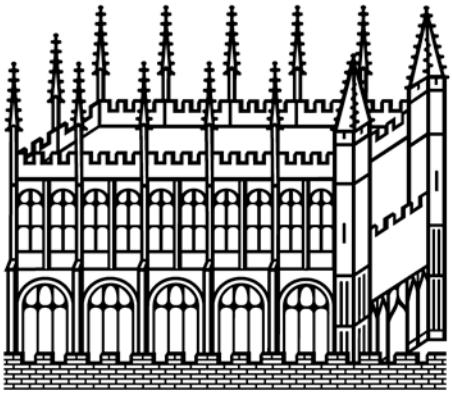


Poems. Ed., with notes, by W.S. Dalgleish

POEMS BY SIR WALTER SCOTT.

POEMS BY SIR WALTER SCOTT.

EDITED,

With Notes, Grammatical and Expository,

BY

W. S. DALGLEISH, M.A.,

ENGLISH MASTER IN THE LONDON INTERNATIONAL COLLEGE.

LONDON:

T. NELSON AND SONS, PATERNOSTER ROW;

EDINBURGH; AND NEW YORK.

1871.

NOTE.

It is the special purpose of this edition of Scott's poetical masterpieces to render them available for critical study as English Classics. To this end the Notes are adapted. They are devoted to such points as are likely to occur in the course of the critical reading of the poems, under the guidance of a good teacher.

The Etymological Notes do not include words which are explained in the ordinary school dictionaries.

The College, Spring Grove,
September 1871.

INTRODUCTION.

THE chief events in the life of Sir Walter Scott are given in the subjoined Chronological Table, in connection with the literary and political history of his time. That table shows his historical position as a poet much more clearly than any critical exposition could do. Beginning to write five years after the death of Cowper, his fame was at its height when that of Wordsworth and Coleridge was struggling for existence, and when they were creating the poetical taste which was destined to raise them to a higher rank as poets than he has any claim to occupy. Again: his decline as a poet—which marks the transference of his great powers to another sphere of creative composition—is coincident with the rise of Byron as a poet of the same genus, with well-marked specific differences; and with that of Keats and Shelley as harbingers of the subtle metaphysical poetry of the present generation.

Scott is essentially a Ballad poet. Ballad poetry was in literature his first love—the spring at which he drank his earliest inspiration. Each of his greater poems is a synthesis, or "new concrete," formed out of ballad elements. Some of his poems have been called novels in verse: they may be more correctly described as dilated or expanded ballads. He himself acknowledged this when he described his earliest considerable poem as, in style and form, a revival of Minstrel-craft. The great charms of Scott's poetry are simply the characteristics of the old ballad, refined and chastened by the influences of modern art and higher culture. Narrative in form, and simple in style and language, his poems appeal to the sympathies and state of knowledge of the mass of the people. They are addressed broadly to the national sentiment. They do not subject the intellect to any violent strain. They are entirely free from subtleties of

thought—from all nice subjectivities, remote allusions, and hidden meanings. Their tone, too, is eminently manly and healthful. The crowning distinction of their character is, that they are genuine transcripts of nature. There is, withal, a delicious artlessness and *abandon* in Scott's delineations both of nature and of human nature, which forms the most enduring charm of his works. Without their splendid descriptions of Scottish scenery, and their apt allusions to Scottish feudal history, Scott's poems would, to the great mass of readers, be "flat, stale, and unprofitable." Indeed, the command he had over these materials, and the manner in which he used them, constituted the great secret of his poetical art.

His power as a *descriptive* poet lies in the grasp which he takes of the grander and broader features of natural scenery: he deals in bold outlines and striking effects, rather than in minute details. His fancy is apt rather than rich, homely rather than brilliant. The elements, or rudimentary ideas, which go to the composition of his pictures, are surprisingly few.

The topographical element bulks very largely in Scott's poems. They are historical romances set in a geographical framework. The skill with which he manipulates the names of his favourite haunts, and the evident love with which he dwells upon them—investing them, as he does, with a romantic interest—form one of the chief sources of his popularity. It is to this strong local colouring, as much as to anything else, that his tales are indebted for that *vraisemblance* which endears them to the hearts of the Scottish people. It is this that makes the south and centre of Scotland preëminently the Land of Scott. It was this that drew so many pilgrims to his shrine; so much so that Mr. Cadell could write: "It is a well-ascertained fact, that, from the publication of 'The Lady of the Lake,' the post-horse duty in Scotland rose in an extraordinary degree; and, indeed, it continued to do so regularly for a number of years, the author's succeeding works keeping up the enthusiasm for our scenery which he had thus originally created."

Scott's power as a *narrative* poet—as an expositor *rerum gestarum*—is only second to his power in description. Next to his descriptions of the Trosachs and the Cuchullin mountains, we rank his account of the combat between Fitz-James and Roderick Dhu; of the heroic capture of Turnberry Castle; of the deaths of Marmion, De Boune,

and De Argentine. These narratives abound in life and vigour. He sweeps through them with untired wing, and with a glorious sense of freedom and power. It must be admitted that the progress of his stories is often laboured, from the weight of historical and antiquarian detail which they have to carry. In the descriptive passages the reader is sometimes apt to lose his way in the maze of geographical digressions. But in the scenes of heroism and daring adventure, the interest never flags: the poet puts forth all his unfettered strength, and carries his reader along with him in his invincible career.

The delineation of *character* in Scott's poems—and in this respect they differ from his novels—is subordinate both to the descriptive and to the narrative elements. In no case does the development of the plot depend upon the analysis or development of character. The interest depends rather upon the concurrence of events than upon the triumph of principles. The reader's sympathies are diffused over the general result, rather than centred in the fate of particular personages. Subordinate characters are sometimes more estimable than the ostensible heroes. Cranstoun, the hero of "The Lay of the Last Minstrel," makes a poor figure in the poem, and excites far less interest than William of Deloraine. Roderick Dhu is the real hero, the central character, of "The Lady of the Lake." Lord Marmion is "a haughty gallant, gay Lothario," a cavalier of the seventeenth century, clothed in the trappings of the sixteenth: the real hero of the poem is the Palmer, De Wilton. Ronald, the Lord of the Isles, is a selfish, faithless, and conceited Highlander. The true *dénouement* of the poem is not his marriage with the Maid of Lorn, but the triumph of Bruce at Bannockburn.

True to his character as a Ballad poet, Scott makes large use of the supernatural element. "The Lay of the Last Minstrel" is based upon, as it was suggested by, the legend of Gilpin Horner. The scene at the tomb of Michael Scott, in the same poem, is another weird fancy. In "Marmion," the host's tale of the Elfin Warrior, and the apparitions at the City Cross, are conceived in the same vein. The Augury of the Taghairm, or Oracle of the Hide, in "The Lady of the Lake," and the appearance of the phantom beacon in "The Lord of the Isles," we owe, in like manner, to that fondness for the purely romantic and supernatural aspects of the ballad which Scott had imbibed along with his admiration for Bürger's "Lenore" and

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

If we were asked to appraise the poems contained in this volume, and to give a comparative estimate of their poetical worth, we should found our verdict upon the analysis of their outstanding features which we have now given. We should therefore unhesitatingly assign the first place to "The Lady of the Lake," as the poem in which vivid description and powerful narration are most successfully combined. We are inclined to give the second place to "The Lay of the Last Minstrel," on account of its romantic and distinctively ballad character. The first of Scott's great original poems, it was written at a time when his mind was saturated with ballad literature; it was produced in answer to a demand for a ballad; its scene is laid in the ballad district of Scotland; and it bears, both in its characters and in its language, proofs of its ballad origin, particularly of its indebtedness to "Jamie Telfer of the Fair Dodhead." "Marmion" may dispute this position with "The Lay," on grounds of historical interest and artistic structure, but not on those of natural feeling or poetical power. The last place remains for "The Lord of the Isles;" but it occupies the lowest rank in an honourable series. Though it is in many parts crude and disjointed, though it lacks unity of action and concentrated interest, it is yet full of national sentiment and heroic adventure.

The great value of Scott's poems for educational purposes has been hitherto underrated, if, indeed, it has not been wholly overlooked. As a rule, their moral tone is unexceptionable. They present us with many noble types of gentle and heroic character. They are calculated to enlist the sympathies of the young on the side of truth, and goodness, and honesty, and moral as well as physical beauty. On the lower ground of usefulness in technical teaching, they may be turned

to excellent account. Not a few grammatical lapses and questionable constructions are to be found in them; but the general vigour of language and Shakespearean concentration of thought which characterize them, entitle Scott as a poet to a prominent place amongst English Classics.

The measure employed by Scott in all his longer poems, with the exception of "The Vision of Don Roderick," is iambic tetrameter, in rhyming couplets. This is the *romantic measure* of English, and specially of Scottish poetry, which Wace, Barbour, Wyntoun, Blind Harry, and other romantic chroniclers, systematically used. In modern times it was revived by Coleridge in his "Christabel;" but Scott has the merit of having made it thoroughly popular. This measure, when pursued with unvarying regularity, as in the case of Scott's "Rokeby," is apt to become monotonous. To avoid monotony, Dunbar adopted a stanza consisting of four romantic couplets of tetrameters, each couplet followed by a trimeter in the same measure. Scott adopts several expedients for giving variety to his verse. Of these the following stanza from "Marmion" affords examples:—

"Resting upon his pilgrim staff,
  Right opposite the Palmer stood;
His thin dark visage seen but half,
  Half hidden by his hood.
Still fixed 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."

1. Trimeters are introduced (lines 4, 7, and 10).

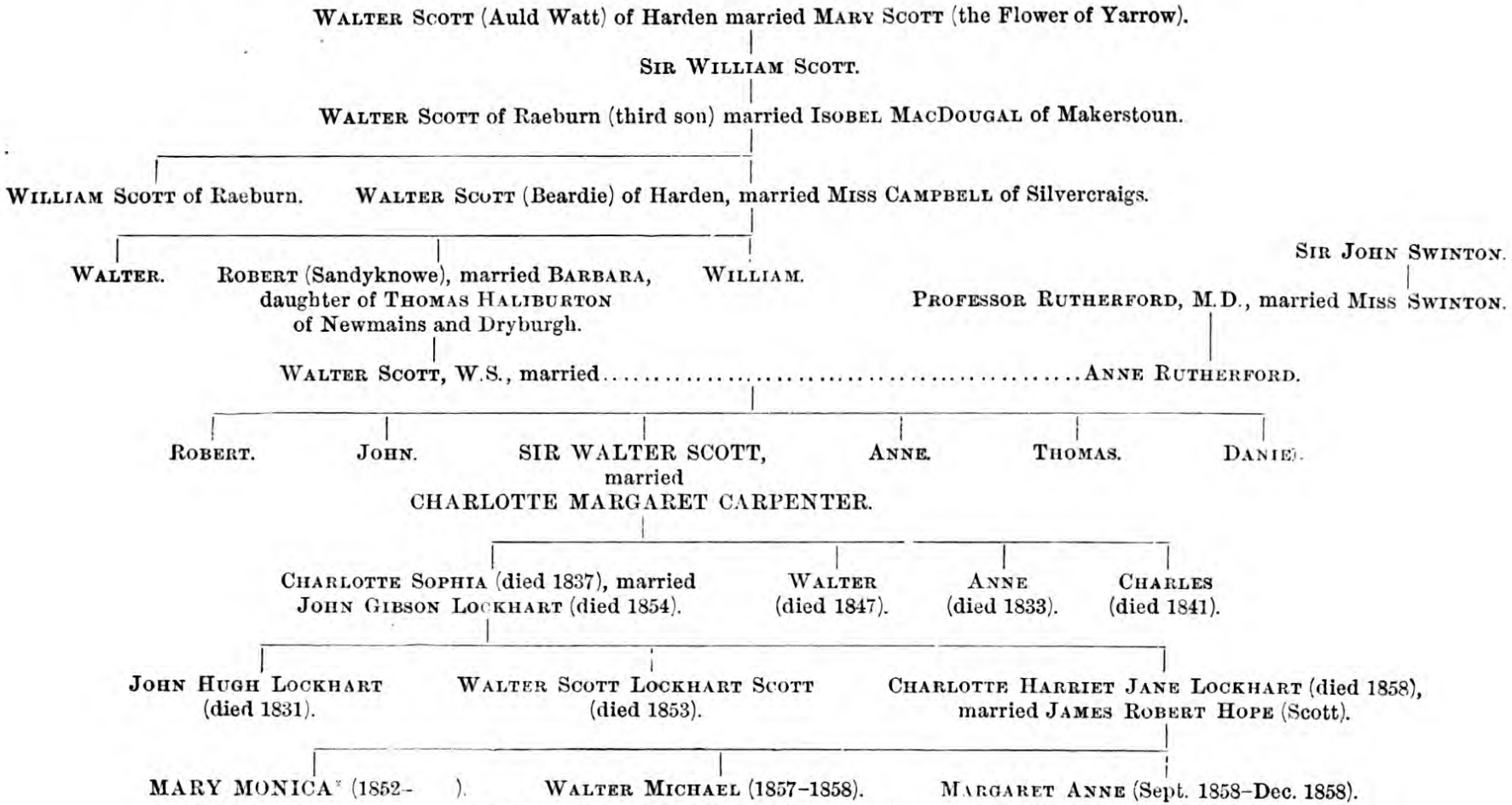
2. The order of the rhymes is changed: sometimes alternate lines rhyme (lines 1 and 3, 2 and 4); sometimes the rhyming lines are separated by a couplet (lines 7 and 10).

3. Trochaic feet are introduced (*e.g.*, "Résting'," in line 1).

4. Anapæstic feet are introduced (*e.g.*, "-mìon' wás," in line 5; and "-tèring' glánce," in line 9).

The rhythm of the poems is further relieved by the introduction of songs and ballads.

GENEALOGICAL TABLE OF THE SCOTT FAMILY.



* *The only surviving descendant of Sir Walter Scott.*

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE

OF THE

LIFE AND TIMES OF SIR WALTER SCOTT.

A.D.	ÆT.	SCOTT.	CONTEMPORARY EVENTS.
1770	..	.....	Wordsworth born.
1771	..	Born at Edinburgh, August 15: His father was Mr. Walter Scott, W.S., grandson of "Beardie," and fifth in descent from "Auld Watt" of Harden; his mother was Anne, daughter of Professor Rutherford, and grand-daughter of Sir John Swinton.	Gray died. Sydney Smith born.
1772	1	A teething fever produces permanent lameness in the right foot.	*Letters of Junius** (collected edition). Coleridge born.
1773	2	Lives with his grandfather at Sandyknowe.	Jeffrey born.
1774	3	Taken to Bath for his health.	R. Fergusson died. Goldsmith died. Southey born.
1775	4	Returns to Edinburgh, and visits Sandyknowe.	American War of Independence. Charles Lamb born. Johnson's *Journey to the Western Highlands of Scotland.*
1776	5	.....	Hume died.
1778	7	Taken to Prestonpans: Returns to Edinburgh, and lives in George Square: Goes to the High School.	Brougham born. Hallam born.
1779	8	At the High School.	Captain Cook died. Moore born.

* The mention of a literary work indicates the time of its first publication.

A. D.	ÆT.	SCOTT.	CONTEMPORARY EVENTS.
1781	10	At the High School: Great reputation as a story-teller: During a visit to his aunt at Kelso he attends the Grammar School, and acts as usher: First acquaintance with *Shakespeare, Spenser,* and *Ossian.*	Johnson's *Lives of the Poets.*
1783	12	Before leaving the High School, writes a poem on *The Setting Sun:* Reads Percy's *Reliques:* Goes to the University of Edinburgh.	Pitt Premier. Ferguson's *Roman History.*
1784	13	At the University.	Mitford's *History of Greece.* Dr. Johnson died.
1785	14	Apprenticed to his father as Writer to the Signet: Studies Italian.	Cowper's *Task.*
1786	15	Sees Robert Burns in James Sibbald's circulating library, and meets him at Professor Ferguson's: Delicate health from bursting a blood-vessel: "Allowed to do nothing, save read."	Warren Hastings impeached.
1787	16	First visit to the Highlands: Attends literary societies.	
1788	17	In his father's office.	Logan died. Byron born.
1789	18	In his father's office.	The French Revolution.
1790	19	In his father's office.	Warton died. Franklin died. Lord Hailes died. Tytler died.
1791	20	In his father's office: Joins the *Speculative Society,* and becomes acquainted with Jeffrey.	Boswell's *Life of Johnson.*
1792	21	Called to the Bar: Falls in love with Miss Stuart Belches: Disappointed.	
1793	22	Begins his "Liddesdale Raids": Takes down anecdotes and ballads.	Robertson died.
1794	23	Fairly successful at the Bar: Takes part as a Tory in a riot in Edinburgh Theatre; bound over to keep the peace.	Gibbon died. Godwin's *Caleb Williams.*
1795	24	.....	Carlyle born.
1796	25	Translations of Bürger's LENORE and THE WILD HUNTSMAN.	Burns died.
1797	26	Writes THE VIOLET, and lines TO A LADY: Meets at Gilsland Miss Charlotte Margaret Carpenter, whom he marries at Carlisle.	
1798	27	.....	Wordsworth and Coleridge's *Lyrical Ballads.* Battle of the Nile.
1799	28	Translation of Goethe's GOETZ VON BERLICHINGEN: Visits London: The HOUSE OF ASPEN written (pub. 1829): Death of his father: First connection with James Ballan-	Buonaparte First Consul. Campbell's *Pleasures of Hope.*

A. D.	Æt.	Scott.	Contemporary Events.
1799	28	tyne, then printer in Kelso: Original ballads—Glenfinlas, &c.: Sheriff of Selkirkshire, with £300 a year: Begins a prose romance entitled Thomas the Rhymer, which was never completed.	
1800	29	Begins a collection of ballads, assisted by Richard Heber, Leyden, Joseph Ritson, and George Ellis: Makes the acquaintance of William Laidlaw and James Hogg.	Cowper died. Macaulay born.
1801	30	At work on the ballads, with the assistance of Leyden, Marriot, Jamieson, &c.	Union of Great Britain and Ireland. Battle of Copenhagen. Battle of Alexandria.
1802	31	The Border Minstrelsy, Vols. I. and II.	The *Edinburgh Review* started.
1803	32	Visits London, Oxford, Blenheim: The Scottish Minstrelsy, Vol. III.	Beattie died. Leyden's *Scenes of Infancy.* Ellis's *Specimens of Early English Poets.*
1804	33	First contribution to the *Edinburgh Review*, on Southey's *Amadis of Gaul:* Sir Tristrem published: Visited by Wordsworth: Death of his uncle, who bequeaths to him Rosebank, near Kelso: He sells it for £5000, and removes to Ashestiel.	Southey's *Thalaba the Destroyer.* Buonaparte Emperor. Miss Edgeworth's *Popular Tales.*
1805	34	The Lay of the Last Minstrel: Partnership with James Ballantyne, printer: Visits Wordsworth at the Lakes: Writes opening chapters of Waverley.	Battle of Trafalgar, and death of Nelson. Foster's *Essays.*
1806	35	Appointed a Clerk in the Court of Session.	Pitt died. Fox died. Chalmers's *Caledonia.*
1807	36	.....	Longfellow born.
1808	37	Marmion: Edition of Dryden's Works.	The Peninsular War. Mrs. Hamilton's *Cottagers of Glenburnie.* Hallam reviews Scott's *Dryden* in the *Edinburgh.*
1809	38	Quarrels with Constable and Co.: Visits London: Meetings with Coleridge, Canning, Croker, &c.	The *Quarterly Review* started. Battle of Corunna, and death of Sir John Moore.
1810	39	Founds the firm of "John Ballantyne and Co., booksellers, Edinburgh:" The Lady of the Lake: Excursion to the Hebrides.	Tennyson born. Miss Porter's *Scottish Chiefs.*
1811	40	The Vision of Don Roderick: Purchases *Abbotsford:* Embarrassment of Ballantyne and Co.	George, Prince of Wales, appointed Regent. Leyden died. Percy died. Thackeray born.

A.D.	ÆT.	SCOTT.	CONTEMPORARY EVENTS.
1812	41	ROKEBY.	Dickens born. Byron's *Childe Harold*, Cantos I. and II. Wilson's *Isle of Palms.*
1813	42	THE BRIDAL OF TRIERMAIN: Reconciled to and assisted by Constable: Declines the Poet-Laureateship in favour of Southey.	Southey Poet-Laureate. Hogg's *Queen's Wake.* Southey's *Life of Nelson.*
1814	43	WAVERLEY, published by Constable and Cadell: Edition of SWIFT: Voyage to Orkney, Shetland, and the Hebrides, with the Commissioners of Northern Lighthouses.	Wordsworth's *Excursion.* Abdication of Napoleon. First locomotive steam-engine used.
1815	44	(January) THE LORD OF THE ISLES: (February) GUY MANNERING: Visits London, and meets Byron: Excursion to Paris: Presented to the Emperor of Russia: THE FIELD OF WATERLOO: PAUL'S LETTERS TO HIS KINSFOLK.	Miss Austen's *Pride and Prejudice.* Shelley's *Alastor.* Battle of Waterloo. Peace of Paris.
1816	45	THE ANTIQUARY: THE BLACK DWARF: OLD MORTALITY.	Wilson's *City of the Plague.* Coleridge's *Christabel.* A. Ferguson died.
1817	46	Visited by Washington Irving: HAROLD THE DAUNTLESS: ROB ROY: Constable takes over the stock of "John Ballantyne and Co.," for £5270.	Mill's *History of British India.* Dr. M'Crie's attack on *Old Mortality.* Mrs. Shelley's *Frankenstein.* Moore's *Lalla Rookh.* Princess Charlotte died. Sheridan died. *Blackwood's Magazine* started.
1818	47	THE HEART OF MID-LOTHIAN: Sells his copyrights to Constable and Co. for £12,000: Severe illness: THE BRIDE OF LAMMERMOOR: THE LEGEND OF MONTROSE.	Death of Sir Philip Francis (Junius). Miss Ferrier's *Marriage.* Keats's *Endymion.* Hallam's *Middle Ages.*
1819	48	IVANHOE.	Shelley's *Cenci.*
1820	49	THE MONASTERY: Visits London: Portrait taken by Lawrence for George IV.: His eldest daughter, Sophia, married to J. G. Lockhart: Gazetted a Baronet (March 20): Visited by Sir H. Davy, and Henry Mackenzie: THE ABBOT: President of the Royal Society of Edinburgh.	Death of George III., and accession of George IV. Trial of Queen Caroline. Washington Irving's *Sketch Book.* Dr. Thomas Brown died. Williams's *Travels in Greece.*
1821	50	KENILWORTH published: Goes to the coronation of George IV.: Writes LIVES OF THE NOVELISTS: THE PIRATE published: Byron dedicates his *Cain* to him.	Death of Keats. Galt's *Annals of the Parish.* Lockhart's *Valerius.* Cooper's *The Spy.*
1822	51	THE FORTUNES OF NIGEL published; also HALIDON HILL, a Drama: Visits George IV. in Leith Roads: Visited by George Crabbe: First warnings of apoplexy.	Death of Shelley. Canning Premier. George IV. enters Edinburgh on 15th August (Scott's birth-day).

A.D.	Æt.	Scott.	Contemporary Events.
1823	52	Peveril of the Peak published; also Quentin Durward: Visited by Maria Edgeworth: St. Ronan's Well published.	Wilson's *Trials of Margaret Lindsay.*
1824	53	Redgauntlet published: Visited by Captain Basil Hall: Marriage of his eldest son: *Constable's Miscellany* projected: The Tales of the Crusaders (The Betrothed; The Talisman): Visits Ireland: Visited at Abbotsford by Thomas Moore: False alarm of Constable's instability.	Death of Byron. Miss Ferrier's *Inheritance.* Theodore Hook's *Sayings and Doings.* Miss Mitford's *Our Village.*
1825	54	His eldest son, Walter, marries Miss Jobson: Begins the Life of Buonaparte for *Constable's Miscellany:* Embarrassment of Hurst and Robinson (Constable's London agents), and consequently of Constable and Co., and of Ballantyne and Co.	Carlyle's *Life of Schiller.* Macaulay's *Essay on Milton.*
1826	55	Failure of Ballantyne and Co., in which he was involved to the extent of £130,000: Executes a trust-deed: Letters of Malachi Malagrowther: Woodstock.	Lockhart editor of the *Quarterly Review.*
1827	56	Death of Lady Scott: Visits London and Paris: Commanded to visit George IV. at Windsor: Acknowledges the authorship of the Waverley Novels at the Theatrical Fund Dinner in Edinburgh: The Life of Buonaparte; and Miscellaneous Prose Works: Death of Constable: Meeting with the Duke of Wellington: The Chronicles of the Canongate (The Highland Widow; The Two Drovers; The Surgeon's Daughter): The Tales of a Grandfather (first series).	Battle of Navarino, and establishment of Greek Independence. Death of Canning. Hallam's *Constitutional History of England.*
1828	57	Religious Discourses by a Layman: The Fair Maid of Perth: Visits London; presented to "the little Princess Victoria;" goes to Hampton Court with Samuel Rogers, Tom Moore, and Wordsworth.	Wellington Premier. Repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts. Death of Dugald Stewart. Tytler's *History of Scotland.* Napier's *History of the Peninsular War.* Combe's *Constitution of Man.* Chalmers Professor in Edinburgh.
1829	58	Supports Catholic Emancipation: Anne of Geierstein: Re-issue of the Novels very successful: Illness; more warnings of apoplexy: Visited by Henry Hallam and his son Arthur.	Catholic Emancipation Act passed. Marryat's *The Naval Officer.* Mrs. Hall's *Sketches of Irish Character.*

A.D.	ÆT.	SCOTT.	CONTEMPORARY EVENTS.
1830	59	THE DOOM OF DEVORGOIL: THE AYRSHIRE TRAGEDY: Serious apoplectic seizure; rapid recovery: LETTERS ON DEMONOLOGY AND WITCHCRAFT; and HISTORY OF FRANCE: Resignation of the Clerkship of Session: His creditors present him with the furniture, library, &c., at Abbotsford, after receiving a second dividend, reducing the debt to £54,000.	Death of George IV.; accession of William IV. Second French Revolution. Earl Grey Premier. Moore's *Life of Byron.* Tennyson's *Poems, chiefly Lyrical.* Marryat's *The King's Own.* Mrs. Gore's *Women as they Are.*
1831	60	Opposition to Parliamentary Reform: Goes to Edinburgh to execute his will: Stroke of paralysis: Persists in composing COUNT ROBERT OF PARIS: Visited by Miss Ferrier: Mobbed at Jedburgh at the election: Partial recovery: Begins to write CASTLE DANGEROUS: Visit to Douglasdale: Publication of his last two tales: Resolves to winter at Naples; the King places a frigate at his service: Visited by Turner at Abbotsford: Wordsworth comes to take farewell of him: Leaves Abbotsford for London 23rd September: The *Barham* sails on 29th October: Spends three weeks at Malta: Reaches Naples 17th December.	Reform Bill rejected: Riots in several large towns. Death of Henry Mackenzie. Miss Ferrier's *Destiny.*
1832	61	Goes to Rome 16th April; leaves, 11th May: Reaches Venice 19th May; Frankfort, 5th June; Nimeguen, 9th June: Another severe paralytic attack: Reaches London 13th June: Returns to Edinburgh 9th July; to Abbotsford, 11th July: Dies, 21st September: Buried in Dryburgh Abbey on the 26th.	Reform Bill passed.

THE LAY OF THE LAST MINSTREL.

CHARACTERS OF THE POEM.

LADY SCOTT of Buccleuch and Branksome, *widow of* Lord Walter Scott (died 1552).
The BARON OF BUCCLEUCH, *her son, a minor.*
LADY MARGARET SCOTT, *her daughter, in love with* Lord Cranstoun.
SIR WILLIAM SCOTT of Deloraine.
The Monk of St. Mary's at Melrose.
HENRY, *Baron of Cranstoun.*
An Elvish Dwarf, *Lord Cranstoun's Page.*
WATT TINLINN of Liddelside.
LORD DACRE, *the English Warden of the Marches.*
LORD HOWARD, *the English Warden of the Western Marches.*
RICHARD OF MUSGRAVE, *an English Knight.*
LORD ANGUS, *the Regent of Scotland.*

Seneschal, Pursuivant, Heralds, &c.

SCENE: *Branksome Tower and its Neighbourhood.*
DATE: *The middle of the Sixteenth Century.*
TIME: *Three days and three nights.*

INTRODUCTION.

THE way was long, the wind was cold,
The Minstrel was infirm and old;
His withered cheek, and tresses grey,
Seemed to have known a better day;
The harp, his sole remaining joy,
Was carried by an orphan boy.
The last of all the Bards was he,
Who sung of Border chivalry.
For, well-a-day! their date was fled;
His tuneful brethren all were dead;
And he, neglected and oppressed,
Wished to be with them and at rest.
No more, on prancing palfrey borne,
He carolled, light as lark at morn;
No longer, courted and caressed,
High placed in hall, a welcome guest,
He poured, to lord and lady gay,
The unpremeditated lay:

Old times were changed, old manners gone;
A stranger filled the Stuarts' throne;
The bigots of the iron time
Had called his harmless art a crime.[1]
A wandering Harper, scorned and poor,
He begged his bread from door to door;
And tuned, to please a peasant's ear,
The harp a king had loved to hear.

He passed where Newark's stately tower[2]
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 passed,
Whose ponderous grate and massy bar
Had oft rolled back the tide of war,
But never closed the iron door
Against the desolate and poor.
The Duchess marked his weary pace,[3]
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,[4]
Of good Earl Francis, dead and gone;[5]
And of Earl Walter,—rest him, God![6]
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[7]
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 obtained;
The aged Minstrel audience gained.
But, when he reached the room of state,
Where she, with all her ladies, sate,

Perchance he wished 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—[8]
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 played it to King Charles the Good,[9]
When he kept court in Holyrood;[10]
And much he wished, yet feared, to try
The long-forgotten melody.
Amid the strings his fingers strayed,
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 lightened up his faded eye,[11]
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,[12]
The poet's glowing thought supplied;
And, while his heart responsive rung,
'Twas thus the LATEST MINSTREL sung.

CANTO FIRST.

THE ARGUMENT.

While knights and squires sit in Branksome Hall, some lounging, and others keeping watch, the Ladye, late at night, seeks Lord David's secret bower. She hears the Spirit of the Flood ask the Spirit of the Fell what is to be the fate of the Ladye Margaret. The Mountain Spirit replies that the house of Branksome cannot enjoy peace till pride be quelled and love be free. The Ladye vows that her daughter shall never be her foeman's bride (referring to Lord Cranstoun). She despatches William of Deloraine to Melrose, to tell the Monk of St. Mary's that the hour is come when the treasure is to be won from the tomb of Michael Scott. Though it is late and dark, Deloraine mounts his steed and starts at once. It is past midnight when he reaches Melrose. He stables his steed, and seeks the convent wall and the cell of the monk.

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.
No living wight, save the Ladye alone,
Had dared to cross the threshold stone.
The tables were drawn, it was idlesse all;
  Knight, and page, and household squire,
Loitered through the lofty hall,
  Or crowded round the ample fire.
The stag-hounds, weary with the chase,
  Lay stretched upon the rushy floor;
And urged, in dreams, the forest-race,
  From Teviot-stone to Eskdale-moor.
Nine-and-twenty knights of fame
  Hung their shields in Branksome Hall;
Nine-and-twenty squires of name
  Brought them their steeds to bower from stall;
    Nine-and-twenty yeomen tall
    Waited, duteous, on them all:
    They were all knights of mettle true,
    Kinsmen to the bold Buccleuch.
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,
Pillowed on buckler cold and hard;
    They carved at the meal
    With gloves of steel,
And they drank the red wine through the helmet barred.

Ten squires, ten yeomen, mail-clad men,
Waited the beck of the warders ten;
Thirty steeds, both fleet and wight,[2]
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 Branksome Hall.

Why do these steeds stand ready dight?[4]
Why watch these warriors, armed, 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,[5]
  Threaten Branksome's lordly towers,
From Warkworth, or Naworth, or merry
    Carlisle.
Such is the custom of Branksome Hall.—[6]
    Many a valiant knight is here;
But he, the chieftain of them all,[7]
His sword hangs rusting on the wall,
    Beside his broken spear.
In sorrow o'er Lord Walter's bier
  The warlike foresters had bent;
And many a flower, and many a tear,
  Old Teviot's maids and matrons lent:
But o'er her warrior's bloody bier
The Ladye dropped nor flower nor tear!
Vengeance, deep-brooding o'er the slain,
  Had locked the source of softer woe;
And burning pride, and high disdain,
  Forbade the rising tear to flow;
Until, amid his sorrowing clan,
  Her son lisped from the nurse's knee—
"And if I live to be a man,[8]
My father's death revenged shall be!"
Then fast the mother's tears did seek
To dew the infant's kindling cheek.—
All loose her negligent attire,
  All loose her golden hair,
Hung Margaret o'er her slaughtered 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 altered eye
Dared she to look for sympathy.
Her lover, 'gainst her father's clan,
With Car in arms had stood,[9]
When Mathouse-burn to Melrose ran
All purple with their blood;
And well she knew her mother dread,
Before Lord Cranstoun she should wed,
Would see her on her dying bed.
Of noble race the Ladye came;
Her father was a clerk of fame,
Of Bethune's line of Picardie:
He learned the art that none may name,
In Padua, far beyond the sea.[10]
And of his skill, as bards avow,
He taught that Ladye fair,
Till to her bidding she could bow
The viewless forms of air.
And now she sits in secret bower,
In old Lord David's western tower,[11]
And listens to a heavy sound,
That moans the mossy turrets round.
The Ladye knew it well!
It was the Spirit of the Flood that spoke,
And he called on the Spirit of the Fell.[12]

River Spirit.

