lot is thine, fair
 maid,
 A weary lot is thine!
 To pull the thorn thy brow to
 braid,

And press the rue for wine!
 A lightsome eye, a soldier's
 mien,

A feather of the blue,
 A doublet of the Lincoln
 green,—

No more of me you knew,
 My love!
 No more of me you knew.

"This morn is merry June, I
 trow,

The rose is budding fain;
 But she shall bloom in winter
 snow,

Ere we two meet again."
 He turn'd his charger as he
 spake,

Upon the river shore,
 He gave his bridle-reins a
 shake,

Said, "Adieu for evermore,
 My love!
 And adieu for evermore."—³¹²

XXIX.

"What youth is this, your band
 among,

The best for minstrelsy and song?
 In his wild notes seem aptly met
 A strain of pleasure and regret."—

"Edmund of Winston is his
 name;

The hamlet sounded with the
 fame

Of early hopes his childhood
 gave,—

Now center'd all in Brignall cave!
 I watch him well—his wayward
 course

Shows oft a tincture of remorse.
 Some early love-shaft grazed his
 heart,

And oft the scar will ache and
 smart

Yet is he useful;—of the rest,
 By fits, the darling and the jest,
 His harp, his story, and his lay,
 Oft aid the idle hours away:

When unemploy'd, each fiery
 mate

Is ripe for mutinous debate.
 He tuned his strings e'en now—
 again

He wakes them, with a blither
 strain."

XXX.

Song.

ALLEN-A-DALE.

Allen-a-Dale has no fagot for
 burning,

Allen-a-Dale has no furrow for
 turning,

Allen-a-Dale has no fleece for the
 spinning,

Yet Allen-a-Dale has red gold for
 the winning.

Come, read me my riddle! come,
 hearken my tale!

And tell me the craft of bold
 Allen-a-Dale.

The Baron of Ravensworth
 prances in pride,

And he views his domains upon
 Arkindale side.

The mere for his net, and the
land for his game,
The chase for the wild, and the
park for the tame ;
Yet the fish of the lake, and the
deer of the vale,
Are less free to Lord Dacre than
Allen-a-Dale !

Allen-a-Dale was ne'er belted a
knight,
Though his spur be as sharp,
and his blade be as bright ;
Allen-a-Dale is no baron or lord,
Yet twenty tall yeomen will draw
at his word ;
And the best of our nobles his
bonnet will veil,
Who at Rere-cross on Stanmore
meets Allen-a-Dale.³¹³

Allen-a-Dale to his wooing is
come ;
The mother, she ask'd of his
household and home :
" Though the castle of Richmond
stand fair on the hill,
My hall," quoth bold Allen,
" shows gallanter still ;
'Tis the blue vault of heaven,
with its crescent so pale,
And with all its bright spangles ! "
said Allen-a-Dale.

The father was steel, and the
mother was stone ;
They lifted the latch, and they
bade him be gone ;
But loud, on the morrow, their
wail and their cry :
He had laugh'd on the lass with
his bonny black eye.
And she fled to the forest to hear
a love-tale,
And the youth it was told by was
Allen-a-Dale !

XXXI.

" Thou see'st that, whether sad
or gay,
Love mingles ever in his lay.
But when his boyish wayward
fit
Is o'er, he hath address and
wit ;
O ! 'tis a brain of fire, can
ape
Each dialect, each various
shape."—
" Nay, then, to aid thy project,
Guy—
Soft ! who comes here ?"—" My
trusty spy.
Speak, Hamlin ! hast thou lodged
our deer ?"—³¹⁴
" I have—but two fair stags are
near
I watch'd her, as she slowly
stray'd
From Egliston up Thorsgill
glade ;
But Wilfrid Wycliffe sought her
side,
And then young Redmond, in his
pride,
Shot down to meet them on their
way :
Much, as it seem'd, was theirs to
say :
There's time to pitch both toil
and net,
Before their path be homeward
set."—
A hurried and a whisper'd
speech
Did Bertram's will to Denzil
teach ;
Who, turning to the robber
band,
Bade four, the bravest, take the
brand.



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80.

Ellen's Isle, Loch Katrine.

M.

CANTO FOURTH.

I.

WHEN Denmark's raven soar'd
 on high,
 Triumphant through Northum-
 brian sky,
 Till, hovering near, her fatal croak
 Bade Reged's Britons dread the
 yoke,³¹⁵
 And the broad shadow of her
 wing
 Blacken'd each cataract and
 spring,
 Where Tees in tumult leaves
 his source,
 Thundering o'er Caldron and
 High-Force ;
 Beneath the shade the Northmen
 came,
 Fix'd on each vale a Runic
 name,³¹⁶
 Rear'd high their altar's rugged
 stone,
 And gave their Gods the land
 they won.
 Then, Balder, one bleak garth
 was thine,
 And one sweet brooklet's silver
 line,
 And Woden's Croft did title
 gain
 From the stern Father of the
 Slain ;
 But to the Monarch of the Mace,
 That held in fight the foremost
 place,
 To Odin's son, and Sifia's spouse,
 Near Stratforth high they paid
 their vows,
 Remember'd Thor's victorious
 fame,
 And gave the dell the Thunderer's
 name.

sc.

II.

Yet Scald or Kemper err'd, I
 ween,
 Who gave that soft and quiet
 scene,
 With all its varied light and
 shade,
 And every little sunny glade,
 And the blithe brook that strolls
 along
 Its pebbled bed with summer
 song,
 To the grim God of blood and
 scar,
 The grisly King of Northern
 War.
 O, better were its banks assign'd
 To spirits of a gentler kind !
 For where the thicket-groups
 recede,
 And the rath primrose decks the
 mead,
 The velvet grass seems carpet
 meet
 For the light fairies' lively feet.
 Yon tufted knoll, with daisies
 strown,
 Might make proud Oberon a
 throne,
 While, hidden in the thicket
 nigh,
 Puck should brood o'er his frolic
 sly ;
 And where profuse the wood-
 vetch clings
 Round ash and elm, in verdant
 rings,
 Its pale and azure-pencill'd flower
 Should canopy Titania's bower.

III.

Here rise no cliffs the vale to
 shade ;
 But, skirting every sunny glade,

M

In fair variety of green
 The woodland lends its silvan
 screen.
 Hoary, yet haughty, frowns the
 oak,
 Its boughs by weight of ages
 broke ;
 And towers erect, in sable spire,
 The pine-tree scathed by light-
 ning-fire ;
 The drooping ash and birch,
 between,
 Hang their fair tresses o'er the
 green,
 And all beneath, at random
 grow
 Each coppice dwarf of varied
 show,
 Or, round the stems profusely
 twined,
 Flung summer odours on the
 wind.
 Such varied group Urbino's hand
 Round Him of Tarsus nobly
 plann'd,
 What time he bade proud Athens
 own
 On Mars's Mount the God Un-
 known !
 Then grey Philosophy stood nigh,
 Though bent by age, in spirit
 high :
 There rose the scar-seam'd
 veteran's spear,
 There Grecian Beauty bent to
 hear,
 While Childhood at her foot was
 placed,
 Or clung delighted to her waist.

IV.

"And rest we here," Matilda
 said,
 And sat her in the varying shade.

"Chance-met, we well may steal
 an hour,
 To friendship due, from fortune's
 power.
 Thou, Wilfrid, ever kind, must
 lend
 Thy counsel to thy sister-friend ;
 And, Redmond, thou, at my
 behest,
 No farther urge thy desperate
 'quest.
 For to my care a charge is left,
 Dangerous to one of aid bereft ;
 Wellnigh an orphan, and alone,
 Captive her sire, her house o'er-
 thrown."
 Wilfrid, with wonted kindness
 graced,
 Beside her on the turf she placed ;
 Then paused, with downcast look
 and eye,
 Nor bade young Redmond seat
 him nigh.
 Her conscious diffidence he saw,
 Drew backward, as in modest
 awe,
 And sat a little space removed,
 Unmark'd to gaze on her he
 loved.

V.

Wreathed in its dark-brown
 rings, her hair
 Half hid Matilda's forehead fair,
 Half hid and half reveal'd to
 view
 Her full dark eye of hazel hue.
 The rose, with faint and feeble
 streak,
 So slightly tinged the maiden's
 cheek,
 That you had said her hue was
 pale ;
 But if she faced the summer gale,

Or spoke, or sung, or quicker
 moved,
 Or heard the praise of those she
 loved,
 Or when of interest was express'd
 Aught that waked feeling in her
 breast,
 The mantling blood in ready play
 Rivall'd the blush of rising day.
 There was a soft and pensive
 grace,
 A cast of thought upon her face,
 That suited well the forehead
 high,
 The eyelash dark, and downcast
 eye ;
 The mild expression spoke a
 mind
 In duty firm, composed, resign'd ;
 'Tis that which Roman art has
 given,
 To mark their maiden Queen of
 Heaven.
 In hours of sport, that mood
 gave way
 To Fancy's light and frolic play ;
 And when the dance, or tale, or
 song,
 In harmless mirth sped time
 along,
 Full oft her doating sire would
 call
 His Maud the merriest of them
 all.
 But days of war and civil crime,
 Allow'd but ill such festal time,
 And her soft pensiveness of
 brow
 Had deepen'd into sadness now.
 In Marston field her father ta'en,
 Her friends dispersed, brave
 Mortham slain,
 While every ill her soul foretold,
 From Oswald's thirst of power
 and gold,

And boding thoughts that she
 must part
 With a soft vision of her heart,—
 All lower'd around the lovely
 maid,
 To darken her dejection's shade.

VI.

Who has not heard—while Erin
 yet
 Strove 'gainst the Saxon's iron
 bit—
 Who has not heard how brave
 O'Neale
 In English blood imbrued his
 steel,³¹⁷
 Against St. George's cross blazed
 high
 The banners of his Tanistry,
 To fiery Essex gave the foil,
 And reign'd a prince on Ulster's
 soil ?
 But chief arose his victor pride,
 When that brave Marshal fought
 and died,³¹⁸
 And Avon-Duff to ocean bore
 His billows red with Saxon
 gore.
 'Twas first in that disastrous
 fight,
 Rokeby and Mortham proved
 their might.
 There had they fallen 'mongst
 the rest,
 But pity touch'd a chieftain's
 breast ;
 The Tanist he to great
 O'Neale ;³¹⁹
 He check'd his followers' bloody
 zeal,
 To quarter took the kinsmen
 bold,
 And bore them to his mountain-
 hold,

Gave them each silvan joy to know,
 Slieve-Donard's cliffs and woods
 could show,
 Shared with them Erin's festal
 cheer,
 Show'd them the chase of wolf
 and deer,
 And, when a fitting time was
 come,
 Safe and unransom'd sent them
 home,
 Loaded with many a gift, to
 prove
 A generous foe's respect and
 love.

VII.

Years sped away. On Rokeby's
 head
 Some touch of early snow was
 shed ;
 Calm he enjoy'd, by Greta's
 wave,
 The peace which James the
 Peaceful gave,
 While Mortham, far beyond the
 main,
 Waged his fierce wars on Indian
 Spain.—
 It chanced upon a wintry night,
 That whiten'd Stanmore's stormy
 height,
 The chase was o'er, the stag was
 kill'd,
 In Rokeby-hall the cups were
 fill'd,
 And by the huge stone chimney
 sate
 The Knight in hospitable state.
 Moonless the sky, the hour was
 late,
 When a loud summons shook
 the gate,

And sore for entrance and for aid
 A voice of foreign accent pray'd.
 The porter answer'd to the call,
 And instant rush'd into the hall
 A Man, whose aspect and attire
 Startled the circle by the fire.

VIII.

His plaited hair in elf-locks
 spread³²⁰
 Around his bare and matted
 head ;
 On leg and thigh, close stretch'd
 and trim,
 His vesture show'd the sinewy
 limb ;
 In saffron dyed, a linen vest
 Was frequent folded round his
 breast ;
 A mantle long and loose he wore,
 Shaggy with ice, and stain'd
 with gore.
 He clasp'd a burden to his heart,
 And, resting on a knotted dart,
 The snow from hair and beard
 he shook,
 And round him gazed with
 wilder'd look.
 Then up the hall, with staggering
 pace,
 He hasten'd by the blaze to place,
 Half lifeless from the bitter air,
 His load, a Boy of beauty rare.
 To Rokeby, next, he louted low,
 Then stood erect his tale to
 show,
 With wild majestic port and
 tone,
 Like envoy of some barbarous
 throne,³²¹
 " Sir Richard, Lord of Rokeby,
 hear !
 Turlough O'Neale salutes thee
 dear ;

He graces thee, and to thy care
Young Redmond gives, his
grandson fair.

He bids thee breed him as thy son,
For Turlough's days of joy are
done ;

And other lords have seized his
land,

And faint and feeble is his hand ;
And all the glory of Tyrone
Is like a morning vapour flown.

To bind the duty on thy soul,
He bids thee think on Erin's
bowl !

If any wrong the young O'Neale,
He bids thee think of Erin's steel.
To Mortham first this charge
was due,

But, in his absence, honours
you.—

Now is my master's message by,
And Ferraight will contented
die."

IX.

His look grew fix'd, his cheek
grew pale,

He sunk when he had told his
tale ;

For, hid beneath his mantle wide,
A mortal wound was in his side.
Vain was all aid—in terror wild,
And sorrow, scream'd the orphan
Child.

Poor Ferraight raised his wistful
eyes,

And faintly strove to soothe his
cries ;

All reckless of his dying pain,
He blest and blest him o'er
again !

And kiss'd the little hands out-
spread,

And kiss'd and cross'd the infant
head,

And, in his native tongue and
phrase,

Pray'd to each saint to watch his
days ;

Then all his strength together
drew,

The charge to Rokeby to re-
new.

When half was falter'd from his
breast,

And half by dying signs ex-
press'd,

"Bless the O'Neale !" he faintly
said,

And thus the faithful spirit fled.

X.

'Twas long ere soothing might
prevail

Upon the Child to end the
tale ;

And then he said, that from his
home

His grandsire had been forced to
roam,

Which had not been if Redmond's
hand

Had but had strength to draw
the brand,

The brand of Lenaugh More the
Red,

That hung beside the grey wolf's
head.—

'Twas from his broken phrase
descried,

His foster-father was his guide,³²²
Who, in his charge, from Ulster
bore

Letters and gifts a goodly
store ;

But ruffians met them in the
wood,

Ferraight in battle boldly stood,

Till wounded and o'erpower'd at
length,
And stripp'd of all, his failing
strength
Just bore him here—and then the
child
Renew'd again his moaning wild.

XI

The tear down childhood's cheek
that flows,
Is like the dewdrop on the rose ;
When next the summer breeze
comes by,
And waves the bush, the flower
is dry.
Won by their care, the orphan
Child
Soon on his new protector smiled,
With dimpled cheek and eye so
fair,
Through his thick curls of flaxen
hair,
But blithest laugh'd that cheek
and eye,
When Rokeby's little Maid was
nigh ;
'Twas his, with elder brother's
pride,
Matilda's tottering steps to
guide ;
His native lays in Irish tongue,
To soothe her infant ear he
sung,
And primrose twined with daisy
fair,
To form a chaplet for her hair.
By lawn, by grove, by brooklet's
strand,
The children still were hand in
hand,
And good Sir Richard smiling
eyed
The early knot so kindly tied.

XII.

But summer months bring wild-
ing shoot
From bud to bloom, from bloom
to fruit ;
And years draw on our human
span,
From child to boy, from boy to
man ;
And soon in Rokeby's wood is
seen
A gallant boy in hunter's green.
He loves to wake the felon
boar,
In his dark haunt on Greta's
shore,
And loves, against the deer so
dun,
To draw the shaft, or lift the
gun :
Yet more he loves, in autumn
prime,
The hazel's spreading boughs to
climb,
And down its cluster'd stores to
hail,
Where young Matilda holds her
veil.
And she, whose veil receives the
shower,
Is alter'd too, and knows her
power ;
Assumes a monitress's pride,
Her Redmond's dangerous sports
to chide ;
Yet listens still to hear him tell
How the grim wild-boar fought
and fell,
How at his fall the bugle rung,
Till rock and greenwood answer
flung ;
Then blesses her, that man can
find
A pastime of such savage kind !

XIII.

But Redmond knew to weave his tale
 So well with praise of wood and dale,
 And knew so well each point to trace,
 Gives living interest to the chase,
 And knew so well o'er all to throw
 His spirit's wild romantic glow,
 That, while she blamed, and while she fear'd,
 She loved each venturous tale she heard.
 Oft, too, when drifted snow and rain
 To bower and hall their steps restrain,
 Together they explored the page
 Of glowing bard or gifted sage ;
 Oft, placed the evening fire beside,
 The minstrel art alternate tried,
 While gladsome harp and lively lay
 Bade winter-night flit fast away :
 Thus, from their childhood, blending still
 Their sport, their study, and their skill,
 An union of the soul they prove,
 But must not think that it was love.
 But though they dare not, envious Fame
 Soon dared to give that union name ;
 And when so often, side by side,
 From year to year the pair she eyed,
 She sometimes blamed the good old Knight,
 As dull of ear and dim of sight,

Sometimes his purpose would declare,
 That young O'Neale should wed his heir.

XIV.

The suit of Wilfrid rent disguise
 And bandage from the lovers' eyes ;
 'Twas plain that Oswald, for his son,
 Had Rokeby's favour wellnigh won.
 Now must they meet with change of cheer,
 With mutual looks of shame and fear ;
 Now must Matilda stray apart,
 To school her disobedient heart :
 And Redmond now alone must rue
 The love he never can subdue.
 But factions rose, and Rokeby sware,
 No rebel's son should wed his heir ;
 And Redmond, nurtured while a child
 In many a bard's traditions wild,
 Now sought the lonely wood or stream,
 To cherish there a happier dream,
 Of maiden won by sword or lance,
 As in the regions of romance ;
 And count the heroes of his line,
 Great Nial of the Pledges Nine,³²³
 Shane-Dymas³²⁴ wild, and Geraldine,³²⁵
 And Connan-more, who vow'd his race
 For ever to the fight and chase,

And cursed him, of his lineage
 born,
 Should sheathe the sword to reap
 the corn,
 Or leave the mountain and the
 wold,
 To shroud himself in castled
 hold.
 From such examples hope he
 drew,
 And brighten'd as the trumpet
 blew.

XV.

If brides were won by heart and
 blade,
 Redmond had both his cause to
 aid,
 And all beside of nurture rare
 That might beseech a baron's
 heir.
 Turlough O'Neale, in Erin's
 strife,
 On Rokeby's Lord bestow'd his
 life,
 And well did Rokeby's generous
 Knight
 Young Redmond for the deed
 requite.
 Nor was his liberal care and
 cost
 Upon the gallant stripling lost :
 Seek the North-Riding broad and
 wide,
 Like Redmond none could steed
 bestride ;
 From Tynemouth search to
 Cumberland,
 Like Redmond none could wield
 a brand ;
 And then, of humour kind and
 free,
 And bearing him to each degree
 With frank and fearless courtesy,

There never youth was form'd to
 steal
 Upon the heart like brave
 O'Neale.

XVI.

Sir Richard loved him as his
 son ;
 And when the days of peace were
 done,
 And to the gales of war he gave
 The banner of his sires to wave,
 Redmond, distinguish'd by his
 care,
 He chose that honour'd flag to
 bear,³²⁶
 And named his page, the next
 degree,
 In that old time, to chivalry.³²⁷
 In five pitch'd fields he well
 maintain'd
 The honour'd place his worth
 obtain'd,
 And high was Redmond's youth-
 ful name
 Blazed in the roll of martial fame.
 Had fortune smiled on Marston
 fight,
 The eve had seen him dubb'd a
 knight ;
 Twice, 'mid the battle's doubtful
 strife
 Of Rokeby's Lord he saved the
 life,
 But when he saw him prisoner
 made,
 He kiss'd and then resign'd his
 blade,
 And yielded him an easy prey
 To those who led the Knight
 away ;
 Resolved Matilda's sire should
 prove
 In prison, as in fight, his love.

XVII.

When lovers meet in adverse
 hour,
 'Tis like a sun-glimpse through a
 shower,
 A watery ray, an instant seen
 The darkly closing clouds be-
 tween.
 As Redmond on the turf reclined,
 The past and present fill'd his
 mind :
 " It was not thus," Affection said,
 " I dream'd of my return, dear
 maid !
 Not thus, when from thy trem-
 bling hand,
 I took the banner and the brand,
 When round me, as the bugles
 blew,
 Their blades three hundred
 warriors drew,
 And, while the standard I un-
 roll'd,
 Clash'd their bright arms, with
 clamour bold.
 Where is that banner now?—its
 pride
 Lies 'whelm'd in Ouse's sullen
 tide !
 Where now these warriors?—in
 their gore,
 They cumber Marston's dismal
 moor !
 And what avails a useless brand,
 Held by a captive's shackled
 hand,
 That only would his life retain,
 To aid thy sire to bear his
 chain !"
 Thus Redmond to himself apart ;
 Nor lighter was his rival's heart ;
 For Wilfrid, while his generous
 soul
 Disdain'd to profit by control.

By many a sign could mark too
 plain,
 Save with such aid, his hopes
 were vain.—
 But now Matilda's accents stole
 On the dark visions of their soul,
 And bade their mournful musing
 fly,
 Like mist before the zephyr's
 sigh.

XVIII.

" I need not to my friends recall,
 How Mortham shunn'd my
 father's hall ;
 A man of silence and of woe,
 Yet ever anxious to bestow
 On my poor self whate'er could
 prove
 A kinsman's confidence and love.
 My feeble aid could sometimes
 chase
 The clouds of sorrow for a space :
 But oftener, fix'd beyond my
 power,
 I mark'd his deep despondence
 lower.
 One dismal cause, by all un-
 guess'd,
 His fearful confidence confess'd ;
 And twice it was my hap to see
 Examples of that agony,
 Which for a season can o'erstrain
 And wreck the structure of the
 brain.
 He had the awful power to know
 The approaching mental over-
 throw,
 And while his mind had courage
 yet
 To struggle with the dreadful fit,
 The victim writhed against its
 throes,
 Like wretch beneath a murderer's
 blows.

This malady, I well could mark,
 Sprung from some direful cause
 and dark ;
 But still he kept its source con-
 ceal'd,
 Till arming for the civil field ;
 Then in my charge he bade me
 hold
 A treasure huge of gems and
 gold,
 With this disjointed dismal scroll,
 That tells the secret of his soul,
 In such wild words as oft betray
 A mind by anguish forced
 astray."—

XIX.

MORTHAM'S HISTORY.

"Matilda! thou hast seen me
 start,
 As if a dagger thrill'd my heart,
 When it has hap'd some casual
 phrase
 Waked memory of my former
 days.
 Believe, that few can backward
 cast
 Their thoughts with pleasure on
 the past ;
 But I!—my youth was rash and
 vain,
 And blood and rage my manhood
 stain,
 And my grey hairs must now
 descend
 To my cold grave without a
 friend!
 Even thou, Matilda, wilt disown
 Thy kinsman, when his guilt is
 known.
 And must I lift the bloody veil,
 That hides my dark and fatal
 tale!

I must—I will—Pale phantom,
 cease!
 Leave me one little hour in peace!
 Thus haunted, think'st thou I
 have skill
 Thine own commission to fulfil?
 Or, while thou point'st with
 gesture fierce,
 Thy blighted cheek, thy bloody
 hearse,
 How can I paint thee as thou
 wert,
 So fair in face, so warm in heart!

XX.

"Yes, she was fair!—Matilda,
 thou
 Hast a soft sadness on thy brow ;
 But hers was like the sunny glow,
 That laughs on earth and all
 below!
 We wedded secret—there was
 need—
 Differing in country and in creed ;
 And, when to Mortham's tower
 she came,
 We mentioned not her race and
 name,
 Until thy sire, who fought afar,
 Should turn him home from
 foreign war,
 On whose kind influence we re-
 lied
 To soothe her father's ire and
 pride.
 Few months we lived retired,
 unknown,
 To all but one dear friend alone,
 One darling friend—I spare his
 shame,
 I will not write the villain's name!
 My trespasses I might forget,
 And sue in vengeance for the
 debt

Due by a brother worm to me,
Ungrateful to God's clemency,
That spared me penitential time,
Nor cut me off amid my crime.—

XXI.

“A kindly smile to all she lent,
But on her husband's friend 'twas bent
So kind, that from its harmless
glee,
The wretch misconstrued villany.
Repulsed in his presumptuous
love,
A vengeful snare the traitor wove.
Alone we sat—the flask had flow'd,
My blood with heat unwonted
glow'd.
When through the alley'd walk
we spied
With hurried step my Edith glide,
Cowering beneath the verdant
screen,
As one unwilling to be seen.
Words cannot paint the fiendish
smile,
That curl'd the traitor's cheek
the while!
Fiercely I question'd of the cause ;
He made a cold and artful pause,
Then pray'd it might not chafe
my mood—
'There was a gallant in the
wood !'
We had been shooting at the
deer ;
My cross-bow (evil chance !) was
near :
That ready weapon of my wrath
I caught, and, hasting up the
path,
In the yew grove my wife I found,
A stranger's arms her neck had
bound !

I mark'd his heart—the bow I
drew—
I loosed the shaft—'twas more
than true !
I found my Edith's dying charms
Lock'd in her murder'd brother's
arms !
He came in secret to inquire
Her state, and reconcile her sire.

XXII.

“All fled my rage—the villain
first,
Whose craft my jealousy had
nursed ;
He sought in far and foreign
clime
To 'scape the vengeance of his
crime.
The manner of the slaughter
done
Was known to few, my guilt to
none ;
Some tale my faithful steward
framed—
I know not what—of shaft mis-
aim'd ;
And even from those the act who
knew,
He hid the hand from which it
flew.
Untouch'd by human laws I stood,
But GOD had heard the cry of
blood !
There is a blank upon my mind,
A fearful vision ill-defined,
Of raving till my flesh was
torn,
Of dungeon - bolts and fetters
worn—
And when I waked to woe more
mild,
And question'd of my infant
child—

(Have I not written, that she
bare
A boy, like summer morning
fair?)—
With looks confused my menials
tell
That arm'd men in Mortham dell
Beset the nurse's evening way,
And bore her, with her charge,
away.
My faithless friend, and none but
he,
Could profit by this villany ;
Him then, I sought, with purpose
dread
Of treble vengeance on his head !
He 'scaped me—but my bosom's
wound
Some faint relief from wandering
found ;
And over distant land and sea
I bore my load of misery.

XXIII.

“ 'Twas then that fate my foot-
steps led
Among a daring crew and dread,
With whom full oft my hated
life
I ventured in such desperate
strife,
That even my fierce associates
saw
My frantic deeds with doubt and
awe.
Much then I learn'd, and much
can show,
Of human guilt and human woe,
Yet ne'er have, in my wanderings,
known
A wretch, whose sorrows match'd
my own !—
It chanced, that after battle fray,
Upon the bloody field we lay ;

The yellow moon her lustre
shed
Upon the wounded and the
dead,
While, sense in toil and wassail
drown'd,
My ruffian comrades slept around,
There came a voice—its silver
tone
Was soft, Matilda, as thine own—
'Ah, wretch !' it said, 'what
makest thou here,
While unavenged my bloody bier,
While unprotected lives mine
heir,
Without a father's name and
care ?'

XXIV.

“ I heard—obey'd—and home-
ward drew ;
The fiercest of our desperate
crew
I brought at time of need to
aid
My purposed vengeance, long
delay'd.
But, humble be my thanks to
Heaven,
That better hopes and thoughts
has given,
And by our Lord's dear prayer
has taught,
Mercy by mercy must be
bought !—
Let me in misery rejoice—
I've seen his face—I've heard his
voice—
I claim'd of him my only child—
As he disown'd the theft, he
smiled !
That very calm and callous look,
That fiendish sneer his visage
took,

As when he said, in scornful mood,
 'There is a gallant in the
 wood!'—

I did not slay him as he stood—
 All praise be to my Maker given!
 Long sufferance is one path to
 heaven."

XXV.

Thus far the woful tale was heard,
 When something in the thicket
 stirr'd.

Up Redmond sprung; the villain
 Guy,

(For he it was that lurk'd so
 nigh,)

Drew back—he durst not cross
 his steel

A moment's space with brave
 O'Neale,

For all the treasured gold that
 rests

In Mortham's iron-banded chests.
 Redmond resumed his seat;—
 he said,

Some roe was rustling in the
 shade.

Bertram laugh'd grimly when he
 saw

His timorous comrade backward
 draw,

"A trusty mate art thou, to fear
 A single arm, and aid so near!

Yet have I seen thee mark a deer.
 Give me thy carabine—I'll show

An art that thou wilt gladly know,
 How thou mayst safely quell a

foe."

XXVI.

On hands and knees fierce Ber-
 tram drew

The spreading birch and hazels
 through,

Till he had Redmond full in view;

The gun he levell'd—Mark like
 this

Was Bertram never known to
 miss,

When fair opposed to aim there
 sat

An object of his mortal hate.

That day young Redmond's death
 had seen,

But twice Matilda came between
 The carabine and Redmond's
 breast,

Just ere the spring his finger
 press'd.

A deadly oath the ruffian swore,
 But yet his fell design forbore:

"It ne'er," he mutter'd, "shall
 be said,

That thus I scath'd thee, haughty
 maid!"

Then moved to seek more open
 aim,

When to his side Guy Denzil
 came:

"Bertram, forbear!—we are un-
 done

For ever, if thou fire the gun.

By all the fiends, an armed force
 Descends the dell, of foot and
 horse!

We perish if they hear a shot—
 Madman! we have a safer plot—

Nay, friend, be ruled, and bear
 thee back!

Behold, down yonder hollow
 track,

The warlike leader of the band
 Comes, with his broadsword in
 his hand."

Bertram look'd up; he saw, he
 knew

That Denzil's fears had counsell'd
 true,

Then cursed his fortune and with-
 drew,

Threaded the woodlands undes-
cried,
And gain'd the cave on Greta
side.

XXVII.

They whom dark Bertram, in his
wrath,
Doom'd to captivity or death,
Their thoughts to one sad subject
lent,
Saw not nor heard the ambush-
ment.

Heedless and unconcern'd they
sate,

While on the very verge of fate ;
Heedless and unconcern'd re-
main'd,

When heaven the murderer's arm
restrain'd ;

As ships drift darkling down the
tide,

Nor see the shelves o'er which
they glide.

Uninterrupted thus they heard
What Mortham's closing tale
declared.

He spoke of wealth as of a
load,

By Fortune on a wretch bestow'd,
In bitter mockery of hate,

His cureless woes to aggravate ;
But yet he pray'd Matilda's
care

Might save that treasure for his
heir—

His Edith's son—for still he raved
As confident his life was saved ;

In frequent vision, he averr'd,
He saw his face, his voice he
heard ;

Then argued calm—had murder
been,

The blood, the corpses, had been
seen ;

Some had pretended, too, to
mark

On Windermere a stranger bark,
Whose crew, with jealous care,
yet mild,

Guarded a female and a child.

While these faint proofs he told
and press'd,

Hope seem'd to kindle in his
breast ;

Though inconsistent, vague, and
vain,

It warp'd his judgment, and his
brain.

XXVIII.

These solemn words his story
close :—

“ Heaven witness for me, that I
chose

My part in this sad civil fight,
Moved by no cause but England's
right.

My country's groans have bid me
draw

My sword for gospel and for
law :—

These righted, I fling arms aside,
And seek my son through Europe
wide.

My wealth, on which a kinsman
nigh

Already casts a grasping eye,
With thee may unsuspected lie.

When of my death Matilda hears,
Let her retain her trust three
years ;

If none, from me, the treasure
claim,

Perish'd is Mortham's race and
name.

Then let it leave her generous
hand,

And flow in bounty o'er the land ;

Soften the wounded prisoner's
lot,
Rebuild the peasant's ruin'd cot ;
So spoils, acquired by fight afar,
Shall mitigate domestic war."

XXIX.

The generous youths, who well
had known
Of Mortham's mind the powerful
tone,
To that high mind, by sorrow
swerved,
Gave sympathy his woes de-
served ;
But Wilfrid chief, who saw re-
veal'd
Why Mortham wish'd his life
conceal'd,
In secret, doubtless, to pursue
The schemes his wilder'd fancy
drew.
Thoughtful he heard Matilda tell,
That she would share her father's
cell,
His partner of captivity,
Where'er his prison-house should
be ;
Yet grieved to think that Rokeby-
hall,
Dismantled, and forsook by all,
Open to rapine and to stealth,
Had now no safe-guard for the
wealth
Intrusted by her kinsman kind,
And for such noble use design'd.
"Was Barnard Castle then her
choice,"
Wilfrid enquired with hasty voice,
"Since there the victor's laws
ordain,
Her father must a space remain ?"
A flutter'd hope his accents shook,
A flutter'd joy was in his look.

Matilda hasten'd to reply,
For anger flash'd in Redmond's
eye ;—
"Duty," she said, with gentle
grace,
"Kind Wilfrid, has no choice of
place ;
Else had I for my sire assign'd
Prison less galling to his mind,
Than that his wild-wood haunts
which sees
And hears the murmur of the
Tees,
Recalling thus, with every glance,
What captive's sorrow can en-
hance ;
But where those woes are highest,
there
Needs Rokeby most his daughter's
care."

XXX.

He felt the kindly check she gave,
And stood abash'd—then answer'd
grave :—
"I sought thy purpose, noble
maid,
Thy doubts to clear, thy schemes
to aid.
I have beneath mine own com-
mand,
So wills my sire, a gallant band,
And well could send some horse-
man wight
To bear the treasure forth by
night,
And so bestow it as you deem
In these ill days may safest
seem."—
"Thanks, gentle Wilfrid, thanks,"
she said :
"O, be it not one day delay'd !
And, more, thy sister-friend to
aid,

Be thou thyself content to hold,
 In thine own keeping, Mortham's
 gold,
 Safest with thee."—While thus
 she spoke,
 Arm'd soldiers on their converse
 broke,
 The same of whose approach
 afraid,
 The ruffians left their ambuscade.
 Their chief to Wilfrid bended low,
 Then look'd around as for a foe.
 "What mean'st thou, friend,"
 young Wycliffe said,
 "Why thus in arms beset the
 glade?"—
 "That would I gladly learn from
 you ;
 For up my squadron as I drew,
 To exercise our martial game
 Upon the moor of Barningham,
 A stranger told you were way-
 laid,
 Surrounded, and to death be-
 tray'd.
 He had a leader's voice, I ween,
 A falcon glance, a warrior's mien.
 He bade me bring you instant
 aid ;
 I doubted not, and I obey'd."

XXXI.

Wilfrid changed colour, and,
 amazed,
 Turn'd short, and on the speaker
 gazed ;
 While Redmond every thicket
 round
 Track'd earnest as a questing
 hound,
 And Denzil's carabine he found ;
 Sure evidence, by which they
 knew
 The warning was as kind as true.

Wisest it seem'd, with cautious
 speed
 To leave the dell. It was agreed,
 That Redmond, with Matilda fair,
 And fitting guard, should home
 repair ;
 At nightfall Wilfrid should attend,
 With a strong band, his sister-
 friend,
 To bear with her from Rokeby's
 bowers
 To Barnard Castle's lofty towers,
 Secret and safe the banded chests,
 In which the wealth of Mortham
 rests.
 This hasty purpose fix'd, they
 part,
 Each with a grieved and anxious
 heart.

CANTO FIFTH.

I.

THE sultry summer day is done,
 The western hills have hid the
 sun.
 But mountain peak and village
 spire
 Retain reflection of his fire.
 Old Barnard's towers are purple
 still,
 To those that gaze from Toller-
 hill ;
 Distant and high, the tower of
 Bowes
 Like steel upon the anvil glows ;
 And Stanmore's ridge, behind
 that lay,
 Rich with the spoils of parting
 day,
 In crimson and in gold array'd,
 Streaks yet a while the closing
 shade,

Then slow resigns to darkening
 heaven
 The tints which brighter hours
 had given.
 Thus aged men, full loth and
 slow,
 The vanities of life forego,
 And count their youthful follies
 o'er,
 Till Memory lends her light no
 more.

II.

The eve, that slow on upland
 fades,
 Has darker closed on Rokeby's
 glades,
 Where, sunk within their banks
 profound,
 Her guardian streams to meeting
 wound.
 The stately oaks, whose sombre
 frown
 Of noontide made a twilight
 brown,
 Impervious now to fainter light,
 Of twilight make an early night.
 Hoarse into middle air arose
 The vespers of the roosting crows,
 And with congenial murmurs seem
 To wake the Genii of the stream ;
 For louder clamour'd Greta's tide,
 And Tees in deeper voice replied.
 And fitful waked the evening
 wind,
 Fitful in sighs its breath resign'd.
 Wilfrid, whose fancy-nurtured
 soul
 Felt in the scene a soft control,
 With lighter footstep press'd the
 ground,
 And often paused to look around ;
 And, though his path was to his
 love,
 Could not but linger in the grove,

To drink the thrilling interest
 dear,
 Of awful pleasure check'd by
 fear.
 Such inconsistent moods have
 we,
 Even when our passions strike
 the key.

III.

Now, through the wood's dark
 mazes past,
 The opening lawn he reach'd at
 last,
 Where, silver'd by the moonlight
 ray,
 The ancient Hall before him
 lay.
 Those martial terrors long were
 fled,
 That frown'd ot old around its
 head :
 The battlements, the turrets
 grey,
 Seem'd half abandon'd to
 decay ;³²⁸
 On barbican and keep of stone
 Stern Time the foeman's work
 had done.
 Where banners the invader
 braved,
 The harebell now and wallflower
 waved ;
 In the rude guard-room, where
 of yore
 Their weary hours the warders
 wore,
 Now, while the cheerful fagots
 blaze,
 On the paved floor the spindle
 plays ;
 The flanking guns dismantled
 lie,
 The moat is ruinous and dry,

The grim portcullis gone—and
all
The fortress turn'd to peaceful
Hall.

IV.

But yet precautions, lately ta'en,
Show'd danger's day revived
again ;
The court-yard wall show'd
marks of care,
The fall'n defences to repair,
Lending such strength as might
withstand
The insult of marauding band.
The beams once more were
taught to bear
The trembling drawbridge into
air,
And not, till question'd o'er and
o'er,
For Wilfrid oped the jealous
door,
And when he entered, bolt and
bar
Resumed their place with sullen
jar :
Then, as he cross'd the vaulted
porch,
The old grey porter raised his
torch,
And view'd him o'er, from foot
to head,
Ere to the hall his steps he led.
That huge old hall, of knightly
state,
Dismantled seem'd and desolate.
The moon through transom-
shafts of stone,
Which cross'd the latticed oriels,
shone,
And by the mournful light she
gave,
The Gothic vault seem'd funeral
cave.

Pennon and banner waved no
more
O'er beams of stag and tusks of
boar,
Nor glimmering arms were
marshall'd seen,
To glance those silvan spoils
between.
Those arms, those ensigas,
borne away,
Accomplish'd Rokeby's brave
array,
But all were lost on Marston's
day !
Yet here and there the moon-
beams fall
Where armour yet adorns the
wall,
Cumbrous of size, uncouth to
sight,
And useless in the modern fight !
Like veteran relic of the wars,
Known only by neglected scars.

V.

Matilda soon to greet him came,
And bade them light the evening
flame ;
Said, all for parting was prepared,
And tarried but for Wilfrid's
guard.
But then, reluctant to unfold
His father's avarice of gold,
He hinted, that lest jealous eye
Should on their precious burden
pry,
He judged it best the castle gate
To enter when the night wore
late ;
And therefore he had left com-
mand
With those he trusted of his
band,

That they should be at Rokeby
 met,
 What time the midnight-watch
 was set.
 Now Redmond came, whose
 anxious care
 Till then was busied to prepare
 All needful, meetly to arrange
 The mansion for its mournful
 change.
 With Wilfrid's care and kindness
 pleased,
 His cold unready hand he seized,
 And press'd it, till his kindly
 strain
 The gentle youth return'd again.
 Seem'd as between them this
 was said,
 "A while let jealousy be dead ;
 And let our contest be, whose
 care
 Shall best assist this helpless
 fair."

VI.

There was no speech the truce
 to bind,
 It was a compact of the mind,—
 A generous thought, at once
 impress'd
 On either rival's generous breast.
 Matilda well the secret took,
 From sudden change of mien
 and look ;
 And—for not small had been her
 fear
 Of jealous ire and danger near—
 Felt, even in her dejected state,
 A joy beyond the reach of fate.
 They closed beside the chimney's
 blaze,
 And talk'd, and hoped for
 happier days,
 And lent their spirits' rising glow
 A while to gild impending woe ;—

High privilege of youthful time,
 Worth all the pleasures of our
 prime !
 The bickering fagot sparkled
 bright,
 And gave the scene of love to
 sight,
 Bade Wilfrid's cheek more lively
 glow,
 Play'd on Matilda's neck of
 snow,
 Her nut-brown curls and fore-
 head high,
 And laugh'd in Redmond's azure
 eye.
 Two lovers by the maiden sate,
 Without a glance of jealous
 hate ;
 The maid her lovers sat between,
 With open brow and equal
 mien ;—
 It is a sight but rarely spied,
 Thanks to man's wrath and
 woman's pride.

VII.

While thus in peaceful guise
 they sate,
 A knock alarm'd the outer gate,
 And ere the tardy porter stirr'd,
 The tinkling of a harp was heard.
 A manly voice of mellow swell,
 Bore burden to the music well.

Song.

"Summer eve is gone and
 past,
 Summer dew is falling fast ;
 I have wander'd all the day,
 Do not bid me farther stray !
 Gentle hearts, of gentle kin,
 Take the wandering harper in !"

But the stern porter answer
gave,
With "Get thee hence, thou
strolling knave
The king wants soldiers; war,
I trow,
Were meetier trade for such as
thou."
At this unkind reproof, again
Answer'd the ready Minstrel's
strain.

Song resumed.

"Bid not me, in battle-field,
Buckler lift or broadsword wield!
All my strength and all my art
Is to touch the gentle heart,
With the wizard notes that
ring
From the peaceful minstrel-
string."—

The porter, all unmoved, re-
plied,
"Depart in peace, with Heaven
to guide
If longer by the gate thou dwell,
Trust me, thou shalt not part so
well."

VIII.

With somewhat of appealing
look,
The harper's part young Wilfrid
took:
"These notes so wild and ready
thrill,
They show no vulgar minstrel's
skill;
Hard were his task to seek a
home
More distant, since the night is
come;

And for his faith I dare engage—
Your Harpool's blood is sour'd
by age;
His gate, once readily display'd,
To greet the friend, the poor to
aid,
Now even to me, though known
of old,
Did but reluctantly unfold."—
"O blame not, as poor Harpool's
crime,
An evil of this evil time.
He deems dependent on his care
The safety of his patron's heir,
Nor judges meet to ope the
tower
To guest unknown at parting
hour,
Urging his duty to excess
Of rough and stubborn faithful-
ness.
For this poor harper, I would
fain
He may relax:—Hark to his
strain!"—

IX.

Song resumed.

"I have song of war for
knight,
Lay of love for lady bright,
Fairy tale to lull the heir,
Goblin grim the maids to
scare.
Dark the night, and long till
day,
Do not bid me farther stray!
"Rokeby's lords of martial
fame,
I can count them name by
name; ³²⁹

Legends of their line there be,
Known to few, but known to
me ;

If you honour Rokeby's kin,
Take the wandering harper in !

“Rokeby's lords had fair
regard

For the harp, and for the
bard ;

Baron's race throve never well,
Where the curse of minstrel
fell.

If you love that noble kin,
Take the weary harper in !”—

“Hark ! Harpool parleys—there
is hope,”

Said Redmond, “that the gate
will ope.”—

—“For all thy brag and boast,
I trow,

Nought know'st thou of the Felon
Sow,”³³⁰

Quoth Harpool, “nor how Greta-
side

She roam'd, and Rokeby forest
wide ;

Nor how Ralph Rokeby gave the
beast

To Richmond's friars to make a
feast.

Of Gilbert Griffinson the tale
Goes, and of gallant Peter Dale,
That well could strike with sword
amain,

And of the valiant son of Spain,
Friar Middleton, and blithe Sir
Ralph ;

There were a jest to make us
laugh !

If thou canst tell it, in yon
shed

Thou'st won thy supper and thy
bed.”

X.

Matilda smiled ; “Cold hope,”
said she,

“From Harpool's love of min-
strelsy !

But, for this harper, may we
dare,

Redmond, to mend his couch and
fare ?”—

“O, ask me not !—At minstrel-
string

My heart from infancy would
spring ;

Nor can I hear its simplest
strain,

But it brings Erin's dream again,
When placed by Owen Lysagh's

knee,

(The Filea of O'Neale was he,³³¹
A blind and bearded man, whose
eld

Was sacred as a prophet's held,)
I've seen a ring of rugged kerne,

With aspects shaggy, wild, and
stern,

Enchanted by the master's lay,
Linger around the livelong day,

Shift from wild rage to wilder
glee,

To love, to grief, to ecstasy,
And feel each varied change of

soul

Obedient to the bard's control.—

Ah, Clandeboy ! thy friendly
floor

Slieve-Donard's oak shall light
no more ;³³²

Nor Owen's harp, beside the
blaze,

Tell maiden's love, or hero's
praise !

The mantling brambles hide thy
hearth,

Centre of hospitable mirth ;

All undistinguish'd in the glade,
 My sires' glad home is prostrate
 laid,
 Their vassals wander wide and
 far,
 Serve foreign lords in distant
 war,
 And now the stranger's sons
 enjoy
 The lovely woods of Clandeboy!"
 He spoke, and proudly turn'd
 aside,
 The starting tear to dry and
 hide.

XI.

Matilda's dark and soften'd eye
 Was glistening ere O'Neale's
 was dry.
 Her hand upon his arm she
 laid,
 "It is the will of Heaven," she
 said.
 "And think'st thou, Redmond,
 I can part
 From this loved home with light-
 some heart,
 Leaving to wild neglect whate'er
 Even from my infancy was dear?
 For in this calm domestic bound
 Were all Matilda's pleasures
 found.
 That hearth, my sire was wont to
 grace,
 Full soon may be a stranger's
 place;
 This hall, in which a child I
 play'd,
 Like thine, dear Redmond, lowly
 laid,
 The bramble and the thorn may
 braid;
 Or, pass'd for aye from me and
 mine,
 It ne'er may shelter Rokeby's line.

Yet is this consolation given,
 My Redmond,—'tis the will of
 Heaven."
 Her word, her action, and her
 phrase,
 Were kindly as in early days;
 For cold reserve had lost its
 power,
 In sorrow's sympathetic hour.
 Young Redmond dared not trust
 his voice;
 But rather had it been his choice
 To share that melancholy hour,
 Than, arm'd with all a chieftain's
 power,
 In full possession to enjoy
 Slieve-Donard wide, and Clande-
 boy.

XII.

The blood left Wilfrid's ashen
 cheek;
 Matilda sees, and hastes to
 speak.—
 "Happy in friendship's ready
 aid,
 Let all my murmurs here be
 staid!
 And Rokeby's Maiden will not
 part
 From Rokeby's hall with moody
 heart.
 This night at least, for Rokeby's
 fame,
 The hospitable hearth shall flame,
 And, ere its native heir retire,
 Find for the wanderer rest and
 fire,
 While this poor harper, by the
 blaze,
 Recounts the tale of other days.
 Bid Harpool ope the door with
 speed,
 Admit him, and relieve each
 need.—

Meantime, kind Wycliffe, wilt
 thou try
 Thy minstrel skill?—Nay, no
 reply—
 And look not sad!—I guess thy
 thought,
 Thy verse with laurels would be
 bought;
 And poor Matilda, landless now,
 Has not a garland for thy brow.
 True, I must leave sweet
 Rokeby's glades,
 Nor wander more in Greta
 shades;
 But sure, no rigid jailer, thou
 Wilt a short prison-walk allow,
 Where summer flowers grow wild
 at will,
 On Marwood-chase and Toller
 Hill;
 Then holly green and lily gay
 Shall twine in guerdon of thy lay."
 The mournful youth, a space
 aside,
 To tune Matilda's harp applied;
 And then a low sad descant rung,
 As prelude to the lay he sung.

XIII.

The Cypress Wreath.

O, Lady, twine no wreath for
 me,
 Or twine it of the cypress-tree!
 Too lively grow the lilies light,
 The varnish'd holly's all too
 bright,
 The May-flower and the eglan-
 tine
 May shade a brow less sad
 than mine;
 But, Lady, weave no wreath
 for me,
 Or weave it of the cypress-
 tree!

Let dimpled Mirth his temples
 twine
 With tendrils of the laughing
 vine;
 The manly oak, the pensive
 yew,
 To patriot and to sage be due;
 The myrtle bough bid lovers
 live,
 But that Matilda will not give;
 Then, Lady, twine no wreath
 for me,
 Or twine it of the cypress-tree!

Let merry England proudly
 rear
 Her blended roses, bought so
 dear;
 Let Albin bind her bonnet blue
 With heath and harebell dipp'd
 in dew;
 On favour'd Erin's crest be
 seen
 The flower she loves of emerald
 green—
 But, Lady, twine no wreath for
 me,
 Or twine it of the cypress-tree.

Strike the wild harp, while
 maids prepare
 The ivy meet for minstrel's
 hair;
 And, while his crown of laurel-
 leaves,
 With bloody hand the victor
 weaves,
 Let the loud trump his triumph
 tell;
 But when you hear the passing-
 bell,
 Then, Lady, twine a wreath
 for me,
 And twine it of the cypress-
 tree.

Yes! twine for me the cypress-
bough;
But, O Matilda, twine not now!
Stay till a few brief months
are past,
And I have look'd and loved my
last!
When villagers my shroud
bestrew
With panzies, rosemary, and
rue,—
Then, Lady, weave a wreath
for me,
And weave it of the cypress-
tree.

XIV.

O'Neale observed the starting
tear,
And spoke with kind and blithe-
some cheer—
“No, noble Wilfrid! ere the
day
When mourns the land thy silent
lay,
Shall many a wreath be freely
wove
By hand of friendship and of
love.
I would not wish that rigid
Fate
Had doom'd thee to a captive's
state,
Whose hands are bound by
honour's law,
Who wears a sword he must not
draw;
But were it so, in minstrel pride
The land together would we
ride,
On prancing steeds, like harpers
old,
Bound for the halls of barons
bold,

Each lover of the lyre we'd seek,
From Michael's Mount to Skid-
daw's Peak,
Survey wild Albin's mountain
strand,
And roam green Erin's lovely
land,
While thou the gentler souls
should move,
With lay of pity and of love,
And I, thy mate, in rougher strain,
Would sing of war and warriors
slain.
Old England's bards were van-
quish'd then,
And Scotland's vaunted Haw-
thornden,
And, silenced on Iernian shore,
M'Curtin's harp should charm no
more!”³³³
In lively mood he spoke, to wile
From Wilfrid's woe-worn cheek
a smile.

XV.

“But,” said Matilda, “ere thy
name,
Good Redmond, gain its destined
fame,
Say, wilt thou kindly deign to
call
Thy brother-minstrel to the hall?
Bid all the household, too, attend,
Each in his rank a humble
friend;
I know their faithful hearts will
grieve,
When their poor Mistress takes
her leave;
So let the horn and beaker flow
To mitigate their parting woe.”
The harper came;—in youth's
first prime
Himself; in mode of olden time

His garb was fashion'd, to express
The ancient English minstrel's
dress,³³⁴

A seemly gown of Kendal green,
With gorget closed of silver
sheen ;

His harp in silken scarf was slung,
And by his side an anlace hung.
It seem'd some masquer's quaint
array,
For revel or for holiday.

XVI.

He made obeisance with a free
Yet studied air of courtesy.
Each look and accent, framed to
please,

Seem'd to affect a playful ease ;
His face was of that doubtful kind,
That wins the eye, but not the
mind ;

Yet harsh it seem'd to deem amiss
Of brow so young and smooth as
this.

His was the subtle look and
sly,
That, spying all, seems nought
to spy ;

Round all the group his glances
stole,
Unmark'd themselves, to mark
the whole.

Yet sunk beneath Matilda's look,
Nor could the eye of Redmond
brook.

To the suspicious, or the old,
Subtile and dangerous and bold
Had seem'd this self-invited
guest ;

But young our lovers,—and the
rest,

Wrapt in their sorrow and their
fear

At parting of their Mistress dear,

Tear-blinded to the Castle-hall,
Came as to bear her funeral pall.

XVII.

All that expression base was
gone,

When waked the guest his min-
strel tone ;

It fled at inspiration's call,
As erst the demon fled from
Saul.

More noble glance he cast around,
More free-drawn breath inspired
the sound,

His pulse beat bolder and more
high,

In all the pride of minstrelsy !
Alas ! too soon that pride was
o'er,

Sunk with the lay that bade it
soar !

His soul resumed, with habit's
chain,

Its vices wild and follies vain,
And gave the talent, with him
born,

To be a common curse and scorn.
Such was the youth whom
Rokeby's Maid,

With condescending kindness,
pray'd

Here to renew the strains she
loved,

At distance heard and well
approved.

XVIII.

Song.

THE HARP.

I was a wild and wayward boy,
My childhood scorn'd each childish
toy,

Retired from all, reserved and coy,
 To musing prone,
 I woo'd my solitary joy,
 My Harp alone.

My youth, with bold Ambition's
 mood,
 Despised the humble stream and
 wood,
 Where my poor father's cottage
 stood,
 To fame unknown ;—
 What should my soaring views
 make good?
 My Harp alone !

Love came with all his frantic
 fire,
 And wild romance of vain desire :
 The baron's daughter heard my
 lyre,
 And praised the tone ;—
 What could presumptuous hope
 inspire?
 My Harp alone !

At manhood's touch the bubble
 burst,
 And manhood's pride the vision
 curst,
 And all that had my folly nursed
 Love's sway to own ;
 Yet spared the spell that lull'd me
 first,
 My Harp alone !

Woe came with war, and want
 with woe ;
 And it was mine to undergo
 Each outrage of the rebel foe :—
 Can aught atone
 My fields laid waste, my cot laid
 low?
 My Harp alone !

Ambition's dreams I've seen
 depart,
 Have rued of penury the smart,
 Have felt of love the venom'd dart,
 When hope was flown ;
 Yet rests one solace to my
 heart,—
 My Harp alone !

Then over mountain, moor, and
 hill,
 My faithful Harp, I'll bear thee
 still ;
 And when this life of want and ill
 Is wellnigh gone,
 Thy strings mine elegy shall thrill,
 My Harp alone !

XIX.

“A pleasing lay !” Matilda
 said ;
 But Harpool shook his old gray
 head,
 And took his baton and his
 torch,
 To seek his guard-room in the
 porch.
 Edmund observed ; with sudden
 change,
 Among the strings his fingers
 range,
 Until they waked a bolder glee
 Of military melody ;
 Then paused amid the martial
 sound,
 And look'd with well-feign'd fear
 around ;—
 “None to this noble house be-
 long,”
 He said, “that would a Minstrel
 wrong,
 Whose fate has been, through
 good and ill,
 To love his Royal Master still ;

And with your honour'd leave,
 would fain
 Rejoice you with a loyal strain."
 Then, as assured by sign and
 look,
 The warlike tone again he took ;
 And Harpool stopp'd, and turn'd
 to hear
 A ditty of the Cavalier.

XX.

Song.

THE CAVALIER.

While the dawn on the mountain
 was misty and grey,
 My true love has mounted his
 steed and away
 Over hill, over valley, o'er dale,
 and o'er down ;
 Heaven shield the brave Gallant
 that fights for the Crown !

He has doff'd the silk doublet the
 breast-plate to bear,
 He has placed the steel-cap o'er
 his long flowing hair,
 From his belt to his stirrup his
 broadsword hangs down,—
 Heaven shield the brave Gallant
 that fights for the Crown !

For the rights of Fair England
 that broadsword he draws,
 Her King is his leader, her Church
 is his cause ;
 His watchword is honour, his pay
 is renown,—
 God strike with the Gallant that
 strikes for the Crown !

They may boast of their Fairfax,
 their Waller, and all
 The roundheaded rebels of West-
 minster Hall ;

But tell these bold traitors of
 London's proud town,
 That the spears of the North have
 encircled the Crown.

There's Derby and Cavendish,
 dread of their foes :
 There's Erin's high Ormond, and
 Scotland's Montrose !
 Would you match the base
 Skippon, and Massey, and
 Brown,
 With the Barons of England, that
 fight for the Crown ?

Now joy to the crest of the brave
 Cavalier !
 Be his banner unconquer'd, resist-
 less his spear,
 Till in peace and in triumph his
 toils he may drown,
 In a pledge to fair England, her
 Church, and her Crown.

XXI.

"Alas !" Matilda said, " that
 strain,
 Good harper, now is heard in
 vain !
 The time has been, at such a
 sound,
 When Rokeby's vassals gather'd
 round,
 An hundred manly hearts would
 bound ;
 But now the stirring verse we
 hear,
 Like trump in dying soldier's ear !
 Listless and sad the notes we own,
 The power to answer them is
 flown.
 Yet not without his meet applause,
 Be he that sings the rightful
 cause,

Even when the crisis of its
fate
To human eye seems desperate.
While Rokeby's Heir such power
retains,
Let this slight guerdon pay thy
pains :—
And, lend thy harp ; I fain would
try,
If my poor skill can aught supply,
Ere yet I leave my father's
hall,
To mourn the cause in which we
fall."

XXII.

The harper, with a downcast
look,
And trembling hand, her bounty
took.—
As yet, the conscious pride of
art
Had steel'd him in his treacherous
part ;
A powerful spring, of force un-
guess'd,
That hath each gentler mood
suppress'd,
And reign'd in many a human
breast ;
From his that plans the red
campaign,
To his that wastes the woodland
reign.
The falling wing, the blood-shot
eye,—
The sportsman marks with
apathy,
Each feeling of his victim's ill
Drown'd in his own successful
skill.
The veteran, too, who now no
more
Aspires to head the battle's roar,

Loves still the triumph of his
art,
And traces on the pencill'd chart
Some stern invader's destined
way,
Through blood and ruin, to his
prey ;
Patriots to death, and towns to
flame,
He dooms, to raise another's
name,
And shares the guilt, though not
the fame.
What pays him for his span of
time
Spent in premeditating crime ?
What against pity arms his
heart?—
It is the conscious pride of art.

XXIII.

But principles in Edmund's mind
Were baseless, vague, and unde-
fined.
His soul, like bark with rudder
lost,
On Passion's changeful tide was
tost ;
Nor Vice nor Virtue had the
power
Beyond the impression of the
hour ;
And, O ! when Passion rules,
how rare
The hours that fall to Virtue's
share !
Yet now she roused her—for the
pride,
The lack of sterner guilt supplied,
Could scarce support him when
arose
The lay that mourned Matilda's
woes.

Song.

THE FAREWELL.

The sound of Rokeby's woods
I hear,
They mingle with the song :
Dark Greta's voice is in mine
ear,
I must not hear them long.
From every loved and native
haunt
The native Heir must stray,
And, like a ghost whom sun-
beams daunt,
Must part before the day.

Soon from the halls my fathers
rear'd,
Their scutcheons may de-
scend,
A line so long beloved and
fear'd
May soon obscurely end.
No longer here Matilda's tone
Shall bid those echoes swell ;
Yet shall they hear her proudly
own
The cause in which we fell.

The Lady paused, and then again
Resumed the lay in loftier strain.

XXIV.

Let our halls and towers decay,
Be our name and line forgot,
Lands and manors pass
away,—
We but share our Monarch's
lot.
If no more our annals show
Battles won and banners
taken,
Still in death, defeat, and woe,
Ours be loyalty unshaken !

Constant still in danger's hour,
Princes own'd our fathers'
aid ;
Lands and honours, wealth and
power,
Well their loyalty repaid.
Perish wealth, and power, and
pride !
Mortal boons by mortals
given ;
But let Constance abide,—
Constance's the gift of
Heaven.

XXV.

While thus Matilda's lay was
heard,
A thousand thoughts in Edmund
stirr'd.
In peasant life he might have
known
As fair a face, as sweet a tone ;
But village notes could ne'er
supply
That rich and varied melody ;
And ne'er in cottage-maid was
seen
The easy dignity of mien,
Claiming respect, yet waving
state,
That marks the daughters of the
great.
Yet not, perchance, had these
alone
His scheme of purposed guilt
o'erthrown ;
But while her energy of mind
Superior rose to griefs combined,
Lending its kindling to her
eye,
Giving her form new majesty,—
To Edmund's thought Matilda
seem'd
The very object he had dream'd ;

When, long ere guilt his soul had
 known,
 In Winston bowers he mused
 alone,
 Taxing his fancy to combine
 The face, the air, the voice divine,
 Of princess fair, by cruel fate
 Reft of her honours, powers and
 state,
 Till to her rightful realm restored
 By destined hero's conquering
 sword.

XXVI.

"Such was my vision!" Edmund
 thought;
 "And have I, then, the ruin
 wrought
 Of such a maid, that fancy ne'er
 In fairest vision form'd her peer?
 Was it my hand that could un-
 close
 The postern to her ruthless foes?
 Foes, lost to honour, law, and
 faith,
 Their kindest mercy sudden
 death!
 Have I done this? I! who have
 sworn,
 That if the globe such angel bore,
 I would have traced its circle
 broad,
 To kiss the ground on which she
 trode!—
 And now—O! would that earth
 would rive,
 And close upon me while alive!—
 Is there no hope? Is all then
 lost?—
 Bertram's already on his post!
 Even now, beside the Hall's
 arch'd door,
 I saw his shadow cross the floor!
 He was to wait my signal strain—
 A little respite thus we gain:

By what I heard the menials say,
 Young Wycliffe's troop are on
 their way—
 Alarm precipitates the crime!
 My harp must wear away the
 time."—
 And then, in accents faint and
 low,
 He falter'd forth a tale of woe.

XXVII.

Ballad.

"And whither would you lead
 me, then?"
 Quoth the Friar of orders grey;
 And the Ruffians twain replied
 again,
 "By a dying woman to
 pray."—
 "I see," he said, "a lovely sight,
 A sight bodes little harm,
 A lady as a lily bright,
 With an infant on her arm."—
 "Then do thine office, Friar
 grey,
 And see thou shrive her free?
 Else shall the sprite, that parts
 to-night,
 Fling all its guilt on thee.
 "Let mass be said, and trentals
 read,
 When thou'rt to convent gone,
 And bid the bell of St. Benedict
 Toll out its deepest tone."
 The shrift is done, the Friar is
 gone,
 Blindfolded as he came—
 Next morning, all in Littlecot
 Hall³³⁵
 Were weeping for their dame.

Wild Darrell is an alter'd man,
The village crones can tell ;
He looks pale as clay, and strives
to pray,
If he hears the convent bell.

If prince or peer cross Darrell's
way,
He'll beard him in his pride—
If he meet a Friar of orders
grey,
He droops and turns aside.

XXVIII.

“Harper! methinks thy magic
lays,”
Matilda said, “can goblins
raise!
Wellnigh my fancy can discern,
Near the dark porch, a visage
stern ;
E'en now, in yonder shadowy
nook,
I see it!—Redmond, Wilfrid,
look!—
A human form distinct and
clear—
God, for thy mercy!—It draws
near!”
She saw too true. Stride after
stride,
The centre of that chamber wide
Fierce Bertram gain'd ; then made
a stand,
And, proudly waving with his
hand,
Thunder'd—“Be still, upon your
lives!—
He bleeds who speaks, he dies
who strives.”
Behind their chief, the robber
crew
Forth from the darken'd portal
drew

In silence—save that echo dread
Return'd their heavy measured
tread.
The lamp's uncertain lustre gave
Their arms to gleam, their plumes
to wave ;
File after file in order pass,
Like forms on Banquo's mystic
glass.
Then, halting at their leader's
sign,
At once they form'd and curved
their line,
Hemming within its crescent
drear
Their victims, like a herd of deer.
Another sign, and to the aim
Levell'd at once their muskets
came,
As waiting but their chieftain's
word,
To make their fatal volley heard.

XXIX.

Back in a heap the menials drew ;
Yet, even in mortal terror, true,
Their pale and startled group
oppose
Between Matilda and the foes.
“O, haste thee, Wilfrid!” Red-
mond cried ;
“Undo that wicket by thy side!
Bear hence Matilda—gain the
wood—
The pass may be a while made
good—
Thy band, ere this, must sure be
nigh—
O speak not—dally not—but
fly!”
While yet the crowd their motions
hide,
Through the low wicket door
they glide.

Through vaulted passages they
 wind,
 In Gothic intricacy twined ;
 Wilfrid half led, and half he
 bore,
 Matilda to the postern-door,
 And safe beneath the forest
 tree,
 The Lady stands at liberty.
 The moonbeams, the fresh gale's
 caress,
 Renew'd suspended conscious-
 ness ;—
 "Where's Redmond?" eagerly
 she cries :
 "Thou answer'st not—he dies !
 he dies !
 And thou hast left him, all bereft
 Of mortal aid—with murderers
 left !
 I know it well—he would not
 yield
 His sword to man—his doom is
 seal'd !
 For my scorn'd life, which thou
 hast bought
 At price of his, I thank thee not."

XXX.

The unjust reproach, the angry
 look,
 The heart of Wilfrid could not
 brook.
 "Lady," he said, "my band so
 near,
 In safety thou mayst rest thee
 here.
 For Redmond's death thou shalt
 not mourn,
 If mine can buy his safe return."
 He turn'd away—his heart
 throbb'd high,
 The tear was bursting from his
 eye ;

The sense of her injustice press'd
 Upon the Maid's distracted
 breast,—
 "Stay, Wilfrid, stay ! all aid is
 vain !"
 He heard, but turn'd him not
 again ;
 He reaches now the postern-door,
 Now enters—and is seen no more.

XXXI.

With all the agony that e'er
 Was gender'd 'twixt suspense
 and fear,
 She watch'd the line of windows
 tall,
 Whose Gothic lattice lights the
 Hall,
 Distinguish'd by the paly red
 The lamps in dim reflection shed,
 While all beside in wan moon-
 light
 Each grated casement glimmer'd
 white.
 No sight of harm, no sound of
 ill,
 It is a deep and midnight still.
 Who look'd upon the scene, had
 guess'd
 All in the Castle were at rest :
 When sudden on the windows
 shone
 A lightning flash, just seen and
 gone !
 A shot is heard—Again the flame
 Flash'd thick and fast—a volley
 came !
 Then echo'd wildly, from within,
 Of shout and scream the mingled
 din,
 And weapon-clash and maddening
 cry,
 Of those who kill, and those who
 die !—



As fill'd the Hall with sulphurous
 smoke,
 More red, more dark, the death-
 flash broke ;
 And forms were on the lattice
 cast,
 That struck, or struggled, as they
 past.

XXXII.

What sounds upon the midnight
 wind
 Approach so rapidly behind ?
 It is, it is, the tramp of steeds,
 Matilda hears the sound, she
 speeds,
 Seizes upon the leader's rein—
 "O, haste to aid, ere aid be
 vain !
 Fly to the postern—gain the
 Hall !"
 From saddle spring the troopers
 all ;
 Their gallant steeds, at liberty,
 Run wild along the moonlight
 lea.
 But, ere they burst upon the
 scene,
 Full stubborn had the conflict
 been.
 When Bertram mark'd Matilda's
 flight,
 It gave the signal for the fight ;
 And Rokeby's veterans, seam'd
 with scars
 Of Scotland's and of Erin's
 wars,
 Their momentary panic o'er,
 Stood to the arms which then
 they bore ;
 (For they were weapon'd, and
 prepared
 Their Mistress on her way to
 guard.)
 sc.

Then cheer'd them to the fight
 O'Neale,
 Then peal'd the shot, and clash'd
 the steel ;
 The war-smoke soon with sable
 breath
 Darken'd the scene of blood and
 death,
 While on the few defenders close
 The Bandits, with redoubled
 blows,
 And, twice driven back, yet fierce
 and fell
 Renew the charge with frantic
 yell.

XXXIII.

Wilfrid has fall'n—but o'er him
 stood
 Young Redmond, soil'd with
 smoke and blood,
 Cheering his mates with heart
 and hand
 Still to make good their desperate
 stand.
 "Up, comrades, up ! In Rokeby
 halls
 Ne'er be it said our courage
 falls.
 What ! faint ye for their savage
 cry,
 Or do the smoke-wreaths daunt
 your eye ?
 These rafters have return'd a
 shout
 As loud at Rokeby's wassail
 rout,
 As thick a smoke these hearths
 have given
 At Hallow-tide or Christmas-
 even.³³⁶
 Stand to it yet ! renew the fight,
 For Rokeby's and Matilda's
 right !

These slaves! they dare not,
 hand to hand,
 Bide buffet from a true man's
 brand."

Impetuous, active, fierce, and
 young,
 Upon the advancing foes he
 sprung.
 Woe to the wretch at whom is
 bent
 His brandish'd falchion's sheer
 descent!
 Backward they scatter'd as he
 came,
 Like wolves before the levin flame,
 When, 'mid their howling con-
 clave driven,
 Hath glanced the thunderbolt of
 heaven.
 Bertram rush'd on—but Harpool
 clasp'd
 His knees, although in death he
 gasp'd,
 His falling corpse before him
 flung,
 And round the trammell'd ruffian
 clung.
 Just then, the soldiers fill'd the
 dome,
 And, shouting, charged the felons
 home
 So fiercely, that, in panic dread,
 They broke, they yielded, fell, or
 fled.
 Bertram's stern voice they heed
 no more,
 Though heard above the battle's
 roar;
 While, trampling down the dying
 man,
 He strove, with volley'd threat
 and ban,
 In scorn of odds, in fate's de-
 spite,
 To rally up the desperate fight.

XXXIV.

Soon murkier clouds the Hall
 enfold,
 Than e'er from battle-thunders
 roll'd
 So dense, the combatants scarce
 know
 To aim or to avoid the blow.
 Smothering and blindfold grows
 the fight—
 But soon shall dawn a dismal
 light!
 'Mid cries and clashing arms,
 there came
 The hollow sound of rushing
 flame;
 New horrors on the tumult dire
 Arise—the Castle is on fire!
 Doubtful, if chance had cast the
 brand,
 Or frantic Bertram's desperate
 hand.
 Matilda saw—for frequent broke
 From the dim casements gusts of
 smoke.
 Yon tower, which late so clear
 defined
 On the fair hemisphere reclined,
 That, pencill'd on its azure pure,
 The eye could count each em-
 brazure,
 Now, swath'd within the sweep-
 ing cloud,
 Seems giant-spectre in his
 shroud;
 Till, from each loop-hole flashing
 light,
 A spout of fire shines ruddy bright,
 And, gathering to united glare,
 Streams high into the midnight
 air;
 A dismal beacon, far and wide
 That waken'd Greta's slumbering
 side.

Soon all beneath, through gallery
 long,
 And pendant arch, the fire flash'd
 strong,
 Snatching whatever could main-
 tain,
 Raise, or extend, its furious
 reign ;
 Startling, with closer cause of
 dread,
 The females who the conflict fled,
 And now rush'd forth upon the
 plain,
 Filling the air with clamours vain.

XXXV.

But ceased not yet, the Hall
 within,
 The shriek, the shout, the
 carnage-din,
 Till bursting lattices give proof
 The flames have caught the
 rafter'd roof.
 What! wait they till its beams
 amain
 Crash on the slayers and the slain?
 The alarm is caught—the draw-
 bridge falls,
 The warriors hurry from the walls,
 But, by the conflagration's light,
 Upon the lawn renew the fight.
 Each struggling felon down was
 hew'd,
 Not one could gain the sheltering
 wood ;
 But forth the affrighted harper
 sprung,
 And to Matilda's robe he clung.
 Her shriek, entreaty, and com-
 mand,
 Stopp'd the pursuer's lifted hand.
 Denzil and he alive were ta'en ;
 The rest, save Bertram, all are
 slain.

XXXVI.

And where is Bertram?—Soaring
 high
 The general flame ascends the
 sky ;
 In gather'd group the soldiers
 gaze
 Upon the broad and roaring
 blaze,
 When, like infernal demon, sent,
 Red from his penal element,
 To plague and to pollute the air,—
 His face all gore, on fire his hair,
 Forth from the central mass of
 smoke
 The giant form of Bertram broke !
 His brandish'd sword on high he
 rears,
 Then plunged among opposing
 spears ;
 Round his left arm his mantle
 truss'd,
 Received and foil'd three lances'
 thrust ;
 Nor these his headlong course
 withstood,
 Like reeds he snapp'd the tough
 ash-wood.
 In vain his foes around him
 clung ;
 With matchless force aside he
 flung
 Their boldest,—as the bull, at
 bay,
 Tosses the ban-dogs from his way,
 Through forty foes his path he
 made,
 And safely gain'd the forest glade.

XXXVII.

Scarce was this final conflict o'er,
 When from the postern Redmond
 bore

Wilfrid, who, as of life bereft,
Had in the fatal Hall been left,
Deserted there by all his train;
But Redmond saw, and turn'd
again.—

Beneath an oak he laid him down,
That in the blaze gleam'd ruddy
brown,
And then his mantle's clasp un-
did;

Matilda held his drooping head,
Till, given to breathe the freer
air,

Returning life repaid their care.
He gazed on them with heavy
sigh,—

“I could have wish'd even thus
to die!”

No more he said—for now with
speed

Each trooper had regain'd his
steed;

The ready palfreys stood array'd,
For Redmond and for Rokeby's
Maid;

Two Wilfrid on his horse sustain,
One leads his charger by the rein.
But oft Matilda look'd behind,
As up the Vale of Tees they wind,
Where far the mansion of her
sires

Beacon'd the dale with midnight
fires.

In gloomy arch above them
spread,

The clouded heaven lower'd
bloody red;

Beneath, in sombre light, the
flood

Appear'd to roll in waves of
blood.

Then, one by one, was heard to
fall

The tower, the donjon-keep, the
hall.

Each rushing down with thunder
sound,

A space the conflagration
drown'd;

Till, gathering strength, again it
rose,

Announced its triumph in its
close,

Shook wide its light the landscape
o'er,

Then sunk—and Robeby was no
more!

CANTO SIXTH.

I.

THE summer sun, whose early
power

Was wont to gild Matilda's
bower,

And rouse her with his matin ray
Her duteous orisons to pay,—

That morning sun has three times
seen

The flowers unfold on Rokeby
green,

But sees no more the slumbers
fly

From fair Matilda's hazel eye;

That morning sun has three times
broke

On Rokeby's glades of elm and
oak,

But, rising from their silvan
screen,

Marks no grey turrets glance
between.

A shapeless mass lie keep and
tower,

That, hissing to the morning
shower,

Can but with smouldering vapour
pay

The early smile of summer day.

The peasant, to his labour bound,
Pauses to view the blacken'd
mound,
Striving, amid the ruin'd space,
Each well-remember'd spot to
trace.

That length of frail and fire-
scorch'd wall

Once screen'd the hospitable hall ;
When yonder broken arch was
whole,

'Twas there was dealt the weekly
dole ;

And where yon tottering columns
nod,

The chapel sent the hymn to
God.—

So flits the world's uncertain
span !

Nor zeal for God, nor love for
man,

Gives mortal monuments a date
Beyond the power of Time and
Fate.

The towers must share the
builder's doom ;

Ruin is theirs, and his a tomb :

But better boon benignant Heaven
To Faith and Charity has given,

And bids the Christian hope
sublime

Transcend the bounds of Fate
and Time.

II.

Now the third night of summer
came,

Since that which witness'd
Rokeby's flame.

On Brignall cliffs and Scargill
brake

The owl's homilies awake,
The bittern scream'd from rush
and flag,

The raven slumber'd on his crag.

Forth from his den the otter
drew,—

Grayling and trout their tyrant
knew.

As between reed and sedge he
peers,

With fierce round snout and
sharpen'd ears,

Or, prowling by the moonbeam
cool,

Watches the stream or swims
the pool ;—

Perch'd on his wonted eyrie high,
Sleep seal'd the tercelet's wearied
eye,

That all the day had watch'd so
well

The cushat dart across the
dell.

In dubious beam reflected shone
That lofty cliff of pale grey
stone,

Beside whose base the secret
cave

To rapine late a refuge gave.

The crag's wild crest of copse
and yew

On Greta's breast dark shadows
threw ;

Shadows that met or shunn'd the
sight,

With every change of fitful light ;
As hope and fear alternate chase

Our course through life's un-
certain race.

III.

Gliding by crag and copsewood
green,

A solitary form was seen
To trace with stealthy pace the
wold,

Like fox that seeks the midnight
fold,

And pauses oft, and cowers dismay'd,
 At every breath that stirs the shade.
 He passes now the ivy bush,—
 The owl has seen him, and is hush ;
 He passes now the dodder'd oak,—
 Ye heard the startled raven croak ;
 Lower and lower he descends,
 Rustle the leaves, the brushwood bends ;
 The otter hears him tread the shore,
 And dives, and is beheld no more ;
 And by the cliff of pale grey stone
 The midnight wanderer stands alone.
 Methinks, that by the moon we trace
 A well-remember'd form and face !
 That stripling shape, that cheek so pale,
 Combine to tell a rueful tale,
 Of powers misused, of passion's force,
 Of guilt, of grief, and of remorse !
 'Tis Edmund's eye, at every sound
 That flings that guilty glance around ;
 'Tis Edmund's trembling haste divides
 The brushwood that the cavern hides ;
 And, when its narrow porch lies bare,
 'Tis Edmund's form that enters there.

IV.

His flint and steel have sparkled bright,
 A lamp hath lent the cavern light.

Fearful and quick his eye surveys
 Each angle of the gloomy maze.
 Since last he left that stern abode,
 It seem'd as none its floor had trode ;
 Untouch'd appear'd the various spoil,
 The purchase of his comrades' toil ;
 Masks and disguises grim'd with mud,
 Arms broken and defiled with blood,
 And all the nameless tools that aid
 Night-felons in their lawless trade,
 Upon the gloomy walls were hung,
 Or lay in nooks obscurely flung.
 Still on the sordid board appear
 The relics of the noontide cheer :
 Flagon and emptied flasks were there,
 And bench o'erthrown, and shatter'd chair ;
 And all around the semblance show'd,
 As when the final revel glow'd,
 When the red sun was setting fast,
 And parting pledge Guy Denzil past.
 "To Rokeby treasure-vaults !" they quaff'd,
 And shouted loud and wildly laugh'd,
 Pour'd maddening from the rocky door,
 And parted—to return no more !
 They found in Rokeby vaults their doom,—
 A bloody death, a burning tomb !

V.

There his own peasant dress he
 spies,
 Doff'd to assume that quaint dis-
 guise ;
 And, shuddering, thought upon
 his glee,
 When prank'd in garb of
 minstrelsy.
 "O, be the fatal art accurst,"
 He cried, "that moved my folly
 first ;
 Till, bribed by bandits' base
 applause,
 I burst through God's and
 Nature's laws !
 Three summer days are scanty
 past
 Since I have trod this cavern last,
 A thoughtless wretch, and
 prompt to err—
 But, O, as yet no murderer !
 Even now I list my comrades'
 cheer,
 That general laugh is in mine
 ear,
 Which raised my pulse and steel'd
 my heart,
 As I rehearsed my treacherous
 part—
 And would that all since then
 could seem
 The phantom of a fever's dream !
 But fatal Memory notes too
 well
 The horrors of the dying yell
 From my despairing mates that
 broke,
 When flash'd the fire and roll'd
 the smoke ;
 When the avengers shouting
 came,
 And hemm'd us 'twixt the sword
 and flame !

My frantic flight,—the lifted
 brand,—
 That angel's interposing
 hand !—
 If, for my life from slaughter
 freed,
 I yet could pay some grateful
 need !
 Perchance this object of my
 quest
 May aid"—he turn'd, nor spoke
 the rest.

VI.

Due northward from the rugged
 hearth,
 With paces five he metes the
 earth,
 Then toil'd with mattock to
 explore
 The entrails of the cavern floor,
 Nor paused till, deep beneath the
 ground,
 His search a small steel casket
 found.
 Just as he stoop'd to loose its
 hasp,
 His shoulder felt a giant grasp ;
 He started, and look'd up aghast,
 'Then shriek'd !—'Twas Bertram
 held him fast.
 "Fear not !" he said ; but who
 could hear
 That deep stern voice, and cease
 to fear ?
 "Fear not !—By heaven, he
 shakes as much
 As partridge in the falcon's
 clutch :"—
 He raised him, and unloosed his
 hold,
 While from the opening casket
 roll'd
 A chain and reliquaire of gold.

Bertram beheld it with surprise,
 Gazed on its fashion and device,
 Then, cheering Edmund as he
 could,
 Somewhat he smooth'd his rugged
 mood :
 For still the youth's half-lifted
 eye
 Quiver'd with terror's agony,
 And sidelong glanced, as to ex-
 plore,
 In meditated flight, the door.
 " Sit," Bertram said, " from
 danger, free :
 Thou canst not, and thou shalt
 not, flee.
 Chance brings me hither ; hill
 and plain
 I've sought for refuge-place in
 vain.
 And tell me now, thou aguish
 boy,
 What makest thou here ? what
 means this toy ?
 Denzil and thou, I mark'd, were
 ta'en ;
 What lucky chance unbound your
 chain ?
 I deem'd, long since on Baliol's
 tower,
 Your heads were warp'd with
 sun and shower.
 Tell me the whole—and, mark !
 nought e'er
 Chafes me like falsehood, or like
 fear."
 Gathering his courage to his aid,
 But trembling still, the youth
 obey'd.

VII.

" Denzil and I two nights pass'd
 o'er
 In fetters on the dungeon floor

A guest the third sad morrow
 brought ;
 Our hold dark Oswald Wycliffe
 sought,
 And eyed my comrade long
 askance,
 With fix'd and penetrating glance.
 ' Guy Denzil art thou call'd ? '—
 ' The same. '—
 ' At Court who served wild
 Buckinghame ;
 Thence banish'd, won a keeper's
 place,
 So Villiers will'd, in Marwood-
 chase ;
 That lost—I need not tell thee
 why—
 Thou madest thy wits thy wants
 supply,
 Then fought for Rokeby :—Have
 I guess'd
 My prisoner right ? '—' At thy
 behest. '—
 He paused a while, and then
 went on
 With low and confidential tone ;—
 Me, as I judge, not then he saw,
 Close nestled on my couch of
 straw.—
 ' List to me, Guy. Thou know'st
 the great
 Have frequent need of what they
 hate ;
 Hence, in their favour oft we
 see
 Unscrupled, useful men like thee.
 Were I disposed to bid thee live,
 What pledge of faith hast thou
 to give ? '

VIII.

" The ready Fiend, who never
 yet
 Hath failed to sharpen Denzil's
 wit,

Prompted his lie—' His only child
Should rest his pledge.'—The
Baron smiled,
And turn'd to me—' Thou art his
son? '

I bowed—our fetters were undone,
And we were led to hear apart
A dreadful lesson of his art.

Wilfrid, he said, his heir and
son,

Had fair Matilda's favour won ;
And long since had their union
been,

But for her fathers bigot spleen,
Whose brute and blindfold party-
rage

Would, force per force, her hand
engage

To a base kern of Irish earth,
Unknown his lineage and his
birth,

Save that a dying ruffian bore
The infant brat to Rokeby door.
Gentle restraint, he said, would
lead

Old Rokeby to enlarge his creed ;
But fair occasion he must find
For such restraint well-meant and
kind,

The Knight being render'd to his
charge

But as a prisoner at large.

IX.

" He school'd us in a well-forged
tale,

Of scheme the Castle walls to
scale,

To which was leagued each
Cavalier

That dwells upon the Tyne and
Wear ;

That Rokeby, his parole forgot,
Had dealt with us to aid the plot.

Such was the charge, which
Denzil's zeal

Of hate to Rokeby and O'Neale
Proffer'd as witness, to make
good,

Even though the forfeit were
their blood.

I scrupled, until o'er and o'er
His prisoners' safety Wycliffe
swore ;

And then—alas ! what needs there
more ?

I knew I should not live to
say

The proffer I refused that
day ;

Ashamed to live, yet loth to
die,

I soil'd me with their infamy ! "

" Poor youth," said Bertram,
" wavering still,

Unfit alike for good or ill !
But what fell next ? "—" Soon as
at large

Was scroll'd and sign'd our fatal
charge,

There never yet, on tragic
stage,

Was seen so well a painted
rage

As Oswald's show'd ! With loud
alarm

He call'd his garrison to arm ;
From tower to tower, from post
to post,

He hurried as if all were
lost ;

Consign'd to dungeon and to
chain

The good old Knight and all his
train ;

Warn'd each suspected Cavalier,
Within his limits to appear

To-morrow, at the hour of noon,
In the high church of Egliston."—

X.

"Or Egliston!—Even now I
 pass'd,"
 Said Bertram, "as the night
 closed fast ;
 Torches and cressets gleam'd
 around,
 I heard the saw and hammer
 sound,
 And I could mark they toil'd to
 raise
 A scaffold, hung with sable baize,
 Which the grim headsman's scene
 display'd,
 Block, axe, and sawdust ready
 laid.
 Some evil deed will there be
 done,
 Unless Matilda wed his son ;—
 She loves him not—'tis shrewdly
 guess'd
 That Redmond rules the damsel's
 breast.
 This is a turn of Oswald's skill ;
 But I may meet, and foil him
 still !—
 How camest thou to thy free-
 dom ?"—"There
 Lies mystery more dark and rare.
 In midst of Wycliffe's well-feign'd
 rage,
 A scroll was offer'd by a page,
 Who told, a muffled horseman
 late
 Had left it at the Castle-gate.
 He broke the seal—his cheeks
 show'd change,
 Sudden, portentous, wild, and
 strange ;
 The mimic passion of his eye
 Was turn'd to actual agony ;
 His hand like summer sapling
 shook,
 Terror and guilt were in his look.

Denzil he judged, in time of
 need,
 Fit counsellor for evil deed ;
 And thus apart his counsel broke,
 While with a ghastly smile he
 spoke :—

XI.

"As in the pageants of the
 stage,
 The dead awake in this wild age,
 Mortham—whom all men deem'd
 decreed
 In his own deadly snare to
 bleed,
 Slain by a bravo, whom, o'er
 sea,
 He train'd to aid in murdering
 me,—
 Mortham has 'scaped ! The
 coward shot
 The steed, but harm'd the rider
 not.'"

Here, with an execration fell,
 Bertram leap'd up, and paced the
 cell :—
 "Thine own grey head, or bosom
 dark,"
 He mutter'd, "may be surer
 mark !"
 Then sat, and sign'd to Edmund,
 pale
 With terror, to resume his tale.
 "Wycliffe went on :—'Mark with
 what flights
 Of wilder'd reverie he writes :—

The Letter.

"Ruler of Mortham's destiny !
 Though dead, thy victim lives to
 thee.
 Once had he all that binds to
 life,
 A lovely child, a lovelier wife ;

Wealth, fame, and friendship,
 were his own—
 Thou gavest the word, and they
 are flown.
 Mark how he pays thee:—To
 thy hand
 He yields his honours and his
 land,
 One boon promised;—Restore
 his child!
 And, from his native land exiled,
 Mortham no more returns to
 claim
 His lands, his honours, or his
 name;
 Refuse him this, and from the
 slain
 Thou shalt see Mortham rise
 again.'

XII.

“This billet while the baron read,
 His faltering accents show'd his
 dread;
 He press'd his forehead with his
 palm,
 Then took a scornful tone and
 calm;
 ‘Wild as the winds, as billows
 wild!
 What wot I of his spouse or
 child?
 Hither he brought a joyous dame,
 Unknown her lineage or her
 name:
 Her, in some frantic fit, he slew;
 The nurse and child in fear with-
 drew.
 Heaven be my witness! wist I
 where
 To find this youth, my kinsman's
 heir,—
 Unguerdon'd, I would give with
 joy
 The father's arms to fold his boy,

And Mortham's lands and towers
 resign
 To the just heirs of Mortham's
 line.'—
 Thou know'st that scarcely e'en
 his fear
 Suppresses Denzil's cynic sneer;—
 ‘Then happy is thy vassal's part,’
 He said, ‘to ease his patron's
 heart!
 In thine own jailer's watchful
 care
 Lies Mortham's just and rightful
 heir;
 Thy generous wish is fully won,—
 Redmond O'Neale is Mortham's
 son.'—

XIII.

“Up starting with a frenzied
 look,
 His clenched hand the Baron
 shook:
 ‘Is Hell at work? or dost thou
 rave,
 Or dar'est thou palter with me,
 slave!
 Perchance thou wot'st not,
 Barnard's towers
 Have racks, of strange and
 ghastly powers.’
 Denzil, who well his safety knew,
 Firmly rejoin'd, ‘I tell thee true.
 Thy racks could give thee but
 to know
 The proofs, which I, untortured,
 show.—
 It chanced upon a winter night,
 When early snow made Stan-
 more white.
 That very night, when first of all
 Redmond O'Neale saw Rokeby-
 hall,
 It was my goodly lot to gain
 A reliquary and a chain,

Twisted and chased of massive
gold.

—Demand not how the prize I
hold!

It was not given, nor lent, nor
sold.—

Gilt tablets to the chain were
hung,

With letters in the Irish tongue.

I hid my spoil, for there was need
That I should leave the land with
speed;

Nor then I deem'd it safe to bear
On mine own person gems so
rare.

Small heed I of the tablets took,
But since have spell'd them by
the book,

When some sojourn in Erin's
land

Of their wild speech had given
command.

But darkling was the sense; the
phrase

And language those of other
days,

Involved of purpose, as to foil
An interloper's prying toil.

The words, but not the sense, I
knew,

Till fortune gave the guiding
clue.

XIV.

““Three days since, was that
clue reveal'd,

In Thorsgill as I lay conceal'd,
And heard at full when Rokeby's
Maid

Her uncle's history display'd;

And now I can interpret well

Each syllable the tablets tell.

Mark, then: Fair Edith was the
joy

Of old O'Neale of Clondeboy;

But from her sire and country
fled,

In secret Mortham's Lord to
wed.

O'Neale, his first resentment o'er,
Despatch'd his son to Greta's

shore,

Enjoining he should make him
known

(Until his farther will were
shown)

To Edith, but to her alone.

What of their ill-starr'd meeting
fell,

Lord Wycliffe knows, and none
so well.

XV.

““O'Neale it was, who, in de-
spair,

Robb'd Mortham of his infant
heir;

He bred him in their nurture
wild,

And call'd him murder'd Connel's
child.

Soon died the nurse; the Clan
believed

What from their Chieftain they
received

His purpose was, that ne'er again
The boy should cross the Irish

main;

But, like his mountain sires, en-
joy

The woods and wastes of Clande-
boy.

Then on the land wild troubles
came,

And stronger Chieftains urged a
claim,

And wrested from the old man's
hands

His native towers, his father's
lands.

Unable then, amid the strife,
 To guard young Redmond's
 rights or life,
 Late and reluctant he restores
 The infant to his native shores,
 With goodly gifts and letters
 stored,
 With many a deep conjuring
 word,
 To Mortham and to Rokeby's
 Lord.
 Nought knew the clod of Irish
 earth,
 Who was the guide, of Redmond's
 birth ;
 But deem'd his Chief's commands
 were laid
 On both, by both to be obey'd.
 How he was wounded by the
 way,
 I need not, and I list not say.'—

XVI.

“ ‘A wondrous tale ! and, grant
 it true,
 What,’ Wycliffe answer'd, ‘might
 I do ?
 Heaven knows, as willingly as
 now
 I raise the bonnet from my
 brow,
 Would I my kinsman's manors
 fair
 Restore to Mortham, or his heir ;
 But Mortham is distraught—
 O'Neale
 Has drawn for tyranny his steel,
 Malignant to our rightful cause,
 And train'd in Rome's delusive
 laws.
 Hark thee apart !’ — They
 whisper'd long,
 Till Denzil's voice grew bold and
 strong :—

‘My proofs ! I never will,’ he
 said,
 ‘Show mortal man where they
 are laid.
 Nor hope discovery to foreclose,
 By giving me to feed the crows ;
 For I have mates at large, who
 know
 Where I am wont such toys to
 stow.
 Free me from peril and from
 band,
 These tablets are at thy com-
 mand ;
 Nor were it hard to form some
 train,
 To wile old Mortham o'er the
 main.
 Then, lunatic's nor papist's hand
 Should wrest from thine the
 goodly land.’—
 —‘I like thy wit,’ said Wycliffe,
 ‘well ;
 But here in hostage shalt thou
 dwell.
 Thy son, unless my purpose err,
 May prove the trustier mes-
 senger.
 A scroll to Mortham shall he bear
 From me, and fetch these tokens
 rare.
 Gold shalt thou have, and that
 good store,
 And freedom, his commission
 o'er ;
 But if his faith should chance to
 fail,
 The gibbet frees thee from the
 jail.’—

XVII.

“ Mesh'd in the net himself had
 twined,
 What subterfuge could Denzil
 find ?

He told me, with reluctant sigh,
That hidden here the tokens lie ;
Conjured my swift return and aid,
By all he scoff'd and disobey'd,
And look'd as if the noose were
tied,
And I the priest who left his side.
This scroll for Mortham Wycliffe
gave,
Whom I must seek by Greta's
wave ;
Or in the hut where chief he
hides,
Where Thorsgill's forester resides.
(Thence chanced it, wandering
in the glade,
That he descried our ambuscade.)
I was dismiss'd as evening fell,
And reach'd but now this rocky
cell."—
"Give Oswald's letter."—Bertram read,
And tore it fiercely, shred by
shred :—
"All lies and villany ! to blind
His noble kinsman's generous
mind,
And train him on from day to day,
Till he can take his life away.—
And now, declare thy purpose,
youth,
Nor dare to answer, save the
truth ;
If aught I mark of Denzil's art,
I'll tear the secret from thy
heart !"—

XVIII.

"It needs not. I renounce," he
said,
"My tutor and his deadly trade.
Fix'd was my purpose to declare
To Mortham, Redmond is his
heir ;

To tell him in what risk he stands,
And yield these tokens to his
hands.

Fix'd was my purpose to atone,
Far as I may, the evil done ;
And fix'd it rests—if I survive
This night, and leave this cave
alive."—

"And Denzil ?"—"Let them
ply the rack
Even till his joints and sinews
crack !
If Oswald tear him limb from
limb,
What ruth can Denzil claim from
him,
Whose thoughtless youth he led
astray,
And damn'd to this unhallow'd
way ?
He school'd me faith and vows
were vain ;
Now let my master reap his
gain."—
"True," answer'd Bertram, "'tis
his meed ;
There's retribution in the deed.
But thou—thou art not for our
course,
Hast fear, hast pity, hast re-
morse :
And he, with us the gale who
braves,
Must heave such cargo to the
waves,
Or lag with overloaded prore,
While barks unburden'd reach
the shore."

XIX.

He paused, and, stretching him
at length,
Seem'd to repose his bulky
strength.

Communing with his secret mind,
 As half he sat, and half reclined,
 One ample hand his forehead
 press'd,
 And one was dropp'd across his
 breast.
 The shaggy eyebrows deeper
 came
 Above his eyes of swarthy flame ;
 His lip of pride a while forebore
 The haughty curve till then it
 wore ;
 The unalter'd fierceness of his
 look
 A shade of darken'd sadness
 took,—
 For dark and sad a presage
 press'd
 Resistlessly on Bertram's
 breast,—
 And when he spoke, his wonted
 tone,
 So fierce, abrupt, and brief, was
 gone.
 His voice was steady, low, and
 deep,
 Like distant waves when breezes
 sleep ;
 And sorrow mix'd with Edmund's
 fear,
 Its low unbroken depth to hear.

XX.

“Edmund, in thy sad tale I
 find
 The woe that warp'd my patron's
 mind :
 'Twould wake the fountains of
 the eye
 In other men, but mine are dry.
 Mortham must never see the
 fool,
 That sold himself base Wycliffe's
 tool ;

Yet less from thirst of sordid
 gain,
 Than to avenge supposed dis-
 dain.
 Say, Bertram rues his fault ;—
 a word,
 Till now, from Bertram never
 heard :
 Say, too, that Mortham's Lord he
 prays
 To think but on their former
 days ;
 On Quariana's beach and rock,
 On Cayo's bursting battle-shock,
 On Darien's sands and deadly
 dew,
 And on the dart Tlatzeca threw ;—
 Perchance my patron yet may
 hear
 More that may grace his com-
 rade's bier.
 My soul hath felt a secret weight,
 A warning of approaching fate :
 A priest had said, ‘Return,
 repent !’
 As well to bid that rock be
 rent.
 Firm as that flint I face mine
 end ;
 My heart may burst, but cannot
 bend.

XXI.

“The dawning of my youth, with
 awe
 And prophecy, the Dalesmen
 saw ;
 For over Redesdale it came,
 As bodeful as their beacon-
 flame.
 Edmund, thy years were scarcely
 mine,
 When, challenging the Clans of
 Tyne,

To bring their best my brand
to prove,
O'er Hexham's altar hung my
glove; ³³⁷
But Tynedale, nor in tower nor
town,
Held champion meet to take it
down.
My noontide, India may declare;
Like her fierce sun, I fired the
air!
Like him, to wood and cave
bade fly
Her natives, from mine angry
eye.
Panama's maids shall long look
pale
When Risingham inspires the
tale;
Chili's dark matrons long shall
tame
The froward child with Bertram's
name.
And now, my race of terror run,
Mine be the eve of tropic sun!
No pale gradations quench his
ray,
No twilight dews his wrath
allay;
With disk like battle-target red,
He rushes to his burning bed,
Dyes the wide wave with bloody
light,
Then sinks at once—and all is
night.—

XXII.

“Now to thy mission, Edmund.
Fly,
Seek Mortham out, and bid him
hie
To Richmond, where his troops
are laid,
And lead his force to Redmond's
aid.

Say, till he reaches Egliston,
A friend will watch to guard his
son.
Now, fare-thee-well; for night
draws on,
And I would rest me here
alone.”
Despite his ill-dissembled fear,
There swam in Edmund's eye a
tear;
A tribute to the courage high,
Which stoop'd not in extremity,
But strove, irregularly great,
To triumph o'er approaching
fate!
Bertram beheld the dewdrop
start,
It almost touch'd his iron
heart:—
“I did not think there lived,”
he said,
“One, who would tear for
Bertram shed.”
He loosen'd then his baldric's
hold,
A buckle broad of massive
gold;—
“Of all the spoil that paid his
pains,
But this with Risingham remains;
And this, dear Edmund, thou
shalt take
And wear it long for Bertram's
sake.
Once more—to Mortham speed
again;
Farewell! and turn thee not
again.”

XXIII.

The night has yielded to the
morn,
And far the hours of prime are
worn.

Oswald, who, since the dawn of
 day,
 Had cursed his messenger's
 delay,
 Impatient question'd now his
 train,
 "Was Denzil's son return'd
 again?"
 It chanced there answer'd of the
 crew,
 A menial, who young Edmund
 knew:
 "No son of Denzil this,"—he
 said;
 "A peasant boy from Winston
 glade,
 For song and minstrelsy
 renown'd,
 And knavish pranks, the hamlets
 round."—
 "Not Denzil's son!—From
 Winston vale!—
 Then it was false, that specious
 tale;
 Or, worse—he hath despatch'd
 the youth
 To show to Mortham's Lord its
 truth.
 Fool that I was!—but 'tis too
 late;—
 This is the very turn of fate!—
 The tale, or true or false, relies
 On Denzil's evidence! He
 dies!
 Ho! Provost Marshall! instantly
 Lead Denzil to the gallows-
 tree!
 Allow him not a parting word;
 Short be the shrift, and sure the
 cord!
 Then let his gory head appal
 Marauders from the Castle-wall.
 Lead forth thy guard, that duty
 done,
 With best despatch to Egliston.—

—Basil, tell Wilfrid he must
 straight
 Attend me at the Castle-gate."—

XXIV.

"Alas!" the old domestic said,
 And shook his venerable head,
 "Alas, my Lord! full ill to-day
 May my young master brook the
 way!
 The leech has spoke with grave
 alarm,
 Of unseen hurt, of secret harm,
 Of sorrow lurking at the heart,
 That mars and lets his healing
 art."—
 "Tush, tell not me!—Romantic
 boys
 Pine themselves sick for airy
 toys,
 I will find cure for Wilfrid soon;
 Bid him for Egliston be boune,
 And quick!—I hear the dull
 death-drum
 Tell Denzil's hour of fate is
 come."
 He paused with scornful smile,
 and then
 Resumed his train of thought
 agen.
 "Now comes my fortune's crisis
 near!
 Entreaty boots not—instant fear,
 Nought else, can bend Matilda's
 pride,
 Or win her to be Wilfrid's bride.
 But when she sees the scaffold
 placed,
 With axe and block and heads-
 man graced,
 And when she deems, that to
 deny
 Dooms Redmond and her sire to
 die,

She must give way.—Then, were
 the line
 Of Rokeby once combined with
 mine,
 I gain the weather-gage of fate !
 If Mortham come, he comes too
 late,
 While I, allied thus and prepared,
 Bid him defiance to his beard.—
 —If she prove stubborn, shall I
 dare
 To drop the axe?—Soft ! pause
 we there.
 Mortham still lives—yon youth
 may tell
 His tale—and Fairfax loves him
 well ;—
 Else, wherefore should I now
 delay
 To sweep this Redmond from
 my way?—
 But she to piety perforce
 Must yield.—Without there !
 Sound to horse.”

XXV.

’Twas bustle in the court below,—
 “Mount, and march forward !”—
 Forth they go.
 Steeds neigh and trample all
 around,
 Steel rings, spears glimmer,
 trumpets sound.—
 Just then was sung his parting
 hymn ;
 And Denzil turn’d his eyeballs
 dim,
 And, scarcely conscious what he
 sees,
 Follows the horsemen down the
 Tees ;
 And scarcely conscious what he
 hears,
 The trumpets tingle in his ears.

O’er the long bridge they’re
 sweeping now,
 The van is hid by greenwood
 bough ;
 But ere the rearward had pass’d
 o’er,
 Guy Denzil heard and saw no
 more !
 One stroke, upon the Castle bell,
 To Oswald rung his dying knell.

XXVI.

O, for that pencil, erst profuse
 Of chivalry’s emblazon’d hues,
 That traced of old in Woodstock
 bower,
 The pageant of the Leaf and
 Flower,
 And bodied forth the tourney
 high,
 Held for the hand of Emily !
 Then might I paint the tumult
 broad,
 That to the crowded abbey
 flow’d,
 And pour’d, as with an ocean’s
 sound,
 Into the church’s ample bound !
 Then might I show each varying
 mien,
 Exulting, woeful, or serene ;
 Indifference, with his idiot stare,
 And Sympathy, with anxious air,
 Paint the dejected Cavalier,
 Doubtful, disarm’d, and sad of
 cheer ;
 And his proud foe, whose formal
 eye
 Claim’d conquest now and
 mastery ;
 And the brute crowd, whose
 envious zeal
 Huzzas each turn of Fortune’s
 wheel,

And loudest shouts when lowest
 lie
 Exalted worth and station high.
 Yet what may such a wish avail?
 'Tis mine to tell an onward tale,
 Hurrying, as best I can, along,
 The hearers and the hasty
 song ;—
 Like traveller when approaching
 home,
 Who sees the shades of evening
 come,
 And must not now his course
 delay,
 Or choose the fair, but winding
 way ;
 Nay, scarcely may his pace sus-
 pend,
 Where o'er his head the wildings
 bend,
 To bless the breeze that cools his
 brow,
 Or snatch a blossom from the
 bough.

XXVII.

The reverend pile lay wild and
 waste,
 Profaned, dishonour'd, and de-
 faced.
 Through storied lattices no more
 In soften'd light the sunbeams
 pour,
 Gilding the Gothic sculpture rich
 Of shrine, and monument, and
 niche.
 The Civil fury of the time
 Made sport of sacrilegious crime ;
 For dark Fanaticism rent
 Altar, and screen, and ornament,
 And peasant hands the tombs
 o'erthrew
 Of Bowes, of Rokeby, and Fitz-
 Hugh.

And now was seen, unwonted
 sight,
 In holy walls a scaffold dight !
 Where once the priest, of grace
 divine
 Dealt to his flock the mystic sign,
 There stood the block display'd,
 and there
 The headsman grim his hatchet
 bare ;
 And for the word of Hope and
 Faith,
 Resounded loud a doom of death.
 Thrice the fierce trumpet's breath
 was heard,
 And echo'd thrice the herald's
 word,
 Dooming, for breach of martial
 laws,
 And treason to the Commons'
 cause,
 The Knight of Rokeby and
 O'Neale
 To stoop their heads to block and
 steel.
 The trumpets flourish'd high and
 shrill,
 Then was a silence dead and
 still ;
 And silent prayers to heaven
 were cast,
 And stifled sobs were bursting
 fast,
 Till from the crowd begun to rise
 Murmurs of sorrow or surprise,
 And from the distant aisles there
 came
 Deep-mutter'd threats, with
 Wycliffe's name.

XXVIII.

But Oswald, guarded by his
 band,
 Powerful in evil, waved his hand,

And bade Sedition's voice be
 dead,
 On peril of the murmurer's head.
 Then first his glance sought
 Rokeby's Knight ;
 Who gazed on the tremendous
 sight,
 As calm as if he came a guest
 To kindred Baron's feudal feast,
 As calm as if that trumpet-call
 Were summons to the banner'd
 hall ;
 Firm in his loyalty he stood,
 And prompt to seal it with his
 blood.
 With downcast look drew Oswald
 nigh,—
 He durst not cope with Rokeby's
 eye !—
 And said, with low and faltering
 breath,
 "Thou know'st the terms of
 life and death."
 The Knight then turn'd, and
 sternly smiled ;
 "The maiden is mine only child,
 Yet shall my blessing leave her
 head,
 If with a traitor's son she wed."
 Then Redmond spoke : "The
 life of one
 Might thy malignity atone,
 On me be flung a double guilt !
 Spare Rokeby's blood, let mine
 be spilt !"
 Wycliffe had listen'd to his suit,
 But dread prevail'd, and he was
 mute.

XXIX.

And now he pours his choice of
 fear
 In secret on Matilda's ear ;

"An union form'd with me and
 mine,
 Ensures the faith of Rokeby's
 line.
 Consent, and all this dread array,
 Like morning dream, shall pass
 away ;
 Refuse, and, by my duty press'd,
 I give the word—thou know'st
 the rest."
 Matilda, still and motionless,
 With terror heard the dread
 address,
 Pale as the sheeted maid who
 dies
 To hopeless love a sacrifice ;
 Then wrung her hands in agony,
 And round her cast bewilder'd eye.
 Now on the scaffold glanced, and
 now
 On Wycliffe's unrelenting brow.
 She veil'd her face, and, with a
 voice
 Scarce audible,—"I make my
 choice !
 Spare but their lives !—for aught
 beside,
 Let Wilfrid's doom my fate de-
 cide.
 He once was generous !"—As
 she spoke,
 Dark Wycliffe's joy in triumph
 broke :—
 "Wilfrid, where loiter'd ye so
 late ?
 Why upon Basil rest thy
 weight ?—
 Art spell-bound by enchanter's
 wand ?—
 Kneel, kneel, and take her yielded
 hand ;
 Thank her with raptures, simple
 boy !
 Should tears and trembling speak
 thy joy ?"—

“O hush, my sire! To prayer
and tear
Of mine thou hast refused thine
ear;
But now the awful hour draws
on,
When truth must speak in loftier
tone.”

XXX.

He took Matilda's hand: “Dear
maid,
Couldst thou so injure me,” he
said,
“Of thy poor friend so basely
deem,
As blend with him this barbarous
scheme?
Alas! my efforts made in vain,
Might well have saved this added
pain.
But now, bear witness earth and
heaven,
That ne'er was hope to mortal
given,
So twisted with the strings of
life,
As this—to call Matilda wife!
I bid it now for ever part,
And with the effort bursts my
heart!”
His feeble frame was worn so
low,
With wounds, with watching,
and with woe,
That nature could no more sus-
tain
The agony of mental pain.
He kneel'd—his lip her hand had
press'd,—
Just then he felt the stern arrest.
Lower and lower sunk his head,—
They raised him,—but the life
was fled!

Then, first alarm'd, his sire and
train
Tried every aid, but tried in vain.
The soul, too soft its ills to bear,
Had left our mortal hemisphere,
And sought in better world the
mead,
To blameless life by Heaven de-
creed.

XXXI.

The wretched sire beheld, aghast,
With Wilfrid all his projects
past,
All turn'd and centred on his son,
On Wilfrid all—and he was gone.
“And I am childless now,” he
said;
“Childless, through that relent-
less maid!
A lifetime's arts, in vain essay'd,
Are bursting on their artist's
head!—
Here lies my Wilfrid dead—and
there
Comes hated Mortham for his
heir,
Eager to knit in happy band
With Rokeby's heiress Redmond's
hand.
And shall their triumph soar o'er
all
The schemes deep-laid to work
their fall?
No!—deeds, which prudence
might not dare,
Appal not vengeance and despair.
The murd'ress weeps upon his
bier—
I'll change to real that feigned
tear!
They all shall share destruction's
shock;—
Ho! lead the captives to the
block!”—

But ill his Provost could divine
 His feelings, and forbore the
 sign.
 "Slave! to the block!—or I, or
 they,
 Shall face the judgment-seat this
 day!"

XXXII.

The outmost crowd have heard a
 sound,
 Like horse's hoofs on harden'd
 ground;
 Nearer it came, and yet more
 near,—
 The very death's-men paused to
 hear.
 'Tis in the churchyard now—the
 tread
 Hath waked the dwelling of the
 dead!
 Fresh sod, and old sepulchral
 stone,
 Return the tramp in varied tone.
 All eyes upon the gateway hung,
 When through the Gothic arch
 there sprung
 A horseman arm'd, at headlong
 speed—
 Sable his cloak, his plume, his
 steed.³³⁸
 Fire from the flinty floor was
 spurn'd,
 The vaults unwonted clang re-
 turn'd!—
 One instant's glance around he
 threw,
 From saddlebow his pistol drew.
 Grimly determined was his look!
 His charger with the spurs he
 strook—
 All scatter'd backward as he
 came,
 For all knew Bertram Risingham!

Three bounds that noble courser
 gave;
 The first has reach'd the central
 nave,
 The second clear'd the chancel
 wide,
 The third—he was at Wycliffe's
 side.
 Full levell'd at the Baron's head,
 Rung the report—the bullet
 sped—
 And to his long account, and
 last,
 Without a groan dark Oswald
 past!
 All was so quick, that it might
 seem
 A flash of lightning, or a dream.

XXXIII.

While yet the smoke the deed
 conceals,
 Bertram his ready charger
 wheels;
 But flounder'd on the pavement-
 floor
 The steed, and down the rider
 bore,
 And, bursting in the headlong
 sway,
 The faithless saddle-girths gave
 way.
 'Twas while he toil'd him to be
 freed,
 And with the rein to raise the
 steed,
 That from amazement's iron
 trance
 All Wycliffe's soldiers waked at
 once.
 Sword, halberd, musket-but, their
 blows
 Hail'd upon Bertram as he rose;

A score of pikes, with each a
 wound,
 Bore down and pinn'd him to the
 ground ;
 But still his struggling force he
 rears,
 'Gainst hacking brands and stab-
 bing spears ;
 Thrice from assailants shook him
 free,
 Once gain'd his feet, and twice
 his knee.
 By tenfold odds oppress'd at
 length,
 Despite his struggles and his
 strength,
 He took a hundred mortal
 wounds,
 As mute as fox 'mongst mangling
 hounds ;
 And when he died, his parting
 groan
 Had more of laughter than of
 moan !
 —They gazed, as when a lion
 dies,
 And hunters scarcely trust their
 eyes,
 But bend their weapons on the
 slain,
 Lest the grim king should rouse
 again ;
 Then blow and insult some re-
 new'd,
 And from the trunk, the head
 had hew'd,
 But Basil's voice the deed for-
 bade ;
 A mantle o'er the corse he
 laid :—
 “ Fell as he was in act and mind,
 He left no bolder heart behind :
 Then give him, for a soldier meet,
 A soldier's cloak for winding
 sheet.”

XXXIV.

No more of death and dying
 pang,
 No more of trump or bugle clang,
 Though through the sounding
 woods there come
 Banner and bugle, trump and
 drum.
 Arm'd with such powers as well
 had freed
 Young Redmond at his utmost
 need,
 And back'd with such a band of
 horse,
 As might less ample powers en-
 force ;
 Possess'd of every proof and
 sign
 That gave an heir to Mortham's
 line,
 And yielded to a father's arms
 An image of his Edith's charms,—
 Mortham, is come, to hear and
 see
 Of this strange morn the history.
 What saw he?—not the church's
 floor,
 Cumber'd with dead and stain'd
 with gore ;
 What heard he?—not the clamor-
 ous crowd,
 That shout their gratulations
 loud :
 Redmond he saw and heard
 alone,
 Clasp'd him, and sobbed, “ My
 son ! my son ! ”—

XXXV.

This chanced upon a summer
 morn,
 When yellow waved the heavy
 corn :

But when brown August o'er the land	Drops, while she folds them for a prayer
Call'd forth the reaper's busy band,	And blessing on the lovely pair.
A gladsome sight the silvan road From Egliston to Mortham show'd,	'Twas then the Maid of Rokeby gave
A while the hardy rustic leaves The task to bind and pile the sheaves,	Her plighted troth to Redmond brave ;
And maids their sickles fling aside,	And Teesdale can remember yet How Fate to Virtue paid her debt,
To gaze on bridegroom and on bride,	And, for their troubles, bade them prove
And childhood's wondering group draws near,	A lengthen'd life of peace and love
And from the gleaner's hands the ear	Time and Tide had thus their sway, Yielding, like an April day, Smiling noon for sullen morrow, Years of joy for hours of sorrow !

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. Δοκεί πρώτος [ὁ Ἀναξαγόρας]

(καθ' ἣν φησι Φαβορίνος ἐν παντοδαπῇ Ἱστορίᾳ) τὴν Ὀμήρου πόλιν ἀποφῆρασθαι 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. Ἐναντιῶλετο μετὰ τοῦ Μέντεω καὶ ὅπου ἐκάστοτε ἀφίκοιτο, πάντα τὰ ἐπιχώρια διεωρᾶτο, καὶ ἱστορέων ἐπινοήσατο: εἰδὸς δὲ μὴ ἦν καὶ μνημόσυνα πάντων γράφασθαι. 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 *Εῖρησία*; 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 reader 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 *Εῖρησία*; 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'dis 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 invidi-
ous 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 cool-
 ing;
 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 diamonds' 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 need to minstrel
true,—

One favouring smile from fair
BUCCLEUCH!

Byone 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, ill-
starred 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 ; ³³⁹

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 ³⁴⁰

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 dinted 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 Triermain,
When that Baron bold awoke.
Starting he woke, and loudly did
call,
Rousing his menials in bower and
hall,
While hastily he spoke.

IV.

“Hearken, 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,
Murmur'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 Triermain
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 Ithing'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,²¹
For feats of chivalry renown'd,
Left Mayburgh's mound and stones
of power,²²
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

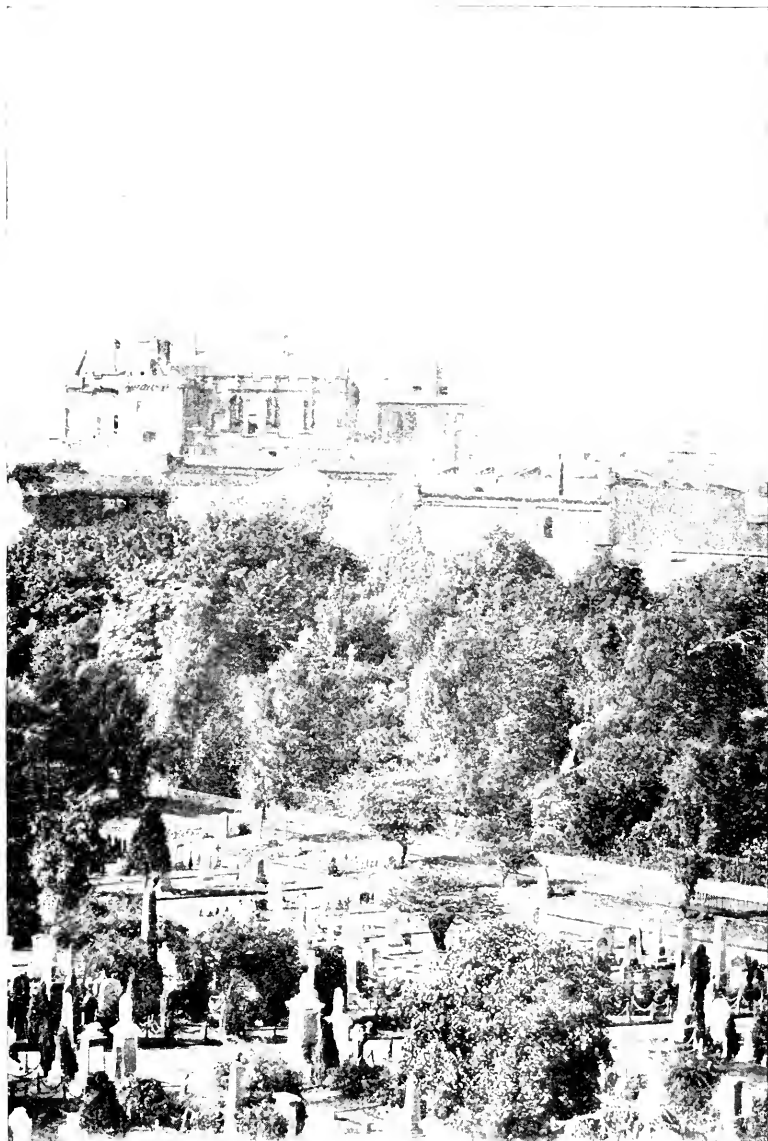


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Stirling Castle.

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
 rod,
 Had a pagan host before him stood,
 He had charged them through
 and through;
 s. c.

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 ex-
 press'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.

Lyulph'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 practis'd 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 deny-
ing;

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 com-
bines,

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 Guen-
dolen.—

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 stirr'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;³¹³

But, on the spot where once they frown'd,

The lonely streamlet brawl'd around
A tufted knoll, where dimly shone
Fragments of rock and rifted 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:
Ryhton, 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.³¹⁴

There Galaad sate 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.³¹⁵

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, 'It 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 be-
stride,
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,³¹⁶

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 re-
port,—

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 com-
 mands,
 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 need 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 dis-
 posed,
 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 heading
 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 gulfiug
 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 long

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

Weil 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 with-
drew,

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 wittings 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 phibntom, fashionably thin,
 With limb of lath and kerchief'd
 chin,
 And lounjing 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 lounjer 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 hitler 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
 throog,
 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
 Flew 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 restless 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 wou'd 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 wou'dst 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 landaulet 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 rest 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 h's 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-scuted 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 com-
plain;
They lack the sword of brave de Vaux,
There comes no aid from Triermaln.
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 Lyulph'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 gorecock 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 fell,
 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, bedafen'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.

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
again

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, Triermal-
 main
 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 ex-
treme,

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 venturesome
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,—

Ofi 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 venturesome
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 with-
 held,
 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 again;
 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,
 Zwanga 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 neighbour-
 ing 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 re-
 veal'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 court-yard
 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 green-
 wood 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 toil-some 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 dark-
 some 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, soothing 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 ecstacy.
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 softien'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.

XXXVIII.

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 when'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 whites, up-gazing still,
 Our menials eye our steepy way,
 Marvelling, perchance, what whim
 can stay
 Our steps, when eye 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 un-
 close !
 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, than 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 LORD OF THE ISLES.

ADVERTISEMENT TO THE FIRST EDITION.

THE scene of this Poem lies, at first, in the Castle of Artornish, on the coast of Argyleshire; and, afterwards, in the Islands of Skye and Arran, and upon the coast of Ayrshire. Finally, it is laid near Stirling. The story opens in the spring of the year 1307, when Bruce, who had been driven out of Scotland by the English, and the Barons who adhered to that foreign interest, returned from the Island of Rachrin on the coast of Ireland, again to assert his claims to the Scottish crown. Many of the personages and incidents introduced are of historical celebrity. The authorities used are chiefly those of the venerable Lord Hailes, as well entitled to be called the restorer of Scottish history, as Bruce the restorer of Scottish monarchy; and of Archdeacon Barbour, a correct edition of whose Metrical History of Robert Bruce will soon, I trust, appear under the care of my learned friend, the Rev. Dr. Jamieson.

ABBOTSFORD, 10th December, 1814.

CANTO FIRST.

AUTUMN departs—but still his
mantle's fold
Rests on the groves of noble
Somerville,
Beneath a shroud of russet dropp'd
with gold
Tweed and his tributaries mingle
still;
Hoarser the wind, and deeper
sounds the rill,
Yet lingering notes of sylvan music
swell,
The deep-toned cushat, and the red-
breast shrill;
And yet some tints of summer
splendour tell
When the broad sun sinks down on
Etrick's western fell.

Autumn departs — from Gala's
fields no more
Come rural sounds our kindred
banks to cheer;
Blent with the stream, and gale
that wafts it o'er,
No more the distant reaper's mirth
we hear.

The last blithe shout hath died
upon our ear,
And harvest-home hath hush'd the
clanging wain,
On the waste hill no forms of life
appear,
Save where, sad laggard of the
autumnal train,
Some age-struck wanderer gleans
few ears of scatter'd grain.

Deem'st thou these sadden'd scenes
have pleasure still,
Lovest thou through Autumn's
fading realms to stray,
To see the heath-flower wither'd on
the hill,
To listen to the wood's expiring
lay,
To note the red leaf shivering on
the spray,
To mark the last bright tints the
mountain stain,
On the waste fields to trace the
gleaner's way,
And moralize on mortal joy and
pain?—
O! if such scenes thou lovest, scorn
not the minstrel strain.

No! do not scorn, although its
hoarser note
Scarce with the cushat's homely
song can vie,
Though faint its beauties as the
tints remote
That gleam through mist in
autumn's evening sky,
And few as leaves that tremble,
sear and dry,
When wild November hath his
bugle wound ;
Nor mock my toil — a lonely
gleaner I,
Through fields time-wasted, on sad
inquest bound,
Where happier bards of yore have
richer harvest found.

So shalt thou list, and haply not
unmoved,
To a wild tale of Albyn's warrior
day ;
In distant lands, by the rough West
reproved,
Still live some relics of the ancient
lay.
For, when on Coolin's hills the
lights decay.
With such the Seer of Skye the
eve beguiles ;
'Tis known amid the pathless
wastes of Reay.
In Harries known, and in Iona's
piles,
Where rest from mortal coil the
Mighty of the Isles.

I.

"WAKE, Maid of Lorn!" the
Minstrels sung.
Thy rugged halls, Artornish!
rung,³⁴⁷
And the dark seas, thy towers that
lave,
Heaved on the beach a softer wave,
As 'mid the tuneful choir to keep
The diapason of the Deep.
Lull'd were the winds on Innin-
more,
And green Loch-Alline's woodland
shore.

As if wild woods and waves had
pleasure
In listing to the lovely measure.
And ne'er to symphony more
sweet
Gave mountain echoes answer
meet,
Since, met from mainland and
from isle,
Ross, Arran, Ilay, and Argyle,
Each minstrel's tributary lay
Paid homage to the festal day.
Dull and dishonour'd were the bard,
Worthless of guerdon and regard,
Deaf to the hope of minstrel fame,
Or lady's smiles, his noblest aim,
Who on that morn's resistless call
Were silent in Artornish hall.

II.

"Wake, Maid of Lorn!" 'twas
thus they sung,
And yet more proud the descant rung,
"Wake, Maid of Lorn! high right
is ours,
To charm dull sleep from Beauty's
bowers ;
Earth, Ocean, Air, have nought so
shy
But owns the power of minstrelsy.
In Lettermore the timid deer
Will pause, the harp's wild chime
to hear ;
Rude Heiskar's seal through
surges dark
Will long pursue the minstrel's
bark ;³⁴⁸
To list his notes, the eagle proud
Will poise him on Ben-Cailliach's
cloud ;
Then let not Maiden's ear disdain
The summons of the minstrel train,
But, while our harps wild music make,
Edith of Lorn, awake, awake !

III.

"O wake, while Dawn, with dewy
shine,
Wakes Nature's charms to vie with
thine !

She bids the mottled thrush rejoice
 To mate thy melody of voice ;
 The dew that on the violet lies
 Mocks the dark lustre of thine eyes ;
 But, Edith, wake, and all we see
 Of sweet and fair shall yield to
 thee !"—

"She comes not yet," gray Ferrand
 cried ;

"Brethren, let softer spell be tried,
 Those notes prolong'd, that soothing
 theme,

Which best may mix with Beauty's
 dream,

And whisper, with their silvery
 tone,

The hope she loves, yet fears to
 own."

He 'spoke, and on the harp-strings
 died

The strains of flattery and of pride ;
 More soft, more low, more tender
 fell

The lay of love he bade them tell.

IV.

"Wake, Maid of Lorn ! the moments
 fly,

Which yet that maiden-name allow ;
 Wake, Maiden, wake ! the hour is
 nigh,

When love shall claim a plighted
 vow.

By Fear, thy bosom's fluttering guest,
 By Hope, that soon shall fears
 remove,

We bid thee break the bonds of
 rest,

And wake thee at the call of Love !

"Wake, Edith, wake ! in yonder
 bay

Lies many a galley gaily mann'd,
 We hear the merry pibrochs play,

We see the streamers' silken band.
 What Chieftain's praise these pibrochs
 swell,

What crest is on these banners
 wove,

The harp, the minstrel, dare not
 tell—

The riddle must be read by Love."

V.

Retired her maiden train among,
 Edith of Lorn received the song,
 But tamed the minstrel's pride had
 been

That had her cold demeanour seen ;
 For not upon her cheek awoke
 The glow of pride when Flattery
 spoke,

Nor could their tenderest numbers
 bring

One sigh responsive to the string.

As vainly had her maidens vied

In skill to deck the princely bride.

Her locks, in dark-brown length
 array'd,

Cathleen of Ulna, 'twas thine to
 braid ;

Young Eva with meet reverence drew
 On the light foot the silken shoe,

While on the ankle's slender round
 Those strings of pearl fair Bertha

wound,
 That, bleach'd Lochryan's depths
 within,

Seem'd dusky still on Edith's skin.

But Einion, of experience old,

Had weightiest task—the mantle's
 fold

In many an artful plait she tied,
 To show the form it seem'd to hide,

'Till on the floor descending roll'd
 Its waves of crimson blent with gold.

VI.

O ! lives there now so cold a maid,
 Who thus in beauty's pomp array'd,

In beauty's proudest pitch of power,
 And conquest won—the bridal hour—

With every charm that wins the heart,
 By Nature given, enhanced by Art,

Could yet the fair reflection view,
 In the bright mirror pictured true,

And not one dimple on her cheek
 A tell-tale consciousness bespeak ?—

Lives still such maid ?—Fair damsels,
 say,

For further vouches not my lay,
 Save that such lived in Britain's isle,

When Lorn's bright Edith scorn'd
 to smile.

VII.

But Morag, to whose fostering care
Proud Lorn had given his daughter
fair,

Morag, who saw a mother's aid
By all a daughter's love repaid,
(Strict was that bond—most kind of
all—

Inviolatè in Highland hall)—
Gray Morag sate a space apart,
In Édith's eyes to read her heart.
In vain the attendants' fond appeal
To Morag's skill, to Morag's zeal;
She mark'd her child receive their
care,

Cold as the image sculptured fair,
(Form of some sainted patroness,)
Which cloister'd maids combine to
dress;

She mark'd—and knew her nursling's
heart

In the vain pomp took little part.
Wistful a while she gazed—then
press'd

The maiden to her anxious breast
In finish'd loveliness—and led
To where a turret's airy head,
Slender and steep, and battled round,
O'erlook'd, dark Mull! thy mighty
Sound,³⁴⁹

Where thwarting tides, with mingled
roar,

Part thy swarth hills from Morven's
shore.

VIII.

“ Daughter,” she said, “ these seas
behold,

Round twice a hundred islands roll'd,
From Hirt, that hears their northern
roar,

To the green Ilay's fertile shore; ³⁵⁰
Or mainland turn, where many a
tower

Owens thy bold brother's feudal
power,

Each on its own dark cape reclined,
And listening to its own wild wind,
From where Mingarry, sternly placed,
O'erawes the woodland and the
waste. ³⁵¹

To where Dunstaffnage hears the
raging
Of Connal with his rocks engaging.
Think'st thou, amid this ample
round,

A single brow but thine has frown'd,
To sadden this auspicious morn,
That bids the daughter of high Lorn
Impledge her spousal faith to wed
The heir of mighty Somerled? ³⁵²

Ronald, from many a hero sprung,
The fair, the valiant, and the young,
LORD OF THE ISLES, whose lofty
name ³⁵³

A thousand bards have given to
fame,

The mate of monarchs, and allied
On equal terms with England's
pride.—

From chieftain's tower to bondsman's
cot,

Who hears the tale, and triumphs
not?

The damsel dons her best attire,
The shepherd lights his beltane fire,
Joy, joy! each warder's horn hath
sung,

Joy, joy! each matin bell hath rung;
The holy priest says grateful mass,
Loud shouts each hardy galla-glass,
No mountain den holds outcast boor,
Of heart so dull, of soul so poor,
But he hath flung his task aside,
And claim'd this morn for holy-tide;
Yet, empress of this joyful day,
Edith is sad while all are gay.”—

IX.

Proud Edith's soul came to her eye,
Resentment check'd the struggling
sigh.

Her hurrying hand indignant dried
The burning tears of injured pride—
“ Morag, forbear! or lend thy praise
To swell yon hireling harpers' lays;
Make to yon maids thy boast of
power,

That they may waste a wondering
hour,

Telling of banners proudly borne,
Of pealing bell and bugle-horn,

Or, theme more dear, of robes of price,
 Crownlets and gauds of rare device.
 But thou, experienced as thou art,
 Think'st thou with these to cheat
 the heart,
 That, bound in strong affection's
 chain,
 Looks for return and looks in vain?
 No! sum thine Edith's wretched lot
 In these brief words—He loves her
 not!

X.

“Debate it not—too long I strove
 To call his cold observance love,
 All blinded by the league that styled
 Edith of Lorn,—while yet a child,
 She tripp'd the heath by Morag's
 side,—
 The brave Lord Ronald's destined
 bride.
 Ere yet I saw him, while afar
 His broadsword blazed in Scotland's
 war,
 Train'd to believe our fates the same,
 My bosom throbb'd when Ronald's
 name
 Came gracing Fame's heroic tale,
 Like perfume on the summer gale.
 What pilgrim sought our halls, nor
 told
 Of Ronald's deeds in battle bold;
 Who touch'd the harp to heroes'
 praise,
 But his achievements swell'd the
 lays?
 Even Morag—not a tale of fame
 Was hers but closed with Ronald's
 name.
 He came! and all that had been told
 Of his high worth seem'd poor and
 cold,
 Tame, lifeless, void of energy,
 Unjust to Ronald and to me!

XI.

“Since then, what thought had
 Edith's heart
 And gave not plighted love its
 part!—

And what requital? cold delay—
 Excuse that shunn'd the spousal
 day.—

It dawns, and Ronald is not here!—
 Hunts he Bentalla's nimble deer,
 Or loiters he in secret dell
 To bid some lighter love farewell,
 And swear, that though he may not
 scorn

A daughter of the House of Lorn,³⁵⁴
 Yet, when these formal rites are o'er,
 Again they meet, to part no more?”

XII.

—“Hush, daughter, hush! thy
 doubts remove,
 More nobly think of Ronald's love.
 Look, where beneath the castle gray
 His fleet unmoor from Aros bay!
 See'st not each galley's topmast
 bend,
 As on the yards the sails ascend?
 Hiding the dark-blue land, they rise
 Like the white clouds on April skies;
 The shouting vassals man the oars,
 Behind them sink Mull's mountain
 shores,
 Onward their merry course they
 keep,
 Through whistling breeze and foam-
 ing deep.
 And mark the headmost, seaward
 cast,
 Stoop to the freshening gale her
 mast,
 As if she vail'd its banner'd pride,
 To greet afar her prince's bride!
 Thy Ronald comes, and while in
 speed
 His galley mates the flying steed,
 He chides her sloth!”—Fair Edith
 sigh'd,
 Blush'd, sadly smiled, and thus
 replied:—

XIII.

“Sweet thought, but vain!—No,
 Morag! mark,
 Type of his course, yon lonely bark,
 That oft hath shifted helm and sail,
 To win its way against the gale.



Since peep of morn, my vacant eyes
 Have view'd by fits the course she
 tries ;
 Now, though the darkening seud
 comes on,
 And dawn's fair promises be gone,
 And though the weary crew may see
 Our sheltering haven on their lee,
 Still closer to the rising wind
 They strive her shivering sail to
 bind,
 Still nearer to the shelves' dread
 verge
 At every tack her course they urge,
 As if they fear'd Artornish more
 Than adverse winds and breakers'
 roar."

XIV.

Sooth spoke the maid.—Amid the
 tide
 The skiff she mark'd lay tossing
 sore,
 And shifted oft her stooping side,
 In weary tack from shore to
 shore.
 Yet on her destined course no
 more
 She gain'd, of forward way,
 Than what a minstrel may com-
 pare
 To the poor meed which peasants
 share,
 Who toil the livelong day ;
 And such the risk her pilot braves,
 That oft, before she wore,
 Her boltsprit kiss'd the broken
 waves,
 Where in white foam the ocean
 raves
 Upon the shelving shore.
 Yet, to their destined purpose true,
 Undaunted toil'd her hardy crew,
 Nor look'd where shelter lay,
 Nor for Artornish Castle drew,
 Nor steer'd for Aros bay.

XV.

Thus while they strove with wind
 and seas,
 Borne onward by the willing breeze,
 Lord Ronald's fleet swept by,
 sc.

Streamer'd with silk, and trick'd
 with gold,
 Mann'd with the noble and the bold
 Of Island chivalry.
 Around their prows the ocean roars,
 And chafes beneath their thousand
 oars,
 Yet bears them on their way :
 So chafes the war-horse in his
 might,
 That fieldward bears some valiant
 knight,
 Champs, till both bit and boss are
 white,
 But, foaming, must obey.

On each gay deck they might behold
 Lances of steel and crests of gold,
 And hauberks with their burnish'd
 fold,

That shimmer'd fair and free ;
 And each proud galley, as she
 pass'd,
 To the wild cadence of the blast
 Gave wilder minstrelsy.
 Full many a shrill triumphant note
 Saline and Scallastle bade float
 Their misty shores around ;
 And Morven's shoes answer'd well,
 And Duart heard the distant swell
 Come down the darksome Sound.

XVI.

So bore they on with mirth and
 pride,
 And if that labouring bark they
 spied,
 'Twas with such idle eye
 As nobles cast on lowly boor,
 When, toiling in his task obscure,
 They pass him careless by.
 Let them sweep on with heedless
 eyes !
 But, had they known what mighty
 prize
 In that frail vessel lay,
 The famish'd wolf, that prowls the
 wold,
 Had scatheless pass'd the unguarded
 fold,
 Ere, drifting by these galleys bold,
 Unchallenged were her way !

And thou, Lord Ronald, sweep thou
 on,
 With mirth, and pride, and minstrel
 tone!
 But hadst thou known who sail'd so
 nigh,
 Far other glance were in thine eye!
 Far other flush were on thy brow,
 That, shaded by the bonnet, now
 Assumes but ill the blithesome cheer
 Of bridegroom when the bride is
 near!

XVII.

Yes, sweep they on!—We will not
 leave,
 For them that triumph, those who
 grieve.

With that armada gay
 Be laughter loud and jocund shout,
 And bards to cheer the wassail route,
 With tale, romance, and lay;
 And of wild mirth each clamorous art,
 Which, if it cannot cheer the heart,
 May stupefy and stun its smart,
 For one loud busy day.
 Yes, sweep they on!—But with that
 skiff

Abides the minstrel tale,
 Where there was dread of surge and
 cliff,
 Labour that strain'd each sinew stiff,
 And one sad Maiden's wail.

XVIII.

All day with fruitless strife they toil'd,
 With eve the ebbing currents boil'd
 More fierce from strait and lake;
 And midway through the channel met
 Conflicting tides that foam and fret,
 And high their mingled billows jet,
 As spears, that, in the battle set,
 Spring upward as they break.
 Then, too, the lights of eve were
 past,
 And louder sung the western blast
 On rocks of Inninmore;
 Rent was the sail, and strain'd the
 mast,
 And many a leak was gaping fast,
 And the pale steersman stood aghast,
 And gave the conflict o'er.

XIX.

'Twas then that One, whose lofty
 look
 Nor labour dull'd nor terror shook,
 Thus to the Leader spoke:—
 "Brother, how hopest thou to abide
 The fury of this wilder'd tide,
 Or how avoid the rock's rude side,
 Until the day has broke?
 Didst thou not mark the vessel reel,
 With quivering planks, and groaning
 keel,

At the last billow's shock?
 Yet how of better counsel tell,
 Though here thou see'st poor Isabel
 Half dead with want and fear;
 For look on sea, or look on land,
 Or yon dark sky—on every hand
 Despair and death are near.
 For her alone I grieve,—on me
 Danger sits light, by land and sea,
 I follow where thou wilt;
 Either to bide the tempest's lour,
 Or wend to yon unfriendly tower,
 Or rush amid their naval power,
 With war-cry wake their wassail-
 hour,
 And die with hand on hilt."—

XX.

That elder Leader's calm reply
 In steady voice was given,
 "In man's most dark extremity
 Oft succour dawns from Heaven.
 Edward, trim thou the shatter'd sail,
 The helm be mine, and down the gale
 Let our free course be driven;
 So shall we 'scape the western bay,
 The hostile fleet, the unequal fray,
 So safely hold our vessel's way
 Beneath the Castle wall;
 For if a hope of safety rest,
 'Tis on the sacred name of guest,
 Who seeks for shelter, storm-dis-
 tress'd,
 Within a chieftain's hall.
 If not—it best beseems our worth,
 Our name, our right, our lofty birth,
 By noble hands to fall."

XXI.

The helm, to his strong arm consign'd,
 Gave the reef'd sail to meet the wind,
 And on her alter'd way,
 Fierce bounding, forward sprung the ship,
 Like greyhound starting from the slip

To seize his flying prey.
 Awaked before the rushing prow,
 The mimic fires of ocean glow,
 Those lightnings of the wave;³⁵⁵
 Wild sparkles crest the broken tides,
 And, flashing round, the vessel's sides

With elvish lustre lave,
 While, far behind, their livid light
 To the dark billows of the night
 A gloomy splendour gave.
 It seems as if old Ocean shakes
 From his dark brow the lucid flakes
 In envious pageantry,
 To match the meteor-light that streaks
 Grim Hecla's midnight sky.

XXII.

Nor lack'd they steadier light to keep
 Their course upon the darken'd deep;—
 Artornish, on her frowning steep
 'Twixt cloud and ocean hung,
 Glanced with a thousand lights of glee,
 And landward far, and far to sea,
 Her festal radiance flung.
 By that blithe beacon-light they steer'd,
 Whose lustre mingled well
 With the pale beam that now appear'd,
 As the cold moon her head uprear'd
 Above the eastern fell.

XXIII.

Thus guided, on their course they bore,
 Until they near'd the mainland shore,

When frequent on the hollow blast
 Wild shouts of merriment were cast,
 And wind and wave and sea-birds' cry
 With wassail sounds in concert vie,
 Like funeral shrieks with revelry,
 Or like the battle-shout
 By peasants heard from cliffs on high,
 When Triumph, Rage, and Agony,
 Madden the fight and route.
 Now nearer yet, through mist and storm
 Dimly arose the Castle's form,
 And deepen'd shadow made,
 Far lengthen'd on the main below,
 Where, dancing in reflected glow,
 A hundred torches play'd,
 Spangling the wave with lights as vain
 As pleasures in this vale of pain,
 That dazzle as they fade.

XXIV.

Beneath the Castle's sheltering lee,
 They staid their course in quiet sea.
 Hewn in the rock, a passage there
 Sought the dark fortress by a stair,³⁵⁶
 So straight, so high, so steep,
 With peasant's staff one valiant hand
 Might well the dizzy pass have mann'd,
 'Gainst hundreds arm'd with spear
 and brand,
 And plunged them in the deep.
 His bugle then the helmsman wound;
 Loud answer'd every echo round,
 From turret, rock, and bay,
 The postern's hinges crash and groan,
 And soon the warder's cresset shone
 On those rude steps of slippery stone,
 To light the upward way.
 "Thrice welcome, holy Sire!" he said;
 "Full long the spousal train have staid,
 And, vex'd at thy delay,

Fear'd lest, amidst these wildering
 seas,
 The darksome night and freshening
 breeze
 Had driven thy bark astray."—

XXV.

"Warder," the younger stranger
 said,
 "Thine erring guess some mirth had
 made
 In mirthful hour; but nights like
 these,
 When the rough winds wake western
 seas,
 Brook not of glee. We crave some
 aid
 And needful shelter for this maid
 Until the break of day;
 For, to ourselves, the deck's rude
 plank
 Is easy as the mossy bank
 That's breath'd upon by May.
 And for our storm-toss'd skiff we
 seek
 Short shelter in this leeward creek,
 Prompt when the dawn the east shall
 streak
 Again to bear away."—
 Answered the Warder,—“In what
 name
 Assert ye hospitable claim?
 Whence come, or whether
 bound?
 Hath Erin seen your parting sails?
 Or come ye on Norwayan gales?
 And seek ye England's fertile vales,
 Or Scotland's mountain ground?”

XXVI.

“Warriors—for other title none
 For some brief space we list to own,
 Bound by a vow—warriors are we;
 In strife by land, and storm by sea,
 We have been known to fame;
 And these brief words have import
 dear,
 When sounded in a noble ear,
 To harbour safe, and friendly cheer,
 That gives us rightful claim.

Grant us the trivial boon we seek,
 And we in other realms will speak
 Fair of your courtesy;
 Deny—and be your niggard Hold
 Scorn'd by the noble and the bold,
 Shunn'd by the pilgrim on the wold,
 And wanderer on the lea!”—

XXVII.

“Bold stranger, no—'gainst claim
 like thine,
 No bolt revolves by hand of mine,
 Though urged in tone that more
 express'd
 A monarch than a suppliant guest.
 Be what ye will, Artornish Hall
 On this glad eve is free to all.
 Though ye had drawn a hostile
 sword
 'Gainst our ally, great England's
 Lord,
 Or mail upon your shoulders borne,
 To battle with the Lord of Lorn,
 Or, outlaw'd, dwelt by greenwood
 tree
 With the fierce Knight of Ellerslie,
 Or aided even the murderous strife,
 When Conyn fell beneath the knife
 Of that fell homicide The Bruce,
 This night had been a term of
 truce.—
 Ho, vassals! give these guests your
 care,
 And show the narrow postern stair.”

XXVIII.

To land these two bold brethren
 leapt,
 (The weary crew their vessel kept,)
 And, lighted by the torches' flare,
 That seaward flung their smoky
 glare,
 The younger knight that maiden
 bare
 Half lifeless up the rock;
 On his strong shoulder lean'd her
 head,
 And down her long dark tresses
 shed,
 As the wild vine in tendrils spread,
 Droops from the mountain oak.

Him follow'd close that elder Lord,
 And in his hand a sheathed sword,
 Such as few arms could wield ;
 But when he bound him to such
 task,
 Well could it cleave the strongest
 casque,
 And rend the surest shield.

XXIX.

The raised portcullis' arch they pass,
 The wicket with its bars of brass,
 The entrance long and low,
 Flank'd at each turn by loop-holes
 strait,
 Where bowmen might in ambush
 wait,
 (If force or fraud should burst the
 gate,)
 To gall an entering foe.
 But every jealous post of ward
 Was now defenceless and unbar'd,
 And all the passage free
 To one low-brow'd and vaulted
 room,
 Where squire and yeoman, page and
 groom,
 Plied their loud revelry.

XXX.

And "Rest ye here," the Warder
 bade,
 "Till to our Lord your suit is
 said.—
 And, comrades, gaze not on the
 maid,
 And on these men who ask our aid,
 As if ye ne'er had seen
 A damsel tired of midnight bark,
 Or wanderers of a moulding stak,
 And bearing martial mien."
 But not for Eachin's reproof
 Would page or vassal stand aloof,
 But crowded on to stare,
 As men of courtesy untaught,
 Till fiery Edward roughly caught.
 From one the foremost there,
 His chequer'd plaid, and in its
 shroud,
 To hide her from the vulgar crowd,
 Involved his sister fair.

His brother, as the clansman bent
 His sullen brow in discontent,
 Made brief and stern excuse ;—
 "Vassal, were thine the cloak of
 pall
 That decks thy Lord in bridal hall,
 'Twere honour'd by her use."

XXXI.

Proud was his tone, but calm ; his
 eye
 Had that compelling dignity,
 His mien that bearing haught and
 high,
 Which common spirits fear !
 Needed nor word nor signal more,
 Nod, wink, and laughter, all were
 o'er ;
 Upon each other back they bore,
 And gazed like startled deer.
 But now appear'd the Seneschal,
 Commission'd by his lord to call
 The strangers to the Baron's
 hall,
 Where feasted fair and free
 That Island Prince in nuptial tide,
 With Edith there his lovely bride,
 And her bold brother by her side,
 And many a chief, the flower and
 pride
 Of Western land and sea.
 Here pause we, gentles, for a
 space ;
 And, if our tale hath won your
 grace,
 Grant us brief patience, and again
 We will renew the minstrel strain.

CANTO SECOND.

FILL the bright goblet, spread the
 festive board !
 Summon the gay, the noble, and
 the fair !
 Through the loud hall in joyous
 concert pour'd,
 Let mirth and music sound the dirge
 of Care !

But ask thou not if Happiness be
 there,
 If the loud laugh disguise convul-
 sive throes,
 Or if the brow the heart's true
 livery wear ;
 Lift not the festal mask !—enough
 to know,
 No scene of mortal life but teems
 with mortal woe.

II.

With beakers' clang, with harpers'
 lay,
 With all that olden time deem'd
 gay,
 The Island Chieftain feasted high ;
 But there was in his troubled eye
 A gloomy fire, and on his brow
 Now sudden flush'd, and faded
 now,
 Emotions such as draw their birth
 From deeper source than festal
 mirth.
 By fits he paused, and harper's
 strain
 And jester's tale went round in
 vain,
 Or fell but on his idle ear
 Like distant sounds which dreamers
 hear.
 Then would he rouse him, and
 employ
 Each art to aid the clamorous joy,
 And call for pledge and lay,
 And, for brief space, of all the
 crowd,
 As he was loudest of the loud,
 Seem gayest of the gay.

III.

Yet nought amiss the bridal throng
 Mark'd in brief mirth, or musing
 long ;
 The vacant brow, the unlistening
 ear,
 They gave to thoughts of raptures
 near,

And his fierce starts of sudden
 glee
 Seem'd bursts of bridegroom's
 ecstasy.
 Nor thus alone misjudged the
 crowd,
 Since lofty Lorn, suspicious, proud,
 And jealous of his honour'd line,
 And that keen knight, De Argen-
 tine,³⁵⁷
 (From England sent on errand
 high,
 The western league more firm to
 tie,)
 Both deem'd in Ronald's mood to
 find
 A lover's transport-troubled mind.
 But one sad heart, one tearful
 eye,
 Pierced deeper through the mystery,
 And watch'd, with agony and fear,
 Her wayward bridegroom's varied
 cheer.

IV.

She watch'd—yet fear'd to meet his
 glance,
 And he shunn'd hers ;—till when
 by chance
 They met, the point of foeman's
 lance
 Had given a milder pang !
 Beneath the intolerable smart
 He writhed—then sternly mann'd
 his heart
 To play his hard but destined
 part,
 And from the table sprang.
 "Fill me the mighty cup !" he
 said,
 "Erst own'd by royal Somerled ;³⁵⁸
 Fill it, till on the studded brim
 In burning gold the bubbles swim,
 And every gem of varied shine
 Glow doubly bright in rosy wine !
 To you, brave lord, and brother
 mine,
 Of Lorn, this pledge I drink—
 The union of Our House with
 thine,
 By this fair bridal-link !"—

V.

“Let it pass round!” quoth He of Lorn,
 “And in good time—that winded horn
 Must of the Abbot tell;
 The laggard monk is come at last.”

Lord Ronald heard the bugle-blast,
 And on the floor at random cast,
 The untasted goblet fell.

But when the warder in his ear
 Tells other news, his blither cheer
 Returns like sun of May,
 When through a thunder-cloud it
 beams!—

Lord of two hundred isles, he
 seems
 As glad of brief delay,
 As some poor criminal might feel,
 When, from the gibbet or the
 wheel,
 Respited for a day.

VI.

“Brother of Lorn,” with hurried
 voice
 He said, “And you, fair lords,
 rejoice!

Here, to augment our glee,
 Come wandering knights from
 travel far,
 Well proved, they say, in strife of
 war,

And tempest on the sea.—
 Ho! give them at your board such
 place
 As best their presences may grace,
 And bid them welcome free!”

With solemn step, and silver wand,
 The Seneschal the presence scann'd
 Of these strange guests; ³⁵⁹ and
 well he knew

How to assign their rank its due;
 For though the costly furs
 That erst had deck'd their caps
 were torn,
 And their gay robes were over-worn,
 And soil'd their gilded spurs,

Yet such a high commanding grace
 Was in their mien and in their
 face,
 As suited best the princely dais,
 And royal canopy;
 And there he marshall'd them their
 place,
 First of that company.

VII.

Then lords and ladies spake aside,
 And angry looks the error chide,
 That gave to guests unnamed,
 unknown,

A place so near their prince's
 throne;

But Owen Erraught said,
 “For forty years a seneschal,
 To marshal guests in bower and
 hall

Has been my honour'd trade.
 Worship and birth to me are
 known,

By look, by bearing, and by tone,
 Not by furr'd robe or broider'd
 zone;

And 'gainst an oaken bough
 I'll gage my silver wand of state,
 That these three strangers oft
 have sate
 In higher place than now.”—

VIII.

“I, too,” the aged Ferrand said,
 “Am qualified by minstrel trade
 Of rank and place to tell;—
 Mark'd ye the younger stranger's
 eye,

My mates, how quick, how keen,
 how high,

How fierce its flashes fell,
 Glancing among the noble rout
 As if to seek the noblest out,
 Because the owner might not
 brook

On any save his peers to look?
 And yet it moves me more,
 That steady, calm, majestic brow,
 With which the elder chief even
 now

Scann'd the gay presence o'er,

Like being of superior kind,
In whose high-toned impartial
mind

Degrees of mortal rank and state
Seem objects of indifferent weight.

The lady too—though closely
tied

The mantle veil both face and
eye,

Her motions' grace it could not
hide,

Nor could her form's fair
symmetry."

IX.

Suspicious doubt and lordly scorn
Lour'd on the haughty front of
Lorn.

From underneath his brows of
pride,

The stranger guests he sternly eyed,
And whisper'd closely what the
ear

Of Argentine alone might hear;

Then question'd, high and
brief,

If, in their voyage, aught they
knew

Of the rebellious Scottish crew,
Who to Rath-Erin's shelter drew,

With Carrick's outlaw'd
Chief?²⁹⁹

And if, their winter's exile o'er,
They harbour'd still by Uister's
shore,

Or launch'd their galleys on the
main,

To vex their native land again?

X.

That younger stranger, fierce and
high,

At once confronts the Chieftain's
eye

With look of equal scorn;

"Of rebels have we nought to
show;

But if of Royal Bruce thou'dst
know,

I warn thee he has sworn,

Ere thrice three days shall come
and go,

His banner Scottish winds shall
blow,

Despite each mean or mighty foe,
From England's every bill and bow,
To Allaster of Lorn."

Kindled the mountain Chieftain's
ire,

But Ronald quench'd the rising
fire;

"Brother, it better suits the time
To chase the night with Ferrand's
rhyme,

Than wake, 'midst mirth and wine,
the jars

That flow from these unhappy
wars."—

"Content," said Lorn; and spoke
apart

With Ferrand, master of his art,

Then whisper'd Argentine,—

"The lay I named will carry smart
To these bold strangers' haughty
heart,

If right this guess of mine."

He ceased, and it was silence all,
Until the minstrel waked the hall.

XI.

The Brooch of Lorn.³⁰¹

"Whence the brooch of burning
gold,

That clasps the Chieftain's mantle-
fold,

Wrought and chased with rare
device,

Studded fair with gems of price,³⁰²

On the varied tartans beaming,

As, through night's pale rainbow
gleaming,

Fainter now, now seen afar,

Fitful shines the northern star?

"Gem! ne'er wrought on Highland
mountain,

Did the fairy of the fountain,

Or the mermaid of the wave,

Frame thee in some coral cave?

Did, in Iceland's darksome mine,
Dwarf's swart hands thy metal
twine?
Or, mortal-moulded, comest thou
here,
From England's love, or France's
fear?

XII.

Song continued.

"No!—thy splendours nothing tell
Foreign art or faëry spell.
Moulded thou for monarch's use,
By the overweening Bruce,
When the royal robe he tied
O'er a heart of wrath and pride;
Thence in triumph wert thou torn,
By the victor hand of Lorn!

"When the gem was won and lost,
Widely was the war-cry toss'd!
Rung aloud Bendourish fell,
Answer'd Douchart's sounding dell,
Fled the deer from wild Teyndrum,
When the homicide, o'ercome,
Hardly 'scaped, with scathe and
scorn,
Left the pledge with conquering
Lorn!

XIII.

Song concluded.

"Vain wasthen the Douglas brand,³⁰³
Vain the Campbell's vaunted hand,
Vain Kirkpatrick's bloody dirk,
Making sure of murder's work;³⁰⁴
Barendown fled fast away,
Fled the fiery De la Haye,³⁰⁵
When this brooch, triumphant borne,
Beam'd upon the breast of Lorn.

"Farthest fled its former Lord,
Left his men to brand and cord,
Bloody brand of Highland steel,
English gibbet, axe, and wheel.
Let him fly from coast to coast,
Dogg'd by Comyn's vengeful ghost,
While his spoils, in triumph worn,
Long shall grace victorious Lorn!"

XIV.

As glares the tiger on his foes,
Hemm'd in by hunters, spears, and
bows,

And, ere he bounds upon the ring,
Selects the object of his spring,—
Now on the bard, now on his Lord,
So Edward glared and grasp'd his
sword—

But stern his brother spoke,—“Be
still.

What! art thou yet so wild of will,
After high deeds and sufferings long,
To chafe thee for a menial's song?—
Well hast thou framed, Old Man,
thy strains,

To praise the hand that pays thy
pains! ³⁰⁶

Yet something might thy song have
told

Of Lorn's three vassals, true and
bold,

Who rent their Lord from Bruce's
hold,

As underneath his knee he lay,
And died to save him in the fray.

I've heard the Bruce's cloak and clasp
Was clench'd within their dying
grasp,

What time a hundred foemen more
Rush'd in, and back the victor bore,
Long after Lorn had left the strife,
Full glad to 'scape with limb and
life.—

Enough of this—And, Minstrel, hold,
As minstrel-hire, this chain of gold,
For future lays a fair excuse,
To speak more nobly of the Bruce.”—

XV.

“Now, by Columba's shrine, I swear,
And every saint that's buried there,
'Tis he himself!” Lorn sternly cries,
“And for my kinsman's death he
dies.”

As loudly Ronald calls,—“Forbear!
Not in my sight while brand I wear,
O'ermatch'd by odds, shall warrior
fall,

Or blood of stranger stain my hall!”

This ancient fortress of my race
 Shall be misfortune's resting-place,
 Shelter and shield of the distress'd,
 No slaughter-house for shipwreck'd
 guest."—

"Talk not to me," fierce Lorn
 replied,

"Of odds or match!—when Comyn
 died,

Three daggers clash'd within his side!
 Talk not to me of sheltering hall,
 The Church of God saw Comyn fall!
 On God's own altar stream'd his
 blood,

While o'er my prostrate kinsman
 stood

The ruthless murderer—e'en as
 now—

With armed hand and scornful
 brow!—

Up, all who love me! blow on blow!
 And lay the outlaw'd felons low!"

XVI.

Then up sprang many a mainland
 Lord,

Obedient to their Chieftain's word.

Barcaldine's arm is high in air,
 And Kinloch-Alline's blade is bare,
 Black Murthok's dirk has left its
 sheath,

And clench'd is Dermid's hand of
 death.

Their mutter'd threats of vengeance
 swell

Into a wild and warlike yell;

Onward they press with weapons
 high,

The affrighted females shriek and fly,
 And, Scotland, then thy brightest ray
 Had darken'd ere its noon of day,—

But every chief of birth and fame,
 That from the Isles of Ocean came,
 At Ronald's side that hour withstood
 Pierce Lorn's relentless thirst for
 blood.

XVII.

Brave Torquil from Dunvegan high,
 Lord of the misty hills of Skye,
 Mac-Niel, wild Bara's ancient thane,
 Duart, of bold Clan-Gillian's strain,

Fergus, of Canna's castled bay,
 Mac-Duffith, Lord of Colonsay,
 Soon as they saw the broadsword's
 glance,

With ready weapons rose at once,
 More prompt, that many an ancient
 feud,

Full oft suppress'd, full oft renew'd,
 Glow'd 'twixt the chieftains of Argyle,
 And many a lord of ocean's isle.

Wild was the scene—each sword
 was bare,

Back stream'd each chieftain's
 shaggy hair,

In gloomy opposition set,
 Eyes, hands, and brandish'd weapons
 met;

Blue gleaming o'er the social board,
 Flash'd to the torches many a
 sword;

And soon those bridal lights may
 shine

On purple blood for rosy wine.

XVIII.

While thus for blows and death
 prepared,

Each heart was up, each weapon
 bared,

Each foot advanced,—a surly pause
 Still revered hospitable laws.

All menaced violence, but alike
 Reluctant each the first to strike,
 (For aye accused in minstrel line
 Is he who brawls 'mid song and
 wine,)

And, match'd in numbers and in
 might,

Doubtful and desperate seem'd the
 fight.

Thus threat and murmur died away,
 Till on the crowded hall there lay
 Such silence, as the deadly still,
 Ere bursts the thunder on the hill.
 With blade advanced, each Chieftain
 bold

Show'd like the Swordsman's form of
 old,

As wanting still the torch of life,
 To wake the marb'e into strife.

XIX.

That awful pause the stranger maid,
And Edith, seized to pray for aid.
As to De Argentine she clung,
Away her veil the stranger flung,
And, lovely 'mid her wild despair,
Fast stream'd her eyes, wide flow'd
her hair.

"O thou, of knighthood once the
flower,
Sure refuge in distressful hour,
Thou, who in Judah well hast fought
For our dear faith, and oft hast
sought

Renown in knightly exercise,
When this poor hand has dealt the
prize,

Say, can thy soul of honour brook
On the unequal strife to look,
When, butcher'd thus in peaceful
hall,

Those once thy friends, my brethren,
fall!"

To Argentine she turn'd her word,
But her eye sought the Island Lord.
A flush like evening's setting flame
Glow'd on his cheek; his hardy
frame,

As with a brief convulsion, shook:
With hurried voice and eager look,—

"Fear not," he said, "my Isabel!
What said I—Edith!—all is well—

Nay, fear not—I will well provide
The safety of my lovely bride—

My bride?"—but there the accent
clung

In tremor to his faltering tongue.

XX.

Now rose De Argentine, to claim
The prisoners in his sovereign's
name,

To England's crown, who, vassals
sworn,

'Gainst their liege lord had weapon
borne—

(Such speech, I ween, was but to
hide

His care their safety to provide;

For knight more true in thought
and deed

Than Argentine ne'er spur'd a
steed)—

And Ronald, who his meaning
guess'd,

Seem'd half to sanction the request.

This purpose fiery Torquil broke:—

"Somewhat we've heard of England's
yoke,"

He said, "and, in our islands, Fame
Hath whisper'd of a lawful claim,

That calls the Bruce fair Scotland's
Lord,

Though disposess'd by foreign
sword.

This craves reflection—but though
right

And just the charge of England's
Knight,

Let England's crown her rebels seize
Where she has power;—in towers

like these,
'Midst Scottish Chieftains summon'd
here

To bridal mirth and bridal cheer,
Be sure, with no consent of mine,

Shall either Lorn or Argentine
With chains or violence, in our sight,

Oppress a brave and banish'd
Knight."

XXI.

Then waked the wild debate again,
With brawling threat and clamour
vain.

Vassals and menials, thronging in,
Lent their brute rage to swell the
din;

When, far and wide, a bugle-clang
From the dark ocean upward rang.

"The Abbot comes!" they cry at
once,

"The holy man, whose favour'd
glance

Hath sainted visions known;
Angels have met him on the
way,

Beside the blessed martyrs' bay,
And by Columba's stone,

And by Columba's stone,

His monks have heard their
hymnings high

Sound from the summit of Dun-Y,
To cheer his penance lone,

When at each cross, on girth and
wold,

(Their number thrice a hundred-
fold,)

His prayer he made, his beads he
told,

With Aves many a one—

He comes our feuds to reconcile,

A sainted man from sainted isle;

We will his holy doom abide,

The Abbot shall our strife decide.”

XXII.

Scarcely this fair accord was o'er,
When through the wide revolving
door

The black-stoled brethren wind;

Twelve sandall'd monks, who relics
bore,

With many a torch-bearer before,

And many a cross behind.

Then sunk each fierce uplifted hand,
And dagger bright and flashing
brand

Dropp'd swiftly at the sight;

They vanish'd from the Churchman's
eye,

As shooting stars, that glance and
die,

Dart from the vault of night.

XXIII.

The Abbot on the threshold stood,

And in his hand the holy rood;

Back on his shoulders flow'd his
hood,

The torch's glaring ray

Show'd, in its red and flashing light,
His wither'd cheek and amice white,

His blue eye glistening cold and
bright,

His tresses scant and gray.

“Fair Lords,” he said, “Our Lady's
love,

And peace be with you from above,

And Benedicite!—

—But what means this? no peace
is here!—

Do dirks unsheathed suit bridal
cheer?

Or are these naked brands

A seemly show for Churchman's
sight,

When he comes summon'd to unite
Betrothed hearts and hands?”

XXIV.

Then, cloaking hate with fiery zeal,
Proud Lorn first answer'd the
appeal;—

“Thou comest, O holy Man,

True sons of blessed church to greet,
But little deeming here to meet

A wretch, beneath the ban

Of Pope and Church, for murder
done

Even on the sacred altar-stone!—

Well mayst thou wonder we should
know

Such miscreant here, nor lay him
low,

Or dream of greeting, peace, or
truce,

With excommunicated Bruce!

Yet well I grant, to end debate,

Thy sainted voice decide his fate.”

XXV.

Then Ronald pled the stranger's
cause,

And knighthood's oath and honour's
laws;

And Isabel, on bended knee,

Brought pray'rs and tears to back
the plea:

And Edith lent her generous aid,

And wept, and Lorn for mercy
pray'd.

“Hence,” he exclaim'd, “degenerate
maid!

Was't not enough to Ronald's bower
I brought thee, like a paramour,³⁶⁷

Or bond-maid at her master's gate,

His careless cold approach to
wait?—

But the bold Lord of Cumberland,
The gallant Clifford, seeks thy hand ;
His it shall be—Nay, no reply !
Hence ! till those rebel eyes be
dry."

With grief the Abbot heard and saw,
Yet not relax'd his brow of awe.

XXVI.

Then Argentine, in England's name,
So highly urged his sovereign's
claim,

He waked a spark, that, long
suppress'd,

Had smoulder'd in Lord Ronald's
breast ;

And now, as from the flint the fire,
Flash'd forth at once his generous
ire.

"Enough of noble blood," he said,
"By English Edward had been shed,
Since matchless Wallace first had
been

In mock'ry crown'd with wreaths
of green,³⁶⁸

And done to death by felon hand,
For guarding well his father's land.
Where's Nigel Bruce ? and De la

Have,

And valiant Seton—where are they ?
Where Somerville, the kind and
free ?

And Fraser, flower of chivalry ?³⁶⁹

Have they not been on gibbet bound,
Their quarters flung to hawk and
hound,

And hold we here a cold debate,

To yield more victims to their fate ?

What ! can the English Leopard's
mood

Never be gorged with northern
blood ?

Was not the life of Athole shed,

To soothe the tyrant's sicken'd bed ?³⁷⁰

And must his word, till dying day,
Be nought but quarter, hang, and
slay !—³⁷¹

Thou frown'st, De Argentine,—My
gaze

Is prompt to prove the strife I
wage."—

XXVII.

"Nor deem," said stout Dunvegan's
knight,

"That thou shalt brave alone the
fight !

By saints of isle and mainland both,
By Woden wild, (my grandsire's
oath,)

Let Rome and England do their
worst,

Howe'er attained or accursed,
If Bruce shall e'er find friends again,

Once more to brave a battle-plain,

If Douglas couch again his lance,

Or Randolph dare another chance,

Old Torquil will not be to lack

With twice a thousand at his
back—

Nay, chafe not at my bearing bold,
Good Abbot ! for thou know'st of
old,

Torquil's rude thought and stubborn
will

Smack of the wild Norwegian still ;

Nor will I barter Freedom's cause

For England's wealth, or Rome's
applause."

XXVIII.

The Abbot seem'd with eye severe

The hardy Chieftain's speech to
hear ;

Then on King Robert turn'd the
Monk,

But twice his courage came and
sunk,

Confronted with the hero's look ;

Twice fell his eye, his accents shook ;

At length, resolved in tone and brow,

Sternly he question'd him—"And
thou,

Unhappy ! what hast thou to plead,

Why I denounce not on thy deed

That awful doom which canons
tell

Shuts paradise, and opens hell ;

Anathema of power so dread,

It blends the living with the dead,

Bids each good angel soar away,

And every ill one claim his prey ;

Expels thee from the church's care,
 And deafens Heaven against thy
 prayer ;
 Arms every hand against thy life,
 Bans all who aid thee in the strife,
 Nay, each whose succour, cold and
 scant,
 With meanest alms relieves thy
 want ;
 Haunts thee while living, — and,
 when dead,
 Dwells on thy yet devoted head,
 Rends Honour's scutcheon from thy
 hearse,
 Stills o'er thy bier the holy verse,
 And spurns thy corpse from hallow'd
 ground,
 Flung like vile carrion to the hound ;
 Such is the dire and desperate
 doom
 For sacrilege, decreed by Rome ;
 And such the well-deserved meed
 Of thine unhallow'd, ruthless
 deed."—

XXIX.

"Abbot !" The Bruce replied, "thy
 charge
 It boots not to dispute at large.
 This much, howe'er, I bid thee
 know,
 No selfish vengeance dealt the blow,
 For Comyn died his country's foe.
 Nor blame I friends whose ill-timed
 speed
 Fulfill'd my soon-repent'd deed,
 Nor censure those from whose stern
 tongue
 The dire anathema has rung.
 I only blame mine own wild ire,
 By Scotland's wrongs incensed to
 fire.
 Heaven knows my purpose to atone,
 Far as I may, the evil done,
 And hears a penitent's appeal
 From papal curse and prelate's zeal.
 My first and dearest task achieved,
 Fair Scotland from her thrall
 relieved,
 Shall many a priest in cope and stole
 Say requiem for Red Comyn's soul,

While I the blessed cross advance,
 And expiate this unhappy chance
 In Palestine, with sword and lance.³⁷²
 But, while content the Church should
 know
 My conscience owns the debt I owe,
 Unto De Argentine and Lorn
 The name of traitor I return,
 Bid them defiance stern and high,
 And give them in their throats the
 lie !
 These brief words spoke, I speak no
 more.
 Do what thou wilt ; my shrift is
 o'er."

XXX.

Like man by prodigy amazed,
 Upon the King the Abbot gazed ;
 Then o'er his pallid features glance,
 Convulsions of ecstatic trance.
 His breathing came more thick and
 fast,
 And from his pale blue eyes were
 cast
 Strange rays of wild and wandering
 light
 Uprise his locks of silver white,
 Flush'd is his brow, through every
 vein
 In azure tide the currents strain,
 And undistinguish'd accents broke
 The awful silence ere he spoke.

XXXI.

"De Bruce ! I rose with purpose
 dread
 To speak my curse upon thy head,³⁷³
 And give thee as an outcast o'er
 To him who burns to shed thy
 gore ;—
 But, like the Midianite of old,
 Who stood on Zophim, heaven-
 controll'd,
 I feel within mine aged breast
 A power that will not be repress'd.³⁷⁴
 It prompts my voice, it swells my
 veins,
 It burns, it maddens, it constrains !—
 De Bruce, thy sacrilegious blow
 Hath at God's altar slain thy foe :

O'ermaster'd yet by high behest,
 I bless thee, and thou shalt be
 bless'd!"
 He spoke, and o'er the astonish'd
 throng
 Was silence, awful, deep, and long.

XXXII.

Again that light has fired his eye,
 Again his form swells bold and high,
 The broken voice of age is gone,
 'Tis vigorous manhood's lofty tone :—
 "Thrice vanquish'd on the battle-
 plain,

Thy followers slaughter'd, fled, or
 ta'en,

A hunted wanderer on the wild,
 On foreign shores a man exiled,³⁷⁵
 Disown'd, deserted, and distress'd,
 I bless thee, and thou shalt be
 bless'd!

Bless'd in the hall and in the field,
 Under the mantle as the shield.
 Avenger of thy country's shame,
 Restorer of her injured fame,
 Bless'd in thy sceptre and thy sword,
 De Bruce, fair Scotland's rightful
 Lord,

Bless'd in thy deeds and in thy fame,
 What lengthen'd honours wait thy
 name!

In distant ages, sire to son
 Shall tell thy tale of freedom won,
 And teach his infants, in the use
 Of earliest speech, to falter Bruce.
 Go, then, triumphant! sweep along
 Thy course, the theme of many a
 song!

The Power, whose dictates swell my
 breast,

Hath bless'd thee, and thou shalt be
 bless'd!—

Enough—my short-lived strength
 decays,

And sinks the momentary blaze.—
 Heaven hath our destined purpose
 broke,

Not here must nuptial vow be spoke;
 Brethren, our errand here is o'er,
 Our task discharged. — Unmoor,
 unmoor!"—

His priests received the exhausted
 Monk,
 As breathless in their arms he sunk.
 Punctual his orders to obey,
 The train refused all longer stay,
 Embark'd, raised sail, and bore
 away.

CANTO THIRD.

I.

HAST thou not mark'd, when o'er
 thy startled head
 Sudden and deep the thunder-peal
 has roll'd,
 How, when its echoes fell, a silence
 dead
 Sunk on the wood, the meadow,
 and the wold?
 The rye-grass shakes not on the
 sod-built fold,
 The rusting aspen's leaves are
 mute and still,
 The wall-flower waves not on the
 ruin'd hold,
 Till, murmuring distant first, then
 near and shrill,
 The savage whirlwind wakes, and
 sweeps the groaning hill.

II.

Artornish! such a silence sunk
 Upon thy halls, when that gray
 Monk

His prophet-speech had spoke;
 And his obedient brethren's sail
 Was stretch'd to meet the southern
 gale

Before a whisper woke.
 Then murmuring sounds of doubt
 and fear,

Close pour'd in many an anxious ear,
 The solemn stillness broke;
 And still they gazed with eager
 guess,

Where, in an oriel's deep recess,
 The Island Prince seem'd bent to
 press

What Lorn, by his impatient cheer,
 And gesture fierce, scarce deign'd to
 hear.

III.

Starting at length, with frowning
look,

His hand he clench'd, his head he
shook,

And sternly flung apart;—

“And deem'st thou me so mean of
mood,

As to forget the mortal feud,
And clasp the hand with blood im-
bued

From my dear Kinsman's heart?

Is this thy rede?—a due return

For ancient league and friendship
sworn!

But well our mountain proverb shows
The faith of Islesmen ebbs and flows.

Be it even so—believe, ere long,

He that now bears shall wreak the
wrong.—

Call Edith—call the Maid of Lorn!

My sister, slaves!—for further scorn,
Be sure nor she nor I will stay.—

Away, De Argentine, away!—

We nor ally nor brother know,
In Bruce's friend, or England's foe.”

IV.

But who the Chieftain's rage can tell,
When, sought from lowest dungeon
cell

To highest tower the castle round,

No Lady Edith was there found!

He shouted, “Falsehood!—
treachery!

Revenge and blood!—a lordly meed

To him that will avenge the deed!

A Baron's lands!”—His frantic mood

Was scarcely by the news withstood,

That Morag' shared his sister's flight,

And that, in hurry of the night,

'Scaped noteless, and without re-
mark,

Two strangers sought the Abbot's
bark.—

“Man every galley!—fly—pursue!

The priest his treachery shall rue!

Ay, and the time shall quickly come,
When we shall hear the thanks that

Rome

Will pay his feigned prophecy!”

Such was fierce Lorn's indignant
cry;

And Cormac Doil in haste obey'd,

Hoisted his sail, his anchor weigh'd,

(For, glad of each pretext for spoil,

A pirate sworn was Cormac Doil.)³⁷⁶

But others, lingering, spoke apart,—

“The Maid has given her maiden
heart

To Ronald of the Isles,

And, fearful lest her brother's word

Bestow her on that English Lord,

She seeks Iona's piles,

And wisely deems it best to dwell

A votress in the holy cell,

Until these feuds so fierce and fell

The Abbot reconciles.”

V.

As, impotent of ire, the hall

Echo'd to Lorn's impatient call,

“My horse, my mantle, and my
train!

Let none who honours Lorn re-
main!”—

Courteous, but stern, a bold request

To Bruce De Argentine express'd.

“Lord Earl,” he said,—“I cannot
chuse

But yield such title to the Bruce,

Though name and earldom both are
gone,

Since he braced rebel's armour on—

But, Earl or Serf—rude phrase was
thine

Of late, and launch'd at Argentine:

Such as compels me to demand

Redress of honour at thy hand.

We need not to each other tell,

That both can wield their weapons
well;

Then do me but the soldier grace,

This glove upon thy helm to
place

Where we may meet in fight;

And I will say, as still I've
said,

Though by ambition far misled,

Thou art a noble knight.”—

VI.

"And I," the princely Bruce replied,
 "Might term it stain on knighthood's
 pride,
 That the bright sword of Argentine
 Should in a tyrant's quarrel shine ;
 But, for your brave request,
 Be sure the honour'd pledge you gave
 In every battle-field shall wave
 Upon my helmet-crest ;
 Believe, that if my hasty tongue
 Hath done thine honour causeless
 wrong,
 It shall be well redress'd.
 Not dearer to my soul was glove,
 Bestow'd in youth by lady's love,
 Than this which thou hast given !
 Thus, then, my noble foe I greet ;
 Health and high fortune till we meet,
 And then—what pleases Heaven."

VII.

Thus parted they — for now, with
 sound
 Like waves roll'd back from rocky
 ground,
 The friends of Lorn retire ;
 Each mainland chieftain, with his
 train,
 Draws to his mountain towers again,
 Pondering how mortal schemes prove
 vain,
 And mortal hopes expire.
 But through the castle double guard,
 By Ronald's charge, kept wakeful
 ward,
 Wicket and gate were trebly barr'd,
 By beam and bolt and chain ;
 Then of the guests, in courteous sort,
 He pray'd excuse for mirth broke
 short,
 And bade them in Artornish fort
 In confidence remain.
 Now torch and menial tendance led
 Chieftain and knight to bower and
 bed,
 And beads were told, and Aves said,
 And soon they sunk away
 Into such sleep as won't to shed
 Oblivion on the weary head,
 After a toilsome day.

VIII.

But soon uprous'd, the Monarch
 cried
 To Edward slumbering by his side,
 "Awake, or sleep for aye !
 Even now there jarr'd a secret door—
 A taper-light gleams on the floor—
 Up, Edward, up, I say !
 Some one glides in like midnight
 ghost—
 Nay, strike not ! 'tis our noble Host."
 Advancing then his taper's flame,
 Ronald stept forth, and with him
 came
 Dunvegan's chief—each bent the
 knee
 To Bruce in sign of fealty,
 And proffer'd him his sword,
 And hail'd him, in a monarch's
 style,
 As king of mainland and of isle,
 And Scotland's rightful lord.
 "And O," said Ronald, "Own'd of
 Heaven !
 Say, is my erring youth forgiven,
 By falsehood's arts from duty driven,
 Who rebel falchion drew,
 Yet ever to thy deeds of fame,
 Even while I strove against thy
 claim,
 Paid homage just and true ?"—
 "Alas ! dear youth, the unhappy
 time,"
 Answer'd the Bruce, "must bear the
 crime,
 Since, guiltier far than you,
 Even I"—he paused ; for Falkirk's
 woes
 Upon his conscious soul arose.³⁷⁷
 The Chieftain to his breast he press'd,
 And in a sigh conceal'd the rest.

IX.

They proffer'd aid, by arms and
 might,
 To repossess him in his right ;
 But well their counsels must be
 weigh'd,
 Ere banners raised and musters
 made,

For English hire and Lorn's intrigues
Bound many chiefs in southern
leagues.

In answer, Bruce his purpose bold
To his new vassals frankly told.
"The winter worn in exile o'er,
I long'd for Carrick's kindred shore.
I thought upon my native Ayr,
And long'd to see the burly fare
That Clifford makes, whose lordly
call

Now echoes through my father's
hall.

But first my course to Arran led,
Where valiant Lennox gathers head
And on the sea, by tempest toss'd,
Our barks dispersed, our purpose
cross'd,

Mine own, a hostile sail to shun,
Far from her destined course had
run,

When that wise will, which masters
ours,
Compell'd us to your friendly towers."

X.

Then Torquil spoke:—"The time
craves speed!

We must not linger in our deed,
But instant pray our Sovereign
Liege,

To shun the perils of a siege.

The vengeful Lorn, with all his
powers,

Lies but too near Artornish towers,
And England's light-arm'd vessels
ride,

Not distant far, the waves of Clyde,
Prompt at these tidings to unmoor,
And sweep each strait, and guard
each shore.

Then, till this fresh alarm pass by,
Secret and safe my Liege must lie
In the far bounds of friendly Skye,
Torquil thy pilot and thy guide."

"Not so, brave Chieftain," Ronald
cried;

"Myself will on my Sovereign wait,
And raise in arms the men of Sleate,
Whilst thou, renown'd where chiefs
debate,

Shalt sway their souls by council
sage,

And awe them by thy locks of age."
—"And if my words in weight shall
fail,

This ponderous sword shall turn the
scale."

XI.

—"The scheme," said Bruce, "con-
tents me well;

Meantime, 'twere best that Isabel,
For safety, with my bark and crew,
Again to friendly Erin drew.

There Edward, too, shall with her
wend,

In need to cheer her and defend,
And muster up each scatter'd
friend."

Here seem'd it as Lord Ronald's ear
Would other council gladlier hear;
But, all achieved as soon as plann'd,
Both barks, in secret arm'd and
mann'd,

From out the haven bore;
On different voyage forth they ply,
This winged for the coast of Skye,
And that for Erin's shore.

XII.

With Bruce and Ronald bides the
tale.

To favouring winds they gave the
sail,

Till Mull's dark headlands scarce
they knew,

And Ardnamurchan's hills were blue.
But then the squalls blew close and
hard,

And, fain to strike the galley's yard,
And take them to the oar,

With these rude seas, in weary plight,
They strove the livelong day and
night,

Nor till the dawning had a sight
Of Skye's romantic shore.

Where Coolin stoops him to the west,
They saw upon his shiver'd crest
The sun's arising gleam;

But such the labour and delay,
Ere they were moor'd in Scavigh bay,
(For calmer heaven compell'd to stay,)

He shot a western beam.
Then Ronald said, "If true mine eye,
These are the savage wilds that lie
North of Strathnardill and Dun-
skye ;³⁷⁸

No human foot comes here,
And, since these adverse breezes
blow,

If my good Liege love hunter's bow,
What hinders that on land we go,
And strike a mountain-deer ?

Allan, my page, shall with us wend ;
A bow full deftly can he bend,
And, if we meet a herd, may send
A shaft shall mend our cheer."

Then each took bow and bolts in
hand,
Their row-boat launch'd and leapt
to land,

And left their skiff and train,
Where a wild stream, with headlong
shock,

Came brawling down its bed of rock,
To mingle with the main.

XIII.

A while their route they silent made,
As men who stalk for mountain-
deer,

Till the good Bruce to Ronald said,
"St. Mary! what a scene is
here !

I've traversed many a mountain-
strand,

Abroad and in my native land,
And it has been my lot to tread
Where safety more than pleasure led ;
Thus, many a waste I've wander'd
o'er,

Clombe many a crag, cross'd many a
moor,

But, by my halidome,
A scene so rude, so wild as this,
Yet so sublime in barrenness,
Ne'er did my wandering footsteps
press,

Where'er I happ'd to roam."

XIV.

No marvel thus the Monarch spake ;
For rarely human eye has known
A scene so stern as that dread lake,
With its dark ledge of barren
stone.

Seems that primeval earthquake's
sway

Hath rent a strange and shatter'd
way

Through the rude bosom of the
hill,

And that each naked precipice,
Sable ravine, and dark abyss,
Tells of the outrage still.

The wildest glen, but this, can show
Some touch of Nature's genial
glow ;

On high Benmore green mosses
grow,

And heath-bells bud in deep Glencroe,
And copse on Cruchan-Ben ;

But here,—above, around, below,
On mountain or in glen,
Nor tree, nor shrub, nor plant, nor
flower,

Nor aught of vegetative power,
The weary eye may ken.

For all is rocks at random thrown,
Black waves, bare crags, and banks
of stone,

As if were here denied
The summer sun, the spring's sweet
dew,

That clothe with many a varied hue
The bleakest mountain-side.

XV.

And wilder, forward as they wound,
Were the proud cliffs and lake pro-
found.

Huge terraces of granite black
Afforded rude and cumber'd track ;

For from the mountain hoar,
Hurl'd headlong in some night of
fear,

When yell'd the wolf and fled the
deer,

Loose crags had toppled o'er ;

And some, chance - poised and
 balanced, lay,
 So that a stripling arm might sway
 A mass no host could raise,
 In Nature's rage at random thrown,
 Yet trembling like the Druid's stone
 On its precarious base.
 The evening mists, with ceaseless
 change,
 Now clothed the mountains' lofty
 range,
 Now left their foreheads bare,
 And round the skirts their mantle
 furl'd,
 Or on the sable waters curl'd,
 Or on the eddying breezes whirl'd,
 Dispersed in middle air.
 And oft, condensed, at once they
 lower,
 When, brief and fierce, the mountain
 shower
 Pours like a torrent down,
 And when return the sun's glad
 beams,
 Whiten'd with foam a thousand
 streams
 Leap from the mountain's
 crown.

XVI.

"This lake," said Bruce, "whose
 barriers drear
 Are precipices sharp and sheer,
 Yielding no track for goat or deer,
 Save the black shelves we tread,
 How term you its dark waves? and
 how
 Yon northern mountain's pathless
 brow,
 And yonder peak of dread,
 That to the evening sun uplifts
 The grisly gulfs and slaty rifts,
 Which seam its shiver'd
 head?"—

"Coriskin call the dark lake's name,
 Coolin the ridge, as bards proclaim,
 From old Cuchullin, chief of fame.
 But bards, familiar in our isles
 Rather with Nature's frowns than
 smiles,
 Full oft their careless humours please

By sportive names from scenes like
 these.
 I would old Turquil were to show
 His maidens with their breasts of
 snow,
 Or that my noble Liege were nigh
 To hear his Nurse sing lullaby!
 (The Maids—tall cliffs with breakers
 white,
 The Nurse—a torrent's roaring
 might,)
 Or that your eye could see the mood
 Of Corryvekin's whirlpool rude,
 When dons the Hag her whiten'd
 hood—
 'Tis thus our islesmen's fancy frames,
 For scenes so stern, fantastic names."

XVII.

Answer'd the Bruce, "And musing
 mind
 Might here a graver moral find.
 These mighty cliffs, that heave on
 high
 Their naked brow to middle sky,
 Indifferent to the sun or snow,
 Where nought can fade, and nought
 can blow,
 May they not mark a Monarch's
 fate,—
 Raised high 'mid storms of strife and
 state,
 Beyond life's lowlier pleasures placed,
 His soul a rock, his heart a waste?
 O'er hope and love and fear aloft
 High rears his crowned head—But
 soft!
 Look, underneath yon jutting crag
 Are hunters and a slaughter'd stag.
 Who may they be? But late you
 said
 No steps these desert regions
 tread?"—

XVIII.

"So said I—and believed in sooth,"
 Ronald replied, "I spoke the truth.
 Yet now I spy, by yonder stone,
 Five men—they mark us, and come
 on;

And by their badge on bonnet borne,
I guess them of the land of Lorn,
Foes to my Liege."—"So let it be;
I've faced worse odds than five to
three—

—But the poor page can little aid;
Then be our battle thus array'd,
If our free passage they contest;
Cope thou with two, I'll match the
rest."—

"Not so, my Liege—for, by my life,
This sword shall meet the treble
strife;

My strength, my skill in arms, more
small,

And less the loss should Ronald fall.
But islesmen soon to soldiers grow,
Allan has sword as well as bow,

And were my Monarch's order given,
Two shafts should make our number
even."—

"No! not to save my life!" he
said;

"Enough of blood rests on my head,
Too rashly spill'd—we soon shall
know,

Whether they come as friend or foe."

XIX.

Nigh came the strangers, and more
nigh;—

Still less they pleased the Monarch's
eye.

Men were they all of evil mien,³⁷⁹
Down-look'd, unwilling to be seen;
They moved with half-resolved pace,
And bent on earth each gloomy
face.

The foremost two were fair array'd,
With brogue and bonnet, trows and
plaid,

And bore the arms of mountaineers,
Daggers and broadswords, bows
and spears.

The three, that lagg'd small space
behind,

Seem'd seris of more degraded kind;
Goat-skins or deer-hides o'er them
cast,

Made a rude fence against the blast;

Their arms and feet and heads were
bare,

Matted their beards, unshorn their
hair;

For arms, the cuttiffs bore in hand,
A club, an axe, a rusty brand.

XX.

Onward, still mute, they kept the
track;—

"Tell who ye be, or else stand
back,"

Said Bruce; "In deserts when they
meet,

Men pass not as in peaceful street."

Still, at his stern command, they
stood,

And proffer'd greeting brief and rude,
But acted courtesy so ill,

As seem'd of fear, and not of will.

"Wanderers we are, as you may
be;

Men hither driven by wind and sea,

Who, if you list to taste our cheer,

Will share with you this fallow
deer."—

"If from the sea, where lies your
bark?"—

"Ten fathom deep in ocean dark!

Wreck'd yesternight: but we are
men,

Who little sense of peril ken.

The shades come down—the day is
shut—

Will you go with us to our hut?"—

"Our vessel waits us in the bay;

Thanks for your proffer—have good-
day."—

"Was that your galley, then, which
rode

Not far from shore when evening
glow'd?"—

"It was."—"Then spare your
needless pain,

There will she now be sought in
vain.

We saw her from the mountain head,
When, with St. George's blazon red,

A southern vessel bore in sight,

And yours raised sail, and took to
flight."—

XXI.

"Now, by the rood, unwelcome news!"

Thus with Lord Ronald communed Bruce;

"Nor rests there light enough to show

If this their tale be true or no.

The men seem bred of churlish kind,

Yet mellow nuts have hardest rind;

We will go with them—food and fire

And sheltering roof our wants require.

Sure guard 'gainst teachery will we keep,

And watch by turns our comrades' sleep.—

Good fellows, thanks; your guests we'll be,

And well will pay the courtesy.

Come, lead us where your lodging lies,—

—Nay, soft! we mix not companies.—

Show us the path o'er crag and stone,

And we will follow you;—lead on."

XXII.

They reach'd the dreary cabin, made
Of sails against a rock display'd,

And there, on entering, found
A slender boy, whose form and

mien
Ill suited with such savage scene,

In cap and cloak of velvet green,

Low seated on the ground.
His garb was such as minstrels

wear,
Dark was his hue, and dark his

hair,
His youthful cheek was marr'd by

care,
His eyes in sorrow drown'd.

"Whence this poor boy?"—As
Ronald spoke,

The voice his trance of anguish
broke;

As if awak'd from ghastly dream,
He raised his head with start and
scream,

And wildly gazed around;
Then to the wall his face he turn'd,
And his dark neck with blushes
burn'd.

XXIII.

"Whose is the boy?" again he said.

"By chance of war our captive made;
He may be yours, if you should hold

That music has more charms than
gold;

For, though from earliest childhood
mute,

The lad can deftly touch the lute,

And on the rote and viol play,

And well can drive the time away

For those who love such glee;

For me, the favouring breeze, when
loud

It pipes upon the galley's shroud,

Makes blither melody."—

"Hath he, then, sense of spoken
sound?"—

"Aye; so his mother bade us
know,

A crone in our late shipwreck
drown'd,

And hence the silly stripling's woe.

More of the youth I cannot say,

Our captive but since yesterday;

When wind and weather wax'd so
grim,

We little listed think of him.—

But why waste time in idle words?

Sit to your cheer—unbelt your
swords."

Sudden the captive turn'd his head,

And one quick glance to Ronald sped.

It was a keen and warning look,

And well the Chief the signal took.

XXIV.

"Kind host," he said, "our needs
require

A separate board and separate fire;

For know, that on a pilgrimage

Wend I, my comrade, and this page.

And, sworn to vigil and to fast,
Long as this hallow'd task shall
last,

We never doff the plaid or sword,
Or feast us at a stranger's board ;
And never share one common sleep,
But one must still his vigil keep.
Thus, for our separate use, good
friend,

We'll hold this hut's remoter end."—
"A churlish vow," the eldest said,
"And hard, methinks, to be obey'd.
How say you, if, to wreak the scorn
That pays our kindness harsh return,
We should refuse to share our
meal?"—

"Then say we, that our swords are
steel!

And our vow binds us not to fast,
Where gold or force may buy re-
past."—

Their host's dark brow grew keen
and fell,

His teeth are clench'd, his features
swell ;

Yet sunk the felon's moody ire
Before Lord Ronald's glance of fire,
Nor could his craven courage brook
The Monarch's calm and dauntless
look.

With laugh constrain'd,—“Let every
man

Follow the fashion of his clan !
Each to his separate quarters keep,
And feed or fast, or wake or sleep.”

XXV.

Their fire at separate distance burns,
By turns they eat, keep guard by
turns ;

For evil seem'd that old man's eye,
Dark and designing, fierce yet shy.
Still he avoided forward look,
But slow and circumspectly took
A circling, never-ceasing glance,
By doubt and cunning mark'd at
once,

Which shot a mischief-boding ray,
From under eyebrows shagg'd and
gray.

The younger, too, who seem'd his
son,

Had that dark look the timid shun ;
The half-clad serfs behind them sate,
And scowl'd a glare 'twixt fear and
hate—

Till all, as darkness onward crept,
Couch'd down, and seem'd to sleep,
or slept.

Nor he, that boy, whose powerless
tongue

Must trust his eyes to wail his
wrong,

A longer watch of sorrow made,
But stretch'd his limbs to slumber
laid.

XXVI.

Not in his dangerous host confides
The King, but wary watch provides.
Ronald keeps ward till midnight
past,

Then wakes the King, young Allan
last ;

Thus rank'd, to give the youthful
page

The rest required by tender age.

What is Lord Ronald's wakeful
thought,

To chase the languor toil had
brought?—

(For deem not that he deign'd to
throw

Much care upon such coward foe),—
He thinks of lovely Isabel,

When at her foeman's feet she fell,
Nor less when, placed in princely
selle,

She glanced on him with favouring
eyes,

At Woodstock when he won the
prize.

Nor, fair in joy, in sorrow fair,
In pride of place as 'mid despair,
Must she alone engross his care.

His thoughts to his betrothed bride,
To Edith, turn—O how decide,
When here his love and heart are
given,

And there his faith stands plight to
Heaven!

No drowsy ward 'tis his to keep,
 For seldom lovers long for sleep.
 Till sung his midnight hymn the
 owl,
 Answer'd the dog-fox with his howl,
 Then waked the King — at his
 request,
 Lord Ronald stretch'd himself to
 rest.

XXVII.

What spell was good King Robert's,
 say,
 To drive the weary night away?
 His was the patriot's burning
 thought,
 Of Freedom's battle bravely fought,
 Of castles storm'd, of cities freed,
 Of deep design and daring deed,
 Of England's roses reft and torn,
 And Scotland's cross in triumph
 worn,
 Of rout and rally, war and truce,—
 As heroes think, so thought the
 Bruce.
 No marvel, 'mid such musings high,
 Sleep shunn'd the Monarch's thought-
 ful eye.
 Now over Coolin's eastern head
 The grayish light begins to spread,
 The otter to his cavern drew,
 And clamour'd shrill the wakening
 mew;
 Then watch'd the page—to needful
 rest
 The King resign'd his anxious
 breast.

XXVIII.

To Allan's eyes was harder task,
 The weary watch their safeties ask.
 He trimm'd the fire, and gave to
 shine
 With bickering light the splinter'd
 pine;
 Then gazed awhile, where silent laid
 Their hosts were shrouded by the
 plaid.
 But little fear waked in his mind,
 For he was bred of martial kind,

And, if to manhood he arrive,
 May match the boldest knight alive.
 Then thought he of his mother's
 tower,
 His little sisters' greenwood bower,
 How there the Easter-gambols pass,
 And of Dan Joseph's lengthen'd
 mass.
 But still before his weary eye
 In rays prolong'd the blazes die—
 Again he roused him — on the
 lake
 Look'd forth, where now the twilight-
 flake
 Of pale cold dawn began to wake.
 On Coolin's cliffs the mist lay furl'd,
 The morning breeze the lake had
 curl'd,
 The short dark waves, heaved to the
 land,
 With ceaseless plash kiss'd cliff or
 sand;—
 It was a slumbrous sound—he turn'd
 To tales at which his youth had
 burn'd,
 Of pilgrim's path by demon cross'd,
 Of sprightly elf or yelling ghost,
 Of the wild witch's baneful cot,
 And mermaid's alabaster grot,
 Who bathes her limbs in sunless
 well,
 Deep in Strathaird's enchanted cell,³⁵⁰
 Thither in fancy rapt he flies,
 And on his sight the vaults arise;
 That hut's dark walls he sees no
 more,
 His foot is on the marble floor,
 And o'er his head the dazzling
 spars
 Glean like a firmament of stars!
 —Hark! hears he not the sea-nymph
 speak
 Her anger in that thrilling shriek!—
 No! all too late, with Allan's dream
 Mingled the captive's warning
 scream.
 As from the ground he strives to
 start,
 A ruffian's dagger finds his heart!
 Upward he casts his dizzy eyes, . . .
 Murmurs his master's name, . . . and
 dies!

XXIX.

Not so awoke the King ! his hand
 Snatch'd from the flame a knott'd
 brand,
 The nearest weapon of his wrath ;
 With this he cross'd the murderer's
 path,
 And venged young Allan well !
 The spatter'd brain and bubbling
 blood
 Hiss'd on the half-extinguish'd wood,
 The miscreant gasp'd and fell !
 Nor rose in peace the Island Lord ;
 One caitiff died upon his sword,
 And one beneath his grasplies prone,
 In mortal grapple overthrown.
 But while Lord Ronald's dagger
 drank
 The life-blood from his panting
 flank,
 The Father-ruffian of the band
 Behind him rears a coward hand !
 —O for a moment's aid,
 Till Bruce, who deals no double
 blow,
 Dash to the earth another foe,
 Above his comrade laid !—
 And it is gain'd—the captive sprung
 On the raised arm, and closely clung,
 And, ere he shook him loose,
 The master'd felon press'd the
 ground,
 And gasp'd beneath a mortal wound,
 While o'er him stands the Bruce.

XXX.

“Miscreant ! while lasts thy flitting
 spark,
 Give me to know the purpose dark,
 That arm'd thy hand with murderous
 knife,
 Against offenceless stranger's life?”—
 “No stranger thou !” with accent
 fell,
 Murrur'd the wretch ; “I know
 thee well ;
 And know thee for the foeman sworn
 Of my high chief, the mighty
 Lorn.”—

“Speak yet again, and speak the
 truth
 For thy soul's sake !—from whence
 this youth ?
 His country, birth, and name
 declare,
 And thus one evil deed repair.”—
 —“Vex me no more ! . . . my blood
 runs cold . . .
 No more I know than I have told.
 We found him in a back we sought
 With different purpose . . . and I
 thought” . . .
 Fate cut him short ; in blood and
 broil,
 As he had lived, died Cormac Doil.

XXXI.

Then resting on his bloody blade,
 The valiant Bruce to Ronald said,
 “Now shame upon us both !—that
 boy
 Lifts his mute face to heaven,
 And clasps his hands, to testify
 His gratitude to God on high,
 For strange deliverance given.
 His speechless gesture thanks hath
 paid,
 Which our free tongues have left
 unsaid !”
 He raised the youth with kindly
 word,
 But mark'd him shudder at the
 sword :
 He cleansed it from its hue of death,
 And plunged the weapon in its
 sheath.
 “Alas, poor child ! unfitting part
 Fate doom'd, when with so soft a
 heart,
 And form so slight as thine,
 She made thee first a pirate's slave,
 Then, in his stead, a patron gave
 Of wayward lot like mine ;
 A landless prince, whose wandering
 life
 Is but one scent of blood and strife—
 Yet scant of friends the Bruce shall
 be,
 But he'll find resting-place for
 thee.—

Come, noble Ronald! o'er the dead
Enough thy generous grief is paid,
And well has Allan's fate been wroke;
Come, wend we hence—the day has
broke

Seek we our bark—I trust the tale
Was false, that she had hoisted
sail."

XXXII.

Yet, ere they left that charnel-cell,
The Island Lord bade sad farewell
To Allan:—"Who shall tell this
tale,"

He said, "in halls of Donagaile!
Oh, who his widow'd mother tell,
That, ere his bloom, her fairest
fell!—

Rest thee, poor youth! and trust my
care

For mass and knell and funeral
prayer;

While o'er those caitiffs, where they
lie,

The wolf shall snarl, the raven cry!"
And now the eastern mountain's head
On the dark lake threw lustre red;
Bright gleams of gold and purple
streak

Ravine and precipice and peak—
(So earthly power at distance shows;
Reveals his splendour, hides his
woes.)

O'er sheets of granite, dark and
broad,

Rent and unequal, lay the road,
In sad discourse the warriors wind,
And the mute captive moves behind.

CANTO FOURTH.

I.

STRANGER! if e'er thine ardent step
hath traced

The northern realms of ancient
Caledon,

Where the proud Queen of
Wilderness hath placed,

By lake and cataract, her lonely
throne;

Sublime but sad delight thy soul
hath known,

Gazing on pathless glen and
mountain high,

Listing where from the cliffs the
torrents thrown

Mingle their echoes with the
eagle's cry,

And with the sounding lake, and
with the moaning sky.

Yes! 'twas sublime, but sad.—
The loneliness

Loaded thy heart, the desert tired
thine eye;

And strange and awful fears began
to press

Thy bosom with a stern solemnity.
Then hast thou wish'd some wood-
man's cottage nigh,

Something that show'd of life,
though low and mean;

Glad sight, its curling wreath of
smoke to spy,

Glad sound, its cock's blithe carol
would have been,

Or children whooping wild beneath
the willows green.

Such are the scenes, where savage
grandeur wakes

An awful thrill that softens into sighs;
Such feelings rouse them by dim

Rannoch's lakes,
In dark Glencoe such gloomy

raptures rise:
Or farther, where, beneath the

northern skies,
Chides wild Loch - Eribol his

caverns hoar—
But, be the minstrel judge, they

yield the prize
Of desert dignity to that dread shore,

That sees grim Coolin rise, and hears
Coriskin roar.

II.

Through such wild scenes the
champion pass'd,

When bold halloo and bugle-blast
Upon the breeze came loud and

fast.

“There,” said the Bruce, “rung
Edward’s horn !
What can have caused such brief
return ?
And see, brave Ronald,—see him
dart
O’er stock and stone like hunted hart,
Precipitate, as is the use,
In war or sport, of Edward Bruce.
—He marks us, and his eager cry
Will tell his news ere he be nigh.”

III.

Loud Edward shouts, “What make
ye here,
Warring upon the mountain-deer,
When Scotland wants her King ?
A bark from Lennox cross’d our
track,
With her in speed I hurried back,
These joyful news to bring—
The Stuart stirs in Teviotdale,
And Douglas wakes his native vale ;
Thy storm-toss’d fleet hath won its
way
With little loss to Brodick Bay,
And Lennox, with a gallant band,
Waits but thy coming and command
To waft them o’er to Carrick strand.
There are blithe news!—but mark
the close !
Edward, the deadliest of our foes,
As with his host he northward
pass’d,
Hath on the Borders breathed his
last.”

IV.

Still stood the Bruce—his steady
cheek
Was little wont his joy to speak,
But then his colour rose :
“Now, Scotland ! shortly shalt thou
see,
With God’s high will, thy children
free,
And vengeance on thy foes !
Yet to no sense of selfish wrongs,
Bear witness with me, Heaven, be-
longs
My joy o’er Edward’s bier ; ³⁵¹

I took my knighthood at his hand,
And lordship held of him, and land,
And well may vouch it here,
That, blot the story from his page,
Of Scotland ruin’d in his rage,
You read a monarch brave and sage,
And to his people dear.”—
“Let London’s burghers mourn her
Lord,
And Croydon monks his praise
record,”

The eager Edward said ;
“Eternal as his own, my hate
Surmounts the bounds of mortal
fate,
And dies not with the dead !
Such hate was his on Solway’s strand,
When vengeance clench’d his palsied
hand,
That pointed yet to Scotland’s land, ³⁵²
As his last accents pray’d
Disgrace and curse upon his heir,
If he one Scottish head should spare,
Till stretch’d upon the bloody lair
Each rebel corpse was laid !
Such hate was his, when his last
breath
Renounced the peaceful house of
death,
And bade his bones to Scotland’s
coast
Be borne by his remorseless host,
As if his dead and stony eye
Could still enjoy her misery !
Such hate was his—dark, deadly,
long ;
Mine, — as enduring, deep and
strong !”—

V.

“Let women, Edward, war with
words,
With curses monks, but men with
swords :
Nor doubt of living foes, to sate
Deepest revenge and deadliest hate,
Now, to the sea ! behold the beach,
And see the galleys’ pendants stretch
Their fluttering length down favour-
ing gale !
Aboard, aboard ! and hoist the sail.

Hold we our way for Arran first,
Where meet in arms our friends
dispersed;

Lennox the loyal, De la Haye,
And Boyd the bold in battle fray.
I long the hardy band to head,
And see once more my standard
spread.—

Does noble Ronald share our course,
Or stay to raise his island force?"—
"Come weal, come woe, by Bruce's
side,"

Replied the Chief, "will Ronald
bide.

And since two galleys yonder ride,
Be mine, so please my liege,
dismiss'd

To wake to arms the clans of Uist,
And all who hear the Minche's roar,
On the Long Island's lonely shore,
The nearer Isles, with slight delay,
Ourselves may summon in our way;
And soon on Arran's shore shall
meet,

With Torquil's aid, a gallant fleet,
If aught avails their Chieftain's best
Among the islesmen of the west."

VI.

Thus was their venturous council
said.

But, ere their sails the galleys
spread,

Coriskin dark and Coolin high
Echoed the dirge's doleful cry.
Along that sable lake pass'd slow,—
Fit scene for such a sight of woe,—
The sorrowing isles-men, as they bore
The murder'd Allan to the shore.

At every pause, with dismal shout,
Their coronach of grief rung out,
And ever, when they moved again,
The pipes resumed their clamorous
strain,

And, with the pibroch's shrilling
wail,

Mourn'd the young heir of Dona-
gaile.

Round and around, from cliff and
cave,

His answer stern old Coolin gave,

Till high upon his misty side
Languish'd the mournful notes, and
died

For never sounds, by mortal made,
Attain'd his high and haggard head,
That echoes but the tempest's moan,
Or the deep thunder's rending groan.

VII.

Merrily, merrily bounds the bark,
She bounds before the gale,
The mountain breeze from Ben-na-
darch

Is jovous in her sail!
With fluttering sound like laughter
hoarse,

The cords and canvass strain,
The waves, divided by her force,
In rippling eddies chased her course,
As if they laugh'd again.

Not down the breeze more blithely
flew,
Skimming the wave, the light sea-
manew.

Than the gay galley bore
Her course upon that favouring wind,
And Coolin's crest has sunk behind,
And Slapin's cavern'd shore.

'Twas then that warlike signals wake
Dunscuith's dark towers and Eisord's
lake,

And soon, from Cavilgarrigh's head,
Thick wreaths of eddying smoke
were spread;

A summons these of war and wrath
To the brave clans of Sleat and Strath,
And, ready at the sight,

Each warrior to his weapons sprung,
And targe upon his shoulder flung,
Impatient for the fight.