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

Mountain Spirit.

"Arthur's slow wain his course doth roll,[13]
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:[14]
Ill may I read their high decree!
But no kind influence deign they shower[15]
On Teviot's tide, and Branksome's tower,
Till pride be quelled, and love be free."—

The Ladye raised her stately head,
And her heart throbbed high with pride:[16]
"Your mountains shall bend,
And your streams ascend,
Ere Margaret be our foeman's bride!"

II.

The Ladye sought the lofty hall,
Where many a bold retainer lay,[17]
And, with jocund din, among them all,
Her son pursued his infant play.
The Ladye forgot her purpose high,
One moment, and no more;
One moment gazed with a mother's eye,
As she paused at the archèd door:[18]
Then from amid the armèd train,
She called to her, William of Deloraine.[19]
A stark moss-trooping Scott was he,[20]
As e'er couched Border lance by knee:
Steady of heart, and stout of hand,
As ever drove prey from Cumberland:
Five times outlawed had he been,
By England's King and Scotland's Queen.—
"Sir William of Deloraine, good at need,
Mount thee on the wightest steed;[21]
Spare not to spur, nor stint to ride,
Until thou come to fair Tweedside;
And in Melrose's holy pile[22]
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,[23]
And, though stars be dim, the moon is bright;
And the Cross, of bloody red,
Will point to the grave of the mighty dead.
What he gives thee, see thou keep;[24]
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![25]
Better hadst thou ne'er been born."—
"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,
Were't my neck-verse at Hairibee."[26]

III.

Soon in his saddle sat he fast,
And soon the steep descent he passed;
Soon crossed the sounding barbican,[27]
And soon the Teviot side he won.
When Hawick he passed, had curfew rung;
Now midnight lauds were in Melrose sung.[28]
The sound, upon the fitful gale,
In solemn wise did rise and fail,[29]
Like that wild harp whose magic tone[30]
Is wakened by the winds alone.
But when Melrose he reached, 'twas silence all;
He meetly stabled his steed in stall,
And sought the convent's lonely wall.

CANTO SECOND.

THE ARGUMENT.

THE aged Monk leads the way to the chancel of the Abbey. In the centre of the east oriel window there is a figure of St. Michael brandishing his Cross of Red. The moonlight striking through this casts a blood-red reflection on the paved floor, and thus marks the stone which covers the Wizard's grave. The Warrior removes this stone with a bar of iron, and a wondrous light streams out of the grave. In terror Deloraine takes from the cold hand of the Wizard his Mighty Book, and replaces the stone. As they leave the chancel, they hear fiendish sobs and unearthly laughter. The Monk returns to his cell, and is found dead at noon. Deloraine returns to Branksome, with the Mystic Book pressed to his bosom.

At daybreak, Margaret glides stealthily down the secret stair of her tower, and meets her lover, Lord Cranstoun, in the hawthorn wood. His page, an elvish Dwarf, warns his master of the approach of some one, and the lovers hurriedly part. Margaret hastens back to her tower. The Baron remounts his steed, and rides eastward through the hawthorns.

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.[1]
When the broken arches are black in night,
And each shafted oriel glimmers white;
When the cold light's uncertain shower
Streams on the ruined 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;[2]

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 ruined pile;
And, home returning, soothly swear,[3]
Was never scene so sad and fair!—
Short halt did Deloraine make there;[4]
Little recked he of the scene so fair.
He entered the cell of the ancient priest,
And lifted his barrèd aventayle,[5]
To hail the Monk of St. Mary's aisle:
"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 stiffened limbs he reared;
A hundred years had flung their snows
On his thin locks and floating beard.
Now, slow and faint, he led the way,
Where, cloistered round, the garden lay;
The pillared arches were over their head,
And beneath their feet were the bones of the dead.[6]

II.

By a steel-clenched postern door,
They entered now the chancel tall;
The darkened roof rose high aloof[7]
On pillars lofty and light and small:
The moon on the east oriel shone
Through slender shafts of shapely stone;
Full in the midst, his Cross of Red
Triumphant Michael brandishèd.
The moonbeam kissed the holy pane,
And threw on the pavement a bloody stain.
They sate them down on a marble stone,—
(A Scottish monarch slept below;)[8]
Thus spoke the Monk, in solemn tone:—
"I was not always a man of woe;
For Paynim countries I have trod,[9]
And fought beneath the Cross of God.
In these far climes, it was my lot
To meet the wondrous Michael Scott.[10]
When Michael lay on his dying bed,
His conscience was awakenèd:
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.

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.
Lo, Warrior! now the Cross of Red
Points to the grave of the mighty dead:
Within it burns a wondrous light,
To chase the spirits that love the night;—
That lamp shall burn unquenchably,
Until the eternal doom shall be."

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 withered hand,
The grave's huge portal to expand.
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,—
Streamed upward to the chancel roof,
And through the galleries far aloof!
No earthly flame blazed ere so bright:
It shone like heaven's own blessed light,
And, issuing from the tomb,
Shewed the Monk's cowl, and visage pale,
Danced on the dark-browed Warrior's mail,
And kissed his waving plume.
Before their eyes the Wizard lay,
As if he had not been dead a day.
His hoary beard in silver rolled,
He seemed some seventy winters old;
A palmer's amice wrapped 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.
Then Deloraine, in terror, took
From the cold hand the Mighty Book,
With iron clasped, and with iron bound:
He thought, as he took it, the dead man frowned;

But the glare of the sepulchral light,
Perchance, had dazzled the Warrior's sight.
The Monk returned 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!
The Knight breathed free in the morning wind,
And strove his hardihood to find:[11]
He was glad when he passed the tombstones grey
Which girdle round the fair Abbaye;
For the Mystic Book, to his bosom pressed,
Felt like a load upon his breast.

III.

The sun had brightened Cheviot grey,
The sun had brightened the Carter's side;[12]
And soon beneath the rising day
Smiled Branksome towers and Teviot's tide.—
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?
The Ladye steps in doubt and dread,
Lest her watchful mother hear her tread;
And she glides through the greenwood at dawn of light,
To meet Baron Henry, her own true knight.—
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.—
Beneath an oak, mossed o'er by eld,
The Baron's Dwarf his courser held,
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.
He was waspish, arch, and litherlie,[13]
But well Lord Cranstoun servèd he:
And he of his service was full fain;
For once he had been ta'en or slain,[14]
An it had not been his ministry.[15]
All between Home and Hermitage[16]
Talked of Lord Cranstoun's Goblin-Page.
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.[17]
The Dwarf the stirrup held and rein;
Vaulted the Knight on his steed amain,
And, pondering deep that morning's scene,
Rode eastward through the hawthorns green.

CANTO THIRD

THE ARGUMENT.

CRANSTOUN has hardly time to recover from his surprise, and, warned by his Goblin-Page of the approach of an armed knight, to don his helmet, when he sees William of Deloraine descending the hill. Few words are needed to express their feudal hate, and to make a combat inevitable. Their meeting is "like the bursting thunder-cloud." The Borderer's spear shaft is shivered against Cranstoun's heart; but the Baron's point pierces Deloraine's mail, and rider and horse are hurled to the ground by the shock. Deeming it unsafe to remain longer in the neighbourhood of Branksome, the Baron, after instructing his page to tend the wounded man and lead him to the Castle gate, pursues his way alone. On removing the Knight's corslet, the page discovers the Mighty Book. He tries to open it, but fails to do so until he smears it over with the blood of the wounded Knight. He reads in it one short spell, by which he is able to make a lady seem a knight, a hut seem a palace, and youth seem age. Before he can read further, he receives from an unseen hand a buffet so strong that it stretches him on the plain. The Book closes, and the clasps shut faster than before. The page recovers, conceals the Book under his cloak, and lays Deloraine on his weary horse and leads him to Branksome. He flings him on the ground, at the entrance of the Ladye's secret bower. Repassing the outer court, the Dwarf sees the young heir of Branksome at play, and, assuming the form of a playmate, decoys him to the wood. Here, taking again his elvish shape, he darts away, crying, "Lost! lost! lost!" The child wanders through the forest, trying in vain to find the way to Branksome. He falls at last into the hands of some English yeomen, who, recognizing him, carry him off to Lord Dacre, the English Warden of the Marches. Meantime the Dwarf has returned to Branksome, and has assumed there the form of the lost boy; but he works so much unwonted mischief, that every one in the Castle believes that the young Baron is possessed by an evil spirit. The Ladye is too busy tending William of Deloraine's wounds to notice the change in her son. The same evening the beacon-blaze of war is seen to glare on the top of Penchryst-hill. Every one knows that an English marauding party has crossed the Border, and all is bustle and excitement. Scouts are sent out in every direction to reconnoitre the enemy, and to summon their allies. Soon the Castle beacon is lighted, and the message is carried from tower to tower, and from hill to hill, till it reaches the Regent in the Capital, who orders a general march to the Border.

CANTO FOURTH.

THE ARGUMENT.

EARLY the next morning Watt Tinlinn of Liddelside arrives at Branksome with news of the enemy, who have burned his little lonely tower. Three thousand Englishmen, led by Lord Dacre and Lord Howard—called Belted Will—and accompanied by a body of German musketeers, are marching with all speed to Branksome. The retainers and

allies meantime crowd into the Castle. In their midst the Ladye extols with pride the bravery of her son. But the wily page, afraid to meet her gaze, feigns fear, shrinks from her sight, shrieks, and weeps. She, ashamed of his cowardice, orders Wat Tinlinn to conduct him to Buccleuch. As they cross a shallow brook, the water of which breaks his spell, the elf, discovered, flees, shouting, "Lost! lost! lost!" Tinlinn sends an arrow after him, which wounds him in the shoulder, and rides back to Branksome in hot haste, in time to see the marshalling of the enemy within sight of the Castle. From the Castle wall the Ladye holds parley with Lord Howard's pursuivant, who leads her son by the hand. He demands the surrender of William of Deloraine for plundering the lands of Musgrave; else they will storm the Castle, and lead her son to London to be page to King Edward. The Ladye, undismayed by her son's danger, defies the English lords, but proposes that Deloraine and Musgrave should engage in single combat to settle the dispute. Before answering the proposal, the English hear that the Regent is approaching with ten thousand Scots. The haughty Dacre wishes to decline the challenge, and attack the Castle at once; but he is overruled by the calmer counsels of Howard. The challenge is accepted, and the combat is fixed for the morrow.

I.

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.
The frightened flocks and herds were pent
Beneath the peel's rude battlement;[1]
And maids and matrons dropped 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,
Showed Southern ravage was begun.
Now loud the heedful gate-ward cried—[2]
  "Prepare ye all for blows and blood!
Watt Tinlinn, from the Liddel-side,
  Comes wading through the flood."
While thus he spoke, the bold yeoman
Entered the echoing barbican.
He led a small and shaggy nag,
That through a bog, from hag to hag,[3]
Could bound like any Billhope stag.
It bore his wife and children twain:
A half-clothed serf was all their train.—
Thus to the Ladye did Tinlinn show
The tidings of the English foe:
"Belted Will Howard is marching here,[4]
And hot Lord Dacre, with many a spear,
And all the German hackbut-men,[5]
Who have long lain at Askerten:
They crossed the Liddel at curfew hour,
And burned my little lonely tower."—
Now weary scouts from Liddesdale,
Fast hurrying in, confirmed the tale:

As far as they could judge by ken,
Three hours would bring to Teviot's strand
Three thousand armèd Englishmen;—
Meanwhile, full many a warlike band,
From Teviot, Aill, and Ettrick shade,
Came in, their Chief's defence to aid.
There was saddling and mounting in haste,
There was pricking o'er moor and lea;
He that was last at the trysting-place
Was but lightly held of his gay ladye.
From fair St. Mary's silver wave,[6]
From dreary Gamescleuch's dusky height,
His ready lances Thirlestane brave[7]
Arrayed beneath a banner bright.—
An agèd knight, to danger steeled,
With many a moss-trooper came on;
And azure in a golden field,
The stars and crescent graced his shield,
Without the bend of Murdieston:
And still, in age, he spurned at rest;
And still his brows the helmet pressed,
Albeit the blanchèd locks below
Were white as Dinlay's spotless snow.[8]
Five stately warriors drew the sword
Before their father's band:
A braver knight than Harden's lord
Ne'er belted on a brand.—
Scotts of Eskdale, a stalwart band,
Came trooping down the Todshaw-hill:
By the sword they won their land,
And by the sword they hold it still.—
Whitslade the Hawk, and Headshaw came,
And warriors more than I may name;
From Yarrow-cleugh to Hindhaugh-swair,[9]
From Woodhouselie to Chester-glen,
Trooped man and horse, and bow and spear:
Their gathering-word was Bellenden.[10]
And better hearts o'er Border sod
To siege or rescue never rode.—
The Ladye marked 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.
Well may you think the wily page
Cared not to face the Ladye sage.
He counterfeited childish fear,
And shrieked, and shed full many a tear,

And moaned and plained in manner wild.
The attendants to the Ladye told,
Some fairy, sure, had changed the child,
That wont to be so free and bold.[11]
Then wrathful was the noble dame;
She blushed 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!"[12]
A heavy task Watt Tinlinn had
To guide the counterfeited lad.
Soon as the palfrey felt the weight
Of that ill-omened elfish freight,
He bolted, sprung, and reared amain,
Nor heeded bit, nor curb, nor rein.
It cost Watt Tinlinn mickle toil[13]
To drive him but a Scottish mile;
But, as a shallow brook they crossed,
The elf, amid the running stream,[14]
His figure changed, like form in dream,
And fled, and shouted, "Lost! lost! lost!"
Full fast the urchin ran and laughed;
But faster still a cloth-yard shaft[15]
Whistled from startled Tinlinn's yew,[16]
And pierced his shoulder through and through.
Although the imp might not be slain,
And though the wound soon healed again,
Yet as he ran he yelled for pain;
And Watt of Tinlinn, much aghast,
Rode back to Branksome fiery fast.

II.

Soon on the hill's steep verge he stood,
That looks o'er Branksome's towers and wood;
And martial murmurs from below
Proclaimed the approaching Southern foe.
Through the dark wood, in mingled tone,
Were Border pipes and bugles blown;
The coursers' neighing he could ken,
And measured tread of marching men;
While broke at times the solemn hum,
The Almayn's sullen kettle-drum;[17]
And banners tall, of crimson sheen,
Above the copse appear;
And, glistening through the hawthorns green,
Shine helm, and shield, and spear.

So rode they forth in fair array,
Till full their lengthened lines display;
Then called a halt, and made a stand,
And cried, "St. George, for merry England!"
Now every English eye, intent,
On Branksome's armèd towers was bent:
So near they were, that they might know
The straining harsh of each cross-bow;
On battlement and bartizan[18]
Gleamed axe, and spear, and partisan;
Falcon and culver on each tower[19]
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
Reeked, 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.—
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:
"Ye English warden lords, of you
Demands the Ladye of Buccleuch,
Why, 'gainst the truce of Border tide,[20]
In hostile guise ye dare to ride,
With Kendal bow, and Gilsland brand,
And all yon mercenary band,
Upon the bounds of fair Scotland?"—
A wrathful man was Dacre's lord;
But calmer Howard took the word:
"May't please thy Dame, Sir Seneschal,
To seek the Castle's outward wall,
Our pursuivant-at-arms shall show
Both why we came and when we go."—
The message sped; the noble Dame
To the wall's outward circle came:
Each chief around leaned on his spear,
To see the pursuivant appear.
All in Lord Howard's livery dressed,
The lion argent decked his breast,
He led a boy of blooming hue,—
Oh, sight to meet a mother's view!
It was the heir of great Buccleuch.
Obeisance meet the herald made,
And thus his master's will he said:

"We claim from thee William of Deloraine,
That he may suffer march-treason pain.[21]
It was but last St. Cuthbert's even
He pricked to Stapleton on Leven,
Harried the lands of Richard Musgrave,
And slew his brother by dint of glaive.[22]
Then, since a lone and widowed 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,[23]
And storm and spoil thy garrison:
And this fair boy, to London led,
Shall good King Edward's page be bred."
He ceased: and loud the boy did cry,
And stretched 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—
Gushed to her eye the unbidden tear:
She gazed upon the leaders round,
And dark and sad each warrior frowned;
Then deep within her sobbing breast
She locked the struggling sigh to rest;
Unaltered and collected stood,
And thus replied, in dauntless mood:
"Say to your Lords of high emprize,[24]
Who war on women and on boys,
That either William of Deloraine
Will cleanse him by oath of march-treason stain,
Or else he will the combat take
'Gainst Musgrave, for his honour's sake."—
Proud she looked round, applause to claim:
Then lightened Thirlestane's eye of flame;
His bugle Wat of Harden blew;
Pensils and pennons wide were flung;[25]
To heaven the Border slogan rung—[26]
"St. Mary for the young Buccleugh!"
The English war-cry answered wide,
And forward bent each Southern spear;
Each Kendal archer made a stride,
And drew the bow-string to his ear;
Each minstrel's war-note loud was blown:
But ere a grey-goose shaft had flown,
A horseman galloped from the rear.

[*He brings tidings that Angus, the Regent, is approaching, with ten thousand Scots, to relieve Branksome. In spite of this news, Lord Dacre wishes to attack the Castle; but Lord Howard's counsels, that the challenge should be accepted, prevail.*]

The pursuivant-at-arms again
  Before the Castle took his stand:
His trumpet called, with parleying strain,
  The leaders of the Scottish band;
And he defied, in Musgrave's right,
Stout Deloraine to single fight;
A gauntlet at their feet he laid,
And thus the terms of fight he said:
"If in the lists good Musgrave's sword
Vanquish the Knight of Deloraine,
Your youthful chieftain, Branksome's Lord,
  Shall hostage for his clan remain:
If Deloraine foil good Musgrave,
The boy his liberty shall have.
  Howe'er it falls, the English band,
Unharming Scots, by Scots unharmed,
In peaceful march, like men unarmed,
  Shall straight retreat to Cumberland."
Unconscious of the near relief,
The proffer pleased each Scottish chief,
  Though much the Ladye sage gainsaid:
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 fixed 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.

CANTO FIFTH.

THE ARGUMENT.

THE night before the combat is spent in feasting and merriment, in which enmity and revenge are forgotten. Margaret, the Flower of Teviot, is the first to retire from the feast, and the first to awake in the morning. Gazing upon the inner court in the grey light, what is her surprise and alarm when she sees her lover, Lord Cranstoun, walking fearlessly towards her turret stair! But he runs small risk, for his page, by his potent spell, has transformed him to a Knight of Hermitage.

The lists being now prepared, the bugles sound a warning blast, and hundreds of eager warriors surround the enclosure. The Ladye of Branksome and her daughter ride forth to grace with their presence a combat in which they have so deep an interest. The young Buccleuch, the prize of the field, is led forth by an English knight. Earl Home and Lord Dacre are marshals of the field. The heralds proclaim the cause of each champion; the marshals give the word, the trumpets sound, and the combatants, advancing on foot, close in mortal strife. After a long and fierce struggle, a terrible blow stretches Musgrave on the plain, and loud shouts hail the victor. Before these have died away, a half-naked, ghastly man, with wild and haggard looks, rushes through the throng, clears the barrier at a bound, and stands in the midst of the field. It is William of Deloraine. Who then is the victor? Knights and ladies press round him to inquire. His helm is soon undone, and reveals Margaret's lover, Cranstoun of Teviotdale! Taking young Buccleuch by the hand, he restores him to his mother, who presses him to her breast, but deigns not to look upon his deliverer; till remembering the prophecy of the Mountain Spirit, she says that not he but Fate has vanquished her; and that pride being now quelled, love may be free. Then, taking her daughter's hand, she places it in that of Cranstoun, saying, "This clasp of love our bond shall be." She appoints the same day for the betrothal of Margaret and Henry, and summons the lords of both armies to be present.

Returning to the Castle with Cranstoun, she learns how he had fought with Deloraine, how his page had got possession of the Wizard's book, and had stolen from Deloraine, while he slept, the armour in which Cranstoun fought.

I.

SCARCELY the hot assault was stayed,
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 appeared,
And trampling steeds were faintly heard;
Bright spears, above the columns dun,
Glanced momentary to the sun;
And feudal banners fair displayed
The bands that moved to Branksome's aid.
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 prayed 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 dubbed, more bold in fight;[1]

Nor, when from war and armour free,[2]
More famed for stately courtesy:
But angry Dacre rather chose
In his pavilion to repose.

Margaret from hall did soon retreat,
Despite the Dame's reproving eye;
Nor marked 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 bannered hosts repose,
She viewed the dawning day:
Of all the hundreds sunk to rest,
First woke the loveliest and the best.
She gazed upon the inner court,
Which in the tower's tall shadow lay;
Where coursers' clang, and stamp, and snort,
Had rung the live-long yesterday;
Now still as death, till, stalking slow,—
The jingling spurs announced his tread,—
A stately warrior passed below;
But when he raised his plumèd head—
Blessed Mary! can it be?—
Secure, as if in Ousenam bowers,[3]
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.
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,[4]
A knight from Hermitage.
Unchallenged thus, the warder's post,
The court, unchallenged, thus he crossed,
For all the vassalage:[5]
But oh! 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.
Now leave we Margaret and her Knight,
To tell of the approaching fight.

II.

Their warning blast the bugles blew,
The pipe's shrill port aroused each clan;[6]
In haste, the deadly strife to view,
The trooping warriors eager ran:
Thick round the lists their lances stood,
Like blasted pines in Ettrick wood;
To Branksome many a look they threw,
The combatants' approach to view;
And bandied many a word of boast,
About the knight each favoured most.
When for the lists they sought the plain,[7]
The stately Ladye's silken rein
Did noble Howard hold:
Unarmèd by her side he walked,
And much, in courteous phrase, they talked
Of feats of arms of old.
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 broidered rein.
He deemed she shuddered at the sight
Of warriors met for mortal fight;
But cause of terror, all unguessed,
Was fluttering in her gentle breast,
When, in their chairs of crimson placed,
The Dame and she the barriers graced.
Prize of the field, the young Buccleuch,
An English knight led forth to view;
Scarce rued the boy his present plight,
So much he longed 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 assigned
Like vantage of the sun and wind.[8]
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:—

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.[9]
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!"

Scottish Herald.

"Here standeth William of Deloraine,
Good knight and true, of noble strain,
Who sayeth, that foul treason's stain,
Since he bore arms, ne'er soiled his coat;
And that, so help him God above,[10]
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.—
'Tis done! 'tis done! that fatal blow
Has stretched him on the bloody plain:
He strives to rise—Brave Musgrave, no!
Thence never shalt thou rise again!—
As if exhausted in the fight,
Or musing o'er the piteous sight,
The silent victor stands;

His beaver did he not unclasp,
Marked 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 thronged array,
In panic haste gave open way
To a half-naked ghastly man,
Who downward from the Castle ran.
He crossed the barriers at a bound,
And wild and haggard looked around,
As dizzy, and in pain;[11]
And all, upon the armèd 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 plumèd helm was soon undone—
"Cranstoun of Teviot-side!
For this fair prize I've fought and won,"—
And to the Ladye led her son.
Full oft the rescued boy she kissed,
And often pressed him to her breast;
For, under all her dauntless show,
Her heart had throbbed at every blow;—
Yet not Lord Cranstoun deigned she greet,
Though low he kneelèd at her feet.
Me lists not tell what words were made,[12]
What Douglas, Home, and Howard said—
For Howard was a generous foe;
And how the clan united prayed
The Ladye would the feud forego,
And deign to bless the nuptial hour
Of Cranstoun's Lord and Teviot's Flower.
She looked to river, looked to hill,
Thought on the Spirit's prophecy,[13]
Then broke her silence stern and still:
"Not you, but Fate has vanquished me;
Their influence kindly stars may shower
On Teviot's tide and Branksome's tower,
For pride is quelled, 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."—
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;[14]
How, in Sir William's armour dight,[15]
Stolen by his page, while slept the knight,
He took on him the single fight.
But half his tale he left unsaid,
And lingered till he joined the maid.—
Cared not the Ladye to betray
Her mystic arts in view of day;
But well she thought, ere midnight came,
Of that strange page the pride to tame,
From his foul hands the Book to save,
And send it back to Michael's grave.—
Needs not to tell each tender word
'Twixt Margaret and 'twixt Cranstoun's lord;
Nor how she told of former woes,
And how her bosom fell and rose,
While he and Musgrave bandied blows.—
Needs not these lovers' joy to tell;
One day, fair maids, you'll know them well.

CANTO SIXTH.

THE ARGUMENT.

THE spousal rites are over before noon, and are followed by a gorgeous festival, at which all is mirth and revelry. The Goblin-Page, still bent on mischief, tries to stir up strife between the English and the Scottish Borderers; but the Ladye checks the threatening fray by calling for the minstrels. While Scottish ballad alternates with English lay, every voice is hushed. Ere the last strains of "the dirge of lovely Rosabelle" have died away, the hall is involved in weird darkness. In the midst of it, the Dwarf falls to the ground, and, shuddering, mutters, "Found! found! found!" Suddenly a flash of lightning darts through the hall and breaks upon the elvish page. It is followed by a loud peal of thunder. This over, the Dwarf is seen no more. All are terror-stricken; but Deloraine's blood freezes and his brain burns, for he has seen what was hidden from other eyes—the apparition of Michael Scott.

Lord Angus then vows a pilgrimage to Melrose Abbey, for the sake of the Wizard's restless spirit. To this solemn ceremony—the bridal of Teviot's Flower and Cranstoun's heir having in the meantime taken place—the pilgrim-chiefs in crowds repair. The Fathers of the Abbey join in procession, with taper, and book, and holy banner. As the pilgrims kneel, the Abbot blesses them, and the Monks sing a solemn requiem for the dead.

I.

BREATHES there the man, with soul so dead,
Who never to himself hath said,[1]
  This is my own, my native land!
Whose heart hath ne'er within him burned,
As home his footsteps he hath turned,
  From wandering on a foreign strand!
If such there be, 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, unhonoured, and unsung.—
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,[2]
Sole friends thy woods and streams were left;
And thus I love them better still,
Even in extremity of ill.
By Yarrow's stream still let me stray,
Though none should guide my feeble way;
Still feel the breeze down Ettrick break,
Although it chill my withered cheek;
Still lay my head by Teviot-stone,
Though there, forgotten and alone,
The Bard may draw his parting groan.

Me lists not at this tide declare[3]
  The splendour of the spousal rite;
How mustered in the chapel fair
  Both maid and matron, squire and knight:
Me lists not tell of owches rare,[4]
Of mantles green, and braided hair,
And kirtles furred with miniver;
What plumage waved the altar round,
How spurs and ringing chainlets sound:[5]
And hard it were for bard to speak[6]
The changeful hue of Margaret's cheek;

That lovely hue which comes and flies,
As awe and shame alternate rise.

II.

The spousal rites were ended soon:
'Twas now the merry hour of noon,
And in the lofty archèd hall
Was spread the gorgeous festival.
Steward and squire, with heedful haste,
Marshalled 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,[7]
And princely peacock's gilded train;[8]
And o'er the boar-head, garnished brave,[9]
And cygnet from St. Mary's wave;[10]
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:[11]
Their clanging bowls old warriors quaffed,
Loudly they spoke, and loudly laughed;
Whispered young knights, in tone more mild,
To ladies fair, and ladies smiled.
The hooded hawks, high perched on beam,[12]
The clamour joined with whistling scream,
And flapped their wings, and shook their bells,[13]
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,[14]
And all is mirth and revelry.
The Goblin-Page, omitting still
No opportunity of ill,
Strove now, while blood ran hot and high,
To rouse debate and jealousy.
The Dwarf, who feared his master's eye
Might his foul treachery espie,
Now sought the Castle buttery,[15]
Where many a yeoman, bold and free,
Revelled as merrily and well
As those that sat in lordly selle.[16]
The wily page, with vengeful thought,
  Remembered him of Tinlinn's yew;[17]
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;
Then, shunning still his powerful arm,
At unawares he wrought him harm;—
From trencher stole his choicest cheer,
Dashed from his lips his can of beer;
Then, to his knee sly creeping on,
With bodkin pierced him to the bone:
The venomed wound, and festering joint,
Long after rued that bodkin's point.
The startled yeoman swore and spurned,
And board and flagons overturned.
Riot and clamour wild began;
Back to the hall the Urchin ran;
Took in a darkling nook his post,
And grinned, and muttered, "Lost! lost! lost!"—
By this, the Dame, lest further fray [18]
Should mar the concord of the day,
Had bid the minstrels tune their lay.
And first stepped forth old Albert Græme,[19]
The minstrel of that ancient name.—

As ended Albert's simple lay,
Arose a bard of loftier port;
For sonnet, rhyme, and roundelay,
Renowned in haughty Henry's court:
There rung thy harp, unrivalled long,
Fitztraver of the silver song!—
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.—
So sweet was Harold's piteous lay,
Scarce marked the guests the darkened hall,
Though, long before the sinking day,
A wondrous shade involved them all:
It was not eddying mist or fog,
Drained by the sun from fen or bog;
Of no eclipse had sages told;
And yet, as it came on apace,
Each one could scarce his neighbour's face,
Could scarce his own stretched hand behold.
A secret horror checked the feast,
And chilled 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, muttered, "Found! found! found!"
Then sudden, through the darkened air
A flash of lightning came;
So broad, so bright, so red the glare,
The Castle seemed 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;[20]
Full through the guests' bedazzled band
Resistless flashed the levin-brand,[21]
And filled the hall with smouldering smoke,
As on the elvish page it broke.
It broke, with thunder long and loud,
Dismayed the brave, appalled 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!
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!"[22]
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 prayed and shook,
And terror dimmed each lofty look.
But none of all the astonished train
Was so dismayed as Deloraine;
His blood did freeze, his brain did burn,—
'Twas feared 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.[23]
At length, by fits, he darkly told,
With broken hint, and shuddering cold—
That he had seen, right certainly,
A shape with amice wrapped around,
With a wrought Spanish baldric bound,
Like pilgrim from beyond the sea;
And knew—but how it mattered not—
It was the wizard, Michael Scott.

Hushed 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 sheltered wanderers, by the blaze,
Oft heard the tale of other days;
For much he loved to ope his door,
And give the aid he begged before.
So passed the winter's day: but still,
When summer smiled on sweet Bowhill,
And July's eve, with balmy breath,
Waved the blue-bells on Newark heath;
When throstles sung in Harehead-shaw,
And corn was green on Carterhaugh,
And flourished, broad, Blackandro's oak,
The aged Harper's soul awoke!
Then would he sing achievements high,
And circumstance of chivalry,
Till the rapt traveller would stay,
Forgetful of the closing day;
And noble youths, the strain to hear,
Forsook the hunting of the deer;
And Yarrow, as he rolled along,
Bore burden to the Minstrel's song.

NOTES TO THE LAY OF THE LAST MINSTREL.

THIS poem was first published in 1805. It was Scott's first important original work. His translations from Bürger had appeared in 1796, and were the first indication of his fondness for ballad poetry. Within the next three years, he had produced several original ballads in imitation of those with which his "Border raids" had made him familiar. *The Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*, the first-fruits of that laborious and exhaustive study which he had devoted to the history and traditions of the south of Scotland, appeared in 1802, 1803. His poetic mind being thus saturated with Border lore, it was quite natural that he should meditate a more considerable work on the subject than he had yet attempted. Accident suggested to him both a special subject and an appropriate measure. The Countess of Dalkeith having heard with great interest the legend of Gilpin Horner, prescribed to Scott the task of writing a ballad on the subject, and he at once consented. Thus, in Scott's own words, "the goblin story, objected to by several critics as an excrescence upon the poem, was in fact the occasion of its being written." But Scott had previously resolved to abandon the ballad form with its monotonous stanza; and his mind had reverted to the old romantic measure, as that which, from the freedom of handling it admitted of, was best suited for his

purpose. It was, however, the success with which Coleridge had used it in his "Cristabel," that finally decided Scott to employ this measure in his poem.

The work was unprecedentedly successful. Scott became at once the most popular poet of the day. However unequal the work might be in parts, he had entirely succeeded in his main purpose, which was "to illustrate the customs and manners which anciently prevailed on the borders of England and Scotland." Scott adds, that "the description of scenery and manners was more the object of the author than a combined and regular narrative." Lord Jeffrey describes the poem as "an attempt to transfer the refinements of modern poetry to the matter and the manner of the ancient metrical romance." This antique character is favoured greatly by the device of putting the poem into the mouth of an aged minstrel, whose character is also interesting as a type of his class. He is represented as narrating the story in Newark Castle, to the Duchess of Buccleuch and Monmouth, about the close of the seventeenth century.