Mac-Kinnon's chief, in warfare gray,
Had charge to muster their array,
And guide their barks to Brodick
Bay.

VIII.

Signal of Ronald's high command,
A beacon gleam'd o'er sea and land,
From Canna's tower, that, steep and
gray,
Like falcon-nest o'erhangs the bay.³⁸³

Seek not the giddy crag to climb,
To view the turret scathed by
time;

It is a task of doubt and fear
To aught but goat or mountain-
deer.

But rest thee on the silver beach,
And let the aged heidsman teach
His tale of former day;

His cur's wild clamour he shall
chide,

And for thy seat by ocean's side,
His varied plaid display;

Then tell, how with their Chieftain
came,

In ancient times, a foreign dame
To yonder turret gray.

Stern was her Lord's suspicious
mind,

Who in so rude a jail confined
So soft and fair a thrall!

And oft, when moon on ocean slept,
That lovely lady sate and wept
Upon the castle-wall,

And turn'd her eye to southern
climes,

And thought perchance of happier
times,

And touch'd her lute by fits, and
sung

Wild ditties in her native tongue.

And still, when on the cliff and
bay

Placid and pale the moonbeams
play,

And every breeze is mute,

Upon the lone Hebridean's ear

Steals a strange pleasure mix'd with
fear,

While from that cliff he seems to
hear

The murmur of a lute,
And sounds, as of a captive lone,
That mourns her woes in tongue un-
known.—

Strange is the tale — but all too
long

Already hath it staid the song—

Yet who may pass them by,
That crag and tower in ruins gray,
Nor to their hapless tenant pay

The tribute of a sigh!

IX.

Merrily, merrily bounds the bark
O'er the broad ocean driven,

Her path by Ronin's mountains
dark

The steersman's hand hath
given.

And Ronin's mountains dark have
sent

Their hunters to the shore,³⁴

And each his ashen bow unbent,

And gave his pastime o'er,

And at the Island Lord's command,
For hunting spear took warrior's
brand.

On Scөөreigg next a warning light
Summon'd her warriors to the light;

A numerous race, ere stern MacLeod
O'er their bleak shores in vengeance
strode,³⁵

When all in vain the ocean-cave

Its refuge to his victims gave.
The Chief, relentless in his wrath,

With blazing heath blockades the
path;

In dense and stifling volumes roll'd,
The vapour fill'd the cavern'd hold!

The warrior-threat, the infant's plain,
The mother's screams, were heard in
vain;

The vengeful Chief maintains his fires,
Till in the vault a tribe expires!

The bones which strew that cavern's
gloom,

Too well attest their dismal doom.

X.

Merrily, merrily goes the bark

On a breeze from the northward
free,

So shoots through the morning sky
the lark,

Or the swan through the summer
sea.

The shores of Mull on the eastward
lay,

And Ulva dark and Colonsay,

And all the group of islets gay
That guard famed Staffa round.

Then all unknown its columns rose,
Where dark and undisturb'd repose
The cormorant had found,
And the shy seal had quiet home,
And welter'd in that wondrous dome,
Where, as to shame the temples
deck'd

By skill of earthly architect,
Nature herself, it seem'd, would raise
A Minster to her Maker's praise!³⁵⁶
Not for a meaner use ascend
Her columns, or her arches bend;
Nor of a theme less solemn tells
That mighty surge that ebbs and
swells,
And still, between each awful pause,
From the high vault an answer
draws,

In varied tone prolong'd and high,
That mocks the organ's melody.
Nor doth its entrance front in vain
To old Iona's holy fane,
That Nature's voice might seem to
say,
"Well hast thou done, frail Child of
clay!
Thy humble powers that stately shrine
Task'd high and hard—but witness
mine!"

XI.

Merrily, merrily goes the bark,
Before the gale she bounds;
So darts the dolphin from the
shark,
Or the deer before the hounds.
They left Loch-Tua on their lee,
And they waken'd the men of the
wild Tirie,
And the Chief of the sandy Coll;
They paused not at Columba's isle,
Though peal'd the bells from the holy
pile
With long and measured toll;
No time for matin or for mass,
And the sounds of the holy summons
pass

Away in the billows' roll.
Lochbuie's fierce and warlike Lord
Their signal saw, and grasp'd his
sword,

And verdant Ilay call'd her host,
And the clans of Jura's rugged coast
Lord Ronald's call obey,
And Scarba's isle, whose tortured
shore
Still rings to Corrievreken's roar,
And lonely Colonsay;
—Scenes sung by him who sings no
more!³⁵⁷

His bright and brief career is o'er,
And mute his tuneful strains;
Quench'd is his lamp of varied lore,
That loved the light of song to pour;
A distant and a deadly shore
Has LEYDEN'S cold remains!

XII.

Ever the breeze blows merrily,
But the galley ploughs no more the
sea.
Lest, rounding wild Cantyre, they
meet
The southern foemen's watchful fleet,
They held unwonted way;—
Up Tarbat's western lake they bore,
Then dragg'd their bark the isthmus
o'er,³⁵⁸

As far as Kilmaconnel's shore,
Upon the eastern bay.
It was a wondrous sight to see
Topmast and pennon glitter free,
High raised above the greenwood tree,
As on dry land the galley moves,
By cliff and copse and a lder groves.
Deep import from that selcouth sign,
Did many a mountain Seer divine,
For ancient legends told the Gael,
That when a royal bark should sail
O'er Kilmaconnel moss,
Old Albyn should in fight prevail,
And every foe should faint and quail
Before her silver Cross.

XIII.

Now launch'd once more, the inland
sea
They furrow with fair augury,
And steer for Arran's isle;

The sun, ere yet he sunk behind
Ben-Ghoil, "the Mountain of the
Wind,"

Gave his grim peaks a greeting
kind,

And bade Loch Ranza smile.³³⁹
Thither their destined course they
drew ;

It seem'd the isle her monarch knew,
So brilliant was the landward view,

The ocean so serene ;
Each puny wave in diamonds roll'd
O'er the calm deep, where hues of
gold

With azure strove and green.
The hill, the vale, the tree, the tower,
Glow'd with the tints of evening's
hour,

The beach was silver sheen,
The wind breathed soft as lover's sigh,
And, oft renew'd, seem'd oft to die,
With breathless pause between.

O who, with speech of war and woes,
Would wish to break the soft repose
Of such enchanting scene !

XIV.

Is it of war Lord Ronald speaks ?
The blush that dies his manly cheeks,
The timid look and downcast eye,
And faltering voice the theme deny.

And good King Robert's brow ex-
press'd,

He ponder'd o'er some high request,
As doubtful to approve ;

Yet in his eye and lip the while,
Dwelt the half-pitying glance and
smile,

Which manhood's graver mood
beguile,

When lovers talk of love.

Anxious his suit Lord Ronald pled ;
—"And for my bride betrothed," he
said,

"My Liege has heard the rumour
spread

Of Edith from Artornish fled.
Too hard her fate—I claim no right
To blame her for her hasty flight ;
Be joy and happiness her lot !—
But she hath fled the bridal-knot,

And Lorn recall'd his promised plight,
In the assembled chieftains' sight.—

When, to fulfil our fathers' band,
I proffer'd all I could—my hand—
I was repulsed with scorn ;
Mine honour I should ill assert,
And worse the feelings of my heart,
If I should play a suitor's part
Again, to pleasure Lorn."

XV.

"Young Lord," the Royal Bruce
replied,

"That question must the Church
decide ;

Yet seems it hard, since rumours state
Edith takes Clifford for her mate,
The very tie, which she hath broke,
To thee should still be binding yoke.
But, for my sister Isabel—

The mood of woman who can tell ?
I guess the Champion of the Rock,
Victorious in the tourney shock,
That knight unknown, to whom the
prize

She dealt,—had favour in her eyes ;
But since our brother Nigel's fate,
Our ruin'd house and hapless state,
From worldly joy and hope estranged,
Much is the hapless mourner changed.
Perchance," here smiled the noble
King,

"This tale may other musings bring.
Soon shall we know—yon mountains
hide

The little convent of Saint Bride ;
There, sent by Edward, she must
stay,

Till fate shall give more prosperous
day ;

And thither will I bear thy suit,
Nor will thine advocate be mute."

XVI.

As thus they talk'd in earnest mood,
That speechless boy beside them stood.
He stoop'd his head against the
mast,
And bitter sobs came thick and fast,

A grief that would not be repress'd,
But seem'd to burst his youthful
Fears.

His hand's against his forehead held,
As if by force his tears were held,
But through his fingers, long and
slight,

Fast fell'd the drops of crystal
bright.

Edward, who walk'd the look apart,
First spied this conflict of the heart,
Thoughtless as brave, with bluntness
kind

He sought to cheer the sorrower's
mind:

By force the slender hand he drew
From those poor eyes that stream'd
with dew.

As in his hold the stripling strove.—
'Twas a rough grasp, though meant
in love.

Away his tears the warrior swept,
And bade shame on him that he
wept.

"I would to heaven, thy helpless-
ness

Could tell me who hath wrought
this wrong!"

For, were he of our crew the best,
The insult went not un-
dressed.

Come, cheer thee; thou art now of
age

To be a warrior's gallant page;
Thou shalt be mine!—a palfrey fair
O'er hill and holt my boy shall
bear,

To hold my bow in hunting greve,
Or speed on errand to my love;
For well I wot thou wilt not tell
The temple where my wishes dwell."

XVII.

Bruce interpos-ed.—"Gay Edward,
no.

This is no youth to hold thy bow,
To fill thy goblet, or to bear
Thy message light to lighter fair.
Thou art a patron all too wild
And thoughtless, for this orphan
child,

Seest thou not how apart he steals,
Keeps lonely couch, and lonely
meals?

Fitter by far in yon calm cell
To tend our sister Isabel,
With father Augustin to share
The peaceful change of convent
prayer,

Than wander wild adventures
through.

With such a reckless guide as
you."

"Thanks, brother!" Edward an-
swer'd gay.

"For the high laud thy words convey!
But we may learn some future day.

If thou or I can this poor boy
Protect the best, or best employ.

Meanwhile, our vessel nears the
strand:

Launch we the boat, and seek the
land."

XVIII.

To land King Rober, lightly sprung,
And thrice aloud his bugle rung

With note prolong'd and varied
strain.

Till Fold Ben-Ghoil replied again.
Good Douglas then, and De la Haye,

Had in a glen a hart at bay,
And Lennox cheer'd the laggard

hounds,
When waked that horn the green-
wood hounds.

"It is the foe!" cried Boyd, who
came

In mouthless haste with eye of flame.
"It is the foe!—each valliant lord

Fling by his bow, and grasp his
sword!"

"Not so," replied the good Lord
James.

"That blast no English bugle
claims.

Oft have I heard it fire the fight,
Cheer the pursuit, or stop the flight.

Dead were my heart, and deaf mine-
ear.

If Bruce should call, nor Douglas
hear!



"Take care with rest of spotted-bird team.
Right onward did Old Alpine come."

Each to Loch Ranza's margin
spring ;
That blast was winded by the
King ! ”³⁹⁹

XIX.

Fast to their mates the tidings
spread,
And fast to shore the warriors sped,
Bursting from glen and greenwood
tree,
High waked their loyal jubilee !
Around the royal Bruce they crowd,
And clasp'd his hands, and wept
aloud.
Veterans of early fields were there,
Whose helmets press'd their hoary
hair,
Whose swords and axes bore a stain
From life-blood of the red-hair'd
Dane ;
And boys, whose hands scarce
brook'd to wield
The heavy sword or bossy shield.
Men too were there that bore the
scars
Impress'd in Albyn's woful wars,
At Falkirk's fierce and fatal fight,
Teyndrum's dread rout, and Meth-
ven's flight ;
The might of Douglas there was
seen,
There Lennox with his graceful
mien ;
Kirkpatrick, Closeburn's dreaded
Knight ;
The Lindsay, fiery, fierce, and light ;
The Heir of murder'd De la Haye,
And Boyd the grave, and Seton gay,
Around their King regain'd they
press'd,
Wept, shouted, clasp'd him to their
breast,
And young and old, and serf and
lord,
And he who ne'er unsheathed a
sword,
And he in many a peril tried,
Alike resolved the brunt to bide,
And live or die by Bruce's side !

sc.

XX.

Oh, War ! thou hast thy fierce de-
light,
Thy gleams of joy, intensely bright !
Such gleams, as from thy polish'd
shield
Fly dazzling o'er the battle-field !
Such transports wake, severe and
high,
Amid the pealing conquest-cry ;
Scarce less, when, after battle lost,
Muste'r the remnants of a host,
And as each comrade's name they
tell,
Who in the well-fought conflict fell,
Knitting stern brow o'er flashing eye,
Vow to avenge them or to die !—
Warriors !—and where are warriors
found,
If not on martial Britain's ground ?
And who, when waked with note of
fire,
Love more than they the British
lyre ?—
Know ye not,—hearts to honour dear !
That joy, deep-thrilling, stern, severe,
At which the heartstrings vibrate
high,
And wake the fountains of the eye ?
And blame ye, then, the Bruce, if
trace
Of tear is on his manly face,
When, scanty relics of the train
That hail'd at Scone his early reign,
This patriot band around him hung,
And to his knees and bosom clung ?—
Blame ye the Bruce ?—his brother
blamed,
But shared the weakness, while
ashamed,
With haughty laugh his head he
turn'd,
And dash'd away the tear he
scorn'd.³⁹¹

XXI.

'Tis morning, and the Convent bell
Long time had ceased its matin
knell,
Within thy walls, Saint Bride !

Q

An aged Sister sought the cell
 Assign'd to Lady Isabel,
 And hurriedly she cried,
 "Haste, gentle Lady, haste—there
 waits
 A noble stranger at the gates ;
 Saint Bride's poor vot'ress ne'er has
 seen
 A Knight of such a princely mien ;
 His errand, as he bade me tell,
 Is with the Lady Isabel."
 The princess rose,—for on her knee
 Low bent she told her rosary,—
 "Let him by thee his purpose teach :
 I may not give a stranger speech."—
 "Saint Bride forefend, thou royal
 Maid !"
 The portress cross'd herself, and
 said,—
 "Not to be prioress might I
 Debate his will, his suit deny."—
 "Has earthly show then, simple
 fool,
 Power o'er a sister of thy rule,
 And art thou, like the worldly train,
 Subdued by splendours light and
 vain ?"—

XXII.

"No, Lady ! in old eyes like mine,
 Gauds have no glitter, gems no
 shine ;
 Nor grace his rank attendants vain,
 One youthful page is all his train.
 It is the form, the eye, the word,
 The bearing of that stranger Lord ;
 His stature, manly, bold, and tall,
 Built like a castle's battled wall,
 Yet moulded in such just degrees,
 His giant strength seems lightsome
 ease.
 Close as the tendrils of the vine
 His locks upon his forehead twine,
 Jet-black, save where some touch of
 gray
 Has ta'en the youthful hue away.
 Weather and war their rougher
 trace
 Have left on that majestic face ;—
 But 'tis his dignity of eye !
 There, if a suppliant, would I fly,

Secure, 'mid danger, wrongs, and
 grief,
 Of sympathy, redress, relief—
 That glance, if guilty, would I dread
 More than the doom that spoke me
 dead !"—
 "Enough, enough," the princess
 cried,
 "'Tis Scotland's hope, her joy, her
 pride !
 To meaner front was ne'er assign'd,
 Such mastery o'er the common
 mind—
 Bestow'd thy high designs to aid,
 How long, O Heaven ! how long de-
 lay'd !—
 Haste, Mona, haste, to introduce
 My darling brother, royal Bruce !"

XXIII.

They met like friends who part in
 pain,
 And meet in doubtful hope again.
 But when subdued that litful swell,
 The Bruce survey'd the humble
 cell ;—
 "And this is thine, poor Isabel !—
 That pallet-couch, and naked wall,
 For room of state, and bed of pall ;
 For costly robes and jewels rare,
 A string of beads and zone of hair ;
 And for the trumpet's sprightly call
 To sport or banquet, grove or hall,
 The bell's grim voice divides thy
 care,
 'Twixt hours of penitence and
 prayer !—
 O ill for thee, my royal claim
 From the First David's sainted name !
 O woe for thee, that while he sought
 His right, thy brother feebly
 fought !"

XXIV.

"Now lay these vain regrets aside,
 And be the unshaken Bruce !" she
 cried.
 "For more I glory to have shared
 The woes thy venturous spirit dared,

When raising first thy valiant band
 In rescue of thy native land,
 Than had fair Fortune set me down
 The partner of an empire's crown.
 And grieve not that on Pleasure's
 stream

No more I drive in giddy dream,
 For Heaven the erring pilot knew,
 And from the gulf the vessel drew,
 Tried me with judgments stern and
 great,

My house's ruin, thy defeat,
 Poor Nigel's death, till, tamed, I
 own,

My hopes are fix'd on Heaven
 alone;

Nor e'er shall earthly prospects win
 My heart to this vain world of
 sin."—

XXV.

"Nay, Isabel, for such stern choice,
 First wilt thou wait thy brother's
 voice;

Then ponder if in convent scene
 No softer thoughts might inter-
 vene—

Say they were of that unknown
 Knight,

Victor in Woodstock's tourney-
 fight—

Nay, if his name such blush you
 owe,

Victorious o'er a fairer foe!"

Truly his penetrating eye
 Hath caught that blush's passing
 dye,—

Like the last beam of evening
 thrown

On a white cloud—just seen and
 gone.

Soon with calm cheek and steady
 eye,

The princess made composed
 reply:—

"I guess my brother's meaning
 well;

For not so silent is the cell,
 But we have heard the islesmen all
 Arm in thy cause at Ronald's call,

And mine eye proves that Knight
 unknown

And the Brave Island Lord are
 one—

Had then his suit been earlier made,
 In his own name, with thee to aid,
 (But that his plighted faith for-
 bade,)

I know not But thy page
 so near?—

This is no tale for menial's ear."

XXVI.

Still stood that page, as far apart
 As the small cell would space
 afford;

With dizzy eye and bursting heart,
 He leant his weight on Bruce's
 sword,

The monarch's mantle too he bore,
 And drew the fold his visage o'er.

"Fear not for him—in murderous
 strife,"

Said Bruce, "his warning saved my
 life;

Full seldom parts he from my side,
 And in his silence I confide,
 Since he can tell no tale again.

He is a boy of gentle strain,
 And I have purposed he shall dwell

In Augustin the chaplain's cell,
 And wait on thee, my Isabel.—

Mind not his tears; I've seen them
 flow,

As in the thaw dissolves the snow.
 'Tis a kind youth, but fanciful,

Unfit against the tide to pull,
 And those that with the Bruce
 would sail,

Must learn to strive with stream
 and gale.—

But forward, gentle Isabel—
 My answer for Lord Ronald tell."—

XXVII.

"This answer be to Ronald given—
 The heart he asks is fix'd on
 heaven.

My love was like a summer flower,
 That wither'd in the wintry hour,

Born but of vanity and pride,
 And with these sunny visions died.
 If further press his suit—then say,
 He should his plighted troth obey,
 Troth plighted both with ring and
 word,
 And sworn on crucifix and sword.—
 Oh, shame thee, Robert! I have
 seen
 Thou hast a woman's guardian
 been!
 Even in extremity's dread hour,
 When press'd on thee the Southern
 power,
 And safety, to all human sight,
 Was only found in rapid flight,
 Thou heard'st a wretched female
 plain
 In agony of travail-pain,
 And thou didst bid thy little band
 Upon the instant turn and stand,
 And dare the worst the foe
 might do,
 Rather than, like a knight untrue,
 Leave to pursuers merciless
 A woman in her last distress.³⁰²
 And wilt thou now deny thine aid
 To an oppress'd and injured maid,
 Even plead for Ronald's perfidy,
 And press his fickle faith on me?—
 So witness Heaven, as true I vow,
 Had I those earthly feelings now,
 Which could my former bosom move
 Ere taught to set its hopes above,
 I'd spurn each proffer he could
 bring,
 Till at my feet he laid the ring,
 The ring and spousal contract both,
 And fair acquittal of his oath,
 By her who brooks his perjured
 scorn,
 The ill-requited Maid of Lorn!"

XXVIII.

With sudden impulse forward
 sprung
 The page, and on her neck he
 hung;
 Then, recollected instantly,
 His head he stoop'd, and bent his
 knee,

Kiss'd twice the hand of Isabel,
 Arose, and sudden left the cell.—
 The princess, loosen'd from his hold,
 Blush'd angry at his bearing bold;
 But good King Robert cried,
 "Chafe not—by signs he speaks his
 mind,
 He heard the plan my care design'd,
 Nor could his transports hide.—
 But, sister, now bethink thee well;
 No easy choice the convent cell;
 Trust, I shall play no tyrant part,
 Either to force thy hand or heart,
 Or suffer that Lord Ronald scorn,
 Or wrong for thee, the Maid of
 Lorn.
 But think,—not long the time has
 been,
 That thou wert wont to sigh unseen,
 And wouldst the ditties best approve,
 That told some lay of hapless love.
 Now are thy wishes in thy power,
 And thou art bent on cloister bower!
 O! if our Edward knew the change,
 How would his busy satire range,
 With many a sarcasm varied still
 On woman's wish, and woman's
 will!"—

XXIX.

"Brother, I well believe," she said,
 "Even so would Edward's part be
 play'd.
 Kindly in heart, in word severe,
 A foe to thought, and grief, and
 fear,
 He holds his humour uncontroll'd;
 But thou art of another mould.
 Say then to Ronald, as I say,
 Unless before my feet he lay
 The ring which bound the faith he
 swore,
 By Edith freely yielded o'er,
 He moves his suit to me no more.
 Nor do I promise, even if now
 He stood absolved of spousal vow,
 That I would change my purpose
 made
 To shelter me in holy shade.—
 Brother, for little space, farewell!
 To other duties warns the bell."—

XXX.

“Lost to the world,” King Robert
said,
When he had left the royal maid,
“Lost to the world by lot severe,
O what a gem lies buried here,
Nipp’d by misfortune’s cruel frost,
The buds of fair affection lost !—
But what have I with love to do ?
Far sterner cares my lot pursue.
—Pent in this isle we may not lie,
Nor would it long our wants supply.
Right opposite, the mainland towers
Of my own Turnberry court our
powers—
—Might not my father’s beadsman
hoar,
Cuthbert, who dwells upon the shore,
Kindle a signal-flame, to show
The time propitious for the blow ?
It shall be so—some friend shall bear
Our mandate with despatch and
care ;
—Edward shall find the messenger.
That fortress ours, the island fleet
May on the coast of Carrick meet.—
O Scotland ! shall it e’er be mine
To wreak thy wrongs in battle-line,
To raise my victor-head, and see
Thy hills, thy dales, thy people
free,—
That glance of bliss is all I crave,
Betwixt my labours and my grave ! ”
Then down the hill he slowly went,
Offt pausing on the steep descent,
And reach’d the spot where his bold
train
Held rustic camp upon the plain.

CANTO FIFTH.

I.

ON fair Loch-Ranza stream’d the
early day,
Thin wreaths of cottage-smoke are
upward curl’d
From the lone hamlet, which her
inland bay
And circling mountains sever from
the world.

And there the fisherman his sail
unfurl’d,
The goat-herd drove his kids to
steep Ben-Ghoil,
Before the hut the dame her spindle
twirl’d,
Courting the sunbeam as she plied
her toil,—
For, wake where’er he may, Man
wakes to care and toil.

But other duties call’d each convent
maid,
Roused by the summons of the
moss-grown bell ;
Sung were the matins, and the
mass was said,
And every sister sought her separate
cell,
Such was the rule, her rosary to
tell.
And Isabel has knelt in lonely
prayer ;
The sunbeam, through the narrow
lattice, fell
Upon the snowy neck and long
dark hair,
As stoop’d her gentle head in meek
devotion there.

II.

She raised her eyes, that duty done,
When glanced upon the pavement-
stone,
Gemm’d and enchased, a golden
ring,
Bound to a scroll with silken
string ;
With few brief words inscribed to
tell,
“ This for the Lady Isabel.”
Within, the writing farther bore,—
“ ’Twas with this ring his plight
he swore,
With this his promise I restore ;
To her who can the heart command,
Well may I yield the plighted hand.
And O ! for better fortune born,
Grudge not a passing sigh to
mourn
Her who was Edith once of Lorn ! ”

One single flash of glad surprise
 Just glanced from Isabel's dark
 eyes,
 But vanish'd in the blush of shame,
 That, as its penance, instant came.
 "O thought unworthy of my
 race!
 Selfish, ungenerous, mean, and
 base,
 A moment's throb of joy to own,
 That rose upon her hopes o'er-
 thrown!—
 Thou pledge of vows too well
 believed,
 Of man ingrate and maid deceived,
 Think not thy lustre here shall
 gain
 Another heart to hope in vain!
 For thou shalt rest, thou tempting
 gaud,
 Where worldly thoughts are over-
 awed.
 And worldly splendours sink de-
 based."
 Then by the cross the ring she
 placed.

III.

Next rose the thought,—its owner
 far,
 How came it here through bolt
 and bar?—
 But the dim lattice is ajar.—
 She looks abroad, the morning
 dew
 A light short step had brush'd
 anew,
 And there were foot-prints seen
 On the carved buttress rising
 still,
 Till on the mossy window-sill
 Their track effaced the green.
 The ivy twigs were torn and fray'd,
 As if some climber's steps to aid.—
 But who the hardy messenger,
 Whose venturous path these signs
 infer?—
 "Strangedoubts are mine!—Mona,
 draw nigh;
 —Nought 'scapes old Mona's
 curious eye—

What strangers, gentle mother,
 say,
 Have sought these holy walls to-
 day?"—
 "None, Lady, none of note or
 name;
 Only your brother's foot-page came,
 At peep of dawn—I pray'd him
 pass
 To chapel where they said the
 mass;
 But like an arrow he shot by,
 And tears seem'd bursting from
 his eye."

IV.

The truth at once on Isabel,
 As darted by a sunbeam, fell.—
 "'Tis Edith's self!—her speech-
 less woe,
 Her form, her looks, the secret
 show!
 —Instant, good Mona, to the bay,
 And to my royal brother say,
 I do conjure him seek my cell,
 With that mute page he loves so
 well."—
 "What! know'st thou not his
 warlike host
 At break of day has left our coast?
 My old eyes saw them from the
 tower.
 At eve they couch'd in greenwood
 bower,
 At dawn a bugle signal, made
 By their bold Lord, their ranks
 array'd;
 Up sprung the spears through bush
 and tree,
 No time for benedicite!
 Like deer, that, rousing from their
 lair
 Just shake the dewdrops from their
 hair,
 And toss their armed crests aloft,
 Such matins theirs!" — "Good
 mother, soft—
 Where does my brother bend his
 way?"—
 "As I have heard, for Brodick
 Bay,

Across the isle—of barks a score
 Lie there, 'tis said, to waft them
 o'er,
 On sudden news, to Carrick-
 shore."—
 "If such their purpose, deep the
 need,"
 Said anxious Isabel, "of speed!
 Call Father Augustin, good
 dame."—
 The nun obey'd, the Father came.

V.

"Kind Father, hie without delay,
 Across the hills to Brodick Bay.
 This message to the Bruce be
 given;
 I pray him, by his hopes of Heaven,
 That, till he speak with me, he
 stay!
 Or, if his haste brook no delay,
 That he deliver, on my suit,
 Into thy charge that stripling mute.
 Thus prays his sister Isabel,
 For causes more than she may
 tell—
 Away, good father! and take heed,
 That life and death are on thy
 speed."
 His cowl the good old priest did on,
 Took his piked staff and sandall'd
 shoon,
 And, like a palmer bent by eld,
 O'er moss and moor his journey
 held.

VI.

Heavy and dull the foot of age,
 And rugged was the pilgrimage;
 But none was there beside, whose
 care
 Might such important message
 bear.
 Through birchen copse he wander'd
 slow,
 Stunted and sapless, thin and low;
 By many a mountain stream he
 pass'd,
 From the tall cliffs in tumult cast,

Dashing to foam their waters
 dun,
 And sparkling in the summer
 sun.
 Round his gray head the wild
 curlew
 In many a fearless circle flew.
 O'er chasms he pass'd, where
 fractures wide
 Craved wary eye and ample stride;³⁰³
 He cross'd his brow beside the stone
 Where Druids erst heard victims
 groan,³⁰⁴
 And at the cairns upon the wild,
 O'er many a heathen hero piled,
 He breathed a timid prayer for
 those
 Who died ere Shiloh's sun arose.
 Beside Macfarlane's Cross he staid,
 There told his hours within the
 shade,
 And at the stream his thirst allay'd.
 Thence onward journeying slowly
 still,
 As evening closed he reach'd the
 hill,
 Where, rising through the wood-
 land green,
 Old Brodick's gothic towers were
 seen,
 From Hastings, late their English
 lord,
 Douglas had won them by the
 sword.³⁰⁵
 The sun that sunk behind the isle,
 Now tinged them with a parting
 smile.

VII.

But though the beams of light
 decay,
 'Twas bustle all in Brodick Bay.
 The Bruce's followers crowd the
 shore,
 And boats and barges some unmoor,
 Some raise the sail, some seize the
 oar;
 Their eyes oft turn'd where
 glimmer'd far
 What might have seem'd an early
 star

On heaven's blue arch, save that its
 light
 Was all too flickering, fierce, and
 bright.
 Far distant in the south, the ray
 Shone pale amid retiring day,
 But as, on Carrick shore,
 Dim seen in outline faintly blue,
 The shades of evening closer
 drew,
 It kindled more and more.
 The monk's slow steps now press
 the sands,
 And now amid a scene he stands,
 Full strange to churchman's eye;
 Warriors, who, arming for the
 fight,
 Rivet and clasp their harness light,
 And twinkling spears, and axes
 bright,
 And helmets flashing high.
 Oft, too, with unaccustom'd ears,
 A language much unmeet he
 hears,³⁶
 While, hastening all on
 board,
 As stormy as the swelling surge
 That mix'd its roar, the leaders
 urge
 Their followers to the ocean
 verge,
 With many a haughty word.

VIII.

Through that wild throng the Father
 pass'd.
 And reach'd the Royal Bruce at
 last.
 He leant against a stranded boat,
 That the approaching tide must
 float,
 And counted every rippling wave,
 As higher yet her side they lave,
 And oft the distant fire he eyed,
 And closer yet his hauberk tied,
 And loosen'd in its sheath his
 brand.
 Edward and Lennox were at hand,
 Douglas and Roland had the care
 The soldiers to the barks to share.—

The Monk approach'd and homage
 paid ;
 "And art thou come," King Robert
 said,
 "So far to bless us ere we part?"—
 —"My Liege, and with a loyal
 heart!—
 But other charge I have to tell,"—
 And spoke the best of Isabel.
 —"Now by Saint Giles," the monarch
 cried,
 "This moves me much!—this morn-
 ing tide,
 I sent the stripling to Saint Bride,
 With my commandment there to
 bide."—
 —"Thither he came the portress
 show'd,
 But there, my Liege, made brief
 abode."—

IX.

"Twas I," said Edward, "found
 employ
 Of nobler import for the boy.
 Deep pondering in my anxious mind,
 A fitting messenger to find,
 To bear thy written mandate o'er
 To Cuthbert on the Carrick shore,
 I chanced, at early dawn, to pass
 The chapel gate to snatch a mass.
 I found the stripling on a tomb
 Low-seated, weeping for the doom
 That gave his youth to convent
 gloom.
 I told my purpose, and his eyes
 Flash'd joyful at the glad surprise.
 He bounded to the skiff, the sail
 Was spread before a prosperous gale,
 And well my charge he hath obey'd ;
 For, see ! the ruddy signal mad ,
 That Clifford, with his merry-men all,
 Guards carelessly our father's
 hall."—³⁷

X.

"O wild of thought, and hard of
 heart !"
 Answer'd the Monarch, "on a part
 Of such deep danger to employ
 A mute, an orphan, and a boy!—

Unfit for flight, unfit for strife,
 Without a tongue to plead for life!
 Now, were my right restored by
 Heaven,
 Edward, my crown I would have
 given,
 Ere, thrust on such adventure wild,
 I peril'd thus the helpless child."—
 —Offended half, and half submiss,
 "Brother and Liege, of blame like
 this,"

Edward replied, "I little dream'd.
 A stranger messenger, I deem'd,
 Might safest seek the beadsman's cell,
 Where all thy squires are known so
 well.

Noteless his presence, sharp his
 sense,

His imperfection his defence.
 If seen, none can his errand guess;
 If ta'en, his words no tale express—
 Methinks, too, yonder beacon's shine
 Might expiate greater fault than
 mine."—

"Rash," said King Robert, "was
 the deed—

But it is done.—Embark with
 speed!—

Good Father, say to Isabel
 How this unhappy chance befell;
 If well we thrive on yonder shore,
 Soon shall my care her page restore.
 Our greeting to our sister bear,
 And think of us in mass and
 prayer."—

XI.

"Aye!" said the Priest, "while this
 poor hand

Can chalice raise or cross command,
 While my old voice has accents' use,
 Can Augustin forget the Bruce!"

Then to his side Lord Ronald press'd,
 And whisper'd, "Bear thou this
 request,

That when by Bruce's side I fight,
 For Scotland's crown and freedom's
 right,

The princess grace her knight to
 bear

Some token of her favouring care;

It shall be shown where England's
 best

May shrink to see it on my crest.

And for the boy—since weightier
 care

For royal Bruce the times prepare,
 The helpless youth is Ronald's
 charge,

His couch my plaid, his fence my
 targe."

He ceased; for many an eager hand
 Had urged the barges from the
 strand.

Their number was a score and ten,
 They bore thrice threescore chosen
 men.

With such small force did Bruce at
 last

The die for death or empire cast!

XII.

Now on the darkening main afloat,
 Ready and mann'd rocks every boat;
 Beneath their oars the ocean's might
 Was dash'd to sparks of glimmering
 light.

* Faint and more faint, as off they
 bore,

Their armour glanced against the
 shore,

And, mingled with the dashing tide,
 Their murmuring voices distant
 died.—

"God speed them!" said the Priest,
 as dark

On distant billows glides each bark;
 "O Heaven! when swords for
 freedom shine,

And monarch's right, the cause is
 thine!

Edge doubly every patriot blow!
 Beat down the banners of the foe!
 And be it to the nations known,
 That Victory is from God alone!"

As up the hill his path he drew,
 He turn'd his blessings to renew,
 Oft turn'd, till on the darken'd coast
 All traces of their course were lost;
 Then slowly bent to Brodick tower,
 To shelter for the evening hour.

XIII.

In night the fairy prospects sink,
Where Cumray's isles with verdant
link

Close the fair entrance of the Clyde ;
The woods of Bute, no more descried,
Are gone—and on the placid sea
The rowers ply their task with glee,
While hands that knightly lances
bore

Impatient aid the labouring oar.
The half-faced moon shone dim and
pale,
And glanced against the whiten'd
sail ;

But on that ruddy beacon-light
Each steersman kept the helm aright,
And oft, for such the King's
command,

That all at once might reach the
strand,

From boat to boat loud shout and
hail

Warn'd them to crowd or slacken
sail.

South and by west the armada bore,
And near at length the Carrick shore.
As less and less the distance grows,
High and more high the beacon
rose ;

The light, that seem'd a twinkling
star,

Now blazed portentous, fierce, and
far.

Dark-red the heaven above it glow'd,
Dark-red the sea beneath it flow'd,
Red rose the rocks on ocean's brim,
In blood-red light her islets swim ;
Wild scream the dazzled sea-fowl
gave,

Dropp'd from their crags on plashing
wave.

The deer to distant covert drew,
The black-cock deem'd it day, and
crew.

Like some tall castle given to flame,
O'er half the land the lustre came.

“ Now, good my Liege, and brother
sage,

What think ye of mine elfin
page ? ”—

“ Row on ! ” the noble King replied,
“ We'll learn the truth whate'er
betide ;

Yet sure the beadsman and the child
Could ne'er have waked that beacon
wild.”

XIV.

With that the boats approach'd the
land,

But Edward's grounded on the sand ;
The eager Knight leap'd in the sea
Waist-deep, and first on shore was
he,

Though every barge's hardy band
Contended which should gain the
land,

When that strange light, which,
seen afar,

Seem'd steady as the polar star,
Now, like a prophet's fiery chair,
Seem'd travelling the realms of air.
Wide o'er the sky the splendour
glows,

As that portentous meteor rose ;
Helm, axe, and falchion glitter'd
bright,

And in the red and dusky light
His comrade's face each warrior saw,
Nor marvell'd it was pale with awe.
Then high in air the beams were
lost,

And darkness sunk upon the coast.—
Ronald to Heaven a prayer address'd,
And Douglas cross'd his dauntless
breast ;

“ Saint James protect us ! ” Lennox
cried,

But reckless Edward spoke aside,
“ Deem'st thou, Kirkpatrick, in that
flame

Red Conyn's angry spirit came,
Or would thy dauntless heart endure
Once more to make assurance
sure ? ”—

“ Hush ! ” said the Bruce, “ we soon
shall know,

If this be sorcerer's empty show,
Or stratagem of southern foe.
The moon shines out—upon the sand
Let every leader rank his band.”

XV.

Faintly the moon's pale beams supply
 That ruddy light's unnatural dye ;
 The dubious cold reflection lay
 On the wet sands and quiet bay.
 Beneath the rocks King Robert drew
 His scatter'd files to order due,
 Till shield compact and serried spear
 In the cool light shone blue and
 clear.
 Then down a path that sought the
 tide,
 That speechless page was seen to
 glide ;
 He knelt him lowly on the sand,
 And gave a scroll to Robert's hand.
 "A torch," the Monarch cried,
 "What, ho !
 Now shall we Cuthbert's tidings
 know."
 But evil news the letters bare,
 The Clifford's force was strong and
 ware,
 Augmented, too, that very morn,
 By mountaineers who came with
 Lorn.
 Long harrow'd by oppressor's hand,
 Courage and faith had fled the land,
 And over Carrick, dark and deep,
 Had sunk dejection's iron sleep.—
 Cuthbert had seen that beacon-flame,
 Unwitting from what source it came.
 Doubtful of perilous event,
 Edward's mute messenger he sent,
 If Bruce deceived should venture
 o'er,
 To warn him from the fatal shore.

XVI.

As round the torch the leaders
 crowd,
 Bruce read these chilling news
 aloud.
 "What council, nobles, have we
 now?—
 To ambush us in greenwood bough,
 And take the chance which fate may
 send
 To bring our enterprise to end,

Or shall we turn us to the main
 As exiles, and embark again?"—
 Answer'd fierce Edward, "Hap
 what may,
 In Carrick, Carrick's Lord must
 stay.
 I would not minstrels told the tale,
 Wildfire or meteor made us
 quail."—
 Answer'd the Douglas, "If my
 Liege
 May win yon walls by storm or
 siege,
 Then were each brave and patriot
 heart
 Kindled of new for loyal part."—
 Answer'd Lord Ronald, "Not for
 shame
 Would I that aged Torquil came,
 And found, for all our empty boast,
 Without a blow we fled the coast.
 I will not credit that this land,
 So famed for warlike heart and hand,
 The nurse of Wallace and of Bruce,
 Will long with tyrants hold a
 truce."—
 "Prove we our fate—the brunt we'll
 bide !"
 So Boyd and Haye and Lennox
 cried ;
 So said, so vow'd, the leaders all ;
 So Bruce resolved : "And in my
 hall
 Since the Bold Southern make their
 home,
 The hour of payment soon shall
 come,
 When with a rough and rugged host
 Clifford may reckon to his cost.
 Meantime, through well-known
 bosk and dell,
 I'll lead where we may shelter well."

XVII.

Now ask you whence that wondrous
 light,
 Whose fairy glow beguiled their
 sight?—
 It ne'er was known³⁰⁸—yet gray-hair'd
 eld
 A superstitious credence held,

That never did a mortal hand
 Wake its broad glare on Carrick
 strand ;
 Nay, and that on the self-same night
 When Bruce cross'd o'er, still gleams
 the light.
 Yearly it gleams o'er mount and
 moor,
 And glittering wave and crimson'd
 shore—

But whether beam celestial, lent
 By Heaven to aid the King's descent,
 Or fire hell-kindled from beneath,
 To lure him to defeat and death,
 Or were it but some meteor strange,
 Of such as oft through midnight
 range,
 Startling the traveller late and lone,
 I know not—and it ne'er was known.

XVIII.

Now up the rocky pass they drew,
 And Ronald, to his promise true,
 Still made his arm the stripling's
 stay

To aid him on the rugged way.
 "Now cheer thee, simple Amadine!
 Why throbs that silly heart of
 thine?"—

—That name the pirates to their
 slave
 (In Gaelic 'tis the Changeling)
 gave—

"Dost thou not rest thee on my
 arm?

Do not my plaid-folds hold thee
 warm?

Hath not the wild bull's treble
 hide

This targe for thee and me supplied?
 Is not Clan-Colla's sword of steel?
 And, trembler, canst thou terror feel?
 Cheer thee, and still that throbbing
 heart;

From Ronald's guard thou shalt not
 part."

—O! many a shaft, at random sent,
 Finds mark the archer little meant!
 And many a word, at random spoken,
 May soothe or wound a heart that's
 broken!

Half soothed, half grieved, half
 terrified,
 Close drew the page to Ronald's side;
 A wild delirious thrill of joy
 Was in that hour of agony,
 As up the steepy pass he strove,
 Fear, toil, and sorrow, lost in love!

XIX.

The barrier of that iron shore,
 The rock's steep ledge, is now climb'd
 o'er;

And from the castle's distant wall,
 From tower to tower the warders
 call:

The sound swings over land and
 sea,

And marks a watchful enemy.—
 They gain'd the Chase, a wide
 domain

Left for the Castle's sylvan reign,³⁹⁹
 (Seek not the scene—the axe, the
 plough,

The boor's dull fence, have marr'd it
 now),

But then, soft swept in velvet green
 The plain with many a glade
 between,

Whose tangled alleys far invade
 The depth of the brown forest shade.
 Here the tall fern obscured the lawn,
 Fair shelter for the sportive fawn;
 There, tufted close with copsewood
 green,

Was many a swelling hillock seen;
 And all around was verdure meet
 For pressure of the fairies' feet.

The glossy holly loved the park,
 The yew-tree lent its shadow dark,
 And many an old oak, worn and
 bare,

With all its shiver'd boughs, was
 there.

Lovely between, the moonbeams fell
 On lawn and hillock, glade and dell.
 The gallant Monarch sigh'd to see
 These glades so loved in childhood
 free.

Bethinking that, as outlaw now,
 He ranged beneath the forest bough.

XX.

Fast o'er the moonlight Chase they
 sped.
 Well knew the band that measured
 tread,
 When, in retreat or in advance,
 The serried warriors move at once ;
 And evil were the luck, if dawn
 Descried them on the open lawn.
 Copses they traverse, brooks they
 cross,
 Strain up the bank and o'er the
 moss.
 From the exhausted page's brow
 Cold drops of toil are streaming
 now ;
 With effort faint and lengthen'd
 pause,
 His weary step the stripling draws.
 "Nay, droop not yet !" the warrior
 said ;
 "Come, let me give thee ease and
 aid !
 Strong are mine arms, and little care
 A weight so slight as thine to
 bear.—
 What ! wilt thou not?—capricious
 boy !
 Then thine own limbs and strength
 employ.
 Pass but this night, and pass thy
 care,
 I'll place thee with a lady fair,
 Where thou shalt tune thy lute to
 tell
 How Ronald loves fair Isabel !"
 Worn out, dishearten'd, and dis-
 may'd,
 Here Amadine let go the plaid ;
 His trembling limbs their aid refuse,
 He sunk among the midnight dews !

XXI.

What may be done?—the night is
 gone—
 The Bruce's band moves swiftly
 on—
 Eternal shame, if at the brunt
 Lord Ronald grace not battle's
 front !—

"See yonder oak, within whose trunk
 Decay a darken'd cell hath sunk ;
 Enter, and rest thee there a space,
 Wrap in my plaid thy limbs, thy
 face.
 I will not be, believe me, far ;
 But must not quit the ranks of
 war.
 Well will I mark the bosky bourne,
 And soon, to guard thee hence,
 return.—
 Nay, weep not so, thou simple boy !
 But sleep in peace, and wake in
 joy."
 In sylvan lodging close bestow'd,
 He placed the page, and onward
 strode
 With strength put forth, o'er moss
 and brook,
 And soon the marching band o'er-
 took.

XXII.

Thus strangely left, long sobb'd and
 wept
 The page, till, wearied out, he
 slept—
 A rough voice waked his dream—
 "Nay, here,
 Here by this thicket, pass'd the
 deer—
 Beneath that oak old Ryno staid—
 What have we here?—a Scottish
 plaid,
 And in its folds a stripling laid?—
 Come forth ! thy name and business
 tell !—
 What, silent?—then I guess thee
 well,
 The spy that sought old Cuthbert's
 cell,
 Wafted from Arran yester morn—
 Come, comrades, we will straight
 return.
 Our Lord may choose the rack should
 teach
 To this young lurcher use of speech.
 Thy bow-string, till I bind him
 fast."—
 "Nay, but he weeps and stands
 aghast ;

Unbound we'll lead him, fear it
not ;
"Tis a fair stripling, though a Scot."
The hunters to the castle sped,
And there the hapless captive led.

XXIII.

Stout Clifford in the castle-court
Prepared him for the morning
sport ;
And now with Lorn held deep dis-
course,
Now gave command for hound and
horse.
War-steeds and palfreys paw'd the
ground,
And many a deer-dog howl'd around.
To Amadine, Lorn's well-known
word
Replying to that Southern Lord,
Mix'd with this clanging din, might
seem
The phantasm of a fever'd dream.
The tone upon his ringing ears
Came like the sounds which fancy
hears,
When in rude waves or roaring
winds
Some words of woe the musér finds,
Until more loudly and more near,
Their speech arrests the page's ear.

XXIV.

"And was she thus," said Clifford,
"lost ?
The priest should rue it to his cost !
What says the monk ?"—"The holy
Sire
Owns, that in masquer's quaint attire
She sought his skill, disguised, un-
known
To all except to him alone.
But, says the priest, a bark from
Lorn
Laid them aboard that very morn,
And pirates seized her for their
prey.
He proffer'd ransom-gold to pay,

And they agreed—but ere told o'er,
The winds blow loud, the billows
roar ;
They sever'd, and they met no more.
He deems—such tempest vex'd the
coast—

Ship, crew, and fugitive, were lost.
So let it be, with the disgrace
And scandal of her lofty race !
Thrice better she had ne'er been born,
Than brought her infamy on Lorn !'

XXV.

Lord Clifford now the captive
spied ;—
"Whom, Herbert, hast thou there ?"
he cried.
"A spy we seized within the Chase,
A hollow oak his lurking place."—
"What tidings can the youth
afford ?"—
"He plays the mute."— "Then
noose a cord—
Unless brave Lorn reverse the doom
For his plaid's sake."— "Clan-
Colla's loom,"
Said Lorn, whose careless glances
trace
Rather the vesture than the face,
"Clan-Colla's dames such tartans
twine ;
Wearer nor plaid claims care of
mine.
Give him, if my advice you crave,
His own scathed oak ; and let him
wave
In air, unless, by terror wrung,
A frank confession find his tongue.—
Nor shall he die without his rite ;
—Thou, Angus Roy, attend the
sight,
And give Clan-Colla's dirge thy
breath,
As they convey him to his death."—
"O brother ! cruel to the last !"
Through the poor captive's bosom
pass'd
The thought, but, to his purpose true,
He said not, though he sigh'd,
"Adieu !"

XXVI.

And will he keep his purpose still,
In sight of that last closing ill,
When one poor breath, one single
word,

May freedom, safety, life, afford?
Can he resist the instinctive call,
For life that bids us barter all?—
Love, strong as death, his heart hath
steel'd,

His nerves hath strung—he will not
yield!

Since that poor breath, that little
word,

May yield Lord Ronald to the
sword.—

Clan-Colla's dirge is pealing wide,
The griesly headsmen's by his side;
Along the greenwood Chase they
bend,

And now their march has ghastly
end!

That old and shatter'd oak beneath,
They destine for the place of death.

—What thoughts are his, while all
in vain

His eye for aid explores the plain?
What thoughts, while, with a dizzy
ear,

He hears the death-prayer mutter'd
near?

And must he die such death accurst,
Or will that bosom-secret burst?

Cold on his brow breaks terror's dew,
His trembling lips are livid blue;
The agony of parting life

Has nought to match that moment's
strife!

XXVII.

But other witnesses are nigh,
Who mock at fear, and death defy!
Soon as the dire lament was play'd,
It waked the lurking ambuscade.

The Island Lord look'd forth, and
spied

The cause, and loud in fury cried,
"By Heaven, they lead the page to
die,

And mock me in his agony!
They shall abye it!"—On his arm

Bruce laid strong grasp, "They
shall not harm

A ringlet of the stripling's hair;
But, till I give the word, forbear.

—Douglas, lead fifty of our force
Up yonder hollow water-course,
And couch thee midway on the wold,
Between the flyers and their hold:
A spear above the copse display'd,
Be signal of the ambush made.

—Edward, with forty spearmen,
straight

Through yonder copse approach the
gate

And, when thou hear'st the battle-din,
Rush forward, and the passage win,
Secure the drawbridge—storm the
port,

And man and guard the castle-
court.—

The rest move slowly forth with me,
In shelter of the forest-tree,
Till Douglas at his post I see."

XXVIII.

Like war-horse eager to rush on,
Compell'd to wait the signal blown,
Hid, and scarce hid, by greenwood
bough,

Trembling with rage, stands Ronald
now,

And in his grasp his sword gleams
blue,

Soon to be dyed with deadlier hue.—
Meanwhile the Bruce, with steady
eye,

Sees the dark death-train moving by,
And, heedful, measures oft the space
The Douglas and his band must
trace,

Ere they can reach their destined
ground.

Now sinks the dirge's wailing sound,
Now cluster round the direful tree
That slow and solemn company,
While hymn mistuned and mutter'd
prayer

The victim for his fate prepare.—

What glances o'er the greenwood
shade?

The spear that marks the ambuscade:

“Now, noble Chief! I leave thee
loose;
Upon them, Ronald!” said the
Bruce.

XXIX.

“The Bruce, the Bruce!” to well-
known cry
His native rocks and woods reply.
“The Bruce, the Bruce!” in that
dread word
The knell of hundred deaths was
heard.
The astonish’d Southern gazed at
first,
Where the wild tempest was to burst,
That waked in that presaging name.
Before, behind, around it came!
Half-arm’d, surprised, on every side
Hemm’d in, hew’d down, they bled
and died.
Deep in the ring the Bruce engaged,
And fierce Clan-Colla’s broadsword
raged!
Full soon the few who fought were
sped,
Nor better was their lot who fled,
And met, ’mid terror’s wild career,
The Douglas’s redoubted spear!
Two hundred yeomen on that morn
The castle left, and none return.

XXX.

Not on their flight press’d Ronald’s
brand,
A gentler duty claim’d his hand.
He raised the page, where on the
plain
His fear had sunk him with the
slain:
And twice, that morn, surprise well
near
Betray’d the secret kept by fear;
Once, when, with life returning,
came
To the boy’s lip Lord Ronald’s
name,
And hardly recollection drown’d
The accents in a murmuring sound;

And once, when scarce he could
resist
The Chieftain’s care to loose the
vest,
Drawn tightly o’er his labouring
breast.
But then the Bruce’s bugle blew,
For martial work was yet to do.

XXXI.

A harder task fierce Edward waits.
Ere signal given, the castle gates
His fury had assail’d;
Such was his wonted reckless mood,
Yet desperate valour oft made good,
Even by its daring, venture rude,
Where prudence might have fail’d.
Upon the bridge his strength he
threw,
And struck the iron chain in two,
By which its planks arose;
The warder next his axe’s edge
Struck down upon the thresholdledge,
’Twixt door and post a ghastly
wedge!
The gate they may not close.
Well fought the Southern in the fray,
Clifford and Lorn fought well that
day,
But stubborn Edward forced his way
Against a hundred foes.
Loud came the cry, “The Bruce,
the Bruce!”
No hope or in defence or truce,
Fresh combatants pour in;
Mad with success, and drunk with
gore,
They drive the struggling foe before,
And ward on ward they win.
Unsparing was the vengeful sword,
And limbs were lopp’d and life-blood
pour’d,
The cry of death and conflict roar’d,
And fearful was the din!
The startling horses plunged and
flung,
Clamour’d the dogs till turrets rung,
Nor sunk the fearful cry,
Till not a foeman was there found
Alive, save those who on the ground
Groan’d in their agony!

XXXII.

The valiant Clifford is no more ;
 On Ronald's broadsword stream'd
 his gore.
 But better hap had he of Lorn,
 Who, by the foemen backward
 borne,
 Yet gain'd with slender train the
 port,
 Where lay his bark beneath the
 fort,
 And cut the cable loose.
 Short were his shrift in that debate,
 That hour of fury and of fate,
 If Lorn encounter'd Bruce !
 Then long and loud the victor
 shout
 From turret and from tower rung
 out,
 The rugged vaults replied ;
 And from the donjon tower on
 high,
 The men of Carrick may descry
 Saint Andrew's cross, in blazonry
 Of silver, waving wide !

XXXIII.

The Bruce hath won his father's
 hall !⁴⁰⁰
 —“ Welcome, brave friends and
 comrades all,
 Welcome to mirth and joy !
 The first, the last, is welcome
 here,
 From lord and chieftain, prince and
 peer,
 To this poor speechless boy.
 Great God ! once more my sire's
 abode
 Is mine—behold the floor I trode
 In tottering infancy !
 And there the vaulted arch, whose
 sound
 Echoed my joyous shout and bound
 In boyhood, and that rung around
 To youth's unthinking glee !
 O first, to thee, all-gracious Heaven,
 Then to my friends, my thanks be
 given ! ”—

He paused a space, his brow he
 cross'd—
 Then on the board his sword he
 toss'd,
 Yet steaming hot ; with Southern
 gore
 From hilt to point 'twas crimson'd
 o'er.

XXXIV.

“ Bring here,” he said, “ the mazers
 four,
 My noble fathers loved of yore.⁴⁰¹
 Thrice let them circle round the
 board,
 The pledge, fair Scotland's rights
 restored !
 And he whose lip shall touch the
 wine,
 Without a vow as true as mine,
 To hold both lands and life at
 nought,
 Until her freedom shall be bought,—
 Be brand of a disloyal Scot,
 And lasting infamy his lot !
 Sit, gentle friends ! our hour of
 glee
 Is brief, we'll spend it joyously !
 Blithest of all the sun's bright
 beams,
 When betwixt storm and storm he
 gleams.
 Well is our country's work begun,
 But more, far more, must yet be
 done.
 Speed messengers the country
 through ;
 Arouse old friends, and gather
 new ;⁴⁰²
 Warn Lanark's knights to gird their
 mail,
 Rouse the brave sons of Teviotdale,
 Let Ettrick's archers sharp their
 darts,
 The fairest forms, the truest hearts !
 Call all, call all ! from Reedswair-
 Path,
 To the wild confines of Cape-Wrath ;
 Wide let the news through Scotland
 ring,
 The Northern Eagle claps his wing ! ”

CANTO SIXTH.

I.

O WHO, that shared them, ever
shall forget
The emotions of the spirit-rousing
time,
When breathless in the mart the
couriers met,
Early and late, at evening and at
prime ;
When the loud cannon and the
merry chime
Hail'd news on news, as field on
field was won,
When Hope, long doubtful, soar'd
at length sublime,
And our glad eyes, awake as day
begun,
Watch'd Joy's broad banner rise, to
meet the rising sun !

O these were hours, when thrilling
joy repaid
A long, long course of darkness,
doubts, and fears !
The heart-sick faintness of the
hope delay'd,
The waste, the woe, the bloodshed,
and the tears
That track'd with terror twenty
rolling years,
All was forgot in that blithe
jubilee !
Her downcast eye even pale
Affliction rears,
To sigh a thankful prayer, amid
the glee,
That hail'd the Despot's fall, and
peace and liberty !

Such news o'er Scotland's hills
triumphant rode,
When 'gainst the invaders turn'd
the battle's scale,
When Bruce's banner had victori-
ous flow'd
O'er Loudoun's mountain, and in
Ury's vale ;⁴⁰³
When English blood oft deluged
Douglas-dale,⁴⁰⁴

And fiery Edward routed stout St.
John,⁴⁰⁵
When Randolph's war-cry swell'd
the southern gale⁴⁰⁶
And many a fortress, town, and
tower, was won,
And Fame still sounded forth fresh
deeds of glory done.

II.

Blithe tidings flew from baron's
tower,
To peasant's cot, to forest-bower,
And waked the solitary cell,
Where lone Saint Bride's recluses
dwell.
Princess no more, fair Isabel,
A vot'ress of the order now,
Say, did the rule that bid thee
wear
Dim veil and woollen scapulaire,
And reft thy locks of dark-brown
hair,
That stern and rigid vow,
Did it condemn the transport high,
Which gladden'd in thy watery eye,
When minstrel or when palmer
told
Each fresh exploit of Bruce the
bold ?—
And whose the lovely form, that
shares
Thy anxious hopes, thy fears, thy
prayers ?
No sister she of convent shade ;
So say these locks in lengthen'd
braid,
So say the blushes and the sighs,
The tremors that unbidden rise,
When, mingled with the Bruce's
fame,
The brave Lord Ronald's praises
came.

III.

Believe, his father's castle won,
And his bold enterprise begun,
That Bruce's earliest cares restore
The speechless page to Arran's
shore :

Nor think that long the quaint
disguise
Conceal'd her from a sister's
eyes ;
And sister-like in love they dwell
In that lone convent's silent cell.
There Bruce's slow assent allows
Fair Isabel the veil and vows ;
And there, her sex's dress regain'd,
The lovely Maid of Lorn remain'd,
Unnamed, unknown, while Scotland
far
Resounded with the din of war ;
And many a month, and many a
day,
In calm seclusion wore away.

IV.

These days, these months, to years
had worn,
When tidings of high weight were
borne
To that lone island's shore ;
Of all the Scottish conquests made
By the First Edward's ruthless
blade,
His son retain'd no more,
Northward of Tweed, but Stirling's
towers,
Beleaguer'd by King Robert's
powers ;
And they took term of truce,⁴⁰⁷
If England's King should not
relieve
The siege ere John the Baptist's
eve,
To yield them to the Bruce.
England was roused — on every
side
Courier and post and herald hied,
To summon prince and peer,
At Berwick-bounds to meet their
Liege,⁴⁰⁸
Prepared to raise fair Stirling's
siege,
With buckler, brand, and spear.
The term was nigh—they muster'd
fast,
By beacon and by bugle-blast
Forth marshall'd for the field ;

There rode each knight of noble
name,
There England's hardy archers
came,
The land they trode seem'd all on
flame,
With banner, blade, and shield !
And not famed England's powers
alone,
Renown'd in arms, the summons
own ;
For Neustria's knights obey'd,
Gasconne hath lent her horsemen
good,
And Cambria, but of late subdued,
Sent forth her mountain - multi-
tude,⁴⁰⁹
And Connoght pour'd from waste
and wood
Her hundred tribes, whose sceptre
rude
Dark Eth O'Connor sway'd.⁴¹⁰

V.

Right to devoted Caledon
The storm of war rolls slowly on,
With menace deep and dread ;
So the dark clouds, with gathering
power,
Suspend awhile the threaten'd
shower,
Till every peak and summit lower
Round the pale pilgrim's head.
Not with such pilgrim's startled eye
King Robert mark'd the tempest
nigh !
Resolved the brunt to bide,
His royal summons warn'd the land,
That all who own'd their King's
command
Should instant take the spear and
brand,
To combat at his side.
O who may tell the sons of fame,
That at King Robert's bidding came,
To battle for the right !
From Cheviot to the shores of Ross,
From Solway-Sands to Marshal's-
Moss,
All boun'd them for the fight.

Such news the royal courier tells,
 Who came to rouse dark Arran's
 dells ;
 But farther tidings must the ear
 Of Isabel in secret hear.
 These in her cloister walk, next morn,
 Thus shared she with the Maid of
 Lorn.

VI.

" My Edith, can I tell how dear
 Our intercourse of hearts sincere
 Hath been to Isabel ?—
 Judge then the sorrow of my heart,
 When I must say the words, We part !
 The cheerless convent-cell
 Was not, sweet maiden, made for
 thee ;
 Go thou where thy vocation free
 On happier fortunes fell.
 Nor, Edith, judge thyself betray'd
 Though Robert knows that Lorn's
 high Maid
 And his poor silent page were one.
 Versed in the fickle heart of man,
 Earnest and anxious hath he look'd
 How Ronald's heart the message
 brook'd
 That gave him, with her last farewell,
 The charge of Sister Isabel,
 To think upon thy better right,
 And keep the faith his promise plight.
 Forgive him for thy sister's sake,
 At first if vain repinings wake—
 Long since that mood is gone :
 Now dwells he on thy juster claims,
 And oft his breach of faith he blames—
 Forgive him for thine own !"—

VII.

" No ! never to Lord Ronald's bower
 Will I again as paramour"—
 " Nay, hush thee, too impatient maid,
 Until my final tale be said !—
 The good King Robert would engage
 Edith once more his elfin page,
 By her own heart, and her own eye,
 Her lover's penitence to try—
 Safe in his royal charge and free,
 Should such thy final purpose be,

Again unknown to seek the cell,
 And live and die with Isabel."
 Thus spoke the maid—King Robert's
 eye
 Might have some glance of policy ;
 Dunstaffnage had the monarch ta'en,
 And Lorn had own'd King Robert's
 reign ;
 Her brother had to England fled,
 And there in banishment was dead ;
 Ample, through exile, death, and
 flight,
 O'er tower and land was Edith's
 right :
 This ample right o'er tower and land
 Were safe in Ronald's faithful hand.

VIII.

Embarrass'd eye and blushing cheek
 Pleasure and shame, and fear be-
 speak !
 Yet much the reasoning Edith made :
 " Her sister's faith she must upbraid,
 Who gave such secret, dark and dear,
 In council to another's ear.
 Why should she leave the peaceful
 cell ?—
 How should she part with Isabel ?—
 How wear that strange attire agen ?—
 How risk herself 'midst martial
 men ?—
 And how be guarded on the way ?—
 At least she might entreat delay."
 Kind Isabel, with secret smile,
 Saw and forgave the maiden's wile,
 Reluctant to be thought to move
 At the first call of truant love.

IX.

Oh, blame her not !—when zephyrs
 wake,
 The aspen's trembling leaves must
 shake ;
 When beams the sun through April's
 shower,
 It needs must bloom, the violet
 flower ;
 And Love, howe'er the maiden strive,
 Must with reviving hope revive !

A thousand soft excuses came,
To plead his cause 'gainst virgin
shame.

Pledged by their sires in earliest
youth,

He had her plighted faith and truth—
Then, 'twas her Liege's strict com-
mand,

And she, beneath his royal hand,
A ward in person and in land :—

And, last, she was resolved to stay

Only brief space—one little day—

Close hidden in her safe disguise
From all, but most from Ronald's
eyes—

But once to see him more!—nor
blame

Her wish—to hear him name her
name!—

Then, to bear back to solitude
The thought he had his falsehood
rued!

But Isabel, who long had seen
Her pallid cheek and pensive mien,
And well herself the cause might
know,

Though innocent, of Edith's woe,
Joy'd, generous, that revolving time
Gave means to expiate the crime.

High glow'd her bosom as she said,
"Well shall her sufferings be re-
paid!"

Now came the parting hour—a band
From Arran's mountains left the
land;

Their chief, Fitz-Louis,⁴¹¹ had the care
To speechless Amadine to bear
To Bruce, with honour, as behoved
To page the monarch dearly loved.

X.

The King had deem'd the maiden
bright

Should reach him long before the
fight,

But storms and fate her course delay :

It was on eve of battle-day,
When o'er the Gillie's-hill she rode.

The landscape like a furnace glow'd,
And far as e'er the eye was borne,
The lances waved like autumn-corn.

In battles four beneath their eye,
The forces of King Robert lie.⁴¹²
And one below the hill was laid,
Reserved for rescue and for aid ;
And three, advanced, form'd vaward-
line,

'Twi'x Bannock's brook and Ninian's
shrine.

Detach'd was each, yet each so nigh
As well might mutual aid supply.

Beyond, the Southern host appears,

A boundless wilderness of spears,

Whose verge or rear the anxious eye

Strove far, but strove in vain, to spy.⁴¹³

Thick flashing in the evening beam,

Glaives, lances, bills, and banners
gleam ;

And where the heaven join'd with the
hill,

Was distant armour flashing still,
So wide, so far, the boundless host
Seem'd in the blue horizon lost.

XI.

Down from the hill the maiden pass'd,
At the wild show of war aghast ;

And traversed first the rearward
host,

Reserved for aid where needed most.
The men of Carrick and of Ayr,

Lennox and Lanark, too, were there,
And all the western land ;

With these the valiant of the Isles
Beneath their chieftains rank'd their
files,⁴¹⁴

In many a plaided band.
There, in the centre, proudly raised,

The Bruce's royal standard blazed,

And there Lord Ronald's banner bore
A galley driven by sail and oar.

A wild, yet pleasing contrast, made
Warriors in mail and plate array'd,

With the plumed bonnet and the
plaid

By these Hebrideans worn ;

But O ! unseen for three long years,
Dear was the garb of mountaineers

To the fair Maid of Lorn !
For one she look'd—but he was far
Busied amid the ranks of war—

Yet with affection's troubled eye
 She mark'd his banner boldly fly,
 Gave on the countless foe a glance,
 And thought on battle's desperate
 chance.

XII.

To centre of the vaward-line
 Fitz-Louis guided Amadine.
 Arm'd all on foot, that host appears
 A serried mass of glimmering spears.
 There stood the Marchers' warlike
 band,

The warriors there of Lodon's land ;
 Ettrick and Liddell bent the yew,
 A band of archers fierce, though few ;
 The men of Nith and Annan's vale,
 And the bold spears of Teviotdale ;—
 The dauntless Douglas these obey,
 And the young Stuart's gentle sway,
 North-eastward by Saint Ninian's
 shrine,

Beneath fierce Randolph's charge,
 combine

The warriors whom the hardy North,
 From Tay to Sutherland sent forth.

The rest of Scotland's war-array
 With Edward Bruce to westward lay,
 Where Bannock, with his broken
 bank

And deep ravine, protects their flank,
 Behind them, screen'd by sheltering
 wood,

The gallant Keith, Lord Marshal,
 stood :

His men-at-arms bear mace and
 lance,

And plumes that wave, and helms that
 glance.

Thus fair divided by the King,
 Centre, and right, and left-ward
 wing,

Composed his front ; nor distant far
 Was strong reserve to aid the war.

And 'twas to front of this array,
 Her guide and Edith made their way.

XIII.

Here must they pause ; for, in advance
 As far as one might pitch a lance,
 The Monarch rode along the van,¹¹⁵
 The foe's approaching force to scan,

His line to marshal and to range,
 And ranks to square, and fronts to
 change.

Alone he rode—from head to heel
 Sheathed in his ready arms of steel ;
 Nor mounted yet on war-horse wight,
 But, till more near the shock of fight,
 Reining a palfrey low and light.

A diadem of gold was set
 Above his bright steel basinet,
 And clasp'd within its glittering twine
 Was seen the glove of Argentine ;

Truncheon or leading staff he lacks,
 Bearing, instead, a battle-axe.

He ranged his soldiers for the fight,
 Accoutred thus, in open sight

Of either host.—Three bowshots
 far,

Paused the deep front of England's
 war,

And rested on their arms awhile,
 To close and rank their warlike file,

And hold high council, if that night
 Should view the strife, or dawning
 light.

XIV.

O gay, yet tearful to behold,
 Flashing with steel and rough with
 gold,

And bristled o'er with bills and
 spears,

With plumes and pennons waving
 fair,

Was that bright battle-front ! for
 there

Rode England's King and peers :
 And who, that saw that monarch ride,
 His kingdom battled by his side,
 Could then his direful doom fore-
 tell !—

Fair was his seat in knightly selle,
 And in his sprightly eye was set
 Some spark of the Plantagenet.

Though light and wandering was
 his glance,

It flash'd at sight of shield and lance.
 "Know'st thou," he said, "De

Argentine,

Yon knight who marshals thus their
 line ?"

"The tokens on his helmet tell
The Bruce, my Liege: I know him
well."—

"And shall the audacious traitor
brave

The presence where our banners
wave?"—

"So please my Liege," said Argen-
tine,

"Were he but horsed on steed like
mine,

To give him fair and knightly chance,
I would adventure forth my lance."—

"In battle-day," the King replied,

"Nice tourney rules are set aside.

—Still must the rebel dare our wrath?
Set on him—sweep him from our
path!"

And, at King Edward's signal, soon
Dash'd from the ranks Sir Henry
Boune.

XV.

Of Hereford's high blood he came,
A race renown'd for knightly fame.
He burn'd before his Monarch's eye
To do some deed of chivalry.

He spurr'd his steed, he couch'd his
lance,

And darted on the Bruce at once.

—As motionless as rocks, that bide
The wrath of the advancing tide,
The Bruce stood fast.—Each breast
beat high,

And dazzled was each gazing eye—
The heart had hardly time to think,
The eyelid scarce had time to wink,
While on the King, like flash of
flame,

Spurr'd to full speed the war-horse
came!

The partridge may the falcon mock,
If that slight palfrey stand the
shock—

But, swerving from the Knight's
career,

Just as they met, Bruce shunn'd the
spear.

Onward the baffled warrior bore
His course—but soon his course was
o'er!—

High in his stirrups stood the King,
And gave his battle-axe the swing.
Right on De Boune, the whiles he
pass'd,

Fell that stern dint—the first—the
last!—

Such strength upon the blow was put,
The helmet crash'd like hazel-nut;
The axe-shaft, with its brazen clasp,
Was shiver'd to the gauntlet grasp,
Springs from the blow the startled
horse,

Drops to the plain the lifeless corse;
—First of that fatal field, how soon,
How sudden, fell the fierce De Boune!

XVI.

One pitying glance the Monarch sped,
Where on the field his foe lay dead;
Then gently turn'd his palfrey's head,
And, pacing back his sober way,
Slowly he gain'd his own array.

There round their King the leaders
crowd,

And blame his recklessness aloud,
That risk'd 'gainst each adventurous
spear,

A life so valued and so dear.

His broken weapon's shaft survey'd
The King, and careless answer
made,—

"My loss may pay my folly's tax;
I've broke my trusty battle-axe."

'Twas then Fitz-Louis, bending low,
Did Isabel's commission show;
Edith, disguised at distance stands,
And hides her blushes with her
hands.

The Monarch's brow has changed its
hue,

Away the gory axe he threw,
While to the seeming page he drew,
Clearing war's terrors from his
eye,

Her hand with gentle ease he took,
With such a kind protecting look,
As to a weak and timid boy
Might speak, that elder brother's
care

And elder brother's love were there.

XVII.

"Fear not," he said, "young Amadine!"

Then whisper'd, "Still that name be thine.

Fate plays her wonted fantasy,
Kind Amadine, with thee and me,
And sends thee here in doubtful hour.
But soon we are beyond her power;
For on this chosen battle-plain,
Victor or vanquish'd, I remain.

Do thou to yonder hill repair;
The followers of our host are there,
And all who may not weapons
bear.—

Fitz-Louis, have him in thy care.—

Joyful we meet, if all go well;

If not, in Arran's holy cell

Thou must take part with Isabel;

For brave Lord Ronald, too, hath
sworn,

Not to regain the Maid of Lorn,

(The bliss on earth he covets most,)

Would he forsake his battle-post,

Or shun the fortune that may fall

To Bruce, to Scotland, and to all.—

But, hark! some news these trumpets
tell;

Forgive my haste—farewell!—fare-
well!"—

And in a lower voice he said,

"Be of good cheer—farewell, sweet
maid!"—

XVIII.

"What train of dust, with trumpet-
sound

And glimmering spears, is wheeling
round

Our leftward flank?"⁴¹⁶—the Mon-
arch cried,

To Moray's Earl who rode beside.

"Lo! round thy station pass the foes!
Randolph, thy wreath has lost a
rose."

The Earl his visor closed, and said,
"My wreath shall bloom, or life
shall fade.—

Follow, my household!"—And they
go

Like lightning on the advancing foe.

"My Liege," said noble Douglas
then,

"Earl Randolph has but one to ten:
Let me go forth his band to aid!"

—"Stir not. The error he hath
made,

Let him amend it as he may;
I will not weaken mine array."

Then loudly rose the conflict cry,
And Douglas's brave heart swell'd
high,—

"My Liege," he said, "with patient
ear

I must not Moray's death-knell
hear!"—

"Then go—but speed thee back
again."—

Forth sprung the Douglas with his
train:

But, when they won a rising hill,
He bade his followers hold them
still.—

"See, see! the routed Southern fly!
The Earl hath won the victory.

Lo! where yon steeds run masterless,
His banner towers above the press.

Rein up; our presence would impair
The fame we come too late to share."

Back to the host the Douglas rode,
And soon glad tidings are abroad,

That, Dayncourt by stout Randolph
slain,

His followers fled with loosen'd
rein.—

That skirmish closed the busy day,
And couch'd in battle's prompt array,
Each army on their weapons lay.

XIX.

It was a night of lovely June,
High rode in cloudless blue the moon,

Demayet smiled beneath her ray;
Old Stirling's towers arose in light,

And, twined in links of silver bright,
Her winding river lay.

Ah, gentle planet! other sight
Shall greet thee next returning night,

Of broken arms and banners tore,
And marshes dark with human

gore,

And piles of slaughter'd men and
horse,
And Forth that floats their frequent
corse,
And many a wounded wretch to plain
Beneath thy silver light in vain!
But now, from England's host, the
cry
Thou hear'st of wassail revelry,
While from the Scottish legions pass
The murmur'd prayer, the early
mass!—
Here, numbers had presumption
given;
There, bands o'er-match'd sought
aid from Heaven.

XX.

On Gillie's-hill, whose height com-
mands
The battle-field, fair Edith stands,
With serf and page unfit for war,
To eye the conflict from afar.
O! with what doubtful agony
She sees the dawning tint the sky!—
Now on the Ochils gleams the sun,
And glistens now Demayet dun;
Is it the lark that carols shrill,
Is it the bittern's early hum?
No!—distant, but increasing still,
The trumpet's sound swells up the
hill,
With the deep murmur of the
drum.
Responsive from the Scottish host,
Pipe-clang and bugle sound were
toss'd,⁴¹⁷
His breast and brow each soldier
cross'd,
And started from the ground;
Arm'd and array'd for instant fight,
Rose archer, spearman, squire and
knight,
And in the pomp of battle bright
The dread battalia frown'd.

XXI.

Now onward, and in open view,
The countless ranks of England
drew,⁴¹⁸

Dark rolling like the ocean-tide,
When the rough west hath chafed
his pride,
And his deep roar sends challenge
wide
To all that bars his way!
In front the gallant archers trode,
The men-at-arms behind them rode,
And midst of the phalanx broad
The Monarch held his sway.
Beside him many a war-horse fumes,
Around him waves a sea of plumes,
Where many a knight in battle
known,
And some who spurs had first braced
on,
And deem'd that fight should see
them won,

King Edward's hests obey.
De Argentine attends his side,
With stout De Valence, Pembroke's
pride,
Selected champions from the train,
To wait upon his bridle-rein.
Upon the Scottish foe he gazed—
—At once, before his sight amazed,
Sunk banner, spear, and shield;
Each weapon-point is downward sent,
Each warrior to the ground is bent.
"The rebels, Argentine, repent!
For pardon they have kneel'd."—
"Aye!—but they bend to other
powers,
And other pardon sue than ours!
See where yon bare-foot Abbot stands,
And blesses them with lifted hands!⁴¹⁹
Upon the spot where they have
kneel'd,
These men will die, or win the
field."—
—"Then prove we if they die or
win!
Bid Gloster's Earl the fight begin."

XXII.

Earl Gilbert waved his truncheon
high,
Just as the Northern ranks arose,
Signal for England's archery
To halt and bend their bows.

Then stepp'd each yeoman forth a
 pace,
 Glanced at the intervening space,
 And raised his left hand high ;
 To the right ear the cords they
 bring—
 —At once ten thousand bow-strings
 ring,
 Ten thousand arrows fly !
 Nor paused on the devoted Scot
 The ceaseless fury of their shot ;
 As fiercely and as fast,
 Forth whistling came the gray-goose
 wing
 As the wild hailstones pelt and ring
 Adown December's blast.
 Nor mountain targe of tough bull-
 hide,
 Nor lowland mail, that storm may
 bide ;
 Woe, woe to Scotland's banner'd
 pride,
 If the fell shower may last !
 Upon the right, behind the wood,
 Each by his steed dismounted, stood
 The Scottish chivalry ;—
 With foot in stirrup, hand on mane,
 Fierce Edward Bruce can scarce
 restrain
 His own keen heart, his eager train,
 Until the archers gain'd the plain ;
 Then, " Mount, ye gallants free !"
 He cried ; and, vaulting from the
 ground,
 His saddle every horseman found.
 On high their glittering crests they
 toss,
 As springs the wild-fire from the
 moss ;
 The shield hangs down on every
 breast,
 Each ready lance is in the rest,
 And loud shouts Edward Bruce,—
 " Forth, Marshal ! on the peasant foe !
 We'll tame the terrors of their bow,
 And cut the bow-string loose !"⁴²⁰

XXIII.

Then spurs were dash'd in chargers'
 flanks,
 They rush'd among the archer ranks.

No spears were there the shock to let,
 No stakes to turn the charge were set,
 And how shall yeoman's armour
 slight,
 Stand the long lance and mace of
 might ?
 Or what may their short swords
 avail,
 'Gainst barbed horse and shirt of
 mail ?
 Amid their ranks the chargers
 sprung,
 High o'er their heads the weapons
 swung,
 And shriek and groan and vengeful
 shout
 Give note of triumph and of rout !
 Awhile, with stubborn hardihood,
 Their English hearts the strife made
 good.
 Borne down at length on every side,
 Compell'd to flight, they scatter
 wide.—
 Let stags of Sherwood leap for glee,
 And bound the deer of Dallom-Lee !
 The broken bows of Bannock's shore
 Shall in the greenwood ring no
 more !
 Round Wakefield's merry May-pole
 now,
 The maids may twine the summer
 bough,
 May northward look with longing
 glance,
 For those that wont to lead the
 dance,
 For the blithe archers look in vain !
 Broken, dispersed, in flight o'erta'en,
 Pierced through, trode down, by thou-
 sands slain,
 They cumber Bannock's bloody plain.

XXIV.

The King with scorn beheld their
 flight.
 " Are these," he said, " our yeomen
 wight ?
 Each braggart churl could boast
 before,
 Twelve Scottish lives his baldric
 bore !"⁴²¹

Fitter to plunder chase or park,
 Than make a manly foe their mark.—
 Forward, each gentleman and
 knight!
 Let gentle blood show generous
 might,
 And chivalry redeem the fight!"
 To rightward of the wild affray,
 The field show'd fair and level way;
 But, in mid-space, the Bruce's
 care
 Had bored the ground with many a
 pit,
 With turf and brushwood hidden yet,
 That form'd a ghastly snare.
 Rushing, ten thousand horsemen
 came,
 With spears in rest, and hearts on
 flame,
 That panted for the shock!
 With blazing crests and banners
 spread,
 And trumpet-clang and clamour
 dread,
 The wide plain thunder'd to their
 tread,
 As far as Stirling rock.
 Down! down! in headlong over-
 throw,¹²²
 Horseman and horse, the foremost
 go,
 Wild floundering on the field!
 The first are in destruction's gorge,
 Their followers wildly o'er them
 urge;—
 The knightly helm and shield,
 The mail, the acorn, and the spear,
 Strong hand, high heart, are useless
 here!
 Loud from the mass confused the
 cry
 Of dying warriors swells on high,
 And steeds that shriek in agony!¹²³
 They came like mountain-torrent red,
 That thunders o'er its rocky bed;
 They broke like that same torrent's
 wave,
 When swallow'd by a darksome cave.
 Billows on billows burst and boil,
 Maintaining still the stern turmoil,
 And to their wild and tortured groan
 Each adds new terrors of his own!

XXV.

Too strong in courage and in might
 Was England yet, to yield the fight.
 Her noblest all are here;
 Names that to fear were never known.
 Bold Norfolk's Earl De Brotherton,
 And Oxford's famed De Vere.
 There Gloster plied the bloody sword
 And Berkley, Grey, and Hereford,
 Bottetourt and Sanzavere,
 Ross, Montague, and Mauley, came,
 And Courtenay's pride, and Percy's
 fame—
 Names known too well in Scotland's
 war,
 At Falkirk, Methven, and Dunbar,
 Blazed broader yet in after years,
 At Cressy red and fell Poitiers.
 Pembroke with these, and Argentine,
 Brought up the rearward battle-line.
 With caution o'er the ground they
 tread,
 Slippery with blood and piled with
 dead,
 Till hand to hand in battle set,
 The bills with spears and axes met,
 And, closing dark on every side,
 Raged the full contest far and wide.
 Then was the strength of Douglas
 tried,
 Then proved was Randolph's
 generous pride,
 And well did Stewart's actions grace
 The sire of Scotland's royal race!
 Firmly they kept their ground;
 As firmly England onward press'd,
 And down went many a noble crest,
 And rent was many a valiant breast,
 And Slaughter revell'd round.

XXVI.

Unflinching foot 'gainst foot was
 set,
 Unceasing blow by blow was met;
 The groans of those who fell
 Were drown'd amid the shriller clang
 That from the blades and harness
 rang,
 And in the battle-yell.

Yet fast they fell, unheard, forgot,
 Both Southron fierce and hardy Scot ;
 And O ! amid that waste of life,
 What various motives fired the strife !
 The aspiring Noble bled for fame,
 The Patriot for his country's claim ;
 This Knight his youthful strength to
 prove,
 And that to win his lady's love ;
 Some fought from ruffian thirst of
 blood,
 From habit some, or hardihood.
 But ruffian stern, and soldier good,
 The noble and the slave,
 From various cause the same wild
 road,
 On the same bloody morning, trode,
 To that dark inn, the grave !

XXVII.

The tug of strife to flag begins,
 Though neither loses yet nor wins.
 High rides the sun, thick rolls the
 dust,
 And feebler speeds the blow and
 thrust.
 Douglas leans on his war-sword
 now,
 And Randolph wipes his bloody
 brow ;
 Nor less had toil'd each Southern
 knight,
 From morn till mid-day in the fight.
 Strong Egremont for air must gasp,
 Beauchamp undoes his visor-clasp,
 And Montague must quit his spear,
 And sinks thy falchion, bold De
 Vere !
 The blows of Berkley fall less fast,
 And gallant Pembroke's bugle-blast
 Hath lost its lively tone ;
 Sinks, Argentine, thy battle-word,
 And Percy's shout was fainter heard,
 " My merry-men, fight on ! "

XXVIII.

Bruce, with the pilot's wary eye,
 The slackening of the storm could
 spy.

" One effort more, and Scotland's
 free !
 Lord of the Isles, my trust in thee
 Is firm as Ailsa Rock ;
 Rush on with Highland sword and
 targe,
 I, with my Carrick spearmen,
 charge ;
 Now, forward to the shock ! " ²¹
 At once the spears were forward
 thrown,
 Against the sun the broadswords
 shone ;
 The pibroch lent its maddening tone,
 And loud King Robert's voice was
 known—
 " Carrick, press on—they fail, they
 fail !
 Press on, brave sons of Innisgail,
 The foe is fainting fast !
 Each strike for parent, child, and
 wife,
 For Scotland, liberty, and life,—
 The battle cannot last ! "

XXIX.

The fresh and desperate onset bore
 The foes three furlongs back and
 more,
 Leaving their noblest in their gore.
 Alone, De Argentine
 Yet bears on high his red-cross shield,
 Gathers the relics of the field,
 Renews the ranks where they have
 reel'd,
 And still makes good the line.
 Brief strife, but fierce,—his efforts
 raise
 A bright but momentary blaze.
 Fair Edith heard the Southron shout,
 Beheld them turning from the rout,
 Heard the wild call their trumpets sent,
 In notes 'twixt triumph and lament.
 That rallying force, combined anew,
 Appear'd in her distracted view,
 To hem the Islesmen round ;
 " O God ! the combat they renew,
 And is no rescue found !
 And ye that look thus tamely on,
 And see your native land o'erthrown,
 O ! are your hearts of flesh or stone ? "

XXX.

The multitude that watch'd afar,
 Rejected from the ranks of war,
 Had not unmoved beheld the fight,
 When strove the Bruce for Scotland's
 right ;
 Each heart had caught the patriot
 spark,
 Old man and stripling, priest and
 clerk,
 Bondsman and serf; even female
 hand
 Stretch'd to the hatchet or the brand ;
 But, when mute Amadine they
 heard
 Give to their zeal his signal-word,
 A frenzy fired the throng ;
 " Portents and miracles impeach
 Our sloth—the dumb our duties
 teach—
 And he that gives the mute his
 speech,
 Can bid the weak be strong.
 To us, as to our lords, are given
 A native earth, a promised heaven ;
 To us, as to our lords, belongs
 The vengeance for our nation's
 wrongs ;
 The choice, 'twixt death or freedom,
 wars ;
 Our breasts as theirs—To arms, to
 arms !"
 To arms they flew,—axe, club, or
 spear,—
 And mimic ensigns high they rear,⁴²⁵
 And, like a banner'd host afar,
 Bear down on England's wearied war.

XXXI.

Already scatter'd o'er the plain,
 Reproof, command, and counsel
 vain,
 The rearward squadrons fled amain,
 Or made but doubtful stay ;—
 But when they mark'd the seeming
 show
 Of fresh and fierce and marshall'd
 foe,
 The boldest broke array.

O give their hapless prince his
 due !⁴²⁶
 In vain the royal Edward threw
 His person 'mid the spears,
 Cried, " Fight ! " to terror and
 despair,
 Menaced, and wept, and tore his
 hair,
 And cursed their caitiff fears ;
 Till Pembroke turn'd his bridle rein,
 And forced him from the fatal plain.
 With them rode Argentine, until
 They gain'd the summit of the hill,
 But quitted there the train :—
 " In yonder field a gage I left,—
 I must not live of fame bereft ;
 I needs must turn again.
 Speed hence, my Liege, for on your
 trace
 The fiery Douglas takes the chase,
 I know his banner well.
 God send my Sovereign joy and bliss,
 And many a happier field than this !—
 Once more, my Liege, farewell."

XXXII.

Again he faced the battle-field,—
 Wildly they fly, are slain, or yield.
 " Now then," he said, and couch'd
 his spear,
 " My course is run, the goal is near ;
 One effort more, one brave career,
 Must close this race of mine."
 Then in his stirrups rising high,
 He shouted loud his battle-cry,
 " Saint James for Argentine !"
 And, of the bold pursuers, four
 The gallant knight from saddle bore ;
 But not unharm'd—a lance's point
 Has found his breastplate's loosen'd
 joint,
 An axe has razed his crest ;
 Yet still on Colonsay's fierce lord,
 Who press'd the chase with gory
 sword,
 He rode with spear in rest,
 And through his bloody tartans bored,
 And through his gallant breast.
 Nail'd to the earth, the mountaineer
 Yet writhed him up against the spear,
 And swung his broadsword round !

—Stirrup, steel-boot, and cuish gave
 way,
 Beneath that blow's tremendous
 sway,
 The blood gush'd from the wound ;
 And the grim Lord of Colonsay
 Hath turn'd him on the ground,
 And laugh'd in death-pang, that his
 blade
 The mortal thrust so well repaid.

XXXIII.

Now toil'd the Bruce, the battle done,
 To use his conquest boldly won ;
 And gave command for horse and
 spear
 To press the Southron's scatter'd rear,
 Nor let his broken force combine,
 —When the war-cry of Argentine
 Fell faintly on his ear ;
 “ Save, save his life,” he cried, “ O
 save
 The kind, the noble, and the brave ! ”
 The squadrons round free passage
 gave,
 The wounded knight drew near ;
 He raised his red-cross shield no
 more,
 Helm, cuish, and breastplate stream'd
 with gore,
 Yet, as he saw the King advance,
 He strove even then to couch his
 lance—
 The effort was in vain !
 The spur-stroke fail'd to rouse the
 horse ;
 Wounded and weary, in mid course
 He stumbled on the plain.
 Then foremost was the generous
 Bruce
 To raise his head, his helm to
 loose ;—
 “ Lord Earl, the day is thine !
 My Sovereign's charge, and adverse
 fate,
 Have made our meeting all too late :
 Yet this may Argentine,
 As boon from ancient comrade,
 crave—
 A Christian's mass, a soldier's
 grave.”

XXXIV.

Bruce press'd his dying hand—its
 grasp
 Kindly replied ; but, in his clasp,
 It stiffen'd and grew cold—
 “ And, O farewell ! ” the victor cried,
 “ Of chivalry the flower and pride,
 The arm in battle bold,
 The courteous mien, the noble race,
 The stainless faith, the manly face !—
 Bid Ninian's convent light their
 shrine,
 For late-wake of De Argentine.
 O'er better knight on death-bier laid,
 Torch never gleam'd nor mass was
 said ! ”

XXXV.

Nor for De Argentine alone,
 Through Ninian's church these
 torches shone,
 And rose the death-prayer's awful
 tone.⁴²⁷
 That yellow lustre glimmer'd pale,
 On broken plate and bloodied mail,
 Rent crest and shatter'd coronet,
 Of Baron, Earl, and Banneret ;
 And the best names that England
 knew,
 Claim'd in the death-prayer dismal
 due.
 Yet mourn not, Land of Fame !
 Though ne'er the leopards on thy
 shield
 Retreated from so sad a field,
 Since Norman William came.
 Oft may thine annals justly boast
 Of battles stern by Scotland lost ;
 Grudge not her victory,
 When for her freeborn rights she
 strove ;
 Rights dear to all who freedom love,
 To none so dear as thee !

XXXVI.

Turn we to Bruce, whose curious ear
 Must from Fitz-Louis tidings hear ;
 With him, a hundred voices tell
 Of prodigy and miracle,

“For the mute page had spoke.”—
 “Page!” said Fitz-Louis, “rather
 say,

An angel sent from realms of day,

To burst the English yoke.

I saw his plume and bonnet drop,

When hurrying from the mountain
 top ;

A lovely brow, dark locks that wave,

To his bright eyes new lustre gave,

A step as light upon the green,

As if his pinions waved unseen !”—

“Spoke he with none ?”—“With
 none—one word

Burst when he saw the Island Lord,

Returning from the battle-field.”—

“What answer made the Chief ?”

—“He kneel’d,

Durst not look up, but mutter’d low,

Some mingled sounds that none
 might know,

And greeted him ’twixt joy and fear,

As being of superior sphere.”

XXXVII.

Even upon Bannock’s bloody plain,
 Heap’d then with thousands of the
 slain,

’Mid victor monarch’s musings high,
 Mirth laugh’d in good King Robert’s
 eye.

“And bore he such angelic air,

Such noble front, such waving hair ?

Hath Ronald kneel’d to him ?” he said,

“Then must we call the church to
 aid—

Our will be to the Abbot known,

Ere these strange news are wider
 blown,

To Cambuskenneth straight ye pass,

And deck the church for solemn mass,

To pay for high deliverance given,

A nation’s thanks to gracious Heaven.

Let him array, besides, such state,

As should on princes’ nuptials wait.

Ourselves the cause, through fortune’s
 spite,

That once broke short that spousal
 rite,

Ourselves will grace, with early morn,

The bridal of the Maid of Lorn.”

CONCLUSION.

Go forth, my Song, upon thy
 venturous way ;

Go boldly forth ; nor yet thy master
 blame,

Who chose no patron for his
 humble lay,

And graced thy numbers with no
 friendly name,

Whose partial zeal might smooth
 thy path to fame.

There was— and O ! how many
 sorrows crowd

Into these two brief words !—*there*
was a claim

By generous friendship given—had
 fate allow’d,

It well had bid thee rank the proudest
 of the proud !

All angel now—yet little less than
 all,

While still a pilgrim in our world
 below !

What ’vails it us that patience to
 recall,

Which hid its own to soothe all
 other woe ;

What ’vails to tell, how Virtue’s
 purest glow

Shone yet more lovely in a form so
 fair :

And, least of all, what ’vails the
 world should know,

That one poor garland, twined to
 deck thy hair,

Is hung upon thy hearse, to droop
 and wither there !

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 be-
tween,

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, re-
ceives

Nor sun, nor air, nor rain.



"Onward they press with weapons high."

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 :—⁴²

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 fane :—
 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 ledge
 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.
 SC.

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 kerchief'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,⁴²⁹
 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; ⁴³⁰
 “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. ⁴³¹
 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!” ⁴³²

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 acclaim,
 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,⁴³³

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 level'd steel,⁴³⁴
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 sun 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 Leipzig'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 re-
 new'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 ;
 Or see'st how manlier grief, sup-
 press'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 marksman'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 waiting 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 off-
 spring 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 grow-
 ing 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 over-
 throw,
 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'r-
ing 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, mis-
tuned 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
drearhood,
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 occur-
ring 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 rattl-
ing dice,
The turning-lathe for framing
gimerack 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 Edge-
worth 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 list-
less 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 pro-
 cession 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 hand 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 Tyne-
 dale 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 prose-
 lyte'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 lied 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 spear-
 men 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 shalt 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 in-
struction 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 clamor-
ously in
The war-songs of Danesmen, Nor-
weyan, 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 Ermen-
garde 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 dark-
ness 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
again,
As if Lok, the Destroyer, had burst
from his chain !
Accused 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 carries
not here."
He leapt from his couch and he
grasp'd to his spear ;
Sought the hall of the feast. Un-
disturb'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 moor-
land 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, out-
stretch'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 griet 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 Aldin-
 gar's brow ;
 The power of his crozier he loved to
 extend
 O'er whatever would break, or what-
 ever 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.





Against the Odds



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 shelter-
 ing 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 for-
get,

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 Metelill !"

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, dis-
may'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 out-
wore

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—
Unearthly 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 race
 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 caitiff's
 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 toe.
 Believe the while, that whatsoever
 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 open, 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,—
 I 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 votress 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 moon-
 light 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 dawn-
 ing 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 pre-
 bendary’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 glutted 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 Metelil?”—
“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.

I.

“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 summernight,
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 manly 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 Metelil?—"—
"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 Tync.
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 gor-
geous tomb,
Carved screen, and altar glimmer-
ing 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 Cuth-
 bert'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 halt-
 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 me 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
 rest 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 morn-
 ing 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 be-
 gone ;

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 un-
 aided, 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 fashion 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 or enchant-
ment 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 un-
pruned were their nails ;
From Strath-Clwyde 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, Nor-
thumblerland'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 mid-
night 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 Nor-
thumbrian'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.”



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80.

"There stood array'd in sable band
Four Maids whom Afric bore."

Page 437.

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 Nor-
 thumberland 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."

sc.

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 eve, 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 musér'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.

s.

Midward their path, a rock of
granite gray
From the adjoining cliff had made
descent,—
A barren mass—yet with her droop-
ing 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
hil-starr'd love
Of some poor maid is in the em-
blem shown,
Whose fates are with some hero's
interwove,
And rooted on a heart to love un-
known:
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, heed-
fully ;

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 resolutely said,—
“Be what it will yon 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-sear'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 punish-
 ment 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 blithe-
 somely 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 unre-
 pressed,
 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 hur'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
rod,"
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 prowl'd 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 my 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-Clwyde'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 in-
 ward push'd,
 And, as it oped, through that em-
 blazon'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 wool 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
 Metelil ;—
 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 un-
 known,
 And unrequited ;—firm and pure,
 Her stainless faith could all en-
 dure ;
 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 con-
 stancy

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 uncloset—
 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 Zerneck !—
 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 thought-
 ful 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 Thoraine?—

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, splent, 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 clench'd 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 plac'd 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 besom'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,
Blaued 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 of 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 quillum spak Thomas
Of Ersyldoune, 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, comedly 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 daunt
 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, when'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 Elflin 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 slie 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 Dunbar demande a Thomas de Essedoune quant la guerre d'Escoce prendreit fyn. Eyl la 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 thious 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 stels
 castels with stye;
 When Rokeshoroughe nys no burgh ant market
 is at Forwyleye;
 When Bambourne is donged with dede men;
 When men ludes 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 lovdies;
 When Scottes flen so faste, that, for faute of
 shep, hy drowneth himselfe;
 When shal this be?
 Nouter in thine tyme ne in mine;
 Ah comen ant gone
 Withinne twenty winter ant one.

PINKERTON'S *Poems*, from MAITLAND'S *M.S.S.*
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 Eildon-
 tree.

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 fausion free.
- Says—"Well met, well met, true
Thomas!
Some uncouth ferlies show to me."—
Says—"Christ thee save, Cors-
patrick brave!
Thrice welcome, good Dunbar,
to me!
- "Light down, light down, Cors-
patrick 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 throug 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
bau;
Some blessings show thou now
to me,
Or, by the faith o' my bodie," Cors-
patrick 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 sheen,
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 south-
ern 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 henpen 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 narver,
E entusché par grant engin,
Quant il afole Kaherdin ;
Pur cest plat e pur cest mal,
Enveiad Tristram Guvernal,
En Engleterre pur 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-
rore,
Glanced gaily through the broom.

The Leader, rolling to the Tweed,
Resounds the ensenzie ;
They roused the deer from Cadden-
head,
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 reast 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 gaily 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 Segra-
more,
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 lily 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 Fairmalie.

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 or
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 trumpet, 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, ⁴³⁵
 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, ⁴³⁶

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
 bear ;
 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 poor 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, ⁴³⁷
 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 with-
drew.
- 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 shriek-
ing 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, rode ye on the eddying smoke,
Or sail’d 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 ; ^{43s}
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 Buc-
cleuch,
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
 Moor ⁴³⁹
 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 Watch-
 fold ;
 For, from height to height, the
 beacons bright
 Of the English foemen told.

“The bitter'n clamour'd from the
 moss,
 The wind blew loud and shrill ;
 Yet the craggy pathway she did cross
 To the ery 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 ! 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 mid-
 night 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 Mer-
 toun'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 Buc-
 cleuch ? ”—

“ The Ancram Moor is red with gore,
 For many a southron fell ;
 And Buccleuch has charged us, ever-
 more,
 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,⁴⁴⁰

That monk, who speaks to none—
That nun was Smaylho'me's Lady gay
That monk the bold Baron.

CADYOW CASTLE.

ADDRESSED TO

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE
LADY ANNE HAMILTON.

THE ruins of Cadyow, or Cadzow Castle, the ancient baronial residence of the family of Hamilton, are situated upon the precipitous banks of the river Ewan, about two miles above its junction with the Clyde. It was dismantled, in the conclusion of the Civil Wars, during the reign of the unfortunate Mary, to whose cause the house of Hamilton devoted themselves with a generous zeal which occasioned their temporary obscurity, and, very nearly, their total ruin. The situation of the ruins, embosomed in wood, darkened by ivy and creeping shrubs, and overhanging the brawling torrent, is romantic in the highest degree. In the immediate vicinity of Cadyow is a grove of immense oaks, the remains of the Caledonian Forest, which anciently extended through the south of Scotland, from the eastern to the Atlantic Ocean. Some of these trees measure twenty-five feet, and upwards, in circumference; and the state of decay in which they now appear, shows that they have witnessed the rites of the Druids. The whole scenery is included in the magnificent and extensive park of the Duke of Hamilton. There was long preserved in this forest the breed of the Scottish wild cattle, until their ferocity occasioned their being extirpated, about forty years ago. Their appearance was beautiful, being milk-white, with black muzzles, horns, and hoofs. The bulls are described by ancient authors as having white manes; but those of latter days had lost that

peculiarity, perhaps by intermixture with the tame breed.

In detailing the death of the Regent Murray, which is made the subject of the following ballad, it would be injustice to my reader to use other words than those of Dr. Robertson, whose account of that memorable event forms a beautiful piece of historical painting.

“Hamilton of Bothwellhaugh was the person who committed this barbarous action. He had been condemned to death soon after the battle of Langside, as we have already related, and owed his life to the Regent's clemency. But part of his estate had been bestowed upon one of the Regent's favourites, who seized his house, and turned out his wife, naked, in a cold night, into the open fields, where, before next morning, she became furiously mad. This injury made a deeper impression on him than the benefit he had received, and from that moment he vowed to be revenged of the Regent. Party rage strengthened and inflamed his private resentment. His kinsmen, the Hamiltons, applauded the enterprise. The maxims of that age justified the most desperate course he could take to obtain vengeance. He followed the Regent for some time, and watched for an opportunity to strike the blow. He resolved at last to wait till his enemy should arrive at Linlithgow, through which he was to pass in his way from Stirling to Edinburgh. He took his stand in a wooden gallery, which had a window towards the street; spread a feather-bed on the floor to hinder the noise of his feet from being heard; hung up a black cloth behind him, that his shadow might not be observed from without; and, after all this preparation, calmly expected the Regent's approach, who had lodged, during the night, in a house not far distant. Some indistinct information of the danger which threatened him had been conveyed to the Regent, and he paid so much regard to it, that he resolved to return by the same gate through which he had entered, and to fetch a compass round the town. But, as the crowd about the gate was great, and he himself unacquainted with fear, he proceeded directly along the

street ; and the throng of people obliging him to move very slowly, gave the assassin time to take so true an aim, that he shot him, with a single bullet, through the lower part of his belly, and killed the horse of a gentleman who rode on his other side. His followers instantly endeavoured to break into the house whence the blow had come ; but they found the door strongly barricaded, and, before it could be forced open, Hamilton had mounted a fleet horse, which stood ready for him at a back passage, and was got far beyond their reach. The Regent died the same night of his wound."—*History of Scotland*, book v.

Bothwellhaugh rode straight to Hamilton, where he was received in triumph ; for the ashes of the houses in Clydesdale, which had been burned by Murray's army, were yet smoking ; and party prejudice, the habits of the age, and the enormity of the provocation, seemed to his kinsmen to justify the deed. After a short abode at Hamilton, this fierce and determined man left Scotland, and served in France, under the patronage of the family of Guise, to whom he was doubtless recommended by having avenged the cause of their niece, Queen Mary, upon her ungrateful brother. De Thou has recorded, that an attempt was made to engage him to assassinate Gaspar de Coligni, the famous Admiral of France, and the buckler of the Huguenot cause. But the character of Bothwellhaugh was mistaken. He was no mercenary trader in blood, and rejected the offer with contempt and indignation. He had no authority, he said, from Scotland to commit murders in France ; he had avenged his own just quarrel, but he would neither, for price nor prayer, avenge that of another man.—*Thuanus*, cap. 46.

The Regent's death happened 23rd January, 1569. It is applauded or stigmatised, by contemporary historians, according to their religious or party prejudices. The triumph of Blackwood is unbounded. He not only extols the pious feat of Bothwellhaugh, "who," he observes, "satisfied, with a single ounce of lead, him whose sacrilegious avarice had stripped the metropolitan

church of St. Andrews of its covering ;" but he ascribes it to immediate divine inspiration, and the escape of Hamilton to little less than the miraculous interference of the Deity.—*JEBB*, vol. ii. p. 263. With equal injustice, it was, by others, made the ground of a general national reflection ; for, when Mather urged Berney to assassinate Burreigh, and quoted the examples of Poltrot and Bothwellhaugh, the other conspirator answered, "that neyther Poltrot nor Hambleton did attempt their enterpryse, without some reason or consideration to lead them to it ; as the one, by hyre, and promise of preferment or rewardes ; the other, upon desperate mind of revenge, for a lyttle wrong done unto him, as the report goethe, according to the vyle trayterous dysposysion of the hoole natyion of the Scottes."—*MURDIN'S State Papers*, vol. i. p. 197.

WHEN princely Hamilton's abode
Ennobled Cadyow's Gothic towers,
The song went round, the goblet
flow'd,
And revel sped the laughing hours.

Then, thrilling to the harp's gay
sound,
So sweetly rung each vaulted wall,
And echoed light the dancer's bound,
As mirth and music cheer'd the
hall.

But Cadyow's towers, in ruins laid,
And vaults, by ivy mantled o'er,
Thrill to the music of the shade,
Or echo Evan's hoarser roar.

Yet still, of Cadyow's faded fame,
You bid me tell a minstrel tale,
And tune my harp, of Border frame,
On the wild banks of Evandale.

For thou, from scenes of courtly
pride,
From pleasure's lighter scenes,
canst turn,
To draw oblivion's pall aside,
And mark the long-forgotten urn.



CHARLES STUART H. 2.

Heben Graess & Co.
St.

"The evening mists, with ceaseless change,
Now clothed the mountains' lofty range."

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Then, noble maid ! at thy command,
 Again the crumbled halls shall
 rise ;
 Lo ! as on Evan's banks we stand,
 The past returns — the present
 flies.

Where, with the rock's wood-cover'd
 side,
 Were blended late the ruins green,
 Rise turrets in fantastic pride,
 And feudal banners flaunt between :

Where the rude torrent's brawling
 course
 Was shagg'd with thorn and
 tangling sloe,
 The ashler buttress braves its force,
 And ramparts frown in battled
 row.

'Tis night—the shade of keep and
 spire
 Obscurely dance on Evan's stream ;
 And on the wave the warder's fire
 Is chequering the moonlight beam.

Fades slow their light ; the east
 is gray ;
 The weary warder leaves his
 tower ;
 Steeds snort ; uncoupled stag-hounds
 bay,
 And merry hunters quit the bower.

The drawbridge falls — they hurry
 out—
 Clatters each plank and swinging
 chain,
 As, dashing o'er, the jovial rout
 Urge the shy steed, and slack the
 rein.

First of his troop, the Chief rode
 on ;
 His shouting merry-men throng
 behind ;
 The steed of princely Hamilton
 Was fleetier than the mountain
 wind.
 SC.

From the thick copse the roebucks
 bound,
 The startled red-deer scuds the
 plain,
 For the hoarse bugle's warrior-sound
 Has roused their mountain haunts
 again.

Through the huge oaks of Evandale,
 Whose limbs a thousand years
 have worn,
 What sullen roar comes down the
 gale,
 And drowns the hunter's pealing
 horn ?

Mightiest of all the beasts of chase,
 That roam in woody Caledon,
 Crashing the forest in his race,
 The Mountain Bull comes thunder
 ing on.

Fierce, on the hunter's quiver'd band,
 He rolls his eyes of swarthy glow,
 Spurs, with black hoof and horn,
 the sand,
 And tosses high his mane of snow.

Aim'd well, the Chieftain's lance
 has flown ;
 Struggling in blood the savage
 lies ;
 His roar is sunk in hollow groan—
 Sound, merry huntsmen ! sound
 the *pryse* !⁴¹

'Tis noon—against the knotted oak
 The hunters rest the idle spear ;
 Curls through the trees the slender
 smoke,
 Where yeomen dight the woodland
 cheer.

Proudly the Chieftain mark'd his
 clan,
 On greenwood lap all careless
 thrown,
 Yet miss'd his eye the boldest man
 That bore the name of Hamilton.

“Why fills not Bothwellhaugh his
 place,
 Still wont our weal and woe to
 share?”

Why comes he not our sport to
 grace?

Why shares he not our hunter's
 fare?—

Stern Claud replied, with darkening
 face,⁴⁴²

(Gray Pasley's haughty lord was
 he,)

“At merry feast, or buxom chase,
 No more the warrior wilt thou see.

“Few suns have set since Wood-
 houselee⁴⁴³

Saw Bothwellhaugh's bright
 goblets foam,

When to his hearths, in social glee,
 The war-worn soldier turn'd him
 home.

“There, wan from her maternal
 throes,

His Margaret, beautiful and mild,
 Sate in her bower, a pallid rose,
 And peaceful nursed her new-born
 child.

“O change accursed! past are those
 days;

False Murray's ruthless spoilers
 came,
 And, for the hearth's domestic
 blaze,
 Ascends destruction's volumed
 flame.

“What sheeted phantom wanders
 wild,

Where mountain Eske through
 woodland flows,
 Her arms enfold a shadowy child—
 Oh! is it she, the pallid rose?

“The wilder'd traveller sees her
 glide,

And hears her feeble voice with
 awe—

‘Revenge,’ she cries, ‘on Murray's
 pride!
 And woe for injured Bothwell-
 haugh!’”

He ceased—and cries of rage and
 grief

Burst mingling from the kindred
 band,

And half arose the kindling Chief,
 And half unsheathed his Arran
 brand.

But who, o'er bush, o'er stream and
 rock,

Rides headlong, with resistless
 speed,
 Whose bloody poniard's frantic
 stroke
 Drives to the leap his jaded
 steed;⁴⁴⁴

Whose cheek is pale, whose eyeballs
 glare,

As one some vision'd sight that
 saw,

Whose hands are bloody, loose his
 hair?—

'Tis he! 'tis he! 'tis Bothwell-
 haugh.

From gory selle, and reeling steed,
 Sprung the fierce horseman with
 a bound,

And, reeking from the recent deed,
 He dash'd his cubine on the
 ground.

Sternly he spoke—“'Tis sweet to
 hear

In good greenwood the bugle
 blown,

But sweeter to Revenge's ear,
 To drink a tyrant's dying groan.

“Your slaughter'd quarry proudly
 trode,

At dawning morn, o'er dale and
 down,

But prouder base-born Murray rode
 Through old Linlithgow's crowded
 town.

- “From the wild Border’s humbled
side,⁴⁴⁵
In haughty triumph marched he,
While Knox relax’d his bigot
pride,
And smiled, the traitorous pomp
to see.
- “But can stern Power, with all
his vaunt,
Or Pomp, with all her courtly
glare,
The settled heart of Vengeance
daunt,
Or change the purpose of Despair ?
- “With hackbut bent, my secret
stand,⁴⁴⁶
Dark as the purposed deed, I
chose,
And mark’d, where, mingling in his
band,
Troop’d Scottish pikes and
English bows.
- “Dark Morton, girt with many a
spear,
Murder’s foul minion, led the van ;
And clash’d their broadswords in
the rear
The wild Macfarlanes’ plaided
clan.⁴⁴⁷
- “Glencairn and stout Parkhead
were nigh,⁴⁴⁸
Obsequious at their Regent’s
rein,
And haggard Lindsay’s iron eye,
That saw fair Mary weep in
vain.⁴⁴⁹
- “Mid pennon’d spears, a steely
grove,
Proud Murray’s plumage floated
high ;
Scarce could his trampling charger
move,
So close the minions crowded
nigh.⁴⁵⁰
- “From the raised vizor’s shade, his
eye,
Dark-rolling, glanced the ranks
along,
And his steel truncheon, waved on
high,
Seem’d marshalling the iron
throng.
- “But yet his sadden’d brow confess’d
A passing shade of doubt and awe ;
Some fiend was whispering in his
breast ;
‘Beware of injured Bothwellhaugh !’
- “The death-shot parts—the charger
springs—
Wild rises tumult’s startling roar !
And Murray’s plummy helmet rings—
—Rings on the ground, to rise no
more.
- “What joy the raptured youth can
feel,
To hear her love the loved one
tell—
Or he, who broaches on his steel
The wolf, by whom his infant
fell !
- “But dearer to my injured eye
To see in dust proud Murray
roll ;
And mine was ten times trebled joy,
To hear him groan his felon soul.
- “My Margaret’s spectre glided near ;
With pride her bleeding victim
saw ;
And shriek’d in his death-deafen’d
ear,
‘Remember injured Bothwell-
haugh !’
- “Then speed thee, noble Chatlerault !
Spread to the wind thy banner’d
tree !
Each warrior bend his Clydesdale
bow !—
Murray is fall’n, and Scotland
free !”

Vaults every warrior to his steed ;
 Loud bugles join their wild
 acclaim—
 “Murray is fall’n, and Scotland
 freed !
 Couch, Arran ! couch thy spear
 of flame !”

But, see ! the minstrel vision fails—
 The glimmering spears are seen
 no more ;
 The shouts of war die on the gales,
 Or sink in Evan’s lonely roar.

For the loud bugle, pealing high,
 The blackbird whistles down the
 vale,
 And sunk in ivied ruins lie
 The banner’d towers of Evandale.

For Chiefs, intent on bloody
 deed,
 And Vengeance shouting o’er the
 slain,
 Lo ! high-born Beauty rules the
 steed,
 Or graceful guides the silken rein.

And long may Peace and Pleasure
 own
 The maids who list the minstrel’s
 tale ;
 Nor e’er a ruder guest be known
 On the fair banks of Evandale !

THE GRAY BROTHER.

A FRAGMENT.

THE imperfect state of this ballad, which was written several years ago, is not a circumstance affected for the purpose of giving it that peculiar interest which is often found to arise from ungratified curiosity. On the contrary, it was the Editor’s intention to have completed the tale, if he had found himself able to succeed to his own satisfaction. Yielding to the opinion of persons, whose judgment, if not biassed by the partiality of friendship, is entitled to deference, he has preferred inserting these verses as

a fragment, to his intention or entirely suppressing them.

The tradition, upon which the tale is founded, regards a house upon the barony of Gilmerton, near Lasswade, in Mid-Lothian. This building, now called Gilmerton Grange, was originally named Burndale, from the following tragic adventure. The barony of Gilmerton belonged, of yore, to a gentleman named Heron, who had one beautiful daughter. This young lady was seduced by the Abbot of Newbattle, a richly endowed abbey, upon the banks of the South Esk, now a seat of the Marquis of Lothian. Heron came to the knowledge of this circumstance, and learned also, that the lovers carried on their guilty intercourse by the connivance of the lady’s nurse, who lived at this house of Gilmerton Grange, or Burndale. He formed a resolution of bloody vengeance, undeterred by the supposed sanctity of the clerical character, or by the stronger claims of natural affection. Choosing, therefore, a dark and windy night, when the objects of his vengeance were engaged in a stolen interview, he set fire to a stack of dried thorns, and other combustibles, which he had caused to be piled against the house, and reduced to a pile of glowing ashes the dwelling, with all its inmates.

The scene with which the ballad opens, was suggested by the following curious passage, extracted from the Life of Alexander Peden, one of the wandering and persecuted teachers of the sect of Cameronians, during the reign of Charles II. and his successor, James. This person was supposed by his followers, and, perhaps, really believed himself, to be possessed of supernatural gifts ; for the wild scenes which they frequented, and the constant dangers which were incurred through their prescription, deepened upon their minds the gloom of superstition, so general in that age.

“About the same time he [Peden] came to Andrew Normand’s house, in the parish of Alloway, in the shire of Ayr, being to preach at night in his barn. After he came in, he halted a little, leaning upon a chair-back, with his face covered ; when he lifted up his

head, he said, "They are in this house that I have not one word of salvation unto"; he halted a little again, saying, "This is strange, that the devil will not go out, that we may begin our work!" Then there was a woman went out, ill-looking upon almost all her life, and to her dying hour, for a witch, with many presumptions of the same. It escaped me, in the former passages, what John Muirhead (whom I have often mentioned) told me, that when he came from Ireland to Galloway, he was at family-worship, and giving some notes upon the Scripture read, when a very ill-looking man came, and sat down within the door, at the back of the *hallan*: immediately he halted and said, "There is some unhappy body just now come into this house. I charge him to go out, and not stop my mouth!" This person went out, and he insisted, yet he saw him neither come in nor go out."—*The Life and Prophecies of Mr. Alexander Peden, late Minister of the Gospel at New Galloway, in Galloway*, part ii. § 26.

A friendly correspondent remarks, "that the incapacity of proceeding in the performance of a religious duty, when a contaminated person is present, is of much higher antiquity than the era of the Reverend Mr. Alexander Peden."—*Vide Hygini Fabulas*, cap. 26. "*Medea Corintho exul, Athenas, ad Egeum Pandionis filium devenit in hospitium, eique nupsit.*

—"*Postea sacerdos Dianæ Medeam exagitare cepit, regique negabat sacra caste facere posse, eo quod in ea civitate esset mulier venefica et scelerata; tunc exulatur.*"

THE Pope he was saying the high,
high mass,

All on Saint Peter's day,
With the power to him given, by the
saints in heaven,
To wash men's sins away.

The Pope he was saying the blessed
mass,
And the people kneel'd around,
And from each man's soul his sins
did pass,
As he kiss'd the holy ground.

And all, among the crowded throng,
Was still, both limb and tongue,
While, through vaulted roof and
aisles aloof,
The holy accents rung.

At the holiest word he quiver'd for
fear,
And falter'd in the sound—
And, when he would the chalice rear
He dropp'd it to the ground.

"The breath of one of evil deed
Pollutes our sacred day;
He has no portion in our creed,
No part in what I say.

"A being, whom no blessed word
To ghostly peace can bring;
A wretch, at whose approach abhor'd
Recoils each holy thing.

"Up, up, unhappy! haste, arise!
My adjuration fear!
I charge thee not to stop my voice,
Nor longer tarry here!"—

Amid them all a pilgrim kneel'd,
In gown of sackcloth gray;
Far journeying from his native field,
He first saw Rome that day.

For forty days and nights so drear,
I ween he had not spoke,
And, save with bread and water clear,
His fast he ne'er had broke.

Amid the penitential flock,
Seem'd none more bent to pray;
But, when the Holy Father spoke,
He rose and went his way.

Again unto his native land
His weary course he drew,
To Lothian's fair and fertile strand,
And Pentland's mountains blue.

His unblest feet his native seat,
'Mid Eske's fair woods, regain;
Thro' woods more fair no stream
more sweet
Rolls to the eastern main.

And lords to meet the pilgrim came,
 And vassals bent the knee ;
 For all 'mid Scotland's chiefs of
 fame,
 Was none more famed than he.

And boldly for his country, still,
 In battle he had stood,
 Ay, even when on the banks of Till
 Her noblest pour'd their blood.

Sweet are the paths, O passing
 sweet !
 By Eske's fair streams that run,
 O'er airy steep, through copsewood
 deep,
 Impervious to the sun.

There the rapt poet's step may rove,
 And yield the muse the day ;
 There Beauty, led by timid Love,
 May shun the tell-tale ray ;

From that fair dome, where suit is
 paid,
 By blast of bugle free,⁴⁵¹
 To Auchendinny's hazel glade,
 And haunted Woodhouse-lee.

Who knows not Melville's beechy
 grove,
 And Roslin's rocky glen,
 Dalkeith, which all the virtues love,
 And classic Hawthornden ?^{452 583}

Yet never a path, from day to day,
 The pilgrim's footsteps range,
 Save but the solitary way
 To Burndale's ruin'd grange.

A woful place was that, I ween,
 As sorrow could desire ;
 For nodding to the fall was each
 crumbling wall,
 And the roof was scathed with fire.

It fell upon a summer's eve,
 While, on Carnethy's head,
 The last faint gleams of the sun's
 low beams
 Had streak'd the gray with red ;

And the convent bell did vespers tell,
 Newbattle's oaks among,
 And mingled with the solemn knell
 Our Ladye's evening song :

The heavy knell, the choir's faint
 swell,
 Came slowly down the wind,
 And on the pilgrim's ear they fell,
 As his wonted path he did find.

Deep sunk in thought, I ween, he
 was,
 Nor ever raised his eye,
 Until he came to that dreary place,
 Which did all in ruins lie.

He gazed on the walls, so scathed
 with fire,
 With many a bitter groan—
 And there was aware of a Gray
 Friar,
 Resting him on a stone.

“Now, Christ thee save !” said the
 Gray Brother ;
 “Some pilgrim thou seemest
 to be.”

But in sore amaze did Lord Albert
 gaze,
 Nor answer again made he.

“O come ye from east, or come ye
 from west,
 Or bring reliques from over the
 sea ;
 Or come ye from the shrine of
 St. James the divine,
 Or St. John of Beverley ?”—

“I come not from the shrine of
 St. James the divine,
 Nor bring reliques from over the
 sea ;
 I bring but a curse from our father,
 the Pope,
 Which for ever will cling to
 me.”—

“Now, woful pilgrim, say not so !
 But kneel thee down to me,

And shrive thee so clean of thy
deadly sin,
That absolved thou mayst be.”—

“And who art thou, thou Gray
Brother,
That I should shrive to thee,
When He, to whom are given the
keys of earth and heaven,
Has no power to pardon me?”—

“O I am sent from a distant clime,
Five thousand miles away,
And all to absolve a foul, foul crime,
Done *here* 'twixt night and day.”

The pilgrim kneel'd him on the
sand,
And thus began his saye—
When on his neck an ice-cold
hand
Did that Gray Brother laye.

.

WAR-SONG OF THE ROYAL EDINBURGH LIGHT DRAGOONS.

Nennius. Is not peace the end of arms?
Caratach. Not where the cause implies a
general conquest.
Had we a difference with some petty isle,
Or with our neighbours, Britons, for our land-
marks,
The taking in of some rebellious lord,
Or making head against a slight commotion,
After a day of blood, peace might be argued :
But where we grapple for the land we live on,
The liberty we hold more dear than life,
The gods we worship, and, next these, our
honours,
And, with those, swords that know no end of
battle—
Those men, besidethemselves, allow no neighbour,
Those minds, that, where the day is, claim inherit-
ance,
And, where the sun makes ripe the fruit, their
harvest,
And, where they march but measure out more
ground
To add to Rome—
It must not be—No! as they are our foes,
Let's use the peace of honour—that's fair dealing ;
But in our hands our swords. The hardy Roman,
That thinks to graft himself into my stock,
Must first begin his kindred under ground,
And be allied in ashes.”—

Bouduca,

THE following War-Song was written during the apprehension of an invasion. The corps of volunteers to which it was addressed, was raised in 1797, consisting of gentlemen, mounted and armed at their own expense. It still subsists, as the Right Troop of the Royal Mid-Lothian Light Cavalry, commanded by the Honourable Lieutenant-Colonel Dundas. The noble and constitutional measure of arming freemen in defence of their own rights, was nowhere more successful than in Edinburgh, which furnished a force of 3000 armed and disciplined volunteers, including a regiment of cavalry, from the city and county, and two corps of artillery, each capable of serving twelve guns. To such a force, above all others, might, in similar circumstances, be applied the exhortation of our ancient Galgacus : “*Proinde ituri in aciem, et majores vestros et posteros cogitate.*” 1812.

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

From high Dunedin's towers we
come,
A band of brothers true ;
Our casques the leopard's spoils
surround,
With Scotland's hardy thistle
crown'd ;
We boast the red and blue.

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

Oh! had they mark'd the avenging
call
Their brethren's murder gave,

Disunion ne'er their ranks had
 mown,
 Nor patriot valour, desperate grown,
 Sought freedom in the grave!

Shall we, too, bend the stubborn
 head,
 In Freedom's temple born,
 Dress our pale cheek in timid smile,
 To hail a master in our isle,
 Or brook a victor's scorn?

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

For gold let Gallia's legions fight,
 Or plunder's bloody gain;
 Unbribed, unbought, our swords we
 draw,

To guard our king, to fence our
 law,
 Nor shall their edge be vain.

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

Then farewell home! and farewell
 friends!

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

To horse! to horse! the sabres
 gleam;

High sounds our bugle-call;
 Combined by honour's sacred tie,
 Our word is *Laws and Liberty!*
 March forward one and all?

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 peijured 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 trail 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 tootstep 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 haw-
thorn 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 thunder-
ing heels
The flashing peebles 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
Unballow'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.

[1794.]

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 hounds ; 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, “ *Glück 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 aerial hunter, who infested the forest of Fontainebleau. 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'erholt 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 em-
brown'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 herds-
man 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 !
Scorner 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 when'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, undis-
 tinguish'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 tence 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.

FREDERICK AND ALICE.

[1801.]

THIS tale is imitated, rather than translated, from a fragment introduced in Goethe's *Claudina von Villa Bella*, where it is sung by a member of a gang of banditti, to engage the attention of the family, while his companions break into the castle. It owes any little merit it may possess to my friend Mr. Lewis, to whom it was sent in an extremely rude state ; and who, after some material improvements, published it in his *Tales of Wonder*.

FREDERICK leaves the land of France,
 Homeward hastes his steps to
 measure,
 Careless casts the parting glance
 On the scene of former pleasure.

Joying in his prancing steed,
 Keen to prove his untried blade,
 Hope's gay dreams the soldier lead
 Over mountain, moor, and glade.

Helpless, ruin'd, left forlorn,
 Lovely Alice wept alone ;
 Mourn'd o'er love's fond contract
 torn,
 Hope, and peace, and honour
 flown.

Mark her breast's convulsive throbs !
 See, the tear of anguish flows !—
 Mingling soon with bursting sobs,
 Loud the laugh of frenzy rose.

Wild she cursed, and wild she pray'd ;
 Seven long days and nights are
 o'er ;
 Death in pity brought his aid,
 As the village bell struck four.

Far from her, and far from France,
 Faithless Frederick onward rides ;
 Marking, blithe, the morning's
 glance
 Mantling o'er the mountain's sides.

Heard ye not the boding sound,
 As the tongue of yonder tower,
 Slowly, to the hills around,
 Told the fourth, the fated hour ?

Starts the steed, and snuffs the air,
 Yet no cause of dread appears ;
 Bristles high the rider's hair,
 Struck with strange mysterious
 fears.

Desperate, as his terrors rise,
 In the steed the spur he hides ;
 From himself in vain he flies ;
 Anxious, restless, on he rides.

Seven long days, and seven long
 nights,
 Wild he wander'd, woe the while !
 Ceaseless care, and causeless fright,
 Urge his footsteps many a mile.

Dark the seventh sad night descends ;
 Rivers swell, and rain-streams
 pour ;
 While the deafening thunder lends
 All the terrors of its roar.

Weary, wet, and spent with toil,
 Where his head shall Frederick
 hide ?
 Where, but in yon ruin'd aisle,
 By the lightning's flash descried.

To the portal, dank and low,
 Fast his steed the wanderer bound :
 Down a ruin'd staircase slow,
 Next his darkling way he wound.

Long drear vaults before him lie !
 Glimmering lights are seen to
 glide !—
 "Blessed Mary, hear my cry !
 Deign a sinner's steps to guide !"

Often lost their quivering beam,
 Still the lights move slow before,
 Till they rest their ghastly gleam
 Right against an iron door.

Thundering voices from within,
 Mix'd with peals of laughter,
 rose ;
 As they fell, a solemn strain
 Lent its wild and wondrous close !

Midst the din, he seem'd to hear
 Voice of friends, by death re-
 moved ;—
 Well he knew that solemn air,
 'Twas the lay that Alice loved.—

Hark ! for now a solemn knell
 Four times on the still night
 broke ;
 Four times, at its deaden'd swell,
 Echoes from the ruins spoke.

As the lengthen'd clangours die,
 Slowly opes the iron door !
 Straight a banquet met his eye,
 But a funeral's form it wore !

Coffins for the seats extend ;
 All with black the board was
 spread ;
 Girt by parent, brother, friend,
 Long since number'd with the
 dead !

Alice, in her grave-clothes bound,
 Ghastly smiling, points a seat ;
 All arose, with thundering sound ;
 All the expected stranger greet.

High their meagre arms they wave,
Wild their notes of welcome
swell;—

“Welcome, traitor, to the grave!
Perjured, bid the light farewell!”

THE BATTLE OF SEMPACH.

[1818.]

THESE verses are a literal translation of an ancient Swiss ballad upon the battle of Sempach, fought 9th July, 1386, being the victory by which the Swiss cantons established their independence; the author, Albert Tschudi, denominated the Souter, from his profession of a shoemaker. He was a citizen of Lucerne, esteemed highly among his countrymen, both for his powers as a *Meister-Singer*, or minstrel, and his courage as a soldier; so that he might share the praise conferred by Collins on Æschylus, that—

—Not alone he nursed the poet's flame,
But reach'd from Virtue's hand the patriot steel.

The circumstance of their being written by a poet returning from the well-fought field he describes, and in which his country's fortune was secured, may confer on Tschudi's verses an interest which they are not entitled to claim from their poetical merit. But ballad poetry, the more literally it is translated, the more it loses its simplicity, without acquiring either grace or strength; and, therefore, some of the faults of the verses must be imputed to the translator's feeling it a duty to keep as closely as possible to his original. The various puns, rude attempts at pleasantry, and disproportioned episodes, must be set down to Tschudi's account, or to the taste of his age.

The military antiquary will derive some amusement from the minute particulars which the martial poet has recorded. The mode in which the Austrian men-at-arms received the charge of the Swiss, was by forming a phalanx, which they defended with their long lances. The gallant Winkel-

reid, who sacrificed his own life by rushing among the spears, clasping in his arms as many as he could grasp, and thus opening a gap in those iron battalions, is celebrated in Swiss history. When fairly mingled together, the unwieldy length of their weapons, and cumbrous weight of their defensive armour, rendered the Austrian men-at-arms a very unequal match for the light armed mountaineers. The victories obtained by the Swiss over the German chivalry, hitherto deemed as formidable on foot as on horseback, led to important changes in the art of war. The poet describes the Austrian knights and squires as cutting the peaks from their boots ere they could act upon foot, in allusion to an inconvenient piece of foppery, often mentioned in the middle ages. Leopold III., Archduke of Austria, called “The handsome man-at-arms,” was slain in the Battle of Sempach, with the flower of his chivalry.

’Twas when among our linden-trees
The bees had housed in swarms
(And gray-hair'd peasants say that
these
Betoken foreign arms),

Then look'd we down to Willisow,
The land was all in flame;
We knew the Archduke Leopold
With all his army came.

The Austrian nobles made their vow,
So hot their heart and bold,
“On Switzer carles we'll trample
now,
And slay both young and old.”

With clarion loud, and banner proud,
From Zurich on the lake,
In martial pomp and fair array,
Their onward march they make.

“Now list, ye lowland nobles all—
Ye seek the mountain strand,
Nor wot ye what shall be your lot
In such a dangerous land.

"I rede ye, shrive ye of your sins,
Before ye farther go;
A skirmish in Helvetian hills
May send your souls to woe." —

"But where now shall we find a
priest
Our shrift that he may hear?" —
"The Switzer priest has ta'en the
field,
He deals a penance drear.

"Right heavily upon your head
He'll lay his hand of steel;
And with his trusty partisan
Your absolution deal." —

'Twas on a Monday morning then,
The corn was steep'd in dew,
And merry maids had sickles ta'en,
When the host to Sempach drew.

The stalwart men of fair Lucerne
Together have they join'd;
The pith and core of manhood stern,
Was none cast looks behind.

It was the Lord of Hare-castle,
And to the Duke he said,
"Yon little band of brethren true
Will meet us undismay'd." —

"O Hare-castle, thou heart of
hare!"
Fierce Oxenstern replied. —
"Shalt see then how the game will
fare,"
The taunted knight replied.

There was lacing then of helmets
bright,
And closing ranks amain;
The peaks they hew'd from their
boot-points
Might wellnigh load a wain.

And thus they to each other said,
"Yon handful down to hew
Will be no boastful tale to tell,
The peasants are so few." —

The gallant Swiss Confederates there
They pray'd to God aloud,
And he display'd his rainbow fair
Against a swarthy cloud.

Then heart and pulse throbb'd more
and more
With courage firm and high,
And down the good Confederates
bore
On the Austrian chivalry.

The Austrian Lion 'gan to growl,
And toss his main and tail;
And ball, and shaft, and crossbow
bolt,
Went whistling forth like hail.

Lance, pike, and halbert, mingled
there,
The game was nothing sweet;
The boughs of many a stately tree
Lay shiver'd at their feet.

The Austrian men-at-arms stood
fast,
So close their spears they laid;
It chafed the gallant Winkelreid,
Who to his comrades said—

"I have a virtuous wife at home,
A wife and infant son;
I leave them to my country's care,—
This field shall soon be won.

"These nobles lay their spears right
thick,
And keep full firm array,
Yet shall my charge their order
break,
And make my brethren way.

He rush'd against the Austrian band,
In desperate career,
And with his body, breast, and hand,
Bore down each hostile spear.

Four lances splinter'd on his crest,
Six shiver'd in his side;
Still on the serried files he press'd—
He broke their ranks, and died.

This patriot's self-devoted deed
 First tamed the Lion's mood,
 And the four forest cantons freed
 From thralldom by his blood.

Right where his charge had made a
 lane,
 His valiant comrades burst,
 With sword, and axe, and partisan,
 And hack, and stab, and thrust.

The daunted Lion 'gan to whine,
 And granted ground amain,
 The Mountain Bull he bent his
 brows,
 And gored his sides again.

Then lost was banner, spear, and
 shield,
 At Sempach in the flight,
 The cloister vaults at König's-field
 Hold many an Austrian knight.

It was the Archduke Leopold,
 So lordly would he ride,
 But he came against the Switzer
 churls,
 And they slew him in his pride.

The heifer said unto the bull,
 "And shall I not complain?
 There came a foreign nobleman
 To milk me on the plain.

"One thrust of thine outrageous horn
 Has gall'd the knight so sore,
 That to the churchyard he is borne
 To range our glens no more."

An Austrian noble left the stour,
 And fast the flight 'gan take;
 And he arrived in luckless hour
 At Sempach on the lake.

He and his squire a fisher call'd
 (His name was Hans Von Rot),
 "For love, or need, or charity,
 Receive us in thy boat!"

Their anxious call the fisher heard,
 And, glad the need to win,
 His shallop to the shore he steer'd,
 And took the flyers in.

And while against the tide and wind
 Hans stoutly row'd his way,
 The noble to his follower sign'd
 He should the boatman slay.

The fisher's back was to them turn'd,
 The squire his dagger drew,
 Hans saw his shadow in the lake,
 The boat he overthrew.

He 'whelm'd the boat, and as they
 strove,
 He stunn'd them with his oar,
 "Now, drink ye deep, my gentle sirs,
 You'll ne'er stab boatman more.

"Two gilded fishes in the lake
 This morning have I caught,
 Their silver scales may much avail,
 Their carrion flesh is nought."

It was a messenger of woe
 Has sought the Austrian land;
 "Ah! gracious lady, evil news!
 My lord lies on the strand.

"At Sempach, on the battle-field,
 His bloody corpse lies there."—
 "Ah, gracious God!" the lady cried,
 "What tidings of despair!"

Now would you know the minstrel
 wight
 Who sings of strife so stern,
 Albert the Souter is he hight,
 A burgher of Lucerne.

A merry man was he, I wot,
 The night he made the lay,
 Returning from the bloody spot,
 Where God had judged the day.

THE NOBLE MORINGER.

AN ANCIENT BALLAD.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN.

[1819.]

THE original of these verses occurs in a collection of German popular songs, entitled, *Sammlung Deutschen Volkslieder*, Berlin, 1807, published by Messrs. Busching and Von der Hagen, both, and more especially the last, distinguished for their acquaintance with the ancient popular poetry and legendary history of Germany.

In the German Editor's notice of the ballad, it is stated to have been extracted from a manuscript Chronicle of Nicolaus Thomann, chaplain to Saint Leonard in Weisenhorn, which bears the date 1533; and the song is stated by the author to have been generally sung in the neighbourhood at that early period. Thomann, as quoted by the German Editor, seems faithfully to have believed the event he narrates. He quotes tombstones and obituaries to prove the existence of the personages of the ballad, and discovers that there actually died, on the 11th May, 1349, a Lady Von Neuffen, Countess of Marstetten, who was, by birth, of the house of Moringer. This lady he supposes to have been Moringer's daughter, mentioned in the ballad. He quotes the same authority for the death of Berckhold Von Neuffen, in the same year. The editors, on the whole, seem to embrace the opinion of Professor Smith of Ulm, who, from the language of the ballad, ascribes its date to the 15th century.

The legend itself turns on an incident not peculiar to Germany, and which, perhaps, was not unlikely to happen in more instances than one, when crusaders abode long in the Holy Land, and their disconsolate dames received no tidings of their fate. A story, very similar in circumstances, but without the miraculous machinery of Saint Thomas, is told of one of the ancient Lords of Haigh-hall in Lancashire, the patri-

monial inheritance of the late Countess of Balcarras; and the particulars are represented on stained glass upon a window in that ancient manor-house.

I.

O, WILL you hear a knightly tale of
old Bohemian day,
It was the noble Moringer in wedlock
bed he lay;
He halsed and kiss'd his dearest
dame, that was as sweet as May,
And said, "Now, lady of my heart,
attend the words I say.

II.

"'Tis I have vow'd a pilgrimage
unto a distant shrine,
And I must seek Saint Thomas-land,
and leave the land that's mine;
Here shalt thou dwell the while in
state, so thou wilt pledge thy fay,
That thou for my return wilt wait
seven twelvemonths and a day."

III.

Then out and spoke that Lady bright,
sore troubled in her cheer,
"Now tell me true, thou noble knight,
what order takest thou here;
And who shall lead thy vassal band,
and hold thy lordly sway,
And be thy lady's guardian true when
thou art far away?"

IV.

Out spoke the noble Moringer, "Of
that have thou no care,
There's many a valiant gentleman of
me holds living fair;
The trustiest shall rule my land, my
vassals and my state,
And be a guardian tried and true to
thee, my lovely mate.

V.

"As Christian-man, I needs must
keep the vow which I have plight,
When I am far in foreign land,
remember thy true knight;

And cease, my dearest dame, to
grieve, for vain were sorrow now,
But grant thy Moringer his leave,
since God hath heard his vow."

VI.

It was the noble Moringer from bed
he made him boune,
And met him there his Chamberlain,
with ewer and with gown :
He flung the mantle on his back,
'twas furr'd with miniver,
He dipp'd his hand in water cold,
and bathed his forehead fair.

VII.

"Now hear," he said, "Sir Chamber-
lain, true vassal art thou mine,
And such the trust that I repose in
that proved worth of thine,
For seven years shalt thou rule my
towers, and lead my vassal train,
And pledge thee for my Lady's faith
till I return again."

VIII.

The Chamberlain was blunt and true,
and sturdily said he,
"Abide, my lord, and rule your own,
and take this rede from me ;
That woman's faith's a brittle trust—
Seven twelvemonths didst thou say ?
I'll pledge me for no lady's truth
beyond the seventh fair day."

IX.

The noble Baron turn'd him round,
his heart was full of care,
His gallant Esquire stood him nigh,
he was Marstetten's heir,
To whom he spoke right anxiously,
"Thou trusty squire to me,
Wilt thou receive this weighty trust
when I am o'er the sea ?

X.

"To watch and ward my castle
strong, and to protect my land,
And to the hunting or the host to
lead my vassal band ;

And pledge thee for my Lady's faith
till seven long years are gone,
And guard her as Our Lady dear was
guarded by Saint John."

XI.

Marstetten's heir was kind and true,
but fiery, hot, and young,
And readily he answer made with too
presumptuous tongue ;
"My noble lord, cast care away, and
on your journey wend,
And trust this charge to me until
your pilgrimage have end.

XII.

"Rely upon my plighted faith, which
shall be truly tried,
To guard your lands, and ward your
towers, and with your vassals ride ;
And for your lovely Lady's faith, so
virtuous and so dear,
I'll gage my head it knows no
change, be absent thirty year."

XIII.

The noble Moringer took cheer when
thus he heard him speak,
And doubt forsook his troubled brow,
and sorrow left his cheek ;
A long adieu he bids to all—hoists
topsails, and away,
And wanders in Saint Thomas-land
seven twelvemonths and a day.

XIV.

It was the noble Moringer within an
orchard slept,
When on the Baron's slumbering
sense a boding vision crept ;
And whisper'd in his ear a voice,
" 'Tis time, Sir Knight, to wake,
Thy lady and thy heritage another
master take.

XV.

"Thy tower another banner knows,
thy steeds another rein,
And stoop them to another's will thy
gallant vassal train ;

And she, the Lady of thy love, so
faithful once and fair,
This night within thy fathers' hall
she weds Marstetten's heir."

XVI.

It is the noble Moringer starts up
and tears his beard,
"Oh would that I had ne'er been
born! what tidings have I heard!
To lose my lordship and my lands
the less would be my care,
But, God! that e'er a squire untrue
should wed my Lady fair.

XVII.

"O good Saint Thomas, hear," he
pray'd, "my patron Saint art thou,
A traitor robs me of my land even
while I pay my vow!
My wife he brings to infamy that
was so pure of name,
And I am far in foreign land, and
must endure the shame."

XVIII.

It was the good Saint Thomas, then,
who heard his pilgrim's prayer,
And sent a sleep so deep and dead
that it o'erpower'd his care;
He waked in fair Bohemian land
outstretch'd beside a rill,
High on the right a castle stood, low
on the left a mill.

XIX.

The Moringer he started up as one
from spell unbound,
And dizzy with surprise and joy
gazed wildly all around;
"I know my fathers' ancient towers,
the mill, the stream I know,
Now blessed be my patron Saint who
cheer'd his pilgrim's woe!"

XX.

He leant upon his pilgrim staff, and
to the mill he drew,
So alter'd was his goodly form that
none their master knew;

The Baron to the miller said, "Good
friend, for charity,
Tell a poor palmer in your land what
tidings may there be?"

XXI.

The miller answered him again,
"He knew of little news,
Save that the Lady of the land did a
new bridegroom choose:
Her husband died in distant land,
such is the constant word,
His death sits heavy on our souls, he
was a worthy Lord.

XXII.

"Of him I held the little mill which
wins me living free,
God rest the Baron in his grave, he
still was kind to me!
And when Saint Martin's tide comes
round, and millers take their toll,
The priest that prays for Moringer
shall have both cope and stole."

XXIII.

It was the noble Moringer to climb
the hill began,
And stood before the bolted gate a
woe and weary man;
"Now help me, every saint in heaven
that can compassion take,
To gain the entrance of my hall this
woful match to break."

XXIV.

His very knock it sounded sad, his
call was sad and slow,
For heart and head, and voice and
hand, were heavy all with woe;
And to the warden thus he spoke;
"Friend, to thy Lady say,
A pilgrim from Saint Thomas-land
craves harbour for a day.

XXV.

"I've wander'd many a weary step,
my strength is wellnigh done,
And if she turn me from her gate I'll
see no morrow's sun;

I pray, for sweet Saint Thomas' sake,
a pilgrim's bed and dole,
And for the sake of Moringer's, her
once-loved husband's soul."

XXVI.

It was the stalwart warder then he
came his dame before,
"A pilgrim, worn and travel-toil'd,
stands at the castle-door ;
And prays, for sweet Saint Thomas'
sake, for harbour and for dole,
And for the sake of Moringer, thy
noble husband's soul."

XXVII.

The Lady's gentle heart was moved,
"Do up the gate," she said,
"And bid the wanderer welcome be
to banquet and to bed ;
And since he names my husband's
name, so that he lists to stay,
These towers shall be his harbourage
a twelvemonth and a day."

XXVIII.

It was the stalwart warder then
undid the portal broad,
It was the noble Moringer that o'er
the threshold strode ;
"And have thou thanks, kind
heaven," he said, "though from
a man of sin,
That the true lord stands here once
more his castle-gate within."

XXIX.

Then up the halls paced Moringer,
his step was sad and slow ;
It sat full heavy on his heart, none
seem'd their Lord to know ;
He sat him on a lowly bench,
oppress'd with woe and wrong,
Short space he sat, but ne'er to him
seem'd little space so long.

XXX.

Now spent was day, and feasting o'er,
and come was evening hour,
The time was nigh when new-made
brides retire to nuptial bower ;

"Our castle's wont," a brides-man
said, "hath been both firm and long,
No guest to harbour in our halls till
he shall chant a song."

XXXI.

Then spoke the youthful bridegroom
there as he sat by the bride,
"My merry minstrel folk," quoth he,
"lay shalm and harp aside ;
Our pilgrim guest must sing a lay,
the castle's rule to hold,
And well his guerdon will I pay with
garment and with gold."—

XXXII.

"Chill flows the lay of frozen age,"
'twas thus the pilgrim sung,
"Nor golden meed nor garment gay,
unlocks his heavy tongue ;
Once did I sit, thou bridegroom gay,
at board as rich as thine,
And by my side as fair a bride with
all her charms was mine.

XXXIII.

"But time traced furrows on my
face, and I grew silver-hair'd,
For locks of brown, and cheeks of
youth, she left this brow and beard ;
Once rich, but now a palmer poor,
I tread life's latest stage,
And mingle with your bridal mirth
the lay of frozen age."

XXXIV.

It was the noble Lady there this
woful lay that hears,
And for the aged pilgrim's grief her
eye was dimm'd with tears ;
She bade her gallant cupbearer a
golden beaker take,
And bear it to the palmer poor to
quaff it for her sake.

XXXV.

It was the noble Moringer that
dropp'd amid the wine
A bridal ring of burning gold so
costly and so fine :

Now listen, gentles, to my song, it
tells you but the sooth,
'Twas with that very ring of gold
he pledged his bridal truth.

XXXVI.

Then to the cupbearer he said, "Do
me one kindly deed,
And should my better days return,
full rich shall be thy meed ;
Bear back the golden cup again to
yonder bride so gay,
And crave her of her courtesy to
pledge the palmer gray."

XXXVII.

The cupbearer was courtly bred, nor
was the boon denied,
The golden cup he took again, and
bore it to the bride ;
"Lady," he said, "your reverend
guest sends this, and bids me pray,
That, in thy noble courtesy, thou
pledge the palmer gray."

XXXVIII.

The ring hath caught the Lady's
eye, she views it close and near,
Then might you hear her shriek
aloud, "The Moringer is here !"
Then might you see her start from
seat, while tears in torrents fell.
But whether 'twas for joy or woe,
the ladies best can tell.

XXXIX.

But loud she utter'd thanks to
Heaven, and every saintly power,
That had return'd the Moringer
before the midnight hour ;
And loud she utter'd vow on vow,
that never was there bride,
That had like her preserved her
truth, or been so sorely tried.

XL.

"Yes, here I claim the praise," she
said, "to constant matrons due,
Who keep the truth that they have
plight, so stedfastly and true ;

For count the term howe'er you will,
so that you count aright,
Seven twelve-months and a day are
out when bells toll twelve to-night."

XLI.

It was Marstetten then rose up, his
falchion there he drew,
He kneel'd before the Moringer, and
down his weapon threw ;
"My oath and knightly faith are
broke," these were the words he
said,
"Then take, my liege, thy vassal's
sword, and take thy vassal's head."

XLII.

The noble Moringer he smiled, and
then aloud did say,
"He gathers wisdom that hath
room'd seven twelve-months and
a day ;
My daughter now hath fifteen years,
fame speaks her sweet and fair,
I give her for the bride you lose,
and name her for my heir.

XLIII.

"The young bridegroom hath youthful
bride, the old bridegroom the old,
Whose faith was kept till term and
tide so punctually were told ;
But blessings on the warder kind
that oped my castle gate,
For had I come at morrow tide, I
came a day too late."

THE ERL-KING.

FROM THE GERMAN OF GOETHE.

(The Erl-King is a goblin that haunts
the Black Forest in Thuringia—To be
read by a candle particularly long in
the snuff.)

O, WHO rides by night thro' the
woodland so wild ?
It is the fond father embracing his
child ;

And close the boy nestles within his
loved arm,
To hold himself fast, and to keep
himself warm.

“O father, see yonder! see yonder!”
he says;

“My boy, upon what doest thou
fearfully gaze?”—

“O, ’tis the Erl-King with his crown
and his shroud.”

“No, my son, it is but a dark
wreath of the cloud.”

(The Erl-King speaks.)

“O come and go with me, thou
loveliest child;

By many a gay sport shall thy time
be beguiled;

My mother keeps for thee full many
a fair toy,

And many a fine flower shall she
pluck for my boy.”

“O, father, my father, and did you
not hear

The Erl-King whisper so low in
my ear?”—

“Be still, my heart’s darling—my
child, be at ease;

It was but the wild blast as it sung
thro’ the trees.”

Erl-King.

“O wilt thou go with me, thou
loveliest boy?”

My daughter shall tend thee with
care and with joy;

She shall bear thee so lightly thro’
wet and thro’ wild,

And press thee, and kiss thee, and
sing to my child.”

“O father, my father, and saw you
not plain,

The Erl-King’s pale daughter glide
past thro’ the rain?”—

“O yes, my loved treasure, I knew
it full soon;

It was the gray willow that danced
to the moon.”

Erl-King.

“O come and go with me, no longer
delay,

Or else silly child, I will drag thee
away.”—

“O father! O father! now, now
keep your hold,

The Erl-King has seized me—his
grasp is so cold.”

Sore trembled the father; he spurr’d
thro’ the wild,

Clasping close to his bosom his
shuddering child;

He reaches his dwelling in doubt
and in dread,

But, clasp’d to his bosom, the infant
was *dead!*”

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 Upsey-
 frees,
 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.

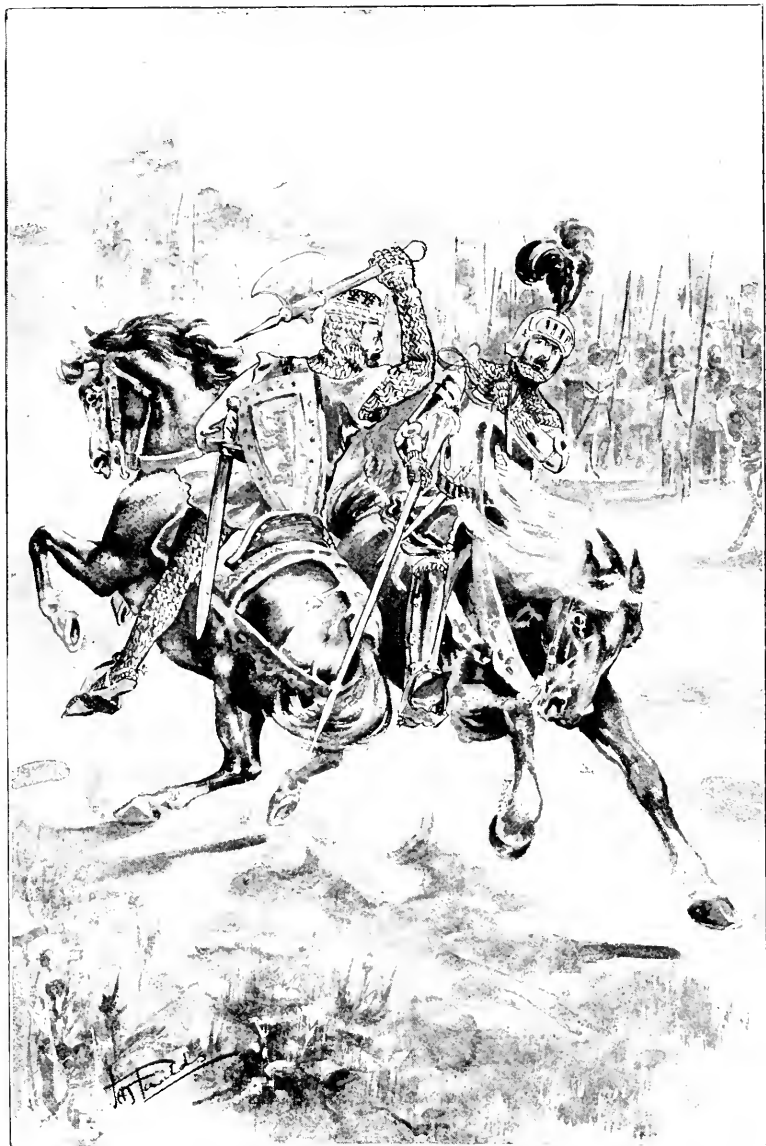
BY CAPTAIN WAVERLEY.

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 blackened
 cheek,
 And bade his surge in thunder speak.





"He spurr'd his steed, he couch'd his lance,
And darted on the Bruce at once."

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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 SONG.

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.
sc.

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 !

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 be-
numb'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 high !

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, Glen-
garry, and Sleat !
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-Shimeì 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!

Chap. xxii.

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 1640.

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, 'midstorms 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 bend-
ing,
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.

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.

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.

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 moon-
light,
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.

HERE has been such a stormy encounter
Betwixt my cousin Captain, and this
soldier,
About I know not what!—nothing,
indeed;
Competitions, degrees, and com-
paratives
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 argu-
ment
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.

REMORSE—she ne'er forsakes us!—
A bloodhound stanch—she tracks
our rapid step
Through the wild labyrinth of youth-
ful 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 you
 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.

Old Play.

Chap. xliii.

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.

Old Play.

Chap. xlv.

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. vi.

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 lilye 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.

Old Ballad.

Chap. x.

'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 over-
throw.
Chap. xix.

VERSES FOUND IN BOTH- WELL'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 ap-
 prove 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 masterless,
 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 astound-
 ing,
 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, Gar-
 onne,
 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 youth-
ful 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.
Chap. x.

Anonymous.

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 bon lage 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 brace’ets strong,

And meriy 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, out-
stretchèd lie,
Shut out from all the fair creation
offers ?

Ethwald, Act i. Sc. i.

Chap. ix.

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.

Love's Pilgrimage.

Chap. xi.

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.

Wit without Money.

Chap. xiii.

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.

The French Courtezan.

Chap. xviii.

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.

The Hog hath lost his Pearl.

Chap. xix.

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.

Chap. xxvii. *Old Play.*

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 gills 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 un-
known,

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 twelve-
month 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 Bare-
footed 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 Bare-
footed 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 undeniable right of the Bare-
footed 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 Bare-
footed 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 pros-
 perous 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 censor 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 for h,
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.
Chap. xl.

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. xlii.

MOTTOES.

AWAY ! our journey lies through dell
and dingle,
Where the blithe fawn trips by its
timid mother,
Where the broad oak, with intercept-
ing boughs,
Chequers the sunbeam in the green-
sward 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.
Chap. xviii. *Ettrick Forest.*

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.

The Hermit of St. Clement's Well.

Chap. xx.

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.

Orra, a Tragedy.

Chap. xxi.

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.

Old Song.

Chap. xxvi.

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 dis-
 cipline.
 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 fathom-
less 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
 bath 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 swim-
 ming with me.
 Chap. v.

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 lack 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.

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!

¹ *Sackless*—Innocent.

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 idleness 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 hope-
 less 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 wizard far than I
 Wields o'er the universe his power ;
 Him owns the eagle in the sky,
 The turtle in the bower.
 Changeeful 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 changeful
 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, Etrick, and Teviot-
dale,

Why the deil dinna ye march
forward in order ?

March, march, Eskdale and Liddes-
dale,

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 or 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,

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 FARE- WELL.

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.
Chap. i. *Old Play.*

IN yon lone vale his early youth was
bred,
Not solitary then—the bugle-horn
Of fell Alecto often waked its wind-
ings,
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.
Chap. ii. *Old Play.*

A PRIEST, ye cry, a priest !—lame
shepherds they,
How shall they gather in the strag-
gling 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.
Chap. v. *The Reformation.*

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
 greensward,
 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.
New Play.

Chap. xiv.

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.

Old Play.

Chap. xv.

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!

Old Play.

Chap. xix.

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.

Love's Pilgrimage.

Chap. xx.

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.

Old Play.

Chap. xxi.

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.

Old Play.

Chap. xxii.

'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.

Old Play.

Chap. xxiii.

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.

Old Play.

Chap. xxiv.

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.

Old Play.

Chap. xxvii.

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.

Old Play.

Chap. xxx.

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.

Old Play.

Chap. xxxi.

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.

Old Play.

Chap. xxxiii.

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 hogs-
heads; turn them out
Thus primed with your good cheer,
to guard your wall,
And they will venture for't.

Old Play.

Chap. xxxiv.

FROM THE ABBOT.

THE PARDONER'S ADVER- TISEMENT.

LISTNETH, gode people, everiche one,
For in the lond of Babylone,
Far eastward I wot it lyeth,
And is the first lond the sonne espieth,
Ther, as he cometh fro out the sé;
In this ilk lond, 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 bodie 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.

Old Play.

Chap. v.

THOU hast each secret of the house-
hold, 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.

Old Play.

Chap. vi.

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!

Rediviva.

Chap. viii.

KNEEL with me, swear it! 'Tis not
in words I trust,
Save when they're fenced with an
appeal to Heaven.

Old Play.

Chap. ix.



“The wide plain thundered to their tread
As far as Stirling Kook.”

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.

Old Play.

Chap. xi.

NAV, 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.

Old Play.

Chap. xii.

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 !

Athelstane, or the Converted Dane.

Chap. xiii.

NOR 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.

The Conspiracy.

Chap. xiv.

YOUTH ! thou wear'st to manhood now

Darker lip and darker brow,
Statelier step, more pensive mien,

In thy face and gait are seen :

sc.

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.

Life, a Poem.

Chap. xvi.

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.

Albion, a Poem.

Chap. xviii.

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.

Old Play.

Chap. xix.

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.

Old Play.

Chap. xx.

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,
dimm'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.

The Spanish Father.

Chap. xxxiii.

AY, Pedro? Come you here with
mask and lantern,
Ladder of ropes, and other moon-
shine 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.

The Spanish Father.

Chap. xxxiv.

IT is a time of danger, not of revel,
When churchmen turn to masquers.

The Spanish Father.

Chap. xxxv.

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.

The Spanish Father.

Chap. xxxvii.

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
enfold,

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.

NAV, 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,

The Deceiver, a Tragedy.

Chap. v.

THIS is He
 Who rides on the court-gale; con-
 trols 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
 brulziement,
 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 pil-
 grimage!
 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.
The Virgin Queen, a Tragi-Comedy.
 Chap. xxx.

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.

Old Play.

Chap. xxxii.

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.

The Woodsman.

Chap. xxxiii.

HIGH o'er the eastern steep the sun
 is beaming,
 And darkness flies with her deceitful
 shadows ;
 So truth prevails o'er falsehood.

Old Play.

Chap. xl.

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, view-
less 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 stoapest 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, yell-
ing,
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 horse-
 men,
 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 vœ,
 Where your daring shallows 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 Foūlah'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 votaress 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-geese, unskill'd to fly,
 Must be content to glide along,
 Where seal and sea-dog list his song.

CLAUD HALCRO.

Be mine the Imber-geese 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 merchan-
 dise,
 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 Haa. 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 !

CLAUD HALCRO'S VERSES.

AND you shall deal the funeral dole ;
Ay, deal it, mother mine,
To weary body, and to heavy soul,
The white bread and the wine.

And you shall deal my horses of pride ;
Ay, deal them, mother mine ;
And you shall deal my lands so wide,
And deal my castles nine.

But deal not vengeance for the deed,
And deal not for the crime ;
The body to its place, and the soul to
Heaven's grace,
And the rest in God's own time.

SAINT MAGNUS control thee, that
martyr of treason ;
Saint Ronan rebuke thee, with rhyme
and with reason ;
By the mass of Saint Martin, the
might of Saint Mary,
Be thou gone, or thy weird shall be
worse if thou tarry !
If of good, go hence and hallow
thee ;—
If of ill, let the earth swallow
thee ;—
If thou'rt of air, let the gray mist fold
thee ;—
If of earth, let the swart mine hold
thee ;—
If a Pixie, seek thy ring ;—
If a Nixie, seek thy spring ;—
If on middle earth thou'st been
Slave of sorrow, shame, and sin,
Hast eat the bread of toil and
strife,
And dree'd the lot which men
call life ;
Begone to thy stone ! for thy coffin is
scant of thee,
The worm, thy play-fellow, wails for
the want of thee :
Hence, houseless ghost ! let the earth
hide thee,
Till Michael shall blow the blast, see
that there thou bide thee !—
Phantom, fly hence ! take the Cross
for a token,
Hence pass till Hallowmass !—my
spell is spoken.

WHERE corpse-light
Dances bright,
Be it by day or night,
Be it by light or dark,
There shall corpse lie stiff and stark.

MENSEFUL maiden ne'er should rise,
Till the first beam tinge the skies ;

Silk-fringed eyelids still should close,
Till the sun has kiss'd the rose ;
Maiden's foot we should not view,
Mark'd with tiny print on dew,
Till the opening flowerets spread
Carpet meet for beauty's tread.

Chap. xxiii.

NORNA'S INCANTATIONS.

CHAMPION, famed for warlike toil,
Art thou silent, Ribolt Troil ?
Sand, and dust, and pebbly stones,
Are leaving bare thy giant bones.
Who dared touch the wild bear's skin
Ye slumber'd on, while life was in ?
A woman now, or babe, may come
And cast the covering from thy tomb.

Yet be not wrathful, Chief, nor blight
Mine eyes or ears with sound or
sight !

I come not, with unhallow'd tread,
To wake the slumbers of the dead,
Or lay thy giant reliques bare ;
But what I seek thou well canst
spare.

Be it to my hand allow'd
To shear a merk's weight from thy
shroud ;

Yet leave thee sheeted lead enough
To shield thy bones from weather
rough.

See, I draw my magic knife :
Never, while thou wert in life,
Lay'st thou still for sloth or fear,
When point and edge were glittering
near ;

See, the cerements now I sever—
Waken now, or sleep for ever !
Thou wilt not wake—the deed is
done !

The prize I sought is fairly won.

Thanks, Ribolt, thanks ; for this the
sea

Shall smooth its ruffled crest for thee,
And while afar its billows foam,
Subside to peace near Ribolt's tomb.

Thanks, Ribolt, thanks ; for this the
might
Of wild winds raging at their height,
When to thy place of slumber nigh,
Shall soften to a lullaby.

She, the dame of doubt and dread,
Norna of the Fitful-head,
Mighty in her own despite,
Miserable in her might,
In despair and frenzy great,
In her greatness desolate,
Wisest, wickedest who lives,—
Well can keep the word she gives.
Chap. xxv.

AT INTERVIEW WITH MINNA.

Thou, so needful, yet so dread,
With cloudy crest, and wing of red ;
Thou, without whose genial breath
The North would sleep the sleep of
death ;

Who deign'st to warm the cottage
hearth,

Yet hurls proud palaces to earth,—
Brightest, keenest of the Powers,
Which form and rule this world of
ours,

With my rhyme of Runic, I
Thank thee for thy agency.

Old Reimkennar, to thy art
Mother Hertha sends her part ;
She, whose gracious bounty gives
Needful food for all that lives.
From the deep mine of the North
Came the mystic metal forth,
Doom'd amidst disjointed stones,
Long to cere a champion's bones,
Disinhumed my charms to aid—
Mother Earth, my thanks are paid.

Girdle of our islands dear,
Element of Water, hear !
Thou whose power can overwhelm
Broken mounds and ruin'd realm
On the lowly Belgian strand ;
All thy fiercest rage can never
Of our soil a furlong sever
From our rock-defended land ;

Play then gently thou thy part,
To assist old Norna's art.

Elements, each other greeting,
Gifts and power attend your meeting.

Thou, that over billows dark
Safely send'st the fisher's bark,
Giving him a path and motion
Through the wilderness of ocean ;
Thou, that when the billows brave ye,
O'er the shelves canst drive the
navy,—

Didst thou chafe as one neglected,
While thy brethren were respected ?
To appease thee, see, I tear
This full grasp of grizzled hair ;
Oft thy breath hath through it sung,
Softening to my magic tongue ;
Now, 'tis thine to bid it fly
Through the wide expanse of sky,
'Mid the countless swarms to sail
Of wild-fowl wheeling on thy gale ;
Take thy portion and rejoice,—
Spirit, thou hast heard my voice !

She who sits by haunted well,
Is subject to the Nixie's spell ;
She who walks on lonely beach,
To the Mermaid's charmed speech ;
She who walks round ring of green,
Offends the peevish Fairy Queen ;
And she who takes rest in the
Dwarfie's cave,
A weary weird of woe shall have.

By ring, by spring, by cave, by shore,
Minna Troil has braved all this and
more ;
And yet hath the root of her sorrow
and ill,
A source that's more deep and more
mystical still.

Thou art within a demon's hold,
More wise than Heims, more strong
than Troll ;
No siren sings so sweet as he,
No fay springs lighter on the lea ;
No elfin power hath half the art
To soothe, to move, to wring the
heart,—

Life-blood from the cheek to drain,
Drench the eye, and dry the vein.
Maiden, ere we farther go,
Dost thou note me, ay or no !

MINNA.

I mark thee, my mother, both word,
look, and sign ;
Speak on with thy riddle—to read it
be mine.

NORNA.

Mark me ! for the word I speak
Shall bring the colour to thy cheek.
This leaden heart, so light of cost,
The symbol of a treasure lost,
Thou shalt wear in hope and in peace,
That the cause of thy sickness and
sorrow may cease,
When crimson foot meets crimson
hand
In the Martyr's Aisle, and in Orkney
land.
Be patient, be patient ; for Patience
hath power
To ward us in danger, like mantle in
shower ;
A fairy gift you best may hold
In a chain of fairy gold ;
The chain and the gift are each a
true token,
That not without warrant old Norna
hath spoken ;
But thy nearest and dearest must
never behold them,
Till time shall accomplish the truths
I have told them.
Chap. xxviii.

BRYCE SNAILSFOOT'S
ADVERTISEMENT.

POOR sinners whom the snake
deceives,
Are fain to cover them with leaves.
Zetland hath no leaves, 'tis true,
Because that trees are none, or few,
But we have flax and taits of woo',
For linen cloth and wadmaal blue ;

And we have many foreign knacks
 Of finer waft, than woo' or flax.
 Ye gallant Lambmas lads appear,
 And bring your Lambmas sisters
 here,
 Bryce Snailsfoot spares not cost or
 care,
 To pleasure every gentle pair.
 Chap. xxxii.

MOTTOES.

'Tis not alone the scene; the man,
 Anselmo,
 The man finds sympathies in these
 wild wastes,
 And roughly tumbling seas, which
 fairer views
 And smoother waves deny him.
 Ancient Drama.

Chap. ii.

THIS is no pilgrim's morning: yon
 gray mist
 Lies upon hill and dale, and field and
 forest,
 Like the dun wimple of a new-made
 widow.
 And, by my faith, although my heart
 be soft,
 I'd rather hear that widow weep and
 sigh,
 And tell the virtues of the dear
 departed,
 Than, when the tempest sends his
 voice abroad,
 Be subject to its fury.

The Double Nuptials.

Chap. iv.

SHE does no work by halves, yon
 raving ocean;
 Engulphing those she strangles, her
 wild womb
 Affords the mariners whom she hath
 dealt on,
 Their death at once, and sepulchre.

Old Play.

Chap. vii.

THIS is a gentle trader, and a prudent.
 He's no Autolycus, to blear your eye,
 With quips of worldly gauds and
 gamesomeness;
 But seasons all his glittering mer-
 chandise
 With wholesome doctrine suited to
 the use,
 As men sauce goose with sage and
 rosemary.

Old Play.

Chap. ix.

ALL your ancient customs,
 And long-descended usages, I'll
 change.
 Ye shall not eat, nor drink, nor
 speak, nor move,
 Think, look, or walk, as ye were
 wont to do;
 Even your marriage-beds shall know
 mutation;
 The bride shall have the stock, the
 groom the wall;
 For all old practice will I turn and
 change,
 And call it reformation — marry,
 will I!

'Tis Even that we're at Odds.

Chap. xi.

WE'LL keep our customs—what is
 law itself,
 But old establish'd custom! What
 religion,
 (I mean, with one-half of the men that
 use it,)
 Save the good use and wont that
 carries them
 To worship how and where their
 fathers worshipp'd?
 All things resolve in custom—we'll
 keep ours.

Old Play.

Chap. xiv.

SEE yonder woman, whom our swains
 revere,
 And dread in secret, while they take
 her counsel
 When sweetheart shall be kind, or
 when cross dame shall die;

Where lurks the thief who stole the
 silver tankard,
 And how the pestilent murrain may
 be cured ;—
 This sage adviser's mad, stark mad,
 my friend ;
 Yet, in her madness, hath the art
 and cunning
 To wring fools' secrets from their
 inmost bosoms,
 And pay inquirers with the coin they
 gave her.

Old Play.

Chap. xxix.

WHAT ho, my jovial mates ! come
 on ! we'll frolic it
 Like fairies frisking in the merry
 moonshine,
 Seen by the curtal friar, who, from
 some christening,
 Or some blithe bridal, hies belated
 cell-ward ;—
 He starts, and changes his bold
 bottle swagger
 To churchman's pace professional,
 and, ransacking
 His treacherous memory for some
 holy hymn,
 Finds but the roundel of the midnight
 catch.

Old Play.

Chap. xxx.

I STRIVE like to the vessel in the tide-
 way,
 Which, lacking favouring breeze,
 hath not the power
 To stem the powerful current.
 Even so,
 Resolving daily to forsake my vices,
 Habit, strong circumstance, renew'd
 temptation,
 Sweep me to sea again. O heavenly
 breath,
 Fill thou my sails, and aid the feeble
 vessel,
 Which ne'er can reach the blessed
 port without thee !

'Tis Odds when Evens meet.

Chap. xxxii.

PARENTAL love, my friend, has
 power o'er wisdom,
 And is the charm, which, like the
 falconer's lure,
 Can bring from heaven the highest
 soaring spirits.
 So, when famed Prosper doff'd his
 magic robe,
 It was Miranda pluck'd it from his
 shoulders.

Old Play.

Chap. xxxiii.

HARK to the insult loud, the bitter
 sneer,
 The fierce threat answering to the
 brutal jeer ;
 Oaths fly like pistol-shots, and venge-
 ful words
 Clash with each other like conflicting
 swords.
 The robber's quarrel by such sounds
 is shown,
 And true men have some chance to
 gain their own.

Captivity, a Poem.

Chap. xxxiv.

FROM THE FORTUNES OF NIGEL.

MOTTOES.

Now Scot and English are agreed,
 And Saunders hastes to cross the
 Tweed,
 Where, such the splendours that
 attend him,
 His very mother scarce had ken'd him,
 His metamorphosis behold,
 From Glasgow frieze to cloth of gold ;
 His back-sword, with the iron hilt,
 To rapier, fairly hatch'd and gilt ;
 Was ever seen a gallant braver !
 His very bonnet's grown a beaver.

The Reformation.

Chap. i.

Thus, sir, is one among the Seignory,
 Has wealth at will, and will to use
 his wealth,

And wit to increase it. Marry, his
 worst folly
 Lies in a thriftless sort of charity,
 That goes a-gadding sometimes after
 objects,
 Which wise men will not see when
 thrust upon them.

The Old Couple.

Chap. ii.

Ay, sir, the clouted shoe hath oftimes
 craft in't,
 As says the rustic proverb ; and your
 citizen,
 In's program suit, gold chain, and
 well-black'd shoes,
 Bears under his flat cap oftimes a
 brain
 Wiser than burns beneath the cap
 and feather,
 Or seethes within the statesman's
 velvet nightcap.

Read me my Riddle.

Chap. iv.

WHEREFORE come ye not to court?
 Certain 'tis the rarest sport ;
 There are silks and jewels glistening,
 Prattling fools and wise men listening,
 Bullies among brave men justling,
 Beggars amongst nobles bustling ;
 Low-breath'd talkers, minion lispers,
 Cutting honest throats by whispers ;
 Wherefore come ye not to court ?
 Skelton swears 'tis glorious sport.

Skelton Skeltonizeth.

Chap. v.

O, I do know him ; 'tis the mouldy
 lemon
 Which our court wits will wet their
 lips withal,
 When they would sauce their honied
 conversation
 With somewhat sharper flavour.
 Marry, sir,
 That virtue's wellnigh left him ; all
 the juice
 That was so sharp and poignant, is
 squeezed out ;
 While the poor rind, although as
 sour as ever,

Must season soon the draff we give
 our grunterns,
 For two-legg'd things are weary on't.
The Chamberlain—A Comedy.
 Chap. vi.

THINGS needful we have thought on ;
 but the thing
 Of all most needful—that which
 Scripture terms,
 As if alone it merited regard,
 The ONE thing needful—that's yet
 unconsider'd.

The Chamberlain.

Chap. vii.

AH! mark the matron well—and
 laugh not, Harry,
 At her old steeple-hat and velvet
 guard—
 I've call'd her like the ear of
 Dionysius ;
 I mean that ear-form'd vault, built
 o'er the dungeon,
 To catch the groans and discontented
 murmurs
 Of his poor bondsmen. Even so doth
 Martha
 Drink up, for her own purpose, all
 that passes,
 Or is supposed to pass, in this wide
 city ;
 She can retail it too, if that her profit
 Shall call on her to do so ; and retail it
 For your advantage, so that you can
 make

Your profit jump with hers.

The Conspiracy.

Chap. viii.

BID not thy fortune troll upon the
 whirls
 Of yonder dancing cubes of mottled
 bone ;
 And drown it not, like Egypt's royal
 harlot,
 Dissolving her rich pearl in the
 brimm'd wine-cup.
 These are the arts, Lothario, which
 shrink acres
 Into brief yards—bring sterling
 pounds to farthings,

Credit to infamy ; and the poor gull,
Who might have lived an honour'd,
easy life,
To ruin, and an unregarded grave.

The Changes.

Chap. x.

THIS is the very barn-yard,
Where muster daily the prime cocks
o' the game,
Ruffle their pinions, crow till they
are hoarse,
And spar about a barleycorn. Here,
too, chickens,
The callow, unfledged brood of
forward folly,
Learn first to rear the crest, and aim
the spur,
And tune their note like full-plumed
Chanticleer

The Bear Garden.

Chap. xii.

LET the proud salmon gorge the
feather'd hook,
Then strike, and then you have him.
He will wince ;
Spin out your line that it shall whistle
from you
Some twenty yards or so, yet you
shall have him.
Marry ! you must have patience ; the
stout rock
Which is his trust, hath edges some-
thing sharp ;
And the deep pool hath ooze and
sludge enough
To mar your fishing—'less you are
more careful.

Albion or the Double Kings.

Chap. xiii.

GIVE way ! give way ! I must and
will have justice ;
And tell me not of privilege and place ;
Where I am injured, there I'll sue
redress.
Look to it, every one who bars my
access ;
I have a heart to feel the injury,

A hand to right myself, and, by my
honour,
That hand shall grasp what gray-
beard Law denies me.

The Chamberlain.

Chap. xvi.

COME hither, young one. Mark me !
Thou art now
'Mongst men o' the sword, that live
by reputation
More than by constant income.
Single-suited
They are, I grant you ; yet each
single suit
Maintains, on the rough guess, a
thousand followers ;
And they be men, who, hazarding
their all,
Needful apparel, necessary income,
And human body, and immortal soul,
Do in the very deed but hazard
nothing—
So strictly is that ALL bound in
reversion ;
Clothes to the broker, income to the
usurer,
And body to disease, and soul to the
foul fiend ;
Who laughs to see Soldadoes and
fooladoes,
Play better than himself his game on
earth.

The Mohocks.

Chap. xvii.

Mother. What ! dazzled by a flash
of Cupid's mirror
With which the boy, as mortal
urchins wont,
Flings back the sunbeam in the eye
of passengers,
Then laughs to see them stumble !
Daughter. Mother ! no ;
It was a lightning-flash which
dazzled me,
And never shall these eyes see true
again.

*Beef and Pudding,
An Old English Comedy.*

Chap. xviii.

By this good light, a wench of match-
less mettle!

This were a leaguer-lass to love a
soldier,
To bind his wounds, and kiss his
bloody brow,
And sing a roundel as she help'd to
arm him,
Though the rough foeman's drums
were beat so nigh,
They seem'd to bear the burden.

Old Play.

Chap. xix.

CREDIT me, friend, it hath been ever
thus,
Since the ark rested on Mount Ararat.
False man hath sworn, and woman
hath believed—
Repented and reproach'd, and then
believed once more.

The New World.

Chap. xx.

ROVE not from pole to pole—the man
lives here
Whose razor's only equall'd by his
beer;
And where, in either sense, the
cockney-put
May, if he pleases, get confounded *cut*.

*For the Sign of an Alehouse
kept by a Barber.*

Chap. xxi.

CHANCE will not do the work, Chance
sends the breeze;
But if the pilot slumber at the helm,
The very wind that wafts us towards
the port
May dash us on the shelves. The
steersman's part is vigilance,
Blow it or rough or smooth.

Old Play.

Chap. xxii.

THIS is the time: Heaven's maiden-
sentinel
Hath quitted her high watch; the
lesser spangles

Are paling one by one; give me the
ladder

And the short lever; bid Antony
Keep with his carabine the wicket-
gate;

And do thou bare thy knife and follow
me,

For we will in and do it. Darkness
like this

Is dawning of our fortunes.

Old Play.

Chap. xxiv.

DEATH finds us 'mid our playthings
—snatches us,

As a cross nurse might do a wayward
child,

From all our toys and baubles. His
rough call

Unlooses all our favourite ties on
earth;

And well if they are such as may be
answer'd

In yonder world, where all is judged
of truly.

Old Play.

Chap. xxv.

GIVE us good voyage, gentle stream;
we stun not

Thy sober ear with sounds of
revelry,

Wake not the slumbering echoes of
thy banks

With voice of flute and horn; we do
but seek

On the broad pathway of thy swelling
bosom

To glide in silent safety.

The Double Bridal.

Chap. xxvi.

THIS way lie safety and a sure
retreat;

Yonder lie danger, shame, and
punishment.

Most welcome danger then—nay, let
me say,

Though spoke with swelling heart—
welcome e'en shame;

And welcome punishment—for, call
me guilty,
I do but pay the tax that's due to
justice;
And call me guiltless, then that
punishment
Is shame to those alone who do
inflict it.

The Tribunal.

Chap. xxvii.

How fares the man on whom good
men would look
With eyes where scorn and censure
combated,
But that kind Christian love hath
taught the lesson—
That they who merit most contempt
and hate,
Do most deserve our pity.

Old Play.

Chap. xxix.

MARRY, come up, sir, with your gentle
blood!
Here's a red stream beneath this
coarse blue doublet,
That warms the heart as kindly as if
drawn
From the far source of old Assyrian
kings,
Who first made mankind subject to
their sway.

Old Play.

Chap. xxxi.

WE are not worse at once : the course
of evil
Begins so slowly, and from such
slight source,
An infant's hand might stem its
breach with clay;
But let the stream get deeper, and
philosophy—
Ay, and religion too,—shall strive in
vain
To turn the headlong torrent.

Old Play.

Chap. xxxv.

FROM PEVERIL OF THE PEAK.

MOTTOES.

WHY then, we will have bellowing
of beeves,
Broaching of barrels, brandishing of
spigots;
Blood shall flow freely, but it shall
be gore
Of herds and flocks, and venison and
poultry,
Join'd to the brave heart's-blood of
John-a-Barleycorn!

Old Play.

Chap. ii.

HERE's neither want of appetites nor
mouths;
Pray Heaven we be not scant of
meat or mirth!

Old Play.

Chap. iii.

NO, sir, I will not pledge: I'm one
of those
Who think good wine needs neither
bush nor preface
To make it welcome. If you doubt
my word,
Fill the quart-cup, and see if I will
choke on't.

Old Play.

Chap. iv.

Ascato. Can she not speak?
Oswald. If speech be only in ac-
cented sounds,
Framed by the tongue and lips, the
maiden's dumb;
But if by quick and apprehensive
look,
By motion, sign, and glance, to give
each meaning,
Express as clothed in language, be
term'd speech,
She hath that wondrous faculty; for
her eyes,

Like the bright stars of heaven, can
hold discourse,
Though it be mute and soundless.

Old Play.

Chap. xvi.

THIS is a love meeting! See the
maiden mourns,
And the sad suitor bends his looks
on earth.

There's more hath pass'd between
them than be'ongs
To Love's sweet sorrows.

Old Play.

Chap. xvii.

Now, hoist the anchor, mates; and
let the sails
Give their broad bosom to the luxom
wind,
Like lass that woos a lover.

Anonymous.

Chap. xix.

HE was a fellow in a peasant's garb;
Yet one could censure you a wood-
cock's carving,
Like any courtier at the ordinary.

The Ordinary.

Chap. xxii.

WE meet, as men see phantoms in a
dream,
Which glide and sigh, and sign, and
move their lips,
But make no sound; or, if they utter
voice,
'Tis but a low and undistinguish'd
moaning,
Which has nor word nor sense of
utter'd sound.

The Chieftain.

Chap. xxiv.

THE course of human life is change-
ful still
As is the fickle wind and wandering
rill;
Or, like the light dance which the
wild breeze weaves
Amidst the faded race of tallen
. leaves;

Which now its breath bears down,
now tosses high,
Beats to the earth, or wafts to middle
sky.

Such, and so varied, the precarious
play
Of fate with man, frail tenant of a
day!

Anonymous.

Chap. xxv.

NECESSITY, thou best of peacemakers,
As well as surest prompter of in-
vention—
Help us to composition!

Anonymous.

Chap. xxvi.

THIS is some creature of the elements
Most like your sea-gull. He can
wheel and whistle
His screaming song, e'en when the
storm is loudest;
Take for his sheeted couch the rest-
less foam
Of the wild wave-crest; slumber in
the calm,
And dally with the storm. Yet 'tis
a gull,
An arrant gull, with all this.

The Chieftain.

Chap. xxvii.

I FEAR the devil worst when gown
and cassock,
Or, in the lack of them, old Calvin's
cloak,
Conceals his cloven hoof.

Anonymous.

Chap. xxxi.

'TIS the black ban-dog of our jail.
Pray look on him,
But at a wary distance; rouse him
not—
He bays not till he worries.

The Black Dog of Newgate.

Chap. xxxiii.

"SPEAK not of niceness, when
there's chance of wreck,"
The captain said, as ladies writhed
their neck

To see the dying dolphin flap the
deck :

"If we go down, on us these gentry
sup ;

We dine upon them, if we haul them
up.

Wise men applaud us when we eat
the eaters,

As the devil laughs when keen folks
cheat the cheaters."

The Sea Voyage.

Chap. xxxviii.

CONTENTIONS fierce,
Ardent, and dire, spring from no
petty cause,

Albion.

Chap. xl.

HE came amongst them like a new-
raised spirit,

To speak of dreadful judgments that
impend,

And of the wrath to come.

The Reformer.

Chap. xliii.

AND some for safety took the dread-
ful leap ;

Some for the voice of Heaven seem'd
calling them ;

Some for advancement, or for lucre's
sake —

I leap'd in frolic.

The Dream.

Chap. xlv.

HIGH feasting was there there ; the
gilded roofs

Rung to the wassail-health ; the
dancer's step

Sprung to the chord responsive ; the
gay gamester

To fate's disposal flung his heap of
gold,

And laughed alike when it increased
or lessen'd :

Such virtue hath court-air to teach
us patience

Which schoolmen preach in vain.

Why come ye not to Court ?

Chap. xlv.

HERE stand I tight and trim,

Quick of eye, though little of limb ;

He who denieth the word I have
spoken,

Betwixt him and me shall lances be
broken.

Lay of the Little John de Saintré.

Chap. xlvii.

FROM QUENTIN DURWARD.

COUNTY GUY.

Al! County Guy, the hour is nigh,

The sun has left the lea,

The orange flower perfumes the
bower,

The breeze is on the sea.

The lark, his lay who thrill'd all day,

Sits hush'd his partner nigh ;

Breeze, bird, and flower, confess the
hour,

But where is County Guy ?

The village maid steals through the
shade,

Her shepherd's suit to hear ;

To beauty shy, by lattice high,

Sings high-born Cavalier.

The star of Love, all stars above,

Now reigns o'er earth and sky ;

And high and low the influence
know,

But where is County Guy ?

Chap. iv.

MOTTOES.

FULL in the midst a mighty pile
arose

Where iron - grated gates their
strength oppose

To each invading step ; and strong
 and steep
 The 'battled walls rose up, the fosse
 sunk deep.
 Slow round the fortress rolled the
 sluggish stream,
 And high in middle air the warder's
 turrets gleam.

Anonymous.

Chap. iii.

PAINTERS show Cupid blind. Hath
 Hymen eyes ?
 Or is his sight warp'd by those spec-
 tacles
 Which parents, guardians, and ad-
 visers lend him,
 That he may look through them on
 lands and mansions,
 On jewels, gold, and all such rich
 donations,
 And see their value ten times
 magnified?—

Methinks 'twill brook a question.

The Miseries of Enforced Marriage.

Chap. xi.

THIS is a lecturer so skill'd in policy,
 That (no disparagement to Satan's
 cunning)
 He well might read a lesson to the
 devil,
 And teach the old seducer new
 temptations.

Old Play.

Chap. xii.

TALK not of kings—I scorn the poor
 comparison :
 I am a sage, and can command the
 elements ;
 At least men think I can ; and on
 that thought
 I found unbounded empire.

Albumazar.

Chap. xiii.

I SEE thee yet, fair France—thou
 favour'd land
 Of art and nature—thou art still
 before me ;

Thy sons, to whom their labour is a
 sport,
 So well thy grateful soil returns its
 tribute ;
 Thy sun-burnt daughters, with their
 laughing eyes
 And glossy raven - locks. But,
 favour'd France,
 Thou hast had many a tale of woe
 to tell,
 In ancient times as now.

Anonymous.

Chap. xiv.

HE was a son of Egypt, as he told
 me,
 And one descended from those dread
 magicians,
 Who waged rash war, when Israel
 dwelt in Goshen,
 With Israel and her Prophet—match-
 ing rod
 With his the sons of Levi's—and
 encountering
 Jehovah's miracles with incanta-
 tions,
 Till upon Egypt came the avenging
 Angel,
 And those proud sages wept for their
 first-born,
 As wept the unletter'd peasant.

Anonymous.

Chap. xv.

RESCUE or none, Sir Knight, I am
 your captive ;
 Deal with me what your nobleness
 suggests—
 Thinking the chance of war may one
 day place you
 Where I must now be reckon'd—i' the
 roll
 Of melancholy prisoners.

Anonymous.

Chap. xxiv.

NO human quality is so well wove
 In warp and woof, but there's some
 flaw in it ;
 I've known a brave man fly a shep-
 herd's cur,

A wise man so demean him, drivelling
 idioçy
 Had wellnigh been ashamed on't.
 For your crafty,
 Your worldly-wise man, he, above
 the rest,
 Weaves his own snares so fine, he's
 often caught in them.

Old Play.

Chap. xxv.

WHEN princes meet, astrologers may
 mark it
 An ominous conjunction, full of
 boding,
 Like that of Mars with Saturn.

Old Play.

Chap. xxvi.

THY time is not yet out—the devil
 thou servest
 Has not as yet deserted thee. He aids
 The friends who drudge for him, as
 the blind man
 Was aided by the guide, who lent his
 shoulder
 O'er rough and smooth, until he
 reach'd the brink
 Of the fell precipice—then hurl'd him
 downward.

Old Play.

Chap. xxix.

OUR counsels waver like the unsteady
 bark,
 That reels amid the strife of meeting
 currents.

Old Play.

Chap. xxx.

HOLD fast thy truth, young soldier.—
 Gentle maiden,
 Keep you your promise plight—leave
 age its subtleties,
 And gray-hair'd policy its maze of
 falsehood;
 But be you candid as the morning
 sky,
 Ere the high sun sucks vapours up to
 stain it.

The Trial.

Chap. xxxi.

'Tis brave for Beauty when the best
 blade wins her.

The Count Palatine.

Chap. xxxv.

FROM ST. RONAN'S WELL.

MOTTOES.

Quis novus hic hospes?

CH'M-MAID!—The Gemman in the
 front parlour!

*Boots's free Translation
 of the Aeneid.*

Chap. ii.

THERE must
 Be government in all society;
 Bees have their Queen, and stag-
 herds have their leader;
 Rome had her Consuls, Athens had
 her Archons,
 And we, sir, have our Managing
 Committee.

The Album of St. Ronan's.

Chap. iii.

COME, let me have thy counsel, for
 I need it;
 Thou art of those, who better help
 their friends
 With sage advice, than usurers with
 gold,
 Or brawlers with their swords. I'll
 trust to thee,
 For I ask only from thee words, not
 deeds.

The Devil hath met his Match.

Chap. x.

NEAREST of blood should still be next
 in love;
 And when I see these happy children
 playing,
 While William gathers flowers for
 Ellen's ringlets,
 And Ellen dresses flies for William's
 angle,
 I scarce can think, that in advancing
 life,

Coldness, unkindness, interest, or
suspicion,
Will e'er divide that unity so sacred
Which Nature bound at birth.

Anonymous.

Chap. xi.

OH! you would be a vestal maid, I
warrant,
The bride of Heaven? Come! we
may shake your purpose :
For here I bring in hand a jolly
suitor
Hath ta'en degrees in the seven
sciences
That ladies love best—he is young
and noble,
Handsome and valiant, gay and rich,
and liberal.

The Nun.

Chap. xxiii.

THOU bear'st a precious burden,
gentle post,—
Nitro and sulphur ; see that it explode
not.

Old Play.

Chap. xxvii.

It comes—it wrings me in my parting
hour,
The long-hid crime, the well-dis-
guised guilt.
Bring me some holy priest to lay the
spectre !

Old Play.

Chap. xxxii.

ON the lee-beam lies the land, boys,
See all clear to reef each course ;
Let the fore-sheet go—don't mind,
boys,
Tho' the weather should be worse,

The Storm.

Chap. xxxiii.

Sedet post equitem atra cura.

STILL though the headlong cavalier,
O'er rough and smooth, in wild
career,
Seems racing with the wind,

His sad companion, ghastly pale,
And darksome as a widow's veil,
CARE—keeps her seat behind.

Horace.

Chap. xxxv.

WHAT sheeted ghost is wandering
through the storm?
For never did a maid of middle earth
Choose such a time or spot to vent
her sorrows.

Old Play.

Chap. xxxviii.

HERE come we to our close,—for that
which follows
Is but the tale of dull, unvaried misery.
Steep crags and headlong linns may
court the pencil,
Like sudden haps, dark plots, and
strange adventures ;
But who would paint the dull and
fog-wrapt moor,
In its long tract of sterile desolation ?

Old Play.

Chap. xxxix.

FROM REDGAUNTLET.

HOPE.

As lords their labourers' hire delay,
Fate quits our toil with hopes to
come,
Which, if far short of present pay,
Still owns a debt and names a sum.

Quit not the pledge, frail sufferer,
then,
Although a distant date be given ;
Despair is treason towards men,
And blasphemy to Heaven.
Chap. x.

FROM THE BETROTHED.

SOLDIER WAKE.

SOLDIER, wake ! the day is peeping ;
Honour ne'er was won in sleeping,
Never when the sunbeams still
Lay unreflected on the hill :

'Tis when they are glinted back
 From axe and armour, spear and jack,
 That they promise future story,
 Many a page of deathless glory.
 Shields that are the foeman's terror,
 Ever are the morning's mirror.

Arm and up! the morning beam
 Hath call'd the rustic to his team,
 Hath call'd the falc'ner to the lake,
 Hath call'd the huntsman to the
 brake ;
 The early student ponders o'er
 His dusty tomes of ancient lore.
 Soldier, wake ! thy harvest, fame ;
 Thy study, conquest ; war, thy game.
 Shield, that would be foeman's terror,
 Still should gleam the morning's
 mirror.

Poor hire repays the rustic's pain ;
 More paltry still the sportsman's
 gain ;
 Vainest of all, the student's theme
 Ends in some metaphysic dream :
 Yet each is up, and each has toil'd
 Since first the peep of dawn has
 smiled ;
 And each is eagerer in his aim
 Than he who barter's life for fame.
 Up, up, and arm thee, son of terror !
 Be thy bright shield the morning's
 mirror.

Chap. xix.

THE TRUTH OF WOMAN.

WOMAN'S faith, and woman's trust—
 Write the characters in dust ;
 Stamp them on the running stream,
 Print them on the moon's pale beam,
 And each evanescent letter
 Shall be clearer, firmer, better,
 And more permanent, I ween,
 Than the thing those letters mean.

I have strain'd the spider's thread
 'Gainst the promise of a maid ;
 I have weigh'd a grain of sand
 'Gainst her plight of heart and hand ;

I told my true love of the token,
 How her faith proved light, and her
 word was broken :
 Again her word and truth she plight,
 And I believed them again ere night.
 Chap. xx.

I ASKED OF MY HARP.

I ASK'D of my harp, "Who hath
 injured thy chords?"
 And she replied, "The crooked finger,
 which I mocked in my tune."
 A blade of silver may be bended—a
 blade of steel abideth :
 Kindness fadeth away, but vengeance
 endureth.

The sweet taste of mead passeth from
 the lips,
 But they are long corroded by the
 juice of wormwood ;
 The lamb is brought to the shambles,
 but the wolf rangeth the mountain ;
 Kindness fadeth away, but vengeance
 endureth.

I asked the red-hot iron, when it
 glimmer'd on the anvil,
 "Wherefore glowest thou longer
 than the firebrand?"
 "I was born in the dark mine, and
 the brand in the pleasant green-
 wood."
 Kindness fadeth away, but vengeance
 endureth.

I ask'd the green oak of the assembly
 wherefore its boughs were dry and
 sear'd like the horns of the stag :
 And it show'd me that a small worm
 had gnaw'd its roots.
 The boy who remembered the scourge
 undid the wicket of the castle at
 midnight.
 Kindness fadeth away, but vengeance
 endureth.

Lightning destroyeth temples,
 though their spires pierce the
 clouds ;
 Storms destroy armadas, though
 their sails intercept the gale.

He that is in his glory falleth, and
that by a contemptible enemy.
Kindness fadeth away, but vengeance
endureth.
Chap. xxxi.

MOTTOES.

IN Madoc's tent the clarion sounds,
With rapid clangour hurried far ;
Each hill and dale the note rebounds,
But when return the sons of war ?
Thou, born of stern Necessity,
Dull Peace ! the valley yields to thee,
And owns thy melancholy sway.
Welsh Poem.

Chap. ii.

O, SADLY shines the morning sun
On leaguer'd castle wall,
When bastion, tower, and battlement,
Seem nodding to their fall.
Old Ballad.

Chap. vii.

NOW all ye ladies of fair Scotland,
And ladies of England that happy
would prove,
Marry never for houses, nor marry
for land,
Nor marry for nothing but only love.
Family Quarrels.

Chap. xii.

Too much rest is rust,
There's ever cheer in changing ;
We tyne by too much trust,
So we'll be up and ranging.
Old Song.

Chap. xiii.

RING out the merry bells, the bride
approaches,
The blush upon her cheek has shamed
the morning,
For that is dawning palely. Grant,
good saints,
These clouds betoken nought of evil
omen !

Old Play.

Chap. xvii.

Julia. GENTLE sir,
You are our captive,—but we'll use
you so,
That you shall think your prison joys
may match
Whate'er your liberty hath known of
pleasure.

Roderick. No, fairest, we have
trifled here too long ;
And, lingering to see your roses
blossom,
I've let my laurels wither.

Old Play.

Chap. xxvii.

FROM THE TALISMAN.

AHRIMAN.

DARK Ahriman, whom Irak still
Holds origin of woe and ill !
When, bending at thy shrine,
We view the world with troubled eye
Where see we 'neath the extended
sky,
An empire matching thine ?

If the Benigner Power can yield
A fountain in the desert field,
Where weary pilgrims drink ;
Thine are the waves that lash the
rock,
Thine the tornado's deadly shock,
Where countless navies sink !

Or if He bid the soil dispense
Balsams to cheer the sinking sense,
How few can they deliver
From lingering pains, or pang in-
tense,
Red Fever, spotted Pestilence,
The arrows of thy quiver !

Chief in Man's bosom sits thy sway,
And frequent, while in words we pray
Before another throne,
Whate'er of specious form be there,
The secret meaning of the prayer
Is, Ahriman, thine own.

Say, hast thou feeling, sense, and form,

Thunder thy voice, thy garments storm,

As Eastern Magi say ;
With sentient soul of hate and wrath,
And wings to sweep thy deadly path,
And fangs to tear thy prey ?

Or art thou mix'd in Nature's source,
An ever-operating force,
Converting good to ill ;
An evil principle innate,
Contending with our better fate,
And oh ! victorious still ?

How'er it be, dispute is vain,
On all without thou hold'st thy reign,
Nor less on all within ;
Each mortal passion's fierce career,
Love, hate, ambition, joy, and fear,
Thou goadest into sin.

When'er a sunny gleam appears,
To brighten up our vale of tears,
Thou art not distant far ;
'Mid such brief solace of our lives,
Thou whett'st our very banquet-knives,
To tools of death and war.

Thus, from the moment of our birth,
Long as we linger on the earth,
Thou rul'st the fate of men ;
Thine are the pangs of life's last hour,
And — who dare answer ? — is thy power,
Dark Spirit ! ended THEN ?
Chap. iii.

A MINSTREL'S SONG.

WHAT brave chief shall head the forces
Where the red-cross legions gather ?
Best of horsemen, best of horses,
Highest head and fairest feather.

Ask not Austria, why 'mid princes
Still her banner rises highest ;
Ask as well the strong-wing'd eagle
Why to heaven he soars the highest.
Chap. xi.

THE BLOODY VEST.

BLONDEL *sings* :—

FYTTE FIRST.

'Twas near the fair city of Benevent,
When the sun was setting on bough
and bent,
And knights were preparing in bower
and tent,
On the eve of the Baptist's tourna-
ment ;
When in Lincoln green a stripling
gent,
Well seeming a page by a princess
sent,
Wander'd the camp, and, still as he
went,
Enquired for the Englishman,
Thomas a Kent.

Far hath he fared, and farther must
fare,
Till he finds his pavilion nor stately
nor rare,—
Little save iron and steel was there ;
And, as lacking the coin to pay
armourer's care,
With his sinewy arms to the shoulders
bare,
The good knight with hammer and
file did repair
The mail that to-morrow must see
him wear,
For the honour of Saint John and
his lady fair.

" Thus speaks my lady," the page
said he,
And the knight bent lowly both head
and knee,
" She is Benevent's Princess so high
in degree,
And thou art as lowly as knight may
well be—
He that would climb so lofty a tree,
Or spring such a gulf as divides her
from thee,
Must dare some high deed, by which
all men may see
His ambition is back'd by his high
chivalrie.

"Therefore thus speaks my lady,"
 the fair page he said,
 And the knight lowly louted with
 hand and with head,
 "Fling aside the good armour in
 which thou art clad,
 And don thou this weed of her night-
 gear instead,
 For a hauberk of steel, a kirtle of
 thread :
 And charge, thus attired, in the
 tournament dread,
 And fight as thy wont is where most
 blood is shed,
 And bring honour away, or remain
 with the dead."

Untroubled in his look, and un-
 troubled in his breast,
 The knight the weed hath taken,
 and reverently hath kiss'd :
 "Now bless'd be the moment, the
 messenger be blest !
 Much honour'd do I hold me in my
 lady's high behest ;
 And say unto my lady, in this dear
 night-weed dress'd,
 To the best arm'd champion I will
 not veil my crest ;
 But if I live and bear me well 'tis
 her turn to take the test."
 Here, gentles, ends the foremost fyfte
 of the Lay of the Bloody Vest.

FYTTE SECOND.

THE Baptist's fair morrow beheld
 gallant feats—
 There was winning of honour, and
 losing of seats—
 There was hewing with falchions,
 and splintering of staves,
 The victors won glory, the vanquish'd
 won graves.
 O, many a knight there fought
 bravely and well,
 Yet one was accounted his peers to
 excel,
 And 'twas he whose sole armour on
 body and breast,
 Seem'd the weed of a damsel when
 boune for her rest.

There were some dealt him wounds
 that were bloody and sore,
 But others respected his plight, and
 forebore.

"It is some oath of honour," they
 said, "and I trow

'Twere unknighly to slay him
 achieving his vow."

Then the Prince, for his sake, bade
 the tournament cease,

He flung down his warder, the
 trumpets sung peace ;

And the judges declare, and com-
 petitors yield,

That the Knight of the Night-gear,
 was first in the field.

The feast it was nigh, and the mass
 it was nigher,

When before the fair Princess low
 louted a squire,

And deliver'd a garment unseemly to
 view,

With sword-cut and spear-thrust, all
 hack'd and pierc'd through ;

All rent and all tatter'd, all clotted
 with blood,

With foam of the horses, with dust,
 and with mud.

Not the point of that lady's small
 finger, I ween,

Could have rested on spot was un-
 sullied and clean.

"This token my master, Sir Thomas
 a Kent,

Restores to the Princess of fair
 Benevent ;

He that climbs the tall tree has won
 right to the fruit,

He that leaps the wide gulf should
 prevail in his suit ;

Through life's utmost peril the prize
 I have won,

And now must the faith of my
 mistress be shown :

For she who prompts knights on
 such danger to run,

Must avouch his true service in front
 of the sun.

“ ‘I restore,’ says my master, ‘the garment I’ve worn,
And I claim of the Princess to don it in turn ;
For its stains and its rents she should prize it the more,
Since by shame ’tis unsullied, though crimson’d with gore,’ ”
Then deep blush’d the Princess--yet kiss’d she and press’d
The blood-spotted robes to her lips and her breast.
“ Go tell my true knight, church and chamber shall show,
If I value the blood on this garment or no.”

And when it was time for the nobles to pass,
In solemn procession to minster and mass,
The first walk’d the Princess in purple and pall,
But the blood-besmeared night-robe she wore over all ;
And eke, in the hall, where they all sat at dine,
When she knelt to her father and proffer’d the wine,
Over all her rich robes and state jewels, she wore
That wimple unseemly bedabbled with gore.

Then lords whisper’d ladies, as well you may think,
And ladies replied, with nod, titter, and wink ;
And the Prince who in anger and shame had look’d down,
Turn’d at length to his daughter, and spoke with a frown :
“ Now since thou hast publish’d thy folly and guilt,
E’en atone with thy hand for the blood thou hast spilt ;
Yet sore for your boldness you both will repent,
When you wander as exiles from fair Benevent.”

Then out spoke stout Thomas, in hall where he stood,
Exhausted and feeble, but dauntless of mood :

“ The blood that I lost for this daughter of thine,
I pour’d forth as freely as flask gives its wine ;
And if for my sake she brooks penance and blame,
Do not doubt I will save her from suffering and shame ;
And light will she reckon of thy principedom and rent,
When I hail her, in England, the Countess of Kent.”
Chap. xxvi.

MOTTOES.

Now change the scene—and let the trumpets sound,
For we must rouse the lion in his lair.

Old Play.

Chap. vi.

THIS is the Prince of Leeches ; fever, plague,
Cold rheum, and hot podagra do but look on him,
And quit their grasp upon the tortured sinews.

Anonymous.

Chap. ix.

ONE thing is certain in our Northern land :
Allow that birth, or valour, wealth, or wit,
Give each precedence to their possessor,
Envy, that follows on such eminence,
As comes the lyme-hound on the roebuck’s trace,
Shall pull them down each one.

Sir David Lindsay.

Chap. xi.

You talk of Gaiety and Innocence !
 The moment when the fatal fruit was
 eaten,
 They parted ne'er to meet again ;
 and Malice
 Has ever since been playmate to
 light Gaiety,
 From the first moment when the
 smiling infant
 Destroys the flower or butterfly he
 toys with,
 To the last chuckle of the dying
 miser,
 Who on his deathbed laughs his last
 to hear
 His wealthy neighbour has become a
 bankrupt.
 Chap. xiii. *Old Play.*

'TIS not her sense—for sure, in that
 There's nothing more than common ;
 And all her wit is only chat,
 Like any other woman.
 Chap. xvi. *Song.*

WERE every hair upon his head a
 life,
 And every life were to be supplicated
 By numbers equal to those hairs
 quadrupled,
 Life after life should out like waning
 stars
 Before the daybreak—or as festive
 lamps,
 Which have lent lustre to the mid-
 night revel,
 Each after each are quench'd when
 guests depart !
 Chap. xvii. *Old Play.*

THIS work desires a planet'ry in-
 tell'gence
 Of Jupiter and Sol ; and those great
 spirits
 Are proud, fantastical. It asks great
 charges
 To entice them from the guiding of
 their spheres
 To wait on mortals.
 Chap. xviii. *Albumazar.*

MUST we then sheathe our still
 victorious sword ;
 Turn back our forward step, which
 ever trode
 O'er foemen's necks the onward path
 of glory ;
 Unclasp the mail, which with a
 solemn vow,
 In God's own house we hung upon
 our shoulders ;
 That vow, as unaccomplish'd as the
 promise
 Which village nurses make to still
 their children,
 And after think no more of ?
The Crusade, a Tragedy.
 Chap. xix.

WHEN beauty leads the lion in her
 toils,
 Such are her charms, he dare not
 raise his mane,
 Far less expand the terror of his fangs,
 So great Alcides made his club a
 distaff,
 And spun to please fair Omphale.
Anonymous.
 Chap. xx.

'MID these wild scenes Enchantment
 waves her wand,
 To change the face of the mysterious
 land ;
 Till the bewildering scenes around us
 seem
 The vain productions of a feverish
 dream.
Astolpho, a Romance.
 Chap. xxiii.

A GRAIN of dust
 Soiling our cup, will make our sense
 reject
 Fastidiously the draught which we
 did thirst for ;
 A rusted nail, placed near the faith-
 ful compass,
 Will sway it from the truth, and
 wreck the argosy.
 Even this small cause of anger and
 disgust

Will break the bonds of amity 'mongst
princes,
And wreck their noblest purposes.

The Crusade.

Chap. xxiv.