INTRODUCTION.

1. *Had called his harmless art a crime.*—The minstrels, as "the usual assistants at scenes, not merely of conviviality, but of license," laid themselves open to clerical censure, and gradually fell into discredit and neglect. "The statute of the 39th of Queen Elizabeth, passed at the close of the sixteenth century, ranks those dishonoured sons of song among rogues and vagabonds, and appoints them to be punished as such; and the occupation, though a vestige of it was long retained in the habits of travelling ballad-singers and musicians, sunk into total neglect and contempt."—*Essay on Romance*, by Sir W. Scott.

2. *Newark's stately tower.*—This castle, now a stately ruin, stands on the right bank of Yarrow Water in Selkirkshire. It was built as a hunting-seat by James II. of Scotland. It was called the New Wark (*work*, fortress) to distinguish it from an older pile in the vicinity, built by Alexander III., called the Auld Wark. It was the residence of Anne, Duchess of Buccleuch and Monmouth, widow of the Duke of Monmouth who was beheaded in 1685.

"That region left, the vale unfolds
Rich groves of lofty stature,
With Yarrow winding through the pomp
Of cultivated nature.
And, rising from those lofty groves,
Behold a ruin hoary!
The shattered front of Newark's towers,
Renowned in Border story."

Wordsworth, *Yarrow Visited.*

3. *The Duchess.*—Anne, Duchess of Buccleuch and Monmouth. See the preceding note.

4. *Anon.*—Presently. [A.-S. *on an*, in one—*i.e.*, in one instant.]

5. *Earl Francis.*—Francis Scott, Earl of Buccleuch, father of the Duchess.

6. *Earl Walter.*—Walter Scott, Earl of Buccleuch, grandfather of the Duchess.

7. *And, would the noble Duchess deign.*—The construction of this sentence is peculiar, inasmuch as it contains two clauses of condition. Construe thus:

1. Would the noble Duchess deign to listen to an old man's strain. (First clause of condition, dependent on 3.)
2. Though stiff his hand, his voice though weak. (Clauses of concession to 4.)
3. He thought even yet, the sooth to speak. (Principal clause.)
4. That he could make music to her ear. (Noun clause, object of 3.)
5. If she loved the harp to hear. (Second clause of condition, dependent on 4.)

8. *Wildering.*—Perplexing, bewildering. Scott frequently uses this word. See *Lady of the Lake*, Canto I., stanzas 14 and 22.

9. *King Charles the Good.*—King Charles I. visited Scotland with Laud in 1633, and set up the Episcopal form of worship in the Abbey of Holyrood.

10. *Holyrood.*—The Abbey was founded by David I. in 1128. It originally comprised a suite of apartments for royal guests. The Palace, or House, as it was generally called, dates from 1528; but the greater part of the present building belongs to the reign of Charles II.

11. *Lightened up his faded eye.*—"Eye" is the subject of "lightened." Such inversions occur frequently in Scott's poetry.

12. *In faithless memory void.*—"Void" is an adjective qualifying "blank;" but the expression is redundant, as a blank must be void.

CANTO FIRST.

1. *Branksome Tower.*—This famous Border keep stood on the left bank of the Teviot, a few miles above Hawick. It was the chief stronghold of upper Teviotdale, and the centre round which Border warfare frequently raged. It has belonged to the Scotts of Buccleuch since the fifteenth century. Its site is now occupied by a modern mansion, called Branxholm House. The suffix *-holm* signifies a little valley, or the low lying ground on the banks of a river.

2. *Wight*—Strong, active. [O. E. and Sc. *wicht.*] Comp. "Wallace *wight*" in Marmion. See *infra* 21.

3. *Jedwood axe.*—A sort of partisan or battle-axe, used by horsemen; called also a Jeddart-staff.

4. *Dight.*—Prepared. [A.-S. *dihtan*, to dress, dispose; Sc. *dicht* and *dycht;* and Ger. *dichten*, to prepare.] Comp.—

"Sche was arisen, and al redy *dight.*"
Chaucer.

5. *Scroop, Howard, Percy.*—Names of famous English Wardens of the Marches, or Border-land.

6. *The custom of Branksome Hall.*—The preceding stanzas contain a vivid description of the arrangements and discipline of a feudal household. One third of the garrison is in constant readiness to spring into the saddle at a moment's notice.

7. *He.....his sword hangs.*—*He* is an example of a nominative without a verb. The writer is supposed to change the structure of the sentence in the course of writing it. Grammarians call the figure, which is common in excited narrative, *anakolouthon*, meaning a separation, or break in logical sequence.

8. *And if.*—This is doubtless the same as the "an if" so frequent in Shakespeare. But he uses "an" by itself, to signify "if"—*e.g.*, "*An* they have conspired together, I will not say you shall see a masque."—*Merchant of Venice.* Comp. Canto II., Note 15.

9. *With Car in arms had stood.*—Margaret's father, Sir Walter Scott of Buccleuch, was murdered (in 1552) by the Cars, a powerful Border family, between whom and the Scotts a deadly feud had arisen. Henry, lord of Cranstoun, had on that occasion fought on the side of Car.

10. *Padua.*—In Venetia, twenty-five miles from Venice; long supposed by the Scottish peasants to be the principal school of necromancy.

11. *Lord David.*—The father of her husband, Sir Walter Scott.

12. *Fell.*—High land only fit for pasture. Those parts of the Cheviot Hills which are not ploughed are called *The Fells.*

13. *Arthur's wain....the Northern Bear ....Orion.*—Constellations in the northern hemisphere. "Arthur's Wain (*i.e.*, waggon) is the *Ursa Minor*, or Little Bear, in the end of the tail of which is the pole star. "The Northern Bear," is the constellation *Ursa Major*, called also "Charles's Wain." "Orion," the most-striking of the northern constellations, is named after the gigantic hunter of Greek mythology. The hunter's "belt" is one of the most prominent features in this constellation.

14. *Shimmers.*—Shines indistinctly, or fitfully. The word is probably a combination of *shine* and *glimmer.*

15. *Shower.*—The infinitive. The sign *to* is not usually omitted after deign.

16. *And her heart.*—These three syllables make one foot in the line, the accent falling on "heart." The principle on which this *romantic verse*, as it may be called, is constructed, is that each line shall contain four *accents*, or strong syllables, and that the *intervals* separating these may consist either of one or of two weak syllables. Let an accent, or strong syllable, be represented by *a*, and an interval by *x;* then we may either read *x* as one syllable, *eks*, or as two, *ek-es.* The scanning of a regular line will thus be represented by

x á | x á | x á | x á

the scanning of the present line, which contains only three feet, by

k s á | x á | x á

17. *Retainer.*—Clansman, or dependant. The word, primarily, has an active signification, = one who retains. In the present sense it has a passive signification, = one who is retained.

18. *As she paused,* &c.—Scan thus:

As she paused	at the ar	-chèd door.
k s á	*k s á*	*x á*

19. *William of Deloraine.*—The lands of Deloraine adjoin those of Buccleuch in Ettrick Forest. They belonged to the Buccleuch family, but were frequently

assigned to their retainers, as to this William Scott, for service on the Borders.

20. *Stark.*—Powerful. This is the Scottish signification of the word. In English it means *stiff*, and is often used redundantly along with that word, as—

"Many a nobleman lies *stark* and stiff."
Shakespeare.

But in Early English it had the meaning of "strong." Both meanings are combined in the Latin equivalent *rigidus*. A body, to be inflexible, must be strong. [A.-S. *stearc*, Ger. *stark*, strong.]——*Moss-trooping.*—The troopers who frequented the Border mosses or morasses of England and Scotland were called moss-troopers.

21. *Wightest.*—Strongest. [Sc. *wight* and *wicht*, strong, active; O. Eng. *wight*; Sw. *vig*. Both *stark* (see note 20) and *wight* are applied in Scotch to the potency of wine.]——In this line the *accent* of each foot precedes the *interval*. Scan thus,—

Mount thee	on the	wightest	steed.
á x	*á x*	*á x*	*á*

The foot *a*—*x* corresponds with the classical *trochee*, and the line is called *trochaic*. The foot *x*—*a* corresponds with the *iambus*, and the measure is called *iambic*. The latter is the usual measure of Scott's poems; but he frequently introduces trochees and trochaic lines, to give variety to the rhythm. For example, in the following line the first foot is a trochee:—

Spare not	to spur	nor stint	to ride.
á x	*x á*	*x á*	*x á*

22. *Melrose's holy pile.*—Melrose Abbey, on the north-east of the town of Melrose, on the Tweed, in Roxburghshire, the finest specimen of Gothic architecture in Scotland, was originally founded by David I., in 1156; was destroyed by the English in the reign of Edward II.; and was restored by Robert Bruce in 1326. King David's liberality in building and endowing abbeys led one of his successors to describe him as a "sore saint for the crown."

23. *St. Michael's night.*—The St. Michael of the calendar is the Archangel Michael. The reference here, however, is obviously to the wizard Michael Scott.

24. *See thou keep.*—"See" is imperative; "thou keep" is a noun clause, governed by "see." Construe thus: "See that thou keep what he gives thee." "Keep" is the subjunctive mood in a dependent clause.

25. *Lorn.*—Lost, abbreviated from *forlorn*. [O. Eng. *loren*, used by Robert of Gloucester. A.-S. *leoran*, to depart, die; and *for-leosan*, past participle *for-loren*.]

26. *Neck-verse.*—The verse anciently read by criminals claiming the benefit of clergy,—the beginning of the Fifty-first Psalm.——*Hairibee.*—The place of execution of the Border marauders at Carlisle.

27. *Barbican.*—The defence of the outer gate of a feudal castle.

28. *Lauds.*—The midnight service of the Roman Catholic Church. [Lat. *laudo*, I praise.]

29. *Wise*—Manner; same as *guise*. Comp. *otherwise* and *other-guess*. The forms in *w* are A.-S.; those in *gu* are N. Fr. Comp. *ward* and *guard*; *wile* and *guile*; *wage* and *guage*, *gage*, &c.

30. *That wild harp*, &c.—The Aeolian harp; named after Aeolus, the god of winds. It is thus described by Thomson:

"Behoves no more
But sidelong, to the gently-waving wind,
To lay the well-tuned instrument reclined;
From which, with airy flying fingers light,
Beyond each mortal touch the most refined,
The god of winds drew sounds of deep delight;
Whence, with just cause, the harp of Æolus it hight."—*Castle of Indolence.*

CANTO SECOND.

1. *Flout.*—To insult. [A.-S. *flitan*, to quarrel; Sc. *flyte*, to scold.]

2. *The scrolls that teach thee to live and die.*—The reference is to the scrolls inscribed with texts of Scripture, placed under niches in the walls of Melrose Abbey.

3. *Soothly.*—In sooth, or truly. The adverbial form of this word is uncommon. [A.-S. *sóth*, truth.]

4. *Deloraine.*—That is, William of Deloraine. In Scotland, proprietors are familiarly called by the names of their estates.

5. *Aventayle.*—The visor or front part of the helmet. [Fr. *avant*, before, and *œil*, the eye; as visor, Fr. *visière*, is from Lat. *video*, I see.]

6. All the feet in this line except the second have two weak syllables. Such

feet correspond with the classical anapaest. Scan thus:—

And beneath	their feet	were the bones
k s á	*x á*	*k s á*

of the dead.

k s á

7. *Aloof.*—Used in the sense of *aloft.* The latter [from A.-S. *a*, in, and *lyft*, the air] means "on high." *Aloof* is probably from the same root.

8. *A Scottish monarch slept below.*—A large marble stone, in the chancel of Melrose Abbey, is pointed out as the monument of Alexander II. Others, however, say it is the resting-place of one of the early abbots.

9. *Paynim.*—Infidel.

10. *Michael Scott.*—A scholar of the thirteenth century, whose skill in experimental science procured him the reputation of a wizard. Sir Walter Scott, following Hector Boece, identifies him with Sir Michael Scott of Balwearie in Fifeshire, who was one of the Scottish embassy sent to bring home the Maid of Norway in 1290. But other evidence makes this conjecture doubtful. One authority maintains that "Scotus" was not his surname, but indicated his nationality,—Michael, *the Scot.* All that can be stated with certainty is, that his fame as a necromancer was European in its extent at the beginning of the fourteenth century; for Dante mentions him in his *Inferno* as a renowned wizard.

11. *Hardihood.* — Boldness. Chaucer uses "hardynesse," and Shakespeare "hardiment," in this sense. [E. *hardy*, strong; Fr. *hardi*, akin to A.-S. *heard*; E. *hard.*]

12. *The Carter's side.*—Carter Fell, one of the Cheviot Hills, near Jedburgh. It was the scene, in 1575, of a sharp encounter, on the occasion of a meeting of the Wardens of the Marches, celebrated in the Border ballad of "The Raid of the Reidswine."

13. *Litherlie.*—The Scotch word "litherlie" properly means *lazily*, from *lither* and *lidder*, sluggish, sleepy. But as this meaning is wholly inapplicable to the elfin page, we suspect that Scott connected it with the E. *lithe*, nimble of limb, and used it in the sense of *lithesome*, active, supple.

14. *He had been.*—Conditional mood, for "he would have been."

15. *An*—If. See Canto I., Note 8. —— *Ministry*—Service, assistance.

16. *Between Home and Hermitage.*—Home Castle is three miles south of Greenlaw on the Blackadder in Berwickshire. Hermitage Castle is in the west of Roxburghshire, in Liddesdale. "All between Home and Hermitage," therefore, means every one on the Border.

17. *Cushat-dove.* — The ring-dove, or wood-pigeon. [Sc. *cushie-dow*, and *cushette* or *kowshot*; A.-S. *cusceote.*]

CANTO FOURTH.

1. *Peel.*—A Border tower. [Sc. *pele*, *paile*, a place of strength; a fortification built of earth; A.-S. *pil*, a heap or mound.]

2. *Gate-ward.* — The guardian of the gate.

3. *Hag.*—Broken ground in a morass. [Sc. *hag*, a stroke with an axe; then a notch, and a notched or broken surface.]

4. *Belted Will Howard.*—Lord William Howard, third son of Thomas, Duke of Norfolk. 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, was called "Belted Will."

5. *Hackbut-men.*—Musketeers; but properly axe-bearers. [A.-S. *haccan*, to cut or *hack.*] At the battle of Pinkie (1547) there were in the English army 600 hackbutters on foot, and 200 on horseback, composed chiefly of foreigners.

6. *St. Mary's silver wave.*—St. Mary's Loch in Selkirkshire, at the head of the vale of Yarrow, and out of which the Yarrow flows.

7. *Thirlestane brave.*—Sir John Scott of Thirlestane, in the reign of James V., possessed the estates of Thirlestane, Gamescleuch, &c., lying upon the River Ettrick, and extending to St. Mary's Loch.

8. *Dinlay.*—A mountain in Liddesdale, to the west of Hermitage Castle. Comp.:

"The Dinlay snaw was ne'er mair white
Nor the lyart locks of Harden's hair."—
The Ballad of Jamie Telfer.

9. *Cleuch.*—A ravine; a strait hollow between precipitous banks. Hence the name Buccleuch;—that is, Buck-cleuch,

the ravine in which the founder of the family slew a famous buck.——*Swair.*—The descent of a hill.

10. *Bellenden.*—Situated near the head of Borthwick Water. Being in the centre of the possessions of the Scotts, it was frequently used as their place of rendezvous, and its name as their gathering-word.

11. *Want*—Was accustomed. See *Marmion*, Canto II., Note 29.

12. *That.*—So that, or since.

13. *Mickle.*—Great. [Sc. *mekyl, muckle;* A.-S. *micel;* Lat. *mag-nus.*]

14. *Amid the running stream.*—Running water destroyed the power of sorcery, and made transformed figures reäppear in their proper shape.

15. *A cloth-yard shaft.*—An arrow the length of a yard or wand for measuring cloth.

16. *Yew.*—His bow, made of the wood of the yew-tree.

17. *The Almayn's sullen kettle-drum.*—The drum of the German mercenaries. [Fr. *Allemand*, German.]

18. *Bartizan.*—A turret projecting from a fortification.

19. *Culver.*—An ancient piece of artillery. [E. *culverin;* Fr. *coulvrine;* Lat. *colubrinus*, from *coluber*, a serpent.]

20. *'Gainst the truce of Border tide.*—In violation of Border law; in time of peace: an expression taken from the Border ballads.

"And have they ta'en him, Kinmont Willie,
Against the truce of Border tide?
And forgotten that the bauld Buccleuch
Is keeper here on the Scottish side."
Ballad of Kinmont Willie.

21. *March-treason pain.*—The penalty of Border treason; of violating the Border laws.

22. *Glaive.*—A broadsword or falchion. [Fr. *glaive*, a sword.]

23. *Warrison.*—Note of assault.

24. *Emprize.*—Daring, renown for bravery.

25. *Pensils.*—Tapered flags. [Lat. *penicilium.*]

26. *Slogan.*—War-cry; the gathering word of a clan. [Sc. *slughorn, sloggorne;* Ir. *sluagh*, an army, and *corn*, a horn.]

CANTO FIFTH.

1. Construe thus: Howard, than whom a knight more bold in fight was never dubbed, accepted (the invitation).

2. *Nor*, &c.—Supply *was there ever dubbed a knight.*

3. *Ousenam.*—Oxnam, the chief seat of the Cranstouns, three miles from Jedburgh, and five from Cessford in Teviotdale. *Ouse*, pl. *ousen*, is Sc. for ox, oxen.

4. *Glamour art.*—The power of enchantment. "Glamour" is properly the charming of the eye of a spectator by magic, so that it sees things differently from what they really are.

5. *For all the vassalage.—In spite of* the numerous dependants of the house.

6. *Port.*—A martial air; a lively tune played on the bagpipes.

7. *For.*—For the sake of. When they sought the plain *in order to* attend the lists.

8. *Like vantage of the sun and wind.*—One of the duties of marshals was to place the combatants so that neither of them had a more favourable position for fighting than the other, with reference especially to the wind and the sun.

9. *Despiteous.*—Merciless, cruel. Shakespeare uses *dispiteous* in this sense: "dispiteous torture" (*King John*). Chaucer's word is *despitous:* "with ful despitous herte" (*Knightes Tale*).——*Scathe.*—Injury. [A.-S. *scethan*, to hurt.]

10. *That.*—Here a conjunction. The construction is, "And (who sayeth) that he will prove on Musgrave's body (that) he lies most foully in his throat."

11. *As dizzy.*—As if he were dizzy.

12. *Me lists not tell*, &c.—To tell, &c., pleases not me. "Lists" is a unipersonal verb, used only in the third person singular. The pronoun marking the person pleased is prefixed to it in the dative case. Its nominative is the infinitive following it—"to tell" in the text. Chaucer uses "me list," it pleases me; "hym list," it pleases him; "us leste," it pleased us. "Methinks" is a similar construction; but in this case the pronoun has become compounded with the verb.

13. *The Spirit's prophecy.*—The prophecy

of the Mountain Spirit referred to in Canto I.

14. *Gramarye.*—Magic. Jamieson derives it from Fr. *grammaire*, grammar; but it is more probably the same word as *glamerie*—that is, *glamour*. See Note 4, *supra*.

15. *Dight.*—Decked, equipped and *prepared* for the combat. See Canto I., Note 4.

CANTO SIXTH.

1. *Who.*—Meaning *that he*, after "*so* dead;" so "whose" in line 4 means *that his*.

2. *Seems as*, &c.—Construe thus: It seems as *if* thy woods and streams were left sole friends to me, bereft of all else.

3. *Declare.*—The infinitive nominative to the verb *lists*. See Note 12, Canto V.

4. *Owches.*—Jewelled ornaments. *Owch* or *ouch* is literally the *notch* or socket in which a jewel is set. Shakespeare uses the word:

"Your brooches, pearls, and *ouches.*"
II. Henry IV., Act ii., Scene 4, line 53.

5. *Chainlets.*—Small chains; diminutive of chain.

6. *Speak.*—To describe. So Shakespeare:

"Pray, *speak* what has happened."
Henry VIII.

7. *Heron-shew.*—The young heron; generally spelt *heron-shaw*. [Fr. *héronceau*, diminutive of *héron*.]

8. *Princely peacock's gilded train.*—"The peacock was considered, during the times of chivalry, not merely an exquisite delicacy, but a dish of peculiar solemnity. After being roasted it was again decorated with its plumage, and a sponge dipped in lighted spirits of wine was placed in its bill. When it was introduced on days of grand festival, it was the signal for the adventurous knights to take upon them vows to do some deed of chivalry 'before the peacock and the ladies.'"—*S.*

9. *Brave.*—Here an adverb, meaning *gaily*. Handsome or ornate is the literal meaning of "brave," as of Sc. *braw*, Ger. *brav*, and Fr. *brave*. It was customary, in feudal times in Scotland, to surround the boar's head with little banners displaying the colours and achievements of the baron at whose board it was served. This is, in part at least, the *garnishing* referred to.

10. *Cygnet from St. Mary's wave.*—Wild swans used to frequent St. Mary's Lake, at the head of the vale of Yarrow. Comp. Wordsworth's well-known couplet:

"The swan on still St. Mary's Lake
Floats double, swan and shadow."

11. *Shalm.*—A wind instrument.—*Psaltery.*—A stringed instrument, used by the Jews.

12. *Hooded hawks.*—The head of the falcon, when not engaged in hunting, is covered with a leathern hood, which completely excludes the light. Its purpose is to make the hawk quiet and tractable, and to prevent its being attracted by chance bait while being carried to or from the field. Much persevering patience and tact is required before the bird is "made to the hood;" but when this is done, its future training is greatly facilitated.

13. *Their bells.*—Hollow globes of metal attached to the falcon's feet.

14. *Sewers.*—Waiters; attendants who placed dishes on the table, and removed them. The word occurs in a stage direction in *Macbeth* (i., 7): "*Enter a* sewer *and divers* servants *with dishes and service, and pass over the stage.*" A *sewer* is literally a follower. [O. E. *sew*, to follow, from O. Fr. *sewir*; Fr. *suivre*; Lat. *sequi*; E. *sue, pursue, suit*, and *suite* a company of *sewers*.]

15. *Buttery.*—The place where the butts or casks are kept. Its superintendent is the butler; generally derived from Fr. *bouteille*, a bottle; but bottle and butt are probably connected in root, the former being a diminutive.

16. *Selle.*—Saddle. [Fr. *selle*, saddle.]

17. *Him.*—This is the dative of advantage. He remembered the yew or bow as a matter in which he was deeply concerned.

18. *By this.*—By this *time;* but also in consequence of these proceedings.

19. *Albert Græme.*—A supposed descendant of John Grahame, second son of Malice, Earl of Monteith, who, incurring the displeasure of the Scottish Court, took refuge in the English Borders in the time of Henry IV.

20. *Instant.*—An adverb, meaning for an instant. The meaning is, the *one* moment they were seen, the *next* they were gone.

21. *Levin.*—Lightning. [A.-S. *hlifian*, to gleam or redden.]

22. *Gylbin, come.*—The Border tradition of an elf called Gilpin Horner formed the basis of the whole of this poem. See Scott's last "Introduction," 1830.

23. *Spoke.* — Here used transitively, meaning encountered, or conversed with. ——*The spectre-hound in Man.*—"The ancient castle of Peel-town, in the Isle of Man, is said to have been haunted by an apparition, called in the Mankish language the *Manthe Doog*, in the shape of a large black spaniel, with curled shaggy hair."—*S.*

MARMION:

A TALE OF FLODDEN FIELD.

INTRODUCTION.

Scott was induced to write this poem by the success of the *Lay of the Last Minstrel.* It was begun in 1806, and published in 1808. It was abundantly successful. The first edition, of two thousand copies, was disposed of in a month. Before the end of 1809, four editions, consisting of eleven thousand copies, had been sold. No fewer than fifty thousand copies were disposed of before the beginning of 1836. Lord Jeffrey, comparing *Marmion* with the *Lay*, says that the former "has more flat and tedious passages, and more ostentation of historical and antiquarian lore; but it has also greater variety both of character and incident; and if it has less sweetness and pathos in the softer passages, it has certainly more vehemence and force of colouring in the loftier and busier representation of action and emotion." There are several anachronisms and historical inaccuracies in the poem: for example, he represents Whitby as a nunnery, and he makes Sir David Lindesay lion-king some years before he received that title; but a poetical artist is entitled to make such details subordinate to his main design; and Scott expressly announced in the preface to the first edition of the poem that he intended it to be rather a "Romantic Tale" than a "Historical Narrative." A grave fault of the poem, acknowledged to a certain extent by Scott himself, is the combination of meanness with chivalry in the character of the hero, Lord Marmion. In spite of minor defects the poem is a masterpiece, as a graphic picture of feudal times, customs, and characters.

CHARACTERS OF THE POEM.

Lord Marmion, *English Envoy to the Scottish Court.*
Sir Hugh (the) Heron of Ford, *Lord of Norham Castle.*
His Nephew, young Selby.
The Palmer (Ralph de Wilton *in disguise*).
The Abbess of Saint Hilda.
The Novice Clare.
The Prioress of Tynemouth.
The Abbot of St. Cuthbert's, Lindisfarne.
Constance de Beverley.
A Monk.
The Host of the Gifford Inn.
Fitz-Eustace, *Marmion's first squire.*
Harry Blount, *Marmion's second squire.*
Sir David Lindesay, *Lord Lion-King-at-Arms.*
King James IV. of Scotland.
Archibald Douglas, *Earl of Angus* (Bell-the-Cat).
Lady Heron.
Gawain Douglas, *Bishop of Dunkeld.*

Scenes: 1. *Norham Castle.* 2. *Lindisfarne.* 3. *Gifford Inn.* 4. *The Country on the South of Edinburgh.* 5. *Edinburgh; Holy-Rood; Tantallon Castle.* 6. *Flodden Field.*

Time: *August and September* 1513.

CANTO FIRST.—THE CASTLE.

THE ARGUMENT.

The King of England, hearing that his brother-in-law, James IV. of Scotland, has been mustering troops in all parts of his kingdom, sends Lord Marmion as a special Envoy to the Scottish Court to ask what his intentions are. On his way, Lord Marmion visits Norham Castle, on the English border, the home of his friend Sir Hugh the Heron. The heralds welcome him as a brave warrior, but especially as the conqueror of Sir Ralph de Wilton in the lists at Cottiswold, when they fought in single combat for the hand of Clara de Clare. Marmion asks his host to provide him with a trusty guide to the Capital. Heron offers to give him some of his retainers; but this Marmion declines, as his errand is one of peace. Young Selby proposes that a holy Palmer, who arrived at the Castle the previous evening, should guide the English lord to the Capital; and the latter gladly accepts the offer, not knowing that the Palmer is his sworn enemy, Ralph de Wilton, in disguise. The Palmer also accepts the office; and they start next day at dawn.

I.

Day set on Norham's castled steep,[1]
And Tweed's fair river, broad and deep,
And Cheviot's mountains lone!
The battled towers, the donjon keep,[2]
The loop-hole grates where captives weep,[3]
The flanking walls that round it sweep,
In yellow lustre shone.
The scouts had parted on their search,
The Castle gates were barred;
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.
A distant trampling sound he hears;
He looks abroad, and soon appears,
O'er Horncliff-hill, a plump of spears,[4]
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 warned the Captain in the hall,
For well the blast he knew;
And joyfully that knight did call,
To sewer, squire, and seneschal:[5]
"Now broach ye a pipe of Malvoisie,[6]
Bring pasties of the doe,

And quickly make the entrance free,
And bid my heralds ready be,
And every minstrel sound his glee,[7]
And all our trumpets blow;
And, from the platform, spare ye not
To fire a noble salvo-shot:
LORD MARMION waits below!"—
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,[8]
And had in many a battle been.
Behind him rode two gallant squires,
Of noble name, and knightly sires:
They burned the gilded spurs to claim;[9]
For well could each a war-horse tame.
Four men-at-arms came at their backs,
With halbert, bill, and battle-axe:[10]
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.[11]
Their dusty palfreys, and array,
Showed they had marched a weary way.
'Tis meet that I should tell you now,[12]
How fairly armed, and ordered 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,[13]
For welcome-shot prepared:
Entered the train, and such a clang,[14]
As then through all his turrets rang,
Old Norham never heard.
They marshalled him to the Castle-hall,[15]
Where the guests stood all aside,
And loudly flourished the trumpet-call,
And the heralds loudly cried:
"Room, lordings, room for Lord Marmion,[16]
With the crest and helm of gold!
Full well we know the trophies won
In the lists at Cottiswold:[17]
There, vainly, Ralph de Wilton strove
'Gainst Marmion's force to stand;
To him he lost his ladye-love,
And to the King his land.

Ourselves beheld the listed field,[18]
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 conquered in the right,
Marmion of Fontenaye!"—
Then stepped to meet that noble lord,
Sir Hugh the Heron bold,
Baron of Twisell, and of Ford,
And Captain of the Hold.
He led Lord Marmion to the deas,[19]
Raised o'er the pavement high,
And placed him in the upper place—
They feasted full and high:
The whiles a Northern harper rude[20]
Chanted a rhyme of deadly feud.

II.

"Now, good Lord Marmion," Heron says,
"Of your fair courtesy,
I pray you bide some little space
In this poor tower with me.
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?"—
"That boy thou thought'st so goodly fair,
He might not brook the northern air.
More of his fate if thou would'st learn,—
I left him sick in Lindisfarne:
Enough of him.
But 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 addressed,
I journey at our King's behest;
And pray you, of your grace, provide
For me, and mine, a trusty guide."—
"For such-like need, my lord, I trow,[21]
Norham can find you guides enow;[22]

For here be some have pricked as far,[23]
On Scottish ground, as to Dunbar."—
"Now, in good sooth," Lord Marmion cried,
"Were I in warlike wise to ride,
A better guard I would not lack,[24]
Than your stout forayers at my back:[25]
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:
A herald were my fitting guide;[26]
Or friar, sworn in peace to bide;
Or pardoner, or travelling priest,
Or strolling pilgrim, at the least."—
The Captain mused a little space,
And passed his hand across his face:
"Fain would I find the guide you want,
But ill may spare a pursuivant.
Friar John of Tillmouth were the man:[26]
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 are good,
'Twixt Newcastle and Holy-Rood."—
Young Selby, at the fair hall-board,
Carved to his uncle and that lord,[27]
And reverently took up the word:
"Kind uncle, woe were we each one,[28]
If harm should hap to brother John.
Last night, to Norham there came one
Will better guide Lord Marmion."—
"Nephew," quoth Heron, "by my fay,[29]
Well hast thou spoke; say forth thy say."—
"Here is a holy Palmer come,
From Salem first, and last from Rome:
One that hath kissed the blessèd tomb,
And visited each holy shrine
In Araby and Palestine."—
"Gramercy!" quoth Lord Marmion,[30]
"Full loth were I that Friar John,[31]
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."—[32]

"Ah, noble sir!" young Selby said,
And finger on his lip he laid,
"This man knows much, perchance e'en more
Than he could learn by holy lore.
Still to himself he's muttering,[33]
And shrinks as at some unseen thing."—
"Let pass," quoth Marmion; "by my fay,
This man shall guide me on my way,
Although the great arch-fiend and he
Had sworn themselves of company;
So please you, gentle youth, to call
This Palmer to the Castle-hall."—
When as the Palmer came in hall,[34]
Nor lord, nor knight, was there more tall,
Or had a statelier step withal,
Or looked 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.[35]
But his gaunt frame was worn with toil;
His cheek was sunk, alas the while!
And when he struggled at a smile,
His eye looked haggard wild.
Lord Marmion then his boon did ask;
The Palmer took on him the task,
So he would march with morning tide,[36]
To Scottish Court to be his guide.—
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:[37]
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 passed
That noble train, their lord the last.[38]
Then loudly rung the trumpet-call;
Thundered 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 rolled forth upon the air,
And met the river breezes there,
Which gave again the prospect fair.

CANTO SECOND.—THE CONVENT.

THE ARGUMENT.