THE tears I shed must ever fall !
I weep not for an absent swain,
For time may happier hours recall,
And parted lovers meet again.

I weep not for the silent dead,
Their pains are past, their sorrows
o'er,
And those that loved their steps must
tread,
When death shall join to part no
more.

But worse than absence, worse than
death,

She wept her lover's sullied fame,
And, fired with all the pride of birth,
She wept a soldier's injured name.¹

Ballad.

Chap. xxvi.

WE heard the tecbir,—so the Arabs
call
Their shout of onset, when with loud
acclaim
They challenge Heaven to give them
victory.

Siege of Damascus.

Chap. xxvii.

FROM WOODSTOCK.

AN HOUR WITH THEE.

AN hour with thee ! When earliest
day
Dapples with gold the eastern gray,
Oh, what can frame my mind to bear
The toil and turmoil, cark and care,
New griefs, which coming hours un-
fold,
And sad remembrance of the old ?

One hour with thee.

One hour with thee ! When burning
June
Waves his red flag at pitch of noon ;
What shall repay the faithful swain,
His labour on the sultry plain ;
And, more than cave or sheltering
bough,
Cool feverish blood and throbbing
brow ?

One hour with thee.

One hour with thee ! When sun is
set,
Oh, what can teach me to forget
The thankless labours of the day ;
The hopes, the wishes, flung away ;
The increasing wants, and lessening
gains,
The master's pride, who scorns my
pains ?

One hour with thee.

Chap. xxvi.

MOTTOES.

COME forth, old man ! Thy daughter's
side
Is now the fitting place for thee :
When Time hath quell'd the oak's
bold pride,
The youthful tendril yet may hide
The ruins of the parent tree.
Chap. ii.

Now, ye wild blades, that make loose
inns your stage,
To vapour forth the acts of this sad
age,
Stout Edgehill fight, the Newberys
and the West,
And northern clashes, where you still
fought best :
Your strange escapes, your dangers
void of fear,
When bullets flew between the head
and ear,
Whether you fought by Damme or the
Spirit,
Of you I speak.

Legend of Captain Jones.

Chap. iii.

¹ Only the last stanza is Scott's.

YON path of greensward
 Winds round by sparry grot and gay
 pavilion ;
 There is no flint to gall thy tender foot,
 There's ready shelter from each
 breeze, or shower.
 But Duty guides not that way : see
 her stand,
 With wand entwined with amaranth,
 near yon cliffs.
 Oft where she leads thy blood must
 mark thy footsteps,
 Oft where she leads thy head must
 bear the storm,
 And thy shrunk form endure heat,
 cold, and hunger ;
 But she will guide thee up to noble
 heights,
 Which he who gains seems native of
 the sky ;
 While earthly things lie stretch'd
 beneath his feet,
 Diminish'd, shrunk, and valueless.

Anonymous.

Chap. iv.

My tongue pads slowly under this
 new language,
 And starts and stumbles at these
 uncouth phrases.
 They may be great in worth and
 weight, but hang
 Upon the native glibness of my
 language
 Like Saul's plate-armour on the
 shepherd boy,
 Encumbering and not arming him.

J. B.

Chap. v.

HERE we have one head
 Upon two bodies : your two-headed
 bullock
 Is but an ass to such a prodigy.
 These two have but one meaning,
 thought, and counsel ;
 And when the single noddle has spoke
 out,
 The four legs scrape assent to it.

Old Play.

Chap. x.

DEEDS are done on earth,
 Which have their punishment ere the
 earth closes
 Upon the perpetrators. Be it the
 working
 Of the remorse-stirr'd fancy, or the
 vision,
 Distinct and real, of unearthly being,
 All ages witness that beside the couch
 Of the fell homicide oft stalks the
 ghost
 Of him he slew, and shows the
 shadowy wound.

Old Play.

Chap. xiv.

We do that in our zeal,
 Our calmer moments are afraid to
 answer.

Anonymous.

Chap. xvii.

THE deadliest snakes are those which,
 twined 'mongst flowers,
 Blend their bright colouring with the
 varied blossoms,
 Their fierce eyes glittering like the
 spangled dew-drop ;
 In all so like what nature has most
 harmless,
 That sportive innocence, which dreads
 no danger,
 Is poison'd unawares.

Old Play.

Chap. xxiv.

FROM CHRONICLES OF THE CANONGATE.

MOTTOES.

(*From THE TWO DROVERS.*)

WERE ever such two loving friends!—
 How could they disagree ?
 O thus it was he loved him dear,
 And thought how to requite him,
 And having no friend left but he,
 He did resolve to fight him.

Duke upon Duke.

Chap. ii.



Henry Graves & Co.
80

“Down reeling steeds and riders went,
Corslets were pierced, and pennons rent.”

Large 517.
A.

(From MY AUNT MARGARET'S
MIRROR.)

THERE are times
When Fancy plays her gambols, in
despite
Even of our watchful senses, when
in sooth
Substance seems shadow, shadow
substance seems,
When the broad, palpable, and marked
partition,
'Twixt that which is and is not, seems
dissolved,
As if the mental eye gain'd power to
gaze
Beyond the limits of the existing
world.
Such hours of shadowy dreams I
better love
Than all the gross realities of life.

Anonymous.

FROM THE FAIR MAID OF PERTH.

THE LAY OF POOR LOUISE.

Ah, poor Louise! the livelong day
She roams from cot to castle gay;
And still her voice and viol say,
Ah, maids, beware the woodland way,
Think on Louise.

Ah, poor Louise! The sun was high,
It smirch'd her cheek, it dimm'd her
eye,
The woodland walk was cool and
nigh,
Where birds with chiming streamlets
vie

To cheer Louise.

Ah, poor Louise! The savage bear
Made ne'er that lovely grove his lair;
The wolves molest not paths so fair—
But better far had such been there
For poor Louise.

Ah, poor Louise! In woody wold
She met a huntsman fair and bold;
sc.

His baldric was of silk and gold,
And many a witching tale he told
To poor Louise.

Ah, poor Louise! Small cause to pine
Hadst thou for treasures of the mine;
For peace of mind that gift divine,
And spotless innocence, were thine,
Ah, poor Louise!

Ah, poor Louise! Thy treasure's reft!
I know not if by force or theft,
Or part by violence, part by gift;
But misery is all that's left
To poor Louise.

Let poor Louise some succour have!
She will not long your bounty crave,
Or tire the gay with warning stave—
For Heaven has grace, and earth a
grave

For poor Louise.

Chap. x.

DEATH CHANT.

VIEWLESS Essence, thin and bare,
Wellnigh melted into air;
Still with fondness hovering near
The earthly form thou once didst
wear;

Pause upon thy pinion's flight,
Be thy course to left or right;
Be thou doom'd to soar or sink,
Pause upon the awful brink.

To avenge the deed expelling
Thee untimely from thy dwelling,
Mystic force thou shalt retain
O'er the blood and o'er the brain.

When the form thou shalt espy
That darken'd on thy closing eye;
When the footstep thou shalt hear,
That thrill'd upon thy dying ear;

Then strange sympathies shall wake,
The flesh shall thrill, the nerves shall
quake;

The wounds renew their clotted flood,
And every drop cry blood for blood.

Chap. xxii.

SONG OF THE GLEE-MAIDEN.

YES, thou mayst sigh,
 And look once more at all around,
 At stream and bank, and sky and
 ground.
 Thy life its final course has roun'd,
 And thou must die.

Yes, lay thee down,
 And while thy struggling pulses
 flutter,
 Bid the gray monk his soul-mass
 mutter,
 And the deep bell its death-tone
 utter—
 Thy life is gone.

Be not afraid.
 'Tis but a pang, and then a thrill,
 A fever fit, and then a chill ;
 And then an end of human ill,
 For thou art dead.
 Chap. xxx.

BOLD AND TRUE.

OH, bold and true,
 In bonnet blue,
 That fear or falsehood never knew ;
 Whose heart was loyal to his
 word,
 Whose hand was faithful to his
 sword :
 Seek Europe wide from sea to sea,
 But bonnie Blue-cap still for me !

I've seen Almayn's proud champions
 prance ;
 I've seen the gallant knights of
 France,
 Unrivalled with the sword and
 lance ;
 I've seen the sons of England true
 wield the brown bill and bend the
 yew ;
 Search France the fair and England
 free—
 But bonnie Blue-cap still for me !
 Chap xxxii.

MOTTOES.

THE ashes here of murder'd Kings
 Beneath my footsteps sleep ;
 And yonder lies the scene of death,
 Where Mary learn'd to weep.
Captain Marjoribanks.

INTRODUCTORY.

“BEHOLD the Tiber !” the vain
 Roman cried,
 Viewing the ample Tay from Baiglie's
 side ;
 But where's the Scot that would the
 vaunt repay,
 And hail the puny Tiber for the Tay ?
Anonymous.

Chap. i.

FAIR is the damsel, passing fair,
 Sunny at distance gleams her
 smile !
 Approach—the cloud of woeful care
 Hangs trembling in her eye the
 while.

Lucinda, a Ballad.

Chap. xi.

THEN up and spak the auld gudewife,
 And, wow ! but she was grim,—
 “ Had e'er your father done the like,
 It had been ill for him.”
Lucky Trumbull.

Chap xii.

O FOR a draught of power to steep
 The soul of agony in sleep !
Bertha.

Chap. xv.

A WOMAN wails for justice at the
 gate,
 A widow'd woman, wan and desolate.
Bertha.

Chap xx.

Lo ! where he lies embalm'd in gore,
 His wound to Heaven cries ;
 The floodgates of his blood implore
 For vengeance from the skies.

Uranus and Psyche.

Chap. xxiii.

THE hour is nigh ; now hearts beat
high ;
Each sword is sharpen'd well ;
And who dares die, who stoops to fly,
To-morrow's light shall tell.

Sir Edwald.

Chap. xxxiii.

“Up, then, up ! When day's at rest,
'Tis time that such as we are
watchers ;
Rise to judgment, brethren, rise !
Vengeance knows not sleepy eyes,
He and night are matchers.”

Chap. xx.

FROM ANNE OF GEJERSTEIN.

THE SECRET TRIBUNAL.

“MEASURERS of good and evil,
Bring the square, the line, the level,—
Rear the altar, dig the trench,
Blood both stone and ditch shall
drench ;

Cubits six, from end to end,
Must the fatal bench extend,
Cubits six, from side to side,
Judge and culprit must divide.
On the east the Court assembles,
On the west the Accused trembles :
Answer, brethren, all and one,
Is the ritual rightly done ?”

“On life and soul, on blood and bone,
One for all, and all for one,
We warrant this is rightly done.”

“How wears the night ? Doth
morning shine,
In early radiance on the Rhine ?
What music floats upon his tide ?
Do birds the tardy morning chide ?
Brethren, look out from hill and
height,
And answer true, how wears the
night ?”

“The night is old ; on Rhine's broad
breast
Glance drowsy stars which long to
rest,
No beams are twinkling in the east.
There is a voice upon the flood,
The stern still call of blood for blood ;
'Tis time we listen the behest.”

MOTTOES.

CURSED be the gold and silver, which
persuade
Weak men to follow far fatiguing
trade,
The lily, peace, outshines the silver
store,
And life is dearer than the golden ore.
Yet money tempts us o'er the desert
brown,
To every distant mart and wealthy
town.

Hassan, or the Camel-driver.

Chap. iii.

I WAS one
Who loved the greenwood bank and
lowing herd,
The russet guise, the lowly peasant's
life,
Season'd with sweet content, more
than the halls
Where revellers feast to fever-height.
Believe me,
There ne'er was poison mix'd in
maple bowl.

Anonymous.

Chap. v.

WHEN we two meet, we meet like
rushing torrents ;
Like warring winds, like flames from
various points,
That mate each other's fury. There
is nought
Of elemental strife, were fiends to
guide it,
Can match the wrath of man.

Frenaud.

Chap. vi.

THEY saw that city, welcoming the
Rhine,
As from his mountain heritage he
bursts,
As purposed proud Orgetorix of yore,
Leaving the desert region of the hills
To lord it o'er the fertile plains of
Gaul.

Helvetia.

Chap. viii.

WE know not when we sleep nor
when we wake.
Visions distinct and perfect cross our
eye,
Which to the slumberer seem
realities;
And while they waked, some men
have seen such sights
As set at nought the evidence of
sense,
And left them well persuaded they
were dreaming.

Anonymous.

Chap. x.

THESE be the adept's doctrines—every
element
Is peopled with its separate race of
spirits:
The airy Sylphs on the blue ether
float:
Deep in the earthy cavern skulks the
Gnome;
The sea-green Naiad skims the ocean-
billow;
And the fierce fire is yet a friendly
home
To its peculiar sprite, the Sala-
mander.

Anonymous.

Chap. xi.

TELL me not of it: I could ne'er abide
The mummy of all that forced
civility.
"Pray, seat yourself, my lord,"—with
cringeing hams
The speech is spoken; and with
bended knee,
Heard by the smiling courtier.—
"Before you, sir?"

It must be on the earth then." Hang
it all!

The pride which cloaks itself in such
poor fashion
Is scarcely fit to swell a beggar's
bosom.

Old Play.

Chap. xxii.

A MIRTHFUL man he was; the snows
of age
Fell, but they did not chill him.
Gaiety,
Even in life's closing, touch'd his
teeming brain
With such wild visions as the setting
sun
Raises in front of some hoar glacier,
Painting the bleak ice with a thousand
hues.

Old Play.

Chap. xxix.

AY, this is he who wears the wreath
of bays
Wove by Apollo and the Sisters Nine,
Which Jove's dread lightning scathes
not. He hath doft
The cumbrous helm of steel, and
flung aside
The yet more galling diadem of gold;
And, with a leafy circlet round his
brows,
He reigns the King of lovers and of
poets.
Chap. xxx.

WANT you a man
Experienced in the world and its
affairs?
Here he is for your purpose. He's
a monk:
He hath forsworn the world and all
its work,
The rather that he knows it passing
well,—
'Special the worst of it, for he's a
monk.

Old Play.

Chap. xxxi.

TOLL, toll the bell!

Greatness is o'er;

The heart has broke,

To ache no more;

An unsubstantial pageant all—

Drop o'er the scene the funeral pall.

Old Poem.

Chap. xxxii.

HERE'S a weapon now,

Shall shake a conquering general in
his tent,

A monarch on his throne, or reach a
prelate,

However holy be his offices,

E'en while he serves the altar.

Old Play.

Chap. xxxv.

FROM COUNT ROBERT OF PARIS.

MOTTOES.

Othus. THIS superb successor

Of the earth's mistress, as thou
vainly speakest,

Stands 'midst these ages as, on the
wide ocean,

The last spared fragment of a spacious
land

That in some grand and awful
ministration

Of mighty nature has engulfed been,

Doth lift aloft its dark and rocky cliffs
O'er the wild waste around, and

sadly frowns

In lonely majesty.

Constantine Paleologus, Scene I.

Chap. ii.

HERE, youth, thy foot unbrace,

Here, youth, thy brow unbraided;

Each tribute that may grace

The threshold here be paid.

Walk with the stealthy pace

Which Nature teaches deer,

When, echoing in the chase,

The hunter's horn they hear.

The Court.

Chap. iii.

THE storm increases: 'tis no sunny
shower,

Foster'd in the moist breast of March
or April,

Or such as parched Summer cools
his lip with;

Heaven's windows are flung wide;
the inmost deeps

Call in hoarse greeting one upon
another;

On comes the flood in all its roaming
horrors,

And where's the dike shall stop it!

The Deluge, a Poem.

Chap. v.

VAIN man! thou mayst esteem thy
love as fair

As fond hyperboles suffice to raise.

She may be all that's matchless in
her person,

And all-divine in soul to match her
body;

But take this from me—thou shalt
never call her

Superior to her sex while *one* sur-
vives,

And I am her true votary.

Old Play.

Chap. vi.

BETWEEN the foaming jaws of the
white torrent

The skilful artist draws a sudden
mound;

By level long he subdivides their
strength,

Stealing the waters from their rocky
bed,

First to diminish what he means to
conquer;

Then, for the residue he forms a road,
Easy to keep, and painful to desert,

And guiding to the end the planner
aim'd at.

The Engineer.

Chap. ix.

THOSE were wild times—the anti-
podes of ours:

Ladies were then who oftener saw
themselves

In the broad lustre of a foeman's
shield
Than in a mirror, and who rather
sought
To match themselves in battle, than
in dalliance
To meet a lover's onset. But though
Nature
Was outraged thus she was not over-
come.

Feudal Times.

Chap. x.

WITHOUT—a ruin, broken, tangled,
cumbrous ;
Within—it was a little paradise,
Where Taste had made her dwelling ;
Statuary,
First-born of human art, moulded
her images,
And bade men mark and worship.

Anonymous.

Chap. xi.

THE parties met. The wily, wordy
Greek,
Weighing each word, and canvassing
each syllable,
Evading, arguing, equivocating.
And the stern Frank came with two-
handed sword,
Watching to see which way the
balance sway'd,
That he might throw it in, and turn
the scales.

Palestine.

Chap. xii.

STRANGE ape of man ! who loathes
thee while he scorns thee ;
Half a reproach to us and half a jest,
What fancies can be ours ere we
have pleasure
In viewing our own form, our pride
and passions,
Reflected in a shape grotesque as
thine !

Anonymous.

Chap. xvi.

'Tis strange that, in the dark sul-
phureous mine,
Where wild ambition piles its ripen-
ing stores
Of slumbering thunder, Love will
interpose
His tiny torch, and cause the stern
explosion
To burst, when the deviser's least
aware.

Anonymous.

Chap. xvii.

ALL is prepared—the chambers of
the mine
Are cramm'd with the combustible,
which, harmless
While yet unkindled as the sable
sand,
Needs but a spark to change its
nature so
That he who wakes it from its
slumbrous mood,
Dreads scarce the explosion less than
he who knows
That 'tis his towers which meet its
fury.

Anonymous.

Chap. xxiv.

HEAVEN knows its time ; the bullet
has its billet,
Arrow and javelin each its destined
purpose ;
The fated beasts of Nature's lower
strain
Have each their separate task.

Chap. xxv.

Old Play.

FROM CASTLE DANGEROUS.

MOTTOES.

A TALE of sorrow, for your eyes may
weep ;
A tale of horror, for your flesh may
tingle ;
A tale of wonder, for the eyebrows
arch
And the blood curdles in you read it
rightly.

Chap. v.

Old Play.

WHERE is he? Has the deep earth
 swallow'd him?
 Or hath he melted like some airy
 phantom
 That shuns the approach of morn and
 the young sun?
 Or hath he wrapt him in Cimmerian
 darkness,
 And pass'd beyond the circuit of the
 sight
 With things of the night's shadows?

Anonymous.

Chap. xi.

THE way is long, my children, long
 and rough,
 The moors are dreary, and the woods
 are dark;
 But he that creeps from cradle on to
 grave,
 Unskill'd save in the velvet course of
 fortune,
 Hath miss'd the discipline or noble
 hearts.

Old Play.

Chap. xiv.

HIS talk was of another world; his
 bodements
 Strange, doubtful, and mysterious:
 those who heard him

Listen'd as to a man in feverish
 dreams,
 Who speaks of other objects than the
 present,
 And mutters like to him who sees a
 vision.

Old Play.

Chap. xviii.

CRY the wild war-note, let the
 champions pass;
 Do bravely each, and God defend the
 right.

UPON Saint Andrew thrice can they
 thus cry,
 And thrice they shout on height,
 And then match'd them on the
 Englishmen,
 As I have told you right.

Saint George the bright, our ladies'
 knight,
 To name they were full fain;
 Our Englishmen they cried on height,
 And thrice they shout again.

Old Ballad.

Chap. xx.

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 con-
vulsions 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 THUNDERSTORM.

[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.]

THOSE 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 compris'd 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
dinge.

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 wreaths 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 summer'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 hands ;
 But I had loured melle with the fiends
 of hell,
 Than with Clavers and his band."

He heard the deep-mouth'd blood-
 hound 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 waved 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 undis-
may'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, "uneath 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 Cess-
ford 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 mai'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.

"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.

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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 tatal 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 Cuts-
feld'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 foe-
men 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 Michael-
 mas 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 Loch-
 wood
 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 Loch-
wood 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 brow;
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 Dundren-
nan'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
Yelad 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.

.

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 moun-
tain 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 wood-
land;
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 Hellvellyn. 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
 Hellvellyn,
 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 re-
 quiem 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 mid-
 night, the torches are gleaming ;
 In the proudly-arch'd chapel the
 banners are beaming,
 Far down 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, un-
 honour'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 fall,
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 wood-
lands 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 open,
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 alders 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 was 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 waved 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 ee ;
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, un-
worthy 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 differ-
 ence 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, merrily, 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, AT 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
threats 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—who'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, applaudive, each sly
vermin sees,

That baulks the snare, yet battens
on the cheese;

Thine ear has heard, with scorn
instead of awe,

Our buckskinn'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 sylvan liberty o'er feudal laws.

Seek we yon glades, where the
proud oak o'ertops
Wide-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 or poorest of the
poor ;
No hearth the fire, no vent the smoke
receives,
The walls are wattles, and the cover-
ing 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 hests 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 un-
latticed 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 even-
 ing 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 convul-
 sion twitch'd,
 While the tongue falters, as to utter-
 ance loth,
 Sounds of dire import—watchword,
 threat, and oath.
 Though, stupefied 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 con-
 tagious 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 rendez-
vous 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 stag-
nant 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 puir 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
crown,
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, re-
member 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 shallows—
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 adven-
turer 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.



Henry Graves & Co.
SC.

“Lancer and guard and cuirassier.”

Page 516.

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 bade 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 ;

SC.

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
Latian 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 resem-
blance 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 min-
strel I.—W. SCOTT.

POSTSCRIPTUM.

Kirkwall. Orkney. Aug. 13, 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.

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.

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—
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.”

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 jorrans, 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 skilful, 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 griet
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 im-
prison'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 !

SAINT CLOUD.

[*Paris, 5th September, 1815.*]

SOFT spread the southern summer
 night

Her veil of darksome blue ;
 Ten thousand stars combined to light
 The terrace of Saint Cloud.

The evening breezes gently sigh'd,

Like breath of lover true,
 Bewailing the deserted pride
 And wreck of sweet Saint Cloud.

The drum's deep roll was heard afar,

The bugle wildly blew
 Good-night to Hulan and Hussar,
 That garrison Saint Cloud.

The startled Naiads from the shade

With broken urns withdrew,
 And silenced was that proud cascade,
 The glory of Saint Cloud.

We sate upon its steps of stone,

Nor could its silence rue,

When waked, to music of our own,
 The echoes of Saint Cloud.

Slow Seine might hear each lovely note
 Fall light as summer dew,
 While through the moonless air they
 float,
 Prolong'd from fair Saint Cloud.

And sure a melody more sweet
 His waters never knew,
 Though music's self was wont to
 meet
 With Princes at Saint Cloud.

Nor then, with more delighted ear,
 The circle round her drew,
 Than ours, when gather'd round to
 hear
 Our songstress at Saint Cloud.

Few happy hours poor mortals pass,—
 Then give those hours their due,
 And rank among the foremost class
 Our evenings at Saint Cloud.

THE DANCE OF DEATH.

[1815.]

I.

NIGHT and morning were at meeting
 Over Waterloo ;

Cocks had sung their earliest greet-
 ing ;

Faint and low they crew,
 For no paly beam yet shone

On the heights of Mount Saint John ;
 Tempest-clouds prolong'd the sway
 Of timeless darkness over day ;

Whirlwind, thunder-clap, and shower,
 Mark'd it a predestined hour.

Broad and frequent through the night
 Flash'd the sheets of levin-light ;

Muskets, glancing lightnings back,
 Show'd the dreary bivouac

Where the soldier lay,
 Chill and stiff, and drench'd with

rain,
 Wishing dawn of morn again,

Though death should come with day.

II.

'Tis at such a tide and hour,
 Wizard, witch, and fiend have power,
 And ghastly forms through mist and
 shower

Gleam on the gifted ken ;
 And then the affrighted prophet's ear
 Drinks whispers strange of fate and
 fear

Presaging death and ruin near

Among the sons of men ;—
 Apart from Albyn's war-array,
 'Twas then gray Allan sleepless lay ;
 Gray Allan, who, for many a day,

Had follow'd stout and stern,
 Where, through battle's rout and reel,
 Storm of shot and hedge of steel,
 Led the grandson of Lochiel,

Valiant Fassiefern.
 Through steel and shot he leads no
 more,

Low laid 'mid friends' and foemen's
 gore—

But long his native lake's wild shore,
 And Sunart rough, and high
 Ardgower,

And Morven long shall tell,
 And proud Bennevis hear with awe,
 How, upon bloody Quatre-Bras,
 Brave Cameron heard the wild hurra
 Of conquest as he fell.

III.

'Lone on the outskirts of the host,
 The weary sentinel held post,
 And heard, through darkness far
 aloof,

The frequent clang of courser's hoof,
 Where held the cloak'd patrol their
 course,

And spurr'd 'gainst storm the
 swerving horse.

But there are sounds in Allan's ear,
 Patrol nor sentinel may hear,
 And sights before his eye aghast
 Invisible to them have pass'd,

When down the destined plain,
 'Twixt Britain and the bands of
 France,
 Wild as marsh-borne meteor's glance,

Strange phantoms wheel'd a revel
 dance,

And doom'd the future slain.—
 Such forms were seen, such sounds
 were heard

When Scotland's James his march
 prepared

For Flodden's fatal plain ;
 Such, when he drew his ruthless
 sword,

As Choosers of the Slain, adored
 The yet unchristen'd Dane.

An indistinct and phantom band,
 They wheel'd their ring-dance hand
 in hand,

With gestures wild and dread ;
 The Seer, who watch'd them ride the
 storm,

Saw through their faint and shadowy
 form

The lightning's flash more red ;
 And still their ghastly roundelay
 Was of the coming battle-fray,
 And of the destined dead.

IV.

Song.

“ Wheel the wild dance
 While lightnings glance,
 And thunders rattle loud,
 And call the brave
 To bloody grave,
 To sleep without a shroud.

Our airy feet,
 So light and fleet,
 They do not bend the rye
 That sinks its head when whirlwinds
 rave,

And swells again in eddying wave,
 As each wild gust blows by ;
 But still the corn,
 At dawn of morn,

Our fatal steps that bore,
 At eve lies waste,
 A trampled paste
 Of blackening mud and gore.

V.

“Wheel the wild dance
While lightnings glance,
And thunders rattle loud,
And call the brave
To bloody grave,
To sleep without a shroud.

Wheel the wild dance!
Brave sons of France,
For you our ring makes room;
Make space full wide
For martial pride,
For banner, spear, and plume.
Approach, draw near,
Proud cuirassier!
Room for the men of steel!
Through crest and plate
The broadsword's weight
Both head and heart shall feel.

VI.

“Wheel the wild dance
While lightnings glance,
And thunders rattle loud,
And call the brave
To bloody grave,
To sleep without a shroud.

Sons of the spear!
You feel us near
In many a ghastly dream;
With fancy's eye
Our forms you spy,
And hear our fatal scream.
With clearer sight
Ere falls the night,
Just when to weal or woe
Your disembodied souls take flight
On trembling wing—each startled
sprite
Our choir of death shall know.

VII.

“Wheel the wild dance
While lightnings glance,
And thunders rattle loud,
And call the brave
To bloody grave,
To sleep without a shroud.

Burst, ye clouds, in tempest showers,
Redder rain shall soon be ours—
See the east grows wan—
Yield we place to sterner game,
Ere deadlier bolts and direr flame
Shall the welkin's thunders shame
Elemental rage is tame
To the wrath of man.”

VIII.

At morn, gray Allan's mates with
awe
Heard of the vision'd sights he saw,
The legend heard him say;
But the Seer's gifted eye was dim,
Deafen'd his ear, and stark his limb,
Ere closed that bloody day—
He sleeps far from his Highland
heath,—
But often of the Dance of Death
His comrades tell the tale,
On picquet-post, when ebbs the night,
And waning watch-fires glow less
bright,
And dawn is glimmering pale.

ROMANCE OF DUNOIS.

FROM THE FRENCH OF HORTENSE
BEAUIHARNAIS, EX-QUEEN OF
HOLLAND.

[1815.]

It was Dunois, the young and brave,
was bound for Palestine,
But first he made his orisons before
St. Mary's shrine:
“And grant, immortal Queen of
Heaven,” was still the Soldier's
prayer,
“That I may prove the bravest
knight, and love the fairest fair.”
His oath of honour on the shrine he
graved it with his sword,
And follow'd to the Holy Land the
banner of his Lord;
Where, faithful to his noble vow, his
war-cry fill'd the air,
“Be honour'd aye the bravest knight,
beloved the fairest fair.”

They owed the conquest to his arm,
 and then his Liege-Lord said,
 "The heart that has for honour beat
 by bliss must be repaid.—
 My daughter Isabel and thou shall
 be a wedded pair,
 For thou art bravest of the brave, she
 fairest of the fair."

And then they bound the holy knot
 before Saint Mary's shrine,
 That makes a paradise on earth, if
 hearts and hands combine;
 And every lord and lady bright, that
 were in chapel there,
 Cried, "Honour'd be the bravest
 knight, beloved the fairest fair!"

THE TROUBADOUR.

FROM THE FRENCH OF HORTENSE
 BEAUHARNAIS.

[1815.]

GLOWING with love, on fire for fame,
 A Troubadour that hated sorrow,
 Beneath his Lady's window came,
 And thus he sung his last good-
 morrow:

"My arm it is my country's right,
 My heart is in my true-love's bower;
 Gaily for love and fame to fight
 Befits the gallant Troubadour."

And while he march'd with helm on
 head

And harp in hand, the descant rung,
 As, faithful to his favourite maid,
 The minstrel-burden still he sung:
 "My arm it is my country's right,
 My heart is in my lady's bower;
 Resolved for love and fame to fight,
 I come, a gallant Troubadour."

Even when the battle-roar was deep,
 With dauntless heart he hew'd his
 way,
 'Mid splintering lance and falchion-
 sweep,
 And still was heard his warrior-lay:

"My life it is my country's right,
 My heart is in my lady's bower;
 For love to die, for fame to fight,
 Becomes the valiant Troubadour."

Alas! upon the bloody field
 He fell beneath the foeman's glaive,
 But still reclining on his shield,
 Expiring sung the exulting stave:—
 "My life it is my country's right,
 My heart is in my lady's bower;
 For love and fame to fall in fight
 Becomes the valiant Troubadour."

FROM THE FRENCH.

[1815.]

It chanced that Cupid on a season,
 By Fancy urged, resolved to wed,
 But could not settle whether Reason
 Or Folly should partake his bed.

What does he then?—Upon my life,
 'Twas bad example for a deity—
 He takes me Reason for a wife,
 And Folly for his hours of gaiety.

Though thus he dealt in petty treason,
 He loved them both in equal
 measure;
 Fidelity was born of Reason,
 And Folly brought to bed of
 Pleasure.

SONG.

ON THE LIFTING OF THE BANNER OF
 THE HOUSE OF BUCCLEUCH, AT A
 GREAT FOOT-BALL MATCH ON
 CARTERHAUGH.

[1815.]

FROM the brown crest of Newark its
 summons extending,
 Our signal is waving in smoke and
 in flame;

And each forester blithe, from his
mountain descending,
Bounds light o'er the heather to
ioin in the game.

CHORUS.

*Then up with the Banner, let forest
winds fan her,
She has blazed over Ettrick eight
ages and more ;
In sport we'll attend her, in battle
defend her,
With heart and with hand, like our
fathers before.*

When the Southern invader spread
waste and disorder,
At the glance of her crescents he
paused and withdrew,
For around them were marshall'd the
pride of the Border,
The Flowers of the Forest, the
Bands of BUCCLEUCH.

Then up with the Banner, etc.

A Stripling's weak hand to our revel
has borne her,
No mail-glove has grasp'd her, no
spearmen surround ;
But ere a bold foeman should
scathe or should scorn her,
A thousand true hearts would be
cold on the ground.

Then up with the Banner, etc.

We forget each contention of civil
dissension,
And hail, like our brethren, HOME,
DOUGLAS, and CAR :
And ELLIOT and PRINGLE in pastime
shall mingle,
As welcome in peace as their fathers
in war.

Then up with the Banner, etc.

Then strip, lads, and to it, though
sharp be the weather,
And if, by mischance, you should
happen to fall,

There are worse things in life than a
tumble on heather,
And life is itself but a game at foot-
ball.

Then up with the Banner, etc.

And when it is over, we'll drink a
blithe measure
To each Laird and each Lady that
witness'd our fun,
And to every blithe heart that took
part in our pleasure,
To the lads that have lost and the
lads that have won.

Then up with the Banner, etc.

May the Forest still flourish, both
Borough and Landward,
From the hall of the Peer to the
Herd's ingle-nook ;
And huzza ! my brave hearts, for
BUCCLEUCH and his standard,
For the King and the Country, the
Clan, and the Duke !

*Then up with the Banner, let forest
winds fan her,
She has blazed over Ettrick eight
ages and more ;
In sport we'll attend her, in battle
defend her,
With heart and with hand, like our
fathers before.*

LULLABY OF AN INFANT
CHIEF.

[1815.]

I.

O, HUSH thee, my babie, thy sire was
a knight,
Thy mother a lady, both lovely and
bright ;
The woods and the glens, from the
towers which we see,
They all are belonging, dear babie,
to thee.
O ho ro, i ri ri, cadul gu lo,
O ho ro, i ri ri, etc.

II.

O, fear not the bugle, though loudly
it blows,
It calls but the warders that guard
thy repose ;
Their bows would be bended, their
blades would be red,
Ere the step of a foeman draws near
to thy bed.
O ho ro, i ri ri, etc.

III.

O, hush thee, my babie, the time
soon will come,
When thy sleep shall be broken by
trumpet and drum ;
Then hush thee, my darling, take
rest while you may,
For strife comes with manhood, and
waking with day.
O ho ro, i ri ri, etc.

THE RETURN TO ULSTER.

[1816.]

ONCE again, — but how changed
since my wand'rings began—
I have heard the deep voice of the
Lagan and Bann,
And the pines of Clanbrassil resound
to the roar
That wearies the echoes of fair
Tullamore.
Alas! my poor bosom, and why
shouldst thou burn?
With the scenes of my youth can its
raptures return?
Can I live the dear life of delusion
again,
That flow'd when these echoes first
mix'd with my strain?

It was then that around me, though
poor and unknown,
High spells of mysterious enchant-
ment were thrown ;
The streams were of silver, of
diamond the dew,

The land was an Eden, for fancy
was new.
I had heard of our bards, and my
soul was on fire
At the rush of their verse, and the
sweep of their lyre :
To me 'twas not legend, nor tale to
the ear,
But a vision of noontide, distinguish'd
and clear.

Ultonia's old heroes awoke at the
call,
And renew'd the wild pomp of the
chase and the hall ;
And the standard of Fion flash'd
fierce from on high,
Like a burst of the sun when the
tempest is nigh.
It seem'd that the harp of green Erin
once more
Could renew all the glories she
boasted of yore.—
Yet why at remembrance, fond heart,
shouldst thou burn?
They were days of delusion, and
cannot return.

But was she, too, a phantom, the
Maid who stood by,
And listed my lay, while she turn'd
from mine eye?
Was she, too, a vision, just glancing
to view,
Then dispersed in the sunbeam, or
melted to dew?
Oh! would it had been so,—Oh!
would that her eye
Had been but a star-gance that shot
through the sky,
And her voice that was moulded to
melody's thrill,
Had been but a zephyr, that sigh'd
and was still!

Oh! would it had been so,—not then
this poor heart
Had learn'd the sad lesson, to love
and to part ;
To bear, unassisted, its burthen of
care,

While I toil'd for the wealth I had no
 one to share,
 Not then had I said, when life's
 summer was done,
 And the hours of her autumn were
 fast speeding on,
 "Take the fame and the riches ye
 brought in your train,
 And restore me the dream of my
 spring-tide again."

JOCK OF HAZELDEAN.

[1816.]

"WHY weep ye by the tide, ladie?
 Why weep ye by the tide?
 I'll wed ye to my youngest son,
 And ye sall be his bride:
 And ye sall be his bride, ladie,
 Sae comely to be seen"—
 But aye she loot the tears down fa'
 For Jock of Hazeldean.

"Now let this wilfu' grief be done,
 And dry that cheek so pale;
 Young Frank is chief of Errington,
 And lord of Langley-dale;
 His step is first in peaceful ha',
 His sword in battle keen"—
 But aye she loot the tears down fa'
 For Jock of Hazeldean.

"A chain of gold ye sall not lack,
 Nor braid to bind your hair;
 Nor mettled hound, nor managed
 hawk,
 Nor palfrey fresh and fair;
 And you, the foremost o' them a',
 Shall ride our forest queen"—
 But aye she loot the tears down fa'
 For Jock of Hazeldean.

The kirk was deck'd at morning-tide,
 The tapers glimmer'd fair;
 The priest and bridegroom wait the
 bride,
 And dame and knight are there.
 They sought her baith by bower and
 ha';
 The ladie was not seen!
 She's o'er the Border and awa,
 Wi' Jock of Hazeldean.

PIBROCH OF DONALD
 DHU.

[1816.]

PIBROCH of Donuil Dhu,
 Pibroch of Donuil,
 Wake thy wild voice anew,
 Summon Clan-Conuil.
 Come away, come away,
 Hark to the summons!
 Come in your war array,
 Gentles and commons.

Come from deep glen, and
 From mountain so rocky,
 The war-pipe and pennon
 Are at Inverlocky.
 Come every hill-plaid, and
 True heart that wears one,
 Come every steel blade, and
 Strong hand that bears one.

Leave untended the herd,
 The flock without shelter;
 Leave the corpse uninter'd,
 The bride at the altar;
 Leave the deer, leave the steer,
 Leave nets and barges:
 Come with your fighting gear,
 Broadswords and targes.

Come as the winds come, when
 Forests are rended;
 Come as the waves come, when
 Navies are stranded:
 Faster come, faster come,
 Faster and faster,
 Chief, vassal, page and groom,
 Tenant and master.

Fast they come, fast they come;
 See how they gather!
 Wide waves the eagle plume,
 Blended with heather.
 Cast your plaids, draw your blades,
 Forward each man set!
 Pibroch of Donuil Dhu,
 Knell for the onset!

NORA'S VOW.

[1816.]

HEAR what Highland Nora said,—
 "The Earlie's son I will not wed,
 Should all the race of nature die,
 And none be left but he and I.
 For all the gold, for all the gear,
 And all the lands both far and near,
 That ever valour lost or won,
 I would not wed the Earlie's son."—

"A maiden's vows," old Callum
 spoke,
 "Are lightly made and lightly broke ;
 The heather on the mountain's height
 Begins to bloom in purple light ;
 The frost-wind soon shall sweep
 away
 That lustre deep from glen and
 brae ;
 Yet Nora, ere its bloom be gone,
 May blithely wed the Earlie's son."—

"The swan," she said, "the lake's
 clear breast
 May barter for the eagle's nest ;
 The Awe's fierce stream may back-
 ward turn,
 Ben-Cruaichan fall, and crush Kil-
 churn ;
 Our kilted clans, when blood is high,
 Before their foes may turn and fly ;
 But I, were all these marvels done,
 Would never wed the Earlie's son."

Still in the water-lily's shade
 Her wonted nest the wild-swan
 made ;
 Ben-Cruaichan stands as fast as
 ever,
 Still downward foams the Awe's
 fierce river ;
 To shun the clash of foeman's steel,
 No Highland brogue has turn'd the
 heel ;
 But Nora's heart is lost and won,
 —She's wedded to the Earlie's son !

MACGREGOR'S GATHERING.

[1816.]

THE moon's on the lake, and the
 mist's on the brae,
 And the Clan has a name that is
 nameless by day ;
 Then gather, gather, gather,
 Grigalach !
 Gather, gather, gather, etc.

Our signal for fight, that from
 monarchs we drew,
 Must be heard but by night in our
 vengeful haloo !
 Then haloo, Grigalach ! haloo,
 Grigalach !
 Haloo, haloo, haloo, Griga-
 lach, etc.

Glen Orchy's proud mountains,
 Coalchuirn and her towers.
 Glenstrae and Glenlyon no longer
 are ours ;
 We're landless, landless, land-
 less, Grigalach !
 Landless, landless, landless,
 etc.

But doom'd and devoted by vassal
 and lord,
 MacGregor has still both his heart
 and his sword !
 Then courage, courage,
 courage, Grigalach !
 Courage, courage, courage,
 etc.

If they rob us of name, and pursue
 us with beagles,
 Give their roofs to the flame, and
 their flesh to the eagles !
 Then vengeance, vengeance,
 vengeance, Grigalach !
 Vengeance, vengeance, venge-
 ance, etc.

While there's leaves in the forest,
 and foam on the river,
 MacGregor, despite them, shall
 flourish for ever !

Come then, Grigalach, come
then, Grigalach.
Come then, come then, come
then, etc.

Through the depths of Loch Katrine
the steed shall career,
O'er the peak of Ben-Lomond the
galley shall steer,
And the rocks of Craig-Royston like
icicles melt,
Ere our wrongs be forgot, or our
vengeance unfelt!
Then gather, gather, gather,
Grigalach!
Gather, gather, gather, etc.

VERSES,

COMPOSED FOR THE OCCASION,
ADAPTED TO HAYDN'S AIR,

"*God Save the Emperor Francis,*"

AND SUNG BY A SELECT BAND AFTER
THE DINNER GIVEN BY THE LORD
PROVOST OF EDINBURGH TO THE

GRAND-DUKE NICHOLAS OF RUSSIA,
AND HIS SUITE, 19th DECEMBER, 1816.

GOD protect brave ALEXANDER,
Heaven defend the noble Czar,
Mighty Russia's high Commander,
First in Europe's banded war;
For the realms he did deliver
From the tyrant overthrown,
Thou, of every good the Giver,
Grant him long to bless his own!
Bless him, 'mid his land's disaster,
For her rights who battled brave,
Of the land of foemen master,
Bless him who their wrongs forgave.

O'er his just resentment victor,
Victor over Europe's foes,
Late and long supreme director,
Grant in peace his reign may close.
Hail! then, hail! illustrious stranger!
Welcome to our mountain strand;

Mutual interests, hopes, and danger,
Link us with thy native land.
Freemen's force, or false beguiling,
Shall that union ne'er divide,
Hand in hand while peace is smiling,
And in battle side by side.

THE SEARCH AFTER
HAPPINESS;

OR,

THE QUEST OF SULTAUN
SOLIMAUN.

[1817.]

I.

OH for a glance of that gay Muse's
eye,
That lighten'd on Bandello's laugh-
ing tale,
And twinkled with a lustre shrewd
and sly,
When Giam Battista bade her
vision hail!—
Yet fear not, ladies, the *naïve*
detail
Given by the natives of that land
canorous;
Italian license loves to leap the
pale,
We Britons have the fear of shame
before us,
And, if not wise in mirth, at least
must be decorous.

II.

In the far eastern clime, no great
while since,
Lived Sultaun Solimaun, a mighty
prince,
Whose eyes, as oft as they perform'd
their round,
Beheld all others fix'd upon the
ground;
Whose ears received the same un-
varied phrase,
"Sultaun! thy vassal hears, and
he obeys!"

All have their tastes—this may the
 fancy strike
 Of such grave folks as pomp and
 grandeur like ;
 For me, I love the honest heart and
 warm
 Of Monarch who can amble round
 his farm,
 Or, when the toil of state no more
 annoys,
 In chimney corner seek domestic
 joys—
 I love a prince will bid the bottle
 pass,
 Exchanging with his subjects glance
 and glass ;
 In fitting time, can, gayest of the
 gay,
 Keep up the jest, and mingle in
 the lay—
 Such Monarchs best our free-born
 humours suit,
 But Despots must be stately, stern,
 and mute.

III.

This Solimaun, Serendib had in
 sway—
 And where's Serendib? may some
 critic say.—
 Good lack, mine honest friend,
 consult the chart,
 Scare not my Pegasus before I
 start !
 If Rennell has it not, you'll find,
 mayhap,
 The isle laid down in Captain
 Sindbad's map,—
 Famed mariner! whose merciless
 narrations
 Drove every friend and kinsman
 out of patience,
 Till, fain to find a guest who
 thought them shorter
 He deign'd to tell them over to a
 porter—
 The last edition see, by Long. and
 Co.,
 Rees. Hurst, and Orme, our fathers
 in the Row.

IV.

Serendib found, deem not my tale
 a fiction—
 This Sultaun, whether lacking
 contradiction—
 (A sort of stimulant which hath its
 uses,
 To raise the spirits and reform the
 juices,
 —Sovereign specific for all sorts of
 cures
 In my wife's practice, and perhaps
 in yours,)
 The Sultaun lacking this same
 wholesome bitter,
 Or cordial smooth for prince's
 palate fitter—
 Or if some Mollah had hag-rid his
 dreams
 With Degial, Ginnistan, and such
 wild themes
 Belonging to the Mollah's subtle
 craft,
 I wot not—but the Sultaun never
 laugh'd,
 Scarce ate or drank, and took a
 melancholy
 That scorn'd all remedy—profane
 or holy ;
 In his long list of melancholies,
 mad,
 Or mazed, or dumb, hath Burton
 none so bad.

V.

Physicians soon arrived, sage, ware,
 and tried,
 As e'er scrawl'd jargon in a
 darken'd room ;
 With heedful glance the Sultaun's
 tongue they eyed,
 Peep'd in his bath, and God knows
 where beside,
 And then in solemn accent spoke
 their doom,
 "His majesty is very far from well."
 Then each to work with his specific
 fell :
 The Hakim Ibrahim *instantly* brought
 His unguent Mahazzim al Zerduk-
 kaut,

While Roompot, a practitioner more
wily,
Relied on his Munaskif al fillily.
More and yet more in deep array
appear,
And some the front assail, and some
the rear ;
Their remedies to reinforce and vary,
Came surgeon eke, and eke apothecary ;
Till the tired Monarch, though of
words grown chary,
Yet dropt, to recompense their fruit-
less labour,
Some hint about a bowstring or a
sabre.
There lack'd, I promise you, no
longer speeches
To rid the palace of those learned
leeches.

VI.

Then was the council call'd—by their
advice,
(They deem'd the matter ticklish all,
and nice,
And sought to shift it off from
their own shoulders,)
Tartars and couriers in all speed
were sent,
To call a sort of Eastern Parliament
Of feudatory chieftains and free-
holders—
Such have the Persians at this very
day,
My gallant Malcolm calls them
couroultai :—
I'm not prepared to show in this
slight song
That to Serendib the same forms
belong,—
E'en let the learn'd go search, and
tell me if I'm wrong.

VII.

The Omrahs, each with hand on
scymitar,
Gave, like Sempronius, still their
voice for war—

“The sabre of the Sultaan in its
sheath
Too long has slept, nor own'd the
work of death ;
Let the Tambourgi bid his signal
rattle,
Bang the loud gong, and raise the
shout of battle !
This dreary cloud that dims our
sovereign's day,
Shall from his kindled bosom flit
away,
When the bold Lootie wheels his
courser round,
And the arm'd elephant shall shake
the ground.
Each noble pants to own the glorious
summons—
And for the charges—Lo ! your faith-
ful Commons !”
The Riots who attended in their
places
(Serendib language calls a farmer
Riot)
Look'd ruefully in one another's
faces,
From this oration auguring much
disquiet,
Double assessment, forage, and free
quarters ;
And fearing these as China-men the
Tartars,
Or as the whisker'd vermin fear the
mousers,
Each fumbled in the pocket of his
trowsers.

VIII.

And next came forth the reverend
Convocation,
Bald heads, white beards, and
many a turban green,
Imaum and Mollah there of every
station,
Santon, Fakir, and Calendar were
seen.
Their votes were various—some
advised a Mosque
With fitting revenues should be
erected,

With seemly gardens and with gay
 Kiosque,
 To recreate a band o' priests
 selected;
 Others opined that through the
 realms a dole
 Be made to holy men, whose
 prayers might profit
 The Sultaun's weal in body and in
 soul.
 But their long-headed chief, the
 Sheik Ul-Sofit,
 More closely touch'd the point:—
 "Thy studious mood,"
 Quoth he, "O Prince! hath thicken'd
 all thy blood,
 And dull'd thy brain with labour
 beyond measure;
 Wherefore relax a space and take
 thy pleasure,
 And toy with beauty, or tell o'er thy
 treasure;
 From all the cares of state, my
 Liege, enlarge thee,
 And leave the burden to thy faithful
 clergy."

IX.

These counsels sage availed not a
 whit,
 And so the patient (as is not
 uncommon
 Where grave physicians lose their
 time and wit)
 Resolved to take advice of an old
 woman;
 His mother she, a dame who once
 was beauteous,
 And still was called so by each
 subject duteous.
 Now, whether Fatima was witch in
 earnest,
 Or only made believe, I cannot
 say—
 But she profess'd to cure disease the
 sternest,
 By dint of magic amulet or lay;
 And, when all other skill in vain was
 shown,
 She deem'd it fitting time to use her
 own.

X.

"*Sympathia magica* hath wonders
 done,"
 (Thus did old Fatima bespeak her
 son,)
 "It works upon the fibres and the
 pores,
 And thus, insensibly, our health
 restores,
 And it must help us here.—Thou
 must endure
 The ill, my son, or travel for the
 cure.
 Search land and sea, and get,
 where'er you can,
 The inmost vesture of a happy
 man,
 I mean his SHIRT, my son; which,
 taken warm
 And fresh from off his back, shall
 chase your harm,
 Bid every current of your veins
 rejoice,
 And your dull heart leap light as
 shepherd-boy's."
 Such was the counsel from his
 mother came;—
 I know not if she had some under-
 game,
 As Doctors have, who bid their
 patients roam
 And live abroad, when sure to die at
 home;
 Or if she thought, that, somehow or
 another,
 Queen-Regent sounded better than
 Queen-Mother;
 But, says the Chronicle (who will go
 look it,)
 That such was her advice—the
 Sultaun took it.

XI.

All are on board—the Sultaun and
 his train,
 In gilded galley prompt to plough
 the main.
 The old Rais was the first who
 questioned, "Whither?"

They paused — “Arabia,” thought
 the pensive Prince,
 “Was call’d The Happy many ages
 since —
 For Mokha, Rais.” — And they
 came safely thither.
 But not in Araby, with all her balm,
 Not where Judea weeps beneath her
 palm,
 Not in rich Egypt, not in Nubian
 waste,
 Could there the step of happiness be
 traced.
 One Copt alone profess’d to have
 seen her smile,
 When Bruce his goblet fill’d at infant
 Nile :
 She bless’d the dauntless traveller as
 he quaff’d,
 But vanish’d from him with the ended
 draught.

XII.

“Enough of turbans,” said the
 weary King,
 “These dolimans of ours are not the
 thing ;
 Try we the Giaours, these men of
 coat and cap, I
 Incline to think some of them must
 be happy ;
 At least, they have as fair a cause as
 any can,
 They drink good wine and keep no
 Ramazan.
 Then northward, ho !” — The vessel
 cuts the sea,
 And fair Italia lies upon her lee. —
 But fair Italia, she who once unfurl’d
 Her eagle banners o’er a conquer’d
 world,
 Long from her throne of domination
 tumbled,
 Lay, by her quondam vassals, sorely
 humbled ;
 The Pope himself look’d pensive,
 pale, and lean,
 And was not half the man he once
 had been.
 “While these the priest and those
 the noble fleeces,

Our poor old boot,” they said, “is
 torn to pieces.
 Its tops the vengeful claws of Austria
 feel,
 And the Great Devil is rending toe
 and heel.
 If happiness you seek, to tell you
 truly,
 We think she dwells with one
 Giovanni Bulli ;
 A tramontane, a heretic, — the
 buck,
 Poffaredio ! still has all the luck ;
 By land or ocean never strikes his
 flag —
 And then — a perfect walking money-
 bag.”
 Off set our Prince to seek John Bull’s
 abode,
 But first took France — it lay upon
 the road.

XIII.

Monsieur Baboon, after much late
 commotion,
 Was agitated like a settling ocean,
 Quite out of sorts, and could not tell
 what ail’d him,
 Only the glory of his house had
 fail’d him ;
 Besides, some tumours on his noddle
 biding,
 Gave indication of a recent hiding.
 Our Prince, though Sultauns of such
 things are heedless,
 Thought it a thing indelicate and
 needless
 To ask, if at that moment he was
 happy.
 And Monsieur, seeing that he was
comme il faut, a
 Loud voice mustered up, for “*Vive
 le Roi !*”
 Then whisper’d, “Ave you any
 news of Nappy ?”
 The Sultaun answer’d him with a
 cross question, —
 “Pray, can you tell me aught of
 one John Bull,
 That dwells somewhere beyond
 your herring-pool ?”

The query seem'd of difficult digestion,
The party shrugg'd, and grinn'd,
and took his snuff,
And found his whole good-breeding
scarce enough.

XIV.

Twitching his visage into as many
puckers
As damsels wont to put into their
tuckers,
(Ere liberal Fashion damn'd both
lace and lawn,
And bade the veil of modesty be
drawn,)

Replied the Frenchman, after a brief
pause,

“Jean Bool!—I vas not know him
—Yes, I vas—

I vas remember dat, von year or two,
I saw him at von place call'd
Vaterloo—

Ma foi ! il s'est tres joliment battu,
Dat is for Englishman,—m'entendez-
vous ?

But den he had wit him one damn
son-gun,
Rogue I no like—dey call him
Vellington.”

Monsieur's politeness could not hide
his fret,
So Solimaun took leave, and cross'd
the strait.

XV.

John Bull was in his very worst of
moods,

Raving of sterile farms and unsold
goods ;

His sugar-loaves and bales about he
threw,

And on his counter beat the devil's
tattoo.

His wars were ended, and the
victory won,

But then, 'twas reckoning-day with
honest John ;

And authors vouch, 'twas still this
Worthy's way,

“Never to grumble till he came to
pay ;

And then he always thinks, his
temper's such,
The work too little, and the pay too
much.”

Yet, grumbler as he is, so kind
and hearty,

That when his mortal foe was on
the floor,

And past the power to harm his
quiet more,

Poor John had wellnigh wept for
Bonaparte !

Such was the wight whom Solimaun
salam'd,—

“And who are you,” John answer'd,
“and be d—d ?”

XVI.

“A stranger, come to see the
happiest man,—

So, signior, all avouch,—in
Frangistan.”—

“Happy ? my tenants breaking on
my hand ;

Unstock'd my pastures, and untill'd
my land ;

Sugar and rum a drug, and mice
and moths

The sole consumers of my good
broadcloths—

Happy ?—Why, cursed war and
racking tax

Have left us scarcely raiment to our
backs.”—

“In that case, signior, I may take
my leave ;

I came to ask a favour—but I
grieve”—

“Favour ?” said John, and eyed the
Sultaun hard,

“It's my belief you come to break
the yard !—

But, stay, you look like some poor
foreign sinner,—

Take that to buy yourself a shirt and
dinner.”—

With that he chuck'd a guinea at his
head ;

But, with due dignity, the Sultaun
said,

“Permit me, sir, your bounty to decline ;
 A *shirt* indeed I seek, but none of thine.
 Signior, I kiss your hands, so fare you well.”—
 “Kiss and be d—d,” quoth John,
 “and go to hell !”

XVII.

Next door to John there dwelt his sister Peg,
 Once a wild lass as ever shook a leg
 When the blithe bagpipe blew—but, soberer now,
 She *doucely* span her flax and milk'd her cow.
 And whereas erst she was a needy slattern,
 Nor now of wealth or cleanliness a pattern,
 Yet once a-month her house was partly swept,
 And once a-week a plenteous board she kept.
 And whereas, eke, the vixen used her claws
 And teeth, of yore, on slender provocation,
 She now was grown amenable to laws,
 A quiet soul as any in the nation ;
 The sole remembrance of her warlike joys
 Was in old songs she sang to please her boys.
 John Bull, whom, in their years of early strife,
 She wont to lead a cat-and-doggish life,
 Now found the woman, as he said, a neighbour,
 Who look'd to the main chance, declined no labour,
 Loved a long grace, and spoke a northern jargon,
 And was d—d close in making of a bargain.

XVIII.

The Sulstaun enter'd, and he made his leg,
 And with decorum curtsy'd sister Peg ;
 (She loved a book, and knew a thing or two,
 And guess'd at once with whom she had to do.)
 She bade him “Sit into the fire,” and took
 Her dram, her cake, her kebbuck from the nook ;
 Ask'd him “about the news from Eastern parts ;
 And of her absent bairns, puir Highland hearts !
 If peace brought down the price of tea and pepper,
 And if the *nitmugs* were grown *ony* cheaper ;—
 Were there nae *speerings* of our Mungo Park—
 Ye'll be the gentleman that wants the sark ?
 If ye wad buy a web o' auld wife's spinnin',
 I'll warrant ye it's a weel-wearing linen.”

XIX.

Then up got Peg, and round the house 'gan scuttle
 In search of goods her customer to nail,
 Until the Sulstaun strain'd his princely throttle,
 And hollo'd.—“Ma'am that is not what I ail.
 Pray, are you happy, ma'am, in this snug glen ?”—
 “Happy ?” said Peg ; “What for d'ye want to ken ?
 Besides, just think upon this by-gane year,
 Grain wadna pay the yoking of the pleugh.”—
 “What say you to the present ?”—
 “Meal's sae dear,
 To mak' their *brose* my bairns have scarce aneugh.”—

"The devil take the shirt," said
Solimaun,
"I think my quest will end as it
began.—
Farewell, ma'am; nay, no ceremony,
I beg"—
"Ye'll no be for the linen then?"
said Peg.

XX.

Now, for the land of verdant Erin,
The Suldaun's royal bark is steering,
The Emerald Isle, where honest
Paddy dwells,
The cousin of John Bull, as story
tells.
For a long space had John, with
words of thunder,
Hard looks, and harder knocks, kept
Paddy under,
Till the poor lad, like boy that's
flogg'd unduly,
Had gotten somewhat restive and
unruly.
Hard was his lot and lodging, you'll
allow,
A wigwam that would hardly serve
a sow;
His landlord, and of middle-men two
brace,
Had screw'd his rent up to the
starving-place;
His garment was a top-coat, and an
old one,
His meal was a potato, and a cold
one;
But still for fun or frolic, and all
that,
In the round world was not the
match of Pat.

XXI.

The Suldaun saw him on a holiday,
Which is with Paddy still a jolly day:
When mass is ended, and his load
of sins
Confess'd, and Mother Church hath
from her binns
Dealt forth a bonus of imputed merit,
Then is Pat's time for fancy, whim,
and spirit!

To jest, to sing, to caper fair and free,
And dance as light as leaf upon the
tree.
"By Mahomet," said Suldaun
Solimaun,
"That ragged fellow is our very man!
Rush in and seize him—do not do
him hurt,
But, will he kill he, let me have his
shirt."—

XXII.

Shilela their plan was wellnigh after
baulking,
(Much less provocation will set it
a-walking,)
But the odds that foil'd Hercules
foil'd Paddy Whack;
They seized, and they floor'd, and
they stripp'd him—Alack!
Up-bubboo! Paddy had not—
a shirt to his back!!!
And the King, disappointed, with
sorrow and shame,
Went back to Serendib as sad as he
came.

MR. KEMBLE'S FARE-
WELL ADDRESS.

ON TAKING LEAVE OF THE EDIN-
BURGH STAGE.

[1817.]

As the worn war-horse, at the
trumpet's sound,
Erects his mane, and neighs, and
paws the ground—
Disdains the ease his generous lord
assigns,
And longs to rush on the embattled
lines,
So I, your plaudits ringing on mine
ear,
Can scarce sustain to think our
parting near;
To think my scenic hour for ever past,
And that these valued plaudits are
my last.

Why should we part, while still some
powers remain,
That in your service strive not yet
in vain ?

Cannot high zeal the strength of
youth supply,
And sense of duty fire the fading eye ;
And all the wrongs of age remain
subdued

Beneath the burning glow of
gratitude ?

Ah, no ! the taper, wearing to its
close,

Oft for a space in fitful lustre glows ;
But all too soon the transient gleam
is past,

It cannot be renew'd, and will not
last ;

Even duty, zeal, and gratitude, can
wage

But short-lived conflict with the
frosts of age.

Yes ! It were poor, remembering
what I was,

To live a pensioner on your applause,
To drain the dregs of your endurance
dry,

And take, as alms, the praise I once
could buy ;

Till every sneering youth around
inquires,

“ Is this the man who once could
please our sires ? ”

And scorn assumes compassion's
doubtful mien,

To warn me off from the encumber'd
scene.

This must not be ;— and higher
duties crave,

Some space between the theatre and
the grave,

That, like the Roman in the Capitol,
I may adjust my mantle ere I fall :

My life's brief act in public service
flown,

The last, the closing scene, must be
my own.

Here, then, adieu ! while yet some
well-graced parts
May fix an ancient favourite in your
hearts,

Not quite to be forgotten, even when
You look on better actors, younger
men :

And if your bosoms own this kindly
debt

Of old remembrance, how shall mine
forget—

O, how forget !—how oft I hither
came

In anxious hope, how oft return'd
with fame !

How oft around your circle this weak
hand

Has waved immortal Shakspeare's
magic wand,

Till the full burst of inspiration came,
And I have felt, and you have fann'd
the flame !

By mem'ry treasured, while her reign
endures,

Those hours must live—and all their
charms are yours.

O favour'd Land ! renown'd for
arts and arms,

For manly talent, and for female
charms,

Could this full bosom prompt the
sinking line,

What fervent benedictions now were
thine !

But my last part is play'd, my knell
is rung,

When e'en your praise falls fluttering
from my tongue ;

And all that you can hear, or I can
tell,

Is—Friends and Patrons, hail, and
FARE YOU WELL.

LINES.

WRITTEN FOR MISS SMITH.

[1817.]

WHEN the lone pilgrim views afar
The shrine that is his guiding star,
With awe his footsteps print the road
Which the loved saint of yore has
trod.

As near he draws, and yet more near,
 His dim eye sparkles with a tear ;
 The Gothic fane's unwonted show,
 The choral hymn, the tapers' glow,
 Oppress his soul ; while they delight
 And chasten rapture with affright.
 No longer dare he think his toil
 Can merit aught his patron's smile ;
 Too light appears the distant way,
 The chilly eve, the sultry day—
 All these endured no favour claim,
 But murmuring forth the sainted
 name,
 He lays his little offering down,
 And only deprecates a frown.

We too, who ply the Thespian art,
 Oft feel such bodings of the heart,
 And, when our utmost powers are
 strain'd,
 Dare hardly hope your favour gain'd.
 She, who from sister climes has
 sought
 The ancient land where Wallace
 fought ;—
 Land long renown'd for arms and
 arts,
 And conquering eyes and dauntless
 hearts ;—
 She, as the flutterings *here* avow,
 Feels all the pilgrim's terrors *now* ;
 Yet sure on Caledonian plain
 The stranger never sued in vain.
 'Tis yours the hospitable task
 To give the applause she dare not
 ask ;
 And they who bid the pilgrim speed,
 The pilgrim's blessing be their meed.

THE SUN UPON THE WEIRDLAW HILL.

[1817.]

THE sun upon the Weirdlaw Hill,
 In Ettrick's vale, is sinking sweet ;
 The westland wind is hush and still,
 The lake lies sleeping at my feet.
 Yet not the landscape to mine eye
 Bears those bright hues that once
 it bore ;

Though evening, with her richest
 dye,
 Flames o'er the hills of Ettrick's
 shore.

With listless look along the plain,
 I see Tweed's silver current glide,
 And coldly mark the holy fane
 Of Melrose rise in ruin'd pride.
 The quiet lake, the balmy air,
 The hill, the stream, the tower,
 the tree,—
 Are they still such as once they were ?
 Or is the dreary change in me ?

Alas, the warp'd and broken board,
 How can it bear the painter's dye !
 The harp of strain'd and tuneless
 chord,
 How to the minstrel's skill reply !
 To aching eyes each landscape
 lowers,
 To feverish pulse each gale blows
 chill ;
 And Araby's or Eden's bowers
 Were barren as this moorland hill.

THE MONKS OF BANGOR'S MARCH.

[1817.]

ETHELFRID or OLFRIID, *King of Northumberland, having besieged Chester in 613, and BROCKMAEL, a British Prince, advancing to relieve it, the religious of the neighbouring Monastery of Bangor marched in procession, to pray for the success of their countrymen. But the British being totally defeated, the heathen victor put the monks to the sword, and destroyed their monastery. The tune to which these verses are adapted is called the Monks' March, and is supposed to have been played at their ill-omened procession.*

WHEN the heathen trumpet's clang
 Round beleaguer'd Chester rang,
 Veiled nun and friar gray
 March'd from Bangor's fair Abbaye ;

High their holy anthem sounds,
Cestria's vale the hymn rebounds,
Floating down the silvan Dee,
O miserere, Domine!

On the long procession goes,
Glory round their crosses glows,
And the Virgin-mother mild
In their peaceful banner smiled;
Who could think such saintly band
Doom'd to feel unhallow'd hand?
Such was the Divine decree,
O miserere, Domine!

Bands that masses only sung,
Hands that censers only swung,
Met the northern bow and bill,
Heard the war-cry wild and shrill:
Woe to Brockmael's feeble hand,
Woe to Olfrid's bloody brand,
Woe to Saxon cruelty,
O miserere, Domine!

Weltering amid warriors slain,
Spurn'd by steeds with bloody mane,
Slaughter'd down by heathen blade,
Bangor's peaceful monks are laid:
Word of parting rest unspoke,
Mass unsung, and bread unbroke;
For their souls for charity,
Sing, O miserere, Domine!

Bangor! o'er the murder wail!
Long thy ruins told the tale,
Shatter'd towers and broken arch
Long recall'd the woeful march:
On thy shrine no tapers burn;
Never shall thy priests return;
The pilgrim sighs and sings for thee,
O miserere, Domine!

LETTER.

TO HIS GRACE THE DUKE OF BUCKLEUCH, DRUMLANRIG CASTLE.

Sanquhar, 2 o'clock, July 30, 1817.

FROM ROSS, where the clouds on
Benlomond are sleeping—
From Greenock, where Clyde to the
Ocean is sweeping—

From Largs, where the Scotch gave
the Northmen a drilling—
From Ardrossan, whose harbour cost
many a shilling—
From Old Cumnock, where beds
are as hard as a plank, sir—
From a chop and green pease, and a
chicken in Sanquhar,
This eve, please the Fates, at Drum-
lanrig we anchor. W. S.

EPILOGUE TO THE APPEAL.

SPOKEN BY MRS. HENRY SIDDONS.

[FEB. 16, 1818.]

A CAT of yore (or else old Æsop lied)
Was changed into a fair and bloom-
ing bride,
But spied a mouse upon her marriage
day,
Forgot her spouse, and seized upon
her prey;
Even thus my bridegroom lawyer, as
you saw,
Threw off poor me, and pounced
upon papa.
His neck from Hymen's mystic knot
made loose,
He twisted round my sire's the literal
noose.
Such are the fruits of our dramatic
labour
Since the New Jail became our next-
door neighbour.

Yes, times *are* changed; for, in
your fathers' age,
The lawyers were the patrons of the
stage;
However high advanced by future
fate,
There stands the bench (*points to the
Pit*) that first received their
weight.
The future legal sage, 'twas ours to
see,
Doom though unwigg'd, and plead
without a fee.

But now, astounding each poor
 mimic elf,
 Instead of lawyers comes the law
 herself;
 Tremendous neighbour, on our right
 she dwells,
 Builds high her towers and excavates
 her cellis;
 While on the left she agitates the
 town,
 With the tempestuous question, Up
 or down?
 'Twixt Scylla and Charybdis thus
 stand we,
 Law's final end, and law's un-
 certainty.
 But, soft! who lives at Rome the
 Pope must flatter,
 And jails and lawsuits are no jesting
 matter.
 Then—just farewell! We wait with
 serious awe
 Till your applause or censure gives
 the law.
 Trusting our humble efforts may
 assure ye,
 We hold you Court and Counsel,
 Judge and Jury.

MACKRIMMON'S LAMENT.

[1818.]

MACLEOD'S wizard flag from the gray
 castle sallies,
 The rowers are seated, unmoor'd are
 the galleys;
 Glean war-axe and broadsword,
 clang target and quiver,
 As Mackrimmon sings, "Farewell
 to Dunvegan for ever!
 Farewell to each cliff, on which
 breakers are foaming;
 Farewell, each dark glen, in which
 red-deer are roaming;
 Farewell, lonely Skye, to lake,
 mountain, and river;
 Macleod may return, but Mac-
 krimmon shall never!

"Farewell the bright clouds that on
 Quillan are sleeping;
 Farewell the bright eyes in the Dun
 that are weeping;
 To each minstrel delusion, farewell!
 —and for ever—
 Mackrimmon departs, to return to
 you never!
 The *Banshee's* wild voice sings the
 death-dirge before me,
 The pall of the dead for a mantle
 hangs o'er me;
 But my heart shall not flag, and my
 nerves shall not shiver,
 Though devoted I go—to return
 again never!

"Too oft shall the notes of Mac-
 krimmon's bewailing
 Be heard when the Gael on their
 exile are sailing;
 Dear land! to the shores, whence
 unwilling we sever,
 Return—return—return shall we
 never!
 Cha till, cha till, cha till sin tuille!
 Cha till, cha till, cha till sin tuille,
 Cha till, cha till, cha till sin tuille,
 Gea thillis Macleod, cha till Mac-
 krimmon!"

DONALD CAIRD'S COME AGAIN.

[1818.]

CHORUS.

*Donald Caird's come again!
 Donald Caird's come again!
 Tell the news in brugh and glen,
 Donald Caird's come again.*

DONALD CAIRD can lilt and sing,
 Blithely dance the Hieland fling,
 Drink till the gudeman be blind,
 Fleech till the gudewife be kind;
 Hoop a leglin, clout a pan,
 Or crack a pow wi' ony man;
 Tell the news in brugh and glen,
 Donald Caird's come again.

*Donald Caird's come again,
Donald Caird's come again!
Tell the news in brugh and glen,
Donald Caird's come again.*

Donald Caird can wire a maukin,
Kens the wiles o' dun-deer staukin',
Leisters kipper, makes a shift
To shoot a muir-fowl in the drift ;
Water-bailiffs, rangers, keepers,
He can wauk when they are sleepers ;
Not for bountith or reward
Dare ye mell wi' Donald Caird.

*Donald Caird's come again!
Donald Caird's come again!
Gar the bagpipes hum amain,
Donald Caird's come again.*

Donald Caird can drink a gill
Fast as hostler-wife can fill ;
Ilka ane that sells gude liquor
Kens how Donald bends a bicker ;
When he's fou he's stout and saucy,
Keeps the cantle o' the cawsey ;
Hieland chief and Lawland laird
Maun gie room to Donald Caird !

*Donald Caird's come again !
Donald Caird's come again !
Tell the news in brugh and glen,
Donald Caird's come again.*

Steek the amrie, lock the kist,
Else some gear may weel be mis't ;
Donald Caird finds orra things
Where Allan Gregor fand the tings ;
Dunts of kebbuck, taits o' woo,
Whiles a hen and whiles a sow,
Webs or duds frae hedge or yard—
'Ware the wuddie, Donald Caird !

*Donald Caird's come again !
Donald Caird's come again !
Dinna let the Shirra ken
Donald Caird's come again.*

On Donald Caird the doom was
stern,
Craig to tether, legs to airn ;
But Donald Caird, wi' mickle study,
Caught the gift to cheat the wuddie ;

Rings of airn, and bolts of steel,
Fell like ice frae hand and heel !
Watch the sheep in fauld and glen,
Donald Caird's come again !

*Donald Caird's come again !
Donald Caird's come again !
Dinna let the Justice ken,
Donald Caird's come again !*

EPITAPH ON MRS. ERSKINE.

[1819.]

PLAIN, as her native dignity of mind,
Arise the tomb of her we have re-
sign'd ;
Unflaw'd and stainless be the marble
scroll,
Emblem of lovely form and candid
soul.—
But, oh ! what symbol may avail, to
tell
The kindness, wit, and sense, we
loved so well !
What sculpture show the broken ties
of life,
Here buried with the parent, friend,
and wife !
Or on the tablet stamp each title dear,
By which the thine urn, EUPHEMIA, claims
the tear !
Yet taught, by thy meek sufferance,
to assume
Patience in anguish, hope beyond
the tomb,
Resign'd, though sad, this votive
verse shall flow,
And brief, alas ! as thy brief span
below.

ON ETTRICK FOREST'S MOUNTAINS DUN.

[1822.]

ON Ettrick Forest's mountains dun,
'Tis blithe to hear the sportsman's
gun,
And seek the heath-frequenting brood
Far through the noonday solitude ;

By many a cairn and trenched mound,
Where chiefs of yore sleep lone and
 sound,
And springs, where gray-hair'd shep-
 herds tell,
That still the fairies love to dwell.

Along the silver streams of Tweed,
'Tis blithe the mimic fly to lead,
When to the hook the salmon springs,
And the line whistles through the
 rings ;
The boiling eddy see him try,
Then dashing from the current high,
Till watchful eye and cautious hand
Have led his wasted strength to land.

'Tis blithe along the midnight tide,
With stalwart arm the boat to guide ;
On high the dazzling blaze to rear,
And heedful plunge the barbed spear ;
Rock, wood, and scaur, emerging
 bright,
Fling on the stream their ruddy light,
And from the bank our band appears
Like Genii, arm'd with fiery spears.

'Tis blithe at eve to tell the tale,
How we succeed, and how we fail,
Whether at Alywn's lordly meal,
Or lowlier board at Ashestiel ;
While the gay tapers cheerly shine,
Bickers the fire, and flows the
 wine—
Days free from thought, and nights
 from care,
My blessing on the Forest fair !

FAREWELL TO THE MUSE.

[1822.]

ENCHANTRESS, farewell, who so oft
 has decoy'd me,
At the close of the evening through
 woodlands to roam,
Where the forester, lated, with won-
 der espied me,
Explore the wild scenes he was
 quitting for home.

Farewell, and take with thee thy
 numbers wild speaking
The language alternate of rapture
 and woe :
Oh ! none but some lover, whose
 heart-strings are breaking,
The pang that I feel at our parting
 can know.

Each joy thou couldst double, and
 when there came sorrow,
Or pale disappointment to darken
 my way,
What voice was like thine, that could
 sing of to-morrow,
Till forgot in the strain was the
 grief of to-day !
But when friends drop around us in
 life's weary waning,
The grief, Queen of Numbers, thou
 canst not assuage ;
Nor the gradual estrangement of
 those yet remaining,
The languor of pain, and the chill-
 ness of age.

'Twas thou that once taught me, in
 accents bewailing,
To sing how a warrior lay stretch'd
 on the plain,
And a maiden hung o'er him with aid
 unavailing,
And held to his lips the cold goblet
 in vain ;
As vain thy enchantments, O Queen
 of wild Numbers,
To a bard when the reign of his
 fancy is o'er,
And the quick pulse of feeling in
 apathy slumbers—
Farewell, then, Enchantress ! I
 meet thee no more !

THE MAID OF ISLA.

[1822.]

Oh, Maid of Isla, from the cliff,
 That looks on troubled wave and
 sky,
Dost thou not see you little skiff
 Contend with ocean gallantly ?

Now beating 'gainst the breeze and surge,
 And steep'd her leeward deck in foam,
 Why does she war unequal urge?—
 Oh, Isla's maid, she seeks her home.

Oh, Isla's maid, yon sea-bird mark,
 Her white wing gleams through mist and spray,
 Against the storm-cloud, lowering dark,
 As to the rock she wheels away;—
 Where clouds are dark and billows rave,
 Why to the shelter should she come
 Of cliff, exposed to wind and wave?—
 Oh, maid of Isla, 'tis her home!

As breeze and tide to yonder skiff,
 Thou'rt adverse to the suit I bring,
 And cold as is yon wintry cliff,
 Where sea-birds close their wearied wing.
 Yet cold as rock, unkind as wave,
 Still, Isla's maid, to thee I come;
 For in thy love, or in his grave,
 Must Allan Vourich find his home.

CARLE, NOW THE KING'S
 COME.

BEING NEW WORDS TO AN AULD
 SPRING.

[1822.]

THE news has flown frae mouth to
 mouth,
 The North for ance has bang'd the
 South;
 The deil a Scotsman's die o' drouth,
 Carle, now the King's come!

CHORUS.

Carle, now the King's come!
 Carle, now the King's come!
 Thou shalt dance, and I will sing,
 Carle, now the King's come!

Auld England held him lang and
 fast;
 And Ireland had a joyfu' cast;
 But Scotland's turn is come at last—
 Carle, now the King's come!

Auld Reekie, in her rokelay gray,
 Thought never to have seen the day;
 He's been a weary time away—
 But, Carle, now the King's come!

She's skirling frae the Castle-hill;
 The Carline's voice is grown sae
 shrill,
 Ye'll hear her at the Canon-mill—
 Carle, now the King's come!

"Up, bairns!" she cries, "baith
 grit and sma',
 And busk ye for the weapon-shaw!
 Stand by me, and we'll bang them a'—
 Carle, now the King's come!"

"Come from Newbattle's ancient
 spires,
 Bauld Lothian, with your knights
 and squires,
 And match the mettle of your sires—
 Carle, now the King's come!"

"You're welcome hame, my Mon-
 tagu!
 Bring in your hand the young
 Buccleuch;
 I'm missing some that I may rue—
 Carle, now the King's come!"

"Come, Haddington, the kind and
 gay,
 You've graced my causeway mony
 a day;
 I'll weep the cause if you should
 stay—
 Carle, now the King's come!"

"Come, premier Duke, and carry
 down
 Frae yonder craig his ancient croun;
 It's had a lang sleep and a soun'—
 But, Carle, now the King's come!"

“Come, Athole, from the hill and
wood,
Bring down your clansmen like a
clud ;
Come, Morton, show the Douglas’
blood,—
Carle, now the King’s come !

“Come, Tweeddale, true as sword
to sheath ;
Come, Hopetoun, fear’d on fields of
death ;
Come, Clerk, and give your bugle
breath ;
Carle, now the King’s come !

“Come, Wemyss, who modest merit
aids ;
Come, Rosebery, from Dalmeny
shades ;
Breadalbane, bring your belted
plaids ;
Carle, now the King’s come !

“Come, stately Niddrie, auld and
true,
Girt with the sword that Minden
knew ;
We have ower few such lairds as you—
Carle, now the King’s come !

“King Arthur’s grown a common
crier,
He’s heard in Fife and far Cantire,—
‘Fie, lads, behold my crest of fire !’
Carle, now the King’s come !

“Saint Abb roars out, ‘I see him
pass,
Between Tantallon and the Bass !’
Calton, get out your keeking-glass—
Carle, now the King’s come !”

The Carline stopp’d ; and, sure I am,
For very glee had ta’en a dwam
But Oman help’d her to a dram.—
Cogie, now the King’s come !

Cogie, now the King’s come !
Cogie, now the King’s come !
I’se be fou’ and ye’s be toom.
Cogie, now the King’s come !

PART SECOND.

A HAWICK gill of mountain dew,
Heised up Auld Reekie’s heart, I
trow,
It minded her of Waterloo—
Carle, now the King’s come !

Again I heard her summons swell,
For, sic a dirdum and a yell,
It drown’d Saint Giles’s jowing bell—
Carle, now the King’s come !

“My trusty Provost, tried and tight,
Stand forward for the Good Town’s
right,
There’s waur than you been made a
knight—
Carle, now the King’s come !

“My reverend Clergy, look ye say
The best of thanksgivings ye ha’e,
And warstle for a sunny day—
Carle, now the King’s come !

“My Doctors, look that you agree,
Cure a’ the town without a fee ;
My Lawyers, dinna pike a plea—
Carle, now the King’s come !

“Come forth each sturdy Burgher’s
bairn,
That dints on wood or clanks on airn,
That fires the o’en, or winds the pirn—
Carle, now the King’s come !

“Come forward with the Blanket
Blue,
Your sires were loyal men and true,
As Scotland’s foemen oft might rue—
Carle, now the King’s come !

“Scot’s downa loup, and rin, and
rave,
We’re steady folks and something
grave,
We’ll keep the causeway firm and
brave—
Carle, now the King’s come !

“ Sir Thomas, thunder from your rock,
Till Pentland dinnales wi’ the shock,
And lace wi’ fire my snood o’ smoke—
Carle, now the King’s come !

“ Melville, bring out your bands of
blue,
A’ Louden lads, baith stout and true,
With Elcho, Hope, and Cockburn,
too—
Carle, now the King’s come !

“ And you, who on your bluidy braes
Compell’d the vanquish’d Despot’s
praise,
Rank out—rank out—my gallant
Greys—
Carle, now the King’s come !

“ Cock o’ the North, my Huntly bra’,
Where are you with the Forty-twa’ ?
Ah ! wae’s my heart that ye’re awa’—
Carle, now the King’s come !

“ But yonder come my canty Celts,
With durk and pistols at their belts,
Thank God, we’ve still some plaids
and kilts—
Carle, now the King’s come !

“ Lord, how the pibrochs groan and
yell !
Macdonnell’s ta’en the field himsell,
Macleod comes branking o’er the
fell—
Carle, now the King’s come !

“ Bend up your bow each Archer
spark,
For you’re to guard him light and dark ;
Faith, lads, for ance ye’ve hit the
mark—
Carle, now the King’s come !

“ Young Errol, take the sword of
state,
The sceptre, Panie-Morarchate ;
Knight Mareschal, see ye clear the
gate—
Carle, now the King’s come !

“ Kind cummer, Leith, ye’ve been
mis-set,
But dinna be upon the fret—

Ye’se hae the handsel of him yet,
Carle, now the King’s come !

“ My daughters, come with een sae
blue,
Your garlands weave, your blossoms
strew ;
He ne’er saw fairer flowers than you—
Carle, now the King’s come !

“ What shall we do for the propine—
We used to offer something fine,
But ne’er a groat’s in pouch of mine—
Carle, now the King’s come !

“ Deil care—for that I’se never start,
We’ll welcome him with Highland
heart ;
Whate’er we have he’s get a part—
Carle, now the King’s come !

“ I’ll show him mason-work this day—
Nane of your bricks of Babel clay,
But towers shall stand till Time’s
away—
Carle, now the King’s come !

“ I’ll show him wit, I’ll show him
lair,
And gallant lads and lassies fair,
And what wad kind heart wish for
mair ?
Carle, now the King’s come !

“ Step out, Sir John, of projects rife,
Come win the thanks of an auld wife,
And bring him health and length of
life—
Carle, now the King’s come !”

ONE VOLUME MORE.

WRITTEN FOR THE BANNATYNE
CLUB.

[1823.]

I.

ASSIST me, ye friends of Old Books
and Old Wine,
To sing in the praises of Sage
Bannatyne,

Who left such a treasure of old
Scottish lore
As enables each age to print one
volume more.

One volume more, my friends, one
volume more,
We'll ransack old Banny for one
volume more.

II.

And first, Allan Ramsay, was eager
to glean
From Bannatyne's *Hortus* his bright
Evergreen ;
Two light little volumes (intended
for four)
Still leave us the task to print one
volume more.

One volume more, etc.

III.

His ways were not ours, for he cared
not a pin
How much he left out, or how much
he put in ;
The truth of the reading he thought
was a bore,
So this accurate age calls for one
volume more.

One volume more, etc.

IV.

Correct and sagacious, then came
my Lord Hailes,
And weigh'd every letter in critical
scales,
But left out some brief words, which
the prudish abhor,
And castrated Banny in one volume
more.

One volume more, my friends, one
volume more ;

We'll restore Banny's manhood in
one volume more.

V.

John Pinkerton next, and I'm truly
concern'd
I can't call that worthy so candid as
learn'd ;

He rail'd at the plaid and blasphemed
the claymore,
And set Scots by the ears in his one
volume more.

One volume more, my friends, one
volume more,

Celt and Goth shall be pleased with
one volume more.

VI.

As bitter as gall, and as sharp as a
razor,
And feeding on herbs as a Nebuchad-
nezzar

His diet too acid, his temper too sour,
Little Ritson came out with his two
volumes more.

But one volume, my friends, one
volume more,

We'll dine on roast-beef and print
one volume more.

VII.

The stout Gothic yeditur, next on the
roll,
With his beard like a brush and as
black as a coal ;

And honest Greysteel that was true
to the core,

Lent their hearts and their hands
each to one volume more.

One volume more, etc.

VIII.

Since by these single champions
what wonders were done,
What may not be achieved by our
Thirty and One ?

Law, Gospel, and Commerce, we
count in our corps,

And the Trade and the Press join for
one volume more.

One volume more, etc.

IX.

Ancient libels and contraband books,
I assure ye,

We'll print as secure from Exchequer
or Jury ;

Then hear your Committee and let
 them count o'er
 The Chiels they intend in their three
 volumes more.
 Three volumes more, etc.

X.

They'll produce you King Jamie, the
 sapient and Sext
 And the Rob of Dumblane and her
 Bishops come next
 One tome miscellaneous they'll add
 to your store,
 Resolving next year to print four
 volumes more.
 Four volumes more, my friends,
 four volumes more ;
 Pay down your subscriptions for
 four volumes more.

TO J. C. LOCKHART, ESQ.

ON THE COMPOSITION OF MAIDA'S
 EPITAPH.

[1824.]

Maidæ Marmorea dormis sub imagine Maida!
 Ad januam domini sit tibi terra levis."

"DEAR JOHN,—I some time ago
 wrote to inform his
 Fat worship of *jaces*, misprinted for
dormis ;
 But that several Southrons assured
 me the *januam*
 Was a twitch to both ears of Ass
 Priscian's cranium.
 You, perhaps, may observe that one
 Lionel Bergeruér,
 In defence of our blunder appears a
 stout arguer :
 But at length I have settled, I hope,
 all these clatters,
 By a *rowt* in the papers—fine place
 for such matters.
 I have, therefore, to make it for once
 my command, sir,
 That my gudeson shall leave the
 whole thing in my hand, sir,

And by no means accomplish what
 James says you threaten,
 Some banter in Blackwood to claim
 your dog-Latin.
 I have various reasons of weight, on
 on my word, sir,
 For pronouncing a step of this sort
 were absurd, sir.—
 Firstly, erudite sir, 'twas against
 your advising
 I adopted the lines this monstrosity
 lies in ;
 For you modestly hinted my English
 translation
 Would become better far such a
 dignified station.
 Second—how, in God's name, would
 my bacon be saved,
 By not having writ what I clearly
 engraved ?
 On the contrary, I, on the whole,
 think it better
 To be whipped as the thief, than
 his lousy resetter.
 Thirdly—don't you perceive that I
 don't care a boddle
 Although fifty false metres were
 flung at my noddle,
 For my back is as broad and as hard
 as Benlomon's,
 And I treat as I please both the
 Greeks and the Romans ;
 Whereas the said heathens might
 rather look serious
 At a kick on their drum from the
 scribe of Valerius.
 And, fourthly and lastly—it is my
 good pleasure
 To remain the sole source of that
 murderous measure.
 So *stet pro ratione voluntas*—be
 tractile,
 Invade not, I say, my own dear little
 dactyl ;
 If you do, you'll occasion a breach
 in our intercourse
 To-morrow will see me in town for
 the winter-course,
 But not at your door, at the usual
 hour, sir,
 My own pye-house daughter's good
 prog to devour, sir.

Ergo—peace!—on your duty, your
 squeamishness throttle,
 And we'll soothe Priscian's spleen
 with a canny third bottle.
 A fig for all dactyls, a fig for all
 spondees,
 A fig for all dunces and dominie
 Grundys ;
 A fig for dry thrapples, south, north,
 east, and west, sir,
 Speates and raxes ere five for a
 famishing guest, sir ;
 And as Fatsman and I have some
 topics for haver, he'll
 Be invited, I hope, to meet me and
 Dame Peveril,
 Upon whom, to say nothing of Oury
 and Anne, you
 Dog shall be deemed if you fasten
 your *Janua*.

LINES,

ADDRESSED TO MONSIEUR ALEXANDRE,
 THE CELEBRATED VENTRILOQUIST.

[1824.]

OF yore, in old England, it was not
 thought good
 To carry two visages under one hood ;
 What should folk say to *you*? who
 have faces such plenty,
 That from under one hood, you last
 night show'd us twenty !
 Stand forth, arch deceiver, and tell
 us in truth,
 Are you handsome or ugly, in age or
 in youth ?
 Man, woman, or child—a dog or a
 mouse ?
 Or are you, at once, each live thing
 in the house ?
 Each live thing, did I ask?—each
 dead implement, too,
 A work-shop in your person,—saw,
 chisel, and screw !
 Above all, are you one individual ?
 I know
 You must be at least Alexandre
 and Co.

But I think you're a troop—an as-
 semblage—a mob,
 And that I, as the Sheriff, should
 take up the job ;
 And instead of rehearsing your
 wonders in verse,
 Must read you the Riot-Act, and bid
 you disperse.

ABBOTSFORD, 23rd April. -

EPILOGUE

TO THE DRAMA FOUNDED ON "ST.
 RONAN'S WELL."

[1824.]

*Enter MEG DODDS, encircled by a
 crowd of unruly boys, whom a town's-
 officer is driving off.*

THAT's right, friend—drive the gait-
 lings back,
 And lend you muckle ane a whack ;
 Your Embro' bairns are grown a
 pack,
 Sae proud and saucy,
 They scarce will let an auld wife walk
 Upon your causey.

I've seen the day they would been
 scaur'd,
 Wi' the Tolbooth, or wi' the Guard,
 Or maybe wud hae some regard
 For Jamie Laing—
 The Water-hole was right weel wared
 On sic a gang.

But whar's the gude Tolbooth gane
 now ?
 Whar's the auld Claught, wi' red
 and blue ?
 Whar's Jamie Laing? and whar's
 John Doo ?
 And whar's the Weigh-house ?
 Deil hae't I see but what is new,
 Except the Playhouse !

Yoursells are changed frae head to
 heel,
 There's some that gar the causeway
 reel



Howe's Army
S. 1.

"Their leaders fall'n, their standards lost"

Page 516.
2 A.

With clashing hufe and rattling
wheel,
And horses canterin',
Wha's fathers daunder'd hame as weel
Wi' lass and lantern.

Mysell being in the public line,
I look for howfs I kenn'd lang syne,
Whar gentles used to drink gude
wine,
And eat cheap dinners ;
But deil a soul gangs there to dine,
Of saints or sinners !

Fortune's and Hunter's gane, alas !
And Bayle's is lost in empty space ;
And now if folk would splice a brace,
Or crack a bottle,
They gang to a new-fangled place
They ca' a Hottle.

The deevil hottle them for Meg !
They are sae greedy and sae gleg,
That if ye're serv'd but wi' an egg,
(And that's puir pickin',)
In comes a chiel and makes a leg,
And charges chicken !

"And wha may ye be," gin ye speer,
"That brings your auld-warld clavers
here ?"
Troth, if there's onybody near
That kens the roads,
I'll haud ye Burgundy to beer,
He kens Meg Dodds.

I came a piece frae west o' Currie ;
And, since I see you're in a hurry,
Your patience I'll nae langer worry,
But be sae crouse
As speak a word for ane Will Murray,
That keeps this house.

Plays are auld-fashion'd things, in
truth,
And ye've seen wonders mair un-
couth ;
Yet actors shouldna suffer drouth,
Or want of dramock,
Although they speak but wi' their
mouth,
Not with their stamock

But ye tak care of a' folk's pantry ;
And surely to hae stooden sentry
Ower this big house, (that's far frae
rent-free,)
For a lone sister,
Is claims as gude's to be a ventri—
How'st ca'd—loquister.

Weel, sirs, gude'en, and have a care,
The bairns mak fun o' Meg nae mair ;
For gin they do, she tells you fair,
And without failzie,
As sure as ever ye sit there,
She'll tell the Bailie.

EPILOGUE.

[1824.]

THE sages—for authority, pray look
Seneca's morals, or the copy-book—
The sages to disparage woman's
power,
Say, beauty is a fair, but fading
flower ;—
I cannot tell—I've small philosophy—
Yet, if it fades, it does not surely die,
But, like the violet, when decay'd in
bloom,
Survives through many a year in
rich perfume.
Witness our theme to-night, two
ages gone,
A third wanes fast, since Mary fill'd
the throne.
Brief was her bloom, with scarce one
sunny day,
'Twi' Pinkie's field and fatal Fother-
ingay :
But when, while Scottish hearts and
blood you boast,
Shall sympathy with Mary's woes
be lost ?
O'er Mary's mem'ry the learn'd
quarrel,
By Mary's grave the poet plants his
laurel,
Time's echo, old tradition, makes
her name
The constant burden of his fault'ring
theme ;

In each old hall his gray-hair'd
 heralds tell
 Of Mary's picture, and of Mary's
 cell,
 And show—my fingers tingle at the
 thought—
 The loads of tapestry which that
 poor Queen wrought,
 In vain did fate bestow a double
 dower
 Of ev'ry ill that waits on rank and
 pow'r,
 Of ev'ry ill on beauty that attends—
 False ministers, false lovers, and
 false friends.
 Spite of three wedlocks so completely
 curst,
 They rose in ill from bad to worse,
 and worst,
 In spite of errors—I dare not say
 more,
 For Duncan Targe lays hand on his
 claymore.
 In spite of all, however, humours
 vary,
 There is a talisman in that word
 Mary,
 That unto Scottish bosoms all and
 some
 Is found the genuine *open sesamum* !
 In history, ballad, poetry, or novel,
 It charms alike the castle and the
 hovel,
 Even you—forgive me—who, demure
 and shy,
 Gorge not each bait, nor stir at every
 fly,
 Must rise to this, else in her ancient
 reign
 The Rose of Scotland has survived
 in vain.

LIFE OF NAPOLEON.

[JUNE, 1825.]

WHEN with Poetry dealing
 Room enough in a shieling :
 Neither cabin nor hovel
 Too small for a novel :

Though my back I should rub
 On Diogenes' tub,
 How my fancy could prance
 In a dance of romance !
 But my house I must swap
 With some Brobdignag chap,
 Ere I grapple, God bless me ! with
 Emperor Nap.

LINES TO SIR CUTHBERT SHARP.

[1827.]

FORGET thee? No! my worthy
 fere!
 Forget blithe mirth and gallant
 cheer!
 Death sooner stretch me on my bier!
 Forget thee? No.

Forget the universal shout
 When "canny Sunderland" spoke
 out—
 A truth which knaves affect to
 doubt—
 Forget thee? No.

Forget you? No—though now-a-
 day
 I've heard your knowing people
 say,
 Disown the debt you cannot pay,
 You'll find it far the thriftiest way—
 But I?—O no.

Forget your kindness found for all
 room,
 In what, though large, seem'd still
 a small room
 Forget my *Surtces* in a ball-room—
 Forget you? No.

Forget your sprightly dumpty-
 diddles,
 And beauty tripping to the fiddles,
 Forget my lovely friends the
Liddells—
 Forget you? No.

THE DEATH OF KEELDAR.

[1828.]

PERCY or Percival Rede of Trochend, in Redesdale, Northumberland, is celebrated in tradition as a huntsman, and a soldier. He was, upon two occasions, singularly unfortunate; once, when an arrow, which he had discharged at a deer, killed his celebrated dog Keeldar; and again, when, being on a hunting party, he was betrayed into the hands of a clan called Crossar, by whom he was murdered. Mr. Cooper's painting of the first of these incidents, suggested the following stanzas.

UP rose the sun, o'er moor and mead;

Up with the sun rose Percy Rede;
Brave Keeldar, from his couples freed,

Career'd along the lea;
The Palfrey sprung with sprightly bound,

As if to match the gamesome hound;
His horn the gallant huntsman wound:

They were a jovial three!

Man, hound, or horse, of higher fame,

To wake the wild deer never came,
Since Alnwick's Earl pursued the game

On Cheviot's rueful day;
Keeldar was matchless in his speed,
Than Tarras, ne'er was stancher steed,

A peerless archer, Percy Rede:
And right dear friends were they.

The chase engross'd their joys and woes,

Together at the dawn they rose,
Together shared the noon's repose,
By fountain or by stream;
And oft, when evening skies were red,
The heather was their common bed,
Where each, as wildering fancy led,
Still hunted in his dream.

Now is the thrilling moment near,
Of sylvan hope and sylvan fear,
Yon thicket holds the harbour'd deer,
The signs the hunters know;—

With eyes of flame, and quivering ears,

The brake sagacious Keeldar nears;
The restless palfrey paws and rears;
The archer strings his bow.

The game's afoot!—Halloo! Halloo!
Hunter, and horse, and hound pursue;—

But woe the shaft that erring flew—
That e'er it left the string!
And ill betide the faithless yew!
The stag bounds scatheless o'er the dew,

And gallant Keeldar's life-blood true
Has drench'd the gray-goose wing.

The noble hound—he dies, he dies,
Death, death has glazed his fixed eyes,

Stiff on the bloody heath he lies,
Without a groan or quiver.
Now day may break and bugle sound,

And whoop and hollow ring around.
And o'er his couch the stag may bound,
But Keeldar sleeps for ever.

Dilated nostrils, staring eyes,
Mark the poor palfrey's mute surprise,

He knows not that his comrade dies,
Nor what is death—but still
His aspect hath expression drear
Of grief and wonder, mix'd with fear,

Like startled children when they hear
Some mystic tale of ill.

But he that bent the fatal bow,
Can well the sum of evil know,
And o'er his favourite, bending low,
In speechless grief recline;
Can think he hears the senseless clay,
In unapproachful accents say,

“The hand that took my life away,
Dear master, was it thine?”

“And if it be, the shaft be bless'd,
Which sure some erring aim address'd,
Since in your service prized, caress'd
I in your service die;
And you may have a fleeter hound,
To match the dun-deer's merry bound,
But by your couch will ne'er be found
So true a guard as I.”

And to his last stout Percy rued
The fatal chance, for when he stood
'Gainst fearful odds in deadly feud,
And fell amid the fray,
E'en with his dying voice he cried,
“Had Keeldar but been at my side,
Your treacherous ambush had been spied—
I had not died to-day!”

Remembrance of the erring bow
Long since had join'd the tides which flow,
Conveying human bliss and woe
Down dark oblivion's river;
But Art can Time's stern doom arrest,
And snatch his spoil from Lethe's breast,
And, in her Cooper's colours drest,
The scene shall live for ever.

THE FORAY.

[1830.]

THE last of our steers on the board
has been spread,
And the last flask of wine in our
goblet is red;
Up! up, my brave kinsmen! belt
swords and begone,
There are dangers to dare, and
there's spoil to be won

The eyes, that so lately mix'd
glances with ours,
For a space must be dim, as they
gaze from the towers,
And strive to distinguish through
tempest and gloom,
The prance of the steed, and the toss
of the plume.

The rain is descending; the wind
rises loud;
And the moon her red beacon has
veil'd with a cloud;
'Tis the better, my mates! for the
warder's dull eye
Shall in confidence slumber, nor
dream we are nigh.

Our steeds are impatient! I hear my
blithe Grey!
There is life in his hoot-clang, and
hope in his neigh;
Like the flash of a meteor, the
glance of his mane
Shall marshal your march through
the darkness and rain.

The drawbridge has dropp'd, the
bugle has blown;
One pledge is to quaff yet—then
mount and begone!—
To their honour and peace, that shall
rest with the slain;
To their health and their glee, that
see Teviot again!

INSCRIPTION

FOR THE MONUMENT OF THE REV.
GEORGE SCOTT.

[1830.]

To youth, to age, alike, this tablet
pale
Tells the brief moral of its tragic
tale.
Art thou a parent? Reverence this
bier,
'The parents' fondest hopes lie buried
here.

Art thou a youth, prepared on life to
 start,
 With opening talents and a generous
 heart,
 Fair hopes and flattering prospects
 all thine own?
 Lo! here their end—a monumental
 stone.
 But let submission tame each
 sorrowing thought,
 Heaven crown'd its champion ere
 the fight was fought.

LINES ON FORTUNE.

[1831.]

“By the advice of Dr. Ebenezer
 Clarkson, Sir Walter consulted a skil-
 ful mechanist, by name *Fortune*, about
 a contrivance for the support of the
 lame limb, which had of late given him
 much pain, as well as inconvenience.
 Mr. Fortune produced a clever piece of
 handiwork, and Sir Walter felt at first
 great relief from the use of it: inso-

much that his spirits rose to quite the
 old pitch, and his letter to me upon the
 occasion overflows with merry applica-
 tions of sundry maxims and verses
 about *Fortune*. “*Fortes Fortuna
 adjuvat*” — he says — “never more
 sing I.”

FORTUNE, my Foe, why dost thou
 frown on me?
 And will my Fortune never better
 be?
 Wilt thou, I say, for ever breed my
 pain?
 And wilt thou ne'er return my joys
 again?

No—let my ditty be henceforth—

Fortune, my Friend, how well thou
 favourest me!
 A kinder Fortune man did never see!
 Thou propp'st my thigh, thou ridd'st
 my knee of pain,
 I'll walk, I'll mount—I'll be a man
 again.—

Life vol. x. p. 38.

DRAMATIC PIECES.

HALIDON HILL;

A DRAMATIC SKETCH FROM SCOTTISH HISTORY.

PREFACE.

THOUGH the Public seldom feel much interest in such communications (nor is there any reason why they should), the Author takes the liberty of stating, that these scenes were commenced with the purpose of contributing to a miscellany projected by a much-esteemed friend. But instead of being confined to a scene or two, as intended, the work gradually swelled to the size of an independent publication. It is designed to illustrate military antiquities, and the manners of chivalry. The drama (if it can be termed one) is, in no particular, either designed or calculated for the stage.

The subject is to be found in Scottish history; but not to overload so slight a publication with antiquarian research, or quotations from obscure chronicles, may be sufficiently illustrated by the following passage from PINKERTON'S *History of Scotland*, vol. i. p. 72.

“The Governor (anno 1402) dispatched a considerable force under Murdac, his eldest son: the Earls of Angus and Moray also joined Douglas, who entered England with an army of ten thousand men, carrying terror and devastation to the walls of Newcastle.