WHILE Marmion and his train, accompanied by the Palmer, pursue their way to Edinburgh, a bark glides swiftly along the coast of Northumberland. It bears the Abbess of St. Hilda and five nuns—of whom the Novice Clare is one—from Whitby to Lindisfarne. She goes to hold, with the Abbot of St. Cuthbert's and the Prioress of Tynemouth, a Chapter of St. Benedict, for inquisition on two apostates, charged with intriguing against the life of Sister Clare; who has resolved to take the veil rather than wed Marmion, who loved her only for her land, her chosen lover, De Wilton, having fled in disgrace. They reach the isle in safety, and are joyously welcomed by the Abbot and the islanders. In the evening, as the sisters sit round the fire telling tales of their respective saints, the solemn Council is held in a secret under-ground aisle, paved with grave-stones, and called the Vault of Penitence. One of the culprits, though he wears the frock and cowl of a monk, is a hireling murderer. He moans and howls, and flings himself on the floor. The other, who is calm and fearless, wears the dress of a page, and the falcon crest of Lord Marmion; but it is Constance de Beverley, a nun who has fled from the Convent of Fontevraud. In the wall of the vault are two tall and narrow niches. Beside each stand two haggard monks. Around lie hewn stones, cement, and building tools. Into these niches the two culprits are to be built alive. Before her doom is spoken, Constance summons up all her courage to tell her sad tale. She had been allured from the convent by Marmion's offers of love, and for three years had bowed her pride to ride in his train as a horse-boy. But he had forsaken her for the Lady Clare. The King approved his choice; but a rival, De Wilton, stood in his way. He charged De Wilton with treason, producing in proof thereof a letter which she had forged; and challenged him to mortal combat. In the lists De Wilton was overthrown. Rather than wed Marmion, Clare fled to Whitby. When Marmion was sent to Scotland she had lingered here to plan the rescue of Clare and herself. The Monk, her companion, had sworn for gold to poison Clare; but his cowardice had undone them both. Had she been able to convey to the King the packet she took from her breast, it would have proved De Wilton's innocence, and have given Marmion to the headsman's stroke.

Sentence is then passed upon the criminals, and the judges hurry up the hundred winding steps that lead to upper day, to escape the shriekings of despair which tell that the butchery work has already begun.

I.

THE breeze, which swept away the smoke,
  Round Norham Castle rolled,
When all the loud artillery spoke,
With lightning-flash and thunder-stroke,
  As Marmion left the Hold.
It curled not Tweed alone, that breeze;
For, far upon Northumbrian seas,
  It freshly blew, and strong—
Where, from high Whitby's cloistered pile,[1]
Bound to Saint Cuthbert's Holy Isle,[2]
  It bore a bark along.

Upon the gale she stooped her side,
And bounded o'er the swelling tide,
As she were dancing home:
The merry seamen laughed, to see
Their gallant ship so lustily
Furrow the green sea-foam.
Much joyed they in their honoured freight;
For, on the deck, in chair of state,[3]
The Abbess of Saint Hilda placed,
With five fair nuns, the galley graced.
Light was each simple bosom there,
Save two, who ill might pleasure share—
The Abbess, and the Novice Clare.—
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,[4]
Nor knew the influence of her eye:
Love to her ear was but a name,
Combined with vanity and shame.

Sad was this voyage to the dame:
Summoned to Lindisfarne, she came,
There, with Saint Cuthbert's Abbot old,
And Tynemouth's Prioress, to hold[5]
A Chapter of Saint Benedict,[6]
For inquisition stern and strict,
On two apostates from the faith;
And, if need were, to doom to death.
Nought say I here of Sister Clare,
Save this, that she was young and fair;
As yet a novice unprofessed,[7]
Lovely and gentle, but distressed.
She was betrothed to one now dead;
Or worse, who had dishonoured fled.[8]
Her kinsmen bade her give her hand
To one who loved her for her land:[9]
Herself, almost heart-broken now,[10]
Was bent to take the vestal vow;
And shroud, within Saint Hilda's gloom,
Her blasted hopes and withered bloom.
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
Prisoned in Cuthbert's islet grey.

And now the vessel skirts the strand
Of mountainous Northumberland;
Then from the coast they bore away,
And reached the Holy Island's bay.
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 sandalled 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.—
Soon as they neared 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-drowned amid the breakers' roar,
    According chorus rose.
  Down to the haven of the isle
  The monks and nuns in order file,[11]
  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,
Rushed emulously through the flood,
  To hale the bark to land:
Conspicuous by her veil and hood,
Signing the cross, the Abbess stood,
  And blessed them with her hand.

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 unhallowed 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 strayed and gazed their fill,
They closed around the fire;
And all, in turn, essayed to paint
The rival merits of their saint;—[12]
A theme that ne'er can tire
A holy maid; for, be it known,
That their saint's honour is their own.—
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 Colwulf built it, for his fault,[13]
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 called the Vault of Penitence,
Excluding air and light—
Was by the prelate Sexhelm made[14]
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 reached the upper air,
The hearers blessed themselves, and said,
The spirits of the sinful dead
Bemoaned their torments there.
But though, in the monastic pile,
Did of this penitential aisle
Some vague tradition go,
Few only, save the Abbot, knew
Where the place lay; and still more few
Were those who had from him the clew
To that dread vault to go.
Victim and executioner
Were blindfold when transported there.
In low dark rounds the arches hung;
From the rude rock the side-walls sprung;

The grave-stones, rudely sculptured o'er,
Half sunk in earth, by time half wore,
Were all the pavement of the floor;
The mildew-drops fell one by one,
With tinkling plash, upon the stone:
A cresset, in an iron chain,
Which served to light this drear domain,
With damp and darkness seemed to strive,
As if it scarce might keep alive;
And yet it dimly served to show
The awful conclave met below.

II.

There, met to doom in secrecy,[15]
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,
Sate 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;
And she with awe looks pale.
And he, that Ancient Man, whose sight
Has long been quenched by age's night,
Upon whose wrinkled brow alone
Nor ruth nor mercy's trace is shown,[16]
Whose look is hard and stern,—
Saint Cuthbert's Abbot is his style;[17]
For sanctity called through the isle
The Saint of Lindisfarne.

Before them stood a guilty pair;
But though an equal fate they share,[18]
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.[19]
Constance de Beverley they know,
Sister professed of Fontevraud,
Whom the Church numbered with the dead,
For broken vows, and convent fled.
When thus her face was given to view,
(Although so pallid was her hue,
It did a ghastly contrast bear
To those bright ringlets glistering 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,[20]
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.

Her comrade was a sordid soul,
Such as does murder for a meed;
Who, but of fear, knows no control,[21]
Because his conscience, seared and foul,
Feels not the import of his deed;
One whose brute feeling ne'er aspires
Beyond his own more brute desires.
This wretch was clad in frock and cowl,
And shamed not loud to moan and howl,[22]
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.
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[23]
Shall ne'er, I ween, find exit more.
In each a slender meal was laid,
Of roots, of water, and of bread:
By each, in Benedictine dress,
Two haggard monks stood motionless;

Who, holding high a blazing torch,
Showed the grim entrance of the porch.
Reflecting back the smoky beam,
The dark-red walls and arches gleam:
Hewn stones and cement were displayed,
And building tools in order laid.—
And now that blind old Abbot rose,
To speak the Chapter's doom
On those the wall was to enclose,
Alive, within the tomb;[24]
But stopped, because that woful maid,
Gathering her powers, to speak essayed.
Twice she essayed, and twice in vain;
Her accents might no utterance gain—
Nought but imperfect murmurs slip
From her convulsed and quivering lip.
At length an effort sent apart
The blood that curdled to her heart:
And when her silence broke at length,
Still as she spoke she gathered strength,
And armed herself to bear.
It was a fearful sight to see
Such high resolve and constancy
In form so soft and fair.

"I speak not to implore your grace,—
Well know I, for one minute's space[25]
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 listened to a traitor's tale:
I left the convent and the veil;
For three long years I bowed my pride,
A horse-boy in his train to ride.
He saw young Clara's face more fair,
He knew her of broad lands the heir;[26]
Forgot his vows, his faith forswore,
And Constance was beloved no more.
The King approved his favourite's aim:[27]
In vain a rival barred his claim
Whose faith with Clare's was plight;
For he attaints that rival's fame
With treason's charge,—and on they came
In mortal lists to fight.
Their oaths are said,
Their prayers are prayed,
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!'
How false the charge, how true he fell,
This guilty packet best can tell."—
Then drew a packet from her breast,
Paused, gathered voice, and spoke the rest:
"Still was false Marmion's bridal stayed;
To Whitby's Convent fled the maid,
The hated match to shun.
'Ho! shifts she thus?' King Henry cried;[28]
'Sir Marmion, she shall be thy bride,
If she were swore a nun!'
One way remained: The King's command
Sent Marmion to the Scottish land;
I lingered here, and rescue planned
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 hath undone us both.
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 betrayed,
This packet, to the King conveyed,
Had given him to the headsman's stroke,[29]
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.
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[30]
Had rather been your guest again.
Behind, a darker hour ascends!
The altars quake, the crozier bends;
The ire of a despotic King[31]
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[32]
Whitening amid disjointed stones,
And, ignorant of priests' cruelty,
Marvel such relics here should be."

Fixed was her look, and stern her air;
Back from her shoulders streamed her hair;
The locks, that wont her brow to shade,[33]
Stared up erectly from her head;
Her figure seemed to rise more high;
Her voice, despair's wild energy[34]
Had given a tone of prophecy.
Appalled the astonished conclave sate;
With stupid eyes the men of fate
Gazed on the light inspirèd form,
And listened 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!"[35]
From that dire dungeon, place of doom,
Of execution too, and tomb,
Paced forth the judges three:
Sorrow it were, and shame, to tell[36]
The butcher-work that there befell,
When they had glided from the cell
Of sin and misery.
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 crossed themselves for terror's sake,
As hurrying, tottering on.

CANTO THIRD.—THE HOSTEL, OR INN.

THE ARGUMENT.

MARMION and his train ride all day by the least frequented paths, and in the evening reach the village of Gifford, and dismount at the inn. Having feasted, they gather round the fire, and cheer themselves with jest and song and legend. Lord Marmion occupies a settle under the arch of the wide chimney. Opposite to him stands the Palmer, his dark visage half hidden by his hood, his bright eye fixed in sullen scowl on Marmion. The latter is made uneasy by his piercing gaze. The mirth gradually

declines; and Marmion, to chase away the awe that is settling down upon the company, calls upon Fitz-Eustace for a song. He sings the favourite roundelay of Marmion's page Constant—a song of faithless love. The song is followed by silence deeper than before. Marmion grows moody and sad. He tells Fitz-Eustace that as he sung he seemed to hear the passing-bell of a nunnery, and asks what it may mean. The Palmer, breaking silence for the first time that day, says that it portends "the death of a dear friend." Marmion, conscience-stricken, is dumb. He reflects on his treatment of Constance. Remorse and reviving love struggle in his breast. But he consoles himself with reflecting that she is safe, though immured in the convent; for he had given strict charge that not a hair of her head should be harmed. The Palmer's boding words suggest to the host the legend of the hamlet, and with Marmion's leave, coldly given, he tells it:—

"In the time of Alexander III., Sir Hugo, the Lord of Gifford, was a noted wizard. On the eve of the invasion of Scotland by Haco of Norway, the King came to Lord Gifford to learn the future weal or woe of his kingdom. The Baron told him that the demon was stubborn, and would reveal nothing; but that the King's courage might extort from him what his own art had failed to obtain. To accomplish this, the King must go to the Charmed Ring, an old Pictish camp near the castle, at midnight. At the sound of his trumpet, the demon would appear in the guise of his worst enemy. If in the combat the spirit fell, he would reveal the future to him; if the King's heart failed him, his life was in danger.

"At midnight the King went to the camp; and, at the blast of his horn, the form of the King of England appeared. Alexander unhorsed him, receiving a slight wound in his face. The Elfin Knight then revealed to him his victory at Largs, and many other future glories of his kingdom. But always on the anniversary of that day his wound bled and smarted. The Elfin Knight had often been encountered since; but, with two exceptions, his adversaries had always foully sped."

After the host's tale, the warriors retire to rest. At midnight, Fitz-Eustace is startled by the appearance of Lord Marmion in the loft where he sleeps. The host's legend has disturbed him, and he wishes to visit the camp. Fitz-Eustace saddles his steed for him, and forth he rides. His squire follows him and listens. In a short time he hears the clatter of hoofs. Marmion returns, with his plume soiled, and stains on his charger's knee.

I.

THE livelong day Lord Marmion rode:
The mountain path the Palmer showed[1]
By glen and streamlet winded still,
Where stunted birches hid the rill.
They might not choose the lowland road,
For the Merse forayers were abroad,[2]
Who, fired with hate and thirst of prey,
Had scarcely failed to bar their way.[3]
The noon had long been past before
They gained the height of Lammermoor;
Thence winding down the northern way,
Before them, at the close of day,
Old Gifford's towers and hamlet lay.[4]
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,[5]
Lord Marmion drew his rein:
The village inn seemed large, though rude;
Its cheerful fire and hearty food
Might well relieve his train.
Down from their seats the horsemen sprung,
With jingling spurs the court-yard rung;
They bind their horses to the stall,
For forage, food, and firing call,
And various clamour fills the hall;
Weighing the labour with the cost,
Toils everywhere the bustling host.—
Soon, by the chimney's merry blaze,
Through the rude hostel might you gaze:
Might see where, in dark nook aloof,[6]
The rafters of the sooty roof
Bore wealth of winter cheer;
Of sea-fowl dried and solands store,[7]
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,[8]
The implements of Scottish fray,
The buckler, lance, and brand.
Beneath its shade, the place of state,
On oaken settle Marmion sate,
And viewed, around the blazing hearth,
His followers mix in noisy mirth;
Whom with brown ale, in jolly tide,[9]
From ancient vessels ranged aside,
Full actively their host supplied.[10]
Resting upon his pilgrim staff,
Right opposite the Palmer stood;
His thin dark visage seen but half,
Half hidden by his hood.
Still fixed 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.

By fits less frequent from the crowd
Was heard the burst of laughter loud;

For still, as squire and archer stared
On that dark face and matted beard,
Their glee and game declined.
All gazed at length in silence drear,
Unbroke, save when in comrade's ear
Some yeoman, wondering in his fear,
Thus whispered forth his mind:
"Saint Mary! saw'st thou e'er such sight?
How pale his cheek, his eye how bright,
Whene'er the fire-brand'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."—
But Marmion, as to chase the awe[11]
Which thus had quelled their hearts, who saw
The ever-varying fire-light show
That figure stern, and face of woe,
Now called upon a squire:
"Fitz-Eustace, know'st thou not some lay,
To speed the lingering night away?
We slumber by the fire."—
"So please you," thus the youth rejoined,
"Our choicest minstrel's left behind.[12]
Ill may we hope to please your ear,
Accustomed Constant's strains to hear.
The harp full deftly can he strike,[13]
And wake the lover's lute alike;
Now must I venture, as I may,
To sing his favourite roundelay."—
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 ripened ear.—
It ceased, the melancholy sound;
And silence sunk on all around.
The air was sad; but sadder still[14]
It fell on Marmion's ear,
And plained as if disgrace and ill[15]
And shameful death were near.
He drew his mantle past his face,
Between it and the band,
And rested with his head a space[16]
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 wished to be their prey,
For Lutterward and Fontenaye.
But soon Lord Marmion raised his head,
And, smiling, to Fitz-Eustace said:
"Is it not strange, that, as ye sung,[17]
Seemed in mine ear a death-peal rung,[18]
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."
Marmion, whose steady heart and eye[19]
Ne'er changed in worst extremity,—
Thought, look, and utterance failed him now,
Fallen was his glance, and flushed his brow;
For either in the tone,
Or something in the Palmer's look,
So full upon his conscience strook,[20]
That answer he found none.
Well might he falter!—By his aid
Was Constance Beverley betrayed.
Not that he augured of the doom
Which on the living closed the tomb;
But, tired to hear the desperate maid
Threaten by turns, beseech, upbraid;
And wroth because, in wild despair,
She practised on the life of Clare;
Its fugitive the Church he gave,
Though not a victim, but a slave;
And deemed restraint in convent strange
Would hide her wrongs, and her revenge.
His conscience slept—he deemed her well,
And safe secured in distant cell;
But, wakened by her favourite lay,[21]
And that strange Palmer's boding say,[22]
That fell so ominous and drear
Full on the object of his fear,
To aid remorse's venomed throes,
Dark tales of convent-vengeance rose;
And Constance, late betrayed and scorned,
All lovely on his soul returned.....
And twice he rose to cry, "To horse!"
And twice his sovereign's mandate came,
Like damp upon a kindling flame:
And twice he thought, "Gave I not charge
She should be safe, though not at large?

They durst not, for their island, shred
One golden ringlet from her head."—
While thus in Marmion's bosom strove
Repentance and reviving love,
Like whirlwinds, whose contending sway
I've seen Loch Vennachar obey,[23]
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,[24]
His tale the host thus gladly told:

II.

The Host's Tale.

"A clerk could tell what years have flown[25]
Since Alexander filled our throne,[26]
(Third monarch of that warlike name,)
And eke the time when here he came
To seek Sir Hugo, then our lord:[27]
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.[27]
The King Lord Gifford's castle sought,
Deep labouring with uncertain thought:
Even then he mustered 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,[28]
Above Norweyan warriors grim,
Savage of heart, and large of limb;[29]
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,
Came forth,—a quaint and fearful sight!
His mantle lined with fox-skins white.
Dire dealings with the fiendish race
Had marked strange lines upon his face;
Vigil and fast had worn him grim,
His eyesight dazzled seemed, and dim.
'I know,' he said,—his voice was hoarse,
And broken seemed 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.
Obstinate in silence still,
The haughty demon mocks my skill.
But thou,—who little know'st thy might,
As born upon that blessèd night,
When yawning graves, and dying groan,
Proclaimed Hell's empire overthrown,—
With untaught valour shalt compel
Response denied to magic spell.'—
'Gramercy,' quoth our Monarch free,
'Place him but front to front with me,
And, by this good and honoured brand,
The gift of Cœur-de-lion's hand,[30]
Soothly I swear, that, tide what tide,[31]
The demon shall a buffet bide.'—
His bearing bold the wizard viewed,
And thus, well pleased, his speech renewed:
'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.'—

Soon as the midnight bell did ring,
Alone, and armed, rode forth the King;
And on the north, within the ring,
Appeared the form of England's King:
Long afterwards did Scotland know
Fell Edward was her deadliest foe.—[32]
The vision made our Monarch start,
But soon he manned 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
Compelled the future war to show.
Of Largs he saw the glorious plain,[33]
Where still gigantic bones remain,
Memorial of the Danish war;
Himself he saw, amid the field,
On high his brandished war-axe wield,
And strike proud Haco from his car,
While all around the shadowy Kings
Denmark's grim ravens cowered their wings.—
Long since, beneath Dunfermline's nave,
King Alexander fills his grave,
Our Lady give him rest!
Yet still the mighty spear and shield
The Elfin Warrior doth wield,
Upon the brown hill's breast;
And many a knight hath proved his chance,
In the charmed ring to break a lance,
But all have foully sped;
Save two, as legends tell, and they
Were Wallace wight, and Gilbert Hay.—[34]
Gentles, my tale is said."

III.

The quaighs were deep, the liquor strong,[35]
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.
Apart, and nestling in the hay
Of a waste loft, Fitz-Eustace lay.
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:
"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;[36]
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 arrayed.
Fitz-Eustace followed him abroad,
And marked him pace the village road,
And listened to his horse's tramp,
Till, by the lessening sound,
He judged that of the Pictish camp
Lord Marmion sought the round.
Little for this Fitz-Eustace cared,
But, patient, waited till he heard,
At distance, pricked 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[37]
Returned Lord Marmion.
Down hastily he sprung from selle,[38]
And, in his haste, well-nigh he fell;
To the squire's hand the rein he threw,
And spoke no word as he withdrew:
But yet the moonlight did betray,
The falcon crest was soiled with clay;[39]
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.

CANTO FOURTH.—THE CAMP.

THE ARGUMENT.

NEXT morning, loud are the complaints on all sides of armour disarranged and spears stolen. Harry Blount's horse is wet with sweat and mire; and Bevis, Lord Marmion's favourite steed, is dying in his stall. Marmion gives cold attention to these complaints, treats them as accidents of course, and gives the signal for advancing. In the woods of Saltoun they meet Sir David Lindesay, Lord Lion-King-at-Arms, attended by heralds and pursuivants, who has been sent by the Scottish King to meet the English Envoy. He conducts Marmion and his train to Crichtoun Castle, where he is to remain till King James finds meet time to see him. Here they tarry two days, while James marshals his forces on the Borough-moor, a plain on the south of Edinburgh. Walking on the battlements on the second night of their sojourn at Crichtoun Castle, Lindesay warns Marmion that his mission will be fruitless, since a messenger from Heaven had failed to turn the King from his purpose. Marmion then narrates to Sir David his own encounter with the Spectre Knight in the form of his mortal enemy within the charmed ring at Gifford. He admits that he was unhorsed, and that it was of the mercy of his foe that his life was spared.

The next morning early they set out for the Capital. When they reach the top of Blackford-hill, Marmion is captivated with the wondrous scene which presents itself. The Scottish host stretches over the plain below, its positions marked by a thousand streamers. High over all floats the royal banner, with its ruddy lion ramped in gold. Across the plain, the City glows in the gloomy splendour of the rising sun. Beyond it flows the golden Forth, studded with emerald islands. In the distance, gleam the purple tops of the Ochils; while the shores of Fife sparkle in the morning light. Presently they descend the hill, and reach the barriers of the camp.

I.

THE lark sung shrill, the cock he crew,
And loudly Marmion's bugles blew;
And, with their light and lively call,
Brought groom and yeoman to the stall.
Whistling they came, and free of heart;[1]
But soon their mood was changed:
Complaint was heard on every part,
Of something disarranged.
Some clamoured loud for armour lost;
Some brawled 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 dressed 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:[2]
To Marmion who the plight dare tell,
Of the good steed he loves so well?"

Gaping for fear and ruth, they saw[3]
The charger panting on his straw;
Till one, who would seem wisest, cried,[4]
"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."[5]
Fitz-Eustace, who the cause but guessed,
Nor wholly understood,
His comrades' clamorous plaints suppressed;
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 marvelled at the wonders told,—
Passed them as accidents of course,
And bade his clarions sound to horse.
The Palmer showing forth the way,[6]
They journeyed all the morning day.

Now sudden, distant trumpets shrill,
In notes prolonged by wood and hill,
Were heard to echo far;
Each ready archer grasped 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, showed
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,
Attendant on a King-at-arms,
Whose hand the armorial truncheon held,
That feudal strife had often quelled,
When wildest its alarms.
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.
Still is thy name in high account,
And still thy verse has charms,
Sir David Lindesay of the Mount,[7]
Lord Lion-King-at-Arms!
Down from his horse did Marmion spring,
Soon as he saw the Lion-King.
Their mutual greetings duly made,
The Lion thus his message said:
"Though Scotland's King hath deeply swore,
Ne'er to knit faith with Henry more,
And strictly hath forbid resort
From England to his royal court;
Yet, for he knows Lord Marmion's name,[8]
And honours much his warlike fame,
My liege hath deemed 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."—

Though inly chafed at this delay,
Lord Marmion bears it as he may.
The Palmer, his mysterious guide,
Beholding thus his place supplied,
Sought to take leave—in vain;
Strict was the Lion-King's command,
That none, who rode in Marmion's band,
Should sever from the train.
The right-hand path they now decline,
And trace, against the stream, the Tyne.
At length up that wild dale they wind,
Where Crichtoun Castle crowns the bank;[9]
For there the Lion's care assigned
A lodging meet for Marmion's rank.
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 marshalled then his land's array,
Upon the Borough-moor that lay.[10]
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[11]
Lord Marmion's powerful mind and wise,—
Trained in the lore of Rome and Greece
And policies of war and peace.
It chanced, as fell the second night,
That on the battlements they walked,
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:
And, closer questioned, thus he told
A tale, which chronicles of old
In Scottish story have enrolled.

[*Lindesay tells Marmion that while King James knelt in prayer within Linlithgow Church, the apparition of the Apostle John appeared to him, and warned him, in the name of the Virgin Mary, against the expedition which he was undertaking; but to no purpose.*]

II.

While Lindesay told this marvel strange,
The twilight was so pale,
He marked not Marmion's colour change,[12]
While listening to the tale:
But, after a suspended pause,
The Baron did at length unfold
The tale his village host had told,
At Gifford to his train.
Nought of the Palmer says he there,
And nought of Constance, or of Clare;
The thoughts, which broke his sleep, he seems
To mention but as feverish dreams.
"In vain," said he, "to rest I spread
My burning limbs, and couched my head:
So sore was the delirious goad,
I took my steed, and forth I rode;
And, as the moon shone bright and cold,
Soon reached the camp upon the wold.[13]
The southern entrance I passed 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.[14]

Thus judging, for a little space
I listened, ere I left the place;[15]
  But scarce could trust my eyes,
Nor yet can think they served me true,
When sudden in the ring I view,[16]
In form distinct of shape and hue,
  A mounted champion rise!—
I've fought, Lord-Lion, many a day,
In single fight and mixed affray,
And ever, I myself may say,
  Have borne me as a knight;
But when this unexpected foe
Seemed starting from the gulf below,—
I care not though the truth I show,—
  I trembled with affright;[17]
And as I placed in rest my spear,
My hand so shook for very fear,
  I scarce could couch it right.
Why need my tongue the issue tell?
We ran our course,—my charger fell;—
What could he 'gainst the shock of Hell?—
  I rolled upon the plain.
High o'er my head, with threatening hand,
The spectre shook his naked brand,—
  Yet did the worst remain:
My dazzled eyes I upward cast,—
Not opening Hell itself could blast
Their sight like what I saw![18]
Full on his face the moonbeam strook,—[19]
A face could never be mistook![20]
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 visor raised, did stare
A human warrior with a glare
  So grimly and so ghast.[21]
Thrice o'er my head he shook the blade;
But when to good Saint George I prayed,
(The first time e'er I asked his aid,)
  He plunged it in the sheath;
And, on his courser mounting light,
He seemed to vanish from my sight:
The moonbeam drooped, and deepest night
  Sunk down upon the heath.—
  'Twere long to tell what cause I have
    To know his face that met me there;

Called by his hatred from the grave,
To cumber upper air:
Dead or alive, good cause had he
To be my mortal enemy."—
Lord Marmion turned him half aside,
And twice to clear his voice he tried,
Then pressed Sir David's hand,—
But nought, at length, in answer said;
And here their further converse stayed,
Each ordering that his band
Should bowne them with the rising day,[22]
To Scotland's camp to take their way.—
Such was the King's command.

Early they took Dun-Edin's road,[23]
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 their route was laid
Across the furzy hills of Braid.[24]
They passed the glen and scanty rill,
And climbed the opposing bank, until
They gained the top of Blackford-hill.[24]
Still on the spot Lord Marmion stayed,
For fairer scene he ne'er surveyed,
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,[25]
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 gleamed a purple amethyst.
Yonder the shores of Fife you saw;
Here Preston-bay, and Berwick-law;

And, broad between them rolled,[26]
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,[27]
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 repressed his glee.
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.

CANTO FIFTH.—THE COURT.

THE ARGUMENT.

THEY ride through the camp, wondering and admired, and soon reach the City, where there is assigned to Marmion and his train a lodging which high overlooks the crowded street. After the hour of vesper, according to the King's command, Lindesay conducts Marmion to Holy-Rood, where he meets the King, and learns from his own lips how futile his errand has been; for the march to England is to begin on the morrow. Since Marmion must remain in Scotland so long as there are the faintest hopes of peace, James consigns him to the guardianship of Archibald Douglas, Earl of Angus, in whose stronghold of Tantallon Castle he will reside. Meantime the Abbess of Whitby and her nuns have been taken by a galley off Dunbar. These also will go to Tantallon, under Marmion's escort. The lodging assigned them for the night is adjoining to Marmion's. At midnight, the Palmer and the Abbess meet in a lofty balcony common to the two houses. The Abbess reveals to him Constance's confession that she had forged the letters by which De Wilton had been convicted of treason. She intrusts Constance's packet to his care, and prays him to take it with speed to Wolsey, that King Henry may know the treachery of Marmion. She scarce has ceased when phantom heralds and pursuivants, bearing banners and scutcheons, appear on the battled tower of the City Cross. From the midst of the spectre crowd a terrible voice summons those who were fore-doomed to fall at Flodden, beginning with King James, and closing with Marmion and De Wilton. The Abbess hears another voice deny the infernal summons, and appeal to Heaven; whereupon the phantom pageant vanishes like a dream, and the Abbess is left alone.

Next morning the Scottish host begins its march. Marmion, with some of his train, including the Palmer, sets out for Tantallon under the conduct of Douglas. They are followed at the distance of a half-hour's march by the Abbess and nuns, escorted by

Fitz-Eustace and a troop of horsemen. They halt before a convent near North Berwick. The Prioress offers them hospitality until Douglas shall have prepared a bark to take them back to Whitby. They all enter except Clare, who, by the orders of Douglas and Marmion, must accompany Fitz-Eustace to Tantallon, to be conducted by Marmion to her kinsman Lord Fitz-Clare. At Tantallon they are hospitably entertained by Douglas. Every day brings news of the varying fortunes of the war. At length they hear that a decisive conflict is inevitable. Marmion chafes under his inactivity and the fancied coldness of Douglas, and gives orders for his band to depart at break of day.

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;[1]
And little deemed their force to feel,
Through links of mail, and plates of steel,
When, rattling upon Flodden vale,
The cloth-yard arrows flew like hail.
Nor less did Marmion's skilful view
Glance every line and squadron through;
And much he marvelled one small land
Could marshal forth such various band.—
Thus through the Scottish camp they passed,
And reached the City gate at last,
Where all around, a wakeful guard,
Armed burghers kept their watch and ward.
Well had they cause of jealous fear,
When lay encamped, in field so near,
The Borderer and the Mountaineer.[2]
As through the bustling streets they go,
All was alive with martial show:
At every turn, with dinning clang,
The armourer's anvil clashed and rang;
Or toiled 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.—
The Lion led to lodging meet,
Which high o'erlooked 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;
And when the appointed hour succeeds,
The Baron dons his peaceful weeds,[3]
And following Lindesay as he leads,
The Palace halls they gain.

Old Holy-Rood rung merrily,[4]
That night, with wassail, mirth, and glee:
King James within her princely bower
Feasted the chiefs of Scotland's power,
Summoned to spend the parting hour;
For he had charged, that his array
Should southward march by break of day.
Through the mixed 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 doffed, to Marmion bending low,
His broidered cap and plume.
And Marmion deemed he ne'er had seen
A prince of such a noble mien.
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 curled beard and hair.
Light was his footstep in the dance,
And firm his stirrup in the lists;[5]
And, oh, he had that merry glance,
That seldom lady's heart resists.
Lightly from fair to fair he flew,[6]
And loved to plead, lament, and sue;—
Suit lightly won, and short-lived pain!
For monarchs seldom sigh in vain.
I said he joyed 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,[7]

That bound his breast in penance pain,
In memory of his father slain.
Even so 'twas strange how, evermore,
Soon as the passing pang was o'er,
Forward he rushed, with double glee,
Into the stream of revelry.
O'er James's heart, the courtiers say,
Sir Hugh the Heron's wife held sway.
Nor to that lady free alone
Did the gay King allegiance own;
For the fair Queen of France[8]
Sent him a turquois ring, and glove,
And charged him, as her knight and love,
For her to break a lance.
And thus for France's Queen he drest
His manly limbs in mailèd vest;
And thus admitted English fair[9]
His inmost counsels still to share;
And thus, for both, he madly planned
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,—[10]
His own Queen Margaret, who in Lithgow's bower[11]
All lonely sat, and wept the weary hour.—
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,[12]
Dame Heron rises with a smile,
Upon the harp to play.

Lady Heron's Song.

LOCHINVAR.

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 weapon had none;
He rode all unarmed, and he rode all alone.
So faithful in love, and so dauntless in war,
There never was knight like the young Lochinvar.

He stayed not for brake, and he stopped 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 entered 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 kissed the goblet: the knight took it up,
He quaffed off the wine, and he threw down the cup.
She looked down to blush, and she looked 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.[13]

So stately his form, and so lovely her face,
That never a hall such a galliard did grace;[14]
While her mother did fret, and her father did fume,
And the bridegroom stood dangling his bonnet and plume;
And the bride-maidens whispered, "'Twere better by far[15]
To have matched our fair cousin with young Lochinvar."

One touch to her hand, and one word in her ear,
When they reached 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;[16]
They 'll have fleet steeds that follow," quoth young Lochinvar.

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

[*In the course of the entertainment the King conducts Marmion to Douglas, and intrusts him to his care. He tells the English Envoy, at the same time, that his mission is fruitless, for he has resolved to begin his southward march the next morning.*]

II.

Leave we these revels now, to tell
What to Saint Hilda's maids befell,
Whose galley, as they sailed 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 summoned to prepare
To journey under Marmion's care,
As escort honoured, safe, and fair,
Again to English land.
Their lodging, (so the King assigned,)
To Marmion's, as their guardian, joined;
And thus it fell, that, passing nigh,
The Palmer caught the Abbess' eye;
Who warned him, by a scroll,
She had a secret to reveal,
That much concerned 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,[17]
At night they might in secret come.

At night, in secret, there they came,
The Palmer and the holy Dame.
"O holy Palmer!" she began,—
"For sure he must be sainted man,
Whose blessèd feet have trod the ground
Where the Redeemer's tomb is found;—
For His dear Church's sake, my tale[18]
Attend, nor deem of light avail,
Though I must speak of worldly love,—[19]
How vain to those who wed above!—
De Wilton and Lord Marmion wooed
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,[20]
Wilton was traitor in his heart,
And had made league with Martin Swart,[21]
When he came here on Simnel's part;[22]
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;[23]
Where frankly did De Wilton own
That Swart in Gueldres he had known;
And that between them then there went
Some scroll of courteous compliment.
For this he to his castle sent;
But when his messenger returned,
Judge how De Wilton's fury burned!
For in his packet there were laid
Letters that claimed disloyal aid,
And proved King Henry's cause betrayed.
His fame, thus blighted, in the field
He strove to clear, by spear and shield;—
To clear his fame in vain he strove,
For wondrous are His ways above!
Perchance some form was unobserved;
Perchance in prayer, or faith, he swerved;
Else how could guiltless champion quail,
Or how the blessèd ordeal fail?[24]
His squire, who now De Wilton saw
As recreant doomed to suffer law,[25]
  Repentant, owned in vain,
That, while he had the scrolls in care,
A stranger maiden, passing fair,
Had drenched him with a beverage rare;—[26]
  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.
Now mark:—When Wilton was betrayed,
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,[27]
Traced quaint and varying character.—
'Twere long, and needless, here to tell
How to my hand these papers fell;
But, saintly Palmer, mark my prayer:
I give this packet to thy care,
For thee to stop they will not dare;
  And, oh! with cautious speed,
To Wolsey's hand the papers bring,
That he may show them to the King:
  And, for thy well-earned 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[28]
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 shrieked in fear,
"Saint Withold, save us!—What is here![29]
  Look at yon City Cross!
See on its battled tower appear
Phantoms, that scutcheons seem to rear,
  And blazoned banners toss!"

Dun-Edin's Cross, a pillared stone,[30]
Rose on a turret octagon:
Then on its battlements they saw
A vision, passing Nature's law,
  Strange, wild, and dimly seen;
Figures that seemed to rise and die,
Gibber and sign, advance and fly,
While nought confirmed 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,[31]
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:
"Prince, prelate, potentate, and peer,
  Whose names I now shall call,
Scottish, or foreigner, give ear!
When forty days are past and gone,
I cite you, at your Monarch's throne
  To answer and appear."—
Then thundered 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-doomed to Flodden's carnage pile,
Was cited there by name:
And Marmion, Lord of Fontenaye,
Of Lutterward, and Scrivelbaye;
De Wilton, erst of Aberley,
The self-same thundering voice did say.—
But then another spoke:
"Thy fatal summons I deny,
And thine infernal lord defy,
Appealing me to Him on high
Who burst the sinner's yoke."
At that dread accent, with a scream,
Parted the pageant like a dream,—
The summoner was gone.
Prone on her face the Abbess fell,
And fast, and fast, her beads did tell;[32]
Her nuns came, startled by the yell,
And found her there alone.
She marked not, at the scene aghast,
What time, or how, the Palmer passed.—
Shift we the scene.—The camp doth move;[33]
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-haired 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.

[*Marmion accompanies Douglas to Tantallon, followed at a short distance by the Abbess and nuns under the escort of Fitz-Eustace. The latter are lodged in a convent near North Berwick; except Clare, who, in spite of her own and the Abbess's remonstrances, must accompany Fitz-Eustace to Tantallon, where they are hospitably entertained by Douglas.*]

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 gathered in the Southern land,
And marched into Northumberland,
And camp at Wooler ta'en.
Marmion, like charger in the stall,
That hears, without, the trumpet-call,
Began to chafe and swear:

"A sorry thing to hide my head
In castle, like a fearful maid,
When such a field is near!
Needs must I see this battle day:[34]
Death to my fame if such a fray
Were fought, and Marmion away!
The Douglas, too, I wot not why,[35]
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.

CANTO SIXTH.—THE BATTLE.

THE ARGUMENT.

As Clare one evening walks and muses on the battlements of Tantallon, the Palmer reveals himself to her as De Wilton, and tells her his history since his overthrow at Cottiswold field. Tended till his recovery by Austin his beadsman, he had wandered with him as a palmer in many lands. He had returned to England, and on his way to Scotland chance threw him into Marmion's train. He had unhorsed him on Gifford-moor, and was restrained from slaying him only by his promise to the dying Austin to spare his life. He had told his tale to Douglas, to whom also he had exposed the treachery of Marmion.

At midnight, in the chapel of the hold, Wilton is anew dubbed knight by the sword of Angus; and at dawn he sets out for the camp of Surrey. A few hours later, Marmion also starts with his band and Clare, after a sharp altercation with Lord Angus. On the way, Blount and Fitz-Eustace tell Marmion that they had seen the Palmer depart at daybreak clad in full armour, and mounted on Angus's favourite steed, and that he had borne a striking resemblance to De Wilton. Marmion now understands both who his adversary on Gifford-moor really was, and why Douglas had treated him so haughtily on his departure. When they reach the field of battle at Flodden, he orders Eustace and Blount, with ten archers, to remain with Clare at a point which commands the entire field. He dashes on with the rest of his train to join Lord Surrey, and is received with acclamations by the host. Blount frets and fumes at being left outside the battle, which is raging within his view. He rushes off, followed by the archers who formed Clare's body-guard, leaving her in charge of Fitz-Eustace alone. Presently Marmion's horse darts by, blood-stained and riderless. Eustace in alarm rushes into the fight, and Clare is left alone. Two horsemen bear Marmion towards her. Forgetting her animosity, she tends him, gives him water to drink, and binds his wound. But he lives only long enough to hear the shouts of the victorious English. A monk leads Clare from the battle-field. As they leave it, the strife grows more desperate. King James falls, surrounded by his bravest lords. Much of the credit of the victory is given to De Wilton, who afterwards clears his name of the stain that had been cast upon it, and is, by consent of the King and the kinsmen of Clare, rewarded with her hand.

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 snuffed the battle from afar;
And hopes were none that back again
Herald should come from Terouenne,[1]
Where England's King in leaguer lay,[2]
Before decisive battle-day;
While these things were, the mournful Clare
Did in the Dame's devotions share:
For the good Countess ceaseless prayed
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 pressed[3]
Upon her intervals of rest,
Dejected Clara well could bear
The formal state, the lengthened prayer,
Though dearest to her wounded heart
The hours that she might spend apart.

I said, Tantallon's dizzy steep
Hung o'er the margin of the deep.
Many a rude tower and rampart there
Repelled the insult of the air,
Which, when the tempest vexed 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,[4]
And in the chief three mullets stood,[5]—
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:[6]
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 manned:

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.
And, for they were so lonely, Clare[7]
Would to these battlements repair,
And muse upon her sorrows there.
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.....
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:[8]
Of such a stem, a sapling weak
He ne'er shall bend, although he break.
"But see!—what makes this armour here?"
For in her path there lay
Targe, corslet, helm;—she viewed 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.—[9]
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 seemed 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.
Shortly I tell what then he said,
By many a tender word delayed,
And modest blush, and bursting sigh,
And question kind, and fond reply.

[*De Wilton narrates his history since his defeat at Cottiswold. On recovering consciousness, he found himself in the cell of his beadsman, Austin, by whom he was faithfully tended till his wounds were healed. With him he left England; and, dressed as a palmer, wandered over many lands. Austin fell sick and died. But on his death-bed he made De Wilton promise that if ever his deadliest enemy was in his power, he would spare him "for Austin's sake." He had returned to England.*

Chance had made him Marmion's guide. He might have slain him on Gifford-moor, but for his promise to Austin. He was glad he had not done so, as the packet given him by the Abbess of Whitby would enable him to clear his character, and to convict Marmion of fraud. Douglas was now his friend; and that knight would restore him to the honours of knighthood.]

II.

That night, upon the rocks and bay
The midnight moon-beam slumbering lay,
And poured its silver light, and pure,
Through loop-hole, and through embrazure,
  Upon Tantallon tower and hall;
But chief where archèd windows wide
Illuminate the chapel's pride,
  The sober glances fall.
Much was there need; though, seamed with scars,[10]
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 silvery moon-shine bright,
  A bishop by the altar stood,[11]
  A noble lord of Douglas blood,
With mitre sheen, and rocquet white.[12]
Yet showed his meek and thoughtful eye
But little pride of prelacy;
More pleased that, in a barbarous age,[13]
He gave rude Scotland Virgil's page,
Than that beneath his rule he held
The bishopric of fair Dunkeld.
Then at the altar Wilton kneels,[14]
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.[15]
Arise, Sir Ralph, De Wilton's heir!
For King, for Church, for Lady fair,[16]
  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 sobbed, for sob he must—[17]
"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!"

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,[18]
And whispered in an under tone,
"Let the hawk stoop, his prey is flown."—[19]
The train from out the castle drew;
But Marmion stopped 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 stayed;
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[20]
Be open, at my Sovereign's will,
To each one whom he lists, howe'er[21]
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."—
Burned 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,[22]
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 dar'st thou then
To beard the lion in his den,
  The Douglas in his hall?
And hop'st thou hence unscathed to go?—
No, by Saint Bride of Bothwell, no!—
Up drawbridge, grooms—what, warder, ho!
  Let the portcullis fall."—[23]
Lord Marmion turned,—well was his need!
And dashed 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!
The steed along the drawbridge flies,
Just as it trembled on the rise;
Not lighter does the swallow skim
Along the smooth lake's level brim:
And when Lord Marmion reached his band,
He halts, and turns with clenchèd hand,[24]
And shouts of loud defiance pours,
And shook his gauntlet at the towers.—
"Horse! horse!" the Douglas cried, "and chase!"
But soon he reined his fury's pace:
"A royal messenger he came,
Though most unworthy of the name.—
A letter forged! Saint Jude to speed!
Did ever knight so foul a deed!
At first in heart it liked me ill,
When the King praised his clerkly skill.
Thanks to Saint Bothan, son of mine,[25]
Save Gawain, ne'er could pen a line:
So swore I, and I swear it still,
Let my boy-bishop fret his fill.—[26]

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.

The day in Marmion's journey wore;
Yet, ere his passion's gust was o'er,
They crossed the heights of Stanrig-moor.
His troop more closely there he scanned,
And missed 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,
Wrapped 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 to his paces, cool and bold.
I heard the Sheriff Sholto say,
The Earl did much the Master pray[27]
To use him on the battle day;
But he preferred "—" 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?"—
" In brief, my lord, we both descried
(For I then 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 wished him speed."—
The instant that Fitz-Eustace spoke,
A sudden light on Marmion broke;—
"Ah! dastard fool, to reason lost!"
He muttered; "'twas nor fay nor ghost[28]
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 gloomed his rugged brow.—
Will Surrey dare to entertain,
'Gainst Marmion, charge disproved and vain?
  Small risk of that, I trow.—
Yet Clare's sharp questions must I shun;
Must separate Constance from the Nun—
O what a tangled web we weave,
When first we practise to deceive!—
A Palmer too!—no wonder why
I felt rebuked beneath his eye:
I might have known there was but one
Whose look could quell Lord Marmion."

Stung with these thoughts, he urged to speed
His troop, and reached, at eve, the Tweed,
Where Lennel's convent closed their march,—[29]
There now is left but one frail arch.
Yet did Saint Bernard's Abbot there
Give Marmion entertainment fair,
And lodging for his train and Clare.
Next morn the Baron climbed the tower,
To view afar the Scottish power,
  Encamped on Flodden edge:
The white pavilions made a show,
Like remnants of the winter snow,
  Along the dusky ridge.
Lord Marmion looked:—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 watched the motions of some foe,
Who traversed on the plain below.
Even so it was. From Flodden ridge
The Scots beheld the English host
Leave Barmore-wood, their evening post,
And heedful watched them as they crossed [30]
The Till by Twisel Bridge.
High sight it is, and haughty, while
They dive into the deep defile;
Beneath the caverned cliff they fall,
Beneath the castle's airy wall.
By rock, by oak, by hawthorn-tree,
Troop after troop are disappearing;
Troop after troop their banners rearing,
Upon the eastern bank you see.
Still pouring down the rocky den,
Where flows the sullen Till,
And rising from the dim-wood glen,
Standards on standards, men on men,
In slow succession still,
And, sweeping o'er the Gothic arch,
And pressing on, in ceaseless march,
To gain the opposing hill.
That morn, to many a trumpet-clang,
Twisel! thy rock's deep echo rang;
And many a chief of birth and rank,
Saint Helen! at thy fountain drank.[31]
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.—
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,[32]
Or well-skilled Bruce, to rule the fight,
And cry—"Saint Andrew and our right!"

Another sight had seen that morn,[33]
From Fate's dark book a leaf been torn,
And Flodden had been Bannockbourne!—
The precious hour has passed in vain,
And England's host has gained the plain;
Wheeling their march, and circling still,
Around the base of Flodden-hill.

With kindling brow Lord Marmion said,—
"This instant be our band arrayed;
The river must be quickly crossed,
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."—
Himself he swift on horseback threw,
Down to the Tweed his band he drew.
Stoutly they braved the current's course,
And, though far downward driven perforce,
The southern bank they gain;
Behind them straggling, came to shore,
As best they might, the train.
A moment then Lord Marmion stayed,
And breathed his steed, his men arrayed,
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.
The hillock gained, Lord Marmion stayed:
"Here, by this cross," he gently said,
"You well may view the scene.
Here shalt thou tarry, lovely Clare:
Oh, 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 picked 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 spurred amain,

And, dashing through the battle plain,
His way to Surrey took.—
"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:[34]
Myself will rule this central host;
Stout Stanley fronts their right;
My sons command the vaward post,
With Brian Tunstall, stainless knight;[35]
Lord Dacre, with his horsemen light,
Shall be in rear-ward of the fight,
And succour those that need it most.
Now, gallant Marmion, well I know,
Would gladly to the vanguard go;
Edmund, the Admiral, Tunstall there,
With thee their charge will blithely share;
There fight thine own retainers too,
Beneath De Burg, thy steward true."—
"Thanks, noble Surrey!" Marmion said;
Nor further 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.

III.

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."[36]
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!
Oh, life and death were in the shout,
Recoil and rally, charge and rout,
  And triumph and despair!
Long looked the anxious squires; their eye
Could in the darkness nought descry.
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 marked they, dashing broad and far,
The broken billows of the war,
And plumèd 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 flashed amain;
Fell England's arrow-flight like rain;
Crests rose, and stooped, 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,[35]
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.

Far on the left, unseen the while,
Stanley broke Lennox and Argyle:[37]
Though there the western mountaineer
Rushed with bare bosom on the spear,

And flung the feeble targe aside,
And with both hands the broadsword plied,—
'Twas vain! But Fortune, on the right,
With fickle smile, cheered Scotland's fight.
Then fell that spotless banner white—
The Howard's lion fell;
Yet still Lord Marmion's falcon flew
With wavering flight, while fiercer grew
Around the battle yell.
The Border slogan rent the sky—[38]
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 wavered '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—[39]
I gallop to the host!"
And to the fray he rode amain,
Followed 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 stayed,
As loth to leave the helpless maid,
When, fast as shaft can fly,
Bloodshot his eyes, his nostrils spread,
The loose rein dangling from his head,
Housing and saddle bloody red,
Lord Marmion's steed rushed 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.

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 scattered van of England wheels;—

She only said, as loud in air
The tumult roared, "Is Wilton there?"—
They fly, or, maddened by despair,
Fight but to die,—"Is Wilton there?"
With that, straight up the hill there rode
Two horsemen drenched with gore;
And in their arms, a helpless load,
A wounded knight they bore.
His hand still strained the broken brand;
His arms were smeared with blood and sand:
Dragged from among the horses' feet,
With dinted shield and helmet beat,
The falcon-crest and plumage gone,
Can that be haughty Marmion!...
Young Blount his armour did unlace,
And, gazing on his ghastly face,
Said, "By Saint George, he's gone!
That spear-wound has our master sped;
And see the deep cut on his head!—
Good night to Marmion!"—
"Unnurtured Blount, thy brawling cease!
He opes his eyes," said Eustace; "peace!"—
When, doffed his casque, he felt free air,[40]
Around 'gan Marmion wildly stare:
"Where's Harry Blount? Fitz-Eustace where?
Linger ye here, ye hearts of hare!
Redeem my pennon—charge again!
Cry, 'Marmion to the rescue!'—Vain!
Last of my race, on battle-plain
That shout shall ne'er be heard again!
Yet my last thought is England's.—Fly!
To Dacre bear my signet-ring;
Tell him his squadrons up to bring.—
Fitz-Eustace, to Lord Surrey hie:
Tunstall lies dead upon the field,
His life-blood stains the spotless shield;
Edmund is down; my life is reft;—
The Admiral alone is left.
Let Stanley charge with spur of fire—
With Chester charge, and Lancashire—
Full upon Scotland's central host,
Or victory and England's lost.—
Must I bid twice? Hence, varlets! fly
Leave Marmion here alone—to die!"
They parted—and alone he lay:
Clare drew her from the sight away,
Till pain wrung forth a lowly moan,
And half he murmured—"Is there none,
Of all my halls have nurst—

Page, squire, or groom—one cup to bring
Of blessèd water, from the spring,
To slake my dying thirst?"

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 stooped her by the runnel's side,[41]
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 filled 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.[42]
Deep drank Lord Marmion of the wave;
And, as she stooped 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.

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, swelled 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.

"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.—
Day dawns upon the mountain's side:
There, Scotland! lay thy bravest pride—
Chiefs, knights, and nobles, many a one;
The sad survivors all are gone!—
View not that corpse mistrustfully,
Defaced and mangled though it be;
Nor to yon Border castle high
Look northward with upbraiding eye;
Nor cherish hope in vain,
That, journeying far on foreign strand,
The Royal Pilgrim to his land[43]
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 clenched within his manly hand,
Beseemed the monarch slain.

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 hewed
Amid the spearmen's stubborn wood—
Unnamed by Holinshed or Hall,[44]
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,[45]
More, Sands, and Denny passed the joke;[46]
That bluff King Hal the curtain drew,
And Catherine's hand the stocking threw;[47]

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!"[48]

NOTES TO MARMION.

CANTO FIRST.

1. *Norham.*—A ruinous castle on the southern or English bank of the Tweed, about six miles above Berwick. Here Edward I. resided when created umpire in the dispute concerning the Scottish succession (1291).——*Castled.*—Castellated.

2. *Battled.*—Embattled; furnished with battlements.——*The donjon keep.*—The "donjon" properly is the strongest part of a castle, generally a high square tower which *dominated* or commanded the entire building and its surroundings. [Fr. *donjon;* low Lat. *dongeo,* from root of *dominari,* to be master; *domus,* a house.] The "donjon" generally contained the prison; hence *dungeon* in its modern sense. The name "keep" was also applied to the central tower or stronghold of a castle. [O. E. *keep,* care; Sc. *kepe;* A.-S. *cépan,* to guard.]

3. *Grates.*—Iron bars or gratings, placed in loop-holes and windows.

4. *Plump.*—A clump or cluster. The word properly applies to a flight of waterfowl, but is applied, by analogy, to a body of horse:

"There is a knight of the North Country,
Which leads a lusty *plump* of spears."
Flodden Field.

5. *Sewer.*—Waiter; an attendant who placed dishes on the table, and removed them. The word occurs in a stage direction in *Macbeth* (i., 7): "*Enter a* sewer *and divers* servants *with dishes and service, and pass over the stage.*" A *sewer* is literally a follower. [O. E. *sew,* to follow, from O. Fr. *sewir;* Fr. *suivre;* Lat. *sequi;* E. *sue, pursue, suit,* and *suite* a company of *sewers.*]

6. *Malvoisie.* — Malmsey wine. The name was originally applied to the wines of *Malvasia* in the Morea, but was extended to those of the Madeiras, Sicily, Provence, &c. [Sp. *Malvasia;* Fr. *Malvoisie;* O. Ger. *Malmasier;* E. *Malmsey.*]

7. *Sound* and *blow* are infinitives, governed by *bid.*

8. *Stalworth.*—O. E. form of *stalwart,* bold, strong. [A.-S. *staelweorth,* from *stalfehoth,* steel-hearted.]

9. *The gilded spurs to claim.*—To be admitted to the honours of knighthood. The ceremony of consecrating a knight is described in Canto VI., lines 110–139.

10. *Halbert.*—Halberd, a pole-axe.

11. *Him listed ease*—It pleased him to ease. *List* is a unipersonal verb, used only in the third person singular present and past. Its nominative is the infinitive following it. The person pleased is expressed by a prefixed pronoun in the dative case. In some verbs of this construction the pronoun has become compounded with the verb, as *methinks, meseems.*

12. *'Tis meet,* &c.—Construe thus: It is meet that I should tell you now how the soldiers of the guard stood in the castle-yard to welcome noble Marmion, fairly armed with musket, pike, and morion; and how they were ordered or arranged.

13. *Linstock.*—A staff with a match at the end, with which the gunner used to fire a gun.——*Yare.*—Ready. This word is used by Shakespeare in two senses: *first,* nimble, quick; as, "Dismount thy tuck, be *yare* in thy preparation" (*Twelfth Night,* Act iii., Scene 4, line 244); *second,* ready, prepared; as, "Our ship is tight and *yare,* and bravely rigg'd" (*Tempest,* Act v., Scene 1, line 214). Shakespeare also uses the adverb *yarely* (*Tempest,* Act i., Scene 1, line 4). *Yare* is used as an adjective (ready) in *Robert of Gloucester's Chronicle;* and as a verb (to make ready) in *Havelok, the Dane.* [A.-S. *gearo,* ready.]

14. *Entered the train.*—One of the many

inverted constructions found in Scott's poetry. For, "the train entered." In the following clause the object is put first and the verb last.

15. *They marshalled him to the Castle-hall.*—This and the succeeding verses afford good examples of the variety and lightness which Scott gives to his lines by the introduction of so-called anapæstic feet, by making the lines rhyme alternately, and by introducing lines of three feet:—

Thĕy már- | shălled hím | tŏ thĕ cá- | stle-háll,
Whĕre thĕ guésts | stŏŏd áll | ăsíde,
And lóud- | lў flóur- | ĭshed thĕ trúm- | pĕt cáll,
And thĕ hér- | ălds lóud- | lў críed.

16. *Lordings.*—A word of similar meaning with *lordling*, but not used in the same contemptuous sense. The *-ing* is rather a patronymic than a diminutive termination. [O. E. *lordynge.*] The host in Chaucer addresses the pilgrims as "lordynges." *Prologue to Canterbury Tales*, line 761.

17. *Cottiswold.*—Cotswold Hills, in Gloucestershire.

18. *The listed field.*—The ground enclosed for a tournament; *the lists.* [Fr. *lice*, It. *lizza*, Lat. *licium*, a girdle; plural *licia*, lists.]

19. *The deas.*—The dais, the principal table, or the raised part of the floor on which it stood. [O. E. *dece;* O. Fr. *dais;* Ger. *fisch;* Lat. *discus*, a quoit; low Lat. a table.]

20. *The whiles.*—At the same time; during the time. The more correct expression is "the while;" *e.g.*,

"If you'll sit down,
I'll bear your logs *the while.*"
The Tempest, Act iii., Scene 1, line 24.

(See Note 12, Canto V.) Scott elsewhere uses "whiles" as an adverb=sometimes, its usual meaning in Scotch. [A.-S. *hwíl*, time. The *es* is a genitive suffix. Hence the adverbs *besid-es, el-se, on-ce, hen-ce, need-s*, &c.]

21. *Such-like.*—Of the same kind. An Anglicised form of the Sc. *sicklike.* But the expression is redundant, for *like* is included in *such*, which is A.-S. *swi-lc*= *swa-lic*—that is, *so-like.*

22. *Enow*—Enough.

23. *Here be some.*—In A.-S. and in O. E. *be* was indicative as much as *am;* but *be* had generally a future signification. In later English it is used when uncertainty is implied; and when, as in the text, a number of persons are referred to as one class. Compare,

"There *be* some spots are painful."
Tempest, Act iii., Scene 1, line 1.

And see Abbot's "Shakespearian Grammar," §300.——*Pricked.*—Ridden, spurred. Compare—

"A gentle knight was *pricking* on the plain."
Spenser.

——*As far....as to Dunbar.*—Elliptical construction for "as far....as (it is far) to Dunbar." Dunbar is an ancient royal burgh on the coast of Haddingtonshire, near the mouth of the Tyne, and nearly equidistant from Edinburgh and Berwick.

24. *Lack*,—in the sense of wish, desire, is a Scotticism. The word properly signifies to be destitute [Du. *lack*, defect]; but the feeling of *defect* naturally gives rise to a *wish* to have the defect removed. The word *want* presents a similar variety of meanings.

25. *Forayers.*—Foragers, those who went in search of *forage*, or food for cattle, and who were generally reavers or freebooters. [Low Lat. *foragium;* It. *fodero*, fodder; A.-S. *foda*, food, and *foder*, fodder.]

26. *Were.*—Conditional mood = would be.

27. *Carved to his uncle.*—To carve for his knight was one of the duties of the squire. Thus Chaucer says of his "yong squyer:"

"Curteys he was, lowely, and servysable,
And *carf* byforn his fadur at the table."
Prologue to Canterbury Tales, line 100.

In describing the accomplishments of Marmion's squires, Scott elsewhere says, that they

"Could dance in hall, and *carve at board.*"

28. *Woe were we.*—"Woe" is properly a noun [A.-S. *wá*], and its proper construction is with the dative; *e.g.*,

"Woe is *me.*"
Hamlet, Act iii., Scene 1, line 168.

But in O. E. it is frequently used as an adjective, "I am woe." In this sense also Shakespeare uses it; as,

"I am *woe* for't, sir."
Tempest, Act v., Scene 1, line 139.

29. *Fay.*—O. E. form of *faith.* [Fr. *foi;* Lat. *fides.*]

30. *Gramercy.*—An expletive, expressing disavowal. [Fr. *grand merci!*—many thanks!]

31. *Loth were I*—I should be unwilling. Another example of the dative con-

struction passing into the nominative. *Loth* properly means hateful, and refers, not to the person, but to the object. Thus Chaucer:

"Ful *loth* were *him* to curse for his tythes."

Prologue to Canterbury Tales, line 486.

That is, to curse for his tithes would be very hateful or disagreeable *to him*.

32. *Angels.*—An old English gold coin, stamped with the figure of an angel; in value about ten shillings.

33. *Still.*—Always, constantly. Shakespeare frequently uses the word in this sense; *e.g.*,

"It is *still* her use,
To let the wretched man outlive his wealth."

Merchant of Venice.

34. *When as.*—An antiquated construction for *when*, or *as soon as*. This doubling of conjunctions is common in Chaucer, and even in Shakespeare. The construction is doubtless elliptical. Both Chaucer and Shakespeare use "when that" in the sense of "when *it has happened* that." Chaucer has "there as" for "where.... that." Shakespeare has "if that" for "if *it has been* that;" so also, "though that," "lest that," "while that."

35. *As he his peer had been.*—A conditional clause elliptically expressed = as he would have done if he had been his peer.

36. *So.*—Represents a subjunctive clause: *if it were so*, that he would march. Compare,

"*So* I were out of prison and kept sheep,
I should be as merry as the day is long."

King John.

37. *The stirrup-cup.*—A cup in which the host and guest pledged one another at parting, when the latter had his foot in the stirrup.

38. *Their lord the last.*—An absolute phrase: their lord being the last to leave. "Lord" is in the nominative absolute.

CANTO SECOND.

1. *High Whitby's cloistered pile.*—The ruins of Whitby Abbey stand on a high cliff overlooking the town of Whitby, on the coast of Yorkshire. It was founded in 657.

2. *Saint Cuthbert's Holy Isle.*—Lindisfarne, or Holy Island, is situated about three miles from the coast of Northumberland. It derives its name of Holy Island from the sanctity of its monastery, the ruins of which betoken great antiquity. It was also from an early period the episcopal seat of the see of Durham, of whose bishops St. Cuthbert (died A.D. 687) was the most famous. It is only at full tide that Lindisfarne is an island; the ebb leaves the sands dry between it and the mainland. (See *infra*, lines 69–74). It was on Lindisfarne that the Danes made one of their earliest descents on England, in A.D. 789. They destroyed the abbey in A.D. 900, when the see was transferred to Durham.

3. *For, on the deck*, &c.—Construe thus: For the Abbess of Saint Hilda, placed in chair of state, on the deck, with five fair nuns, graced the galley.

4. *Sigh.*—Infinitive, governed by *had seen*.

5. *Tynemouth's Prioress.*—Tynemouth is situated at the mouth of the Tyne, on the coast of Northumberland, about a mile west of North Shields. The ruins of the priory church, a Norman structure, stand within the precincts of an ancient castle situated on a high rock.

6. *A Chapter.*—A conclave of heads (*capita*) of houses dedicated to St. Benedict.

7. *Unprofessed.*—Who had not yet taken the vow. The word is redundant, as this is implied in *novice*.

8. *Or worse, who had dishonoured fled.*—De Wilton, after his overthrow by Marmion at Cottiswold, had disappeared.

9. *To one who loved her for her land.*—To Marmion.

10. *Herself....was bent.*—This is the second example of the use of a reflective pronoun by itself as subject. The pronouns compounded with the adjective *self* were originally accusatives and datives. *Me-sylf* and *the-sylf* were frequently added to the nominative for the sake of emphasis, *I, me-sylf; thee, the-sylf*. Lastly, they have come to be used as nominatives themselves. Compare:

"Who would be free, *themselves* must strike the blow."—*Byron.*

"*Ourselves* beheld the listed field."
Supra, line 82.

But *ourselves* is an improper form, made on the supposition that *my*-self and *thy*-self were genitives. They are really accusatives, *me-sylf*, *the-sylf*. Self in A.-S. was an adjective, agreeing with the pronoun which it qualified in gender, number, and case.

11. *Nuns.*—There were no nuns in Holy Isle. Indeed, Scott admits that "the nunnery of Holy Isle is altogether fictitious." More than this, it is said that St. Cuthbert had a particular aversion to women.——*File.*—Present tense, while all the verbs preceding and following it are past. No doubt the exigencies of rhyme compelled the momentary change.

12. *The rival merits of their saint.*—Another sacrifice to rhyme. "Saint" should be *saints*.

13. *Old Colwulf.*—A king of Northumbria, who abdicated in 738 and retired to Holy Island, where he died. To him the Venerable Bede dedicates his "Ecclesiastical History," finished in 731.——*For his fault.*—Construe thus: Colwulf built it, to dwell (there) in penitence for his fault (sins). "To dwell" is infinitive of purpose.

14. *Scxhelm.*—Bishop of Chester-le-Street (Cumcasestre) in the middle of the tenth century.

15. *To doom.*—To pronounce sentence, condemn.

16. *Ruth.*—Pity [O. E. *routhe*, from *rewen*, to be sorry; A.-S. *hrcowan*. Hence E. *ruthless*, cruel, pitiless.]

17. *Style.*—Title or designation.

18. *Share.*—The present and past tenses are rather recklessly mixed up in this passage. *Stood* is past; *share*, present; *deserves*, present; *belied* and the following verbs are past, till we reach the seventeenth line, where the rhyme requires *know* instead of *knew*.

19. *Ringlets rich and rare.*—An example of alliteration or head-rhyme, the repetition of the same letter at the beginning of successive words.

20. *But her breathing did not fail*—If her breathing had failed....you might have thought a form of wax....was there. *But* is equivalent to *if not*, and this *not* is cancelled by the *not* following: *but* = if not; *but*....*not* = if. Compare:

"Beshrew me, but I love her heartily."
Merchant of Venice.

i.e., Curse me, *if* I do *not* love her.

21. *But of fear.*—Construe: Who knows no control but (except) that of fear.

22. *Shamed not*—Was not ashamed.

23. *Who enters at such grisly door.*—Supply *he* as antecedent of "who" and subject of the verb "shall find."

24. *To enclose, alive, within the tomb.*—Among the ruins of the Abbey of Coldingham were some years ago discovered the remains of a female skeleton, which, from the shape of the niche and position of the figure, seemed to be that of an immured nun.

25. *For one minute's space successless*—Without success even for one minute.

26. *He knew her of broad lands the heir*—He knew her *to be* the heir of broad lands.

27. *The King.*—King Henry VIII. of England.

28. *Ho! shifts she thus?*—This imitation of the imperious manner of Henry would be suitable in the main narrative, but it is out of place in the mouth of an agitated maiden making her last confession.

29. *Had given.*—Conditional mood, for *would have given*. The subjunctive clause is "had fortune betrayed," &c. = if fortune had betrayed (*betrayed*, in the sense of delivered up, fulfilled).——*Broke*, in the next line, is subjunctive, for *had broken*.

30. *The fiery Dane.*—See Note 2, *supra*.

31. *The ire of a despotic King.*—A prophetic allusion to the destruction of the monasteries by Henry VIII. (A.D. 1536–39). Shakespeare has made Queen Elizabeth the subject of similar dramatic prophecies in *Henry VIII.*, Act ii., Scene 3, line 77; Act iii., Scene 2, line 51; Act v., Scene 5, line 18.

32. *Find my bones.*—An idea suggested perhaps by the incident mentioned in Note 24, *supra*.