“Henry IV. was now engaged in the Welsh war against Owen Glendour; but the Earl of Northumberland, and his son, the Hotspur Percy, with the Earl of March, collected a numerous array, and awaited the return of the Scots, impeded with spoil, near Milfield, in the north part of Northumberland. Douglas had reached Wooler, in his return; and, perceiving the enemy, seized a strong post between the two armies, called Homildon-hill. In this method he rivalled his pre-

decessor at the battle of Otterburn, but not with like success. The English advanced to the assault, and Henry Percy was about to lead them up the hill, when March caught his bridle, and advised him to advance no farther, but to pour the dreadful shower of English arrows into the enemy. This advice was followed by the usual fortune; for in all ages the bow was the English instrument of victory; and though the Scots, and perhaps the French, were superior in the use of the spear, yet this weapon was useless after the distant bow had decided the combat. Robert the Great, sensible of this at the battle of Bannockburn, ordered a prepared detachment of cavalry to rush among the English archers at the commencement, totally to disperse them, and stop the deadly effusion. But Douglas now used no such precaution; and the consequence was, that his people, drawn up on the face of the hill, presented one general mark to the enemy, none of whose arrows descended in vain. The Scots fell without fight, and unrevenged, till a spirited knight, Swinton, exclaimed aloud, ‘O my brave countrymen! what fascination has seized you to-day, that you stand like deer to be shot, instead of indulging your ancient courage, and meeting your enemies hand to hand? Let those who will, descend with me, that we may gain victory, or life, or fall like men.’ This being heard by Adam Gordon, between whom and Swinton there remained an ancient deadly feud, attended with the mutual slaughter of many followers, he instantly fell on his knees before Swinton, begged his pardon, and desired to be dubbed a knight by him whom he must now regard as the wisest and the boldest of that order in Britain. The ceremony performed, Swinton and

Gordon descended the hill, accompanied only by one hundred men; and a desperate valour led the whole body to death. Had a similar spirit been shown by the Scottish army, it is probable that the event of the day would have been different. Douglas, who was certainly deficient in the most important qualities of a general, seeing his army begin to disperse, at length attempted to descend the hill; but the English archers, retiring a little, sent a flight of arrows so sharp and strong that no armour could withstand; and the Scottish leader himself, whose panoply was of remarkable temper, fell under five wounds, though not mortal. The English men-of-arms, knights, or squires, did not strike one blow, but remained spectators of the rout, which was now complete. Great numbers of the Scots were slain, and near five hundred perished in the river Tweed upon their flight. Among the illustrious captives was Douglas, whose chief wound deprived him of an eye; Murdac, son of Albany; the Earls of Moray and Angus; and about twenty-four gentlemen of eminent rank and power. The chief slain were, Swinton, Gordon, Livingston of Calendar, Ramsay of Dalhousie, Walter Sinclair, Roger Gordon, Walter Scott, and others. Such was the issue of the unfortunate battle of Homildon."

It may be proper to observe, that the scene of action has, in the following pages, been transferred from Homildon to Halidon Hill. For this there was an obvious reason;—for who would again venture to introduce upon the scene the celebrated Hotspur, who commanded the English at the former battle? There are, however, several coincidences which may reconcile even the severer antiquary to the substitution of Halidon Hill for Homildon. A Scottish army was defeated by the English on both occasions, and under nearly the same circumstances of address on the part of the victors, and mismanagement on that of the vanquished, for the English long-bow decided the day in both cases. In both cases, also, a Gordon was left on the field of battle; and at Halidon, as at

Homildon, the Scots were commanded by an ill-fated representative of the great house of Douglas. He of Homildon was surnamed *Tineman*, i.e. *Loseman*, from his repeated defeats and misadventures; and, with all the personal valour of his race, seems to have enjoyed so small a portion of their sagacity, as to be unable to learn military experience from reiterated calamity. I am far, however, from intimating, that the traits of imbecility and envy attributed to the Regent in the following sketch, are to be historically ascribed either to the elder Douglas of Halidon Hill, or to him called *Tineman*, who seems to have enjoyed the respect of his countrymen, notwithstanding that, like the celebrated Anne de Montmorency, he was either defeated, or wounded, or made prisoner, in every battle which he fought. The Regent of the sketch is a character purely imaginary.

The tradition of the Swinton family, which still survives in a lineal descent, and to which the author has the honour to be related, avers, that the Swinton who fell at Homildon in the manner related in the preceding extract, had slain Gordon's father; which seems sufficient ground for adopting that circumstance into the following dramatic sketch, though it is rendered improbable by other authorities.

If any reader will take the trouble of looking at Froissart, Fordun, or other historians of the period, he will find, that the character of the Lord of Swinton, for strength, courage, and conduct, is by no means exaggerated.

W. S.

ABBOTSFORD, 1822.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

SCOTTISH.

The Regent of Scotland.

Gordon,
Swinton,
Lennox,
Rotherland,
Ross,
Maxwell,
Johnstone,
Lindesay,

} *Scottish Chiefs and Nobles.*

Adam de Vipont, *a Knight Templar*,
 The Prior of Maison-Dieu.
 Reynald, *Swinton's Squire*.
 Hob Hattely, *a Border Moss-Trooper*.
Heralds.

ENGLISH.

King Edward III.
 Chandos, }
 Percy, } *English and Norman*
 Ribaultmont, } *Nobles.*
 The Abbot of Walthamstow.

ACT I.—SCENE I.

The northern side of the eminence of Halidon. The back Scene represents the summit of the ascent, occupied by the Rear-guard of the Scottish army. Bodies of armed Men appear as advancing from different points, to join the main Body.

Enter DE VIPONT and the PRIOR OF MAISON-DIEU.

VIP. No farther, Father—here I need no guidance—
 I have already brought your peaceful step

Too near the verge of battle.

PRI. Fain would I see you join some Baron's banner,
 Before I say farewell. The honour'd sword

That fought so well in Syria, should not wave
 Amid the ignoble crowd.

VIP. Each spot is noble in a pitched field,

So that a man has room to fight and fall on't.

But I shall find out friends. 'Tis scarce twelve years

Since I left Scotland for the wars of Palestine,

And then the flower of all the Scottish nobles

Were known to me; and I, in my degree,

Not all unknown to them.

PRI. Alas! there have been changes since that time!

The Royal Bruce, with Randolph, Douglas, Grahame,
 Then shook in field the banners which now moulder

Over their graves i' the chancel.

VIP. And thence comes it, That while I look'd on many a well-known crest

And blazon'd shield, as hitherward we came,

The faces of the Barons who displayed them

Were all unknown to me. Brave youths they seem'd;

Yet, surely, fitter to adorn the tilt-yard,

Than to be leaders of a war. Their followers,

Young like themselves, seem like themselves unpractis'd—

Look at their battle-rank.

PRI. I cannot gaze on't with undazzled eye,

So thick the rays dart back from shield and helmet,

And sword and battle-axe, and spear and pennon.

Sure 'tis a gallant show! The Bruce himself

Hath often conquer'd at the head of fewer

And worse appointed followers.

VIP. Ay, but 'twas Bruce that led them. Reverend Father,

'Tis not the falchion's weight decides a combat;

It is the strong and skilful hand that wields it.

Ill fate, that we should lack the noble King,

And all his champions now! Time call'd them not,

For when I parted hence for Palestine,

The brows of most were free from grizzled hair.

PRI. Too true, alas! But well you know, in Scotland

Few hairs are silver'd underneath the helmet;

'Tis cowls like mine which hide them.
 'Mongst the laity,
 War's the rash reaper, who thrusts
 in his sickle
 Before the grain is white. In three-
 score years
 And ten, which I have seen, I have
 outlived
 Wellnigh two generations of our
 nobles.
 The race which holds yon summit is
 the third.

VIP. Thou mayst outlive them
 also.

PRI. Heaven forfend!
 My prayer shall be, that Heaven will
 close my eyes,
 Before they look upon the wrath to
 come.

VIP. Retire, retire, good Father!—
 Pray for Scotland—
 Think not on me. Here comes an
 ancient friend,
 Brother in arms, with whom to-day
 I'll join me.

Back to your choir, assemble all your
 brotherhood,
 And weary Heaven with prayers for
 victory.

PRI. Heaven's blessing rest with
 thee,
 Champion of Heaven, and of thy
 suffering country!

[*Exit PRIOR. VIPONT draws a
 little aside and lets down the
 beaver of his helmet.*]

*Enter SWINTON, followed by REYNALD
 and others, to whom he speaks as
 he enters.*

SWI. Halt here, and plant my
 pennon, till the Regent
 Assign our band its station in the
 host.

REY. That must be by the
 Standard. We have had
 That right since good Saint David's
 reign at least.
 Fain would I see the Marcher would
 dispute it.

SWI. Peace, Reynald! Where the
 general plants the soldier,

There is his place of honour, and
 there only
 His valour can win worship. Thou'rt
 of those,

Who would have war's deep art bear
 the wild semblance
 Of some disorder'd hunting, where,
 pell-mell,
 Each trusting to the swiftness of his
 horse,
 Gallants press on to see the quarry
 fall.

Yon steel-clad Southrons, Reynald,
 are no deer;
 And England's Edward is no stag at
 bay.

VIP. (*advancing.*) There needed
 not, to blazon forth the Swinton,
 His ancient burgonet, the sable Boar
 Chain'd to the gnarl'd oak,—nor his
 proud step,
 Nor giant stature, nor the ponderous
 mace,
 Which only he, of Scotland's realm,
 can wield:

His discipline and wisdom mark the
 leader,
 As doth his frame the champion.
 Hail, brave Swinton!

SWI. Brave Templar, thanks!
 Such your cross'd shoulder
 speaks you;
 But the closed visor, which conceals
 your features,
 Forbids more knowledge. Umfra-
 ville, perhaps—

VIP. (*unclosing his helmet.*) No;
 one less worthy of our sacred
 Order.

Yet, unless Syrian suns have scorch'd
 my features
 Swart as my sable visor, Alan
 Swinton
 Will welcome Symon Vipont.

SWI. (*embracing him.*) As the blithe
 reaper
 Welcomes a practised mate, when
 the ripe harvest
 Lies deep before him, and the sun is
 high!
 Thou'lt follow yon old pennon, wilt
 thou not?

'Tis tatter'd since thou saw'st it, and
the Boar-heads
Look as if brought from off some
Christmas board,
Where knives had notch'd them
deeply.

VIP. Have with them, ne'ertheless.
The Stuart's Chequer,
The Bloody Heart of Douglas, Ross's
Lymphads,
Sutherland's Wild-cats, nor the royal
Lion,
Rampant in golden treasure, wins
me from them.
We'll back the Boar-heads bravely.
I see round them
A chosen band of lances—some well
known to me.

Where's the main body of thy
followers?

SWI. Symon de Vipont, thou dost
see them all
That Swinton's bugle-horn can call
to battle,
However loud it rings. There's not
a boy
Left in my halls, whose arm has
strength enough
To bear a sword—there's not a man
behind,
However old, who moves without a
staff.

Striplings and graybeards, every one
is here,
And here all should be—Scotland
needs them all;
And more and better men, were each
a Hercules,
And yonder handful centuplied.

VIP. A thousand followers—such,
with friends and kinsmen,
Allies and vassals, thou wert wont to
lead—
A thousand followers shrunk to sixty
lances
In twelve years' space?—And thy
brave sons, Sir Alan?

Alas! I fear to ask.

SWI. All slain, De Vipont. In my
empty home
A puny babe lisps to a widow'd
mother,

“Where is my grandsire! wherefore
do you weep?”
But for that prattler, Lyulph's house
is heirless.

I'm an old oak, from which the foresters
Have hew'd four goodly boughs, and
left beside me

Only a sapling, which the fawn may
crush

As he springs over it.

VIP. All slain?—alas!

SWI. Ay, all, De Vipont. And
their attributes,

John with the Long Spear—Archi-
bald with the Axe—

Richard the Ready—and my young-
est darling,

My Fair-hair'd William—do but now
survive

In measures which the gray-hair'd
minstrels sing,

When they make maidens weep.

VIP. These wars with England,
they have rooted out

The flowers of Christendom.
Knights, who might win

The sepulchre of Christ from the
rude heathen,

Fall in unholy warfare!

SWI. Unholy warfare? ay, well
hast thou named it;

But not with England—would her
cloth-yard shafts

Had bored their cuirasses! Their
lives had been

Lost like their grandsire's, in the
bold defence

Of their dear country—but in private
feud

With the proud Gordon, fell my
Long-spear'd John,

He with the Axe, and he men call'd
the Ready,

Ay, and my Fair-hair'd Will—the
Gordon's wrath

Devour'd my gallant issue.

VIP. Since thou dost weep, their
death is unavenged?

SWI. Templar, what think'st thou
me?—See yonder rock,

From which the fountain gushes—is
it less

Compact of adamant, though waters
 flow from it ?
 Firm hearts have moister eyes.—
 They *are* avenged ;
 I wept not till they were—till the
 proud Gordon
 Had with his life-blood dyed my
 father's sword,
 In guerdon that he thinn'd my
 father's lineage,
 And then I wept my sons ; and, as
 the Gordon
 Lay at my feet, there was a tear for him,
 Which mingled with the rest. We
 had been friends,
 Had shared the banquet and the
 chase together,
 Fought side by side,—and our first
 cause of strife,
 Woe to the pride of both, was but a
 light one !
 VIP. You are at feud, then, with
 the mighty Gordon ?
 SWI. At deadly feud. Here in this
 Border-land,
 Where the sire's quarrels descend
 upon the son,
 As due a part of his inheritance,
 As the strong castle and the ancient
 blazon,
 Where private Vengeance holds the
 scales of justice,
 Weighing each drop of blood as
 scrupulously
 As Jews or Lombards balance silver
 pence,
 Not in this land, 'twixt Solway and
 Saint Abb's,
 Rages a bitterer feud than mine and
 theirs,
 The Swinton and the Gordon.
 VIP. You, with some threescore
 lances—and the Gordon
 Leading a thousand followers.
 SWI. You rate him far too low.
 Since you sought Palestine,
 He hath had grants of baronies and
 lordships
 In the far-distant North. A thousand
 horse
 His southern friends and vassals
 always number'd.

Add Badenoch kerne, and horse from
 Dey and Spey,
 He'll count a thousand more.—And
 now, De Vipont,
 If the Boar-heads seem in your eyes
 less worthy
 For lack of followers—seek yonder
 standard—
 The bounding Stag, with a brave
 host around it ;
 There the young Gordon makes his
 earliest field,
 And pants to win his spurs. His
 father's friend,
 As well as mine, thou wert—go, join
 his pennon,
 And grace him with thy presence.
 VIP. When you were friends, I
 was the friend of both,
 And now I can be enemy to neither ;
 But my poor person, though but
 slight the aid,
 Joins on this field the banner of the
 two
 Which hath the smallest following.
 SWI. Spoke like the generous
 Knight, who gave up all,
 Leading and lordship, in a heathen
 land
 To fight, a Christian soldier ! Yet,
 in earnest,
 I pray, De Vipont, you would join
 the Gordon
 In this high battle. 'Tis a noble
 youth,—
 So fame doth vouch him,—amorous,
 quick, and valiant ;
 Takes knighthood, too, this day, and
 well may use
 His spurs too rashly in the wish to
 win them.
 A friend like thee beside him in the
 fight,
 Were worth a hundred spears, to rein
 his valour
 And temper it with prudence :—'tis
 the aged eagle
 Teaches his brood to gaze upon the
 sun,
 With eye undazzled.
 VIP. Alas ! brave Swinton !
 Would'st thou train the hunter

That soon must bring thee to the bay? Your custom,
Your most unchristian, savage, fiend-like custom,
Binds Gordon to avenge his father's death.

SWI. Why, be it so! I look for nothing else:
My part was acted when I slew his father,
Avenging my four sons — Young Gordon's sword,
If it should find my heart, can ne'er inflict there
A pang so poignant as his father's did.
But I would perish by a noble hand,
And such will his be if he bear him nobly,
Nobly and wisely on this field of Halidon.

Enter a PURSUIVANT.

PUR. Sir Knights, to council! — 'tis the Regent's order,
That knights and men of leading meet him instantly
Before the royal standard. Edward's army
Is seen from the hill-summit.

SWI. Say to the Regent, we obey his orders.

[*Exit PURSUIVANT.*]

[*To REYNALD.*] Hold thou my casque, and furl my pennon up
Close to the staff. I will not show my crest,
Nor standard, till the common foe shall challenge them.
I'll wake no civil strife, nor tempt the Gordon
With aught that's like defiance.

VIP. Will he not know your features?

SWI. He never saw me. In the distant North,
Against his will, 'tis said, his friends detain'd him
During his nurture — caring not, belike,
To trust a pledge so precious near the Boar-tusks.

It was a natural but needless caution:
I wage no war with children, for I think

Too deeply on mine own.

VIP. I have thought on it, and will see the Gordon

As we go hence to council. I do bear

A cross, which binds me to be Christian priest,

As well as Christian champion. God may grant,

That I, at once his father's friend and yours,

May make some peace betwixt you.

SWI. When that your priestly zeal, and knightly valour,
Shall force the grave to render up the dead.

[*Exeunt severally.*]

SCENE II.

The summit of Halidon Hill, before the Regent's Tent. The Royal Standard of Scotland is seen in the background, with the Pennons and Banners of the principal Nobles around it.

Council of Scottish Nobles and Chiefs. SUTHERLAND, ROSS, LENNOX, MAXWELL, and other Nobles of the highest rank, are close to the REGENT'S person, and in the act of keen debate. VIPONT with GORDON and others, remain grouped at some distance on the right hand of the Stage. On the left, standing also apart, is SWINTON, alone and bare-headed. The Nobles are dressed in Highland or Lowland habits, as historical costume requires. Trumpets, Herald's, etc., are in attendance.

LEX. Nay, Lordings, put no shame upon my counsels.

I did but say, if we retired a little,
We should have fairer field and better vantage.

I've seen King Robert — ay, The Bruce himself —

Retreat six leagues in length, and think no shame on't

REG. Ay, but King Edward sent a haughty message Defying us to battle on this field, This very hill of Halidon; if we leave it

Unfought withal, it squares not with our honour.

SWI. (*apart.*) A perilous honour that allows the enemy, And such an enemy as this same Edward,

To choose our field of battle! He knows how

To make our Scottish pride betray its master

Into the pitfall.

[*During this speech the debate among the Nobles is continued.*]

SUTH. (*aloud.*) We will not back one furlong—not one yard,

No, nor one inch; where'er we find the foe,

Or where the foe finds us, there will we fight him.

Retreat will dull the spirit of our followers,

Who now stand prompt for battle.

ROSS. My Lords, methinks great Morarchat has doubts,

That, if his Northern clans once turn the seam

Of their check'd hose behind, it will be hard

To halt and rally them.

SUTH. Say'st thou, MacDonnell? —Add another falsehood,

And name when Morarchat was coward or traitor?

Thine island race, as chronicles can tell,

Were oft affianced to the Southron Loving the weight and temper of their gold,

More than the weight and temper of their steel.

REG. Peace, my Lords, ho!

ROSS. (*throwing down his Glove.*) MacDonnell will not peace!

There lies my pledge, Proud Morarchat, to witness thee aliar.

MAX. Brought I all Nithsdale from the Western Border;

Left I my towers exposed to foraying England,

And thieving Annandale, to see such misrule?

JOHN. Who speaks of Annandale? Dare Maxwell slander

The gentle House of Lochwood?

REG. Peace, Lordings, once again. We represent

The Majesty of Scotland—in our presence

Brawling is treason.

SUTH. Were it in presence of the King himself,

What should prevent my saying—

Enter LINDESAY.

LIN. You must determine quickly. Scarce a mile

Parts our vanguard from Edward's. On the plain

Bright gleams of armour flash through clouds of dust,

Like stars through frost-mist—steeds neigh, and weapons clash—

And arrows soon will whistle—the worst sound

That waits on English War.—You must determine.

REG. We are determined. We will spare proud Edward

Half of the ground that parts us.—Onward, Lords;

Saint Andrew strike for Scotland! We will lead

The middle ward ourselves, the Royal Standard

Display'd beside us; and beneath its shadow

Shall the young gallants, whom we knight this day,

Fight for their golden spurs.—Lennox, thou'rt wise,

And wilt obey command—lead thou the rear.

LEN. The rear!—why I the rear? The van were fitter

For him who fought abreast with Robert Bruce.

SWI. (*apart.*) Discretion hath forsaken Lennox too!

The wisdom he was forty years in
gathering
Has left him in an instant. 'Tis
contagious

Even to witness frenzy.

SUTH. The Regent hath determined
well. The rear
Suits him the best who counsell'd
our retreat.

LEN. Proud Northern Thane, the
van were soon the rear,
Were thy disorder'd followers planted
there.

SUTH. Then, for that very word,
I make a vow,
By my broad Earldom, and my
father's soul,
That, if I have not leading of the van,
I will not fight to-day!

ROSS. Morarchat! thou the lead-
ing of the van!

Not whilst MacDonnell lives:

SWI. (*apart.*) Nay, then a stone
would speak.

[*Addresses the REGENT.*] May't please
your Grace,

And you, great Lords, to hear an
old man's counsel,

That hath seen fights enow. These
open bickerings

Dishearten all our host. If that
your Grace,

With these great Earls and Lords,
must needs debate,

Let the closed tent conceal your
disagreement;

Else 'twill be said, ill fares it with
the flock, [is nigh]

If shepherds wrangle, when the wolf

REG. The old Knight counsels
well. Let every Lord

Or Chief, who leads five hundred
men or more,

Follow to council—others are
excluded—

We'll have no vulgar censurers of
our conduct—

[*Looking at SWINTON.*
Young Gordon, your high rank and
numerous following

Give you a seat with us, though yet
unknighted.

GORDON. I pray you, pardon me.
My youth's unfit.

To sit in council, when that Knight's
gray hairs

And wisdom wait without.

REG. Do as you will; we deign
not bid you twice.

[*The REGENT, ROSS, SUTHERLAND,
LENNON, MAXWELL, etc., enter the
Tent. The rest remain grouped
about the Stage.*

GOR. (*observing SWI.*) That helmet-
less old Knight, his giant
stature,

His awful accents of rebuke and
wisdom,

Have caught my fancy strangely.
He doth seem

Like to some vision'd form which
I have dream'd of.

But never saw with waking eyes till
now.

I will accost him.

VIP. Pray you, do not so;
Anon I'll give you reason why you
should not.

There's other work in hand—

GOR. I will but ask his name.
There's in his presence

Something that works upon me like
a spell,

Or like the feeling made my childish
ear

Dote upon tales of superstitious dread,
Attracting while they chill'd my heart
with fear.

Now, born the Gordon, I do feel right
well

I'm bound to fear nought earthly—
and I fear nought.

I'll know who this man is—

[*Accosts SWINTON.*
Sir Knight, I pray you, of your gentle
courtesy,

To tell your honour'd name. I am
ashamed,

Being unknown in arms, to say that
mine

Is Adam Gordon.

SWINTON (*shows emotion, but in-
stantly subdues it.*)

It is a name that soundeth in my ear

Like to a death-knell—ay, and like
the call
Of the shrill trumpet to the mortal
lists ;
Yet, 'tis a name which ne'er hath
been dishonour'd,
And never will, I trust—most surely
never
By such a youth as thou.

GOR. There's a mysterious courtesy
in this,
And yet it yields no answer to my
question.
I trust you hold the Gordon not un-
worthy
To know the name he asks ?

SWI. Worthy of all that openness
and honour
May show to friend or foe—but, for
my name,
Vipont will show it you ; and, if it
sound
Harsh in your ear, remember that it
knells there
But at your own request. This day,
at least,
Though seldom wont to keep it in
concealment,
As there's no cause I should, *you* had
not heard it.

GOR. This strange—

VIP. The mystery is needful.
Follow me.

[*They retire behind the side scene.*]

SWI. (*looking after them.*) 'Tis a
brave youth. How blush'd his
noble cheek,

While youthful modesty, and the em-
barrassment
Of curiosity, combined with wonder,
And half suspicion of some slight
intended,
All mingled in the flush ; but soon
'twill deepen
Into revenge's glow. How slow is
Vipont !—

I wait the issue, as I've seen spec-
tators
Suspend the motion even of the
eyelids,
When the slow gunner, with his
lighted match,

Approach'd the charged cannon, in
the act
To waken its dread slumbers.—Now
'tis out ;
He draws his sword, and rushes
towards me,
Who will nor seek nor shun him.

Enter GORDON, withheld by VIPONT.

VIP. Hold, for the sake of Heaven !
O, for the sake
Of your dear country, hold !—Has
Swinton slain your father,
And must you, therefore, be yourself
a parricide,
And stand recorded as the selfish
traitor,
Who in her hour of need, his country's
cause
Deserts, that he may wreak a private
wrong ?
Look to yon banner—that is Scot-
land's standard ;
Look to the Regent—he is Scotland's
general ;
Look to the English—they are Scot-
land's foemen !
Bethink thee, then, thou art a son of
Scotland,
And think on nought beside.

GOR. He hath come here to brave
me !—Off ! unhand me !—
Thou canst not be my father's ancient
friend,
That stand'st 'twixt me and him who
slew my father.

VIP. You know not Swinton.
Scarce one passing thought
Of his high mind was with you ; now,
his soul
Is fix'd on this day's battle. You
might slay him
At unawares before he saw your blade
drawn.—
Stand still, and watch him close.

Enter MAXWELL from the tent.

SWI. How go our councils, Max-
well, may I ask ?

MAX. As wild, as if the very wind
and sea

With every breeze and every billow
battled

For their precedence.

SWI. Most sure they are possess'd !
Some evil spirit,
To mock their valour, robs them of
discretion.

Fie, fie, upon't ! O, that Dunfer-
line's tomb

Could render up The Bruce ! that
Spain's red shore

Could give us back the good Lord
James of Douglas !

Or that fierce Randolph, with his
voice of terror,

Were here, to awe these brawlers to
submission !

VIP. (*to GOR.*) Thou hast perused
him at more leisure now.

GOR. I see the giant form which
all men speak of,

The stately port—but not the sullen
eye,

Not the bloodthirsty look, that should
belong

To him that made me orphan. I
shall need

To name my father twice ere I can
strike

At such gray hairs, and face of such
command ;

Yet my hand clenches on my
falchion hilt,

In token he shall die.

VIP. Need I again remind you, that
the place

Permits not private quarrel ?

GOR. I'm calm. I will not seek—
nay, I will shun it—

And yet methinks that such debate's
the fashion.

You've heard how taunts, reproaches,
and the lie,

The lie itself, have flown from mouth
to mouth ;

As if a band of peasants were dis-
puting

About a foot-ball match, rather than
Chiefs

Were ordering a battle. I am young,
And lack experience ; tell me, brave

De Vipont,

Is such the fashion of your wars in
Palestine ?

VIP. Such it at times hath been ;
and then the Cross

Hath sunk before the Crescent.
Heaven's cause

Won us not victory where wisdom
was not.—

Behold yon English host come slowly
on,

With equal front, rank marshall'd
upon rank,

As if one spirit ruled one moving
body ;

The leaders, in their places, each
prepared

To charge, support, and rally, as the
fortune

Of changeful battle needs : then look
on ours,

Broken, disjointed, as the tumbling
surges

Which the winds wake at random.
Look on both,

And dread the issue ; yet there might
be succour.

GOR. We're fearfully o'ermatch'd in
discipline ;

So even my inexperienced eye can
judge.

What succour save in Heaven ?

VIP. Heaven acts by human means.
The artist's skill

Supplies in war, as in mechanicrafts,
Deficiency of tools. There's courage,

wisdom,

And skill enough, live in one leader
here,

As, flung into the balance, might avail
To counterpoise the odds 'twixt that

ruled host
And our wild multitude. I must not
name him.

GOR. I guess, but dare not ask.—
What band is yonder,

Arranged so closely as the English
discipline

Hath marshall'd their best files ?

VIP. Know'st thou not the pennon ?
One day, perhaps, thou'lt see it all

too closely ;
It is Sir Alan Swinton's.

GOR. These, then, are his,—the relics of his power ;
 Yet worth an host of ordinary men.—
 And I must slay my country's sagest leader,
 And crush by numbers that determined handful,
 When most my country needs their practised aid,
 Or men will say, " There goes degenerate Gordon ;
 His father's blood is on the Swinton's sword,

And his is in his scabbard ! " [*Muses.*

VIP. (*apart.*) High blood and mettle, mix'd with early wisdom,
 Sparkle in this brave youth. If he survive

This evil-omen'd day, I pawn my word,

That, in the ruin which I now forbode,

Scotland has treasure left.—How close he eyes

Each look and step of Swinton ! Is it hate,

Or is it admiration, or are both commingled strangely in that steady gaze ?

[SWINTON and MAXWELL return from the bottom of the stage.

MAX. The storm is laid at length amongst these counsellors ;
 See, they come forth.

SWI. And it is more than time ;
 For I can mark the vanguard archery
 Handling their quivers—bending up their bows.

Enter the REGENT and Scottish Lords.

REG. Thus shall it be, then, since we may no better
 And, since no Lord will yield one jot of way

To this high urgency, or give the vanguard

Up to another's guidance, we will abide them

Even on this bent ; and as our troops are rank'd,

So shall they meet the foe. Chief, nor Thane,

Nor Noble, can complain of the precedence

Which chance has thus assign'd him.

SWI. (*apart.*) O, sage discipline,
 That leaves to chance the marshalling of a battle !

GOR. Move him to speech, De Vipont.

VIP. Move *him* !—Move whom ?

GOR. Even him, whom, but brief space since,

My hand did burn to put to utter silence.

VIP. I'll move it to him.—Swinton, speak to them.

They lack thy counsel sorely.

SWI. Had I the thousand spears which once I led,

I had not thus been silent. But men's wisdom

Is rated by their means. From the poor leader

Of sixty lances, who seeks words of weight ?

GOR. (*steps forward.*) Swinton, there's that of wisdom on thy brow,

And valour in thine eye, and that of peril

In this most urgent hour, that bids me say,—

Bids me, thy mortal foe, say,—Swinton, speak,

For King and Country's sake !

SWI. Nay, if that voice commands me, speak I will ;

It sounds as if the dead lays charge on me.

REG. (*To LENNOX, with whom he has been consulting.*)

'Tis better than you think. This broad hill-side

Affords fair compass for our power's display.

Rank above rank rising in seemly tiers ;
 So that the rearward stands as fair and open—

SWI. As e'er stood mark before an English archer.

REG. Who dares to say so ?—Who is't dare impeach
 Our rule of discipline ?

SWI. A poor Knight of these
 Marches, good my Lord ;
 Alan of Swinton, who hath kept a
 house here,
 He and his ancestry, since the old
 days
 Of Malcolm, called the Maiden.

REG. You have brought here, even
 to this pitched field,
 In which the Royal Banner is dis-
 play'd,
 I think some sixty spears, Sir Knight
 of Swinton ;
 Our musters name no more.

SWI. I brought each man I had ;
 and Chief, or Earl,
 Thane, Duke, or dignitary, brings no
 more ;
 And with them brought I what may
 here be useful—
 An aged eye ; which, what in Eng-
 land, Scotland,
 Spain, France, and Flanders, hath
 seen fifty battles,
 And ta'en some judgment of them ;
 a stark hand too,
 Which plays as with a straw with
 this same mace,—
 Which if a young arm here can wield
 more lightly,
 I never more will offer word of
 counsel.

LEN. Hear him, my Lord ; it is the
 noble Swinton—
 He hath had high experience.

MAX. He is noted
 The wisest warrior 'twixt the Tweed
 and Solway,—
 I do beseech you, hear him.

JOHN. Ay, hear the Swinton—hear
 stout old Sir Alan ;
 Maxwell and Johnstone both agree
 for once.

REG. Where's your impatience
 now ?
 Late you were all for battle, would
 not hear
 Ourselves pronounce a word—and now
 you gaze
 On yon old warrior, in his antique
 armour,
 As if he were arisen from the dead,

To bring us Bruce's counsel for the
 battle.

SWI. 'Tis a proud word to speak ;
 but he who fought
 Long under Robert Bruce, may
 something guess,
 Without communication with the dead,
 At what he would have counsell'd.—
 Bruce had bidden ye
 Review your battle-order, marshall'd
 broadly
 Here on the bare hill-side, and bidden
 you mark
 Yon clouds of Southron archers,
 bearing down
 To the green meadow-lands which
 stretch beneath—
 The Bruce had warn'd you, not a
 shaft to-day
 But shall find mark within a Scottish
 boson,
 If thus our field be order'd. The
 callow boys,
 Who draw but four-foot bows, shall
 gall our front,
 While on our mainward, and upon
 the rear,
 The cloth-yard shafts shall fall like
 death's own darts,
 And, though blind men discharge
 them, find a mark.
 Thus shall we die the death of
 slaughter'd deer,
 Which, driven into the toils, are
 shot at ease
 By boys and women, while they toss
 aloft
 All idly and in vain their branchy
 horns,
 As we shall shake our unavailing
 spears.

REG. Tush, tell not me ! If their
 shot fall like hail,
 Our men have Milan coats to bear
 it out.

SWI. Never did armourer temper
 steel on stithy
 That made sure fence against an
 English arrow ;
 A cobweb gossamer were guard as
 good
 Against a wasp-sting.

REG. Who fears a wasp-sting?
 SWI. I, my Lord, fear none;
 Yet should a wise man brush the
 insect off,
 Or he may smart for it.
 REG. We'll keep the hill; it is the
 vantage-ground
 When the main battle joins.
 SWI. It ne'er will join, while their
 light archery
 Can foil our spearmen and our
 barbed horse.
 To hope Plantagenet would seek
 close combat
 When he can conquer riskless, is to
 deem
 Sagacious Edward simpler than a
 babe
 In battle-knowledge. Keep the hill,
 my Lord,
 With the main body, if it is your
 pleasure;
 But let a body of your chosen horse
 Make execution on yon waspish
 archers.
 I've done such work before, and love
 it well;
 If 'tis your pleasure to give me the
 leading,
 The dames of Sherwood, Inglewood,
 and Weardale,
 Shall sit in widowhood and long
 for venison,
 And long in vain. Whoe'er re-
 members Bannockburn,—
 And when shall Scotsman, till the
 last loud trumpet,
 Forget that stirring word!—knows
that great battle
 Even thus was fought and won.
 LEN. This is the shortest road to
 bandy blows;
 For when the bills step forth and
 bows go back,
 Then is the moment that our hardy
 spearmen,
 With their strong bodies, and their
 stubborn hearts,
 And limbs well knit by mountain
 exercise,
 At the close tug shall foil the short-
 breath'd Southron.

SWI. I do not say the field will
 thus be won;
 The English host is numerous, brave,
 and loyal;
 Their Monarch most accomplish'd in
 war's art
 Skill'd, resolute, and wary—
 REG. And if your scheme secure
 not victory,
 What does it promise us?
 SWI. This much at least,—
 Darkling we shall not die: the
 peasant's shaft,
 Loosen'd perchance without an aim
 or purpose,
 Shall not drink up the life-blood we
 derive
 From those famed ancestors, who
 made their breasts
 This frontier's barrier for a thousand
 years.
 We'll meet these Southron bravely
 hand to hand,
 And eye to eye, and weapon against
 weapon;
 Each man who falls shall see the
 foe who strikes him.
 While our good blades are faithful
 to the hilts,
 And our good hands to these good
 blades are faithful,
 Blow shall meet blow, and none fall
 unavenged—
 We shall not bleed alone.
 REG. And this is all
 Your wisdom hath devised?
 SWI. Not all; for I would pray
 you, noble Lords.
 (If one, among the guilty guiltiest,
 might,)
 For this one day to charm to ten
 hours' rest
 The never-dying worm of deadly
 feud,
 That gnaws our vexed hearts—think
 no one foe
 Save Edward and his host:—days
 will remain,
 Ay, days by far too many will
 remain,
 To avenge old feuds or struggles
 for precedence;—

Let this one day be Scotland's.—
 For myself,
 If there is any here may claim from me
 (As well may chance) a debt of blood
 and hatred,
 My life is his to-morrow unresisting,
 So he to-day will let me do the best
 That my old arm may achieve for
 the dear country
 That's mother to us both.

[GORDON shows much emotion during this and the preceding speech of SWINTON.]

REG. It is a dream—a vision!—
 if one troop

Rush down upon the archers, all
 will follow,
 And order is destroy'd—we'll keep
 the battle-rank

Our fathers wont to do. No more
 on't.—Ho!

Where be those youths seek knight-
 hood from our sword?

HER. Here are the Gordon,
 Somerville, and Hay,

And Hepburn, with a score of
 gallants more.

REG. Gordon, stand forth.

GOR. I pray your Grace,
 forgive me.

REG. How! seek you not for
 knighthood?

GOR. I do thirst for't.
 But, pardon me—'tis from another
 sword.

REG. It is your Sovereign's—
 seek you for a worthier?

GOR. Who would drink purely,
 seeks the secret fountain,

How small soever—not the general
 stream,

Though it be deep and wide. My
 Lord, I seek

The boon of knighthood from the
 honour'd weapon

Of the best knight, and of the
 sagest leader,

That ever graced a ring of chivalry.
 —Therefore, I beg the boon on
 bended knee,

Even from Sir Alan Swinton.

[Kneels.]

REG. Degenerate boy! Abject
 at once and insolent!—

See, Lords, he kneels to him that
 slew his father!

GOR. (*starting up.*) Shame be on
 him, who speaks such shameful
 word!

Shame be on him, whose tongue
 would sow dissension,

When most the time demands that
 native Scotsmen

Forget each private wrong!

SWI. (*interrupting him.*) Youth,
 since you crave me

To be your sire in chivalry, I remind
 you

War has its duties, Office has its
 reverence;

Who governs in the Sovereign's
 name is Sovereign;—

Crave the Lord Regent's pardon.

GOR. You task me justly, and I
 crave his pardon,

[Bows to the REGENT.]

His and these noble Lords'; and
 pray them all

Bear witness to my words.—Ye
 noble presence,

Here I remit unto the Knight of
 Swinton

All bitter memory of my father's
 slaughter,

All thoughts of malice, hatred, and
 revenge;

By no base fear or composition moved,
 But by the thought, that in our
 country's battle

All hearts should be as one. I do
 forgive him

As freely as I pray to be forgiven,
 And once more kneel to him to sue
 for knighthood.

SWI. (*affected, and drawing his
 sword.*)

Alas! brave youth, 'tis I should
 kneel to you,

And, tendering thee the hilt of the
 fell sword

That made thee fatherless, bid thee
 use the point

After thine own discretion. For thy
 boon—

Trumpets be ready—In the Holiest name,
And in Our Lady's and Saint Andrew's name,

[*Touching his shoulder with his sword.*]

I dub thee Knight!—Arise, Sir Adam Gordon!

Be faithful, brave, and O, be fortunate,

Should this ill hour permit!

[*The trumpets sound; the Heralds cry "Largesse," and the Attendants shout "A Gordon! A Gordon!"*]

REG. Beggars and flatterers!
Peace, peace, I say!

We'll to the Standard; knights shall there be made

Who will with better reason crave your clamour.

LEN. What of Swinton's counsel?
Here's Maxwell and myself think it worth noting.

REG. (*with concentrated indignation.*)

Let the best knight, and let the sagest leader,—

So Gordon quotes the man who slew his father,—

With his old pedigree and heavy mace,

Essay the adventure if it pleases him,

With his fair threescore horse. As for ourselves,

We will not peril aught upon the measure.

GOR. Lord Regent, you mistake; for if Sir Alau

Shall venture such attack, each man who calls

The Gordon chief, and hopes or fears from him

Or good or evil, follows Swinton's banner

In this achievement.

REG. Why, God ha' mercy! This is of a piece.

Let young and old e'en follow their own counsel,

Since none will list to mine.

Ross. The Border cockerel fain would be on horseback;

'Tis safe to be prepared for fight or flight:

And this comes of it to give Northern lands

To the false Norman blood.

GOR. Hearken, proud Chief of Isles! Within my stalls

I have two hundred horse; two hundred riders

Mount guard upon my castle, who would tread

Into the dust a thousand of your Redshanks,

Nor count it a day's service.

SWI. Hear I this

From thee, young man, and on the day of battle?

And to the brave MacDonnell?

GOR. 'Twas he that urged me; but I am rebuked.

REG. He crouches like a leash-hound to his master!

SWI. Each hound must do so that would head the deer—

'Tis mongrel curs that snatch at mate or master.

REG. Too much of this. Sirs, to the Royal Standard!

I bid you, in the name of good King David.

Sound trumpets—sound for Scotland and King David.

[*The REGENT and the rest go off, and the Scene closes.*]

MANENT GORDON, SWINTON, and VIPONT, with REYNALD and followers. LENNOX follows the REGENT; but returns, and addresses SWINTON.

LEN. O, were my western horsemen but come up,

I would take part with you!

SWI. Better that you remain

They lack discretion; such gray head as yours

May best supply that want.

Lennox, mine ancient friend, and honour'd lord,

Farewell, I think, for ever!

LEN. Farewell, brave friend!—and
farewell, noble Gordon,
Whose sun will be eclipsed even as it
rises!—

The Regent will not aid you.

SWI. We will so bear us, that as
soon the blood-hound
shall halt, and take no part, what
time his comrade
is grappling with the deer, as he
stand still,
And see us overmatch'd.

LEN. Alas! thou dost not know
how mean his pride is,
How strong his envy.

SWI. Then we will die, and leave
the shame with him.

[Exit LENNOX.]

VIP. (to GORDON.) What ails thee,
noble youth?

What means this pause?

Thou dost not rue thy generosity?

GOR. I have been hurried on by
strong impulse,

Like to a bark that scuds before the
storm,

Till driven upon some strange and
distant coast,

Which never pilot dream'd of.—

Have I not forgiven?

And am I not still fatherless?

SWI. Gordon, no;
For while we live I am a father to
thee.

GOR. Thou, Swinton?—no!—that
cannot, cannot be.

SWI. Then change the phrase, and
say, that while we live,

Gordon shall be my son. If thou
art fatherless,

Am I not childless too? Bethink
thee, Gordon,

Our death-feud was not like the
household fire,

Which the poor peasant hides among
its embers,

To smoulder on, and wait a time
for waking.

Ours was the conflagration of the
forest,

Which, in its fury, spares nor sprout
nor stem,

Hoar oak, nor sapling—not to be
extinguish'd,

Till Heaven, in mercy, sends down
all her waters;

But, once subdued, its flame is
quench'd for ever;

And spring shall hide the tract of
devastation,

With foliage and with flowers.—
Give me thy hand.

GOR. My hand and heart!—And
freely now!—to fight!

VIP. How will you act? [To
SWINTON.] The Gordon's band
and thine

Are in the rearward left, I think,
in scorn—

I'll post for them who wish to charge
the foremost!

SWI. We'll turn that scorn to
vantage and descend

Sidelong the hill—some winding
path there must be—

O, for a well skill'd guide!

[HOB HATTELY starts up
from a Thicket.]

HOB. So here he stands.—An
ancient friend, Sir Alan.

Hob Hattely, or, if you like it better,
Hob of the Heron Plume, here
stands your guide.

SWI. An ancient friend?—a most
notorious knave,

Whose throat I've destined to the
dodder'd oak

Before my castle, these ten months
and more.

Was it not you who drove from
Simprim-mains,

And Swinton-quarter, sixty head of
cattle?

HOB. What then, if now I lead
your sixty lances

Upon the English flank, where
they'll find spoil

Is worth six hundred beeves?

SWI. Why, thou canst do it, knave.
I would not trust thee

With one poor bullock; yet would
risk my life,

And all my followers, on thine
honest guidance.

HOB. There is a dingle, and a most discreet one, (I've trod each step by star-light,) that sweeps round

The rearward of this hill, and opens secretly

Upon the archers' flank.—Will not that serve

Your present turn, Sir Alan?

SWI. Bravely, bravely!

GOR. Mount, sirs, and cry my slogan.

Let all who love the Gordon follow me!

SWI. Ay, let all follow—but in silence follow.

Scare not the hare that's couchant on her form—

The cushat from her nest—brush not, if possible,

The dew-drop from the spray—

Let no one whisper, until I cry, "Havoc!"

Then shout as loud's ye will.—On, on, brave Hob;

On, thou false thief, but yet most faithful Scotsman!

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT II.—SCENE I.

A rising Ground immediately in front of the Position of the English Main Body. PERCY, CHANDOS, RIBAUMONT, and other English and Norman Nobles, are grouped on the Stage.

PER. The Scots still keep the hill—the sun grows high.

Would that the charge would sound.

CHA. Thou scent'st the slaughter, Percy.—Who comes here?

[*Enter the ABBOT OF WALTHAMSTOW.*

Now, by my life, the holy priest of Walthamstow,

Like to a lamb among a herd of wolves!

See, he's about to bleat.

AB. The King, methinks, delays the onset long.

CHA. Your general, Father, like your rat-catcher.

Pauses to bait his traps, and set his snares.

AB. The metaphor is decent.

CHA. Reverend sir,

I will uphold it just. Our good King Edward

Will presently come to this battle-field,

And speak to you of the last tilting match,

Or of some feat he did a twenty years since;

But not a word of the day's work before him.

Even as the artist, sir, whose name offends you,

Sits prosing o'er his can, until the trap fall,

Announcing that the vermin are secured,

And then 'tis up, and on them.

PER. Chandos, you give your tongue too bold a license.

CHA. Percy, I am a necessary evil. King Edward would not want me,

if he could,

And could not, if he would. I know my value.

My heavy hand excuses my light tongue.

So men wear weighty swords in their defence,

Although they may offend the tender shin,

When the steel-boot is doff'd.

AB. My Lord of Chandos,

This is but idle speech on brink of battle,

When Christian men should think upon their sins;

For as the tree falls, so the trunk must lie,

Be it for good or evil. Lord, bethink thee,

Thou hast withheld from our most reverend house,

The tithes of Everingham and Settleton;

Wilt thou make satisfaction to the Church

Before her thunders strike thee? I
do warn thee
In most paternal sort.

CHA. I thank you, Father,
filially.
Though but a truant son of Holy
Church,
I would not choose to undergo her
censures,
When Scottish blades are waving at
my throat.
I'll make fair composition.

AB. No composition; I'll have all,
or none.

CHA. None, then—'tis soonest
spoke. I'll take my chance,
And trust my sinful soul to Heaven's
mercy,
Rather than risk my worldly goods
with thee—
My hour may not be come.

AB. Impious—impenitent—

PER. Hush! the King—the King!

*Enter KING EDWARD, attended by
BALIOL and others.*

KING (*apart to CHA.*) Hark hither,
Chandos!—

Have the Yorkshire archers
Yet join'd the vanguard?

CHA. They are marching thither.

K. ED. Bid them make haste, for
shame—send a quick rider.
The loitering knaves! were it to
steal my venison,
Their steps were light enough.—
How now, Sir Abbot?
Say, is your Reverence come to study
with us,
The princely art of war?

AB. I've had a lecture from my
Lord of Chandos,
In which he term'd your Grace a
rat-catcher.

K. ED. Chandos, how's this?

CHA. O, I will prove it, sir!—
These skipping Scots
Have changed a dozen times 'twixt
Bruce and Baliol,
Quitting each House when it began
to totter;

They're fierce and cunning, treach-
erous, too, as rats,
And we, as such, will smoke them in
their fastnesses.

K. ED. These rats have seen your
back, my Lord of Chandos,
And noble Percy's too.

PER. Ay; but the mass which now
lies weltering
On yon hill side, like a Leviathan
That's stranded on the shallows, then
had soul in't,

Order and discipline, and power of
action.
Now 'tis a headless corpse, which
only shows,
By wild convulsions, that some life
remains in't.

K. ED. True, they had once a
head; and 'twas a wise,
Although a rebel head.

AB. (*bowing to the KING.*) Would
he were here! we should find
one to match him.

K. ED. There's something in that
wish which wakes an echo
Within my bosom. Yet it is as
well,

Or better, that The Bruce is in his
grave.

We have enough of powerful foes on
earth,—

No need to summon them from other
worlds.

PER. Your Grace ne'er met The
Bruce?

K. ED. Never himself; but in my
earliest field.

I did encounter with his famous
captains,
Douglas and Randolph. Faith!
they press'd me hard.

AB. My Liege, if I might urge
you with a question,
Will the Scots fight to-day?

K. ED. (*sharply.*) Go look your
breviary.

CHA. (*apart.*) The Abbot has it—
Edward will not answer
On that nice point. We must
observe his humour.—

[*Addresses the KING.*

Your first campaign, my Liege?—
That was in Weardale,
When Douglas gave our camp yon
midnight ruffle,
And turn'd men's beds to biers?

K. ED. Ay, by Saint Edward!—
I escaped right nearly.

I was a soldier then for holidays,
And slept not in mine armour: my
safe rest

Was startled by the cry of
"Douglas! Douglas!"

And by my couch, a grisly chamber-
lain,

Stood Alan Swinton, with his bloody
mace.

It was a churchman saved me—my
stout chaplain,

Heaven quit his spirit! caught a
weapon up,

And grappled with the giant.—How
now, Louis?

*Enter an Officer, who whispers
the KING.*

K. ED. Say to him—thus—and
thus— [*Whispers.*

AB. That Swinton's dead. A monk
of ours reported,

Bound homeward from St. Ninian's
pilgrimage,

The Lord of Gordon slew him.

PER. Father, and if your house
stood on our borders,

You might have cause to know that
Swinton lives,

And is on horseback yet.

CHA. He slew the Gordon,
That's all the difference—a very
trifle.

AB. Trifling to those who wage a
war more noble

Than with the arm of flesh.

CHA. (*apart.*) The Abbot's vex'd,
I'll rub the sore for him.—

(*Aloud.*) I have seen priests that
used that arm of flesh,

And used it sturdily.—Most reverend
Father,

What say you to the chaplain's deed
of arms

In the King's tent at Weardale?

AB. It was most sinful, being
against the canon
Prohibiting all churchmen to bear
weapons;

And as he fell in that unseemly
guise,

Perchance his soul may rue it.

K. ED. (*overhearing the last words.*)
Who may rue?

And what is to be rued?

CHA. (*apart.*) I'll match his Rever-
ence for the tithes of Everingham.

—The Abbot says, my Liege, the
deed was sinful,

By which your chaplain, wielding
secular weapons,

Secured your Grace's life and liberty,
And that he suffers for't in purga-
tory.

K. ED. (*to the ABBOT.*) Say'st thou
my chaplain is in purgatory?

AB. It is the canon speaks it, good
my Liege.

K. ED. In purgatory! thou shalt
pray him out on't,

Or I will make thee wish thyself
beside him.

AB. My Lord, perchance his soul
is past the aid

Of all the Church may do—there is
a place

From which there's no redemption.

K. ED. And if I thought my faith-
ful chaplain there,

Thou shouldst there join him, priest!
—Go, watch, fast, pray,

And let me have such prayers as will
storm Heaven—

None of your maim'd and mutter'd
hunting masses.

AB. (*apart to CHA.*) For God's
sake take him off.

CHA. Wilt thou compound, then,
The tithes of Everingham?

K. ED. I tell thee, if thou bear'st
the keys of Heaven,

Abbot, thou shalt not turn a bolt with
them

'Gainst any well-deserving English
subject.

AB. (*to CHA.*) We will compound,
and grant thee, too, a share

I' the next indulgence. Thou dost need it much,
And greatly 'twill avail thee.

CHA. Enough—we're friends, and when occasion serves,
I will strike in.—

[*Looks as if towards the Scottish Army.*]

K. ED. Answer, proud Abbot; is my chaplain's soul,
If thou knowest aught on't, in the evil place?

CHA. My Liege, the Yorkshire men have gain'd the meadow.
I see the pennon green of merry Sherwood.

K. ED. Then give the signal instant! We have lost
But too much time already.

AB. My Liege, your holy chaplain's blessed soul—

K. ED. To hell with it and thee!
Is this a time
To speak of monks and chaplains?

[*Flourish of Trumpets, answered by a distant sound of Bugles.*]

See, Chandos, Percy—Ha, Saint George! Saint Edward!

See it descending now, the fatal hail-shower,

The storm of England's wrath—sure, swift, resistless,

Which no mail-coat can brook.—Brave English hearts!

How close they shoot together!—as one eye

Had aim'd five thousand shafts—as if one hand

Had loosed five thousand bow-strings!

PER. The thick volley
Darkens the air, and hides the sun from us.

K. ED. It falls on those shall see the sun no more.

The winged, the resistless plague is with them.

How their vex'd host is reeling to and fro,

Like the chafed whale with fifty lances in him,

They do not see, and cannot shun the wound.

The storm is viewless, as death's sable wing,

Unerring as his scythe.

PER. Horses and riders are going down together.

'Tis almost pity to see nobles fall,

And by a peasant's arrow.

BAL. I could weep them, Although they are my rebels.

CHA. (*aside to PER.*) His conquerors he means, who cast him out From his usurped kingdom.—(*Aloud.*)

'Tis the worst of it,
That knights can claim small honour in the field

Which archers win, unaided by our lances.

K. ED. The battle is not ended.

[*Looks towards the field.*]

Not ended?—scarce begun! What horse are these,
Rush from the thicket underneath the hill?

PER. They're Hainaulters, the followers of Queen Isabel.

K. ED. (*hastily.*) Hainaulters!—thou art blind—wear Hainaulters Saint Andrew's silver cross?—or would they charge

Full on our archers, and make havoc of them?

Bruce is alive again—ho, rescue! rescue!—

Who was't survey'd the ground?

RIBA. Most royal Liege—

K. ED. A rose hath fallen from thy chaplet, Ribamont.

RIBA. I'll win it back, or lay my head beside it. [*Exit.*]

K. ED. Saint George! Saint Edward! Gentlemen, to horse,

And to the rescue!—Percy, lead the bill-men;

Chandos, do thou bring up the men-at-arms.—

If yonder numerous host should now bear down

Bold as their vanguard, (*to the Abbot,*) thou mayst pray for us,

We may need good men's prayers.—
 To the rescue,
 Lords, to the rescue! ha, Saint
 George! Saint Edward!
 [Exeunt.

SCENE II.

*A part of the field of Battle betwixt
 the two Main Armies. Tumults
 behind the scenes; alarums, and
 cries of "Gordon, a Gordon,"
 "Swinton," etc.*

*Enter, as victorious over the English
 vanguard, VIPONT, REYNALD, and
 others.*

VIP. 'Tis sweet to hear these war-
 cries sound together,—
 Gordon and Swinton.

REY. 'Tis passing pleasant, yet 'tis
 strange withal.

Faith, when at first I heard the
 Gordon's slogan
 Sounded so near me, I had nigh struck
 down

The knave who cried it.

Enter SWINTON and GORDON.

SWI. Pitch down my pennon in yon
 holly bush.

GOR. Mine in the thorn beside it;
 let them wave,
 As fought this morn their masters,
 side by side.

SWI. Let the men rally, and restore
 their ranks
 Here in this vantage-ground—dis-
 order'd chase

Leads to disorder'd flight; we have
 done our part,

And if we're succour'd now, Plan-
 tagenet

Must turn his bridle southward,—
 Reynald, spur to the Regent with the
 basnet

Of stout De Grey, the leader of their
 vanguard;

Say, that in battle-front the Gordon
 slew him,

And by that token bid him send us
 succour.

GOR. And tell him that when
 Selby's headlong charge
 Had well-nigh borne me down, Sir
 Alan smote him.

I cannot send his helmet, never nut-
 shell

Went to so many shivers.—Harkye,
 grooms!

[*To those behind the scenes.*
 Why do you let my noble steed stand
 stiffening

After so hot a course?

SWI. Ay, breathe your horses,
 they'll have work anon,

For Edward's men-at-arms will soon
 be on us,

The flower of England, Gascony, and
 Flanders;

But with swift succour we will bide
 them bravely.—

De Vipont, thou look'st sad?

VIP. It is because I hold a Temp-
 lar's sword

Wet to the crossed hilt with Christian
 blood.

SWI. The blood of English archers
 —what can gild

A Scottish blade more bravely?

VIP. Even therefore grieve I for
 those gallant yeomen,

England's peculiar and appropriate
 sons,

Known in no other land. Each boasts
 his hearth

And field as free as the best lord his
 barony,

Owing subjection to no human
 vassalage,

Save to their King and law. Hence
 are they resolute,

Leading the van on every day of
 battle,

As men who know the blessings they
 defend.

Hence are they frank and generous
 in peace,

As men who have their portion in its
 plenty.

No other kingdom shows such worth
 and happiness

Veil'd in such low estate—therefore
 I mourn them.

SWI. I'll keep my sorrow for our
native Scots,
Who, spite of hardship, poverty,
oppression,
Still follow to the field their Chief-
tain's banner,
And die in the defence on't.

GOR. And if I live and see my halls
again,
They shall have portion in the good
they fight for.
Each hardy follower shall have his
field,
His household hearth and sod-built
home, as free
As ever Southron had. They shall
be happy!—
And my Elizabeth shall smile to see
it!—

I have betray'd myself.

SWI. Do not believe it.
Vipont, do thou look out from yonder
height,
And see what motion in the Scottish
host,
And in King Edward's.—

[Exit VIPONT.

Now will I counsel thee ;
The Templar's ear is for no tale of
love,
Being wedded to his Order. But I
tell thee,
The brave young knight that hath no
lady-love
Is like a lamp unlighted ; his brave
deeds,
And its rich painting, do seem then
most glorious,
When the pure ray gleams through
them.—

Hath thy Elizabeth no other name ?

GOR. Must I then speak of her to
you, Sir Alan ?
The thought of thee, and of thy
matchless strength,
Hath conjured phantoms up amongst
her dreams,
The name of Swinton hath been spell
sufficient
To chase the rich blood from her
lovely cheek,
And wouldst thou now know hers ?

SWI. I would, nay must.
Thy father in the paths of chivalry,
Should know the load-star thou dost
rule thy course by.

GOR. Nay, then, her name is—
hark——

{*Whispers.*

SWI. I know it well, that ancient
northern house.

GOR. O, thou shalt see its fairest
grace and honour
In my Elizabeth. And if music touch
thee——

SWI. It did, before disasters had
untuned me.

GOR. O, her notes
Shall hush each sad remembrance to
oblivion,
Or melt them to such gentleness of
feeling,
That grief shall have its sweetness.

Who, but she,
Knows the wild harpings of our
native land ?
Whether they lull the shepherd on
his hill,
Or wake the knight to battle ; rouse
to merriment,
Or soothe to sadness ; she can touch
each mood.

Princes and statesmen, chiefs re-
nown'd in arms,
And gray-hair'd bards, contend which
shall the first
And choicest homage render to the
enchantress.

SWI. You speak her talent bravely.

GOR. Though you smile,
I do not speak it half. Her gift
creative,
New measures adds to every air she
wakes ;
Varying and gracing it with liquid
sweetness,
Like the wild modulation of the
lark ;
Now leaving, now returning to the
strain !
To listen to her, is to seem to wander
In some enchanted labyrinth of
romance,
Whence nothing but the lovely fairy's
will,

Who wove the spell, can extricate
the wanderer.

Methinks I hear her now!—

SWI. Bless'd privilege
Of youth! There's scarce three
minutes to decide

'Twixt death and life, 'twixt triumph
and defeat,

Yet all his thoughts are in his lady's
bower,

List'ning her harping!—

[Enter VIPONT.

Where are thine, De Vipont?

VIP. On death—on judgment—on
eternity!

For time is over with us.

SWI. There moves not, then, one
pennon to our aid,

Of all that flutter yonder!

VIP. From the main English host
come rushing forward

Pennons enow—ay, and their Royal
Standard.

But ours stand rooted, as for crows
to roost on.

SWI. (*to himself*) I'll rescue him at
least.—Young Lord of Gordon,
Spur to the Regent—show the
instant need—

GOR. I penetrate thy purpose; but
I go not.

SWI. Not at my bidding? I, thy
sire in chivalry—

Thy leader in the battle?—I
command thee.

GOR. No, thou wilt not command
me seek my safety,—

For such is thy kind meaning—at
the expense

Of the last hope which Heaven
reserves for Scotland.

While I abide, no follower of mine
Will turn his rein for life; but were

I gone,
What power can stay them? and,
our band dispersed,

What swords shall for an instant
stem yon host,

And save the latest chance for
victory?

VIP. The noble youth speaks
truth; and were he gone,

There will not twenty spears be left
with us.

GOR. No, bravely as we have
begun the field,

So let us fight it out. The Regent's
eyes,

More certain than a thousand
messages,

Shall see us stand, the barrier of
his host

Against yon bursting storm. If
not for honour,

If not for warlike rule, for shame
at least

He must bear down to aid us.

SWI. Must it be so?
And am I forced to yield the sad
consent,

Devoting thy young life? O,
Gordon, Gordon!

I do it as the patriarch doom'd his
issue;

I at my country's, he at Heaven's
command;

But I seek vainly some atoning
sacrifice,

Rather than such a victim!—
(*Trumpets.*) Hark, they come!

That music sounds not like thy lady's
lute.

GOR. Yet shall my lady's name
mix with it gaily.—

Mount, vassals, couch your lances,
and cry, "Gordon!

Gordon for Scotland and Elizabeth!"

[*Exeunt. Loud Alarums.*]

SCENE III.

*Another part of the Field of Battle,
adjacent to the former Scene.*

*Alarums. Enter SWINTON, followed
by HOB HATTELY.*

SWI. Stand to it yet! The man
who flies to-day,

May bastards warm them at his
household hearth!

HOB. That ne'er shall be my curse.
My Magdalen.

Is trusty as my broadsword.

SWI. Ha, thou knave,
Art thou dismounted too?

HOB. I know, Sir Alan,
You want no homeward guide; so
threw my reins

Upon my palfrey's neck, and let
him loose,
Within an hour he stands before my
gate;

And Magdalen will need no other
token

To bid the Melrose Monks say
masses for me.

SWI. Thou art resolved to cheat
the halter, then?

HOB. It is my purpose,
Having lived a thief, to die a brave
man's death;

And never had I a more glorious
chance for't.

SWI. Here lies the way to it,
knave.—Make in, make in,
And aid young Gordon!

[*Exeunt. Loud and long Alarums.
After which the back Scene
rises, and discovers SWINTON
on the ground, GORDON support-
ing him; both much wounded.*

SWI. All are cut down—the reapers
have pass'd o'er us,
And hie to distant harvest.—My
toil's over;

There lies my sickle. [*Dropping his
sword.*] Hand of mine again
Shall never, never wield it!

GOR. O valiant leader, is thy
light extinguish'd!
That only beacon-flame which
promised safety

In this day's deadly wrack!

SWI. My lamp hath long been
dim! But thine, young Gordon,
Just kindled, to be quench'd so
suddenly,

Ere Scotland saw its splendour!—

GOR. Five thousand horse hung
idly on yon hill,
Saw us o'erpower'd, and no one
stirr'd to aid us!

SWI. It was the Regent's envy.—
Out!—alas!

Why blame I him!—It was our
civil discord,

Our selfish vanity, our jealous
hatred,

Which framed this day of dole for
our poor country.—

Had thy brave father held yon
leading staff,

As well his rank and valour might
have claim'd it,

We had not fall'n unaided.—How,
O how

Is he to answer it, whose deed
prevented—

GOR. Alas! alas! the author of
the death-feud,

He has his reckoning too! for had
your sons

And num'rous vassals lived, we had
lack'd no aid.

SWI. May God assoil the dead,
and him who follows!

We've drank the poison'd beverage
which we brew'd:

Have sown the wind, and reap'd
the tenfold whirlwind!—

But thou, brave youth, whose noble-
ness of heart

Pour'd oil upon the wounds our
hate inflicted;

Thou, who hast done no wrong,
need'st no forgiveness,—

Why should'st thou share our
punishment!

GOR. All need forgiveness—[*distant
alarum.*]—Hark! in yonder
shout

Did the main battles counter!

SWI. Look on the field, brave
Gordon, if thou canst,

And tell me how the day goes.—But
I guess,

Too surely do I guess—

GOR. All's lost! all's lost!—Of
the main Scottish host,

Some wildly fly, and some rush
wildly forward;

And some there are who seem to
turn their spears

Against their countrymen.

SWI. Rashness, and cowardice,
and secret treason.

Combine to ruin us ; and our hot
valour,
Devoid of discipline, is madmen's
strength,
More fatal unto friends than
enemies !

I'm glad that these dim eyes shall
see no more on't.—

Let thy hands close them, Gordon—
I will dream

My fair-hair'd William renders me
that office !

GOR. And, Swinton, I will think
I do that duty
To my dead father.

Enter DE VIPONT.

VIP. Fly, fly, brave youth !—A
handful of thy followers,
The scatter'd gleanings of this
desperate day,
Still hover yonder to essay thy
rescue.—

O linger not ! I'll be your guide to
them.

GOR. Look there, and bid me fly !
—The oak has fall'n ;
And the young ivy bush, which
learn'd to climb
By its support, must needs partake
its fall.

VIP. Swinton ? Alas ! the best,
the bravest, strongest,
And sagest of our Scottish chivalry !
Forgive one moment, if to save the
living,
My tongue should wrong the dead.
—Gordon, bethink thee,
Thou dost but stay to perish with
the corpse
Of him who slew thy father.

GOR. Ay, but he was my sire in
chivalry.
He taught my youth to soar above
the promptings
Of mean and selfish vengeance ;
gave my youth
A name that shall not die even on
this death-spot.

Records shall tell this field had not
been lost,

Had all men fought like Swinton
and like Gordon. [*Trumpets.*]

Save thee, De Vipont. Hark ! the
Southron trumpets.

VIP. Nay, without thee I stir not.

*Enter EDWARD, CHANDOS, PERCY,
BALIOL, etc.*

GOR. Ay, they come on—the Tyrant
and the Traitor
Workman and tool, Plantagenet and
Baliol.

O for a moment's strength in this
poor arm,
To do one glorious deed !

[*He rushes on the English, but
is made prisoner with VIPONT.*]

K. ED. Disarm them—harm them
not ; though it was they
Made havoc on the archers of our
vanguard,
They and that bulky champion.
Where is he ?

CHAN. Here lies the giant ! Say
his name, young Knight ?

GOR. Let it suffice, he was a man
this morning.

CHA. I question'd thee in sport. I
do not need
Thy information, youth. Who that
has fought
Through all these Scottish wars, but
knows his crest,
The sable boar chain'd to the leafy
oak,
And that huge mace still seen where
war was wildest !

K. ED. 'Tis Alan Swinton !
Grim chamberlain, who in my tent
at Weardale,
Stood by my startled couch with
torch and mace,
When the Black Douglas' war-cry
waked my camp.

GOR. (*sinking down.*) If thus thou
know'st him,
Thou wilt respect his corpse.

K. ED. As belted Knight and
crowned King, I will.

GOR. And let mine
Sleep at his side, in token that our
death

Ended the feud of Swinton and of Gordon.

K. ED. It is the Gordon!—Is there aught beside Edward can do to honour bravery, Even in an enemy?

GOR. Nothing but this :
Let not base Baliol, with his touch or look,

Profane my corpse or Swinton's. I've some breath still,

Enough to say—Scotland—Elizabeth!

CHA. Baliol, I would not brook such dying looks,
To buy the crown you aim at.

K. ED. (*to VIP.*) Vipont, thy crossed shield shows ill in warfare
Against a Christian king.

VIP. That Christian King is warring upon Scotland.
I was a Scotsman ere I was a Templar,

Sworn to my country ere I knew my Order.

K. ED. I will but know thee as a Christian champion,
And set thee free unransom'd.

Enter ABBOT OF WALTHAMSTOW.

AB. Heaven grant your Majesty
Many such glorious days as this has been!

K. ED. It is a day of much and high advantage ;
Glorious it might have been, had all our foes

Fought like these two brave champions.—Strike the drums,
Sound trumpets, and pursue the fugitives,

Till the Tweed's eddies whelm them.
Berwick's render'd—

These wars, I trust, will soon find lasting close.

MACDUFF'S CROSS.

TO

MRS. JOANNA BAILLIE,

AUTHORESS OF

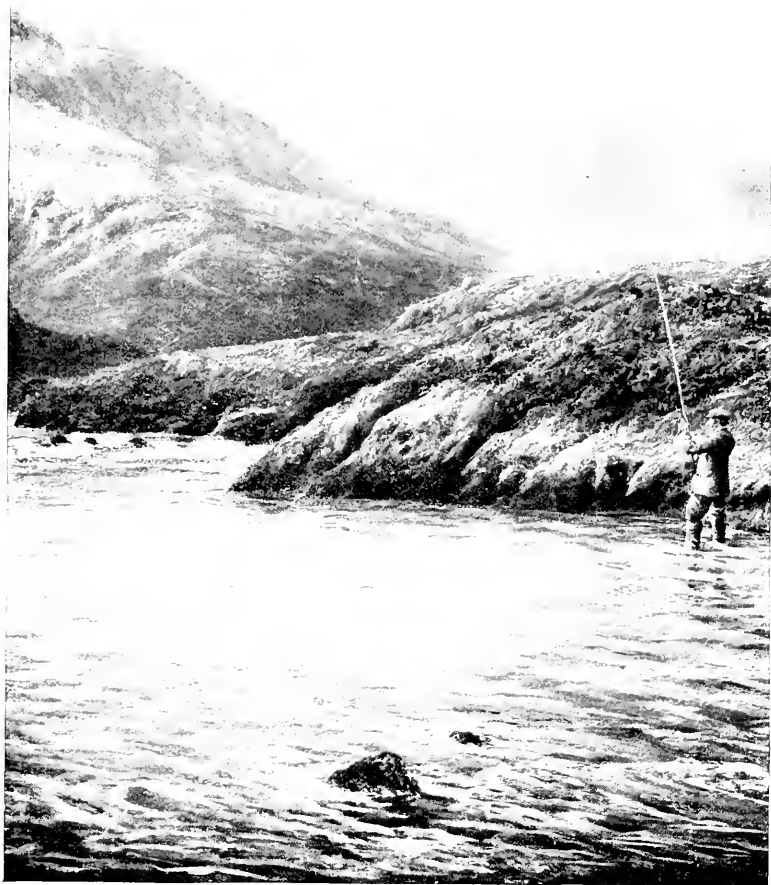
“THE PLAYS ON THE PASSIONS.”

INTRODUCTION.

THESE few scenes had the honour to be included in a Miscellany, published in the year 1823, by Mrs. Joanna Baillie, and are here reprinted, to unite them with the trifles of the same kind which owe their birth to the author. The singular history of the Cross and Law of Clan MacDuff is given, at length enough to satisfy the keenest antiquary, in *The Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*. It is here only necessary to state, that the Cross was a place of refuge to any person related to MacDuff, within the ninth degree, who, having committed homicide in sudden quarrel, should

reach this place, prove his descent from the Thane of Fife, and pay a certain penalty.

The shaft of the Cross was destroyed after the Reformation. The huge block of stone which served for its pedestal is still in existence near the town of Newburgh, on a kind of pass which commands the county of Fife to the southward, and to the north, the windings of the magnificent Tay and fertile country of Angus-shire. The Cross bore an inscription, which is transmitted to us in an unintelligible form by Sir Robert Sibbald.



Henry Grinnell & Co.
S.C.

When to the hook the salmon springs,
And the line whistles through the rings.

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DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Ninian, }
 Waldhawe, } *Monks of Lindores.*
 Lindesay, }
 Maurice Berkeley, } *Scottish Barons.*

PRELUDE.

NAV, smile not, Lady, when I speak
 of witchcraft,
 And say, that still there lurks
 amongst our glens
 Some touch of strange enchantment.
 —Mark that fragment,
 I mean that rough-hewn block of
 massive stone,
 Placed on the summit of this moun-
 tain-pass,
 Commanding prospect wide o'er field
 and fell,
 And peopled village and extended
 moorland,
 And the wide ocean and majestic
 Tay,
 To the far distant Grampians.— Do
 not deem it
 A loosen'd portion of the neighbour-
 ing rock,
 Detach'd by storm and thunder,—
 'twas the pedestal
 On which, in ancient times, a Cross
 was rear'd,
 Carved o'er with words which foil'd
 philologists;
 And the events it did commemorate
 Were dark, remote, and undis-
 tinguishable,
 As were the mystic characters it bore.
 But, mark,—a wizard, born on Avon's
 bank,
 Tuned but his harp to this wild
 northern theme,
 And, lo! the scene is hallow'd. None
 shall pass,
 Now, or in after days, beside that
 stone,
 But he shall have strange visions;
 thoughts and words,
 That shake, or rouse, or thrill the
 human heart,
 sc.

Shall rush upon his memory when
 he hears
 The spirit-stirring name of this rude
 symbol;—
 Oblivious ages, at that simple spell,
 Shall render back their terrors with
 their woes,
 Alas! and with their crimes—and
 the proud phantoms
 Shall move with step familiar to his
 eye,
 And accents which, once heard, the
 ear forgets not,
 Though ne'er again to list them.
 Siddons, thine,
 Thou matchless Siddons! thrill upon
 our ear;
 And on our eye thy lofty Brother's
 form
 Rises as Scotland's monarch.—But
 to thee,
 Joanna, why to thee speak of such
 visions?
 Thine own wild wand can raise
 them.

Yet since thou wilt an idle tale of
 mine,
 Take one which scarcely is of worth
 enough
 To give or to withhold.—Our time
 creeps on,
 Fancy grows colder as the silvery
 hair
 Tells the advancing winter of our
 life.
 But if it be of worth enough to please,
 That worth it owes to her who set
 the task;
 If otherwise, the fault rests with
 the author.

SCENE I.

*The summit of a Rocky Pass near to
 Newburgh, about two miles from
 the ancient Abbey of Lindores, in
 Fife. In the centre is MacDuff's
 Cross, an antique Monument; and,
 at a small distance, on one side, a
 Chapel, with a Lamp burning.*

Enter, as having ascended the Pass, NINIAN and WALDHAVE, Monks of Lindores. NINIAN crosses himself, and seems to recite his devotions. WALDHAVE stands gazing on the prospect, as if in deep contemplation.

NIN. Here stands the Cross, good brother, consecrated
By the bold Thane unto his patron saint
Magridius, once a brother of our house.
Canst thou not spare an ave or a creed?
Or hath the steep ascent exhausted you?
You trode it stoutly, though 'twas rough and toilsome.

WAL. I have trode a rougher.

NIN. On the Highland hills—
Scarcely within our sea-girt province here,
Unless upon the Lomonds or Bennarty.

WAL. I spoke not of the literal path, good father,
But of the road of life which I have travell'd,
Ere I assumed this habit; it was bounded,
Hedged in, and limited by earthly prospects,
As ours beneath was closed by dell and thicket.

Here we see wide and far, and the broad sky,
With wide horizon, opens full around,
While earthly objects dwindle.
Brother Ninian,
Fain would I hope that mental elevation
Could raise me equally o'er worldly thoughts,
And place me nearer heaven.

NIN. 'Tis good morality.—But yet forget not,
That though we look on heaven from this high eminence,
Yet doth the Prince of all the airy space,
Arch foe of man, possess the realms between.

WAL. Most true, good brother;
and men may be farther
From the bright heaven they aim at,
even because
They deem themselves secure on't.

NIN. *(after a pause.)* You do gaze—

Strangers are wont to do so—on the prospect.

You is the Tay roll'd down from
Highland hills,
That rests his waves, after so rude a race,
In the fair plains of Gowrie—farther westward,
Proud Stirling rises—yonder to the east,

Dundee, the gift of God, and fair Montrose,
And still more northward lie the ancient towers—

WAL. Of Edzell.

NIN. How? know you the towers of Edzell?

WAL. I've heard of them.

NIN. Then have you heard a tale,
Which when he tells, the peasant shakes his head,
And shuns the mouldering and deserted walls.

WAL. Why, and by whom, deserted?

NIN. Long the tale—
Enough to say that the last Lord of Edzell,

Bold Louis Lindsay, had a wife, and found—

WAL. Enough is said, indeed—
since a weak woman,
Ay, and a tempting fiend, lost Paradise,

When man was innocent.

NIN. They fell at strife,
Men say, on slight occasion: that fierce Lindsay
Did bend his sword against De Berkeley's breast,
And that the lady threw herself between:

That then De Berkeley dealt the Baron's death-wound.

Enough, that from that time De
Berkeley bore
A spear in foreign wars. But, it is
said,
He hath return'd of late; and, there-
fore, brother,
The Prior hath ordain'd our vigil here,
To watch the privilege of the sanc-
tuary,
And rights of Clan MacDuff.

WAL. What rights are these?

NIX. Most true! you are but newly
come from Rome,
And do not know our ancient usages.
Know then, when fell Macbeth be-
neath the arm
Of the predestined knight, unborn or
woman,
Three boons the victor ask'd, and
thrice did Malcolm,
Stooping the sceptre by the Thane
restored,
Assent to his request. And hence
the rule,
That first when Scotland's King
assumes the crown,
MacDuff's descendant rings his brow
with it:
And hence, when Scotland's King
calls forth his host,
MacDuff's descendant leads the van
in battle:
And last, in guerdon of the crown
restored,
Red with the blood of the usurping
tyrant,
The right was granted in succeeding
time,
That if a kinsman of the Thane of
Fire
Commit a slaughter on a sudden
impulse,
And fly for refuge to this Cross
MacDuff,
For the Thane's sake he shall find
sanctuary;
For here must the avenger's step be
staid,
And here the panting homicide find
safety.

WAL. And here a brother of your
order watches,

To see the custom of the place ob-
served?

NIX. Even so;—such is our con-
vent's holy right,
Since Saint Maggridius—blessed be
his memory!—
Did by a vision warn the Abbot
Eadmir,—
And chief we watch, when there is
bickering
Among the neighbouring nobles,
now most likely

From this return of Berkeley from
abroad,
Having the Lindesay's blood upon
his hand.

WAL. The Lindesay, then, was
loved among his friends?

NIX. Honour'd and fear'd he was
— but little loved;
For even his bounty bore a show of
sternness;
And when his passions waked, he
was a Satan
Of wrath and injury.

WAL. How now, Sir Priest!
(*fiercely*)—Forgive me (*recollect-
ing himself*)—I was dreaming
Of an old baron, who did bear about
him

Some touch of your Lord Reynold.
NIX. Lindesay's name, my brother,
Indeed was Reynold;—and me-
thinks, moreover,
That, as you spoke even now, he
would have spoken.

I brought him a petition from our
convent;
He granted straight, but in such
tone and manner,
By my good saint! I thought my-
self scarce safe
Till Tay roll'd broad between us. I
must now

Unto the chapel—meanwhile the
watch is thine;
And, at thy word, the hurrying
fugitive,
Should such arrive, must here find
sanctuary;
And, at thy word, the fiery-paced
avenger

Must stop his bloody course - e'en as
swoln Jordan

Controll'd his waves, soon as they
touch'd the feet

Of those who bore the ark,

WAL. Is this my charge?

NIX. Even so; and I am near,
should chance require me.

At midnight I relieve you on your
watch,

When we may taste together some
refreshment:

I have cared for it; and for a flask
of wine—

There is no sin, so that we drink it
not

Until the midnight hour, when lauds
have to!d.

Farewell a while, and peaceful watch
be with you!

[Exit towards the Chapel.

WAL. It is not with me, and alas!
alas!

I know not where to seek it. This
monk's mind

Is with his cloister match'd, nor
lacks more room.

Its petty duties, formal ritual,

Its humble pleasures and its paddy
troubles,

Fill up his round of life; even as
some reptiles,

They say, are moulded to the very
shape,

And all the angles of the rocky
crevice,

In which they live and die. But for
myself,

Retired in passion to the narrow
cell,

Couching my tired limbs in its re-
cesses,

So ill-adapted am I to its limits,

That every attitude is agony.—

How now! what brings him back?

Re-enter NIXIAN.

NIX. Look to your watch, my
brother; horsemen come:

I heard their tread when kneeling in
the chapel.

WAL. (*looking to a distance.*) My
thoughts have rapt me more
than thy devotion,

Else had I heard the tread of distant
horses

Farther than thou couldst hear the
sacring bell;

But now in truth they come:—flight
and pursuit

Are sights I've been long strange to.

NIX. See how they gallop down
the opposing hill!

You gray steed bounding down the
headlong path,

As on the level meadow; while the
black,

Urged by the rider with his naked
sword,

Stoops on his prey, as I have seen
the falcon

Dashing upon the heron.—Thou dost
frown

And clench thy hand, as if it grasp'd
a weapon?

WAL. 'Tis but for shame to see a
man fly thus

While only one pursues him.
Coward, turn!—

Turn thee, I say! thou art as stout
as he,

And well mayst match thy single
sword with his—

Shame, that a man should rein a
steed like thee,

Yet fear to turn his front against a
foe!—

I am ashamed to look on them.

NIX. Yet look again; they quit
their horses now,

Unfit for the rough path: the
fugitive

Keeps the advantage still.—They
strain towards us.

WAL. I'll not believe that ever the
bold Thane

Rear'd up his Cross to be a sanctuary
To the base coward, who shunn'd an
equal combat.—

How's this?—that look—that mien
—mine eyes grow dizzy!—

NIX. He comes!—thou art a novice
on this watch,—

Brother, I'll take the word and speak to him.

Pluck down thy cowl; know, that we spiritual champions

Have honour to maintain, and must not seem

To quail before the laity.

[WALDHAVE *lets down his cowl, and steps back.*

Enter MAURICE BERKELEY.

NIX. Who art thou, stranger? speak thy name and purpose.

BER. I claim the privilege of Clan MacDuff.

My name is Maurice Berkeley, and my lineage

Allies me nearly with the Thane of Fife.

NIX. Give us to know the cause of sanctuary?

BER. Let him show it,

Against whose violence I claim the privilege.

Enter LINDESAY, with his sword drawn. He rushes at BERKELEY; NIXIAN interposes.

NIX. Peace, in the name of Saint Magriddius!

Peace, in our Prior's name, and in the name

Of that dear symbol, which did purchase peace

And good-will towards man! I do command thee

To sheath thy sword, and stir no contest here.

LIX. One charm I'll try first,

To lure the craven from the enchanted circle

Which he hath harbour'd in.—Hear you, De Berkeley,

This is my brother's sword—the hand it arms

Is weapon'd to avenge a brother's death:—

If thou hast heart to step a furlong off,

And change three blows,—even for so short a space

As these good men may say an ave-marie,—

So, Heaven be good to me! I will forgive thee

Thy deed and all its consequences.

BER. Were not my right hand fetter'd by the thought

That slaying thee were but a double guilt

In which to steep my soul, no bridegroom ever

Stepp'd forth to trip a measure with his bride

More joyfully than I, young man, would rush

To meet thy challenge.

LIX. He quails, and shuns to look upon my weapon,

Yet boasts himself a Berkeley!

BER. Lindesay, and if there were no deeper cause

For slunning thee than terror of thy weapon,

That rock-hewn Cross as soon should start and stir,

Because a shepherd-boy blew horn beneath it,

As I for brag of thine.

NIX. I charge you both, and in the name of Heaven,

Breathe no defiance on this sacred spot,

Where Christian men must bear them peacefully,

On pain of the Church thunders. Calmly tell

Your cause of difference; and, Lord Lindsay, thou

Be first to speak them.

LIX. Ask the blue welkin—ask the silver Tay,

The northern Grampians—all things know my wrongs;

But ask not me to tell them, while the villain,

Who wrought them, stands and listens with a smile.

NIX. It is said—

Since you refer us thus to general fame—

That Berkeley slew thy brother, the Lord Louis,

In his own halls at Edzell——

LIX. Ay, in his halls—
In his own halls, good father, that's
the word.

In his own halls he slew him, while
the wine

Pass'd on the board between! The
gallant Thane,

Who wreak'd Macbeth's inhospitable
murder,

Rear'd not yon Cross to sanction
deeds like these.

BER. Thou say'st I came a guest!
—I came a victim,

A destined victim, train'd on to the
doom

His frantic jealousy prepared for me.
He fix'd a quarrel on me, and we
fought.

Can I forget the form that came
between us,

And perish'd by his sword? 'Twas
then I fought

For vengeance,—until then I guarded
life,

But then I sought to take it, and
prevail'd.

LIX. Wretch! thou didst first dis-
honour to thy victim.

And then didst slay him!

BER. There is a busy fiend tugs
at my heart,

But I will struggle with it!—Youth-
ful knight,

My heart is sick of war, my hand of
slaughter;

I come not to my lordships, or my
land,

But just to seek a spot in some cold
cloister,

Which I may kneel on living, and,
when dead,

Which may suffice to cover me.

Forgive me that I caused your
brother's death;

And I forgive thee the injurious
terms

With which thou taxest me.

LIX. Take worse and blacker.—
Murderer, adulterer!—

Art thou not moved yet?

BER. Do not press me further.

The hunted stag, even when he seeks
the thicket,

Compell'd to stand at bay, grows
dangerous!

Most true thy brother perish'd by
my hand,

And if you term it murder—I must
bear it.

Thus far my patience can; but if
thou brand

The purity of yonder martyr'd saint,
Whom then my sword but poorly did

avenge,
With one injurious word, come to

the valley,
And I will show thee how it shall be

answer'd!

NIX. This heat, Lord Berkeley,
doth but ill accord

With thy late pious patience.

BER. Father, forgive, and let me
stand excused

To Heaven and thee, if patience
brooks no more.

I loved this lady fondly—truly loved—
Loved her, and was beloved, ere yet

her father
Conferr'd her on another. While

she lived,
Each thought of her was to my soul

as hallow'd
As those I send to Heaven; and on

her grave,
Her bloody, early grave, while this

poor hand
Can hold a sword, shall no one cast

a scorn.

LIX. Follow me. Thou shalt hear
me call the adulteress

By her right name.—I'm glad there's
yet a spur

Can rouse thy sluggard mettle.

BER. Make then obeisance to the
blessed Cross,

For it shall be on earth thy last
devotion.

[*They are going off.*
WAL. (*rushing forward.*) Madmen,
stand!—

Stay but one second—answer but
one question.—

There, Maurice Berkeley, can'st thou
look upon
That blessed sign, and swear thou'st
spoken truth?

BER. I swear by Heaven,
And by the memory of that murder'd
innocent,
Each seeming charge against her
was as false

As our bless'd Lady's spotless. Hear,
each saint!

Hear me, thou holy rood! hear me
from heaven,

Thou martyr'd excellence!—Hear me
from penal fire,

(For sure not yet thy guilt is ex-
piated!)

Stern ghost of her destroyer!—

WAL. (*throws back his coat.*) He
hears! he hears

Thy spell hath raised the dead.

LIN. My brother! and alive!—

WAL. Alive,—but yet, my Richard,
dead to thee,

No tie of kindred binds me to the
world;

All were renounced, when, with
reviving life,

Came the desire to seek the sacred
cloister.

Alas, in vain! for to that last retreat,

Like to a pack of bloodhounds in full
chase,

My passion and my wrongs have
follow'd me,

Wrath and remorse—and, to fill up
the cry,

Thou hast brought vengeance hither.

LIN. I but sought
To do the act and duty of a brother.

WAL. I ceased to be so when I
left the world;

But if he can forgive as I forgive,
God sends me here a brother in mine

enemy,
To pray for me and with me. If
thou canst,

De Berkeley, give thine hand.—

BER. (*gives his hand.*) It is the
will

Of Heaven, made manifest in thy
preservation,

To inhibit further bloodshed; for De
Berkeley,

The votary Maurice lays the title
down.

Go to his halls, Lord Richard, where
a maiden,

Kin to his blood, and daughter in
affection,

Heirs his broad lands;—If thou
canst love her, Lindesay,

Woo her, and be successful.

THE DOOM OF DEVORGOIL.

PREFACE.

THE first of these dramatic pieces was long since written, for the purpose of obliging the late Mr. Terry, then Manager of the Adelphi Theatre, for whom the Author had a particular regard. The manner in which the mimic goblins of Devergoil are intermixed with the supernatural machinery, was found to be objectionable, and the production had other faults, which rendered it unfit for representation. I have called the piece a Melo-drama, for want of a better name; but, as I

learn from the unquestionable authority of Mr. Colman's *Random Records*, that one species of the drama is termed an *extravaganza*, I am sorry I was not sooner aware of a more appropriate name than that which I had selected for Devergoil.

The Author's Publishers thought it desirable, that the scenes, long condemned to oblivion, should be united to similar attempts of the same kind; and as he felt indifferent on the subject, they are printed in the same volume with *Halidon Hill* and *MacDuff's Cross*, and thrown off in a separate form, for

the convenience of those who possess former editions of the Author's Poetical Works.

The general story of the Doom or Devorgoil is founded on an old Scottish tradition, the scene of which lies in Galloway. The crime supposed to have occasioned the misfortunes of this devoted house, is similar to that of a Lord Herries of Hoddam Castle, who is the principal personage of Mr. Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe's interesting ballad, in the *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*, vol. iv., p. 307. In remorse for his crime, he built the singular monument called the Tower of Repentance. In many cases the Scottish superstitions allude to the fairies, or those who, for sins of a milder description, are permitted to wander with the "rout that never rest," as they were termed by Dr. Leyden. They imitate human labour and human amusements, but their toil is useless, and without any advantageous result; and their gaiety is unsubstantial and hollow. The phantom of Lord Erick is supposed to be a spectre of this character.

The story of the Ghostly Barber is told in many countries; but the best narrative founded on the passage, is the tale called *Stumme Liebe*, among the legends of Musæus. I think it has been introduced upon the English stage in some pantomime, which was one objection to bringing it upon the scene a second time.

ABBOTSFORD, April, 1830.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Oswald of Devorgoil, *a decayed Scottish Baron.*

Leonard, *a Ranger.*

Durward, *a Palmer.*

Lancelot Blackthorn, *a Companion of Leonard, in love with Kalleen.*

Gullerammer, *a conceited Student.*

Owlspegle and
Cockledemoy, } *Masks, represented
by Blackthorn and
Kalleen.*

Spirit of Lord Erick of Devorgoil.

Peasants, Shepherds, and Vassals of inferior Rank.

Eleanor, *Wife of Oswald, descended of obscure Parentage.*

Flora, *Daughter of Oswald.*

Kalleen, *Niece of Eleanor.*

ACT I.—SCENE I.

The Scene represents a wild and hilly, but not a mountainous Country, in a frontier District of Scotland. The flat Scene exhibits the Castle of Devorgoil, decayed, and partly ruinous, situated upon a Lake, and connected with the Land by a Drawbridge, which is lowered. Time—Sunset.

FLORA *enters from the Castle, looks timidly around, then comes forward and speaks.*

He is not here—those pleasures are not ours
Which placid evening brings to all things else.

SONG.

The sun upon the lake is low,
The wild birds hush their song,
The hills have evening's deepest glow,
Yet Leonard tarries long.
Now all whom varied toil and care
From home and love divide,
In the calm sunset may repair
Each to the loved one's side.

The noble dame, on turret high,
Who waits her gallant knight,
Looks to the western beam to spy
The flash of armour bright.
The village maid, with hand on brow,
The level ray to shade,
Upon the footpath watches now
For Colin's darkening plaid.

Now to their mates the wild swans row,
By day they swim apart,
And to the thicket wanders slow,
The hind beside the hart.

The woodlark at his partner's side,
 Twitters his closing song—
 All meet whom day and care divide,
 But Leonard tarries long.

[KATLEEN has come out of the Castle while FLORA was singing, and speaks when the Song is ended.

KAT. Ah, my dear coz!—if that
 your mother's niece
 May so presume to call your father's
 daughter—
 All these fond things have got some
 home of comfort
 To tempt their rovers back to the
 lady's bower,
 The shepherdess's hut, the wild
 swan's couch
 Among the rushes, even the lark's
 low nest,
 Has that of promise which lures
 home a lover,—
 But we have nought of this.

FLO. How call you, then, this
 castle of my sire,
 The towers of Devorgoil?

KAT. Dungeons for men, and
 palaces for owls;
 Yet no wise owl would change a
 farmer's barn
 For yonder hungry hall—our latest
 mouse,
 Our last of mice, I tell you, has been
 found
 Starved in the pantry; and the
 reverend spider,
 Sole living tenant of the Baron's
 halls,
 Who, train'd to abstinence, lived a
 whole summer
 Upon a single fly, he's famish'd too;
 The cat is in the kitchen-chimney
 seated
 Upon our last of fagots, destined
 soon
 To dress our last of suppers, and,
 poor soul,
 Is starved with cold, and mewling
 mad with hunger.

FLO. D'ye mock our misery,
 Katleen?

KAT. No, but I am hysteric on the
 subject,
 So I must laugh or cry, and laugh-
 ing's lightest.

FLO. Why stay you with us, then,
 my merry cousin?
 From you my sire can ask no filial
 duty.

KAT. No, thanks to Heaven!
 No noble in wide Scotland, rich or
 poor,
 Can claim an interest in the vulgar
 blood
 That dances in my veins; and I
 might wed

A forester to-morrow, nothing fearing
 The wrath of high-born kindred, and
 far less

That the dry bones of lead-lapp'd
 ancestors
 Would clatter in their cements at
 the tidings.

FLO. My mother, too, would gladly
 see you placed

Beyond the verge of our unhappi-
 ness,
 Which, like a witch's circle, blights
 and taints

Whatever comes within it.

KAT. Ah! my good aunt!
 She is a careful kinswoman and
 prudent,
 In all but marrying a ruin'd baron,
 When she could take her choice of
 honest yeomen;
 And now, to balance this ambitious
 error,

She presses on her daughter's love
 the suit
 Of one, who hath no touch of noble-
 ness,

In manners, birth, or mind, to
 recommend him,—

Sage Master Gullcrammer, the new-
 dubb'd preacher.

FLO. Do not name him, Katleen!

KAT. Ay, but I must, and with
 some gratitude.

I said but now, I saw our last of
 fagots
 Destined to dress our last of meals,
 but said not

That the repast consisted of choice
dainties,
Sent to our larder by that liberal
suitor,
The kind Melchisedek.

FLO. Were famishing the word,
I'd famish ere I tasted them—the
fop,

The fool, the low-born, low-bred,
pedant coxcomb!

KAT. There spoke the blood of
long-descended sires!

My cottage wisdom ought to echo
back,—

O the snug parsonage! the well-
paid stipend!

The yew-hedged garden! beehives,
pigs, and poultry!

But, to speak honestly, the peasant
Katleen,

Valuing these good things justly,
still would scorn

To wed, for such, the paltry Gull-
crammer,

As much as Lady Flora.

FLO. Mock me not with a title,
gentle cousin,

Which poverty has made ridi-
culous.—

[*Trumpets far off.*]

Hark! they have broken up the
weaponshawing;

The vassals are dismiss'd, and
marching homeward.

KAT. Comes your sire back to-
night?

FLO. He did purpose
To tarry for the banquet. This day
only,

Summon'd as a king's tenant, he
resumes

The right of rank his birth assigns
to him,

And mingles with the proudest.

KAT. To return
To his domestic wretchedness to-
morrow—

I envy not the privilege. Let us go
To yonder height, and see the
marksmen practise:

They shoot their match down in the
dale beyond,

Betwixt the Lowland and the Forest
district,

By ancient custom, for a tun of
wine.

Let us go see which wins.

FLO. That were too forward.

KAT. Why, you may drop the
screen before your face,

Which some chance breeze may
haply blow aside

Just when a youth of special note
takes aim.

It chanced even so that memorable
morning,

When, nutting in the woods, we met
young Leonard;—

And in good time here comes his
sturdy comrade,

The rough Lance Blackthorn.

*Enter LANCELOT BLACKTHORN, a
Forester, with the Carcass of a
Deer on his back, and a Gun in
his hand.*

BLA. Save you, damsels!

KAT. Godden, good yeoman.—
Come you from the Weapon-
shaw?

BLA. Not I, indeed; there lies the
mark I shot at.

[*Lays down the Deer.*]

The time has been I had not miss'd
the sport,

Although Lord Nithsdale's self had
wanted venison;

But this same mate of mine, young
Leonard Dacre,

Makes me do what he lists;—he'll
win the prize, though:

The Forest district will not lose its
honor,

And that is all I care for—(*some
skouts are heard*). Hark they're
at it.

I'll go see the issue.

FLO. Leave not here
The produce of your hunting.

BLA. But I must, though.
This is his lair to-night, for Leonard
Dacre

Charged me to leave the stag at
Devorgoil;

Then show me quickly where to stow the quarry,
And let me to the sports—(*more shots*). Come, hasten, damsels!

FLO. It is impossib'e—we dare not take it.

BLA. There let it lie, then, and I'll wind my bugle,
That all within these tottering walls may know

That here lies venison, whose likes to lift it. [*About to blow.*]

KAT. (*to FLO*). He will alarm your mother; and, besides,
Our Forest proverb teaches, that no question

Should ask where venison comes from.
Your careful mother, with her wonted prudence,

Will hold its presence plead its own apology.—

Come, Blackthorn, I will show you where to stow it.

[*Exit KATLEEN and BLACKTHORN into the Castle—more shooting—then a distant shout—Stragglers, armed in different ways, pass over the Stage, as if from the Weapon-share.*]

FLO. The prize is won; that general shout proclaim'd it.
The marksmen and the vassals are dispersing. [*She draws back.*]

FIRST VASSAL (*a peasant*). Ay, ay, —'tis lost and won,—the Forest have it.

'Tis they have all the luck on't.

SECOND VAS. (*a shepherd*). Luck, sayst thou, man? 'Tis practice, skill, and cunning.

THIRD VAS. 'Tis no such thing.— I had hit the mark precisely,
But for this cursed flint; and, as I fired,

A swallow cross'd mine eye too— Will you tell me
That that was but a chance, mine honest shepherd?

FIRST VAS. Ay, and last year, when Lancelot Blackthorn won it,

Because my powder happen'd to be damp,

Was there no luck in that?—The worse luck mine.

SECOND VAS. Still I say 'twas not chance; it might be witchcraft.

FIRST VAS. Faith, not unlikely, neighbours; for these foresters
Do often haunt about this ruin'd castle.

I've seen myself this spark,—young Leonard Dacre,—

Come stealing like a ghost ere break of day,

And after sunset, too, along this path;
And well you know the haunted towers of Devorgoil

Have no good reputation in the land.

SHEP. That have they not. I've heard my father say,—

Ghosts dance as lightly in its moon-light halls,

As ever maiden did at Mid-summer
Upon the village-green.

FIRST VAS. Those that frequent such spirit-haunted ruins

Must needs know more than simple Christians do.—

See, Lance this blessed moment leaves the castle,

And comes to triumph o'er us.

[*BLACKTHORN enters from the Castle, and comes forward while they speak.*]

THIRD VAS. A mighty triumph!
What is't, after all,

Except the driving of a piece of lead,—

As learned Master Gullcrammer defined it,—

Just through the middle of a painted board.

BLACK. And if he so define it, by your leave,

Your learned Master Gullcrammer's an ass.

THIRD VAS. (*angrily*.) He is a preacher, huntsman, under favour.

SECOND VAS. No quarrelling, neighbours—you may both be right.

Enter a FOURTH VASSAL, with a gallon stoup of wine.

FOURTH VAS. Why stand you brawling here? Young Leonard Daere Has set abroach the tun of wine he gain'd, That all may drink who list. Black-thorn, I sought you; Your comrade prays you will bestow this flagon Where you have left the deer you kill'd this morning.

BLACK. And that I will; but first we will take toll To see if it's worth carriage. Shepherd, thy horn. There must be due allowance made for leakage, And that will come about a draught a-piece.

Skink it about, and, when our throats are liquor'd, We'll merrily trowl our song of weaponslaw.

[They drink about out of the SHEPHERD'S horn and then sing.

SONG.

We love the shrill trumpet, we love the drum's rattle,
They call us to sport, and they call us to battle;
And old Scotland shall laugh at the threats of a stranger,
While our comrades in pastime are comrades in danger.

If there's mirth in our house, 'tis our neighbour that shares it—
If peril approach, 'tis our neighbour that dares it;
And when we lead off to the pipe and the tabor,
The fair hand we press is the hand of a neighbour.

Then close your ranks, comrades, the bands that combine them,
Faith, friendship, and brotherhood, join'd to entwine them;

And we'll laugh at the threats of each insolent stranger,
While our comrades in sport are our comrades in danger.

BLACK. Well, I must do mine errand. Master flagon

[Shaking it.]
Is too consumptive for another bleeding.

SHEP. I must to my fold.

THIRD VAS. I'll to the butt of wine, And see if that has given up the ghost yet.

FIRST VAS. Have with you, neighbour.

[BLACKTHORN enters the Castle, the rest exeunt severally. MELCHISEDEK GULLCRAMMER watches them off the stage, and then enters from the side-scene. His costume is a Geneva cloak and band, with a high-crowned hat; the rest of his dress in the fashion of James the First's time. He looks to the windows of the Castle, then draws back as if to escape observation, while he brushes his cloak, drives the white threads from his waistcoat with his wetted thumb, and dusts his shoes, all with the air of one who would not willingly be observed engaged in these offices. He then adjusts his collar and band, comes forward and speaks.]

GUL. Right comely is thy garb, Melchisedek;
As well besemeth one, whom good Saint Mungo,
The patron of our kind and university,
Hath graced with license both to teach and preach—
Who dare opine thou hither plod'st on foot?
Trim sits thy cloak, unruffled is thy band,
And not a speck upon thine outward man,

Bewrays the labours of thy weary
sole.

*[Touches his shoe, and smiles
complacently.]*

Quaint was that jest and pleasant!

—Now, will I

Approach and hail the dwellers of
this fort;

But specially sweet Flora Devorgoil,
Ere her proud sire return. He loves
me not,

Mocketh my lineage, flouts at mine
advancement—

Sour as the fruit the crab-tree
furnishes,

And hard as is the cudgel it supplies;

But Flora—she's a lily on the lake.

And I must reach her, though I risk
a ducking.

*[As GULLCRAMMER moves towards
the drawbridge, BAULDIE
DURWARD enters, and inter-
poses himself betwixt him and
the Castle. GULLCRAMMER
stops and speaks.]*

Whom have we here?—that ancient
fortune-teller,

Papist and sorcerer, and sturdy
beggar,

Old Bauldie Durward! Would I were
well past him!

*[DURWARD advances, partly in
the dress of a palmer, partly
in that of an old Scottish
mendicant, having coarse
blue cloak and badge, white
beard, etc.]*

DUR. The blessing of the evening
on your worship,

And on your taffy doublet. Much I
marvel

Your wisdom chooseth such trim
garb, when tempests

Are gathering to the bursting.

GULLCRAMMER *(looks to his dress,
and then to the sky, with some
apprehension.)*

Surely, Bauldie,

Thou dost belie the evening—in the
west

The light sinks down as lovely as
this band

Drops o'er this mantle—Tush, man!
'twill be fair.

DUR. Ay, but the storm I bode is
big with blows,

Horsewhips for hail-stones, clubs for
thunderbolts;

And for the wailing of the midnight
wind,

The unpitied howling of a cur-gell'd
coxcomb,

Come, come, I know thou seek'st
fair Flora Devorgoil.

GUL. And if I did, I do the damsel
grace,

Her mother thinks so, and she has
accepted

At these poor hands gifts of some
consequence,

And curious dainties for the evening
cheer,

To which I am invited—She respects
me.

DUR. But not so doth her father,
haughty Oswald.

Bethink thee, he's a baron—

GUL. And a bare one;

Construe me that, old man!—The
crofts of Mucklewhame—

Destined for mine so soon as heaven
and earth

Have shared my uncle's soul and
bones between them—

The crofts of Mucklewhame, old
man, which nourish

Three scores of sheep, three cows,
with each her follower,

A female palfrey eke—I will be
candid,

She is of that meek tribe whom, in
derision,

Our wealthy southern neighbours
nickname donkeys—

DUR. She hath her follower too,—
when thou art there.

GUL. I say to thee, these crofts of
Mucklewhame,

In the mere tything of their stock
and produce,

Outvie whatever patch of land
remains

To this old rugged castle and its
owner.

Well, therefore, may Melchisedek
Gullcrammer,
Younger of Mucklewhame, for such
I write me,
Master of Arts, by grace of good
Saint Andrew,
Preacher, in brief expectance of a
kirk,
Endow'd with ten score Scottish
pounds per annum,
Being eight pounds seventeen eight
in sterling coin—

Well then, I say, may this Melchise-
dek,
Thus highly graced by fortune—and
by nature
E'en gifted as thou seest—aspire to
woo
The daughter of the beggar'd Devor-
goil.

DUR. Credit an old man's word,
kind Master Gullcrammer,
You will not find it so.—Come, sir,
I've known
The hospitality of Mucklewhame;
It reach'd not to profuseness—yet,
in gratitude
For the pure water of its living well,
And for the barley loaves of its fair
fields,
Wherein chopp'd straw contended
with the grain
Which best should satisfy the appetite,
I would not see the hopeful heir of
Mucklewhame
Thus sling himself on danger.

GUL. Danger! what danger?—
Know'st thou not, old Oswald
This day attends the muster of the
shire,
Where the crown-vassals meet to
show their arms,
And their best horse of service?—
'Twas good sport
(An if a man had dared but laugh at
it)
To see old Oswald with his rusty
morion,
And huge two-handed sword, that
might have seen
The field of Bannockburn or Chevy-
Chase,

Without a squire or vassal, page or
groom,
Or e'en a single pikeman at his heels,
Mix with the proudest nobles of the
county,
And claim precedence for his tatter'd
person
O'er armours double gilt and ostrich-
plumage.

DUR. Ay! 'twas the jest at which
fools laugh the loudest,
The downfall of our old nobility—
Which may forerun the ruin of a
kingdom.
I've seen an idiot clap his hands, and
shout

To see a tower like yon (*points to a
part of the Castle*) stoop to its base
In headlong ruin; while the wise
look'd round,
And feaful sought a distant stance
to watch

What fragment of the fabric next
should follow;
For when the turrets fall, the walls
are tottering.

GUL. (*after pondering*). If that
means aught, it means thou
saw'st old Oswald
Expell'd from the assembly.

DUR. Thy sharp wit
Hath glanced unwittingly right nigh
the truth.
Expell'd he was not, but, his claim
denied

At some contested point of ceremony,
He left the weaponslaw in high
displeasure,
And hither comes—his wonted bitter
temper

Scaree sweeten'd by the chances of
the day.
'Twere much like rashness should
you wait his coming,
And thither tends my counsel.

GUL. And I'll take it;
Good Bauldie Durward, I will take
thy counsel,
And will requite it with this minted
farthing,
That bears our sovereign's head in
purest copper.

DUR. Thanks to thy bounty—
Haste thee, good young master;
Oswald, besides the old two-handed
sword,
Bears in his hand a staff of potency,
To charm intruders from his castle
purlieus.

GUL. I do abhor all charms, nor
will abide
To hear or see, far less to feel their
use.
Behold, I have departed.

[Exit hastily.]

Manent DURWARD.

DUR. Thus do I play the idle part
of one
Who seeks to save the moth from
scorching him
In the bright taper's flame—And
Flora's beauty
Must, not unlike that taper, waste
away,
Gilding the rugged walls that saw it
kindled.
This was a shard-born beetle, heavy,
drossy,
Though boasting his dull drone and
gilded wing.
Here comes a flutterer of another
stamp,
Whom the same ray is charming to
his ruin.

Enter LEONARD, dressed as a hunts-
man; he pauses before the Tower,
and whistles a note or two at inter-
vals—drawing back, as if fearful of
observation—yet waiting, as if ex-
pecting—some reply.—DURWARD,
whom he had not observed, moves
round, so as to front LEONARD un-
expectedly.

LEON. I am too late—it was no
easy task
To rid myself from yonder noisy
revellers.
Flora!—I fear she's angry—Flora—
Flora.

SONG.

Admire not that I gain'd the prize
From all the village crew;
How could I fail with hand or eyes,
When heart and faith were true?

And when in floods of rosy wine
My comrades drown'd their cares,
I thought but that thy heart was
mine,
My own leapt light as theirs.

My brief delay then do not blame,
Nor deem your swain untrue;
My form but linger'd at the game,
My soul was still with you.

She hears not!

DUR. But a friend hath heard—
Leonard, I pity thee.

LEON. (*starts, but recovers himself*).
Pity, good father, is for those in
want,

In age, in sorrow, in distress of
mind,

Or agony of body. I'm in health—
Can match my limbs against the
stag in chase,

Have means enough to meet my
simple wants,

And am so free of soul that I can
carol

To woodland and to wild in notes as
lively

As are my jolly bugle's.

DUR. Even therefore dost thou
need my pity, Leonard,
And therefore I bestow it, praying
thee,

Before thou feel'st the need, my mite
of pity.

Leonard, thou lovest; and in that
little word

There lies enough to claim the
sympathy

Of men who wear such hoary locks
as mine,

And know what misplaced love is
sure to end in.

LEON. Good father, thou art old,
and even thy youth,

As thou hast told me, spent in
 cloister'd cells,
 Fits thee but ill to judge the passions,
 Which are the joy and charm of
 social life.
 Press me no further, then, nor waste
 those moments
 Whose worth thou canst not estimate.

[As turning from him.

DUR. (*detains him*). Stay, young
 man!

'Tis seldom that a beggar claims a
 debt;

Yet I bethink me of a gay young
 stripling,

That owes to these white locks and
 hoary beard

Something of reverence and of
 gratitude

More than he wills to pay.

LEON. Forgive me, father! Often
 hast thou told me,

That in the ruin of my father's house
 You saved the orphan Leonard in
 his cradle;

And well I know, that to thy care
 alone—

Care seconded by means beyond thy
 seeming—

I owe whate'er of nurture I can
 boast.

DUR. Then for thy life preserved,
 And for the means of knowledge I
 have furnish'd,

(Which lacking, man is levell'd with
 the brutes,)

Grant me this boon:—Avoid these
 fatal walls!

A curse is on them, bitter, deep, and
 heavy,

Of power to split the massiest tower
 they boast

From pinnacle to dungeon vault. It
 rose

Upon the gay horizon of proud
 Devorgoil,

As unregarded as the fleecy cloud,
 The first forerunner of the hurricane,

Scarce seen amid the welkin's shade-
 less blue.

Dark grew it, and more dark, and
 still the fortunes

Of this doom'd family have darken'd
 with it.

It hid their sovereign's favour, and
 obscured

The lustre of their service, gender'd
 hate

Betwixt them and the mighty of the
 land;

Till by degrees the waxing tempest
 rose,

And stripp'd the goodly tree of fruit
 and flowers,

And buds, and boughs, and branches.
 There remains

A rugged trunk, dismember'd and
 unsightly,

Waiting the bursting of the final
 bolt

To splinter it to shivers. Now, go
 pluck

Its single tendril to enwreath thy
 brow,

And rest beneath its shade—to share
 the ruin!

LEON. This anathema,
 Whence should it come?—How
 merited!—and when!

DUR. 'Twas in the days
 Of Oswald's grandsire,—'mid Gal-
 wegian chiefs

The fellest foe, the fiercest champion.
 His blood-red pennons scared the

Cumbrian coasts,
 And wasted towns and manors

mark'd his progress.
 His galleys stored with treasure, and

their decks
 Crowded with English captives, who

beheld,
 With weeping eyes, their native

shores retire,
 He bore him homeward; but a

tempest rose—

LEON. So far I've heard the tale,
 And spare thee the recital,—The grim

chief,
 Marking his vessels labour on the

sea,
 And loth to lose his treasure, gave

command
 To plunge his captives in the raging
 deep.

DUR. There sunk the lineage of a noble name,
 And the wild waves boom'd over sire and son,
 Mother and nursling, of the House of Aglionby,
 Leaving but one frail tendril.—Hence the fate
 That hovers o'er these turrets,—hence the peasant,
 Belated, hying homewards, dreads to cast
 A glance upon that portal, lest he see
 The unshrouded spectres of the murder'd dead;
 Or the avenging Angel, with his sword,
 Waving destruction; or the grisly phantom
 Of that fell Chief, the doer of the deed,
 Which still, they say, roams through his empty halls,
 And mourns their wasteness and their loneliness.

LEON. Such is the dotage
 Of superstition, father, ay, and the cant
 Of hoodwink'd prejudice.—Not for atonement
 Of some foul deed done in the ancient warfare,
 When war was butchery, and men were wolves,
 Doth Heaven consign the innocent to suffering.

I tell thee, Flora's virtues might atone
 For all the massacres her sires have done,
 Since first the Pictish race their stained limbs
 Array'd in wolf's skin.

DUR. Leonard, ere yet this beggar's scrip and cloak
 Supplied the place of mitre and of crosier,
 Which in these alter'd lands must not be worn,
 I was superior of a brotherhood
 Of holy men,—the Prior of Lanercost.

St.

Nobles then sought my footstool many a league,
 There to unload their sins—questions of conscience
 Of deepest import were not deem'd too nice
 For my decision, youth.—But not even then,
 With mitre on my brow, and all the voice
 Which Rome gives to a father of her church,
 Dared I pronounce so boldly on the ways
 Of hidden Providence, as thou, young man,
 Whose chiefest knowledge is to track a stag,
 Or wind a bugle, hast presumed to do.

LEON. Nay, I pray forgive me, Father; thou know'st I meant not to presume—

DUR. Can I refuse thee pardon?—Thou art all
 That war and change have left to the poor Durward.
 Thy father, too, who lost his life and fortune
 Defending Lanercost, when its fair aisles
 Were spoil'd by sacrilege—I bless'd his banner,
 And yet it prosper'd not. But—all I could—
 Thee from the wreck I saved, and for thy sake
 Have still dragg'd on my life of pilgrimage
 And penitence upon the hated shores
 I else had left for ever. Come with me,
 And I will teach thee there is healing in
 The wounds which friendship gives.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.

The Scene changes to the interior of the Castle. An apartment is discovered, in which there is much

appearance of present poverty, mixed with some relics of former grandeur. On the wall hangs, amongst other things, a suit of ancient armour; by the table is a covered basket; behind, and concealed by it, the carcass of a roe-deer. There is a small latticed window, which, appearing to perforate a wall of great thickness, is supposed to look out towards the drawbridge. It is in the shape of a loop-hole for musketry; and, as is not unusual in old buildings, is placed so high up in the wall, that it is only approached by five or six narrow stone steps.

ELEANOR, the wife of OSWALD of DEVORGOIL, FLORA and KATLEEN, her Daughter and Niece, are discovered at work. The former spins, the latter are embroidering. ELEANOR quits her own labour to examine the manner in which FLORA is executing her task, and shakes her head as if dissatisfied.

ELE. Fy on it, Flora; this botch'd work of thine Shows that thy mind is distant from thy task. The finest tracery of our old cathedral Had not a richer, freer, bolder pattern, Than Flora once could trace. Thy thoughts are wandering.

FLO. They're with my father. Broad upon the lake The evening sun sunk down; huge piles of clouds, Crimson and sable, rose upon his disk, And quench'd him ere his setting, like some champion In his last conflict, losing all his glory. Sure signals those of storm. And if my father Be on his homeward road——

ELE. But that he will not. Baron of Devorgoil, this day at least He banquets with the nobles, who the next

Would scarce vouchsafe an alms to save his household From want or famine. Thanks to a kind friend, For one brief space we shall not need their aid.

FLO. (*joyfully.*) What! knew you then his gift? How silly I that would, yet durst not tell it!

I fear my father will condemn us both, That easily accepted such a present.

KAT. Now, here's the game a bystander sees better Than those who play it.—My good aunt is pondering

On the good cheer which Gullerammer has sent us, And Flora thinks upon the forest venison. [*Aside.*]

ELE. (*to FLO.*) Thy father need not know on't—'tis a boon Comes timely, when frugality, nay, abstinence,

Might scarce avail us longer. I had hoped Ere now a visit from the youthful donor,

That we might thank his bounty; and perhaps My Flora thought the same, when Sunday's kerchief

And the best kirtle were sought out, and donn'd To grace a work-day evening.

FLO. Nay, mother, that is judging all too close! My work-day gown was torn—my kerchief sullied; And thus—But, think you, will the gallant come?

ELE. He will, for with these dainties came a message From gentle Master Gullerammer, to intimate——

FLO. (*greatly disappointed.*) Gullerammer?

KAT. There burst the bubble—down fell house of cards, And cousin's like to cry for't! [*Aside.*]

ELE. Gullcrammer? ay, Gullcrammer—thou scorn'st not at him?

'Twere something short of wisdom in a maiden,

Who, like the poor bat in the Grecian fable,

Hovers betwixt two classes in the world,

And is disclaim'd by both the mouse and bird.

KAT. I am the poor mouse. And may go creep into what hole I list,

And no one heed me—Yet I'll waste a word

Of counsel on my betters.—Kind my aunt,

And you, my gentle cousin, were't not better

We thought of dressing this same gear for supper,

Than quarrelling about the worthless donor?

ELE. Peace, minx!

FLO. Thou hast no feeling, cousin Kathleen.

KAT. Soh! I have brought them both on my poor shoulders

So meddling peace-makers are still rewarded:

E'en let them to't again, and fight it out.

FLO. Mother, were I disclaim'd of every class,

I would not therefore so disclaim myself,

As even a passing thought of scorn to waste

On cloddish Gullcrammer.

ELE. List to me, love, and let adversity

Incline thine ear to wisdom. Look around thee—

Of the gay youths who boast a noble name,

Which will incline to wed a dowerless damsel?

And of the yeomanry, who think'st thou, Flora,

Would ask to share the labours of his farm

An high-born beggar?—This young man is modest—

FLO. Silly, good mother; sheepish, if you will it.

ELE. E'en call it what you list—the softer temper,

The fitter to endure the bitter sallies

Of one whose wit is all too sharp for mine.

FLO. Mother, you cannot mean it as you say;

You cannot bid me prize conceited folly?

ELE. Content thee, child—each lot has its own blessings.

This youth, with his plain-dealing honest suit,

Proffers thee quiet, peace, and competence,

Redemption from a home, o'er which fell Fate

Stoops like a falcon.—O, if thou couldst choose

(As no such choice is given) 'twixt such a mate

And some proud noble!—Who, in sober judgment,

Would like to navigate the heady river,

Dashing in fury from its parent mountain,

More than the waters of the quiet lake?

KAT. Now can I hold no longer—Lake, good aunt?

Nay, in the name of truth, say mill-pond, horse-pond;

Or if there be a pond more mix'd, More sluggish, mean-derived, and

base than either, Be such Gullcrammer's emblem—

and his portion!

FLO. I would that he or I were in our grave,

Rather than thus his suit should goad me!—Mother,

Flora of Devorgoil, though low in fortunes,

Is still too high in mind to join her name

With such a base-born churl as Gullcrammer.

ELE. You are trim maidens both !
(To FLORA.) Have you forgotten,
Or did you mean to call to *my* remembrance

Thy father chose a wife of peasant blood ?

FLO. Will you speak thus to me,
or think the stream
Can mock the fountain it derives its source from ?

My venerated mother, in that name
Lies all on earth a child should
chiefest honour ;
And with that name to mix reproach
or taunt,
Were only short of blasphemy to
Heaven.

ELE. Then listen, Flora, to that
mother's counsel,
Or rather profit by that mother's fate.
Your father's fortunes were but bent,
not broken,
Until he listen'd to his rash affection.
Means were afforded to redeem his
house,
Ample and large - the hand of a rich
heirress
Awaited, almost courted, his ac-
ceptance ;
He saw my beauty - such it then was
call'd,
Or such at least he thought it - the
wither'd bush,
Whate'er it now may seem, had
blossoms then, -
And he forsook the proud and wealthy
heirress,
To wed with me and ruin -

KAT. (*aside.*) The more fool,
Say I, apart, the peasant maid then,
Who might have chose a mate from
her own hamlet.

ELE. Friends fell off,
And to his own resources, his own
counsels,
Abandon'd, as they said, the thought-
less prodigal,
Who had exchanged rank, riches,
pompe, and honour,
For the mean beauties of a cottage
maid.

FLO. It was done like my father,

Who scorn'd to sell what wealth can
never buy -

True love and free affections. And
he loves you !

If you have suffer'd in a weary world,
Your sorrows have been jointly
borne, and love

Has made the load sit lighter.

ELE. Ay, but a misplaced match
hath that deep curse in't,
That can embitter e'en the purest
streams

Of true affection. Thou hast seen
me seek,

With the strict caution early habits
taught me,

To match our wants and means -
hast seen thy father

With aristocracy's high brow of
scorn,

Spurn'd at economy, the cottage virtue,
As best befitting her whose sires
were peasants ;

Nor can I, when I see my lineage
scorn'd,

Always conceal in what contempt
I hold

The fancied claims of rank he clings
to fondly.

FLO. Why will you do so? - well
you know it chafes him.

ELE. Flora, thy mother is but
mortal woman.

Nor can at all times check an eager
tongue.

KAT. (*aside.*) That's no new tidings
to her niece and daughter.

ELE. O mayst thou never know the
spited feelings

That gender discord in adversity
Betwixt the dearest friends and
truest lovers !

In the chill damping gale of poverty,
If Love's lamp go not out, it gleams
but palely,

And twinkles in the socket.

FLO. But tenderness can screen it
with her veil,

Till it revive again. By gentleness,
good mother,

How oft I've seen you soothe my
father's mood !

KAT. Now there speak youthful hope and fantasy! [*Aside.*

ELE. That is an easier task in youth than age;

Our temper hardens, and our charms decay,

And both are needed in that art of soothing.

KAT. And there speaks sad experience. [*Aside.*

ELE. Besides, since that our state was utter desperate,

Darker his brow, more dangerous grow his words;

Fain would I snatch thee from the woe and wrath

Which darken'd long my life, and soon must end it.

[*A knocking without; ELEANOR shows alarm.*

It was thy father's knock, haste to the gate.

[*Exeunt FLORA and KATLEEN.*

What can have happ'd?—he thought to stay the night.

This gear must not be seen.

[*As she is about to remove the basket, she sees the body of the roe-deer.*

What have we here? a roe-deer!—as I fear it,

This was the gift of which poor Flora thought.

The young and handsome hunter;—but time presses.

[*She removes the basket, and the roe into a closet. As she has done—*

Enter OSWALD of DEVORGOIL, FLORA, and KATLEEN.

[*He is dressed in a scarlet cloak, which should seem worn and old—a headpiece, and old-fashioned sword—the rest of his dress that of a peasant. His countenance and manner should express the moody and irritable haughtiness of a proud man involved in calamity, and who has been exposed to recent insult.*

Osw. (*addressing his wife*). The sun hath set—why is the draw-bridge lower'd?

ELE. The counterpoise has fail'd, and Flora's strength,

Katleen's, and mine united, could not raise it.

Osw. Flora and thou! A goodly garrison

To hold a castle, which, if fame say true, Once foil'd the King of Norse and all his rovers.

ELE. It might be so in ancient times, but now—

Osw. A herd of deer might storm proud Devorgoil.

KAT. (*aside to FLO*). You, Flora, know full well one deer already

Has enter'd at the breach; and, what is worse,

The escort is not yet march'd off, for Blackthorn

Is still within the castle.

FLO. In Heaven's name, rid him out on't, ere my father

Discovers he is here! Why went he not

Before?

KAT. Because I staid him on some little business;

I had a plan to scare poor paltry Gullcrammer

Out of his paltry wits.

FLO. Well, haste ye now, And try to get him off.

KAT. I will not promise that, I would not turn an honest hunter's dog,

So well I love the woodcraft, out of shelter

In such a night as this—far less his master:

But I'll do this, I'll try to hide him for you.

Osw. (*whom his wife has assisted to take off his cloak and feather'd cap*). Ay, take them off, and bring my peasant's bonnet.

And peasant's plaid—I'll noble it no farther.

Let them erase my name from honour's lists,

And drag my scutcheon at their
horses' heels ;

I have deserved it all, for I am poor,
And poverty hath neither right of
birth,

Nor rank, relation, claim, nor
privilege,

To match a new-coin'd viscount,
whose good grandsire,

The Lord be with him, was a care-
ful skipper,

And steer'd his paltry skiff 'twixt
Leith and Campvere—

Marry, sir, he could buy Geneva
cheap,

And knew the coast by moonlight.

FLO. Mean you the Viscount
Ellondale, my father ?

What strife has been between you ?

Osw. O, a trifle !
Not worth a wise man's thinking
twice about—

Precedence is a toy—a superstition
About a table's end, joint-stool, and
trencher.

Something was once thought due to
long descent,

And something to Galwegia's oldest
baron,—

But let that pass—a dream of the old
time.

ELE. It is indeed a dream.

Osw. (*turning upon her rather
quickly.*) Ha ! said ye, let me
hear these words more plain.

ELE. Alas ! they are but echoes of
your own.

Match'd with the real woes that
hover o'er us,

What are the idle visions of pre-
cedence,

But, as you term them, dreams, and
toys, and trifles,

Not worth a wise man's thinking
twice upon ?

Osw. Ay, 'twas for you I framed
that consolation,

The true philosophy of clouted shoe
And linsey-woolsey kirtle. I know,
that minds

Of nobler stamp receive no dearer
motive

Than what is link'd with honour
Ribands, tassels,

Which are but shreds of silk and
spangled tinsel—

The right of place, which in itself is
momentary—

A word, which is but air—may in
themselves,

And to the nobler file, be steep'd so
richly

In that elixir, honour, that the lack
Of things so very trivial in them-
selves

Shall be misfortune. One shall
seek for them

O'er the wild waves—one in the
deadly breach

And battle's headlong front—one in
the paths

Of midnight study ; and, in gaining
these

Emblems of honour, each will hold
himself

Repaid for all his labours, deeds,
and dangers.

What then should he think, know-
ing them his own,

Who sees what warriors and what
sages toil for,

The formal and establish'd marks of
honour,

Usurp'd from him by upstart in-
solence ?

ELE. (*who has listened to the last
speech with some impatience.*)

This is but empty declamation,
Oswald.

The fragments left at yonder full-
spread banquet,

Nay, even the poorest crust swept
from the table,

Ought to be far more precious to a
father,

Whose family lacks food, than the
vain boast,

He sate at the board-head.

Osw. Thou'lt drive me frantic !—
I will tell thee, woman—

Yet why to thee ? There is another
ear

Which that tale better suits, and he
shall hear it.

[Looks at his sword, which he has unbuckled, and addresses the rest of the speech to it.

Yes, trusty friend, my father knew thy worth,

And often proved it—often told me of it—

Though thou and I be now held lightly of,

And want the gilded hatchments of the time,

I think we both may prove true metal still.

'Tis thou shalt tell this story, right this wrong :

Rest thou till time is fitting.

[Hangs up the sword.

[The Women look at each other with anxiety during this speech, which they partly overhear. They both approach OSWALD.

ELE. Oswald—my dearest husband!

FLO. £ My dear father!

Osw. Peace, both!—we speak no more of this. I go

To heave the drawbridge up. [Exit.

[KATLEEN mounts the steps towards the loop-hole, looks out, and speaks.

The storm is gathering fast ; broad, heavy drops

Fall plashing on the bosom of the lake,

And dash its inky surface into circles ;
The distant hills are hid in wreaths of darkness.

'Twill be a fearful night.

OSWALD re-enters, and throws himself into a seat.

ELE. More dark and dreadful Than is our destiny, it cannot be.

Osw. (to FLO.) Such is Heaven's will—it is our part to bear it.

We're warranted, my child, from ancient story

And blessed writ, to say, that song assuages

The gloomy cares that prey upon our reason,

And wake a strife betwixt our better feelings

And the fierce dictates of the head-long passions.

Sing, then, my love ; for if a voice have influence

To mediate peace betwixt me and my destiny,

Flora, it must be thine.

FLO. My best to please you !

SONG.

When the tempest's at the loudest,

On its gale the eagle rides ;

When the ocean rolls the proudest,

Through the foam the sea-bird glides—

All the rage of wind and sea

Is subdued by constancy.

Gnawing want and sickness pining,

All the ills that men endure ;

Each their various pangs combining,

Constancy can find a cure—

Pain, and Fear, and Poverty,

Are subdued by constancy.

Bar me from each wonted pleasure,

Make me abject, mean, and poor ;

Heap on insults without measure,

Chain me to a dungeon floor—

I'll be happy, rich, and free,

If endow'd with constancy.

ACT II.—SCENE I.

A Chamber in a distant part of the Castle. A large Window in the flat scene, supposed to look on the Lake, which is occasionally illuminated by lightning. There is a Couch-bed in the Room, and an antique Cabinet.

Enter KATLEEN, introducing BLACKTHORN.

KAT. This was the destined scene of action, Blackthorn,

And here our properties. But all in vain.

For of Gullcrammer we'll see nought to-night,

Except the dainties that I told you of.

BLA. O, if he's left that same hog's
face and sausages,
He will try back upon them, never
fear it.

The cur will open on the trail of
bacon,
Like my old brach-hound.

KAT. And should that hap, we'll
play our comedy,—
Shall we not, Blackthorn? Thou
shalt be Owlspiegle—

BLA. And who may that hard-
named person be?

KAT. I've told you nine times
over.

BLA. Yes, pretty Katleen, but my
eyes were busy
In looking at you all the time you
were talking;
And so I lost the tale.

KAT. Then shut your eyes, and let
your goodly ears
Do their good office.

BLA. That were too hard penance.
Tell but thy tale once more, and I
will hearken
As if I were thrown out, and listen-
ing for
My bloodhound's distant bay.

KAT. A civil simile!
Then, for the tenth time, and the
last—be told,
Owlspiegle was of old the wicked
barber

To Erick, wicked Lord of Devorgoil.

BLA. The chief who drown'd his
captives in the Solway—
We all have heard of him.

KAT. A hermit hoar, a venerable
man—
So goes the legend—came to wake
repentance
In the fierce lord, and tax'd him with
his guilt;

But he, heart-harden'd, turn'd into
derision

The man of heaven, and, as his
dignity

Consisted much in a long reverend
beard,

Which reach'd his girdle, Erick
caused his barber

This same Owlspiegle, violate its
honours

With sacrilegious razor, and clip his
hair

After the fashion of a roguish fool.

BLA. This was reversing of our
ancient proverb,
And shaving for the devil's, not for
God's sake.

KAT. True, most grave Black-
thorn; and in punishment
Of this foul act of scorn, the barber's
ghost

Is said to have no resting after
death,

But haunts these halls, and chiefly
this same chamber,

Where the profanity was acted,
trimming

And clipping all such guests as sleep
within it.

Such is at least the tale our elders
tell,

With many others, of this haunted
castle.

BLA. And you would have me take
this shape of Owlspiegle,

And trim the wise Melchisedek!—
I wonnot.

KAT. You will not!

BLA. No—unless you bear a
part.

KAT. What! can you not a'one
play such a farce?

BLA. Not I—I'm dull. Besides,
we foresters

Still hunt our game in couples.

Look you, Katleen,
We danced at Shrovetide—then you
were my partner;

We sung at Christmas—you kept
time with me;

And if we go a mumming in this
business,

By heaven, you must be one, or
Master Gullcrammer

Is like to rest unshaven—

KAT. Why, you fool,
What end can this serve?

BLA. Nay, I know not, I.
But if we keep this wont of being
partners,

Why, use makes perfect—who knows
what may happen?

KAT. Thou art a foolish patch
But sing our carol,

As I have alter'd it, with some few
words

To suit the characters, and I will
bear—— [*Gives a paper.*]

BLA. Part in the gambol. I'll go
study quickly.

Is there no other ghost, then, haunts
the castle,

But this same barber shave-a-penny
goblin?

I thought they glanced in every
beam of moonshine,

As frequent as the bat.

KAT. I've heard my aunt's high
husband tell of prophecies,
And fates impending o'er the house
of Devorgoil;

Legends first coin'd by ancient
superstition,

And render'd current by credulity

And pride of lineage. Five years
have I dwelt,

And ne'er saw any thing more
mischievous

Than what I am myself.

BLA. And that is quite enough, I
warrant you.

But, stay, where shall I find a dress
To play this—what d'ye call him—

Owlspegle?

KAT. (*takes dresses out of the
cabinet.*) Why, there are his
own clothes,

Preserved with other trumpery of the
sort,

For we have kept nought but what
is good for nought.

[*She drops a cap as she draws
out the clothes. Blackthorn
lifts it, and gives it to her.*]

Nay, keep it for thy pains—it is a
coxcomb;

So call'd in ancient times, in ours a
fool's cap;

For you must know they kept a
Fool at Devorgoil

In former days; but now are well
contented

To play the fool themselves, to save
expenses;

Yet give it me, I'll find a worthy use
for't.

I'll take this page's dress, to play the
page

Cockledemoy, who waits on ghostly
Owlspegle;

And yet 'tis needless, too, for Gull-
crammer

Will scarce be here to-night.

BLA. I tell you that he will—I
will uphold

His plighted faith and true allegiance
Unto a sows'd sow's face and

sausages,

And such the dainties that you say
he sent you,

Against all other likings whatsoever,
Except a certain sneaking of affec-
tion,

Which makes some folks I know of
play the fool,

To please some other folks.

KAT. Well, I do hope he'll come—
there's first a chance

He will be cudgell'd by my noble
uncle—

I cry his mercy—by my good aunt's
husband,

Who did vow vengeance, knowing
nought of him

But by report, and by a limping
sonnet

Which he had fashion'd to my
cousin's glory,

And forwarded by blind Tom Long
the carrier;

So there's the chance, first of a
hearty beating,

Which foiling, we've this after-plot
of vengeance.

BLA. Kind damsel, how consid-
erate and merciful!

But how shall we get off, our parts
being play'd?

KAT. For that we are well fitted;
here's a trap-door

Sinks with a counterpoise—you shall
go that way.

I'll make my exit yonder—'neath
the window,

A balcony communicates with the tower
That overhangs the lake.

BLA. 'Twere a rare place, this house of Devorgoil,
To play at hide-and-seek in—shall we try,

One day, my pretty Katleen?

KAT. Hands off, rude ranger! I'm no managed hawk
To stoop to lure of yours.—But bear you gallantly;

This Gullcrammer hath vex'd my cousin much,
I fain would have some vengeance.

BLA. I'll bear my part with glee;
—he spoke irreverently
Of practice at a mark!

KAT. That cries for vengeance.
But I must go; I hear my aunt's shrill voice!

My cousin and her father will scream next.

ELE. (*at a distance.*) Katleen!
Katleen!

BLA. Hark to old Sweetlips!
Away with you before the full cry open—

But stay, what have you there?

KAT. (*with a bundle she has taken from the wardrobe.*) My dress,
my page's dress—let it alone.

BLA. Your tiring-room is not, I hope, far distant;
You're inexperienced in these new habiliments—

I am most ready to assist your toilet.

KAT. Out, you great ass! was ever such a fool! [*Runs off.*]

BLA. (*sings.*)

O, Robin Hood was a bowman good,
And a bowman good was he,
And he met with a maiden in merry Sherwood,
All under the greenwood tree.

Now give me a kiss, quoth bold Robin Hood,
Now give me a kiss, said he,

For there never came maid into merry Sherwood,
But she paid the forester's fee.

I've coursed this twelvemonth this sly puss, young Katleen,
And she has dodged me, turn'd beneath my nose,
And flung me out a score of yards at once;

If this same gear fadge right, I'll cote and mouth her,
And then! whoop! dead! dead! dead!—
She is the metal
To make a woodsman's wife of!—

[*Pauses a moment.*]

Well—I can find a hare upon her form

With any man in Nithsdale—stalk a deer,

Run Reynard to the earth for all his doubles,

Reclaim a haggard hawk that's wild and wayward,

Can bait a wild-cat,—sure the devil's in't

But I can match a woman—I'll to study.

[*Sits down on the couch to examine the paper.*]

SCENE II.

Scene changes to the inhabited apartment of the Castle, as in the last Scene of the preceding Act. A fire is kindled, by which OSWALD sits in an attitude of deep and melancholy thought, without paying attention to what passes around him. ELEANOR is busy in covering a table; FLORA goes out and re-enters, as if busied in the kitchen. There should be some by-play—the women whispering together, and watching the state of OSWALD; then separating, and seeking to avoid his observation, when he casually raises his head, and drops it again. This must be left to taste and management. The Women, in the first

part of the scene, talk apart, and as if fearful of being overheard; the by-play of stopping occasionally, and attending to OSWALD'S movements, will give liveliness to the Scene.

ELE. Is all prepared?

FLO. Ay; but I doubt the issue Will give my sire less pleasure than you hope for.

ELE. Tush, maid—I know thy father's humour better.

He was high-bred in gentle luxuries; And when our griefs began, I've wept apart, While lordly cheer and high-fill'd cups of wine

Were blinding him against the woe to come.

He has turn'd his back upon a princely banquet:

We will not spread his board—this night at least,

Since chance hath better furnish'd— with dry bread,

And water from the well.

Enter KATLEEN, and hears the last speech.

KAT. (*aside.*) Considerate aunt! she deems that a good supper Were not a thing indifferent even to him

Who is to hang to-morrow. Since she thinks so,

We must take care the venison has due honour—

So much I owe the sturdy knave, Lance Blackthorn.

FLO. Mother, alas! when Grief turns reveller, Despair is cup-bearer. What shall hap to-morrow?

ELE. I have learn'd carelessness from fruitless care.

Too long I've watch'd to-morrow; let it come

And cater for itself—Thou hear'st the thunder.

[Low and distant thunder.

This is a gloomy night—within, alas! *[Looking at her husband.*

Still gloomier and more threatening — Let us use

Whatever means we have to drive it o'er,

And leave to Heaven to-morrow. Trust me, Flora,

'Tis the philosophy of desperate want To match itself but with the present evil,

And face one grief at once.

Away, I wish thine aid and not thy counsel.

[As FLORA is about to go off, GULLCRAMMER'S voice is heard behind the flat scene, as if from the drawbridge.

GUL. (*behind.*) Hillo—hillo—hilloa —ho—ho!

[OSWALD raises himself and listens; ELEANOR goes up the steps, and opens the window at the loop-hole; GULLCRAMMER'S voice is then heard more distinctly.

GUL. Kind Lady Devorgoil—sweet Mistress Flora!—

The night grows fearful, I have lost my way,

And wander'd till the road turn'd round with me,

And brought me back—For Heaven's sake give me shelter!

KAT. (*aside.*) Now, as I live, the voice of Gullcrammer!

Now shall our gambol be play'd off with spirit;

I'll swear I am the only one to whom

That screech-owl whoop was e'er acceptable.

Osw. What bawling knave is this that takes our dwelling

For some hedge-inn, the haunt of lated drunkards?

ELE. What shall I say?—Go, Katleen, speak to him.

KAT. (*aside.*) The game is in my hands—I will say something Will fret the Baron's pride—and then he enters.

(She speaks from the window.) Good sir, be patient!

We are poor folks — it is but six
 Scotch miles
 To the next borough town, where
 your Reverence
 May be accommodated to your wants;
 We are poor folks, an't please your
 Reverence,
 And keep a narrow household—
 there's no track
 To lead your steps astray—

GUL. Nor none to lead them
 right.—You kill me, lady,

If you deny me harbour. To budge
 from hence,
 And in my weary plight, were
 sudden death,
 Interment, funeral-sermon, tomb-
 stone, epitaph.

OSW. Who's he that is thus
 clamorous without?

(To ELE.) Thou know'st him?

ELE. (*confused.*) I know him?—no
 —yes—'tis a worthy clergyman,
 Benighted on his way;—but think
 not of him.

KAT. The morn will rise when
 that the tempest's past,
 And if he miss the marsh, and can avoid
 The crags upon the left, the road is
 plain

OSW. Then this is all your piety!
 —to leave

One whom the holy duties of his office
 Have summon'd over moor and
 wilderness,

To pray beside some dying wretch's
 bed,

Who (erring mortal) still would
 cleave to life,

Or wake some stubborn sinner to
 repentance—

To leave him, after offices like these,
 To choose his way in darkness
 'twixt the marsh

And dizzy precipice?

ELE. What can I do?

OSW. Do what thou canst—the
 wealthiest do no more—

And if so much, 'tis well. These
 crumbling walls,

While yet they bear a roof, shall
 now, as ever,

Give shelter to the wanderer—Have
 we food?

He shall partake it—Have we none?
 the fast

Shall be accounted with the good
 man's merits

And our misfortunes—

[*He goes to the loop-hole while
 he speaks, and places himself
 there in room of his Wife,
 who comes down with re-
 luctance.*

GUL. (*without.*) Hillo—hoa—hoa!
 By my good faith, I cannot plod it
 farther;

The attempt were death.

OSW. (*speaks from the window.*)
 Patience, my friend, I come to
 lower the drawbridge.

[*Descends, and exit.*

ELE. O, that the screaming bittern
 had his couch

Where he deserves it, in the deepest
 marsh!

KAT. I would not give this sport
 for all the rent

Of Devorgoil, when Devorgoil was
 richest!

(To ELE.) But now you chided me,
 my dearest aunt,

For wishing him a horse-pond for
 his portion?

ELE. Yes, saucy girl; but, an it
 please you, then

He was not fretting me; if he had
 sense enough,

And skill to bear him as some casual
 stranger,—

But he is dull as earth, and every
 hint

Is lost on him, as hail-shot on the
 cormorant,

Whose hide is proof except to
 musket-bullets!

FLO. (*apart.*) And yet to such a one
 would my kind mother,

Whose chiefest fault is loving me
 too fondly,

Wed her poor daughter!

*Enter GULLCRAMMER, his dress dam-
 aged by the storm; ELEANOR runs*

to meet him, in order to explain to him that she wished him to behave as a stranger. GULLCRAMMER, mistaking her approach for an invitation to familiarity, advances with the air of pedantic conceit belonging to his character, when OSWALD enters,—ELEANOR recovers herself, and assumes an air of distance—GULLCRAMMER is confounded, and does not know what to make of it.

Osw. The counterpoise has clean given way; the bridge
Must e'en remain unraised, and
leave us open,
For this night's course at least, to
passing visitants.—
What have we here?—is this the
reverend man?

[He takes up the candle, and surveys GULLCRAMMER, who strives to sustain the inspection with confidence, while fear obviously contends with conceit and desire to show himself to the best advantage.]

Gul. Kind sir—or, good my lord
—my band is ruffled,
But yet 'twas fresh this morning.
This fell shower
Hath somewhat smirch'd my cloak,
but you may note
It rates five marks per yard; my
doublet
Hath fairly 'scaped—'tis three-piled
taffeta.

[Opens his cloak, and displays his doublet.]

Osw. A goodly inventory—Art
thou a preacher?

Gul. Yea—I laud Heaven and
good Saint Mungo for it.

Osw. 'Tis the time's plague,
when those that should weed
follies

Out of the common field, have
their own minds
O'errun with foppery—Envoys 'twixt
heaven and earth,
Example should with precept join,
to show us

How we may scorn the world with
all its vanities.

Gul. Nay, the high heavens
forefend that I were vain!

When our learn'd Principal such
sounding laud

Gave to mine Essay on the hidden
qualit'es

Of the sulphuric mineral, I dis-
claim'd

All self-exaltment. And *(turning to
the women)* when at the dance,

The lovely Saccharissa Kirkencroft,
Daughter to Kirkencroft of Kirken-
croft,

Graced me with her soft hand,
credit me, ladies,

That still I felt myself a mortal man,
Though beauty smiled on me.

Osw. Come, sir, enough of this,
That you're our guest to-night,

thank the rough heavens,
And all our woser fortunes; be

conformable
Unto my rules; these are no Sac-
charissas

To gild with compliments. There's
in your profession,

As the best grain will have its piles
of chaff,

A certain whiffler, who hath dared to
bait

A noble maiden with love tales and
sonnets;

And if I meet him, his Geneva cap
May scarce be proof to save his ass's
ears.

Kal. *(aside.)* Umph— I am strongly
tempted

And yet I think I will be generous,
And give his brains a chance to save
his bones,

Then there's more humour in our
goblin plot,

Than in a simple drubbing.

ELE. *(apart to FLO.)* What shall we
do? If he discover h'im,

He'll fling him out at window.

FLO. My father's hint to keep
himself unknown

Is all too broad, I think, to be
neglected.

ELE. But yet the fool, if we produce his bounty,
May claim the merit of presenting it;

And then we're but lost women for accepting

A gift our needs made timely.

KAT. Do not produce them.
E'en let the fop go supperless to bed,

And keep his bones whole.

OSW. (*to his Wife.*) Hast thou aught

To place before him ere he seek repose?

ELE. Alas! too well you know our needful fare
Is of the narrowest now, and knows no surplus.

OSW. Shame us not with thy niggard housekeeping;

He is a stranger—were it our last crust,

And he the veriest coxcomb ere wore taffeta,

A pitch he's little short of—he must share it,

Though all should want to-morrow.

GUL. (*partly overhearing what passes between them.*) Nay, I am no lover of your sauced dainties: Plain food and plenty is my motto still.

Your mountain air is bleak, and brings an appetite:

A soured sow's face, now, to my modest thinking,

Has ne'er a fellow. What think these fair ladies

Of a sow's face and sausages?

[*Makes signs to* ELEANOR.

FLO. Plague on the vulgar hind, and on his courtesies,
The whole truth will come out!

OSW. What should they think, but that you're like to lack

Your favourite dishes, sir, unless perchance

You bring such dainties with you.

GUL. No, not *with me*; not, indeed,

Directly *with me*; but—Aha! fair ladies!

[*Makes signs again.*

KAT. He'll draw the beating down—Were that the worst,

Heaven's will be done! [*Aside.*

OSW. (*apart.*) What can he mean?—this is the veriest dog-whelp—

Still he's a stranger, and the latest act

Of hospitality in this old mansion

Shall not be sullied.

GUL. Troth, sir, I think, under the ladies' favour,

Without pretending skill in second sight,

Those of my cloth being seldom conjurers—

OSW. I'll take my Bible-oath that thou art none. [*Aside.*

GUL. I do opine, still with the ladies' favour,

That I could guess the nature of our supper:

I do not say in such and such precedence

The dishes will be placed; housewives, as you know,

On such forms have their fancies; but, I say still,

That a sow's face and sausages—

OSW. Peace, sir! O'er-driven jests (if this be one) are insolent.

FLO. (*apart, seeing her mother uneasy.*) The old saw still holds true—a churl's benefits,

Sauced with his lack of feeling,

sense, and courtesy,

Savour like injuries.

[*A horn is winded without; then a loud knocking at the gate.*

LEO. (*without.*) Ope, for the sake of love and charity!

[*OSWALD goes to the loop-hole.*

GUL. Heaven's mercy! should there come another stranger,

And he half starved with wandering on the wolds,

The sow's face boasts no substance, nor the sausages,

To stand our reinforced attack! I judge, too,
By this starved Baron's language,
there's no hope
Of a reserve of victuals.

FLO. Go to the casement, cousin.

KAT. Go yourself,
And bid the gallant who that bugle
winded
Sleep in the storm-swept waste; as
meet for him

As for Lance Blackthorn.—Come,
I'll not distress you,
I'll get admittance for this second
suitor,

And we'll play out this gambol at
cross purposes.

But see, your father has prevented
me.

Osw. (*seems to have spoken with
those without, and answers.*)

Well, I will ope the door; one
guest already,

Driven by the storm, has claim'd my
hospitality,

And you, if you were fiends, were
scarce less welcome

To this my mouldering roof, than
empty ignorance

And rank conceit—I hasten to admit
you. [*Exit.*]

ELE. (*to FLO.*) The tempest
thickens. By that winded bugle,
I guess the guest that next will
honour us.—

Little deceiver, that didst mock my
troubles,

'Tis now thy turn to fear!

FLO. Mother, if I knew less or
more of this

Unthought of and most perilous
visitation,

I would your wishes were fulfill'd on
me,

And I were wedded to a thing like
yon.

GUL. (*approaching.*) Come, ladies,
now you see the jest is thread-
bare,

And you must own that same sow's
face and sausages—

*Re-enter OSWALD with LEONARD,
supporting BAULDIE DURWARD.
OSWALD takes a view of them, as
formerly of GULLCRAMMER, then
speaks.*

Osw. (*to LEO.*) By thy green cas-
sock, hunting-spear, and bugle,
I guess thou art a huntsman?

LEO. (*bowing with respect.*) A ranger
of the neighbouring royal forest,
Under the good Lord Nithsdale;
huntsman, therefore,

In time of peace, and when the land
has war,

To my best powers a soldier.

Osw. Welcome, as either. I have
loved the chase

And was a soldier once.—This aged
man,

What may he be?

DUR. (*recovering his breath.*) Is but
a beggar, sir, an humble mendic-
ant,

Who feels it passing strange, that
from this roof,

Above all others, he should now
crave shelter.

Osw. Why so? You're welcome
both—only the word

Warrants more courtesy than our
present means

Permit us to bestow. A huntsman
and a soldier

May be a prince's comrade, much
more mine;

And for a beggar—friend, there little
lacks,

Save that blue gown and badge, and
clouted pouches,

To make us comrades too; then
welcome both,

And to a beggar's feast. I fear
brown bread,

And water from the spring, will be
the best on't;

For we had cast to wend abroad this
evening,

And left our larder empty.

GUL. Yet, if some kindly tairy,
In our behalf, would search its hid
recesses,—

(*Apart.*) We'll not go supperless now—we're three to one.—
 Still do I say, that a sowsed face and sausages—
 Osw. (*looks sternly at him, then at his wife.*) There's something under this, but that the present
 Is not a time to question. (*To ELE.*)
 Wife, my mood
 Is at such height of tide, that a
 turn'd feather
 Would make me frantic now, with
 mirth or fury!
 Tempt me no more—but if thou hast
 the things
 This carrion crow so croaks for,
 bring them forth;
 For, by my father's beard, if I stand
 caterer,
 'Twill be a fearful banquet!
 ELE. Your pleasure be obey'd—
 Come, aid me, Flora. [*Exit.*
*(During the following speeches
 the Women place dishes on
 the table.)*
 Osw. (*to DUR.*) How did you lose
 your path?
 DUR. E'en when we thought to
 find it, a wild meteor
 Danced in the moss, and led our feet
 astray.—
 I give small credence to the tales of
 old,
 Of Friar's-lantern told, and Will-o'-
 Wisp,
 Else would I say, that some malicious
 demon
 Guided us in a round; for to the
 moat,
 Which we had pass'd two hours
 since, were we led,
 And there the gleam flicker'd and
 disappear'd,
 Even on your drawbridge. I was so
 worn down,
 So broke with labouring through
 marsh and moor,
 That, wold I nold I, here my young
 conductor
 Would needs implore for entrance;
 else, believe me,
 I had not troubled you.

Osw. And why not, father?—have
 you e'er heard aught,
 Or of my house or me, that wanderers,
 Whom or their roving trade or
 sudden circumstance
 Oblige to seek a shelter, should avoid
 The House of Devorgoil?
 DUR. Sir, I am English born—
 Native of Cumberland. Enough is
 said
 Why I should shun those bowers,
 whose lords were hostile
 To English blood, and unto Cumber-
 land
 Most hostile and most fatal.
 Osw. Ay, father. Once my grand-
 sire plough'd, and harrow'd,
 And sow'd with salt, the streets of
 your fair towns;
 But what of that?—you have the
 'vantage now.
 DUR. True, Lord of Devorgoil, and
 well believe I,
 That not in vain we sought these
 towers to-night,
 So strangely guided, to behold their
 state.
 Osw. Ay, thou wouldst say, 'twas
 fit a Cumbrian beggar
 Should sit an equal guest in his
 proud halls,
 Whose fathers beggar'd Cumberland
 —Greybeard, let it be so,
 I'll not dispute it with thee.
 (*To LEO, who was speaking to
 FLORA, but, on being sur-
 prised, occupied himself with
 the suit of armour.*)
 What makest thou there, young
 man?
 LEO. I marvell'd at this harness;
 it is larger
 Than arms of modern days. How
 richly carved
 With gold inlaid on steel—how close
 the rivets—
 How justly fit the joints! I think
 the gauntlet
 Would swallow twice my hand.
 [*He is about to take down some
 part of the Armour; OSW. WLD
 inter-feres.*

Osw. Do not displace it
 My grandsire, Erick, doubled human
 strength,
 And almost human size—and human
 knowledge,
 And human vice, and human virtue
 also,
 As storm or sunshine chanced to
 occupy
 His mental hemisphere. After a
 fatal deed,
 He hung his armour on the wall,
 forbidding
 It e'er should be ta'en down. There
 is a prophecy,
 That of itself 'twill fall, upon the
 night
 When, in the fiftieth year from his
 decease,
 Devorgoil's feast is full. This is the
 era ;
 But, as too well you see, no meet
 occasion
 Will do the downfall of the armour
 justice,
 Or grace it with a feast. There let
 it bide,
 Trying its strength with the old
 walls it hangs on
 Which shall fall soonest.
 DUR. (*looking at the trophy with a
 mixture of feeling.*) Then there-
 stern Erick's harness hangs un-
 touch'd,
 Since his last fatal raid on Cumber-
 land !
 Osw. Ay, waste and want, and
 recklessness—a comrade
 Still yoked with waste and want—
 have stripp'd these walls
 Of every other trophy. Antler'd
 skulls,
 Whose branches vouch'd the tales
 old vassals told
 Of desperate chases—partisans and
 spears—
 Knights' barred helmets and shields—
 the shafts and bows,
 Axes and breastplates, of the hardy
 yeomanry—
 The banners of the vanquish'd—signs
 these arms

SC.

Were not assumed in vain, have
 disappear'd.
 Yes, one by one they all have dis-
 appear'd ;
 And now Lord Erick's harness hangs
 alone,
 'Midst implements of vulgar hus-
 bandry
 And mean economy ; as some old
 warrior,
 Whom want hath made an inmate
 of an alms-house,
 Shows, mid the beggar'd spendthrifts,
 base mechanics,
 And bankrupt pedlars, with whom
 fate has mix'd him.

DUR. Or rather like a pirate, whom
 the prison-house,
 Prime leveller next the grave, hath
 for the first time
 Mingled with peaceful captives, low
 in fortunes,
 But fair in innocence.

Osw. (*looking at DUR. with sur-
 prise.*) Friend, thou art bitter !

DUR. Plain truth, sir, like the
 vulgar copper coinage,
 Despised amongst the gentry, still
 finds value
 And currency with beggars.

Osw. Be it so.
 I will not trench on the immunities
 I soon may claim to share. Thy
 features, too,
 Though weather-beaten, and thy
 strain of language,
 Relish of better days. Come hither,
 friend,

[*They speak apart.*]

And let me ask thee of thine occupa-
 tion.

[LEONARD *looks round, and,
 seeing OSWALD engaged with
 DURWARD, and GULLCRAM-
 MER with ELEANOR, ap-
 proaches towards FLORA, who
 must give him an opportunity
 of doing so, with obvious
 attention on her part to give
 it the air of chance. The by-
 play here will rest with the
 Lady, who must engage the*

attention of the audience by playing off a little female hypocrisy and simple coquetry.

LEO. Flora—

FLO. Ay, gallant huntsman, may she deign to question

Why Leonard came not at the appointed hour ;

Or why he came at midnight ?

LEO. Love has no certain loadstar, gentle Flora,

And oft gives up the helm to wayward pilotage.

To say the sooth—A beggar forced me hence,

And Will-o'-Wisp did guide us back again.

FLO. Ay, ay, your beggar was the faded spectre

Of Poverty, that sits upon the threshold

Of these our ruin'd walls. I've been unwise,

Leonard, to let you speak so oft with me ;

And you a fool to say what you have said.

E'en let us here break short ; and, wise at length,

Hold each our separate way through life's wide ocean.

LEO. Nay, let us rather join our course together,

And share the breeze or tempest, doubling joys,

Relieving sorrows, warding evils off

With mutual effort, or enduring them

With mutual patience.

FLO. This is but flattering counsel—sweet and baneful ;

But mine had wholesome bitter in't.

KAT. Ay, ay ; but like the sly apothecary,

You'll be the last to take the bitter drug

That you prescribe to others.

[They whisper. ELEANOR advances to interrupt them, followed by GULLCRAMMER.]

ELE. What, maid, no household cares ? Leave to your elders

The task of filling passing strangers' ears

With the due notes of welcome.

GUL. Be it thine, O, Mistress Flora, the more useful talent

Of filling strangers' stomachs with substantial ;

That is to say,—for learn'd commentators

Do so expound substantial in some places,—

With a sows'd bacon-face and sausages,

FLO. (*apart.*) Would thou wert sows'd, intolerable pedant,

Base, greedy, perverse, interrupting coxcomb !

KAT. Hush, coz, for we'll be well avenged on him,

And ere this night goes o'er, else woman's wit

Cannot o'ertake her wishes.

[She proceeds to arrange seats. OSWALD and DURWARD come forward in conversation.]

OSW. I like thine humour well.—So all men beg—

DUR. Yes—I can make it good by proof. Your soldier

Begs for a leaf of laurel, and a line in the Gazette. He brandishes his sword

To back his suit, and is a sturdy beggar—

The courtier begs a riband or a star, And, like our gentler mumpers, is provided

With false certificates of health and fortune

Lost in the public service. For your lover,

Who begs a sigh, a smile, a lock of hair,

A buskin-point, he maunds upon the pad,

With the true cant of pure mendicity, "The smallest trifle to relieve a Christian,

And if it like your Ladyship !"—

[In a begging tone.]

KAT. (*apart.*) This is a cunning knave, and feeds the humour Of my aunt's husband, for I must not say Mine honour'd uncle. I will try a question.— Your man of merit though, who serves the commonwealth, Nor asks for a requital?—

[*To DURWARD.*]

DUR. Is a dumb beggar, And lets his actions speak like signs for him, Challenging double guerdon.—Now, I'll show How your true beggar has the fair advantage O'er all the tribes of cloak'd mendicinity I have told over to you.—The soldier's laurel, The statesman's riband, and the lady's favour, Once won and gain'd, are not held worth a farthing By such as longest, loudest, canted for them ; Whereas your charitable halfpenny, Which is the scope of a true beggar's suit, Is worth *two* farthings, and, in times of plenty, Will buy a crust of bread.

FLO. (*interrupting him, and addressing her father.*) Sir, let me be a beggar with the time, And pray you come to supper.

ELE. (*to OSWALD, apart.*) Must he sit with us ?

[*Looking at DURWARD.*]

OSW. Ay, ay, what else—since we are beggars all ? When cloaks are ragged, sure their worth is equal Whether at first they were of silk or woollen.

ELE. Thou art scarce consistent This day thou didst refuse a princely banquet,

Because a new-made lord was placed above thee ; And now—

OSW. Wife, I have seen, at public executions, A wretch that could not brook the hand of violence Should push him from the scaffold, pluck up courage, And, with a desperate sort of cheerfulness, Take the fell plunge himself— Welcome then, beggars, to a beggar's feast.

GUL. (*who has in the meanwhile seated himself.*) But this is more.— A better countenance,— Fair fall the hands that sows'd it !— than this hog's, Or prettier provender than these same sausages, (By what good friend sent hither, shall be nameless, Doubtless some youth whom love hath made profuse,)

[*Smiling significantly at ELEANOR and FLORA.*]

No prince need wish to peck at. Long, I ween, Since that the nostrils of this house (by metaphor, I mean the chimneys) smell'd a steam so grateful— By your good leave I cannot dally longer. [*Helps himself.*]

OSW. (*places DURWARD above GULLCRAMMER.*) Meanwhile, sir, Please it your faithful learning to give place To gray hairs and to wisdom ; and, moreover, If you had tarried for the benediction—

GUL. (*somewhat abashed.*) I said grace to myself.

OSW. (*not minding him.*)—And waited for the company of others, It had been better fashion. Time has been, I should have told a guest at Devor-goil,

Bearing himself thus forward, he was saucy.

[*He seats himself, and helps the company and himself in dumb-show. There should be a contrast betwixt the precision of his aristocratic civility, and the rude under-breeding of GULLCRAMMER.*]

OSW. (*having tasted the dish next him.*) Why, this is venison, Eleanor!

GUL. Eh! What! Let's see—

[*Pushes across OSWALD and helps himself.*]

It may be venison—

I'm sure 'tis not beef, veal, mutton, lamb, or pork.

Eke am I sure, that be it what it will,

It is not half so good as sausages, Or as a sow's face sows'd.

OSW. Eleanor, whence all this?—

ELE. Wait till to-morrow, You shall know all. It was a happy chance

That furnish'd us to meet so many guests. [*Fills wine.*]

Try if your cup be not as richly garnish'd

As is your trencher.

KAT. (*apart.*) My aunt adheres to the good cautious maxim

Of,—“Eat your pudding, friend, and hold your tongue.”

OSW. (*tastes the wine.*) It is the grape of Bordeaux.

Such dainties, once familiar to my board,

Have been estranged from't long.

[*He again fills his glass, and continues to speak as he holds it up.*]

Fill round, my friends—here is a treacherous friend now

Smiles in your face, yet seeks to steal the jewel,

Which is distinction between man and brute—

I mean our reason—this he does, and smiles.

But are not all friends treacherous?

—one shall cross you

Even in your dearest interests—one shall slander you—

This steal your daughter, that defraud your purse;

But this gay flask of Bordeaux will but borrow

Your sense of mortal sorrows for a season,

And leave, instead, a gay delirium.

Methinks my brain, unused to such gay visitants,

The influence feels already!—we will revel!—

Our banquet shall be loud!—it is our last.

Kateen, thy song.

KAT. Not now, my lord—I mean to sing to-night

For this same moderate, grave, and reverend clergyman;

I'll keep my voice till then.

ELE. Your round refusal shows but cottage breeding.

KAT. Ay, my good aunt, for I was cottage-nurtured,

And taught, I think, to prize my own wild will

Above all sacrifice to compliment.

Here is a huntsman—in his eyes I read it,

He sings the martial song my uncle loves,

What time fierce Claver'se with his Cavaliers,

Abjuring the new change of government.

Forcing his fearless way through timorous friends,

And enemies as timorous, left the capital

To rouse in James's cause the distant Highlands.

Have you ne'er heard the song, my noble uncle?

OSW. Have I not heard, wench?—

It was I rode next him,

'Tis thirty summers since—rode by his rein;

We marched on through the a'arm'd city,

As sweeps the osprey through a flock
of gulls,
Who scream and flutter, but dare no
resistance
Against the bold sea-empress—They
did murmur,
The crowds before us, in their sullen
wrath,
And those whom we had pass'd,
gathering fresh courage,
Cried havoc in the rear—we minded
them
E'en as the brave bark minds the
bursting billows,
Which, yielding to her bows, burst
on her sides,
And ripple in her wake.—Sing me
that strain,

[To LEONARD.

And thou shalt have a meed I seldom
tender,
Because they're all I have to give—
my thanks.

LEO. Nay, if you'll bear with what
I cannot help,
A voice that's rough with hollowing
to the hounds,
I'll sing the song even as old
Rowland taught me.

SONG.

AIR—*The Bonnets of Bonny Dundee.*

To the Lords of Convention 'twas
Claver'se who spoke,
“ Ere the King's crown shall fall
there are crowns to be broke ;
So let each Cavalier who loves
honour and me,
Come follow the bonnet of Bonny
Dundee.

“ Come fill up my cup, come fill up
my can,
Come saddle your horses, and call
up your men ;
Come open the West Port, and let
me gang free,
And it's room for the bonnets of
Bonny Dundee !”

Dundee he is mounted, he rides up
the street,
The bells are rung backward, the
drums they are beat ;
But the Provost, douce man, said,
“ Just e'en let him be,
The Gude Town is weel quit of that
Deil of Dundee.”
Come fill up my cup, etc.

As he rode down the sanctified bends
of the Bow,
Hk carline was flyting and shaking
her pow ;
But the young plants of grace they
look'd couthie and slee,
Thinking, luck to thy bonnet, thou
Bonny Dundee !
Come fill up my cup, etc.

With sour-featured Whigs the
Grassmarket was cramm'd
As if half the West had set tryst to
be hang'd ;
There was spite in each look, there
was fear in each e'e,
As they watch'd for the bonnets of
Bonny Dundee.
Come fill up my cup, etc.

These cows of Kilmarnock had spits
and had spears,
And lang-hafted gullies to kill
Cavaliers ;
But they shruik to close-heads, and
the causeway was free,
At the toss of the bonnet of Bonny
Dundee.
Come fill up my cup, etc.

He spur'd to the foot of the proud
Castle rock,
And with the gay Gordon he gallantly
spoke ;
“ Let Mons Meg and her marrows
speak twa words or three,
For the love of the bonnet of Bonny
Dundee.”
Come fill up my cup, etc.

The Gordon demands of him which way he goes—

“Where'er shall direct me the shade of Montrose!

Your Grace in short space shall hear tidings of me,

Or that low lies the bonnet of Bonny Dundee.”

Come fill up my cup, etc.

“There are hills beyond Pentland, and lands beyond Forth,

If there's lords in the Lowlands, there's chiefs in the North;

There are wild Duniewassals three thousand times three,

Will cry *hoigh!* for the bonnet of Bonny Dundee.”

Come fill up my cup, etc.

“There's brass on the target of barken'd bull-hide;

There's steel in the scabbard that dangles beside;

The brass shall be burnish'd, the steel shall flash free,

At a toss of the bonnet of Bonny Dundee.”

Come fill up my cup, etc.

“Away to the hills, to the caves, to the rocks—

Ere I own an usurper, I'll couch with the fox;

And tremble, false Whigs, in the midst of your glee,

You have not seen the last of my bonnet and me!”

Come fill up my cup, etc.

He waved his proud hand, and the trumpets were blown,

The kettle-drums clash'd, and the horsemen rode on,

Till on Ravelston's cliffs and on Clermiston's lee,

Died away the wild war-notes of Bonny Dundee.

Come fill up my cup, come fill up my can,

Come saddle the horses and call up the men,

Come open your gates, and let me gae free,

For it's up with the bonnets of Bonny Dundee!

ELE. Katleen, do thou sing now. Thy uncle's cheerful;

We must not let his humour ebb again.

KAT. But I'll do better, aunt, than if I sung,

For Flora can sing blithe; so can this huntsman,

As he has shown e'en now; let them duet it.

Osw. Well, huntsman, we must give to freakish maiden

The freedom of her fancy.—Raise the carol,

And Flora, if she can, will join the measure.

SONG.

When friends are met o'er merry cheer,

And lovely eyes are laughing near,

And in the goblet's bosom clear
The cares of day are drown'd;

When puns are made, and bumpers quaff'd,

And wild Wit shoots his roving shaft,

And Mirth his jovial laugh has laugh'd,

Then is our banquet crown'd.
Ah gay,

Then is our banquet crown'd.

When glees are sung, and catches troll'd,

And bashfulness grows bright and bold,

And beauty is no longer cold,
And age no longer dull;

When chimes are brief, and cocks do crow,

To tell us it is time to go,
Yet how to part we do not know,

Then is our feast at full,
Ah gay,

Then is our feast at full.

Osw. (*rises with the cup in his hand.*) Devorgoil's feast is full—
Drink to the pledge!

[*A tremendous burst of thunder follows these words of the Song; and the Lightning should seem to strike the suit of black Armour, which falls with a crash. All rise in surprise and fear except GULLCRAMMER, who tumbles over backwards, and lies still.*

Osw. That sounded like the judgment-peal—the roof
Still trembles with the volley.

DUR. Happy those
Who are prepared to meet such
fearful summons.—

Leonard, what dost thou there?

LEO. (*supporting FLO.*) The duty
of a man—
Supporting innocence. Were it the
final call,

I were not misemploy'd.

Osw. The armour of my grandsire
hath fall'n down,
And old saws have spoke truth.—
(*Musing.*) The fiftieth year—

Devorgoil's feast at fullest! What
to think of it—

LEO. (*lifting a scroll which had fallen with the armour.*) This
may inform us.

[*Attempts to read the manuscript, shakes his head, and gives it to OSWALD.*

But not to eyes unlearn'd it tells its
tidings.

Osw. Hawks, hounds, and revel-
ling consumed the hours
I should have given to study.

[*Looks at the manuscript.*
These characters I spell not more
than thou.

They are not of our day, and, as I
think,

Not of our language.—Where's our
scholar now,

So forward at the banquet? Is he
laggard

Upon a point of learning?

LEO. Here is the man of letter'd
dignity,
E'en in a piteous case.

[*Drags GULLCRAMMER forward.*

Osw. Art waking, craven? canst
thou read this scroll?

Or art thou only learn'd in sowsing
swine's flesh,

And prompt in eating it?

GUL. Eh — ah! — oh — ho! — Have
you no better time
To tax a man with riddles, than the
moment

When he scarce knows whether he's
dead or living?

Osw. Confound the pedant? — Can
you read the scroll,

Or can you not, sir? If you *can*,
pronounce

Its meaning speedily.

GUL. *Can* I read it, quotha!
When at our learned University,
I gain'd first premium for Hebrew
learning,—

Which was a pound of high-dried
Scottish snuff,

And half a peck of onions, with a
bushel

Of curious oatmeal,—our learn'd
Principal

Did say, "Melchisedek, thou canst
do any thing!"

Now comes he with his paltry scroll
of parchment,

And, "Can you read it?"—After such
affront,

The point is, if I *will*.

Osw. A point soon solved,
Unless you choose to sleep among
the frogs;

For look you, sir, there is the chamber
window,

Beneath it lies the lake.

ELE. Kind master Gullcrammer,
beware my husband,

He brooks no contradiction—'tis his
fault,

And in his wrath he's dangerous.

GUL. (*looks at the scroll, and mutters as if reading.*) Hashgaboth hotch-
potch—

A simple matter this to make a rout
of—

Ten rashersen bacon, mish-mash venison,

Sausagian sowsed-face—'Tis a simple catalogue

Of our small supper—made by the grave sage

Whose prescience knew this night that we should feast

On venison, hash'd sow's face, and sausages,

And hung his steel-coat for a supper bell—

E'en let us to our provender again,

For it is written we shall finish it,

And bless our stars the lightning left it us.

Osw. This must be impudence or ignorance!—

The spirit of rough Erick stirs within me,

And I will knock thy brains out in thou palterest!

Expound the scroll to me!

GUL. You're over hasty;

And yet you may be right too—'Tis Samaritan,

Now I look closer on't, and I did take it

For simple Hebrew.

DUR. 'Tis Hebrew to a simpleton, That we see plainly, friend—Give me the scroll.

GUL. Alas, good friend! what would you do with it?

DUR. (*takes it from him.*) My best to read it, sir—The character is Saxon,

Used at no distant date within this district;

And thus the tenor runs—nor in Samaritan,

Nor simple Hebrew, but in wholesome English:—

Devorgoil, thy bright moon waneth,

And the rust thy harness staineth;

Servile guests the banquet soil

Of the once proud Devorgoil.

But should Black Erick's armour fall,

Look for guests shall scare you all!

They shall come ere peep of day,—
Wake and watch, and hope and pray.

KAT. (*to FLO.*) Here is fine foolery—
—an old wall shakes

At a loud thunder-clap—down comes a suit

Of ancient armour, when its wasted braces

Were all too rotten too sustain its weight—

A beggar cries out, Miracle! and your father,

Weighing the importance of his name and lineage,

Must needs believe the dotard!

FLO. Mock not, I pray you; this may be too serious.

KAT. And if I live till morning, I will have

The power to tell a better tale of wonder

Wrought on wise Gullcrammer. I'll go prepare me. [*Exit.*]

FLO. I have not Katleen's spirit, yet I hate

This Gullcrammer too heartily, to stop Any disgrace that's hastening towards him.

Osw. (*to whom the Beggar has been again reading the scroll.*) 'Tis a strange prophecy!—The silver moon,

Now waning sorely, is our ancient bearing—

Strange and unfitting guests—

GUL. (*interrupting him.*) Ay, ay, the matter.

Is, as you say, all moonshine in the water.

Osw. How mean you, sir? (*threatening.*)

GUL. To show that I can rhyme With yonder bluegown. Give me breath and time,

I will maintain, in spite of his pretence,

Mine exposition had the better sense—

It spoke good victuals and increase of cheer;

And his, more guests to eat what we have here—

An increment right needless.

OSW. Get thee gone ;
To kennel, hound !

GUL. The hound will have his bone.
[Takes up the platter of meat, and a flask.

OSW. Flora, show him his chamber—take him hence,

Or, by the name I bear, I'll see his brains.

GUL. Ladies, good-night !—I spare you, sir, the pains.

[Exit, lighted by FLORA with a lamp.

OSW. The owl is fled.—I'll not to bed to-night ;

There is some change impending o'er this house,

For good or ill. I would some holy man

Were here, to counsel us what we should do !

Yon witless thin-faced gull is but a cassock

Stuff'd out with chaff and straw.

DUR. (assuming an air of dignity.)
I have been wont,

In other days, to point to erring mortals

The rock which they should anchor on.

[He holds up a Cross—the rest take a posture of devotion, and the Scene closes.

ACT III.—SCENE I.

A ruinous Anteroom in the Castle.
Enter KATLEEN, fantastically dressed to play the Character of Cocklede moy, with the visor in her hand.

KAT. I've scarce had time to glance at my sweet person,

Yet this much could I see, with half a glance,

My elfish dress becomes me—I'll not mask me

Till I have seen Lance Blackthorn.

Lance ! I say— [Calls.

Blackthorn, make haste !

Enter BLACKTHORN, half dressed as Owlspeigle.

BLA. Here am I—Blackthorn in the upper half,

Much at your service ; but my nether parts

Are goblinised and Owlspeigled. I had much ado

To get these trankums on. I judge Lord Erick

Kept no good house, and starved his quondam barber.

KAT. Peace, ass, and hide you—Gullcrammer is coming ;

He left the hall before, but then took fright,

And e'en sneak'd back. The Lady Flora lights him—

Trim occupation for her ladyship ! Had you seen Leonard, when she

left the hall
On such fine errand !

BLA. This Gullcrammer shall have a bob extraordinary

For my good comrade's sake.—But tell me, Kat een,

What dress is this of yours ?

KAT. A page's, fool !

BLA. I'm accounted no great scholar,

But 'tis a page that I would fain peruse

A little closer. [Approaches her.

KAT. Put on your spectacles, And try if you can read it at this distance,

For you shall come no nearer.

BLA. But is there nothing, then, save rank imposture,

In all these tales of goblinry at Devorgoil ?

KAT. My aunt's grave lord thinks otherwise, supposing

That his great name so interests the Heavens,

That miracles must needs bespeak its fall—

I would that I were in a lowly cottage

Beneath the greenwood, on its walls
no armour

To court the levin-bolt——

BLA. And a kind husband, Katleen,
To ward such dangers as must needs
come nigh.—

My father's cottage stands so low
and lone,

That you would think it solitude
itself;

The greenwood shields it from the
northern blast,

And, in the woodbine round its
latticed casement,

The linnet's sure to build the earliest
nest

In all the forest.

KAT. Peace, you fool, they come.

FLORA *lights GULLCRAMMER across
the Stage.*

KAT. (*when they have passed.*)
Away with you!

On with your cloak—be ready at the
signal.

BLA. And shall we talk of that
same cottage, Katleen,

At better leisure? I have much to
say

In favour of my cottage.

KAT. If you will be talking,
You know I can't prevent you.

BLA. That's enough.
(*Aside.*) I shall have leave, I see, to
spell the page

A little closer, when the due time
comes.

SCENE II.

*Scene changes to GULLCRAMMER'S
Sleeping Apartment. He enters,
ushered in by FLORA, who sets on
the table a flask, with the lamp.*

FLO. A flask, in case your Reverence
be athirsty;

A light, in case your Reverence be
afear'd;—

And so sweet slumber to your
Reverence.

GUL. Kind Mistress Flora, will
you?—eh! eh! eh!

FLO. Will I what?

GUL. Tarry a little?

FLO. (*smiling.*) Kind Master Gull-
crammer,

How can you ask me aught so un-
becoming?

GUL. Oh, fie, fie, fie!—Believe me,
Mistress Flora,

'Tis not for that—but being guided
through

Such dreary galleries, stairs, and
suites of rooms,

To this same cubicle, I'm somewhat
loth

To bid adieu to pleasant company.

FLO. A flattering compliment!—
In plain truth you are frighten'd.

GUL. What! frighten'd?—I—I—
am not timorous.

FLO. Perhaps you've heard this is
our haunted chamber?

But then it is our best—Your Rever-
ence knows,

That in all tales which turn upon a
ghost,

Your traveller belated has the luck
To enjoy the haunted room—it is a
rule:—

To some it were a hardship, but to
you,

Who are a scholar, and not timor-
ous——

GUL. I did not say I was not
timorous,

I said I was not temerarious.—
I'll to the hall again.

FLO. You'll do your pleasure.

But you have somehow moved my
father's anger,

And you had better meet our playful
Owlspeggle—

So is our goblin call'd—than face
Lord Oswald.

GUL. Owlspeggle?—

It is an uncouth and outlandish name,
And in mine ear sounds fiendish.

FLO. Hush, hush, hush!

Perhaps he hears us now—(*in an
under tone*)—A merry spirit:

None of your elves that pinch folks
black and blue,
For lack of cleanliness.

GUL. As for that, Mistress Flora,
My taffeta doublet hath been duly
brush'd,
My shirt hebdomadal put on this
morning.

FLO. Why, you need fear no gob-
lins. But this Owlspiegle
Is of another class;—yet has his
frolics;
Cuts hair, trims beards, and plays
amid his antics
The office of a sinful mortal barber.
Such is at least the rumour.

GUL. He will not cut my clothes,
or scar my face,
Or draw my blood?

FLO. Enormities like these
Were never charged against him.

GUL. And, Mistress Flora, would
you smile on me,
If, prick'd by the fond hope of your
approval,
I should endure this venture?

FLO. I do hope
I shall have cause to smile.

GUL. Well! in that hope
I will embrace the achievement for
thy sake. [*She is going.*]
Yet, stay, stay, stay!—on second
thoughts I will not—

I've thought on it, and will the
mortal cudgel
Rather endure than face the ghostly
razor!

Your crab-tree's tough but blunt,—
your razor's polish'd,
But, as the proverb goes, 'tis cruel
sharp,
I'll to thy father, and unto his
pleasure
Submit these destined shoulders.

FLO. But you shall not,
Believe me, sir, you shall not; he is
desperate,
And better far be trimm'd by ghost or
goblin,
Than by my sire in anger; there are
stores

Of hidden treasure, too, and Heaven
knows what,
Buried among these ruins—you shall
stay.

(*Apart.*) And if indeed there be such
sprite as Owlspiegle,
And, lacking him, that thy fear
plague thee not
Worse than a goblin, I have miss'd
my purpose,
Which else stands good in either
case.—Good-night, sir.

[*Exit, and double-locks the door.*]
GUL. Nay, hold ye, hold!—Nay,
gentle Mistress Flora,
Wherefore this ceremony?—She has
lock'd me in,
And left me to the goblin!—(*Listen-*
ing.)—So, so, so!

I hear her light foot trip to such
a distance,
That I believe the castle's breadth
divides me
From human company. I'm ill at
ease—

But if this citadel (*Laying his hand
on his stomach*) were better
victual'd,

It would be better mann'd
[*Sits down and drinks.*]
She has a footstep light, and taper
ankle. [*Chuckles.*]

Aha! that ankle! yet, confound it
too,
But for those charms Melchisedek
had been

Snug in his bed at Mucklewhame—
I say,
Confound her footstep, and her
instep too,

To use a cobbler's phrase.—There
I was quaint.

Now, what to do in this vile circum-
stance,
To watch or go to bed, I can't
determine;

Were I a-bed, the ghost might catch
me napping,
And if I watch, my terrors will
increase

As ghostly hours approach. I'll to
my bed

E'en in my taffeta doublet, shrink my
head
Beneath the clothes—leave the lamp
burning there,

[Sets it on the table.

And trust to fate the issue.

[He lays aside his cloak, and
brushes it, as from habit,
starting at every moment;
ties a napkin over his head;
then shrinks beneath the bed-
clothes. He starts once or
twice, and at length seems to
go to sleep. A bell tolls ONE.
He leaps up in his bed.

GUL. I had just coax'd myself to
sweet forgetfulness,
And that confounded bell—I hate all
bells,
Except a dinner bell—and yet I lie,
too,—

I love the bell that soon shall tell the
parish
Of Gabblegoose, Melchisedek's incu-
bent—

And shall the future minister of
Gabblegoose
Whom his parishioners will soon
require

To exorcise their ghosts, detect their
witches,
Lie shivering in his bed for a pert
goblin,

Whom, be he switch'd or cocktail'd,
horn'd or poll'd,

A few tight Hebrew words will soon
send packing?

Tush! I will rouse the parson up
within me,

And bid defiance—(A distant noise.)
In the name of Heaven,

What sounds are these!—O Lord!
this comes of rashness!

[Draws his head down
under the bed-clothes.

Duet without, between OWLSPIEGLE
and COCKLEDEMOY.

OWLSPIEGLE.

Cockledemoy!
My boy, my boy—

COCKLEDEMOY.

Here, father, here.

OWLSPIEGLE.

Now the pole-star's red and burning,
And the witch's spindle turning,
Appear, appear!

GUL. (who has again raised him-
self, and listened with great terror
to the Duet.) I have heard of the
devil's dam before,
But never of his child. Now, Heaven
deliver me!

The Papists have the better of us
there,—

They have their Latin prayers, cut
and dried,
And pat for such occasion—I can
think

On nought but the vernacular.

OWLSPIEGLE.

Cockledemoy!
My boy, my boy,
We'll sport us here—

COCKLEDEMOY.

Our gambols play,
Like elfe and fay;

OWLSPIEGLE.

And domineer,

BOTH.

Laugh, frolic, and frisk, till the
morning appear.

COCKLEDEMOY.

Lift latch—open clasp—
Shoot bolt—and burst hasp!

[The door opens with violence.
Enter BLACKTHORN as
OWLSPIEGLE, fantastically
dressed as a Spanish Bar-
ber, tall, thin, emaciated,
and ghostly; KATLEEN, as
COCKLEDEMOY, attends as

his Page. All their manners, tones, and motions, are fantastic, as those of Goblins. They make two or three times the circuit of the Room, without seeming to see GULLCRAMMER. They then resume their Chant, or Recitative.

OWLSPIEGLE.

Cockledemoy!
My boy, my boy,

What wilt thou do that will give thee joy?
Wilt thou ride on the midnight owl?

COCKLEDEMOY.

No; for the weather is stormy and foul.

OWLSPIEGLE.

Cockledemoy!
My boy, my boy,

What wilt thou do that can give thee joy?
With a needle for a sword, and a thimble for a hat,
Wilt thou fight a traverse with the castle cat?

COCKLEDEMOY.

Oh, no! she has claws, and I like not that.

GUL. I see the devil is a doting father,
And spoils his children—'tis the surest way
To make cursed imps of them. They see me not—
What will they think on next? It must be own'd,
They have a dainty choice of occupations.

OWLSPIEGLE.

Cockledemoy!
My boy, my boy,

What shall we do that can give thee joy?
Shall we go seek for a cuckoo's nest?

COCKLEDEMOY.

That's best, that's best!

BOTH.

About, about,
Like an elvish scout,
The cuckoo's a gull, and we'll soon find him out.

[They search the room with mops and mazes. At length COCKLEDEMOY jumps on the bed. GULLCRAMMER raises himself half up, supporting himself by his hands. COCKLEDEMOY does the same, and grins at him, then skips from the bed, and runs to OWLSPIEGLE.]

COCKLEDEMOY.

I've found the nest,
And in it a guest,
With a sable cloak and a taffeta vest;
He must be wash'd, and trimm'd,
and dress'd,
To please the eyes he loves the best.

OWLSPIEGLE.

That's best, that's best.

BOTH.

He must be shaved, and trimm'd, and dress'd,
To please the eyes he loves the best.

[They arrange shaving things on the table, and sing as they prepare them.]

BOTH.

Know that all of the humbug, the bite, and the buz,
Of the make-believe world, becomes forfeit to us.

OWLSPIEGLE (*sharpening his razor.*)

The sword this is made of was lost in a fray
By a fop, who first bullied and then ran away;

And the strap, from the hide of a
lame racer, sold
By Lord Match, to his friend, for
some hundreds in gold.

BOTH.

For all of the humbug, the bite, and
the buz,
Of the make-believe world, becomes
forfeit to us.

COCKLEDEMOY (*placing the napkin.*)

And this cambric napkin, so white
and so fair,
At an usurer's funeral I stole from
the heir.

[*Drops something from a vial,
as going to make suds.*]

This dewdrop I caught from one eye
of his mother,
Which wept while she ogled the
parson with t'other.

BOTH.

For all of the humbug, the bite, and
the buz.
Of the make-believe world, becomes
forfeit to us.

OWLSPIEGLE (*arranging the lather
and the basin.*)

My soap-ball is of the mild alkali
made,
Which the soft dedicator employs in
his trade;
And it froths with the pith of a
promise, that's sworn
By a lover at night, and forgot on
the morn.

BOTH.

For all of the humbug, the bite, and
the buz,
Of the make-believe world, becomes
forfeit to us.

Halloo, halloo,

The blackcock crew,
Thrice shriek'd hath the owl, thrice
croak'd hath the raven,

Here, ho! Master Gullcrammer, rise
and be shaven!

Da capo.

GUL. (*who has been observing them.*)

I'll pluck a spirit up; they're
merry goblins,
And will deal mildly. I will soothe
their humour;
Besides, my beard lacks trimming.

[*He rises from his bed, and
advances with great symptoms
of trepidation, but affecting
an air of composure. The
Goblins receive him with
fantastic ceremony.*]

Gentlemen, 'tis your will I should be
trimm'd—
E'en do your pleasure.

[*They point to a seat—he sits.*]

Think, howsoe'er,
Of me as one who hates to see his
blood;
Therefore I do beseech you, signior,
Be gentle in your craft. I know
those barbers,
One would have harrows driven
across his visnomy,
Rather than they should touch it
with a razor.

OWLSPIEGLE *shaves* GULLCRAMMER,
while COCKLEDEMOY *sings.*

Father never started hair,
Shaved too close, or left too bare—
Father's razor slips as glib
As from courtly tongue a fib.
Whiskers, mustache, he can trim in
Fashion meet to please the women;
Sharp's his blade, perfumed his
lather!

Happy those are trimm'd by father!

GUL. That's a good boy. I love to
hear a child
Stand for his father, if he were the
devil. [*He motions to rise.*]
Craving your pardon, sir.—What!
sit again?

My hair lacks not your scissors.
[*OWLSPIEGLE insists on his sitting.*]

Nay, if you're peremptory, I'll ne'er
dispute it,
Nor eat the cow and choke upon the
tail—

E'en trim me to your fashion.
[OWLSPIEGLE cuts his hair, and
shaves his head, ridiculously.]

COCKLEDEMOY (*sings as before.*)

Hair-breadth 'scapes, and hair-
breadth snares,
Hair-brain'd follies, ventures, cares,
Part when father clips your hairs.
If there is a hero frantic,
Or a lover too romantic ;—
If threescore seeks second spouse,
Or fourteen lists lover's vows.
Bring them here—for a Scotch boddle,
Owlspeggle shall trim their noddle.

[*They take the napkin from
about GULLCRAMMER'S neck.
He makes bows of acknow-
ledgment, which they return
fantastically, and sing—*

Thrice crow'd hath the blackcock,
thrice croak'd hath the raven,
And Master Melchisedek Gull-
crammer's shaven!

GUL. My friends, you are too
musical for me ;
But though I cannot cope with you
in song,
I would, in humble prose, inquire of
you,
If that you will permit me to acquit
Even with the barber's pence the
barber's service?

[*They shake their heads.*
Or if there is aught else that I can
do for you,
Sweet Master Owlspeggle, or your
loving child,
The hopeful Cockle'moy?

COCKLEDEMOY.

Sir, you have been trimm'd of late,
Smooth's your chin, and bald your
pate ;
Lest cold rheums should work you
harm,
Here's a cap to keep you warm.

GUL. Welcome, as Fortunatus'
wishing cap,
For 'twas a cap that I was wishing
for.

(There I was quaint in spite of
mortal terror.)

[*As he puts on the cap, a pair
of ass's ears disengage them-
selves.*

Upon my faith, it is a dainty head-
dress,

And might become an alderman!—
Thanks, sweet Monsieur,

Thou'rt a considerate youth.

[*Both Goblins bow with cere-
mony to GULLCRAMMER, who
returns their salutation.
OWLSPIEGLE descends by the
trap-door. COCKLEDEMOY
springs out at window.*

SONG (*without.*)

OWLSPIEGLE.

Cockledemoy, my hope, my care,
Where art thou now, O tell me
where?

COCKLEDEMOY.

Up in the sky,
On the bonny dragonfly,
Come, father, come you too—
She has four wings and strength
enow,
And her long body has room for two.

GUL. Cockledemoy now is a
naughty brat—
Would have the poor old stiff-rump'd
devil, his father
Peril his fiendish neck. All boys are
thoughtless.

SONG.

OWLSPIEGLE.

Which way didst thou take?

COCKLEDEMOY.

I have fall'n in the lake—
Help, father, for Beëlzebub's sake.

GUL. The imp is drown'd—a
strange death for a devil,—
O, may all boys take warning, and
be civil;
Respect their loving sires, endure a
chiding,
Nor roam by night on dragonflies
a-riding!

COCKLEDEMOY (*sings.*)

Now merrily, merrily, row I to
shore,
My bark is a bean-shell, a straw for
an oar.

OWLSPIEGLE (*sings.*)

My life, my joy,
My Cockledemoy!

GUL. I can bear this no longer—
thus children are spoil'd.

[*Strikes into the tune.*

Master Owlspiegle, hoy!
He deserves to be whip'd little
Cockledemoy!

[*Their voices are heard,
as if dying away.*

GUL. They're gone!—Now, am I
scared, or am I not?

I think the very desperate ecstasy
Of fear has given me courage. This
is strange, now.

When they were here, I was not half
so frighten'd

As now they're gone—they were a
sort of company.

What a strange thing is use—A
horn, a claw,

The tip of a fiend's tail, was wont to
scare me.

Now am I with the devil hand and
glove;

His soap has lather'd, and his razor
shaved me;

I've joined him in a catch, kept time
and tune,

Could dine with him, nor ask for a
long spoon;

And if I keep not better company,
What will become of me when I shall
die?

[*Exit.*

SCENE III.

*A Gothic Hall, waste and ruinous.
The moonlight is at times seen
through the shafted windows.
Enter KATLEEN and BLACKTHORN
—They have thrown off the more
indicrous parts of their disguise.*

KAT. This way—this way; was
ever fool so gull'd!

BLA. I play'd the barber better
than I thought for.

Well, I've an occupation in reserve,
When the long-bow and merry
musket fail me.—

But, hark ye, pretty Katleen.

KAT. What should I hearken to?

BLA. Art thou not afraid,
In these wild halls while playing
feigned goblins,

That we may meet with real ones?

KAT. Not a jot.

My spirit is too light, my heart too
bold,

To fear a visit from the other world.

BLA. But is not this the place, the
very hall

In which men say that Oswald's
grandfather,

The black Lord Erick, walks his
penance round?

Credit me, Katleen, these half-
moulder'd columns

Have in their ruin something very
fiendish,

And, if you'll take an honest friend's
advice,

The sooner that you change their
shatter'd splendour

For the snug cottage that I told you
of,

Believe me, it will prove the blither
dwelling.

KAT. If I e'er see that cottage,
honest Blackthorn,

Believe me, it shall be from other
motive

Than fear of Erick's spectre.

[*A rustling sound is heard.*

BLA. I heard a rustling sound—
Upon my life, there's something in
the hall,
Katleen, besides us two!

KAT. A yeoman thou,
A forester, and frighten'd! I am sorry
I gave the fool's-cap to poor Gull-
crammer,
And let thy head go bare.

[*The same rustling sound is repeated.*]

BLA. Why, are you mad, or hear
you not the sound?

KAT. And if I do, I take small
heed of it.

Will you allow a maiden to be bolder
Than you, with beard on chin and
sword at girdle?

BLA. Nay, if I had my sword, I
would not care;

Though I ne'er heard of master of
defence,

So active at his weapon as to brave
The devil, or a ghost—See! see!
see yonder

[*A Figure is imperfectly seen
between two of the pillars.*]

KAT. There's something moves,
that's certain, and the moonlight,
Chased by the flitting gale, is too
imperfect

To show its form; but, in the name
of God,
I'll venture on it boldly.

BLA. Wilt thou so?
Were I alone, now, I were strongly
tempted

To trust my heels for safety; but
with thee,

Be it fiend or fairy, I'll take risk to
meet it.

KAT. It stands full in our path,
and we must pass it,
Or tarry here all night.

BLA. In its vile company?

[*As they advance towards the
Figure, it is more plainly
distinguished, which might,
I think, be contrived by raising
successive screens of crape.
The Figure is wrapped in a
long robe, like the mantle of
a Hermit, or Palmer.*]

PAL. Ho! ye who thread by night
these wildering scenes,
In garb of those who long have
slept in death,

Fear ye the company of those you
imitate?

BLA. This is the devil, Katleen,
let us fly! [*Runs off.*]

KAT. I will not fly—why should I?
My nerves shake
To look on this strange vision, but
my heart

Partakes not the alarm.—If thou
dost come in Heaven's name,
In Heaven's name art thou welcome!

PAL. I come, by Heaven permitted.
Quit this castle:

There is a fate on't—if for good or
evil,

Brief space shall soon determine.
In that fate,

If good, by lineage thou canst
nothing claim;

If evil, much mayst suffer.—Leave
these precincts.

KAT. Whate'er thou art, be
answer'd—Know, I will not
Desert the kinswoman who train'd
my youth;

Know, that I will not quit my friend,
my Flora

Know, that I will not leave the aged
man

Whose roof has shelter'd me. This
is my resolve—

If evil come, I aid my friends to
bear it;

If good, my part shall be to see
them prosper,

A portion in their happiness from
which

No fiend can bar me.

PAL. Maid, before thy courage,
Firm built on innocence, even beings
of nature

More powerful far than thine, give
place and way;

Take then this key, and wait the
event with courage.

[*He drops the key.—He dis-
appears gradually—the moon-
light failing at the same time.*]

KAT. (*after a pause.*) Whate'er it was, 'tis gone! My head turns round—
The blood that lately fortified my heart
Now eddies in full torrent to my brain,
And makes wild work with reason.
I will haste,
If that my steps can bear me so far safe,
To living company. What if I meet it
Again in the long aisle, or vaulted passage?
And if I do, the strong support that bore me
Through this appalling interview, again
Shall strengthen and uphold me.

[*As she steps forward she stumbles over the key.*]

What's this? The key?—there may be mystery in't.
I'll to my kinswoman, when this dizzy fit
Will give me leave to choose my way aright.

[*She sits down exhausted.*]

Re-enter BLACKTHORN, *with a drawn sword and torch.*

BLA. Katleen! What, Katleen!—
What a wretch was I
To leave her!—Katleen,—I am weapon'd now,
And fear nor dog nor devil.—She replies not!
Beast that I was—nay, worse than beast; the stag,
As timorous as he is, lights for his hind.
What's to be done?—I'll search this cursed castle
From dungeon to the battlements;
if I find her not,
I'll fling me from the highest pinnacle—

KATLEEN (*who has somewhat gathered her spirits, in consequence of his entrance, comes behind and touches him; he starts.*)

Brave sir!
I'll spare you that rash leap—You're a bold woodsman!
Surely I hope that from this night henceforward
You'll never kill a hare, since you're akin to them;
O I could laugh—but that my head's so dizzy.
BLA. Lean on me, Katleen—By my honest word,
I thought you close behind—I was surprised,
Not a jot frighten'd.

KAT. Thou art a fool to ask me to thy cottage,
And then to show me at what slight expense
Of manhood I might master thee and it.

BLA. I'll take the risk of that—
This goblin business
Came rather unexpected; the best horse
Will start at sudden sights. Try me again,
And if I prove not true to bonny Katleen,
Hang me in mine own bowstring.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV.

The Scene returns to the Apartment at the beginning of Act Second. OSWALD and DURWARD are discovered with ELEANOR, FLORA, and LEONARD—DURWARD shuts a Prayer-book, which he seems to have been reading.

DUR. 'Tis true—the difference betwixt the churches,
Which zealots love to dwell on, to the wise
Of either flock are of far less importance
Than those great truths to which all Christian men
Subscribe with equal reverence.

Osw. We thank thee, father, for the holy office.

Still best performed when the pastor's
tongue
Is echo to his breast; of jarring
creeds
It ill beseems a layman's tongue to
speak.—

Where have you stow'd yon prater?
[To FLORA.

FLO. Safe in the goblin-chamber.

ELE. The goblin-chamber
Maiden, wert thou frantic?—if his
Reverence

Have suffer'd harm by waspish
Owlsplegle,

Be sure thou shalt abye it.

FLO. Here he comes.
Can answer for himself!

*Enter GULLCRAMMER, in the fashion
in which OWLSPIEGLE had put him:
having the fool's-cap on his head,
and towel about his neck, etc. His
manner through the scene is wild
and extravagant, as if the fright
had a little affected his brain.*

DUR. A goodly spectacle!—Is there
such a goblin

(To Osw.) Or has sheer terror
made him such a figure?

Osw. There is a sort of wavering
tradition
Of a malicious imp who teased all
strangers;
My father went to call him Owl-
spiegle.

GUL. Who talks of Owlsplegle?
He is an honest fellow for a devil,
So is his son, the hopeful Cockle'moy.

(Sings.)

“ My hope, my joy,
My Cockledemoy!”

LEO. The fool's bewitch'd— the
goblin hath furnish'd him
A cap which well befits his reverend
wisdom.

FLO. If I could think he had lost
his slender wits,
I should be sorry for the trick they
play'd him.

LEO. O fear him not; it were a
foul reflection

On any fiend of sense and reputation,
To filch such petty wares as his poor
brains.

DUR. What saw'st thou, sir?
What heard'st thou?

GUL. What was't I saw and heard?
That which old graybeards,

Who conjure Hebrew into Anglo-
Saxon,

To cheat starved barons with, can
little guess at.

FLO. If he begin so roundly with
my father,

His madness is not like to save his
bones.

GUL. Sirs, midnight came, and
with it came the goblin.

I had reposed me after some brief
study;

But as the soldier, sleeping in the
trench,

Keeps sword and musket by him,
so I had

My little Hebrew manual prompt for
service.

FLO. *Sausagian sow's-d-face*; that
much of your Hebrew

Even I can bear in memory.

GUL. We counter'd,
The goblin and myself, even in mid-
chamber,

And each stepp'd back a pace, as
'twere to study

The foe he had to deal with!—I be-
thought me,

Ghosts ne'er have the first word, and
so I took it,

And fired a volley of round Greek at
him.

He stood his ground, and answer'd
in the Syriac;

I flank'd my Greek with Hebrew, and
compell'd him— [A noise heard.

Osw. Peace, idle prater!—Hark—
what sounds are these?

Amid the growling of the storm with-
out,

I hear strange notes of music, and
the crash

Of coursers' trampling feet.

VOICES (*without.*)

We come, dark riders of the night,
And flit before the dawning light;
Hill and valley, far aloof,
Shake to hear our chargers' hoof;
But not a foot-stamp on the green
At morn shall show where we have
been.

Osw. These must be revellers be-
lated—

Let them pass on; the ruin'd halls
of Devorgoil

Open to no such guests.—

[*Flourish of trumpets at a
distance, then nearer.*]

They sound a summons;

What can they lack at this dead
hour of night?

Look out, and see their number, and
their bearing.

LEO. (*goes up to the window.*) 'Tis
strange—one single shadowy
form alone

Is hovering on the drawbridge—far
apart

Flit through the tempest banners,
horse, and riders,

In darkness lost, or dimly seen by
lightning.—

Hither the figure moves—the bolts
revolve—

The gate uncloses to him.

ELE. Heaven protect us!

The PALMER enters—GULLCRAMMER
runs off.

Osw. Whence and what art thou?
for what end come hither?

PAL. I come from a far land, where
the storm howls not,

And the sun sets not, to pronounce
to thee,

Oswald of Devorgoil, thy house's
fate.

DUR. I charge thee, in the name
we late have kneel'd to—

PAL. Abbot of Lanercost, I bid thee
peace!

Uninterrupted let me do mine errand:
Baron of Devorgoil, son of the bold,
the proud,

The warlike and the mighty, where-
fore wear'st thou

The habit of a peasant? Tell me,
wherefore

Are thy fair halls thus waste—thy
chambers bare—

Where are the tapestries, where the
conquer'd banners,

Trophies, and gilded arms, that
deck'd the walls

Of once proud Devorgoil?

[*He advances, and places him-
self where the Armour hung,
so as to be nearly in the
centre of the Scene.*]

DUR. Whoe'er thou art—if thou
dost know so much,

Needs must thou know—

Osw. Peace—I will answer here;
to me he spoke.—

Mysterious stranger, briefly I reply:
A peasant's dress befits a peasant's
fortune;

And 'twere vain mockery to array
these walls

In trophies, of whose memory nought
remains,

Save that the cruelty outvied the
valour

Of those who wore them.

PAL. Degenerate as thou art,
Know'st thou to whom thou say'st
this?

[*He drops his mantle, and is
discovered armed as nearly
as may be to the suit which
hung on the wall; all express
terror.*]

Osw. It is himself—the spirit of
mine Ancestor!

ERI. Tremble not, son, but hear
me!

[*He strikes the wall; it opens,
and discovers the Treasure-
Chamber.*]

There lies piled
The wealth I brought from wasted

Cumberland,
Enough to reinstate thy ruin'd for-
tunes.—

Cast from thine high-born brows
that peasant bonnet,

Throw from thy noble grasp the
peasant's staff,
O'er all, withdraw thine hand from
that mean mate,
Whom in an hour of reckless despera-
tion
Thy fortunes cast thee on. This do,
And be as great as ere was Devorgoil,
When Devorgoil was richest!

DUR. Lord Oswald, thou art
tempted by a fiend,
Who doth assail thee on thy weakest
side,—
Thy pride of lineage, and thy love of
grandeur.

Stand fast—resist—contemn his fatal
offers!

ELE. Urge him not, father; if the
sacrifice
Of such a wasted woe-worn wretch
as I am,

Can save him from the abyss of misery,
Upon whose verge he's tottering,
let me wander

An unacknowledged outcast from
his castle,
Even to the humble cottage I was
born in.

Osw. No, Ellen, no—it is not
thus they part,
Whose hearts and souls, disasters
borne in common
Have knit together, close as summer
saplings

Are twined in union by the eddying
tempest.—

Spirit of Erick, while thou bear'st
his shape,

I'll answer with no ruder conjuration
Thy impious counsel, other than
with these words,

Depart, and tempt me not!

ERI. Then fate will have her
course.—Fall, massive grate,
Yield them the tempting view of these
rich treasures,

But bar them from possession?

[A portcullis falls before the
door of the Treasure-Chamber.

Mortals, hear!

No hand may ope that grate, except
the Heir

Of plunder'd Aglionby, whose mighty
wealth,
Ravish'd in evil hour, lies yonder
piled;
And not his hand prevails without
the key
Of Black Lord Erick; brief space
is given
To save proud Devorgoil.—So wills
high Heaven.

[Thunder; he disappears.

DUR. Gaze not so wildly; you
have stood the trial
That his commission bore, and
Heaven designs,
If I may spell his will, to rescue
Devorgoil

Even by the Heir of Aglionby—
Behold him
In that young forester, unto whose
hand

Those bars shall yield the treasures
of his house,

Destined to ransom yours.—Advance,
young Leonard,
And prove the adventure.

LEO. (*advances and attempts the
grate.*) It is fast
As is the tower, rock-seated.

Osw. We will fetch other means,
and prove its strength,
Nor starve in poverty with wealth
before us.

DUR. Think what the vision spoke;
The key—the fated key—

Enter GULLCRAMMER.

GUL. A key?—I say a quay is what
we want,

Thus by the learn'd orthographised
—Q, u, a, y.

The lake is overflow'd!—A quay, a
boat,

Oars, punt, or sculler, is all one
to me!—

We shall be drown'd, good people!!!

Enter KATLEEN and BLACKTHORN.

KAT. Deliver us!
Haste, save yourselves—the lake is
rising fast.

BLA. 'T has risen my bow's height
in the last five minutes,
And still is swelling strangely.

GUL. (*who has stood astonished upon seeing them.*) We shall
be drown'd without your kind
assistance.

Sweet Master Owlspiegle, your
dragonfly.—

Your straw, your bean-stalk, gentle
Cockle'moy!

LEO. (*looking from the shot-hole.*)
'Tis true, by all that's fearful! The
proud lake

Peers, like ambitious tyrant, o'er
his bounds,

And soon will whelm the castle—
even the drawbridge

Is under water now.

KAT. Let us escape! Why stand
you gazing there?

DUR. Upon the opening of that
fatal grate

Depends the fearful spell that now
entraps us,

The key of Black Lord Erick—ere
we find it,

The castle will be whelm'd beneath
the waves,

And we shall perish in it!

KAT. (*giving the key.*) Here, prove
this;

A chance most strange and fearful
gave it me.

[OSWALD puts it into the lock,
and attempts to turn it—a
loud clap of thunder.

FLO. The lake still rises faster.

—Leonard, Leonard,

Canst thou not save us!

[LEONARD tries the lock—it
opens with a violent noise,
and the Portcullis rises. A
loud strain of wild music.—
There may be a Chorus here.

[OSWALD enters the apartment,
and brings out a scroll.

LEO. The lake is ebbing with as
wondrous haste

As late it rose—the drawbridge is
left dry!