33. *Wont*—Were accustomed; but this use of *wont* as a *past tense* is hardly legitimate. Its proper use is as an adjective in the predicate; as, "He went, as he *was wont*, to the Mount of Olives" (Luke xxii. 39). When we use it attributively, we treat *wont* as a *present* tense, and coin another participial form, *wonted*; as, "He acted with his *wonted* prudence." Shakespeare uses *wont* as a noun:

"Then it draws near the season
Wherein the spirit held his *wont* to walk."
Hamlet, Act i., Scene 4, line 6.

The O. E. equivalent *wone* is used both as an adjective and as a noun. Chaucer uses *wone* as a noun:

"Ere it were day, as was hire *wone* to do,
Sche was arisen."
Knightes Tale, line 182.

[A.-S. *wune, gewuna*, custom, *gewunian*, to be accustomed, from *wunian*, to dwell; O. E. *wone;* Ger. *wohnen.*]

34. *Her voice.*—Dative case=to her voice, governed by "had given."

35. *Part in peace.*—The usual form of the sentence was *Vade in pacem;* which would be more correctly rendered, "Depart into peace."

36. *It were.*—Conditional mood, for *it would be.* The condition is here expressed by the infinitive *to tell* = if I were to tell.

CANTO THIRD.

1. *The mountain path the Palmer showed.*—Supply *which* after *path.* The relative is often omitted when it is in the objective case, and when its antecedent immediately precedes the relative clause.

2. *The Merse.*—Lower Tweeddale—the plain between the Lammermoors and the Cheviots. It is thus a familiar name for Berwickshire. The word has the same meaning as *Mercia*, one of the kingdoms of the Heptarchy, *viz.*, the domain of the *marches*, or border-lands. [A.-S. *mearc;* E. *mark*; Ger. *mark*; Fr. *marque*, &c.]

3. *Had scarcely failed.*—Conditional mood, for "would scarcely have failed." Supply the subjunctive, "if they had met them."

4. *Old Gifford's towers and hamlet.*—The hamlet is the village of Gifford, four miles from Haddington. Here John Knox was born in 1505. The towers are those of the Castle of Gifford, or Yester, a mile or two to the south-east of the village, an ancestral seat of the Tweeddale family. The castle is famous for a subterranean, vaulted cave, called Bo-hall, or Hobgoblin Hall, the Goblin Hall of the host's tale. Its construction has been popularly ascribed to magical power, and has been connected with the reputation as a magician of "Sir Hugh Gifford de Yester," who died in 1267.

5. *Bush.*—In olden times it was customary to hang out a *bush*—a branch of a tree, generally of ivy, the plant sacred to Bacchus—as a tavern sign. "The Bush" is still a common name of English inns. The proverb quoted in the epilogue to *As You Like It* refers to this custom: "Good wine needs no bush,"—*i.e.*, an inn known for its good wine needs no sign-board.

6. *Aloof.*—Used in the sense of *aloft*, with which it is probably identical in origin,—*viz.*, A.-S. *a*, in, and *lyft*, the air.

7. *Of sea-fowl dried and solands store.*—Construe: The rafters bore store of dried sea-fowl and solands.——*Solands*—Solan-geese, or gannets (*sula bassana*). The name *soland*, or *solan*, is said to be derived from the *Solent*, the strait between the Isle of Wight and the mainland on the west; a name formerly applied to the whole of the English Channel. In summer they frequent insular rocks in the northern seas, such as Ailsa Craig, the Bass, Lundy Isle, and migrate in winter to warmer regions. Their nests, consisting of a few sticks and sea-grasses, are exposed on the open rock. The flesh is rank and oily, but that of the young bird is in some places considered a delicacy. The Bass Rock is said to be visited annually by twenty thousand of these birds.

8. *Nor wanted*—Nor were there wanting.——*Day.*—Age.

9. *Whom with brown ale*, &c.—Construe: Whom in jolly tide their host supplied full actively with brown ale (drawn) from ancient vessels ranged aside—*i.e.*, side by side. *In jolly tide* means during their mirth.

10. *Full*—Very. *Full*, as an adverb of intensity, is common in English poetry from Chaucer downwards; *e.g.*,

"*Ful* wel sche sang the servisë divyne,
Entuned in hire nose *ful* semëly;
And Frensch sche spok *ful* faire and fetysly."
Prologue to Canterbury Tales, lines 122–5.

"*Full* many a flower is born to blush unseen."—*Gray.*

"*Full* well they laughed," &c.—*Goldsmith.*

11. *As.*—For *so as*, or *as if.*

12. *Our choicest minstrel.*—Constance de Beverley, who had attended Marmion in the disguise of a page.

13. *The harp*, &c.—The "harp" is the emblem of the minstrel, the "lute" of the lover. Constant was equally ("alike") skilled in martial and in love songs.

14. *Sadder.*—An adverb, for *sadlier.*

15. *Plained.*—Was plaintive or sorrowful.

16. *A space.*—The objective of duration. Construe: And rested for a space (a considerable time) with his head reclining on his hand.

17. *Ye.*—For *you*, as a singular pronoun in the nominative case. Ben Jonson says that *ye* is used in the singular "for reverence' sake;" and so it was in and before his time; but this principle cannot account for the present example. It is more likely to be due to the colloquial pronunciation of *you* as *ye* which prevails, especially in the Scottish Lowlands. This is not unknown in English; for example, in the familiar "How d'*ye* do?"

18. *Seemed in mine ear a death-peal rung.—It* seemed *that* a death-peal rung in mine ear. It is a common superstition amongst the peasantry of Scotland that a singing or tinkling in the ears announces some friend's demise.

19. *Marmion.*—Objective case. In apposition with *him* in the second line following.

20. *Strook.*—Struck. A form invented to suit the rhyme. The Sc. past of "strike" is *straik.*

21. *Wakened* qualifies *remorse* in line 155. Construe the sentence thus: But dark tales of convent-vengeance rose to aid the venomed throes of remorse, (which was) wakened by her favourite lay, and that strange Palmer's boding say, that fell so ominous and drear, full on the object of his fear.

22. *Say.*—A speech or saying. [O. E. *saye* (*Owl and Nightingale*), and *saw;* A.-S. *sagu;* Ic. *saga*, a narration.]

23. *Loch Vennachar.*—A lake in the south of Perthshire, which receives the waters of Loch Katrine and Loch Achray, and discharges itself into the Teith, the chief tributary of the Forth. See *Lady of the Lake.*

24. *Marmion giving license cold.*—An absolute phrase. "Marmion" is the nominative absolute.

25. *A clerk.*—A scholar. From the same root as *clergy* (Lat. *clerus*, a lot, Matthias having been chosen by *lot*), because in the Middle Ages the *clerics* or *clergy* were the only learned men.

26. *Alexander*—That is, Alexander III. of Scotland, who reigned from 1249–1263.

27. See Note 4, *supra.*

28. *Haco.*—King of Norway. He invaded Scotland, and was defeated at Largs, on the coast of Ayrshire, in 1263.

29. *Savage of heart, and large of limb.*—Examples of the genitive of reference. Savage in respect of heart, and large in respect of limb.

30. *The gift of Cœur-de-Lion's hand.*—The sword must have been given by Richard Cœur-de-Lion to William the Lion of Scotland, the only Scottish King who was his contemporary; unless, indeed, it is an anachronism.

31. *Tide what tide*—Happen whatever may happen. A concessive clause = *though* what tide may tide; though anything may happen. [A.-S. *tidan*, to betide, happen, from *tíd*, time.]

32. *Fell Edward*—Cruel Edward: Edward I. of England, surnamed Longshanks, the conqueror of Wallace and oppressor of Scotland.

33. *Largs.*—See Note 28, *supra.*

34. *Wallace wight.*—William Wallace, the knight of Ellerslie, who maintained the independence of Scotland for so many years against Edward I., until he was betrayed into his hands and executed in 1305. Perhaps "apt alliteration" suggested the addition to his name of the epithet *wight*, which here means strong, manly, heroic. See also Canto VI., line 375.

35. *Quaighs.*—Wooden drinking cups, composed, like a cask, of staves. [Gael. *cuach*, a cup or bowl.]

36. *Me.*—The dative of advantage: Saddle the steed for me.

37. *Yode.*—Went. [O. E. *yod;* A.-S. *eóde*, past tense of *gan, gangan*, to go.]

38. *Selle.*—Saddle. [Fr. *selle*, Lat. *sella*, a seat.]

39. *The falcon crest was soiled with clay.*—A noun clause. Supply *that* before it.

CANTO FOURTH.

1. *Free of heart*—Free as to heart. A genitive of reference.

2. *Bevis.*—Marmion's steed.

3. *Ruth.*—Pity. See Note 16, Canto II.

4. *Who would seem*—Who was determined to seem.

5. *Friar Rush.*—Jack o' lanthorn, or Will o' the wisp. So says Scott in his note; but Mr. Keightley points out, in his "Fairy Mythology," that Scott has here confounded two distinct spirits—Jack o' lanthorn, the frequenter of fields and morasses, with Friar Rush, the plague of houses, who, as Scott says, "once upon a time got admission into a monastery as a scullion, and played the monks many pranks." But Scott erred in good company; for Milton, in "L'Allegro," uses the expression, "By *friar's lantern* led."

6. *The Palmer showing forth the way.*—Nominative absolute.

7. *Sir David Lindesay of the Mount.*—A well-known Scottish poet (1490–1555), who lashed with unsparing severity the vices of the Church of Rome. His most famous work is the "Satyre on the Three Estates," a play constructed on the model of the ancient "mysteries." He was in 1530 made Lion-King-at-Arms, or head of the Heralds' Court for Scotland.

8. *For*—Since.

9. *Crichtoun Castle.*—A large ruinous castle, of different dates and styles of architecture, on the banks of the Tyne, about eleven miles from Edinburgh. It was originally founded by Sir William Crichton, Chancellor of Scotland, guardian of James II., A.D. 1437.

10. *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. It was anciently a forest; and in that state was so great a nuisance that the inhabitants of Edinburgh had permission granted them of building wooden galleries, projecting over the street, in order to encourage them to consume the timber—which they seem to have done very effectually. When James IV. mustered the array of the kingdom there in 1513, the Borough-moor was, according to Hawthornden, "a field, spacious and delightful, by the shade of many stately and aged oaks."

11. *To prize*—To value, or appreciate.

12. *He marked not*, &c.—For *that* "he marked not," after "*so* pale."

13. *Wold.*—A *weald*, or open country; literally a forest. [A.-S. *weald;* Ger. *wald.*]

14. *It might be.*—For, *it might have been;* after the past tense *was*. Scott did not adhere to the niceties of grammar in his poetry, when the structure of his verse made it expedient to sacrifice them.

15. *I listened, ere I left the place.*—This also is loosely expressed. It implies that, after listening, he did leave the place, which is not true. The meaning is, that believing the sound to be the echo of his own blast, he was on the point of leaving, but first waited to listen.

16. *I view.*—Another example of a present tense introduced awkwardly between two past tenses—"could trust," and "I trembled."

17. *Affright.*—The use of "affright" as a noun is, to say the least, unusual.

18. *Like what I saw*—In the same manner *as* "what I saw" could blast their sight. The use of "like" for *as* is colloquial.

19. *Strook.*—Struck. See Note 20, Canto III.

20. *A face could never be mistook.*—Supply *which* after face.

21. *So grimly and so ghast.*—"Grimly" is an adverb, and "ghast" an adjective. We must suppose the former to relate to the verb "stare," and the latter to the noun "glare."

22. *Bowne.*—Make ready. "Busk and boun" occurs frequently in old ballads, applied to the marshalling of forces—array and prepare. [O. E. and Sc. *boun*, adj., ready; Ic. to *boun*, to prepare; old Norse *búiun.*]

23. *Dun-Edin.*—The Gaelic name of Edinburgh. Properly the Castle of Edin, or Edwin. *Dun*, and the Saxon *heork*, or *herg*, have the same meaning—a fortified height.

24. *Hills of Braid.*—The Braid Hills lie about a mile and a half to the south of Edinburgh. Blackford Hill is an eminence nearer the city.

25. *And all the steep slope down*, &c.—A vivid description of the picturesque outline of the Old Town of Edinburgh, the main artery of which covers with irregular buildings the ridge extending from the Castle on the west to Holyrood on the east. This continuous line of streets, extending to upwards of a mile, bears in its successive portions the names of the Castle Hill, the Lawnmarket, the High Street, and the Canongate.

26. *Rolled.*—A participle, qualifying Frith (of Forth).

27. *Demi-volte.*—The sudden start or bound of a charger pricked by a spur. [Fr. *demi*, half, and *volte*, a turn or bound; Lat. *volvo*, I turn.]

CANTO FIFTH.

1. *But for a vaunt such weapons wrought.*—That such weapons were wrought only for boasting or display, and not for use: a noun clause.

2. *The Borderer and the Mountaineer.*—The clansmen both of the Borders and of the Highlands were noted freebooters, and the honest burghers of the capital did not feel quite at ease in their proximity.

3. *Weeds.*—Literally *woven* stuff, or clothing of men and women; now applied to the mourning attire of a widow,—"widow's *weeds.*" In Chaucer the word has its original signification:

"Hem for to streepe of harness and of *wede*,
The pilours diden businesse and cure."
Knightes Tale, line 148.

4. *Holy-Rood.*—The Abbey was founded by David I. in 1128. It originally comprised a suite of apartments for royal guests. The Palace, or House, as it was generally called, dates from 1528; but the greater part of the present building belongs to the time of Charles II.

5. *Lists.*—See Note 18, Canto I.

6. *From fair to fair*—From lady to lady. An adjective, used as a noun, is generally accompanied by the article. It also usually names either an abstract principle, as the good, for goodness, or the good, for good people. Cowper, however, uses the adjective substantively in the singular:

"The *Fair* commands the song."
Task, i., 7.

And again:

"*The paralytic*, who can hold her cards
But cannot play them, borrows a friend's hand."
Task, i., 472.

7. *The pressure of his iron belt.*—James had been forced, while still a youth, to go into the field with the lords in rebellion against his father. He was present at the battle of Sauchieburn (18th June 1488), in fleeing from which James III. was slain. One of the forms of penance which James IV. imposed upon himself for this crime was the wearing for the rest of his life an iron girdle, to the weight of which he added certain ounces every year. This passage well describes the character of James as a mixture of earnest devotion and gaiety approaching to license.

8. *The fair Queen of France.*—Anne of Brittany, wife of Louis XII. of France, wishing to engage James as her husband's ally, sent him a ring and glove, and appointed him her chosen knight. The ring, along with James's sword and dagger, is said to be preserved in the College of Heralds, London.

9. *English fair.*—See Note 6, *supra.*

10. *Margaret.*—In 1502, James married Margaret of England, the daughter of Henry VII. and sister of Henry VIII. This marriage afterwards led (1603) to the union of the English and Scottish Crowns.

11. *Lithgow's bower.*—The ruins of Linlithgow Palace stand on the southern bank of the Lake of Linlithgow. This grand old pile was built in successive portions from the time of James IV. to that of James VI., but its site had been occupied by forts and castles from the time of the Romans. It was a favourite residence of the kings and queens of Scotland, especially of Mary of Guise; and here the unfortunate Mary Queen of Scots was born in 1542.

12. *The while*—At the same time. "While" is a noun in the objective case, by the rule that "duration of time and extent of space may be expressed by a noun in the objective without a preposition." See Note 20, Canto I.

13. *Tread we a measure.*—An example of the first person plural of the imperative.

14. *Galliard.*—A quick and lively dance. [Sp. *gallardo*, gay; Fr. *gaillard*]. Compare:

"*Sir Toby.* What is thy excellence in a galliard, knight?
Sir And. 'Faith, I can cut a caper."
Twelfth Night, Act i., Scene 3, line 128.

15. *'Twere better by far.*—Conditional mood, for *it would have been better.* The subjunctive is implied in the infinitive, "To have matched"=if we had matched.

16. *Scaur.*—Scar, a cliff. [Sc. *scaur.*]

17. *Common to each home.*—Not strictly logical: it should be, common to *both* homes.

18. *My tale attend*—Attend (imperative) *to* my tale. *Attend*, in the sense of listen, is usually intransitive. Shakespeare uses *listen* in like manner as a transitive verb:

"And now, Octavius,
Listen great things."
Julius Cæsar, Act iv., Scene 1.

19. *Though I must speak.*—*That* I must speak would have been more correct. Con-

strue: Deem *it* not of light avail *that* I must speak of worldly love.

20. *Despiteously.*—Cruelly. Shakespeare uses *dispiteous* in this sense: "dispiteous torture" (*King John*). Chaucer's word is *despitous:* "with ful despitous herte" (*Knightes Tale*).

21. *Martin Swart.*—Martin Schwartz, a German general, who commanded the auxiliaries sent by the Duchess of Burgundy in aid of Lambert Simnel. He was defeated and killed at Stokefield, 1487. The field of battle preserves his name—Swartmoor.

22. *On Simnel's part.*—Lambert Simnel, the son of a baker in Oxford, was induced by the enemies of Henry VII. to personate the young Earl of Warwick, son of George, Duke of Clarence, and nephew of Richard III. Warwick was then (1487) a prisoner in the Tower, and when Simnel appeared, it was pretended that he had escaped from prison. Warwick's cousin, John de la Pole, Earl of Lincoln, and his aunt, the Duchess of Burgundy (a sister of Edward IV.), were induced to enter into the scheme of imposture. The defeat at Stoke proved fatal to the conspiracy. Simnel was taken prisoner, and after serving for some time as a scullion in the royal kitchen, was promoted to the rank of falconer.

23. *As wont*—As was customary. See Note 33, Canto II.

24. *The blessèd ordeal.—The wager of battle* is the ordeal referred to. *Ordeal* is the name given in general to all those means in use amongst primitive nations for determining guilt or innocence by the issue of natural experiments. The kinds of ordeal most common in Europe were those of *fire*, *water*, and *battle.*—In the ordeal of *fire*, the accused had to carry a bar of red-hot iron in his hand, or had to walk over red-hot ploughshares. The hand, or the feet, were bound up for three days. If no harm had been done, he was declared innocent; if otherwise, guilty.—In the case of the *water* ordeal, the accused had either to take with impunity a stone out of a vessel filled with boiling water, or he was thrown into a pond, lake, or river. If he floated, he was judged guilty; if he sank, he was innocent. This was the usual mode of dealing with reputed witches. For example, in St. Andrews, the practice continued till the beginning of last century of throwing women charged with witchcraft into the "Witch's Lake." If they sank, they were considered to have been innocent; if they floated, they were declared guilty, were drawn out of the water, and were burned on an adjoining hill!—Trial by *battle* consisted of a personal combat between the disputants in presence of a court of justice. It was believed that Heaven, thus appealed to, would "defend the right;" and the victor was declared innocent. This mode of trial was specially countenanced by the Church, and sanctioned by law. This barbarous enactment disfigured the English statute-book till 1829, when it was abolished by Act of Parliament. Duelling, whether with swords, pistols, or fists, is doubtless a relic of this rude style of dispensing justice.

25. *Recreant.*—The name applied to the vanquished in the *wager of battle*, when he yielded his cause and craved his life.

26. *Drenched.*—A happy instance of the use of a transitive verb derived from an intransitive one. To *drench* is not only *to cause to drink*, but *to make drunk.* Compare, *blink, blench; wake, watch; rise, raise; fall, fell*, &c.

27. *Clerk.*—A scholar. See Note 25, Canto III.

28. *What ail'st thou?—Ail* must, in this construction, be taken as an intransitive verb, meaning *to be in trouble;* and *what* as an "accusative of reference:" "*As to* what art thou in trouble?" "What ails thee?" would have been a simpler and more natural construction. Probably *thee* is a dative: What gives pain *to thee?* It was construed with a dative in Anglo-Saxon: *Me egleth*, it troubles me.

29. *Saint Withold, save us!*—This saint is not found in the calendar, but it is the "Swithold" (St. Withold) of one of Poor Tom's rhymes in *Lear:*

"Swithold footed thrice the 'old," &c.

Probably Shakespeare got the name from the following couplet, which occurs in an old play on the Reign of King John:

"Sweet S. Withold, of thy lenity, defend
us from extremitie;
And heare us for S. Charitie, oppressèd
with austeritie."

Cowden Clarke's Shakespeare, III., 499.

30. *Dun-Edin's Cross.*—The ancient City Cross of Edinburgh, from which proclamations were made by heralds and pursuivants, stood in the High Street, to the north-east of St. Giles's. It was an octagonal embattled tower, about 15 feet high and 16 wide, surmounted by a stone column in one piece, 20 feet in height, bearing a

unicorn on its top. This column formed the Cross proper. The whole structure was removed in 1756; but its site is indicated by a device in the causeway. The stone column, or Cross proper, has lately been re-erected within the railings of St. Giles's, not far from its ancient site. The visionary pageant described in the poem is a romantic rendering of the proclamations usually made from the Cross, and still made with "pomp and circumstance" from its former site.

31. *As fancy forms,* &c.—The pageant was of that vague, indistinct kind which the fancy frames out of the changing shapes of the midnight clouds.

32. *Her beads did tell.*—To tell the beads, was to count the petitions or prayers offered by the votary in the Roman Catholic Church. A *bead* is literally a prayer. [A.-S. *bed, gebed,* a prayer, from *biddan,* to ask, pray, demand; E. *bid.*]

33. *Shift we the scene.*—Imperative, first person plural.

34. *Needs.*—Of necessity. [A.-S. *nedes, nydes;* from *neod,* necessity. The *s* is a genitive suffix. See Canto I., Note 20.]

35. *I wot*—I know. Infinitive, *to wit* (used an adverb=namely). Past tense, *I wist.* [A.-S. *witan,* to know.]

CANTO SIXTH.

1. *Terouenne.*—A town in the north of France, a few miles south-east of Calais. Henry VIII. laid siege to this town in August 1513. A French force sent to relieve it was defeated in the "Battle of the Spurs"—so called from the precipitate flight of the French cavalry—and the town surrendered.

2. *In Leaguer.*—As a beleaguerer, or besieger.

3. *Nothing.*—An accusative of reference: as to nothing, in no respect.

4. *The Bloody Heart.*—The *Heart* in the arms of the Douglas family commemorates the dying charge of Bruce to the good Lord James Douglas, that he should bury his heart in the Holy Land. Douglas died in battle with the Moors in Spain, and the heart of Bruce was brought back to Scotland, and buried in Melrose Abbey.

5. *Three mullets stood.*—A *mullet,* in heraldry, is a star with five points, intended to represent the rowel of a spur. It is the mark of cadency assigned to the third son, to incite him to chivalry. Sometimes, however, it indicates the fish so called.

6. *Vantage-coign.*—A commanding corner. The expression is taken from *Macbeth,* Act i., Scene 6, line 7:

> " No jutty, frieze,
> Buttress, nor *coign of vantage,* but this bird
> Hath made his pendent bed."

In masonry, a corner-stone is called a *quoin.* [Fr. *coin,* Lat. *cuneus,* a wedge.]

7. *For.*—Because. *For* is a coördinative conjunction, connecting principal clauses. *Because* is a subordinative conjunction, connecting a subordinate with a principal clause. When *for* is subordinative, it is usually followed by *that.* In the following passage, both the subordinative uses of *for* are exemplified:

> " I hate him *for* he is a Christian;
> But more, *for that,* in low simplicity,
> He lends out money gratis."
>
> *Mer. of Venice,* Act i., Scene 3, line 43.

8. *Red De Clare, stout Gloster's Earl.*—Gilbert De Clare, Earl of Gloucester. His father Richard was one of the leaders of the Barons in their rebellion against Henry III. Quarrelling with Leicester, he secretly joined the King. On his death, in 1264, his son Gilbert attached himself to Leicester's party; but before the Battle of Evesham (1265), he returned to his allegiance. When Henry III. died (1272) his son, Edward I., was absent in the Holy Land; and Gloucester was one of three Guardians of the Realm, who carried on the civil administration until his return. Gloucester married Joan, one of Edward's numerous daughters. Their son "plied the bloody sword" at Bannockburn (see *Lord of the Isles,* Canto VI., Stanza 25, line 7), and fell in that fatal field.

9. *Blood-gouts.*—Drops of blood. [Fr. *goutte,* Lat. *gutta,* a drop.]

10. *Much was there need.*—There was much need of the moonlight, so poorly was the chapel lit by the torches.

11. *A bishop by the altar stood.*—Gawain, or Gavin Douglas, Bishop of Dun-

keld, son of Archibald, Earl of Angus, commonly called Bell-the-Cat. His metrical version of the *Æneid* of Virgil was the earliest translation of an ancient classic into English verse. His original arguments prefixed to the several books, and his other original poems, are of great merit. He died in 1522.

12. *Rocquet.*—A *rochet*, or bishop's surplice, usually made of lawn. [O. Fr. *roquet*; It. *roccetto*; Ger. *rock*, a garment, from *rauch*, rough, because originally made of frieze or fur.]

13. *More pleased that*, &c.—Supply "he was" before "more."

14. *Kneels.... bound.*—Another example sentence. There is no reason why *binds* of a present and a past tense in the same should not have been written in the second line.

15. *Dub.*—The technical description of the act of knighting. [A.-S. *dubban*, to strike.] After the sword and spurs were bound on the candidate, he was struck on the cheek or shoulder with a sword, to indicate that no future insult must go unresented.

16. *For King, for Church, for Lady fair.*—These were the three duties of knighthood: to protect the King (as a vassal), the Church (as a servant), the fair sex (as a champion).

17. *Sobbed.* — Here a transitive verb, meaning *said while sobbing.* Its object is the clause, "Where'er I meet," &c. *Sob*, in "Sob he must," is the intransitive verb.

18. *Would Clara on her palfrey place.*—*Would* implies determination. He insisted upon placing Clara on her palfrey.

19. *Stoop.*—A term in falconry, applied to the swoop with which a hawk comes down on its prey.

20. *Still.*—Always.

21. *Whom he lists.*—*List* is usually an intransitive verb. Its proper complement should be an infinitive. In Old English it is construed with an infinitive subject, its personal subject being in the dative: *Him lists* = it pleases him. See Canto I., Note 11.

22. *An 'twere not*—If it were not. *An*, meaning *if*, is a corruption of *and*, implying that the two clauses, the condition and the conclusion, are to be taken *together*. See *Lay of the Last Minstrel*, Canto I., Note 8.

23. *Portcullis.*—A sliding gate, formed of cross-bars, suspended in the gateway of a castle. When the chains on which it was hung were let loose, it fell by its own weight, crushing whatever lay beneath it, and was an effectual means of shutting an enemy either out or in.

24. *He halts.*—Again we have present and past tenses recklessly intermingled. He *halts* and *turns*, when he *reached*; he *pours* and he *shook*. But in every case it is either the rhythm or the rhyme to which grammar is sacrificed.

25. *Saint Bothan.*—The identity of this saint, whom Douglas thanks for keeping all his sons but one in blissful ignorance, is difficult to determine, as there are several saints in the Scottish calendar with names similar to this. There was a convent at St. Bothan's in Berwickshire (referred to in Canto I., Stanza 19, line 5), now Abbey St. Bathan's, a village on the main road from Coldstream to Dunbar.

26. *My boy-bishop.* — His son Gawain, above referred to (Note 11).

27. *The Master.* — His eldest son, the *Master* of Angus. This title is given, especially in Scotland, to the eldest son of a nobleman.

28. *Fay.*—A corruption or contraction of *fairy*; a spirit.

29. *Lennel's convent.* — A Cistercian monastery near Coldstream, and almost opposite to Cornhill. It was therefore within sight of Flodden.

30. *As they crossed the Till by Twisel Bridge.*—This passage alludes to the fatal error made by the Scots at Flodden in allowing the English to cross the Till without attacking them, and so to place themselves between the Scottish King and his own country. This is referred to in the lines below:

"The precious hour has passed in vain,
And England's host has gained the plain."

31. *Saint Helen! at thy fountain drank.*—A copious fountain, beneath a tall rock near Twisel Bridge, is still called Saint Helen's Well.

32. *Wallace wight.* — See Canto III., Note 34.

33. *Another sight had seen that morn.*—The apodosis or conclusion of a hypothetical sentence, the protasis, or supposition, being implied in the exclamations preceding. Construe: That morn would have seen another sight, a leaf would have been torn from Fate's dark book, and Flodden would have been Bannockbourne

—*if* the leading wand of Douglas, or the speed of Randolph, had been there—if Wallace or Bruce had ruled the fight for one hour. But the apodosis also is partly in the form of a prayer, Would that Flodden had been Bannockbourne!

34. *Thus have I ranged my power.*—The English force was drawn up in four divisions: Surrey led the centre; Sir Edward Stanley, the left wing; the two sons of Surrey, the right wing; Lord Dacre, with a body of horse, formed a reserve.

35. *Brian Tunstall, stainless knight.*—"Sir Brian Tunstall, called, in the romantic language of the time, Tunstall the Undefiled, was one of the few Englishmen of rank slain at Flodden. Tunstall perhaps derived his epithet of *undefiled* from his white armour and banner (the latter bearing a white cock about to crow), as well as from his unstained loyalty and knightly faith. His place of residence was Thurland Castle."—*S.*

36. *The Scottish foe has fired his tent.*—The Scots set fire to their encampment, partly to prevent it falling into the hands of the English, partly also that the smoke might conceal the advance of their forces.

37. *Stanley broke Lennox and Argyle.*—The Scottish army was disposed in three divisions: the centre was commanded by King James in person; the left wing, by the Earls of Huntly and Home; the right, by the Earls of Lennox and Argyle.

38. *Slogan.*—The war-cry or watchword of a clan. [Sc. *slughorne;* Fr. *sluagh,* an army, and *corn,* a horn.]

39. *May bid your beads.*—To *bid* means properly to pray. A *bead* is literally a prayer. See Canto V., Note 32. But the name was transferred to the little balls, mounted on a string or wire, used by Roman Catholics in counting, to aid the memory in reckoning their petitions.——*Patter prayer.*—Repeat prayers. "Patter," as applied to prayer, is a corruption of *Pater noster,* "Our Father," the opening words of the Lord's Prayer.

40. *Doffed his casque.*—An absolute phrase: his casque being doffed. *Doff* is a compression of *do-off,* as *don* is of *do-on,* and *dup* of *do-up.*

41. *Runnel.*—Streamlet. A diminutive (by the suffix *-el*) of run; the same as *runlet.*

42. *Shrieve.*—Confess, or receive confession; and hence to absolve. The noun is *shrift,* the penance prescribed by a priest, and absolution. [A.-S. *scrifan,* to receive confession, *scrift,* confession; Ger. *schreiben;* Lat. *scribere,* to write]

43. *The Royal Pilgrim.*—There was a tradition long prevalent in Scotland that King James was not killed at Flodden; but that, ashamed to present himself after his defeat, he went in disguise on pilgrimage to merit absolution for the death of his father, and for the breach of his oath of amity to Henry of England. There is no doubt, however, that James was slain on that disastrous field (9th September 1513); and though his iron belt was never found, his sword and dagger are preserved in the Heralds' College in London.

44. *Holinshed or Hall.*—Two English chroniclers of the sixteenth century, to whose works Shakespeare was greatly indebted for the materials of his historical plays. Hall's Chronicle contains an account of the Battle of Flodden; Holinshed's does not.

45. *Wolsey.*—Cardinal Wolsey, the great minister of Henry VIII., died 1530.

46. *More.*—Sir Thomas More, who succeeded Wolsey in the office of chancellor. He joined Fisher in denying the King's ecclesiastical supremacy, and was executed in 1535. He is honourably known in English literature as the author of the "Life of Edward the Fifth and Richard the Third," which Hallam considers the earliest prose work in modern or current English. He was also the author of a romance in Latin, entitled "Utopia;" whence the English word *Utopian,* visionary.——*Sands.*—Sir William Sandys, chamberlain to Henry VIII.——*Denny.*—Sir Anthony Denny, a favourite courtier of Henry VIII., and one of his gentlemen of the Privy Chamber, as well as an executor of his will.

47. *The stocking threw.*—Throwing the slipper or stocking after a bride is still a token of good luck.

48. *Love they.*—The imperative, or optative, third person plural=let them love.

THE LADY OF THE LAKE.

INTRODUCTION.

THE *Lady of the Lake* followed *Marmion*, after an interval of little more than two years. The former appeared in February 1808, the latter in May 1810. Its success was even greater than that of the previous poems, eight editions, or 20,000 copies, having been sold before the end of the year; and Scott's reputation was proportionately increased by the work. Mr. Cadell, the publisher, says: "The whole country rang with the praises of the poet—crowds set off to view the scenery of Loch Katrine, till then comparatively unknown; and as the book came out just before the season for excursions, every house and inn in that neighbourhood was crammed with a constant succession of visitors." Writing in 1830, Scott himself says: "I took uncommon pains to verify the accuracy of the local circumstances of this story. I recollect, in particular, that, to ascertain whether I was telling a probable tale, I went into Perthshire, to see whether King James could actually have ridden from the banks of Loch Vennachar to Stirling Castle within the time supposed in the poem, and had the pleasure to satisfy myself that it was quite practicable." The general verdict on Scott's three greatest poems is thus fairly expressed by Lockhart: "'The Lay,' if I may venture to state the creed now established, is, I should say, generally considered as the most natural and original; 'Marmion,' as the most powerful and splendid; 'The Lady of the Lake,' as the most interesting, romantic, picturesque, and graceful of his great poems;" and Jeffrey predicted that the last would be "oftener read hereafter than either of the former." The charm of the poem lies not more in the magnificent descriptive passages, than in the romantic interest with which the poet has invested Highland scenery.