Osw. This may explain the cause.—
(GULLCRAMMER offers to take it.) But
soft you, sir,

We'll not disturb your learning for
the matter;

Yet, since you've borne a part in
this strange drama,

You shall not go unguerdon'd. Wise
or learn'd,

Modest or gentle, Heaven alone can
make thee,

Being so much otherwise; but from
this abundance

Thou shalt have that shall gild thine
ignorance,

Exalt thy base descent, make thy
presumption

Seem modest confidence, and find
thee hundreds

Ready to swear that same fool's-cap
of thine

Is reverend as a mitre.

GUL. Thanks, mighty baron, now
no more a bare one!—

I will be quaint with him, for all his
quips. [*Aside.*

Osw. Nor shall kind Katleen lack
Her portion in our happiness.

KAT. Thanks, my good lord, but
Katleen's fate is fix'd—

There is a certain valiant forester,
Too much afear'd of ghosts to sleep

anights
In his lone cottage, without one to
guard him.—

LEO. If I forget my comrade's
faithful friendship,

May I be lost to fortune, hope, and
love!

DUR. Peace, all! and hear the
blessing which this scroll

Speaks unto faith, and constancy,
and virtue.

No more this castle's troubled guest,
Dark Erick's spirit hath found rest.

The storms of angry Fate are past—
For Constancy denies their blast.

Of Devorgoil the daughter free
Shall wed the Heir of Aglionby;

Nor ever more dishonour soil
The rescued house of Devorgoil.

AUCHINDRANE;

OR,

THE AYRSHIRE TRAGEDY.

Cur aliquid vidi? cur noxia lumina feci
Cur imprudenti cognita culpa mihi est?

QVINTILIAN *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 caiffes of our day bend to Mammon, the meanest of the spirits who fell. The criminals, there-

fore, 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 think 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 school-master 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 Chapeldonan, 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 Garriehorne, 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 fring 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 attempts 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 Scot and! 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 Southon'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 complain-
ing;
But we'll take up the tools,
Which we flung by like fools,
'Gainst Don Spaniard to go a-cam-
paigning.

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'st seen but little on't.

WIL. Thou dost belie him—I have
seen him fight
Bravely enough for one in his con-
dition.

ABR. What he? that counter-
casting, smock-faced boy?
What was he but the colonel's scrib-
bling 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.

It 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 lead-
ing, 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-right 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 o'd 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.

SC.

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 acquire-
ments 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 de-
positary
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 interpreta-
tion.

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 whatsoe'er 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 leprosy,—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 kins-
man'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 pro-
tection:

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 shepherd-
less,
'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 in-
noxious snake,
Which bears the adder's form, lurks
in his haunts,
Yet neither bath 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, you
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 Scot-
land,
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 hunt
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 aid'd 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 con-
science 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 folly—

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 pile it.

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 Chapel-
donan. [*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 Nether-
lander,
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 Auchin-
drane,
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 com-
pose 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
on 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.

All 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 contraries!

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 or Auchin-drane,

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, false-
hoods 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 un-
willingly.

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 com-manded 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 epi'ogue to bott'e 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 chamber-lain,

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 o'd 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 pick-
thanks 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 inferen-
tial,

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 an eye sparkled—not a foot ad-
vanced—

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 evi-
dence suppress'd.

AUCH. Suppress'd!—what evi-
dence?—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 whatever
commissions

You listed trust him with, for court
or city:

And, thus apprised of Cassilis' pur-
posed 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 com-
posure.)* When they produce 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
quench'd:"

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 for-
bidding 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 mysticaction,
Stealing the soul from out the un-
scathed 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 re-
verse 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 you con-
venience
For flight, if flight be thought the
better remedy;
To face the court requires the con-
sciousness
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 GIF.*) 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 seaweed,

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, comes 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 Kye, 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.

GIF. (*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 swiit 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, d'shonour 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 dispropor-
tion'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 astonish-
ment 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 dis-
charged with them.

They told me, that a quarrel happ'd
at landing,

And that the youngster and an
ancient sergeant

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 merr-
iment,

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 Mac-Lellan'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,

Cou'd 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.

ATCH. 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 work-
man'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.

ATCH. 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—
ATCH. 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 Hilde-
brand.

By all the ties of late authority,
Conjuring him by ancient soldier-
ship,

To hasten to his mansion instantly.
On business of high import, with a

charge

To come alone---

ATCH. 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.

ATCH. Who carries the forged
letter to the veteran?

PHI. Why, Niel MacLellan, who,
return'd again

To his own tower, as it to pass the night there.

They pass'd on him, or tried to pass, a story,

As if they wish'd the sergent'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 need 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,

Stain'd 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 Chapel-donan

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 thy purpose. What,
then, is it?

Is't scorn, or is't compassion? One
thing's certain,

Either the feeling must have free in-
dulgence,

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
Grames—

With 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 pro-
phesy,

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 headsmen.

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. Mean-time, 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 in I 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 ap-
prehended,
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 everything I look on makes me
laugh.

MAC. I've seen but few so game-
some, 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 press-
ing message :

Montgomery presently must see his
sergeant,
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 merri-
ment—

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. Mean-
time, 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 ex-
cepted,
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 see 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, AUCHIN-
DRANE 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 resist-
less,

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 in-
dependence,

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 exampl'e 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 habita-
tion,
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, 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 un-kennel 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 father
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. Auchin-
drane
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 Sea-beach. 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 I 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 ghastli-
ness,

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,
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,

SC.

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
stabbd',

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 AUCHIN-
DRANE 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 corrobora-
tive,

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 prac-
tised.

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 blanchie 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 Brank-
some 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 saddle-
bow.

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 Etrick 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 *Ministry 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 *Hierarchie*, 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 chevron, 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. I have endeavoured to give William of Deloraine the attributes which characterised the Borderers of his day.

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 (*Moat. 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 meetyly 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 Lindsay 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 un-
quenchably.

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 unsheathed 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-bosoms*, 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 salved 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 roes,
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 Murdie-
ston.

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 leysur 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 enemyes 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 in 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 Penielbeuch, 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 fall
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 *Lincluden*; 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, decern, 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 not 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 all 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 Buckleuch, 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 Comte 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 Kirk-
wall.

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 Kirkcaldy 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 Rosslinhe, the promontory of the linn,

or water-fall. 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 Fontenay,
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 counter-
feit,
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 Lauder-
dale;
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 (*Scottice*, 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.

Etrick 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. Loch-skene 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 Arch-deaconry 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 sunrise, 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 was 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 were 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 Whithorn, 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 oppor-

tunity 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 Ashdown, 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 1066, 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 hostelrie, 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 Norweyan 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 over-
thrown.

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 after 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 Ashestiel.

137. . . . Forbes.

Sir William Forbes of Pitlago, 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 *Dallamoun*, 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 Sadler, 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 Pitcottie 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 Wanclyffe 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 signalled 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 Ravaillere, 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
again
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 *demi-volte* with *courbettes*, so that they be not too high, may be useful in a fight or *meslee*; for, as Labroue hath it, in his Book of Horsemanship, Monsieur de Montmorency having a

horse that was excellent in performing the *demi-volte*, 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 burghesses 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 pen-
ance 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 Herald's, 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 mid-

night 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 Simnel. 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 salves 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 (*prohi 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 lol more deep the mead did
drain.

The lol 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 mumm-
ing 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 shì*, 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 subterranean 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 Streanshall 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 hopest thou hence un-
scathed 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 head-quarters 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 Dacres, 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 Argyle, 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 of 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 Undeified, 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,
Besem'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 LADY OF THE LAKE.

184. . . . the heights of Uam-Var,
And roused the cavern, where
'tis told,
A giant made his den of old.

Ua-var, as the name is pronounced, or more properly *Uaighmor*, is a mountain to the north-east of the village of Callender in Menteith, deriving its name, which signifies the great den, or cavern, from a sort of retreat among the rocks on the south side, said, by tradition, to have been the abode of a giant.

185. Two dogs of black Saint
Hubert's breed,
Unmatch'd for courage, breath,
and speed.

"The hounds which we call Saint Hubert's hounds are commonly all blacke, yet neuertheless, the race is so mingled at these days, that we find them of all colours. These are the hounds which the abbots of St. Hubert haue always kept some of their race or kind, in honour or remembrance of the

saint, which was a hunter with S. Eustace."

186. For the death-wound and death-halloo,
Muster'd his breath, his whin-yard drew.

When the stag turned to bay, the ancient hunter had the perilous task of going in upon, and killing or disabling the desperate animal. At certain times of the year this was held particularly dangerous, a wound received from a stag's horn being then deemed poisonous, and more dangerous than one from the tusks of a boar.

187. And now, to issue from the glen,
No pathway meets the wanderer's ken,
Unless he climb, with footing nice,
A far projecting precipice.

Until the present road was made through the romantic pass which I have presumptuously attempted to describe in the preceding stanzas, there was no mode of issuing out of the defile called the Trosachs, excepting by a sort of ladder, composed of the branches and roots of trees.

188. To meet with Highland plunderers here,
Were worse than loss of steed or deer.

The clans who inhabited the romantic regions in the neighbourhood of Loch Katrine, were, even until a late period, much addicted to predatory excursions upon their Lowland neighbours.

189. A grey-hair'd sire, whose eye intent,
Was on the vision'd future bent.

If force of evidence could authorise us to believe facts inconsistent with the general laws of nature, enough might be produced in favour of the existence of the Second-sight. It is called in Gaelic *Taishitaraugh*, from *Taish*, an

unreal or shadowy appearance; and those possessed of the faculty are called *Taishatrin*, which may be aptly translated visionaries.

190. Here, for retreat in dangerous hour,
Some chief had framed a rustic bower.

The Celtic chieftains, whose lives were continually exposed to peril, had usually, in the most retired spot of their domains, some place of retreat for the hour of necessity, which, as circumstances would admit, was a tower, a cavern, or a rustic hut, in a strong and secluded situation.

191. My sire's tall form might grace the part
Of Ferragus or Ascabart.

These two sons of Anak flourished in romantic fable. The first is well known to the admirers of Ariosto, by the name of Ferrau. Ascart, or Ascabart, makes a very material figure in the History of Bevis of Hampton, by whom he was conquered.

192. Though all unask'd his birth and name.

The Highlanders, who carried hospitality to a punctilious excess, are said to have considered it as churlish, to ask a stranger his name or lineage, before he had taken refreshment.

193. . . . and still a harp unseen,
Fill'd up the symphony between.

"The harp and clairschoes are now only heard of in the Highlands in ancient song. At what period these instruments ceased to be used, is not on record; and tradition is silent on this head. But, as Irish harpers occasionally visited the Highlands and Western Isles till lately, the harp might have been extant so late as the middle of the last century. How it happened that the noisy and unharmonious bagpipe banished the soft and expressive harp, we cannot say; but certain it is,

that the bagpipe is now the only instrument that obtains universally in the Highland districts."—CAMPBELL'S *Journey through North Britain*.

194. Morn's genial influence roused
a minstrel grey.

That Highland chieftains, to a late period, retained in their service the bard, as a family officer, admits of very easy proof.

195. . . . The Græme.

The ancient and powerful family of Graham (which, for metrical reasons, is here spelt after the Scottish pronunciation) held extensive possessions in the counties of Dumbarton and Stirling. Few families can boast of more historical renown, having claim to three of the most remarkable characters in the Scottish annals. Sir John the Græme, the faithful and undaunted partaker of the labours and patriotic warfare of Wallace, fell in the unfortunate field of Falkirk, in 1293. The celebrated Marquis of Montrose, in whom De Retz saw realised his abstract idea of the heroes of antiquity, was the second of these worthies. And, notwithstanding the severity of his temper, and the rigour with which he executed the oppressive mandates of the princes whom he served, I do not hesitate to name as a third, John Græme of Claverhouse, Viscount of Dundee, whose heroic death in the arms of victory may be allowed to cancel the memory of his cruelty to the non-conformists, during the reigns of Charles II. and James II.

196. This harp, which erst Saint
Modan sway'd.

I am not prepared to show that Saint Modan was a performer on the harp. It was, however, no unsaintly accomplishment; for Saint Dunstan certainly did play upon that instrument, which retaining, as was natural, a portion of the sanctity attached to its master's character, announced future events by its spontaneous sound.

197. Ere Douglasses, to ruin driven,
Were exiled from their native
heaven.

The downfall of the Douglasses of the house of Angus during the reign of James V. is the event alluded to in the text.

198. In Holy-Rood a knight he slew.

This was by no means an uncommon occurrence in the Court of Scotland; nay, the presence of the sovereign himself scarcely restrained the ferocious and inveterate feuds which were the perpetual source of bloodshed among the Scottish nobility.

199. The Douglas, like a stricken
deer,
Disown'd by every noble peer.

The exile state of this powerful race is not exaggerated in this and subsequent passages. The hatred of James against the race of Douglas was so inveterate, that numerous as their allies were, and disregarded as the regal authority had usually been in similar cases, their nearest friends, even in the most remote parts of Scotland, durst not entertain them, unless under the strictest and closest disguise. James Douglas, son of the banished Earl of Angus, afterwards well known by the title of Earl of Morton, lurked, during the exile of his family, in the north of Scotland, under the assumed name of James Innes.

200. . . . Maronnan's cell.

The parish of Kilmaronock, at the eastern extremity of Loch Lomond, derives its name from a cell or chapel, dedicated to Saint Maronock, or Maronock, or Maronnan.

201. . . . Bracklinn's thundering
wave.

This is a beautiful cascade made by a mountain stream called the Keltie, at a place called the Bridge of Bracklinn.

202. For Tine-man forged by fairy
lore.

Archibald, the third Earl of Douglas, was so unfortunate in all his enterprises, that he acquired the epithet of **TINEMAN**, because he *tined*, or lost, his followers in every battle which he fought.

203. Did, self- unscabbarded, fore-
show
The footstep of a secret foe.

The ancient warriors, whose hope and confidence rested chiefly in their blades, were accustomed to deduce omens from them, especially from such as were supposed to have been fabricated by enchanted skill, of which we have various instances in the romances and legends of the time.

204. Those thrilling sounds that call
the might
Of old Clan-Alpine to the fight.

The connoisseurs in pipe-music affect to discover in a well-composed pibroch, the imitative sounds of march, conflict, flight, pursuit, and all the "current of a heady fight."

205. Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu, ho !
ieroe !

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

SC.

habit or appearance. The line of the text therefore signifies,

Black Roderick the descendant
of Alpine.

206. The best of Loch Lomond lie
dead on her side.

The Lennox, as the district is called, which encircles the lower extremity of Loch Lomond, was peculiarly exposed to the incursions of the mountaineers, who inhabited the inaccessible fastnesses at the upper end of the lake, and the neighbouring district of Loch Katrine. These were often marked by circumstances of great ferocity.

207. . . . The King's vindictive
pride
Boasts to have tamed the
Border-side.

In 1529, James V. made a convention at Edinburgh for the purpose of considering the best mode of quelling the Border robbers, who, during the license of his minority, and the troubles which followed, had committed many exorbitances. Accordingly, he assembled a flying army of ten thousand men, who were directed to bring their hawks and dogs with them, that the monarch might refresh himself with sport during the intervals of military execution. With this array he swept through Ettrick Forest, where he hanged over the gate of his own castle, Piers Cockburn of Henderland, who had prepared, according to tradition, a feast for his reception. He caused Adam Scott of Tushielaw also to be executed, who was distinguished by the title of King of the Border. But the most noted victim of justice, during that expedition, was John Armstrong of Gilnockie, who, confiding in his own supposed innocence, met the King, with a retinue of thirty-six persons, all of whom were hanged at Carlenrig, near the source of the Teviot.

208. What grace for Highland Chiefs,
judge ye
By fate of Border chivalry.

James was in fact equally attentive to restrain rapine and feudal oppression in every part of his dominions.

209. Rest safe till morning ; pity
 'twere
 Such cheek should feel the mid-
 night air.

Hardihood was in every respect so essential to the character of a Highlander, that the reproach of effeminacy was the most bitter which could be thrown upon him.

210. . . . his henchman came.

This officer is a sort of secretary, and is to be ready, upon all occasions, to venture his life in defence of his master ; and at drinking-bouts he stands behind his seat, at his haunch, from whence his title is derived, and watches the conversation, to see if any one offends his patron.

211. And while the Fiery Cross
 glanced, like a meteor, round.

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

212. That monk, of savage form and
 face.

The state of religion in the middle ages afforded considerable facilities for those whose mode of life excluded them from regular worship, to secure, nevertheless, the ghostly assistance of confessors, perfectly willing to adapt the nature of their doctrine to the necessities and peculiar circumstances of their flock. Robin Hood, it is well known, had his celebrated domestic chaplain, Friar Tuck.

213. Of Brian's birth strange tales
 were told.

The legend which follows is not of the author's invention, but is transcribed, with the variation of a very few words, from the geographical collections made by the Laird of Macfarlane.

214. Yet ne'er again to braid her
 hair
 The virgin snood did Alice
 wear.

The *snood*, or riband, with which a Scottish lass braided her hair, had an emblematical signification, and applied to her maiden character.

215. The desert gave him visions
 wild,
 Such as might suit the spectre's
 child.

In adopting the legend concerning the birth of the Founder of the Church of Kilmalie, the author has endeavoured to trace the effects which such a belief was likely to produce, in a barbarous age, on the person to whom it related. It seems likely that he must have become a fanatic or an impostor, or that mixture of both which forms a more frequent character than either of them, as existing separately. In truth, mad persons are frequently more anxious to impress upon others a faith in their visions, than they are themselves confirmed in their reality ; as, on the other hand, it is difficult for the most cool-headed impostor long to personate an enthusiast, without in

some degree believing what he is so eager to have believed. It was a natural attribute of such a character as the supposed hermit, that he should credit the numerous superstitions with which the minds of ordinary Highlanders are almost always imbued. A few of these are slightly alluded to in this stanza.

216. The fatal Ben-Shie's boding scream.

Most great families in the Highlands were supposed to have a tutelary, or rather a domestic spirit, attached to them, who took an interest in their prosperity, and intimated, by its wailings, any approaching disaster. The Ban-Schie implies a female Fairy, whose lamentations were often supposed to precede the death of a chieftain of particular families.

217. Sounds, too, had come in mid-night blast,
Of charging steeds, careering fast
Along Benharrow's shingly side,
Where mortal horseman ne'er might ride.

A presage of the kind alluded to in the text, is still believed to announce death to the ancient Highland family of M'Lean of Lochbuy. The spirit of an ancestor slain in battle is heard to gallop along a stony bank, and then to ride thrice around the family residence, ringing his fairy bridle, and thus intimating the approaching calamity.

218. Whose parents in Inch-Cailliach wave
Their shadowso'er Clan-Alpine's grave.

Inch-Cailliach, the Isle of Nuns, or of Old Women, is a most beautiful island at the lower extremity of Loch Lomond. The church belonging to the former nunnery was long used as the place of worship for the parish of Buchanan.

219. . . . the dun deer's hide
On fleeter foot was never tied.

The present *brogue* of the Highlanders is made of half-dried leather, with holes to admit and let out the water; for walking the moors dry-shod is a matter altogether out of the question. The ancient buskin was still ruder, being made of undressed deer's hide, with the hair outwards; a circumstance which procured the Highlanders the well-known epithet of *Red-shanks*.

220. The dismal coronach.

The *Coronach* of the Highlanders, like the *Ualalatus* of the Romans, and the *Uuloo* of the Irish, was a wild expression of lamentation, poured forth by the mourners over the body of a departed friend.

221. Benledi saw the Cross of Fire,
It glanced like lightning up
Strath-Ire.

Inspection of the provincial map of Perthshire, or any large map of Scotland, will trace the progress of the signal through the small district of lakes and mountains, which, in exercise of my poetical privilege, I have subjected to the authority of my imaginary chieftain, and which, at the period of my romance, was really occupied by a clan who claimed a descent from Alpine; a clan the most unfortunate, and most persecuted, but neither the least distinguished, least powerful, nor least brave, of the tribes of the Gael.

The first stage of the Fiery Cross is to Duncraggan, a place near the Brigg of Turk, where a short stream divides Loch Achray from Loch Vennachar. From thence, it passes towards Callender, and then, turning to the left up the pass of Leny, is consigned to Norman at the chapel of Saint Bride, which stood on a small and romantic knoll in the middle of the valley, called Strath-Ire. Tombea and Arnandave, or Armandave, are names of places in the vicinity. The alarm is then supposed to pass along the lake of Lubnaig, and through the various glens in the district of Balquidder, including the neighbouring tracts of Glenfinlas and Strathgartney.

222. Not faster o'er thy heathery
braes,
Balquidder, speeds the midnight
blaze.

It may be necessary to inform the southern reader, that the heath on the Scottish moorlands is often set fire to, that the sheep may have the advantage of the young herbage produced, in room of the tough old heather plants.

223. No oath, but by his chieftain's
hand,
No law, but Roderick Dhu's
command.

The deep and implicit respect paid by the Highland clansmen to their chief rendered this both a common and a solemn oath.

224. . . . a low and lonely cell.
By many a bard, in Celtic
tongue,
Has Coir-nan-Uriskin been
sung.

This is a very steep and most romantic hollow in the mountain of Benvenue, overhanging the south-eastern extremity of Loch Katrine. It is surrounded with stupendous rocks, and overshadowed with birch-trees, mingled with oaks, the spontaneous production of the mountain, even where its cliffs appear denuded of soil. A dale in so wild a situation, and amid a people whose genius bordered on the romantic, did not remain without appropriate deities. The name literally implies the Corri, or Den, of the Wild or Shaggy men.

225. The wild pass of Beal-nam-bo.

Bealach-nam-bo, or the pass of cattle, is a most magnificent glade, overhung with aged birch-trees, a little higher up the mountain than the Coir-nan-Uriskin, treated of in a former note. The whole composes the most sublime piece of scenery that imagination can conceive.

226. A single page, to bear his sword,
Alone attended on his lord.

A Highland chief, being as absolute in his patriarchal authority as any prince, had a corresponding number of officers attached to his person. He had his body-guards, called *Luichttach*, picked from his clan for strength, activity, and entire devotion to his person. These, according to their deserts, were sure to share abundantly in the rude profusion of his hospitality.

227. The Taghairm call'd ; by which,
afar,
Our sires foresaw the events of
war.

The Highlanders, like all rude people, had various superstitious modes of inquiring into futurity. One of the most noted was the *Taghairm*, mentioned in the text.

228. The choicest of the prey we had,
When swept our merry-men
Gallangad.

I know not if it be worth observing, that this passage is taken almost literally from the mouth of an old Highland Kern or Ketteran, as they were called.

229. . . . That huge cliff, whose
ample verge
Tradition calls the Hero's Targe.

There is a rock so named in the Forest of Glenfinlas, by which a tumultuary cataract takes its course.

230. Raven
That, watching while the deer
is broke,
His morsel claims with sullen
croak?

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

231. "Which spills the foremost foe-
man's life,
That party conquers in the strife."

Though this be in the text described as a response of the Taghairm, or Oracle of the Hide, it was of itself an augury frequently attended to. The fate of the battle was often anticipated in the imagination of the combatants, by observing which party first shed blood. It is said that the Highlanders under Montrose were so deeply imbued with this notion, that, on the morning of the battle of Tippermoor, they murdered a defenceless herdsman, whom they found in the fields, merely to secure an advantage of so much consequence to their party.

232. Alice Brand.

This little fairy tale is founded upon a very curious Danish ballad, which occurs in the *Kæmpe Viser*, a collection of heroic songs, first published in 1591, and reprinted in 1695, inscribed by Anders Sofrensen, the collector and editor, to Sophia, Queen of Denmark.

233. . . . the moody Elfin King.

The *Daoine Shi'*, or Men of Peace of the Highlanders, though not absolutely malevolent, are believed to be a peevish, repining race of beings, who, possessing themselves but a scanty portion of happiness, are supposed to envy mankind their more complete and substantial enjoyments. They are supposed to enjoy in their subterraneous recesses a sort of shadowy happiness,—a tinsel grandeur; which, however, they would willingly exchange for the more solid joys of mortality.

234. Why sounds yon stroke on beech
and oak,
Our moonlight circle's screen?
Or who comes here to chase the
deer,
Beloved of our Elfin Queen?

It has been already observed, that fairies, if not positively malevolent, are capricious, and easily offended. They are, like other proprietors of forests,

peculiarly jealous of their rights of *vert* and *venison*.

235. . . . Who may dare on wold
to wear
The fairies' fatal green?

As the *Daoine Shi'*, or Men of Peace, wore green habits, they were supposed to take offence when any mortals ventured to assume their favourite colour. Indeed, from some reason which has been, perhaps, originally a general superstition, *green* is held in Scotland to be unlucky to particular tribes and counties.

236. For thou wert christen'd man.

The elves were supposed greatly to envy the privileges acquired by Christian initiation, and they gave to those mortals who had fallen into their power a certain precedence, founded upon this advantageous distinction.

237. And gaily shines the Fairy-
land—
But all is glistening show.

No fact respecting Fairy-land seems to be better ascertained than the fantastic and illusory nature of their apparent pleasure and splendour.

238. . . . I sunk down in a sinful
fray,
And, 'twixt life and death, was
snatch'd away
To the joyless Elfin bower.

The subjects of Fairy-land were recruited from the regions of humanity by a sort of *crimping* system, which extended to adults as well as to infants. Many of those who were in this world supposed to have discharged the debt of nature, had only become denizens of the "Londe of Faery."

239. Who ever reck'd, where, how,
or when,
The prowling fox was trapp'd
or slain?

St. John actually used this illustration when engaged in confuting the plea of

law proposed for the unfortunate Earl of Strafford: "It was true, we gave laws to hares and deer, because they are beasts of chase; but it was never accounted either cruelty or foul play to knock foxes or wolves on the head as they can be found, because they are beasts of prey. In a word, the law and humanity were alike; the one being more fallacious, and the other more barbarous, than in any age had been vented in such an authority."—CLARENDON'S *History of the Rebellion*.

240. . . . his Highland cheer,
The harden'd flesh of mountain
deer.

The Scottish Highlanders in former times had a concise mode of cooking their venison, or rather of dispensing with cooking it, which appears greatly to have surprised the French whom chance made acquainted with it. The Vidame of Charters, when a hostage in England, during the reign of Edward VI., was permitted to travel into Scotland, and penetrated as far as to the remote Highlands (*au fin fond des Sauvages*). After a great hunting party, at which a most wonderful quantity of game was destroyed, he saw these *Scottish Savages* devour a part of their venison raw, without any farther preparation than compressing it between two batons of wood, so as to force out the blood, and render it extremely hard. This they reckoned a great delicacy; and when the Vidame partook of it, his compliance with their taste rendered him extremely popular.

241. Not then claim'd sovereignty
his due;
While Albany, with feeble hand,
Held borrow'd truncheon of
command.

There is scarcely a more disorderly period in Scottish history than that which succeeded the battle of Flodden, and occupied the minority of James V.

242. The Gael, of plain and river
heir,
Shall, with strong hand, redeem
his share.

The Gael, great traditional historians, never forgot that the Lowlands had, at some remote period, been the property of their Celtic forefathers, which furnished an ample vindication of all the ravages that they could make on the unfortunate districts which lay within their reach.

243. . . . I only meant
To show the reed on which you
leant,
Deeming this path you might
pursue
Without a pass from Roderick
Dhu.

This incident, like some other passages in the poem, illustrative of the character of the ancient Gael, is not imaginary, but borrowed from fact. The Highlanders, with the inconsistency of most nations in the same state, were alternately capable of great exertions of generosity, and of cruel revenge and perfidy.

244. On Bochastle the mouldering
lines,
Where Rome, the Empress of
the world,
Of yore her eagle wings un-
fur'd.

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

245. See here, all vantageless I stand,
Arm'd, like thyself, with single
brand.

The duellists of former times did not always stand upon those punctilios respecting equality of arms, which are now judged essential to fair combat. It is true, that in former combats in the lists the parties were, by the judges of the field, put as nearly as possible in

the same circumstances. But in private duel it was often otherwise.

246. Ill fared it then with Roderick
 Dhu,
 That on the field his targe he
 threw,
 For train'd abroad his arms to
 wield
 Fitz-James's blade was sword
 and shield.

A round target of light wood, covered with strong leather, and studded with brass or iron, was a necessary part of a Highlander's equipment. In charging regular troops, they received the thrust of the bayonet in this buckler, twisted it aside, and used the broadsword against the encumbered soldier. In the civil war of 1745, most of the front rank of the clans were thus armed.

247. Thy threats, thy mercy I defy!
 Let recreant yield, who fears to die.

Duels even more desperate than that of the text might easily be found in the records of the Highland chieftains.

248. Ye towers ! within whose circuit
 dread
 A Douglas by his sovereign
 bled ;
 And thou, O sad and fatal
 mound !
 That oft hast heard the death-
 axe sound.

An eminence on the north-east of the Castle, where state criminals were executed. Stirling was often polluted with noble blood.

The fate of William, eighth Earl of Douglas, whom James II. stabbed in Stirling Castle with his own hand, and while under his royal safe-conduct, is familiar to all who read Scottish history. Murdock Duke of Albany, Duncan Earl of Lennox, his father-in-law, and his two sons, Walter and Alexander Stuart, were executed at Stirling, in 1425.

249. The burghers hold their sports
 to-day.

Every burgh of Scotland, of the least note, but more especially the considerable towns, had their solemn *play*, or festival, when feats of archery were exhibited, and prizes distributed to those who excelled in wrestling, hurling the bar, and the other gymnastic exercises of the period. Stirling, a usual place of royal residence, was not likely to be deficient in pomp upon such occasions, especially since James V. was very partial to them.

250. Robin Hood.

The exhibition of this renowned outlaw and his band was a favourite frolic at such festivals as we are describing.

251. Indifferent as to archer wight,
 The monarch gave the arrow
 bright.

The Douglas of the poem is an imaginary person, a supposed uncle of the Earl of Angus. But the King's behaviour during an unexpected interview with the Laird of Kilspindie, one of the banished Douglasses, under circumstances similar to those in the text, is imitated from a real story told by Hume of Godscroft. I would have availed myself more fully of the simple and affecting circumstances of the old history, had they not been already woven into a pathetic ballad by my friend Mr. Finlay.

252. Prize of the wrestling match,
 the King
 To Douglas gave a golden
 ring.

The usual prize of a wrestling was a ram and a ring, but the animal would have embarrassed my story.

253. Adventurers they, from far who
 roved,
 To live by battle which they
 loved.

The Scottish armies consisted chiefly of the nobility and barons, with their vassals, who held lands under them, for military service by themselves and their tenants. The patriarchal influence

exercised by the heads of clans in the Highlands and Borders was of a different nature, and sometimes at variance with feudal principles. It flowed from the *Patria Potestas*, exercised by the chieftain as representing the original father of the whole name, and was often obeyed in contradiction to the feudal superior.

254. Thou now hast glee-maiden
and harp!
Get thee an ape, and trudge the
land,
The leader of a juggler band.

The jongleurs, or jugglers, as we learn from the elaborate work of the late Mr. Strutt, on the sports and pastimes of the people of England, used to call in the aid of various assistants, to render these performances as captivating as possible. The glee-maiden was a necessary attendant.

255. That stirring air that peals on
high.

There are several instances, at least in tradition, of persons so much attached to particular tunes, as to require to hear them on their deathbed. Such an anecdote is mentioned by the late Mr. Riddell of Glenriddel, in his collection of Border tunes, respecting an air called the "Dandling of the Bairns," for which a certain Gallovidian laird is said to have evinced this strong mark of partiality.

256. Battle of Beal' an Duine.

A skirmish actually took place at a

pass thus called in the Trosachs, and closed with the remarkable incident mentioned in the text. It was greatly posterior in date to the reign of James V.

257. And Snowdown's Knight is
Scotland's King.

This discovery will probably remind the reader of the beautiful Arabian tale of *Il Bondocani*. Yet the incident is not borrowed from that elegant story, but from Scottish tradition. James V., of whom we are treating, was a monarch whose good and benevolent intentions often rendered his romantic freaks venial, if not respectable, since, from his anxious attention to the interests of the lower and most oppressed class of his subjects, he was, as we have seen, popularly termed the *King of the Commons*. For the purpose of seeing that justice was regularly administered, and frequently from the less justifiable motive of gallantry, he used to traverse the vicinage of his several palaces in various disguises. The two excellent comic songs, entitled, "the Gaberlunzie man," and "We'll gae nae mair a roving," are said to have been founded upon the success of his amorous adventures when travelling in the disguise of a beggar. The latter is perhaps the best comic ballad in any language.

258. . . . Stirling's tower
Of yore the name of Snowdown
claims.

William of Worcester, who wrote about the middle of the fifteenth century, calls Stirling Castle Snowdown.

THE VISION OF DON RODERICK.

259. 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 Cattleath, lamented by the celebrated Aneurin, is supposed, by the learned Dr. Leyden, to have been fought on the skirts of Etrick

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 Wyllt, or the Savage, his name of Caledonia, and his retreat into the Caledonian wood, appropriate him to Scotland.

260. Minchmore's haunted spring.

A belief in the existence and nocturnal revels of the fairies still lingers among the vulgar in Selkirkshire.

261. . . . 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.

262. 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.

263. 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.

264. 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.

265. 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.

266. 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.

267. 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.

268. 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.

269. 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

heroical 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.

270. 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.

271. 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 Virgen 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.

272. 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.

273. 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.

274. Vainly thy squadrons hide
Assuava's plain,
And front the flying thunders as
they roar,
With frantic charge and ten-
fold 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 no-wise 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.

275. 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.

276. 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.

277. 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.

278. . . . 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.

ROKEBY.

279. On Barnard's towers, and Tees's stream, etc.

"Barnard Castle," saith old Leland, "standeth stately upon Tees." It is founded upon a very high bank, and its ruins impend over the river, including within the area a circuit of six acres and upwards. This once magnificent fortress derives its name from its founder. Barnard Baliol, the ancestor of the short and unfortunate dynasty of that name, which succeeded to the Scottish throne under the patronage of Edward I. and Edward III. Baliol's Tower, afterwards mentioned in the poem, is a round tower of great size, situated at the western extremity of the building. The prospect from the top of Baliol's Tower commands a rich and magnificent view of the wooded valley of the Tees.

280. . . . no human ear,
Unsharpen'd by revenge and
fear,
Could e'er distinguish horse's
clank.

I have had occasion to remark, in real life, the effect of keen and fervent anxiety in giving acuteness to the organs of sense.

281. The morion's plumes his visage
hide,
And the buff-coat, in ample
fold,
Mantles his form's gigantic
mould.

The use of complete suits of armour was fallen into disuse during the Civil War, though they were still worn by leaders of rank and importance.

282. On his dark face a scorching
clime,
And toil, had done the work of
time.

. . . .
Death had he seen by sudden
blow,
By wasting plague, by tortures
slow.

In this character, I have attempted to sketch one of those West Indian adventurers, who, during the course of the seventeenth century, were popularly known by the name of Bucaniers.

283. . . . On Marston heath
Met, front to front, the ranks
of death.

The well-known and desperate battle of Long-Marston Moor, which terminated so unfortunately for the cause of Charles, seems to have commenced with every prospect of success for the Royalist forces.

284. Monckton and Mitton told the
news,
How troops of roundheads
choked the Ouse,
And many a bonny Scot, aghast,
Spurring his palfrey northward,
past,
Cursing the day when zeal or
need
First lured their Lesley o'er the
Tweed.

Monckton and Mitton are villages near the field of battle. The particulars of the action were violently disputed.

285. With his barb'd horse, fresh
tidings say,
Stout Cromwell has redeem'd
the day.

Cromwell, with his regiment of cuirassiers, had a principal share in turning the fate of the day at Marston Moor.

286. Do not my native dales prolong
Of Percy Rede the tragic song,
Train'd forward to his bloody
fall,
By Girsonfield, that treacherous
Hall?

In a poem, entitled "The Lay of the Reedwater Minstrel," Newcastle, 1809, this tale, with many others peculiar to the valley of the Reed, is commemorated:—"The particulars of the traditional story of Percy Reed of Troughend, and the Halls of Girsonfield, the author had from a descendant of the family of Reed. From his account, it appears that Percival Reed, Esquire, a keeper of Reedsdale, was betrayed by the Halls

(hence denominated the false-hearted Ha's) to a band of moss-troopers of the name of Crosier, who slew him at Batinghope, near the source of the Reed.

287. And near the spot that gave me
name,
The moated mound of Rising-
ham,
Where Reed upon her margin
sees
Sweet Woodburne's cottages
and trees,
Some ancient sculptor's art has
shown
An outlaw's image on the stone.

Risingham, upon the river Reed, near the beautiful hamlet of Woodburn, is an ancient Roman station, formerly called Habitancum. About half a mile distant from Risingham, upon an eminence covered with scattered birch-trees and fragments of rock, there is cut upon a large rock, in *alto relievo*, a remarkable figure, called Robin of Risingham, or Robin of Reedsdale. It presents a hunter, with his bow raised in one hand, and in the other what seems to be a hare. There is a quiver at the back of the figure, and he is dressed in a long coat, or kirtle, coming down to the knees, and meeting close, with a girdle bound round him. Dr. Horseley, who saw all monuments of antiquity with Roman eyes, inclines to think this figure a Roman archer: and certainly the bow is rather of the ancient size than of that which was so formidable in the hand of the English archers of the middle ages. But the rudeness of the whole figure prevents our founding strongly upon mere inaccuracy of proportion. The popular tradition is, that it represents a giant, whose brother resided at Woodburn, and he himself at Risingham. It adds, that they subsisted by hunting, and that one of them, finding the game become too scarce to support them, poisoned his companion, in whose memory the monument was engraved.

288. . . . Do thou revere
The statutes of the Bucanier.

The "statutes of the Bucaniers" were, in reality, more equitable than

could have been expected from the state of society under which they had been formed. They chiefly related, as may readily be conjectured, to the distribution and the inheritance of their plunder.

289. The course of Tees.

The view from Barnard Castle commands the rich and magnificent valley of Tees. Immediately adjacent to the river, the banks are thickly wooded; at a little distance they are more open and cultivated; but, being interspersed with hedge-rows and isolated trees of great size and age, they retain the richness of woodland scenery.

290. Egliston's grey ruins.

The ruins of this abbey or priory are beautifully situated upon the angle, formed by a little dell called Thorsgill, at its junction with the Tees.

291. . . . the mound,
 Raised by that Legion long
 renown'd,
 Whose votive shrine asserts
 their claim,
 Of pious, faithful, conquering
 fame.

Close behind the George Inn at Greta Bridge, there is a well-preserved Roman encampment, surrounded with a triple ditch, lying between the river Greta and a brook called the Tutta. Very many Roman altars and monuments have been found in the vicinity. Among others is a small votive altar, with the inscription, LEG. VI. VIC. P. F. V., which has been rendered, *Legio. Scyta. Victrix. Pia. Fortis. Fidelis.*

292. Rokeby's turrets high.

This ancient manor long gave name to a family by whom it is said to have been possessed from the Conquest downward, and who are at different times distinguished in history. The Rokeby, or Rokesby family, continued to be distinguished until the great Civil War, when, having embraced the cause of Charles I., they suffered fines and confiscations. The estate then passed

to the family of the Robinsons, from whom it was purchased by the father of the present proprietor.

293. A stern and lone, yet lovely
 road,
 As e'er the foot of Minstrel
 trode.

What follows is an attempt to describe the romantic glen, or rather ravine, through which the Greta finds a passage between Rokeby and Mortham; the former situated upon the left bank, the latter on the right, about half a mile nearer to its junction with the Tees.

294. How whistle rash bids tempests
 roar.

That this is a general superstition, is well known to all who have been on ship-board, or who have conversed with seamen.

295. Of Erick's cap and Elmo's
 light.

"This Ericus, King of Sweden, in his time was held second to none in the magical art; and he was so familiar with the evil spirits, which he exceedingly adored, that which way soever he turned his cap, the wind would presently blow that way. From this occasion he was called Windy Cap; and many men believed that Regnerus, King of Denmark, by the conduct of this Ericus, who was his nephew, did happily extend his piracy into the most remote parts of the earth, and conquered many countries and fenced cities by his cunning, and at last was his coadjutor; that by the consent of the nobles, he should be chosen King of Sweden, which continued a long time with him very happily, until he died of old age."

296. The Demon Frigate.

This is an allusion to a well-known nautical superstition concerning a fantastic vessel, called by sailors the Flying Dutchman, supposed to be seen about the Cape of Good Hope.

297. . . . By some desert isle or
 key.

What contributed much to the security of the Bucaniers about the Windward

Islands, was the great number of little islets, called in that country *keys*. Such little uninhabited spots afforded the pirates good harbours, either for re-fitting or ambush; they were occasionally the hiding-place of their treasure.

298. Before the gate of Mortham stood.

The castle of Mortham is a picturesque tower, surrounded by buildings of different ages, now converted into a farm-house and offices. The battlements of the tower itself are singularly elegant, the architect having broken them at regular intervals into different heights; while those at the corners of the tower project into octangular turrets. They are also from space to space covered with stones laid across them, as in modern embrasures, the whole forming an uncommon and beautiful effect. At some distance is most happily placed between the stems of two magnificent elms, the monument alluded to in the text. It is said to have been brought from the ruins of Egliston Priory, and from the armoury with which it is richly carved, appears to have been a tomb of the Fitz-Hughs.

299. There dig, and tomb your
precious heap,
And bid the dead your treasure
keep.

If time did not permit the Bucaniers to lavish away their plunder in their usual debaucheries, they were wont to hide it, with many superstitious solemnities, in the desert islands and keys which they frequented, and where much treasure, whose lawless owners perished without reclaiming it, is still supposed to be concealed. The most cruel of mankind are often the most superstitious; and these pirates are said to have had recourse to a horrid ritual, in order to secure an unearthly guardian to their treasures. They killed a Negro or Spaniard, and buried him with the treasure, believing that his spirit would terrify away all intruders.

300. The power : : : :
 : : : :
That unsubdued and lurking
lies

To take the felon by surprise,
And force him, as by magic
spell,
In his despite his guilt to tell.

All who are conversant with the administration of criminal justice must remember many occasions in which malefactors appear to have conducted themselves with a species of infatuation, either by making unnecessary confidences respecting their guilt, or by sudden and involuntary allusions to circumstances by which it could not fail to be exposed.

301. . . . Brackenbury's dismal
tower.

This tower has been already mentioned. It is situated near the north-eastern extremity of the wall which encloses Barnard Castle, and is traditionally said to have been the prison.

302. Nobles and knights, so proud
of late,
Must fine for freedom and
estate.

Right heavy shall his ransom
be,
Unless that maid compound
with thee!

After the battle of Marston Moor, the Earl of Newcastle retired beyond sea in disgust, and many of his followers laid down their arms, and made the best composition they could with the Committees of Parliament. Fines were imposed upon them in proportion to their estates and degrees of delinquency. In some circumstances the oppressed cavaliers were fain to form family alliances with some powerful person among the triumphant party.

303. The Indian, prowling for his
prey,
Who hears the settlers track
his way.

The patience, abstinence, and ingenuity, exerted by the North American Indians, when in pursuit of plunder or vengeance, is the most distinguished feature in their character; and the

activity and address which they display in their retreat is equally surprising.

304. In Redesdale his youth had heard
 Each art her wily dalesmen dared,
 When Rookan-edge, and Redswair high,
 To bugle rung and bloodhound's cry.

Reidswair is on the very edge of the Carter-fell, which divides England from Scotland. The Rookan is a place upon Reedwater. Bertram, being described as a native of these dales, where hostile depredation long survived the union of the crowns, may have been, in some degree, prepared for a similar trade in the wars of the Bucaniers.

305. Hiding his face, lest foemen spy
 The sparkle of his swarthy eye.

After one of the recent battles, in which the Irish rebels were defeated, one of their most active leaders was found in a bog, up to the shoulders, while his head was concealed by a ledge of turf. Being detected and seized, he became solicitous to know how his retreat had been discovered. "I caught," answered the Sutherland Highlander, by whom he was taken, "the sparkle of your eye." Those who are accustomed to mark hares upon their form usually discover them by the same circumstance.

306. Here stood a wretch, prepared to change
 His soul's redemption for revenge!

It is agreed by all the writers upon magic and witchcraft, that revenge was the most common motive for the pretended compact between Satan and his vassals.

307. Of my marauding on the clowns
 Of Calverley and Bradford downs.

The troops of the King, when they first took the field, were as well disciplined as could be expected. But as the circumstances of Charles became less favourable, and his funds decreased,

habits of military license prevailed among them in greater excess.

308. . . . Brignall's woods, and
 Scargill's, wave,
 E'en now, o'er many a sister cave.

The banks of the Greta, below Rutherford Bridge, abound in seams of greyish slate, which are wrought in some places to a very great depth under ground, thus forming artificial caverns, which are gradually hidden by the underwood. In times of public confusion, they might be well adapted to the purposes of banditti.

309. When Spain waged warfare
 with our land.

There was a short war with Spain in 1625-6, which will be found to agree with the chronology of the poem.

310. . . . Our comrades' strife.

The laws of the Bucaniers, and their successors the Pirates, however severe and equitable, were, like other laws, often set aside by the stronger party. Their quarrels about the division of the spoil fill their history, and they as frequently arose out of mere frolic, or the tyrannical humour of their chiefs.

311. . . . my rangers go,
 Even now to track a milk-white doe.

The reference, of course, is to Matilda.

312. Song . . . Adieu for evermore.

The last verse of this song is taken from an old Scottish ballad, of which I only recollected two verses when the first edition of Rokeby was published.

313. Rere-cross on Stanmore.

This is a fragment of an old cross, with its pediment, surrounded by an intrenchment, upon the very summit of the waste ridge of Stanmore, near a small house of entertainment called the Spittal. The situation of the cross, and the pains taken to defend it, seem to indicate that it was intended for a landmark of importance.

314. Hast thou lodged our deer ?

The duty of the ranger, or pricker, was first to lodge or harbour the deer ; *i.e.* to discover his retreat.

315. When Denmark's raven soar'd
on high,

Triumphant through Northun-
brian sky,

Till, hovering near, her fatal
croak

Bade Reged's Britons dread the
yoke.

About the year of God 866, the Danes, under their celebrated leaders Inguar (more properly Agnar) and Hubba, sons, it is said, of the still more celebrated Regnar Lodbrog, invaded Northumberland, bringing with them the magical standard, so often mentioned in poetry, called REAFEN, or Rulfan, from its bearing the figure of a raven.

316. Beneath the shade the North-
men came,

Fix'd on each vale a Runic
name.

The heathen Danes have left several traces of their religion in the upper part of Teesdale. Balder-garth, which derives its name from the unfortunate son of Odin, is a tract of waste land on the very ridge of Stanmore ; and a brook, which falls into the Tees near Barnard Castle, is named after the same deity. A field upon the banks of the Tees is also termed Woden-Croft, from the supreme deity of the Edda.

317. Who has not heard how brave
O'Neale

In English blood imbrued his
steel ?

The O'Neale here meant, for more than one succeeded to the chieftainship during the reign of Elizabeth, was Hugh, the grandson of Con O'Neale, called Con Bacco, or the Lame. His father, Matthew O'Kelly, was illegitimate, and, being the son of a blacksmith's wife, was usually called Matthew the Blacksmith. His father, nevertheless, destined his succession to him ; and he was created, by Elizabeth,

Baron of Dungannon. Upon the death of Con Bacco, this Matthew was slain by his brother. Hugh narrowly escaped the same fate, and was protected by the English. Shane O'Neale, his uncle, called Shane Dymas, was succeeded by Turlough Lynogh O'Neale ; after whose death Hugh, having assumed the chieftainship, became nearly as formidable to the English as any by whom it had been possessed. He rebelled repeatedly, and as often made submissions, of which it was usually a condition that he should not any longer assume the title of O'Neale ; in lieu of which he was created Earl of Tyrone.

318. But chief arose his victor pride,
When that brave Marshal fought
and died.

The chief victory which Tyrone obtained over the English was in a battle fought near Blackwater, while he besieged a fort garrisoned by the English, which commanded the passes into his country. Tyrone is said to have entertained a personal animosity against the knight-marshal Sir Henry Bagnal, whom he accused of detaining the letters which he sent to Queen Elizabeth, explanatory of his conduct, and offering terms of submission.

319. The Tanist he to great O'Neale.

The Tanist of O'Neale was the heir-apparent of his power.

320. His plaited hair in elf-locks
spread, etc.

There is here an attempt to describe the ancient Irish dress.

321. With wild majestic port and tone,
Like envoy of some barbarous
throne.

The Irish chiefs, in their intercourse with the English, and with each other, were wont to assume the language and style of independent royalty.

322. His foster-father was his guide.

There was no tie more sacred among the Irish than that which connected the foster-father, as well as the nurse herself, with the child they brought up.

323. Great Nial of the Pledges Nine.

Neal Naighvallach, or Of the Nine Hostages, is said to have been Monarch of all Ireland, during the end of the fourth or beginning of the fifth century.

324. Shane-Dymas wild.

This Shane-Dymas, or John the Wanton, held the title and power of O'Neale in the earlier part of Elizabeth's reign, against whom he rebelled repeatedly. When reduced to extremity, this Shane-Dymas fled to Clandeboy, then occupied by a colony of Scottish Highlanders of the family of MacDonell. He was at first courteously received; but by degrees they began to quarrel about the slaughter of some of their friends whom Shane-Dymas had put to death, and advancing from words to deeds, fell upon him with their broadswords, and cut him to pieces.

325. . . . Geraldine.

The O'Neales were closely allied with this powerful and warlike family; for Henry Owen O'Neale married the daughter of Thomas Earl of Kildare, and their son Con-More married his cousin-german, a daughter of Gerald Earl of Kildare.

326. He chose that honour'd flag to bear.

Lacy informs us, in the old play already quoted, how the cavalry raised by the country gentlemen for Charles's service were usually officered. "You, cornet, have a name that's proper for all cornets to be called by, for they are all beardless boys in our army. The most part of our horse were raised thus:—The honest country gentleman raises the troop at his own charge; then he gets a Low-country lieutenant to fight his troop safely; then he sends for his son from school to be his cornet; and then he puts off his child's coat to put on a buff-coat: and this is the constitution of our army."

327. . . . his page, the next degree
In that old time to chivalry.

Originally, the order of chivalry embraced three ranks:—1. The Page; 2. The Squire; 3. The Knight;—a

gradation which seems to have been imitated in the mystery of freemasonry. But, before the reign of Charles I., the custom of serving as a squire had fallen into disuse, though the order of the page was still, to a certain degree, in observance. This state of servitude was considered as the regular school for acquiring every quality necessary for future distinction.

328. Seem'd half abandon'd to decay.

The ancient castle of Rokeby stood exactly upon the site of the present mansion, by which a part of its walls is enclosed.

329. Rokeby's lords of martial fame,
I can count them name by name.

The pedigree of this once powerful family can be traced back to Norman times.

330. . . . The Felon Sow.

The ancient minstrels had a comic as well as a serious strain of romance; and although the examples of the latter are by far the most numerous, they are, perhaps, the less valuable. One of the very best, which has no small portion of comic humour, is the Hunting of the Felon Sow of Rokeby by the Friars of Richmond.

331. The Filea of O'Neale was he.

The Filea, or Ollamh Re Dan, was the proper bard, or, as the name literally implies, poet. Each chieftain of distinction had one or more in his service, whose office was usually hereditary. There were itinerant bards of less elevated rank, but all were held in the highest veneration.

332. Ah, Clandeboy! thy friendly
floor
Slieve-Donard's oak shall light
no more.

Clandeboy is a district of Ulster, formerly possessed by the sept of the O'Neales, and Slieve-Donard, a romantic mountain in the same province. The clan was ruined after Tyrone's great rebellion, and their places of abode laid desolate. The ancient Irish, wild and uncultivated in

other respects, did not yield even to their descendants in practising the most free and extended hospitality.

333. M'Currtin's harp.

“MacCurrtin, hereditary Ollamh of North Munster, and Filea to Donough, Earl of Thomond, and President of Munster. This nobleman was amongst those who were prevailed upon to join Elizabeth's forces. Soon as it was known that he had basely abandoned the interests of his country, MacCurrtin presented an adulatory poem to MacCarthy, chief of South Munster, and of the Eugenic line, who, with O'Neil, O'Donnel, Lacy, and others, were deeply engaged in protecting their violated country.

334. The ancient English minstrel's dress.

Among the entertainments presented to Elizabeth at Kenilworth Castle, was the introduction of a person designed to represent a travelling minstrel, who entertained her with a solemn story out of the Acts of King Arthur. Of this person's dress and appearance Mr. Laneham has given us a very accurate

account, transferred by Bishop Percy to the preliminary Dissertation on Minstrels, prefixed to his *Reliques of Ancient Poetry*, vol. i.

335. Littlecote Hall.

The ballad is founded on old traditions.

336. As thick a smoke these hearths
have given
At Hallow-tide or Christmas-
even.

Such an exhortation was, in similar circumstances, actually given to his followers by a Welsh chieftain.

337. O'er Hexham's altar hung my
glove.

Well on in the eighteenth century, this custom was still prevalent among the Redesdale and Tynedale Borderers.

338. A Horseman arm'd, at headlong
speed.

This, and what follows, is taken from a real achievement of Major Robert Philipson, called, from his desperate and adventurous courage, Robin the Devil.

THE BRIDAL OF TRIERMAIN.

339. 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.

340. The Baron of Triermain.

Triermain was a fief of the Barony of Gilsland, in Cumberland.

341. 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.

342. 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.

343. 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.

344. The flower of Chivalry.

The characters named are more or less distinguished in the romances of King Arthur and his Round Table, and their names are strung together according to the established custom of minstrels upon such occasions.

345. 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.

346. There were two who loved their
neighbours' wives,
And one who loved his own.

In which booke (*La Morie d'Arthur*) they be counted the noblest knightes that do kill most men without any quarrell, and commit fowlest adouleries 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 LORD OF THE ISLES.

347. Thy rugged halls, Artornish !
rung.

The ruins of the Castle of Artornish are situated upon a promontory, on the Morven, or mainland side of the Sound of Mull, a name given to the deep arm of the sea which divides that island from the continent. The situation is wild and romantic in the highest degree. In former days, it was a place of great consequence, being one of the principal strongholds of the Lords of the Isles, during the period of their stormy independence.

It is only further necessary to say of the Castle of Artornish that it is almost opposite to the Bay of Aros, in the Island of Mull, where there was another castle, the occasional residence of the Lords of the Isles.

348. Rude Heiskar's seal through
surges dark,
Will long pursue the minstrel's
bark.

The seal displays a taste for music, which could scarcely be expected from his habits and local predilections. They will long follow a boat in which any musical instrument is played.

349. . . . a turret's airy head,
Slender and steep, and battled
round,
O'erlook'd, dark Mull ! thy
mighty Sound.

The Sound of Mull, which divides that island from the continent of Scotland, is one of the most striking scenes which the Hebrides afford to the traveller. Many ruinous castles, situated generally upon cliffs overhanging the ocean, add interest to the scene.

350. . . . "these seas behold,
Round twice a hundred islands
roll'd,
From Hirt, that hears their
northern roar,
To the green Ilay's fertile shore."

The number of the western isles of Scotland exceeds two hundred, of which St. Kilda is the most northerly, anciently called Hirth, or Hirt, probably from "earth," being in fact the whole globe to its inhabitants. Ilay is by far the most fertile of the Hebrides. This was in ancient times the principal abode of the Lords of the Isles, being, if not the largest, the most important island of their archipelago.

351. . . . Mingarry, sternly placed,
O'erawes the woodland and the
waste.

The Castle of Mingarry is situated on the sea-coast of the district of Ardnamurchan.

352. The heir of mighty Somerled.

Somerled was thane of Argyle and Lord of the Isles, about the middle of the twelfth century. He seems to have exercised his authority in both capacities, independent of the crown of Scotland.

353. Lord of the Isles.

The representative of this independent principality was, at the period of the poem, Angus, called Angus Og; but the name had been, *euphonia gratia*, exchanged for that of Ronald, which frequently occurs in the genealogy. Angus was a protector of Robert Bruce, whom he received in his Castle of Dunnaverty, during the time of his greatest distress.

354. The House of Lorn.

The House of Lorn was, like the Lord of the Isles, descended from a son of Somerled, slain at Renfrew, in 1164. This son obtained the succession of his mainland territories, comprehending the greater part of the three districts of Lorn, in Argyleshire, and of course might rather be considered as petty princes than feudal barons. They assumed the patronymic appellation of Mac-Dougal, by which they are distinguished in the history of the middle ages. The Lord of Lorn, who flourished during the wars of Bruce, was Allaster (or Alexander) Mac-Dougal, called Allaster of Argyle. He had married the third daughter of John, called the Red Comyn, who was slain by Bruce in the Dominican Church at Dumfries, and hence he was a mortal enemy of that prince, and more than once reduced him to great straits during the early and distressed period of his reign.

355. Awaked before the rushing prow,
The mimic fires of ocean glow,
Those lightnings of the wave.

The phenomenon called by sailors Sea-fire, is one of the most beautiful and interesting which is witnessed in the Hebrides. At times the ocean appears entirely illuminated around the vessel, and a long train of lambent coruscations are perpetually bursting upon the sides of the vessel, or pursuing her wake through the darkness.

356. . . . The dark fortress.

The fortress of a Hebridean chief was almost always on the sea-shore, for the facility of communication which the ocean afforded.

357. That keen knight, De Argentine.

Sir Egidius, or Giles de Argentine, was one of the most accomplished knights of the period. He had served in the wars of Henry of Luxemburg with high reputation.

358. "Fill me the mighty cup!" he
said,

"Erst own'd by royal Somerled."

A Hebridean drinking cup, of the most ancient and curious workmanship, has been long preserved in the castle of Dunvegan, in Skye, the romantic seat of Mac-Leod of Mac-Leod, the chief of that ancient and powerful clan.

359. With solemn step, and silver
wand,

The Seneschal the presence
scann'd

Of these strange guests.

The Sewer, to whom, rather than the Seneschal, the office of arranging the guests of an island chief appertained, was an officer of importance in the family of a Hebridean chief.

360. . . . the rebellious Scottish
crew,

Who to Rath-Erin's shelter
drew,

With Carrick's outlaw'd
Chief?

It must be remembered by all who have read the Scottish history, that after he had slain Comyn at Dumfries, and asserted his right to the Scottish

crown, Robert Bruce was reduced to the greatest extremity by the English and their adherents.

361. The Brooch of Lorn.

It has been generally mentioned in the preceding notes, that Robert Bruce, after his defeat at Methven, being hard pressed by the English, endeavoured, with the dispirited remnant of his followers, to escape from Breadalbane and the mountains of Perthshire into the Argyleshire Highlands. But he was encountered and repulsed, after a very severe engagement, by the Lord of Lorn. Bruce's personal strength and courage were never displayed to greater advantage than in this conflict. There is a tradition in the family of the Mac-Dougals of Lorn, that their chieftain engaged in personal battle with Bruce himself, while the latter was employed in protecting the retreat of his men; that Mac-Dougal was struck down by the king, whose strength of body was equal to his vigour of mind, and would have been slain on the spot, had not two of Lorn's vassals, a father and son, whom tradition terms Mac-Keoch, rescued him, by seizing the mantle of the monarch, and dragging him from above his adversary. Bruce rid himself of these foes by two blows of his redoubted battle-axe, but was so closely pressed that he was forced to abandon the mantle and brooch in the dying grasp of the Mac-Keochs.

362. Wrought and chased with fair device, Studded fair with gems of price.

Great art and expense was bestowed upon the *fibula*, or brooch, which secured the plaid, when the wearer was a person of importance.

363. Vain was then the Douglas brand— Vain the Campbell's vaunted hand.

The gallant Sir James, called the Good Lord Douglas, the most faithful and valiant of Bruce's adherents, was wounded at the battle of Dalry. Sir Nigel, or Neil Campbell, was also in

that unfortunate skirmish. He married Marjorie, sister to Robert Bruce, and was among his most faithful followers.

364. Vain Kirkpatrick's bloody dirk, Making sure of murder's work.

Every reader must recollect that the proximate cause of Bruce's asserting his right to the crown of Scotland, was the death of John, called the Red Comyn. The causes of this act of violence, equally extraordinary from the high rank both of the perpetrator and sufferer, and from the place where the slaughter was committed, are variously related by the Scottish and English historians.

365. Barendown fled fast away, Fled the fiery De la Haye.

These knights are enumerated by Barbour among the small number of Bruce's adherents, who remained in arms with him after the battle of Methven.

366. Well hast thou framed, Old Man, thy strains, To praise the hand that pays thy pains.

The character of the Highland bards, however high in an earlier period of society, seems soon to have degenerated. The Irish affirm, that in their kindred tribes severe laws became necessary to restrain their avarice.

367. Was't not enough to Ronald's bower I brought thee, like a paramour.

It was anciently customary in the Highlands to bring the bride to the house of the husband.

368. Since matchless Wallace first had been In mock'ry crown'd with wreaths of green.

There is something singularly doubtful about the mode in which Wallace was taken. That he was betrayed to the English is indubitable; and popular fame charges Sir John Menteith with the indelible infamy. But John de Menteith was all along a zealous favourer of the English interest, and

was governor of Dumbarton Castle by commission from Edward the First; and therefore, as the accurate Lord Hailes has observed, could not be the friend and confidant of Wallace, as tradition states him to be. The truth seems to be, that Menteith, thoroughly engaged in the English interest, pursued Wallace closely, and made him prisoner through the treachery of an attendant, whom Peter Langtoft calls Jack Short.

369. Where's Nigel Bruce? and De
la Haye,
And valiant Seton—where are
they?

Where Somerville, the kind and
free?

And Fraser, flower of chivalry?

The fate of all these companions-in-arms was unfortunate. Nigel Bruce, the younger brother of the king, Seton, and Fraser, were executed. De la Haye and Somerville were made prisoners after the Battle of Methven, but were not executed.

370. Was not the life of Athole shed,
To soothe the tyrant's sickened
bed.

John de Strathbogie, Earl of Athole, had attempted to escape out of the kingdom, but a storm cast him upon the coast, when he was taken, sent to London, and executed. Matthew of Westminster tells us that King Edward, then extremely ill, received great ease from the news that his relative was apprehended.

371. And must his word, till dying
day,
Be nought but quarter, hang,
and slay.

The allusion is to an order of Edward I., while in his mortal sickness at Burgh-upon-Sands, to hang and draw certain Scottish prisoners, who had surrendered upon condition that they should be at King Edward's disposal.

372. While I the blessed cross
advance,
And expiate this unhappy chance,
In Palestine, with sword and
lance.

Bruce uniformly professed, and probably felt compunction for having violated the sanctuary of the church by the slaughter of Comyn; and finally, in his last hours, in testimony of his faith, penitence, and zeal, he requested James Lord Douglas to carry his heart to Jerusalem, to be there deposited in the Holy Sepulchre.

373. De Bruce! I rose with purpose
dread
To speak my curse upon thy
head.

So soon as the notice of Comyn's slaughter reached Rome, Bruce and his adherents were excommunicated.

374. I feel within mine aged breast
A power that will not be
repress'd.

See Numbers, xxiii. 14-20.

375. A hunted wanderer on the wild,
On foreign shores a man exiled.

This is not metaphorical. The echoes of Scotland did actually

. . . "ring
With the bloodhounds that bayed for
her fugitive king."

376. For, glad of each pretext for
spoil,
A pirate sworn was Cormac
Doil.

A sort of persons common in the isles until the introduction of civil polity.

377. "Alas! dear youth, the un-
happy time,"
Answer'd the Bruce, "must
bear the crime,
Since, guiltier far than you,
Even I"—he paused; for Fal-
kirk's woes
Upon his conscious soul arose.

I have followed the vulgar and inaccurate tradition, that Bruce fought against Wallace at the battle of Falkirk.

378. These are the savage wilds that
lie
North of Strathnardill and Dun-
skye.

The extraordinary piece of scenery which I have here attempted to describe is, I think, unparalleled in any part of Scotland, at least in any which I have happened to visit.

379. Men were they all of evil mien,
Down-look'd, unwilling to be
seen.

The story of Bruce's meeting the banditti is copied, with such alterations as the fictitious narrative rendered necessary, from an incident told by Barbour.

380. And mermaid's alabaster grot,
Who bathes her limbs in sunless
well
Deep in Strathaird's enchanted
cell.

Imagination can hardly conceive anything more beautiful than the extraordinary grotto discovered not many years since upon the estate of Strathaird.

381. Yet to no sense of selfish wrongs,
Bear witness with me, Heaven,
belongs
My joy o'er Edward's bier.

The generosity which does justice to the character of an enemy, often marks Bruce's sentiments, as recorded by the faithful Barbour. He seldom mentions a fallen enemy without praising such good qualities as he might possess.

382. Such hate was his on Solway's
strand,
When vengeance clench'd his
palsied hand,
That pointed yet to Scotland's
land.

To establish his dominion in Scotland had been a favourite object of Edward's ambition, and nothing could exceed the pertinacity with which he pursued it, unless his inveterate resentment against the insurgents, who so frequently broke the English yoke when he deemed it most firmly riveted.

383. . . . Canna's tower, that, steep
and gray,
Like falcon-nest o'erhangs the
bay.

The little island of Canna, or Cannay, adjoins to those of Rum and Muick,

with which it forms one parish. In a pretty bay opening towards the east, there is a lofty and slender rock detached from the shore. Upon the summit are the ruins of a very small tower, scarcely accessible by a steep and precipitous path. Here, it is said, one of the kings, or Lords of the Isles, confined a beautiful lady, of whom he was jealous. The ruins are of course haunted by her restless spirit, and many romantic stories are told by the aged people of the island concerning her fate in life, and her appearances after death.

384. And Ronin's mountains dark
have sent
Their hunters to the shore.

Ronin (popularly called Rum, a name which a poet may be pardoned for avoiding if possible) is a very rough and mountainous island, adjacent to those of Eigg and Cannay.

385. On Scoreigg next a warning
light
Summon'd her warriors to the
fight;
A numerous race, ere stern
Macleod
O'er their bleak shores in ven-
geance strode.

Scoor-Eigg is a high peak in the centre of the small Isle of Eigg, or Egg. It is well known to mineralogists, as affording many interesting specimens, and to others whom chance or curiosity may lead to the island, for the astonishing view of the mainland and neighbouring isles, which it commands.

386. . . . that wondrous dome,
Where, as to shame the temples
deck'd
By skill of earthly architect,
Nature herself, it seem'd, would
raise
A Minster to her Maker's praise!

It would be unpardonable to detain the reader upon a wonder so often described, and yet so incapable of being understood by description.

387. Scenes sung by him who sings
no more.

The ballad, entitled "Macphail of Colonsay, and the Mermaid of Corrievrekin," was composed by John Leyden, from a tradition which he found while making a tour through the Hebrides about 1801.

388. Up Tarbat's western lake they
bore,
Then dragg'd their bark the
isthmus o'er.

The peninsula of Cantire is joined to South Knapdale by a very narrow isthmus, formed by the western and eastern Loch of Tarbat. These two saltwater lakes, or bays, encroach so far upon the land, and the extremities come so near to each other, that there is not above a mile of land to divide them.

389. The sun, ere yet he sunk behind
Ben-Ghoil, "the Mountain of
the Wind,"
Gave his grim peaks a greeting
kind,
And bade Loch Ranza smile.

Loch Ranza is a beautiful bay, on the northern extremity of Arran, opening towards East Tarbat Loch. Ben-Ghaoil, "the mountain of the winds," is generally known by its English, and less poetical name, of Goatfield.

390. Each to Loch Ranza's margin
spring;
That blast was winded by the
King!

The passage in Barbour, describing the landing of Bruce, and his being recognised by Douglas and those of his followers who had preceded him, by the sound of his horn, is in the original singularly simple and affecting.

391. . . . his brother blamed,
But shared the weakness, while
ashamed,
With haughty laugh his head
he turn'd,
And dash'd away the tear he
scorn'd.

Edward Bruce is depicted by Barbour as a man of kind yet fiery character.

392. A woman in her last distress.

This incident illustrates happily the chivalrous generosity of Bruce's character.

393. O'er chasms he pass'd, where
fractures wide
Craved wary eye and ample
stride.

The interior of the island of Arran abounds with beautiful Highland scenery. The hills, being very rocky and precipitous, afford some cataracts of great height, though of inconsiderable breadth.

394. He cross'd his brow beside the
stone
Where Druids erst heard victims
groan.

The isle of Arran, like those of Man and Anglesea, abounds with many relics of heathen, and probably Druidical, superstition.

395. Old Brodick's gothic towers
were seen,
From Hastings, late their
English lord,
Douglas had won them by the
sword.

Brodick or Brathwick Castle, in the Isle of Arran, is an ancient fortress, near an open roadstead called Brodick-Bay, and not far distant from a tolerable harbour, closed in by the Island of Lamash. This important place had been assailed a short time before Bruce's arrival in the island.

396. Oft, too, with unaccustom'd
ears,
A language much unmeet he
hears.

Barbour, with great simplicity, gives an anecdote, from which it would seem that the vice of profane swearing, afterwards too general among the Scottish nation, was, at this time, confined to military men. As Douglas, after Bruce's return to Scotland, was roving about the mountainous country of Tweeddale, near the water of Line, he chanced to hear some persons in a farm-house say "*the devil*." Concluding, from this hardy expression, that

the house contained warlike guests, he immediately assailed it, and had the good fortune to make prisoners Thomas Randolph, afterwards the famous Earl of Murray, and Alexander Stuart, Lord Bonkle. Both were then in the English interest, and had come into that country with the purpose of driving out Douglas. They afterwards ranked among Bruce's most zealous adherents.

397. For, see! the ruddy signal made,
That Clifford, with his merry-
men all,
Guards carelessly our father's
hall.

The remarkable circumstances by which Bruce was induced to enter Scotland, under the false idea that a signal-fire was lighted upon the shore near his maternal castle of Turnberry—the disappointment which he met with, and the train of success which arose out of that very disappointment, are elaborately narrated by Barbour.

398. Now ask you whence that
wondrous light,
Whose fairy glow beguiled their
sight?—
It ne'er was known.

In Carrick, the belief was long entertained that the fire seen by Bruce from the Isle of Arran was really the work of supernatural power, unassisted by the hand of any mortal being; and that, for several centuries, the flame rose yearly on the same hour of the same night of the year, on which the king first saw it from the turrets of Brodick Castle.

399. They gain'd the Chase, a wide
domain
Left for the Castle's silvan reign.

The Castle of Turnberry, on the coast of Ayrshire, was the property of Robert Bruce, in right of his mother.

400. The Bruce hath won his father's
hall!

I have followed the flattering and pleasing tradition, that the Bruce, after his descent upon the coast of Ayrshire, gained possession of his maternal castle. But the tradition is not accurate.

401. "Bring here," he said, "the
mazers four,
My noble fathers loved of yore."

These mazers were large drinking-cups, or goblets.

402. Arouse old friends, and gather
new.

As soon as it was known in Kyle, says ancient tradition, that Robert Bruce had landed in Carrick, with the intention of recovering the crown of Scotland, the Laird of Craigie, and forty-eight men in his immediate neighbourhood, declared in favour of their legitimate prince.

403. When Bruce's banner had vic-
torious flow'd,
O'er Loudoun's mountain, and
in Ury's vale.

The first important advantage gained by Bruce, after landing at Turnberry, was over Aymer de Valence, Earl of Pembroke, the same by whom he had been defeated near Methven. They met at Loudonhill, in the west of Scotland. Pembroke sustained a defeat; and from that time Bruce was at the head of a considerable flying army.

404. When English blood oft deluged
Douglas-dale.

The "good Lord James of Douglas," during these commotions, often took from the English his own castle of Douglas, but being unable to garrison it, contented himself with destroying the fortifications, and retiring into the mountains. As a reward to his patriotism, it is said to have been prophesied, that how often soever Douglas Castle should be destroyed, it should always again arise more magnificent from its ruins.

405. And fiery Edward routed stout
St. John.

"John de St. John, with 15,000 horsemen, had advanced to oppose the inroad of the Scots. By a forced march he endeavoured to surprise them, but intelligence of his motions was timely received. The courage of Edward Bruce, approaching to temerity, frequently enabled him to achieve what men of more judicious valour would

never have attempted. He ordered the infantry, and the meaner sort of his army, to intrench themselves in strong narrow ground. He himself, with fifty horsemen well harnessed, issued forth under cover of a thick mist, surprised the English on their march, attacked and dispersed them." —DALRYMPLE'S *Annals of Scotland*.

406. When Randolph's war-cry
swell'd the southern gale.

Thomas Randolph, Bruce's sister's son, a renowned Scottish chief, was in the early part of his life not more remarkable for consistency than Bruce himself. He espoused his uncle's party when Bruce first assumed the crown, and was made prisoner at the fatal battle of Methven, in which his relative's hopes appeared to be ruined. Randolph accordingly not only submitted to the English, but took an active part against Bruce; appeared in arms against him; and, in the skirmish where he was so closely pursued by the bloodhound, it is said his nephew took his standard with his own hand. But Randolph was afterwards made prisoner by Douglas in Tweeddale, and brought before King Robert. Some harsh language was exchanged between the uncle and nephew, and the latter was committed for a time to close custody. Afterwards, however, they were reconciled, and Randolph was created Earl of Moray about 1312. After this period he eminently distinguished himself, first by the surprise of Edinburgh Castle, and afterwards by many similar enterprises, conducted with equal courage and ability.

407. . . . Stirling's towers,
Beleaguer'd by King Robert's
powers:
And they took term of truce.

When a long train of success, actively improved by Robert Bruce, had made him master of almost all Scotland, Stirling Castle continued to hold out. The care of the blockade was committed by the king to his brother Edward, who concluded a treaty with Sir Philip Mowbray, the governor, that he should surrender the fortress, if it were not

succoured by the King of England before St. John the Baptist's day. The King severely blamed his brother for the impolicy of a treaty, which gave time to the King of England to advance to the relief of the castle with all his assembled forces, and obliged himself either to meet them in battle with an inferior force, or to retreat with dishonour.

408. To summon prince and peer,
At Berwick-bounds to meet
their Liege.

There is printed in Rymer's *Fœdera* the summons issued upon this occasion to the sheriff of York; and he mentions eighteen other persons to whom similar ordinances were issued.

409. And Cambria, but of late sub-
dued,
Sent forth her mountain-multi-
tude.

Edward the First, with the usual policy of a conqueror, employed the Welsh, whom he had subdued, to assist him in his Scottish wars, for which their habits, as mountaineers, particularly fitted them. But this policy was not without its risks. Previous to the battle of Falkirk, the Welsh quarrelled with the English men-at-arms, and after bloodshed on both parts, separated themselves from his army, and the feud between them, at so dangerous and critical a juncture, was reconciled with difficulty. Edward II. followed his father's example in this particular, and with no better success.

410. And Connoght pour'd from
waste and wood
Her hundred tribes, whose
sceptre rude
Dark Eth O'Connor sway'd.

There is in the *Fœdera* an invitation to Eth O'Connor, chief of the Irish of Connaught, setting forth that the king was about to move against his Scottish rebels, and therefore requesting the attendance of all the force he could muster, either commanded by himself in person, or by some nobleman of his race. These auxiliaries were to be commanded by Richard de Burgh, Earl of Ulster.

411. Their chief, Fitz-Louis.

Fitz-Louis, or Mac-Louis, otherwise called Fullarton, is a family of ancient descent in the Isle of Arran. They attached themselves to Bruce upon his first landing.

412. In battles four beneath their eye,
The forces of King Robert lie.

The arrangements adopted by King Robert for the decisive battle of Bannockburn, are given very distinctly by Barbour, and form an edifying lesson to tacticians.

413. Beyond, the Southern host
appears.

Upon the 23rd June, 1314, the alarm reached the Scottish army of the approach of the enemy. Douglas and the Marshal were sent to reconnoitre with a body of cavalry.

The two Scottish commanders were cautious in the account which they brought back to their camp. To the king in private they told the formidable state of the enemy; but in public reported that the English were indeed a numerous host, but ill commanded, and worse disciplined.

414. With these the valiant of the
Isles

Beneath their chieftains rank'd
their files.

The men of Argyle, the islanders, and the Highlanders in general, were ranked in the rear. They must have been numerous, for Bruce had reconciled himself with almost all their chieftains, excepting the obnoxious MacDougals of Lorn.

415. The Monarch rode along the
van.

The English vanguard, commanded by the Earls of Gloucester and Hereford, came in sight of the Scottish army upon the evening of the 23rd of June. Bruce was then riding upon a little palfrey, in front of his foremost line, putting his host in order. It was then that the personal encounter took place betwixt him and Sir Henry de Bohun, a gallant English knight, the issue of which had a great effect upon the spirits of both armies.

416. What train of dust, with trumpet
sound,
And glimmering spears, is
wheeling round
Our leftward flank?

While the van of the English army advanced, a detached body attempted to relieve Stirling.

417. Responsive from the Scottish
host,
Pipe-clang and bugle-sound
were toss'd.

The tradition that a certain old Scottish tune was Bruce's march at Bannockburn has been the means of securing to Scotland one of the finest lyrics in the language, the celebrated war-song of Burns,—“Scots, wha hae wi' Wallace bled.”

418. Now onward, and in open view,
The countless ranks of England
drew.

Upon the 24th of June, the English army advanced to the attack. The narrowness of the Scottish front, and the nature of the ground, did not permit them to have the full advantage of their numbers, nor is it very easy to find out what was their proposed order of battle. The vanguard, however, appeared a distinct body, consisting of archers and spearmen on foot, and commanded, as already said, by the Earls of Gloucester and Hereford.

419. See where yon barefoot Abbot
stands,
And blesses them with lifted
hands.

“Maurice, abbot of Inchaffray, placing himself on an eminence, celebrated mass in sight of the Scottish army. He then passed along the front bare-footed, and bearing a crucifix in his hands, and exhorting the Scots, in few and forcible words, to combat for their rights and their liberty. The Scots kneeled down. ‘They yield,’ cried Edward; ‘see, they implore mercy.’—‘They do,’ answered Ingelram de Umfraville, ‘but not ours. On that field they will be victorious, or die.’”

420. Forth, Marshal, on the peasant
foe!

We'll tame the terrors of their
bow,

And cut the bow-string loose!

The English archers commenced the attack with their usual bravery and dexterity. But against a force, whose importance he had learned by fatal experience, Bruce was provided. A small but select body of cavalry were detached from the right, under command of Sir Robert Keith. They rounded, as I conceive, the marsh called Milntown bog, and, keeping the firm ground, charged the left flank and rear of the English archers. As the bowmen had no spears nor long weapons fit to defend themselves against horse, they were instantly thrown into disorder, and spread through the whole English army a confusion from which they never fairly recovered.

421. Each braggart churl could boast
before,

Twelve Scottish lives his baldric
bore!

Roger Ascham quotes a similar Scottish proverb, "whereby they give the whole praise of shooting honestly to Englishmen, saying thus, 'that every English archer beareth under his girdle twenty-four Scottes.'"

422. Down! down! in headlong
overthrow,

Horseman and horse, the fore-
most go.

It is generally alleged by historians that the English men-at-arms fell into the hidden snare which Bruce had prepared for them.

423. And steeds that shriek in agony.

I have been told that this line requires an explanatory note: and, indeed, those who witness the silent patience with which horses submit to the most cruel usage, may be permitted to doubt, that, in moments of sudden and intolerable anguish, they utter a most melancholy cry. It was my fortune, upon one occasion, to hear a horse, in a moment of agony, utter a thrilling scream,

which I still consider the most melancholy sound I ever heard.

424. Lord of the Isles, my trust in
thee

Is firm as Ai'sa Rock;

Rush on with Highland sword
and targe.

I, with my Carrick spearmen
charge.

When the engagement between the main bodies had lasted some time, Bruce made a decisive movement by bringing up the Scottish reserve. It is traditionally said that at this crisis he addressed the Lord of the Isles in a phrase used as a motto by some of his descendants, "My trust is constant in thee."

425. To arms they flew,—axe, club,
or spear,—

And mimic ensigns high they
rear.

The followers of the Scottish camp observed, from the Gillies' Hill in the rear, the impression produced upon the English army by the bringing up of the Scottish reserve, and, prompted by the enthusiasm of the moment, or the desire of plunder, assumed, in a tumultuary manner, such arms as they found nearest, fastened sheets to tent-poles and lances, and showed themselves like a new army advancing to battle.

426. O! give their hapless prince his
due.

Edward II., according to the best authorities, showed, in the fatal field of Bannockburn, personal gallantry not unworthy of his great sire and greater son. He remained on the field till forced away by the Earl of Pembroke, when all was lost. He then rode to the Castle of Stirling and demanded admittance; but the governor remonstrating upon the imprudence of shutting himself up in that fortress, which must so soon surrender, he assembled around his person five hundred men-at-arms, and, avoiding the field of battle and the victorious army, fled towards Linlithgow, pursued by Douglas with about sixty horse.

427. Nor for De Argentine alone,
Through Ninian's church these
torches shone,
And rose the death-prayer's
awful tone.

THE FIELD OF WATERLOO.

428. 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.

429. 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.

430. "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.

431. 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

Besides this renowned warrior, there fell many representatives of the noblest houses in England, which never sustained a more disastrous defeat. Barbour says two hundred pairs of gilded spurs were taken from the field.

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 all over 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.

432. 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.

433. 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.*"

434. 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 a French author has put into their mouths the magnanimous sentiment, "The Guards never yield—they die."

GLENFINLAS.

435. 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.

436. 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."

437. 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.

438. 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.

THE EVE OF ST. JOHN.

439. 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.

440. 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 Sheffield, 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.

CADYOW CASTLE.

441. . . . sound the pryse!

Pryse—The note blown at the death of the game.

442. Stern Claud replied.

Lord Claud Hamilton, second son of the Duke of Chatelherault, and commendator of the Abbey of Paisley, acted a distinguished part during the troubles of Queen Mary's reign, and remained unalterably attached to the cause of that unfortunate princess. He led the

van of her army at the fatal battle of Langside, and was one of the commanders at the Raid of Stirling, which had so nearly given complete success to the Queen's faction. He was ancestor of the present Marquis of Abercorn.

443. Woodhouselee.

This barony, stretching along the banks of the Esk, near Auchendinny, belonged to Bothwellhaugh, in right of his wife. The ruins of the mansion,

from whence she was expelled in the brutal manner which occasioned her death, are still to be seen in a hollow glen beside the river.

444. Drives to the leap his jaded steed.

Birrel informs us, that Bothwellhaugh, being closely pursued, "after that spur and wand had failed him, he drew forth his dagger, and strocke his horse behind, whilk caused the horse to leap a very brode stanke [*i.e.* ditch], by whilk means he escapit, and gat away from all the rest of the horses."

445. From the wild Border's humbled side.

Murray's death took place shortly after an expedition to the Borders.

446. With hackbut bent.

Hackbut bent—Gun cock'd.

447. The wild Macfarlanes' plaided clan.

This clan of Lennox Highlanders were attached to the Regent Murray.

448. Glencairn and stout Parkhead were nigh.

The Earl of Glencairn was a steady adherent of the Regent. George Douglas of Parkhead was a natural

brother of the Earl of Morton, whose horse was killed by the same ball by which Murray fell.

449. . . . haggard Lindsay's iron eye,
That saw fair Mary weep in vain.

Lord Lindsay, of the Byres, was the most ferocious and brutal of the Regent's faction, and, as such, was employed to extort Mary's signature to the deed of resignation presented to her in Lochleven castle. He discharged his commission with the most savage rigour; and it is even said that when the weeping captive, in the act of signing, averted her eyes from the fatal deed, he pinched her arm with the grasp of his iron glove.

450. So close the minions crowded nigh.

Not only had the Regent notice of the intended attempt upon his life, but even of the very house from which it was threatened. With that infatuation at which men wonder, after such events have happened, he deemed it would be a sufficient precaution to ride briskly past the dangerous spot. But even this was prevented by the crowd: so that Bothwellhaugh had time to take a deliberate aim.

THE GRAY BROTHER.

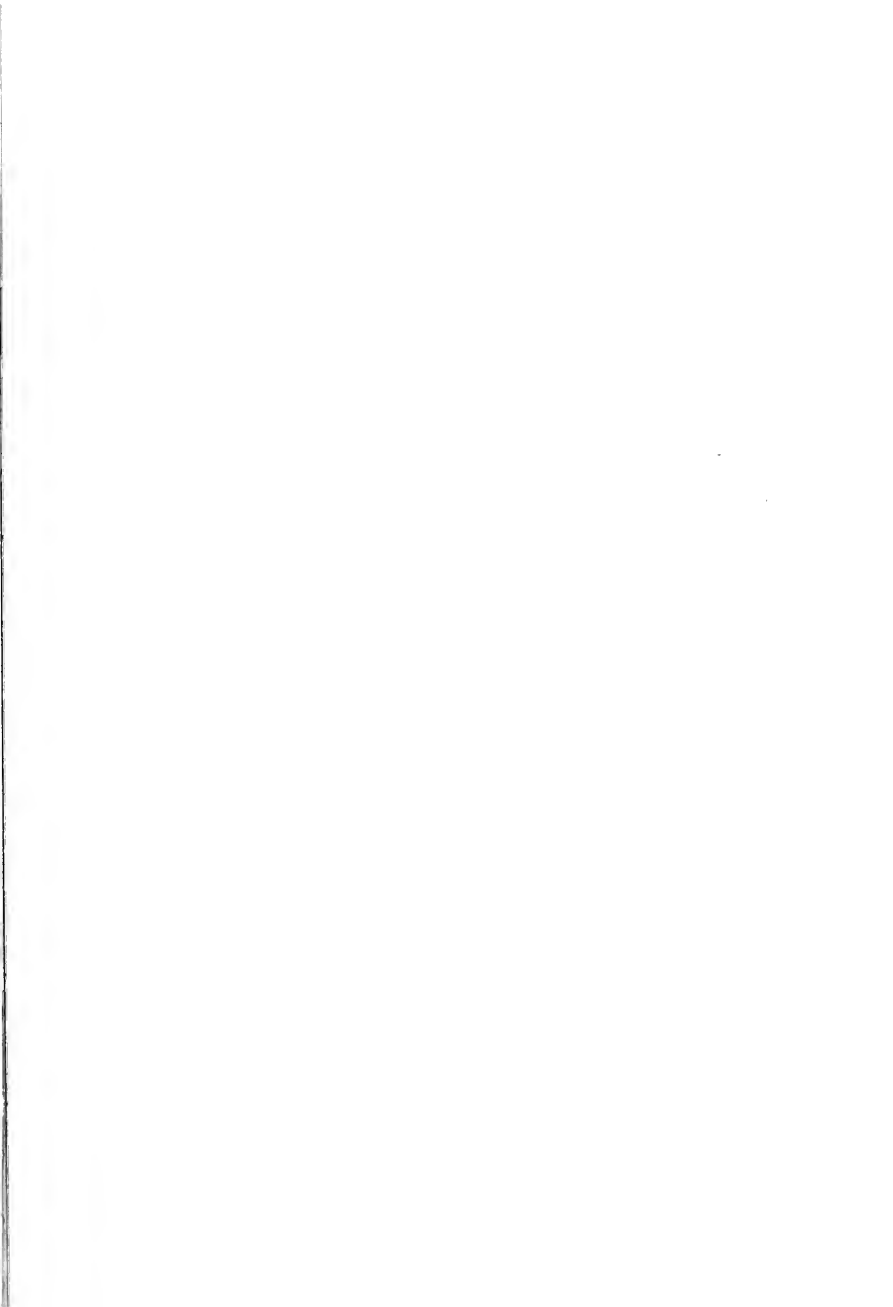
451. By blast of bugle free.

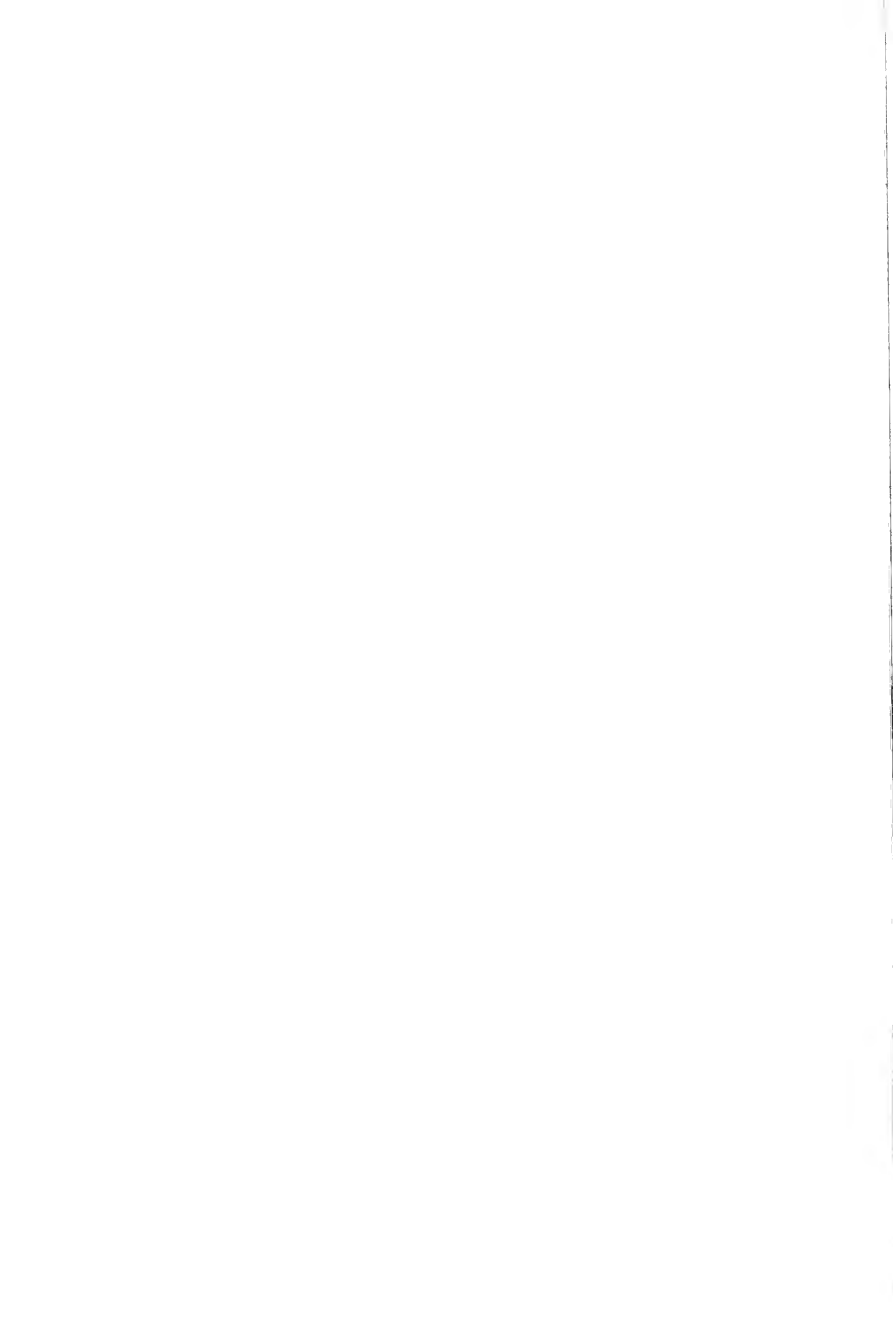
The barony of Pennycuik, the property of Sir George Clerk, Bart., is held by a singular tenure; the proprietor being bound to sit upon a large rocky fragment called the Buckstane, and wind three blasts of a horn, when the King shall come to hunt on the Borough Muir, near Edinburgh. Hence the family have adopted as their crest a demi-forester proper, winding a horn, with the motto, *Free for a Blast*.

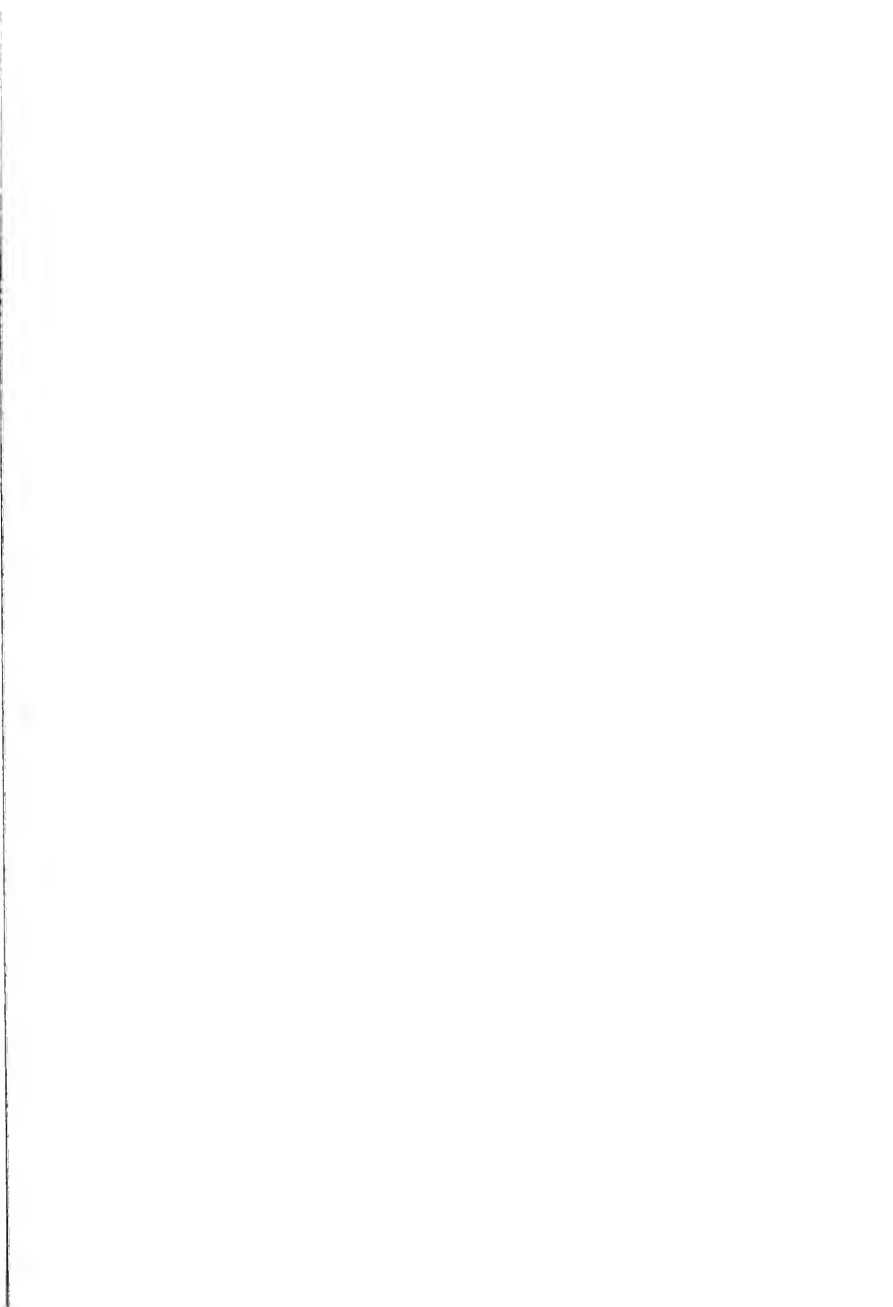
452. And classic Hawthornden.

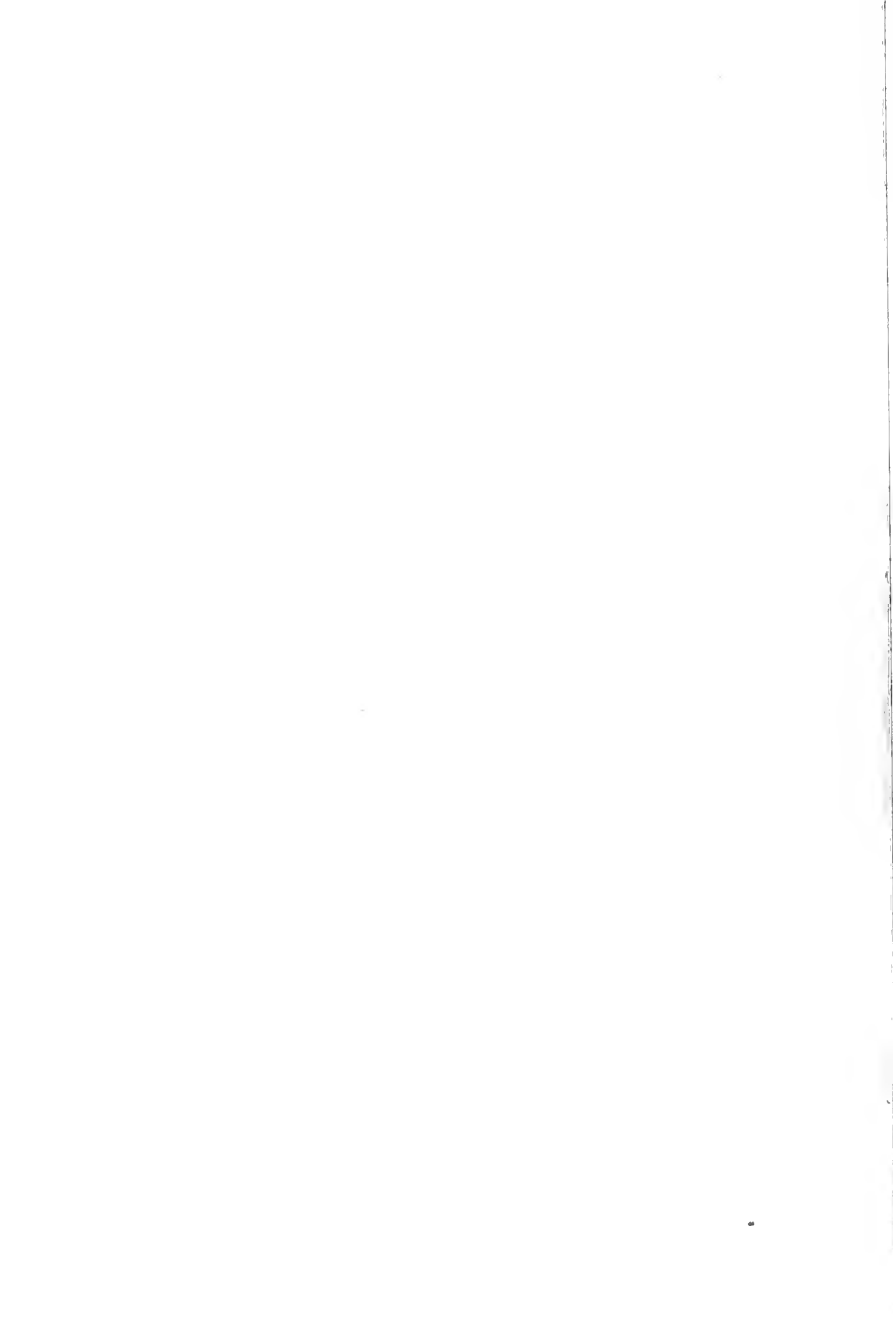
Hawthornden, the residence of the

poet Drummond. A house of more modern date is enclosed, as it were, by the ruins of the ancient castle, and overhangs a tremendous precipice upon the banks of the Eske, perforated by winding caves, which in former times were a refuge to the oppressed patriots of Scotland. Here Drummond received Ben Jonson, who journeyed from London on foot in order to visit him. The beauty of this striking scene has been much injured of late years by the indiscriminate use of the axe. The traveller now looks in vain for the leafy bower.

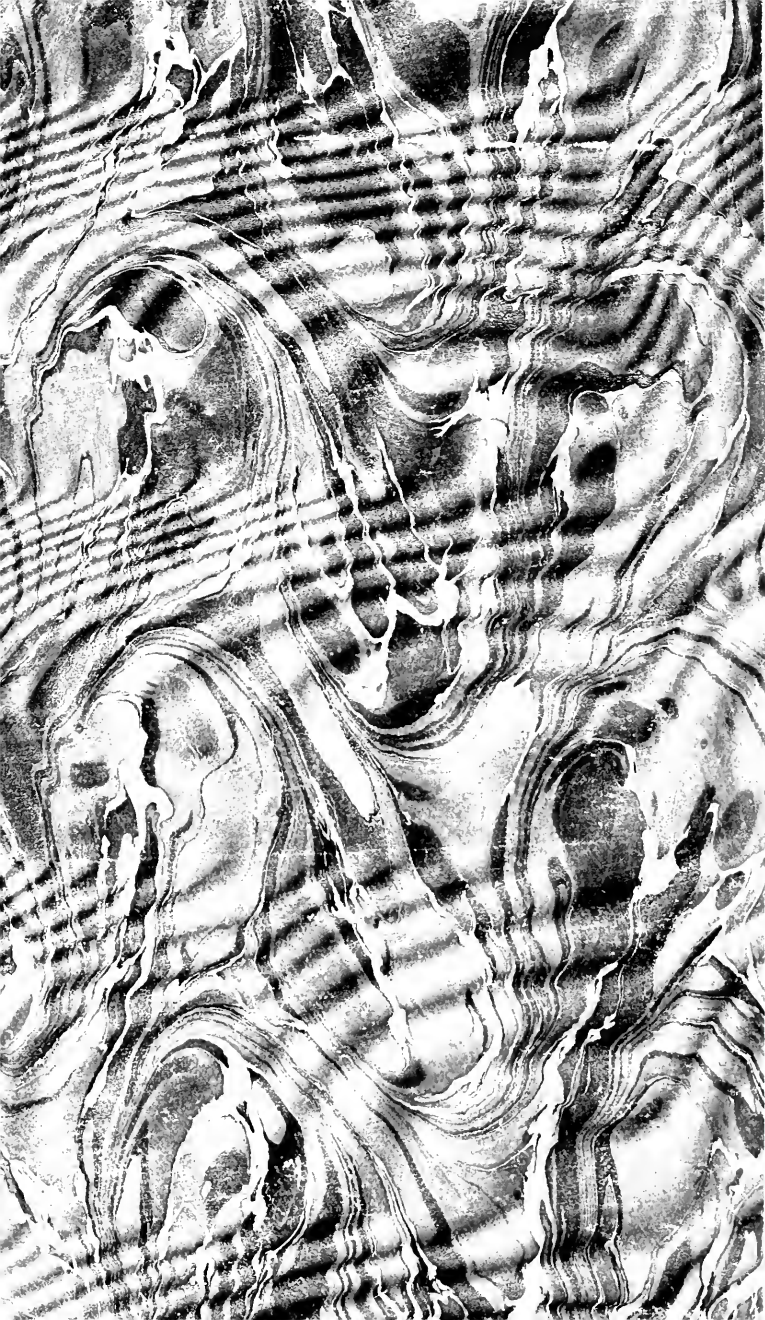












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