CHARACTERS OF THE POEM.

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

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

TIME: *About* 1530.

CANTO FIRST.—THE CHASE.

THE ARGUMENT.

A SOLITARY huntsman, having outstripped his comrades, missed the stag he was pursuing, and lost his steed, the gallant grey, which dropped down exhausted in the Trosachs, wanders to the shore of Loch Katrine. He sounds his horn in the hope that help may be near. His blast brings to the bay a little skiff, rowed by a damsel, who thinks it is her father's horn. At first startled by the appearance of a stranger clad in Lincoln green, but afterwards reässured, she offers him the hospitality of her father's hut, and they row together to the island, not far from the shore, on which it stands. The mistress of the island home, a graceful dame, entertains him hospitably, and here he spends the night.

This secluded island is the hiding-place in which Lord James Douglas, uncle of the proscribed Earl of Angus, is sheltered by the famous Highland outlaw, Roderick Dhu. Dame Margaret is his sister-in-law, and Roderick's mother, and Ellen Douglas is his daughter. They are attended by an aged minstrel, Allan-bane. The stranger fails to discover who they are ; but is haunted by dreams of the exiled Douglas family. He represents himself as the Knight of Snowdoun, James Fitz-James.

I.

THE stag at eve had drunk his fill,[1]
Where danced the moon on Monan's rill ;[2]
And deep his midnight lair had made
In lone Glenartney's hazel shade :[3]
But, when the sun his beacon red
Had kindled on Benvoirlich's head,[4]
The deep-mouthed blood-hound's heavy bay
Resounded up the rocky way;
And faint, from farther distance borne,
Were heard the clanging hoof and horn.—
As Chief, who hears his warder call,
"To arms! the foemen storm the wall,"
The antlered 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,
Tossed his beamed frontlet to the sky ;
A moment gazed adown the dale,
A moment snuffed the tainted gale,
A moment listened to the cry,
That thickened as the chase drew nigh ;
Then, as the headmost foes appeared,
With one brave bound the copse he cleared,[5]
And, stretching forward free and far,
Sought the wild heaths of Uam-Var.—[6]
Yelled on the view the opening pack,[7]
Rock, glen, and cavern paid them back ;
To many a mingled sound at once[8]
The awakened mountain gave response.

An hundred dogs bayed deep and strong,
Clattered an hundred steeds along,
Their peal the merry horns rung out,
An hundred voices joined the shout.—
'Twere long to tell what steeds gave o'er,
As swept the hunt through Cambus-
more;[9]
What reins were tightened in despair,
When rose Benledi's ridge in air;[10]
Who flagged upon Bochastle's heath,[11]
Who shunned to stem the flooded Teith:
For twice that day, from shore to shore,
The gallant stag swam stoutly o'er.
Few were the stragglers, following far,
That reached the lake of Vennachar;
And when the Brig of Turk was won,[12]
The headmost horseman rode alone.

Alone, but with unbated zeal,
That horseman plied the scourge and steel;
For, jaded now, and spent with toil,
Embossed with foam and dark with soil,
While every gasp with sobs he drew,
The labouring stag strained full in view.
Two dogs of black Saint Hubert's breed,[13]
Unmatched for courage, breath, and speed,
Fast on his flying traces came,
And all but won that desperate game;[14]
For, scarce a spear's length from his haunch,
Vindictive toiled the blood-hounds 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.—
The hunter marked that mountain high,[15]
The lone lake's western boundary,
And deemed the stag must turn to bay,[16]
Where that huge rampart barred the way.
The wily quarry shunned the shock,
And turned him from the opposing rock;
Then, dashing down a darksome glen,
Soon lost to hound and hunter's ken,[17]
In the deep Trosach's wildest nook[18]
His solitary refuge took.
Close on the hounds the hunter came,
To cheer them on the vanished game;
But, stumbling in the rugged dell,[19]
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,[20]
Stretched his stiff limbs to rise no more:[21]
Then, touched with pity and remorse,
He sorrowed o'er the expiring horse.
"I little thought, when first thy rein
I slacked upon the banks of Seine,
That Highland eagle e'er should feed
On thy fleet limbs, my matchless steed!
Woe worth the chase, woe worth the day,[22]
That costs thy life, my gallant grey!"

Then through the dell his horn resounds,
From vain pursuit to call the hounds.
Back limped, with slow and crippled pace,
The sulky leaders of the chase;
And on the hunter hied his way,[23]
To join some comrades of the day;
Yet often paused, so strange the road,
So wondrous were the scenes it showed.—
The western waves of ebbing day
Rolled o'er the glen their level way;[24]
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-splintered pinnacle.
Aloft, the ash and warrior oak[25]
Cast anchor in the rifted rock;
And, higher yet, the pine-tree hung
His shattered trunk, and frequent flung,[26]
Where seemed the cliffs to meet on high,
His boughs athwart the narrowed sky.[27]
Highest of all, where white peaks glanced,
Where glistening streamers waved and danced,
The wanderer's eye could barely view
The summer heaven's delicious blue;
So wondrous wild, the whole might seem[28]
The scenery of a fairy dream.—
And now, to issue from the glen,[29]
No pathway meets the wanderer's ken,
Unless he climb, with footing nice,[30]
A far projecting precipice.
The broom's tough roots his ladder made,
The hazel saplings lent their aid;

And thus an airy point he won,
Where, gleaming with the setting sun,
One burnished sheet of living gold,
Loch Katrine lay beneath him rolled;[31]
In all her length far winding lay,
With promontory, creek, and bay,
And islands that, empurpled bright,[32]
Floated amid the livelier light;
And mountains that like giants stand,[33]
To sentinel enchanted land.
High on the south, huge Benvenue[34]
Down to the lake in masses threw
Crags, knolls, and mounds, confusedly hurled,—
The fragments of an earlier world;
A wildering forest feathered o'er[35]
His ruined sides and summit hoar;
While on the north, through middle air,
Ben-an heaved high his forehead bare.[36]

From the steep promontory gazed
The stranger, raptured and amazed.
And, "What a scene were here," he cried,[37]
"For princely pomp or churchman's pride!
On this bold brow, a lordly tower;
In that soft vale, a lady's bower.
Blithe were it then to wander here!
But now,—beshrew yon nimble deer,—[38]
The copse must give my evening fare;[39]
Some mossy bank my couch must be,[40]
Some rustling oak my canopy;—
But hosts may in these wilds abound,
Such as are better missed than found;
To meet with Highland plunderers here[41]
Were worse than loss of steed or deer.—
I am alone; my bugle strain
May call some straggler of the train;
Or, fall the worst that may betide,[42]
Ere now this falchion has been tried."—
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,[43]
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 twig to lave,

And kiss with whispering sound and slow,
The beach of pebbles bright as snow.
The boat had touched this silver strand,[44]
Just as the hunter left his stand,
And stood concealed amid the brake,
To view this LADY OF THE LAKE.
The maiden paused, as if again
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 seemed to stand
The guardian Naiad of the strand.
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 uttered fell,
The echoes could not catch the swell.

II.

"A stranger I," the huntsman said,
Advancing from the hazel shade.
The maid, alarmed, with hasty oar
Pushed her light shallop from the shore;
And when a space was gained between,
Closer she drew her bosom screen:
(So forth the startled swan would swing,[45]
So turn to prune his ruffled wing.)
Then safe, though fluttered and amazed,
She paused, and on the stranger gazed.
Not his the form, nor his the eye,
That youthful maidens wont to fly.[46]
On his bold visage middle age
Had slightly pressed its signet sage,
Yet had not quenched the open truth
And fiery vehemence of youth.
Slighting the petty need he showed,
He told of his benighted road;
His ready speech flowed fair and free,
In praise of gentlest courtesy;
Yet seemed that tone, and gesture bland,
Less used to sue than to command.
A while the maid the stranger eyed,[47]
And, reässured, at last replied,

That Highland halls were open still
To wildered wanderers of the hill:[48]
"Nor think you unexpected come
To yon lone isle, our desert home;
Before the heath had lost the dew,
This morn, a couch was pulled for you."—[49]
"Now, by the rood, my lovely maid,[50]
Your courtesy has erred," 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,[51]
Have ever drawn your mountain air,
Till on this lake's romantic strand,
I found a fay in fairy land."—[52]
"I well believe," the maid replied,
As her light skiff approached 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.
He bade that all should ready be,
To grace a guest of fair degree;
But light I held his prophecy,
And deemed it was my father's horn
Whose echoes o'er the lake were borne."

[*The stranger accompanies the maid to the island. In the centre of it, deep-hidden by the trees, there is a large rustic lodge, framed by some chief for retreat in dangerous hour.*]

He crossed the threshold—and a clang
Of angry steel that instant rang.
To his bold brow his spirit rushed;
But soon for vain alarm he blushed,
When on the floor he saw displayed,
Cause of the din, a naked blade
Dropped from the sheath, that, careless flung,
Upon a stag's huge antlers swung:
For all around, the walls to grace,
Hung trophies of the fight or chase.
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.[53]
And as the brand he poised and swayed,
"I never knew but one," he said,
"Whose stalwart arm might brook to wield
A blade like this in battle-field."—

She sighed, then smiled and took the word:
"You see the guardian champion's sword;—
As light it trembles in his hand,
As in my grasp a hazel wand:
My sire's tall form might grace the part
Of Ferragus or Ascabart;[54]
But in the absent giant's hold
Are women now, and menials old."—
The mistress of the mansion came,
Mature of age, a graceful dame;[55]
Whose easy step and stately port
Had well become a princely court;
To whom, though more than kindred knew,[56]
Young Ellen gave a mother's due.
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[57]
Oft for his right with blade in hand.
This morning, with Lord Moray's train,
He chased a stalwart stag in vain,
Out-stripped his comrades, missed the deer,
Lost his good steed, and wandered here."—
Fain would the knight in turn require
The name and state of Ellen's sire;
Each hint the Knight of Snowdoun gave
Dame Margaret heard with silence grave;
Or Ellen, innocently gay,
Turned all inquiry light away:
"Weird women we! by dale and down[58]
We dwell, afar from tower and town.
We stem the flood, we ride the blast,
On wandering knights our spells we cast."

The hall was cleared—the stranger's bed
Was there of mountain heather spread,
Where oft an hundred guests had lain,
And dreamed their forest sports again.
But vainly did the heath-flower shed
Its moorland fragrance round his head.
In broken dreams the image rose
Of varied perils, pains, and woes:
His steed now flounders in the brake,[59]
Now sinks his barge upon the lake;
Now leader of a broken host,
His standard falls, his honour's lost.

At length, with Ellen in a grove
He seemed to walk, and speak of love;
She listened with a blush and sigh,—
His suit was warm, his hopes were high.
He sought her yielded hand to clasp,
And a cold gauntlet met his grasp:
The phantom's sex was changed and gone,
Upon its head a helmet shone;
Slowly enlarged to giant size,[60]
With darkened cheek and threatening eyes,
The grisly visage, stern and hoar,
To Ellen still a likeness bore.—
He woke, and, panting with affright,
Recalled the vision of the night.
The hearth's decaying brands were red,
And deep and dusky lustre shed,
Half showing, half concealing all
The uncouth trophies of the hall.
'Mid those the stranger fixed his eye
Where that huge falchion hung on high;
And thoughts on thoughts, a countless throng,
Rushed, chasing countless thoughts along;
Until, the giddy whirl to cure,
He rose and sought the moonshine pure.
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,
Played on the water's still expanse;—
Wild were the heart whose passions' sway[61]
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?[62]
Can I not view a Highland brand,
But it must match the Douglas hand?
Can I not frame a fevered dream,
But still the Douglas is the theme?—
I'll dream no more!—by manly mind
Not even in sleep is will resigned.
My midnight orisons said o'er,[63]
I'll turn to rest, and dream no more."—
His midnight orisons he told,
A prayer with every bead of gold,

Consigned to Heaven his cares and woes,
And sunk in undisturbed repose;
Until the heath-cock shrilly crew,
And morning dawned on Benvenue.

CANTO SECOND.—THE ISLAND.

THE ARGUMENT.

FITZ-JAMES takes his leave in the morning, guided by a trusty Highlander. In a short time four barges, bearing Roderick Dhu and his followers, approach the island. While they are landing, Ellen hears her father's bugle on the shore, and sets off in her skiff to meet him. He is accompanied by her lover, Malcolm Græme. Arrived in the island, they pass the morning in talk and sport; but at noon a messenger brings tidings to Roderick that the King, having subdued the Border chieftains, is preparing to attack the Highland freebooters, especially those amongst whom the outlawed Douglas was believed to be concealed. Douglas proposes to withdraw with his daughter, and counsels Roderick to submit to the King. Roderick demands the hand of Ellen, and the alliance of Douglas against the King. Douglas refuses both. Roderick quarrels with Græme, being jealous of the favour which Ellen shows him. Bloodshed is prevented by the interposition of Douglas. But Græme is ordered to leave the island; which, disdaining the offer of his enemy's boat, he does by swimming to the mainland.

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;[1]
And while yon little bark glides down the bay,
Wafting the stranger on his way again,
Morn's genial influence roused a minstrel grey,[2]
And sweetly o'er the lake was heard thy strain,
Mix'd with the sounding harp, O white-haired Allan-bane!

[*The minstrel sings a farewell to the stranger. Ellen sits by his side. They have much talk of the family misfortunes, of Fitz-James, Malcolm Græme, and Roderick Dhu. Ellen vows that she will never marry Roderick, as she will not marry whom she does not love. Their converse is interrupted by the sound of the distant pibroch.*]

Far up the lengthened lake were spied
Four darkening specks upon the tide,
That, slow enlarging on the view,[3]
Four manned and masted barges grew;
And, bearing downwards from Glengyle,[4]
Steered full upon the lonely isle:
The point of Brianchoil they passed,[5]
And, to the windward as they cast,[6]
Against the sun they gave to shine
The bold Sir Roderick's bannered Pine.
Nearer and nearer as they bear,
Spears, pikes, and axes flash in air.

Now might you see the tartans brave,[7]
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[8]
From their loud chanters down, and sweep[9]
The furrowed bosom of the deep,
As, rushing through the lake amain,
They plied the ancient Highland strain.
Ever, as on they bore, more loud
And louder rung the pibroch proud.[10]
At first the sound, by distance tame,
Mellowed along the waters came,
And, lingering long by cape and bay,
Wailed every harsher note away;
Then bursting bolder on the ear,
The clan's shrill Gathering they could hear,—[11]
Those thrilling sounds, that call the might
Of old Clan-Alpine to the fight.
Thick beat the rapid notes as when
The mustering hundreds shake the glen,
And, hurrying at the signal dread,
The battered earth returns their tread.
Then prelude light, of livelier tone,
Expressed their merry marching on,
Ere peal of closing battle rose,
With mingled outcry, shrieks, and blows;
And mimic din of stroke and ward,[12]
As broadsword upon target jarred;
And groaning pause, ere yet again,
Condensed, the battle yelled amain;
The rapid charge, the rallying shout,
Retreat borne headlong into rout,
And bursts of triumph, to declare
Clan-Alpine's conquest—all were there.
Nor ended thus the strain; but slow,
Sunk in a moan prolonged and low,
And changed the conquering clarion-swell,
For wild lament o'er those that fell.

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,[13]
In such wild cadence as the breeze
Makes through December's leafless trees.
The chorus first could Allan know,
" Roderigh Vich Alpine, ho ! iro !"
And near and nearer as they rowed,
Distinct the martial ditty flowed.

Boat Song.

Hail to the Chief who in triumph advances ![14]
Honoured and blessed be the ever-green Pine !
Long may the Tree, in his banner that glances,
Flourish, the shelter and grace of our line ![15]
Heaven send it happy dew,
Earth lend it sap anew,
Gaily to bourgeon, and broadly to grow ;[16]
While every Highland glen
Sends our shout back agen,[17]
" Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu, ho ! ieroe !"[18]

Ours is no sapling, chance-sown by the fountain,
Blooming at Beltane, in winter to fade ;[19]
When the whirlwind has stripped every leaf on the mountain,
The more shall Clan-Alpine exult in her shade.
Moored in the rifted rock,
Proof to the tempest's shock,
Firmer he roots him the ruder it blow ;[20]
Menteith and Breadalbane, then,[21]
Echo his praise agen,[22]
" Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu, ho ! ieroe !"

Row, vassals, row, for the pride of the Highlands !
Stretch to your oars for the ever-green 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,
Honoured and blessed in their shadow might grow !
Loud should Clan-Alpine then
Ring from her deepmost glen,
" Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu, ho ! ieroe !"—

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 called Ellen to the strand,
To greet her kinsman ere he land:
"Come, loiterer, come! a Douglas thou,[23]
And shun to wreathe a victor's brow?"—
Reluctantly and slow, the maid
The unwelcome summoning obeyed;
And, when a distant bugle rung,
In the mid-path aside she sprung:
"List, Allan-bane! From mainland cast,
I hear my father's signal blast.
Be ours," she cried, "the skiff to guide,[24]
And waft him from the mountain-side."—
Then, like a sunbeam, swift and bright,
She darted to her shallop light;
And, eagerly while Roderick scanned,
For her dear form, his mother's band,
The islet far behind her lay,
And she had landed in the bay.

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[25]
His darling Ellen closely pressed,
Such holy drops her tresses steeped,
Though 'twas an hero's eye that weeped.
Nor while on Ellen's faltering tongue
Her filial welcomes crowded hung,
Marked she, that fear (affection's proof),
Still held a graceful youth aloof;
No! not till Douglas named his name,
Although the youth was Malcolm Græme.—
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 returned? 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[26]
Were all of Douglas I have left.
I met young Malcolm as I strayed,
Far eastward, in Glenfinlas' shade;—[27]
Nor strayed I safe; for, all around,
Hunters and horsemen scoured the ground.
This youth, though still a royal ward,
Risked life and land to be my guard,
And through the passes of the wood
Guided my steps, not unpursued;
And Roderick shall his welcome make,
Despite old spleen, for Douglas' sake.
Then must he seek Strath-Endrick glen,[28]
Nor peril aught for me agen."—

Sir Roderick, who to meet them came,
Reddened at sight of Malcolm Græme;
Yet not in action, word, or eye,
Failed aught in hospitality.[29]
In talk and sport they whiled away
The morning of that summer day;
But at high noon a courier light
Held secret parley with the knight,
Whose moody aspect soon declared
That evil were the news he heard.
Deep thought seemed toiling in his head;
Yet was the evening banquet made,
Ere he assembled round the flame,
His mother, Douglas, and the Græme,
And Ellen, too; then cast around[30]
His eyes, then fixed them on the ground,
As studying phrase that might avail[31]
Best to convey unpleasant tale.

[*The substance of his intelligence is, that King James, having subdued the lawless Border clans, is now preparing to attack the Highland chiefs; and that the stately form of Douglas had been recognized in Glenfinlas. He asks the Douglas for advice.*]

Then sorrowful, but undismayed,
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,[32]
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 passed and o'er."

"No, by mine honour," Roderick said,
"So help me Heaven, and my good blade![33]
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;[34]
To Douglas, leagued with Roderick Dhu,
Will friends and allies flock enow;[35]
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,[36]
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 heat 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 foiled King from pathless glen
Shall bootless turn him home agen."

There are who have, at midnight hour,[37]
In slumber scaled a dizzy tower,
And, on the verge that beetled o'er[38]
The ocean-tide's incessant roar,
Dreamed calmly out their dangerous dream,
Till wakened by the morning beam;
When, dazzled by the eastern glow,
Such startler cast his glance below,
Did he not desperate impulse feel,
Headlong to plunge himself below,
And meet the worst his fears foreshow?—
Thus, Ellen, dizzy and astound,[39]
As sudden ruin yawned around,

By crossing terrors wildly tossed,
Still for the Douglas fearing most,
Could scarce the desperate thought withstand,
To buy his safety with her hand.
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 marked the hectic strife,
Where death seemed combating with life;—
For to her cheek, in feverish flood,
One instant rushed 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,[40]
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;[41]
I love him still, despite my wrongs,
By hasty wrath, and slanderous tongues.[42]
O seek the grace you well may find,
Without a cause to mine combined."

[*A quarrel, the result of jealousy, arises between Roderick and Malcolm. They struggle, and are separated by Douglas. The Chieftain orders Græme to quit the island. The latter, disdaining to use his enemy's boat, plunges into the lake, and swims to the shore.*]

CANTO THIRD.—THE GATHERING.

THE ARGUMENT.

NEXT morning Roderick sends forth the Fiery Cross to summon his followers to Lanrick mead, by the margin of Loch Vennachar. Malise, Roderick's henchman, flies with the fatal symbol along the side of Loch Achray. When he reaches Duncraggan's huts he hears the coronach, or funeral-song, of the aged Chieftain. Nevertheless, his stripling son, young Angus, is bound to belt on his father's sword and speed him forth with the Fiery Cross. When he reaches Strath-Ire a bridal party is issuing from the Chapel of St. Bride. He puts the signal into the hand of the bridegroom, Norman, heir of Armandave; who tears himself from the arms of his new-made bride, and glances off "like fire from flint." So the Cross of Fire is passed from hand to hand, and from valley to valley, till all Clan-Alpine's followers are summoned.

The same morning Douglas, true to his promise, leaves the island with Ellen and Allan-bane, and takes refuge in the Goblin Cave (Coir-nan-Uriskin), in the darkest cleft of Benvenue. On his way to the muster on Lanrick mead, Roderick ventures into the neighbourhood of their cell, and listens for the last time to Ellen's voice mingling with that of Allan-bane in a hymn to the Virgin.

No thought of peace, no thought of rest,
Assuaged the storm in Roderick's breast.
With sheathèd broadsword in his hand,
Abrupt he paced the islet strand,
And eyed the rising sun, and laid
His hand on his impatient blade.[1]
Beneath a rock, his vassals' care
Was prompt the ritual to prepare,[2]
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.
A heap of withered boughs was piled
Of juniper and rowan wild,[3]
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.
'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 clogged beard and shaggy limb,
Till darkness glazed his eyeballs dim.
The grizzly priest, with murmuring prayer,
A slender crosslet formed with care,
A cubit's length in measure due;
The shaft and limbs were rods of yew,
Whose parents in Inch-Cailliach wave[4]
Their shadows o'er Clan-Alpine's grave,
And, answering Lomond's breezes deep,
Soothe many a chieftain's endless sleep.
The Cross, thus formed, he held on high,
With wasted hand and haggard eye;
And strange and mingled feelings woke,
While his anathema he spoke:

"Woe to the clansman who shall view
This symbol of sepulchral yew,[5]

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."[6]

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;[7]
And first in murmur low,
Then, like the billow in his course,
That far to seaward finds his source,
And flings to shore his mustered force,
Burst, with loud roar, their answer hoarse,
"Woe to the traitor! woe!"—
The shout was hushed on lake and fell;[8]
The monk resumed his muttered spell.
Dismal and low its accents came,
The while he scathed the Cross with flame.[9]
The crosslet's points of sparkling wood
He quenched among the bubbling blood;
And as again the sign he reared,
Hollow and hoarse his voice was heard:

"When flits this Cross from man to man,[10]
Vich-Alpine's summons to his clan,
Burst be the ear that fails to heed![11]
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[12]
The murmur of the deep Amen.
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—[13]
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 bargemen row,
The bubbles where they launched the boat[14]
Were all unbroken and afloat,
Dancing in foam and ripple still,
When it had neared the mainland hill;
And from the silver beach's side
Still was the prow three fathoms wide,
When lightly bounded to the land
The messenger of blood and brand.—
Fast as the fatal symbol flies,
In arms the huts and hamlets rise;[15]
From winding glen, from upland brown,
They poured each hardy tenant down.
Nor slacked the messenger his pace:
He showed 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 changèd cheer, the mower blithe
Left in the half-cut swathe his scythe;
The herds without a keeper strayed;
The plough was in mid-furrow stayed;
The falconer tossed his hawk away;
The hunter left the stag at bay:
Prompt at the signal of alarms,
Each son of Alpine rushed to arms.
So swept the tumult and affray
Along the margin of Achray.[16]

Speed, Malise, speed! The lake is passed,
Duncraggan's huts appear at last:[17]
There may'st thou rest, thy labour done—[18]
Their lord shall speed the signal on.—
What woful accents load the gale?
The funeral yell, the female wail!
A gallant hunter's sport is o'er;
A valiant warrior fights no more.
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 mournful by;
His youngest weeps, but knows not why:
The village maids and matrons round
The dismal coronach resound.[19]—

All stand aghast. Unheeding all,
The henchman bursts into the hall;
Before the dead man's bier he stood,
Held forth the Cross besmeared with blood:
"The muster-place is Lanrick mead![20]
Speed forth the signal! clansmen, speed!"—
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 opened arms he flew,
Pressed on her lips a fond adieu.
"Alas!" she sobbed—"and yet be gone,
And speed thee forth, like Duncan's son![21]
One look he cast upon the bier,
Dashed from his eye the gathering tear,
Breathed deep, to clear his labouring breast,
And tossed aloft his bonnet crest;
Then, like the high-bred colt, when, freed,
First he essays his fire and speed,
He vanished, and o'er moor and moss
Sped forward with the Fiery Cross.

Benledi saw the Cross of Fire;
It glanced like lightning up Strath-Ire.[22]
O'er dale and hill the summons flew—
Nor rest nor pause young Angus knew;
The tear that gathered in his eye
He left the mountain breeze to dry,
Until, where Teith's young waters roll
Betwixt him and a wooded knoll
That graced the sable strath with green,
The chapel of Saint Bride was seen.[23]
Swoln was the stream, remote the bridge,
But Angus paused not on the edge;
Though the dark waves danced dizzily,
Though reeled his sympathetic eye,
He dashed amid the torrent's roar:
His right hand high the crosslet bore,
His left the pole-axe grasped, to guide
And stay his footing in the tide.
He stumbled twice—the foam splashed high,
With hoarser swell the stream raced by;[24]
And had he fallen—for ever there,
Farewell Duncraggan's orphan heir!
But still, as if in parting life,
Firmer he grasped the Cross of strife,

Until the opposing bank he gained,
And up the chapel pathway strained.

A blithesome rout that morning tide
Had sought the chapel of Saint Bride.
Her troth Tombea's Mary gave[25]
To Norman, heir of Armandave;
And, issuing from the Gothic arch,
The bridal now resumed their march.
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,[26]
Panting and travel-soiled 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 linked to his by holy band,
For the fell Cross of blood and brand?
And must the day so blithe that rose,
And promised rapture in the close,
Before its setting hour divide
The bridegroom from the plighted bride?
O fatal doom!—it must! it must!
Clan-Alpine's cause, her Chieftain's trust,[27]
Her summons dread, brook no delay:
Stretch to the race—away! away!
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[28]
Where Lubnaig's lake supplies the Teith.
Not faster o'er thy heathery braes,
Balquidder, speeds the midnight blaze,[29]
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[30]
The sullen margin of Loch Voil;

Waked still Loch Doine; and to the source
Alarmed, Balvaig, thy swampy course:[31]
Thence southward turned its rapid road
Adown Strath-Gartney's valley broad;[32]
Till rose in arms each man might claim[33]
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 sequestered glen,
Mustered its little horde of men,
That met as torrents from the height
In Highland dale 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 trained to arms since life began,
Owning no tie but to his clan—
No oath, but by his Chieftain's hand—
No law, but Roderick Dhu's command.—
That summer morn had Roderick Dhu
Surveyed the skirts of Benvenue,
And sent his scouts o'er hill and heath,
To view the frontiers of Menteith.
All backward came with news of truce:
Still lay each martial Græme and Bruce—
In Rednock courts no horsemen wait,[34]
No banner waved on Cardross gate;[35]
On Duchray's towers no beacon shone,[36]
Nor scared the herons from Loch Con;[37]
All seemed at peace.—Now, wot ye why[38]
The Chieftain, with such anxious eye,
Ere to the muster he repair,
This western frontier scanned 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 sequestered dell
Had sought a low and lonely cell.
By many a bard, in Celtic tongue,
Has Coir-nan-Uriskin been sung:[39]
A softer name the Saxons gave,
And called the grot the Goblin Cave.

In the evening Roderick, with a few chosen followers, visits the neighbourhood of the cave, and hears Ellen's voice—for the last time, he believes—singing "Ave Maria."]

CANTO FOURTH.—THE PROPHECY.

THE ARGUMENT.

BRIAN the hermit, Roderick's monk, has tried an augury, the result of which is the *prophecy* that that party shall conquer which first spills the foeman's blood. Malise, who has been sent to reconnoitre, returns with the news that the Earls of Mar and Moray will march against them on the morrow.

Meantime Douglas has left his retreat on a secret mission, having instructed Allan-bane and Ellen, that, if he did not return before evening, they should go to meet him at Cambus-kenneth. While they converse in the neighbourhood of their cave, they are startled by the appearance of Fitz-James, who has been led to them by the same guide, Murdoch, who conducted him when he left the isle. He declares his love for Ellen, and asks her to fly with him to Stirling. She tells him that her heart is already given to a noble youth (Malcolm Græme) who is risking his life for her and hers. The knight's love is turned into sympathy, and he gives her a ring which the King had given him for saving his life, and by presenting which to the King, she may obtain any boon she asks.

The knight now departs with his guide, Red Murdoch, of whose faithfulness Ellen has hinted suspicions. These suspicions are confirmed when they meet Blanche of Devan, a half-crazed woman whom Roderick had taken captive on her bridal morning in a Lowland foray, in which her husband was slain. Fitz-James charges Murdoch with treachery. The latter takes to flight; but, turning, discharges an arrow at the knight, which grazes his crest and thrills in Blanche's heart. Fitz-James pursues and slays Murdoch, and returns to tend the dying Blanche. He finds on her breast a braid of her bridegroom's hair. He twines it with a lock of her own. He dips it in her blood and places it in his bonnet, vowing to wear no other favour till he has imbrued it in the blood of Roderick Dhu. Wandering onwards alone, he comes in the evening upon the encampment of a solitary Highlander, who receives him hospitably, and shares with him his plaid and heather couch for the night.

I.

WITH Alpine's lord
The hermit monk held solemn word:
"Roderick! it is a fearful strife,[1]
For man endowed with mortal life,
Whose shroud of sentient clay can still
Feel feverish pang and fainting chill,
Whose eye can stare in stony trance,
Whose hair can rouse like warrior's lance,—
'Tis hard for such to view, unfurled,
The curtain of the future world;
Yet, witness every quaking limb,[2]
My sunken pulse, mine eye-balls 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[3]
Between the living and the dead,
Is gifted beyond nature's law,—
Had e'er survived to say he saw.[4]

At length the fateful 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,[5]
THAT PARTY CONQUERS IN THE STRIFE."

"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-offered 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.—[6]
But see, who comes his news to show!
Malise, what tidings of the foe?"—
"At Doune, o'er many a spear and glaive,[7]
Two Barons proud their banners wave.
I saw the Moray's silver star,
And marked the sable pale of Mar."—[8]
"By Alpine's soul, high tidings those!
I love to hear of worthy foes.[9]
When move they on?"—"To-morrow's noon
Will see them here for battle boune."—[10]
"Then shall it see a meeting stern!—
But, for the place—say, couldst thou learn
Nought of the friendly clans of Earn?
Strengthened 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."—
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.

Where is the Douglas? He is gone;
And Ellen sits on the grey stone
Fast by the cave, and makes her moan;[11]
While vainly Allan's words of cheer
Are poured on her unheeding ear:
"He will return—dear lady, trust!—
With joy return;—he will—he must.
Well was it time to seek, afar,
Some refuge from impending war,
When e'en Clan-Alpine's rugged swarm
Are cowed by the approaching storm.
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?"—
"No, Allan, no! Pretext so kind
My wakeful terrors could not blind.
He hears reports of battle rife,[12]
He deems himself the cause of strife.
Why else that solemn warning given,—
'If not on earth, we meet in heaven'?
Why else, to Cambus-kenneth's fane,[13]
If eve return him not again,
Am I to hie, and make me known?
Alas! he goes to Scotland's throne,
Buys his friends' safety with his own;—
He goes to do—what I had done,[14]
Had Douglas' daughter been his son!"—
"Nay, lovely Ellen!—dearest, nay!
If aught should his return delay,
He only named yon holy fane
As fitting place to meet again.
Dear lady, change that look of woe!
My harp was wont thy grief to cheer."

The minstrel tried his simple art,
But distant far was Ellen's heart.
Just as the minstrel sounds were stayed,
A stranger climbed the steepy glade:
His martial step, his stately mien,
His hunting suit of Lincoln green,
His eagle glance, remembrance claims—
'Tis Snowdoun's Knight, 'tis James Fitz-James.
Ellen beheld as in a dream,
Then, starting, scarce suppressed 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 marshalled, over bank and bourne,[15]
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."—[16]
"Oh, haste thee, Allan, to the kern,—[17]
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."—
"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 weighed 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;[18]
They bear us soon to Stirling gate.
I'll place thee in a lovely bower,
I'll guard thee like a tender flower."—
"Oh, 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.—
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."—
Fitz-James knew every wily train
A lady's fickle heart to gain;
But here he knew and felt them vain.
With hand upon his forehead laid,
The conflict of his mind to shade,
A parting step or two he made;

Then, as some thought had crossed his brain,[19]
He paused, and turned, and came again.
"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, 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—kissed her hand—and then was gone.

II.

The agèd minstrel stood aghast,
So hastily Fitz-James shot past.
He joined his guide, and wending down
The ridges of the mountain brown,
Across the stream they took their way
That joins Loch Katrine to Achray.
All in the Trosach's glen was still,
Noontide was sleeping on the hill:
Sudden his guide whooped loud and high—
"Murdoch! was that a signal cry?"—
He stammered forth, "I shout to scare
Yon raven from his dainty fare."—
He looked—he knew the raven's prey,
His own brave steed:—"Ah, gallant grey!
For thee—for me, perchance—'t were 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,[20]
Each silent, each upon his guard.
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 tattered weeds and wild array,[21]
Stood on a cliff beside the way,
And, glancing round, her restless eye,
Upon the wood, the rock, the sky,
Seemed nought to mark, yet all to spy.[22]

Her brow was wreathed with gaudy broom;
With gesture wild she waved a plume
Of feathers, which the eagles fling
To crag and cliff from dusky wing:
Such spoils her desperate step had sought,
Where scarce was footing for the goat.
The tartan plaid she first descried,
And shrieked, till all the rocks replied;
As loud she laughed when near they drew,[23]
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 strained and roughened, still
Rung wildly sweet to dale and hill.

"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," Murdoch said,[24]
"A crazed and captive Lowland maid,
Ta'en on the morn she was a bride,
When Roderick forayed Devan-side.
The gay bridegroom resistance made,
And felt our Chief's unconquered blade.
I marvel she is now at large,
But oft she 'scapes from Maudlin's charge.—
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 pitched a bar!"—
"Thanks, champion, thanks!" the maniac cried,
And pressed her to Fitz-James's side.
Still on the clansman, fearfully,
She fixed her apprehensive eye;
Then turned it on the knight, and then
Her look glanced wildly o'er the glen.
Fitz-James's mind was passion-tossed,
When Ellen's hints and fears were lost
But Murdoch's shout suspicion wrought,
And Blanche's song conviction brought.—
Not like a stag that spies the snare,
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 thrilled in Blanche's faded breast.—
Murdoch of Alpine! prove thy speed,
For ne'er had Alpine's son such need!
With heart of fire, and foot of wind,
The fierce avenger is behind!
Fate judges of the rapid strife—
The forfeit death—the prize is life!
Thy kindred ambush lies before,[25]
Close couched upon the heathery moor;
Them couldst thou reach!—it may not be—[26]
Thine ambushed kin thou ne'er shalt see,
The fiery Saxon gains on thee!—
Resistless speeds the deadly thrust,
As lightning strikes the pine to dust;
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.

A kindly heart had brave Fitz-James;
Fast poured his eye at pity's claims,
And now with mingled grief and ire
He saw the murdered maid expire.
"God, in my need, be my relief,
As I wreak this on yonder Chief!"—
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."—
Barred from the known but guarded way,
Through copse and cliffs Fitz-James must stray,
And oft must change his desperate track,
By stream and precipice turned back.
Heartless, fatigued, and faint, at length,
From lack of food and loss of strength,
He couched him in a thicket hoar,
And thought his toils and perils o'er:—

"Of all my rash adventures past,
This frantic feat must prove the last!
Who e'er so mad but might have guessed,
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 couch me here till evening grey,
Then darkling try my dangerous way."[27]

With cautious step, and ear awake,
He climbs the crag and threads the brake;[28]
And not the summer solstice, there,[29]
Tempered the midnight mountain air,
But every breeze that swept the wold[30]
Benumbed his drenchèd limbs with cold.
In dread, in danger, and alone,
Famished and chilled, through ways unknown,
Tangled and steep, he journeyed on;[31]
Till, as a rock's huge point he turned,
A watch-fire close before him burned.
Beside its embers red and clear,
Basked, in his plaid, a mountaineer;
And up he sprung with sword in hand,—
"Thy name and purpose! Saxon, stand!"—[32]
"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 chilled my limbs with frost."—
"Art thou a friend to Roderick?"—"No."—
"Thou darest not call thyself a foe?"—
"I dare! to him and all the band[33]
He brings to aid his murderous hand."—
"Bold words!—but, though the beast of game[34]
The privilege of chase may claim,
Though space and law the stag we lend
Ere hound we slip or bow we bend,
Who ever recked, where, how, or when,
The prowling fox was trapped or slain?
Thus treacherous scouts,—yet sure they lie,
Who say thou camest a secret spy!"—
"They do, by heaven!—Come Roderick Dhu,[35]
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 may'st thou know
Each proud oppressor's mortal foe."—
"Enough, enough; sit down and share
A soldier's couch, a soldier's fare.
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,[36]
O'er stock and stone, through watch and ward,
Till past Clan-Alpine's outmost guard,
As far as Coilantogle's ford;[37]
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 gathered heath,
And spread his plaid upon the wreath;[38]
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.

THE ARGUMENT

In the morning, the Highlander, bound by his promise and by the laws of hospitality, conducts Fitz-James on his way. In their converse, Fitz-James calls Roderick a traitor and a murderer. The Highlander's blood is roused; and as they pass Loch Vennachar, he blows his whistle. At the signal, armed men start from every bush and bracken, and the Highlander reveals himself as Roderick Dhu. But he has pledged his word to conduct his guest to Coilantogle ford, and at his signal his host disappears again. When they reach Coilantogle, they engage in mortal combat. Fitz-James, a practised fencer, wounds Roderick severely, and brings him to his knee; but the Highlander has strength enough left to spring like a wild-cat at his adversary's throat. They wrestle fiercely, and fall to the ground, the Gael above, Fitz-James below. The Highlander draws his dirk, but has not strength to guide its point, and it sinks harmlessly in the heath. Fitz-James rises and winds his horn. Horsemen appear. He intrusts to them the wounded Gael, and rides off towards Stirling Castle. On the way, one of the knights descries James of Douglas toiling in the guise of a woodman up the stony path, and hastens to inform the King.

It is holiday in Stirling. Trials of strength and skill are held. In several contests the Douglas joins, and bears the prize. He is applauded by the populace, but shunned by the nobles, and spurned by the King, even while he bestows upon him his well-earned rewards. At last the King orders the Captain of the Guard to take him into

custody, and abruptly breaks off the sports. A messenger arrives from the Earl of Mar to announce the muster of Clan-Alpine. The King sends back the messenger, who fears it is too late to forbid the war.

I.

THE early beam, so fair and sheen,[1]
Was twinkling through the hazel screen,
When, rousing at its glimmer red,
The warriors left their lowly bed,
Looked out upon the dappled sky,
Muttered their soldier matins by,[2]
And then awaked their fire, to steal,
As short and rude, their soldier meal.[3]
That o'er, the Gael around him threw[4]
His graceful plaid of varied hue;
And, true to promise, led the way,
By thicket green and mountain grey.
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 threatening stone:
An hundred men might hold the post
With hardihood against a host.[5]
So toilsome was the road to trace,
The guide, abating of his pace,[6]
Led slowly through the pass's jaws,
And asked Fitz-James, by what strange cause
He sought these wilds? traversed by few
Without a pass from Roderick Dhu.
"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, brand, 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!"—

"Have, then, thy wish!"—he whistled shrill,
And he was answered from the hill;
Wild as the scream of the curlew,[7]
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,[8]
The bracken bush sends forth the dart,[9]
The rushes and the willow-wand
Are bristling into axe and brand,
And every tuft of broom gives life
To plaided warrior armed for strife!
That whistle garrisoned 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[10]
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 fixed his eye and sable brow
Full on Fitz-James—"How say'st thou now?
These are Clan-Alpine's warriors true;
And, Saxon,—I am Roderick Dhu!"—
Fitz-James was brave. Though to his heart
The life-blood thrilled with sudden start,
He manned himself with dauntless air,
Returned the Chief his haughty stare;[11]
His back against a rock he bore,
And firmly placed his foot before:
"Come one, come all! this rock shall fly[12]
From its firm base as soon as I."—
Sir Roderick marked—and in his eyes
Respect was mingled with surprise,
And the stern joy which warriors feel
In foemen worthy of their steel.[13]
Short space he stood—then waved his hand:
Down sunk the disappearing band;
Each warrior vanished where he stood,
In broom or bracken, heath or wood;
Sunk brand and spear and bended bow,
In osiers pale and copses low;—[14]
It seemed as if their mother Earth
Had swallowed up her warlike birth.
The wind's last breath had tossed in air,
Pennon, and plaid, and plumage fair,—
The next but swept a lone hill-side,
Where heath and fern were waving wide:

The sun's last glance was glinted back[15]
From spear and glaive, from targe and jack—[16]
The next, all unreflected, shone
On bracken green, and cold grey stone.
Fitz-James looked round—yet scarce believed
The witness that his sight received ;
Such apparition well might seem
Delusion of a dreadful dream.[17]
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[18]
Rent by the Saxon from the Gael.
So move we on ;—I only meant[19]
To show the reed on which you leant,
Deeming this path you might pursue[20]
Without a pass from Roderick Dhu."—
The Chief in silence strode before,
And reached that torrent's sounding shore,
Which, daughter of three mighty lakes,[21]
From Vennachar in silver breaks,
Sweeps through the plain, and ceaseless mines
On Bochastle the mouldering lines,
Where Rome, the empress of the world,[22]
Of yore her eagle wings unfurled.
And here his course the Chieftain stayed,
Threw down his target and his plaid,[23]
And to the Lowland warrior said:
" Bold Saxon ! to his promise just,
Vich-Alpine has discharged his trust.
This murderous Chief, this ruthless man,
This head of a rebellious clan,
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,[24]
Armed, like thyself, with single brand :
For this is Coilantogle ford,
And thou must keep thee with thy sword."

II.

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

Nay, more, brave Chief, I vowed thy death;
Yet sure thy fair and generous faith,
And my deep debt for life preserved,
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 foeman's life,[25]
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,[26]
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."—
Dark lightning flashed from Roderick's eye—
"Soars thy presumption, then, so high,
Because a wretched kern ye slew,[27]
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—[28]
We try this quarrel hilt to hilt."

Then each at once his falchion drew;
Each on the ground his scabbard threw;
Each looked to sun, and stream, and plain,
As what he ne'er might see again;—
Then foot, and point, and eye opposed,
In dubious strife they darkly closed.—
Ill fared it then with Roderick Dhu,
That on the field his targe he threw,
Whose brazen studs and tough bull-hide
Had death so often dashed aside;
For, trained abroad his arms to wield,
Fitz-James's blade was sword and shield.
He practised every pass and ward,
To thrust, to strike, to feint, to guard;
While, less expert, though stronger far,
The Gael maintained unequal war.
Three times in closing strife they stood,
And thrice the Saxon blade drank blood;—
No stinted draught, no scanty tide,
The gushing flood the tartans dyed.
Fierce Roderick felt the fatal drain,
And showered his blows like wintry rain;
And, as firm rock, or castle-roof,
Against the winter shower is proof,
The foe, invulnerable still,
Foiled his wild rage by steady skill;
Till, at advantage ta'en, his brand
Forced Roderick's weapon from his hand,
And backward borne upon the lea,[29]
Brought the proud Chieftain to his knee.—
"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."—
Like adder darting from his coil,[30]
Like wolf that dashes through the toil,
Like mountain-cat who guards her young,
Full at Fitz-James's throat he sprung;
Received, but recked not of a wound,
And locked his arms his foeman round.—
Now, gallant Saxon, hold thine own!
No maiden's hand is round thee thrown!
That desperate grasp thy frame might feel
Through bars of brass and triple steel!—

They tug, they strain!—down, down they go,
The Gael above, Fitz-James below!
The Chieftain's gripe his throat compressed,
His knee was planted 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 gleamed 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 gleamed on high,
Reeled soul and sense, reeled 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.

He faltered thanks to Heaven for life,
Redeemed, unhoped, from desperate strife;
Next on his foe his look he cast,
Whose every gasp appeared his last;
In Roderick's gore he dipped the braid,—[31]
"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 loosened rein, a saddled steed:
Each onward held his headlong course,
And by Fitz-James reined up his horse,—
With wonder viewed the bloody spot—
"Exclaim not, gallants! question not.—
You, Herbert and Luffness, alight,
And bind the wounds of yonder knight;
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.[32]
The sun rides high;—I must be boune[33]
To see the archer-game at noon;
But lightly Bayard clears the lea.—
De Vaux and Herries, follow me."

As up the flinty path they strained,
Sudden his steed the leader reined;
A signal to his squire he flung,
Who instant to his stirrup sprung:
"Seest thou, De Vaux, yon woodsman 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 mountain-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?
Afar, ere to the hill he drew,
That stately form and step I knew;
Like form in Scotland is not seen,
Treads not such step on Scottish green.
'Tis James of Douglas, by Saint Serle![34]
The uncle of the banished 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 wheeled their steeds, and straight
They won the Castle's postern gate.—
The Douglas, who had bent his way
From Cambus-kenneth's abbey grey,
Now, as he climbed the rocky shelf,
Held sad communion with himself:
"Yes! all is true my fears could frame;
A prisoner lies the noble Græme,
And fiery Roderick soon will feel
The vengeance of the royal steel.
I, only I, can ward their fate,—
God grant the ransom come not late!
The Abbess hath her promise given,
My child shall be the bride of Heaven;—
Be pardoned one repining tear!
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;[35]
And thou, O sad and fatal mound![36]
That oft has heard the death-axe sound,
As on the noblest of the land
Fell the stern headsman's bloody hand,—
The dungeon, block, and nameless tomb
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.[37]
I guess, by all this quaint array,
The burghers hold their sports to-day.[38]
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,[39]
If age has tamed these sinews stark,[40]
Whose force so oft, in happier days,
His boyish wonder loved to praise."[41]

[*The Douglas engages as a competitor in the sports. He is the victor in archery, in wrestling, and in "putting" the stone. The prize for the last contest is a purse of broad pieces. He throws the gold amongst the people, and is hailed enthusiastically as a champion. A royal stag is let loose. Douglas's dog Lufra distances the King's greyhounds, and brings down the deer. The King's huntsman, in anger, strikes Lufra with his leash. A blow from Douglas's hand stretches him bleeding and senseless on the sward. Douglas is arrested by the King's orders. A tumult arises, which the Douglas, on whose behalf it is made, with difficulty quells. A messenger arrives to inform the King that the Earl of Mar has marched against Roderick Dhu. The King sends back the messenger to forbid the war, though the latter fears that it is too late.*]

Ill with King James's mood that day
Suited gay feast and minstrel lay;
Soon were dismissed the courtly throng,
And soon cut short the festal song.
Nor less upon the saddened town
The evening sunk in sorrow down.
The burghers spoke of civil jar,
Of rumoured feuds and mountain war;
Of Moray, Mar, and Roderick Dhu,
All up in arms:—the Douglas too,

They mourned him pent within the hold
"Where stout Earl William was of old"—[42]
And there his word the speaker stayed,
And finger on his lip he laid,
Or pointed to his dagger blade.
But jaded horsemen, from the west,
At evening to the Castle pressed;
And busy talkers said they bore
Tidings of fight on Katrine's shore;
At noon the deadly fray begun,
And lasted till the set of sun.
Thus giddy rumour shook the town,
Till closed the Night her pennons brown.

CANTO SIXTH.—THE GUARD-ROOM.

THE ARGUMENT.

THERE is great excitement in Stirling Castle on the morning of the next day. News has arrived of a bloody fray fought between Loch Katrine and Loch Achray. Old Bertram of Ghent arrives at the Castle, accompanied by a minstrel and a maid. It is Ellen Douglas and Allan-bane. Ellen has to endure many indignities from the rough soldiery; but her maiden innocence, and the knight's ring, are her safeguard. Young Lewis of Tullibardine conducts her to a room where she may repose securely under female care till the King can receive her. Allan-bane induces the warder to admit him to his master's cell. When he is locked in, he finds himself in the presence, not of Douglas, but of Roderick Dhu. The minstrel narrates to the Chieftain the incidents of the battle. So completely is the latter transported by the narrative that he dreams he is in the field, and dies before it is finished.

Fitz-James appears in Ellen's room, and conducts her to the court. In the midst of the gay assemblage, she observes that he alone wears cap and plume, and now discovers that "Snowdoun's Knight is Scotland's King." She learns, too, that her father has been reconciled to the King. Through her father, she asks a pardon for Malcolm Græme, who kneels before the King. The latter dooms him to "fetters, and, throwing his own golden chain round his neck, lays the clasp in Ellen's hand.

I.

THE sun, awakening, through the smoky air
Of the dark city casts a sullen glance;
Rousing each caitiff to his task of care,[1]
Of sinful man the sad inheritance;
Summoning revellers from the lagging dance,
Scaring the prowling robber to his den;
Gilding on battled tower the warder's lance,[2]
And warning student pale to leave his pen,
And yield his drowsy eyes to the kind nurse of men.[3]

[*In the early morning, Bertram of Ghent arrives at the Castle, accompanied by Ellen Douglas and Allan-bane. Ellen suffers many indignities from the rough soldiery; but her native bravery and her maiden innocence disarm them, and win for her the protection of John de Brent, who goes to inform the Captain of the Guard of the strange arrival.*]

Their captain came, a gallant young—
(Of Tullibardine's house he sprung),[4]
Nor wore he yet the spurs of knight;
Gay was his mien, his humour light,
And, though by courtesy controlled,
Forward his speech, his bearing bold.
The high-born maiden ill could brook
The scanning of his curious look
And dauntless eye;—and yet, in sooth,
Young Lewis was a generous youth;
But Ellen's lovely face and mien,
Ill suited to the garb and scene,[5]
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?[6]
Does thy high quest a knight require,
Or may the venture suit a squire?"—
Her dark eye flashed;—she paused and sighed,—
"O what have I to do with pride!—
Through scenes of sorrow, shame, and strife,
A suppliant for a father's life,
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."—

The signet-ring young Lewis took,
With deep respect and altered look;
And said,—"This ring our duties own;
And pardon, if to worth unknown,
In semblance mean obscurely veiled,[7]
Lady, in aught my folly failed.
Soon as the day flings wide his gates,
The King shall know what suitor waits.
Please you, meanwhile, in fitting bower[8]
Repose you till his waking hour;
Female attendance shall obey
Your hest, for service or array.
Permit I marshal you the way."—[9]
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;[10]
But Brent, with shy and awkward look,

On the reluctant maiden's hold
Forced bluntly back the proffered gold;—
"Forgive a haughty English heart,
And O forget its ruder part!
The vacant purse shall be my share,
Which in my barret-cap I'll bear,[11]
Perchance, in jeopardy of war,
Where gayer crests may keep afar."—
With thanks—'t was all she could—the maid
His rugged courtesy repaid.

When Ellen forth with Lewis went,
Allan made suit to John of Brent:
"My lady safe, O let your grace[12]
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."—
"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 Beaudesert!
And, but I loved to drive the deer,[13]
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."—
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.
They halted at a low-browed porch,
And Brent to Allan gave the torch,
While bolt and chain he backward rolled,
And made the bar unhasp its hold.[14]
They entered:—'t was a prison-room
Of stern security and gloom,
Yet not a dungeon; for the day
Through lofty gratings found its way,
And rude and antique garniture
Decked the sad walls and oaken floor,—
Such as the rugged days of old
Deemed fit for captive noble's hold.
"Here," said De Brent, "thou may'st
remain
Till the Leech visit him again.[15]

Strict is his charge, the warders tell,
To tend the noble prisoner well."—
Retiring then, the bolt he drew,
And the lock's murmurs growled anew.
Roused at the sound, from lowly bed
A captive feebly raised his head:
The wondering minstrel looked, and knew—
Not his dear lord, but Roderick Dhu!
For, come from where Clan-Alpine fought,
They, erring, deemed the Chief he sought.[16]

As the tall ship, whose lofty prore[17]
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 fevered limbs he threw
In toss abrupt, as when her sides[18]
Lie rocking in the advancing tides,
That shake her frame with ceaseless 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 ruined in my fall?
Ah, yes! or wherefore art thou here?
Yet speak,—speak boldly,—do not fear."—
(For Allan, who his mood well knew,
Was choked with grief and terror too.)—
"Who fought?—who fled?—old man, be brief;—
Some might—for they had lost their Chief.[19]
Who basely live?—who bravely died?"—
"Oh, 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,[20]
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."—

The Chieftain reared his form on high,
And fever's fire was in his eye;
But ghastly, pale, and livid streaks
Chequered 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,
O'er Dermid's race our victory.—
Strike it!—and then (for well thou canst),
Free from thy minstrel-spirit glanced,[21]
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,[22]
For the fair field of fighting men,
And my free spirit burst away,
As if it soared from battle fray."—
The trembling bard with awe obeyed.
Slow on the harp his hand he laid;
But soon remembrance of the sight
He witnessed from the mountain's height,
With what old Bertram told at night,
Awakened the full power of song,
And bore him in career along.

* * * *

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

II.

Ellen, the while, with bursting heart,
Remained in lordly bower apart.

The banquet proud, the chamber gay,
Scarce drew one curious glance astray.
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.[23]

Lay of the Imprisoned Huntsman.

"My hawk is tired of perch and hood,
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,[24]
Hunting the hart in forest green,
With bended bow and bloodhound free,
For that's the life is meet 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!"

The heart-sick lay was hardly said,
The list'ner had not turned her head,
It trickled still, the starting tear,
When light a footstep struck her ear,
And Snowdoun's graceful knight was near.
She turned the hastier, lest again
The prisoner should renew his strain.
"O welcome, brave Fitz-James!" she said;
"How may an almost orphan maid[25]
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,[26]
With Scotland's King thy suit to aid.
No tyrant he, though ire and pride
May lead his better mood aside.
Come, Ellen, come!—'tis more than time;
He holds his court at morning prime."—[27]
With beating heart, and bosom wrung,
As to a brother's arm she clung.[28]

Gently he dried the falling tear,
And gently whispered hope and cheer;
Her faltering steps half led, half stayed,
Through gallery fair and high arcade,
Till, at his touch, its wings of pride
A portal arch unfolded wide.

Within 'twas brilliant all and light,
A thronging scene of figures bright;
It glowed on Ellen's dazzled sight,
As when the setting sun has given[29]
Ten thousand hues to summer even,
And, from their tissue, fancy frames
Aërial knights and fairy dames.
Still by Fitz-James her footing stayed;[30]
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 owned this state,
The dreaded prince whose will was fate!—
She gazed on many a princely port,[31]
Might well have ruled a royal court;[32]
On many a splendid garb she gazed,—
Then turned bewildered and amazed,
For all stood bare; and, in the room,
Fitz-James alone wore cap and plume.
To him each lady's look was lent;
On him each courtier's eye was bent;
'Midst furs, and silks, and jewels sheen,[33]
He stood, in simple Lincoln green,
The centre of the glittering ring,—
And Snowdoun's Knight is Scotland's King!

As wreath of snow, on mountain-breast,[34]
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 showed the ring,—she clasped her hands.
O! not a moment could he brook,
The generous prince, that suppliant look!
Gently he raised her,—and, the while,[35]
Checked with a glance the circle's smile;
Graceful, but grave, her brow he kissed,
And bade her terrors be dismissed:—
"Yes, Fair; the wandering poor Fitz-James[36]
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 slanderous tongue;
I, from his rebel kinsmen, wrong.
We would not to the vulgar crowd[37]
Yield what they craved with clamour loud;
Calmly we heard and judged his cause;
Our council aided, and our laws.
I stanched 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.—[38]
But, lovely infidel, how now?
What clouds thy misbelieving brow?
Lord James of Douglas, lend thine aid;
Thou must confirm this doubting maid."

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 stepped between—"Nay, Douglas, nay,
Steal not my proselyte away!
The riddle 'tis my right to read,
That brought this happy chance to speed.—[39]
Yes, Ellen, when disguised I stray[40]
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 Snowdoun claims,[41]
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,
Joined to thine eye's dark witchcraft, drew
My spell-bound steps to Benvenue,
In dangerous hour, and all but gave
Thy Monarch's life to mountain glaive!"—[42]
Aloud he spoke—"Thou still dost hold
That little talisman of gold,
Pledge of my faith, Fitz-James's ring—
What seeks fair Ellen of the King?"—

Full well the conscious maiden guessed[43]
He probed the weakness of her breast;
But, with that consciousness, there came
A lightening of her fears for Græme,[44]
And more she deemed 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.[45]
"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 turned her from the King,
And to the Douglas gave the ring,
As if she wished her sire to speak
The suit that stained her glowing cheek.—
"Nay, then, my pledge has lost its force,
And stubborn Justice holds her course.
Malcolm, come forth!"—And, at the word,
Down kneeled the Græme to Scotland's Lord.
"For thee, rash youth, no suppliant sues,
From thee may Vengeance claim her dues,
Who, nurtured underneath our smile,
Hast paid our care by treacherous wile,
And sought, amid thy faithful clan,
A refuge for an outlawed man,
Dishonouring thus thy loyal name;—
Fetters and warder for the Græme!—"
His chain of gold the King unstrung,
The links o'er Malcolm's neck he flung,
Then gently drew the glittering band,
And laid the clasp on Ellen's hand.

NOTES TO THE LADY OF THE LAKE.

CANTO FIRST.

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

2. ***Monan's rill.*** — This stream is not entered in any map or gazetteer that we have seen The subsequent course of the stag, however, indicates the neighbourhood of St. Fillans as its starting-place. And here there are several rivulets or "burns" between the *Monadh môr Chille* (Great Hill of Chille) and the *Monadh á Phruit mhoir* (Great Peat Hill). *Monadh* is Gaelic for hill; plural *Monann*, a group of hills. *Monan's rill* is therefore probably only a euphonious name for a mountain stream, and might well apply to one of those flowing into the Earn near St. Fillans.

3. *Glenartney.*—A glen or valley in Perthshire, watered by the Artney or Ruchill stream, which rises midway between Benvoirlich and Uam-Var.

4. *Benvoirlich.* — A mountain, 3180 feet high, on the southern side of Loch Earn. *Ben* is the Gaelic for mountain—as in Ben-Lomond, Ben-Venue, &c.; Welsh, *pen.*

5. *Brave.* — Grand or splendid, without reference to courage. [Fr. *brave*, Sc. *braw*, Ger. *brav*, handsome.] —— *Copse.* — Coppice, underwood for *cutting.* [O. Fr. *copiez*, newly-cut wood; Fr. *couper*, to cut; Gr. κόπτω, I cut.]

6. *Uam-Var.*—A mountain to the north-east of Callander, and the highest point in the "Braes of Doune."

7. *The opening pack.* — The hounds spreading out in beginning the chase.

8. *Many a mingled sound.*—In the modern idiom the article always follows the adjectives *many*, *what*, and *such*; and adjectives qualified by *so*, *how*, *as*, and *too.* In O. E. the same construction is found; but Shakespeare has "*a many* merry men" (*As You Like It*, Act i., Scene 1, line 119), and "*a many* thousand warlike French" (*King John*, Act iv., Scene 2, line 199). In these instances it is equivalent to "a great number (of);" and here *many* may correctly be considered a noun, as it is in the phrase "a great *many.*" Trench, following Horne Tooke, explains the *a* after *many* to be a relic of the preposition *of.* But it is simpler to consider *many* as a multiple of the quantity following, equivalent to *many times*; thus, "many a sound" =many times a sound.

9. *Cambus-more.* — The Great Cambus. Cambus-more is situated on the Keltie Water, a few miles to the south-east of Callander.

10. *Benledi.* —A mountain on the north side of Loch Vennachar. The name means "the hill of God."

11. *Bochastle.* —A *haugh* or plain between the stream that flows out of Loch Vennachar and the Teith.

12. *Brig of Turk.*—A small village, taking its name from the bridge on the Glenfinlas Water, at the east end of Loch Achray.

13. *Of black Saint Hubert's breed.*—Black hounds of the breed preserved by the abbots of Saint Hubert, the patron saint of hunting.

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

15. *That mountain high.* — Ben-an, or Ben-a'an, to the north-west of Loch Achray, the "lone lake" of the passage.

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

17. *Soon lost to hound and hunter's ken.*—Attribute to "quarry."

18. *Trosach's* — literally "the bristled territory"—is the Gaelic name applied to the district between Lochs Achray and Katrine.

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

20. *His labours o'er.* — An absolute phrase — "his labours *being* over." *Labours* is in the nominative case absolute.

21. *To rise no more.*—A phrase attributive to *limbs.* They were "limbs *which were* to rise no more."

22. *Woe worth the chase.*—Woe *be to* the chase. *Worth* is imperative of O. E. *wurth*, *worthe*, to be, become. [A.-S. *weorthan*, Ger. *werden.*] *Chase* and *day* are datives. Compare "Woe is *me*" (*Hamlet*, Act iii., Scene 1, line 168).

23. *Hied his way.*—*Hie* is an intransitive verb, meaning to hasten [A.-S. *higan*]; *way* is therefore a redundant object. *Hie* is, however, used with a personal and reflexive object — "Hie *thee* hither" (*Macbeth*, Act i., Scene 5, line 26). In "Hie *you* to horse" (*Macbeth*, Act iii., Scene 1, line 34), "you" may be either nominative or objective.

24. *Their level way.* — Towards sunset the rays of the sun become more and more nearly *horizontal.* In this passage, *day* or light is spoken of as a liquid; and the metaphor is appropriately maintained throughout, in the words *waves*, *ebbing*, *rolled*, *bathed*, *floods.*

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

26. *Frequent.*—An adjective, qualifying *pine-tree* = "many a pine-tree." It may, however, also be taken as an adverb="at

frequent intervals." The object of *flung* is *boughs*.

27. *Athwart.* — On-thwart; *i.e.*, cross-wise. [A.-S. *on*, in, and *theor*, cross, perverse.]

28. *So wondrous wild.* — Construe: "The whole *was* so wondrous wild *that it* might seem the scenery of a fairy dream."

29. *To issue.* — An attribute to *pathway* — "no pathway *by which* he may issue."

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

31. *Loch Katrine.*—The lake referred to in the title of the poem. It disputes with Loch Lomond—which it excels in romantic interest—the title of "The Queen of Scottish Lakes." It is situated in the southwest of Perthshire. Scott connected the name with *catterine*, a Highland robber; the whole district having been a famous and almost inaccessible retreat of cattle-reavers. Other authorities, however, interpret the word as "the lake of the battle."

32. *Bright.* — An adverb, for *brightly*. In O. E. many adverbs were formed from adjectives by the suffix *-é* (representative of the dative, expressing manner). When the suffix was lost, the adverbs came to have the appearance of adjectives. Hence many adjectives are now used as adverbs, though they have not gone through this process. Consult Ernest Adams's *English Language*, sections 396, 503, 636.

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

34. *Benvenue.* — The mountain which overlooks the Trosachs and Loch Katrine on its southern side.

35. *Wildering.* — Perplexing, from the confusion; bewildering. [Ger. *wildren*, *verwildren*, to grow *wild*.]

36. *Ben-an* is on the north side of Loch Katrine, opposite Benvenue. See *supra*, note 14.

37. *Were here.* — Conditional mood = "would be here;" indicating possibility, and implying the contrary fact—"it is not, but it might be."

38. *Beshrew.* — Curse. [*Be*, and O. E. *shrew*, wicked.]

39. *Give.*—Afford or yield.

40. *Some mossy bank my couch must be.*—Compare—

"The heath this night must be my bed,
The bracken curtain for my head."
Canto III., Stanza 23.

41. *To meet with Highland plunderers here*, &c.—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. It was considered not only lawful, but honourable, for hostile tribes to plunder one another. *To meet* is the nominative, or subject, to *were worse*, which is in the conditional mood = "would be worse." The supposition is implied in the subject *to meet:* "It *would be* worse than loss of steed or deer (is bad), *if I were to meet* with Highland plunderers here."

42. *Fall the worst.*—Subjunctive mood; concessive or conditional—"*if*, or *though*, the worst should *be*fall." The apodosis is implied in the next line: "Ere now this falchion has been tried;" therefore *I need not fear.*

43. *A damsel guider of its way.* — An absolute phrase—"a damsel *being* guider of its way."

44. *This silver strand.* — The beach of Loch Katrine in this bay is now called "The Silver Strand."

45. *Would swing.* — Conditional mood. The subjunctive is implied in the attribute *startled:* "So the swan would swing forth, if it were startled."

46. *Wont.*—Are accustomed. See *Marmion*, Canto II., Note 33.

47. *A while.* The objective of time. *While* is properly a noun. [A.-S. *hwil*,

time.] Measure of time, space, or quantity is expressed by a noun in the objective, without a preposition. See Note 1.

48. *Wildered.*—Perplexed, bewildered. This is the passive participle, and shows that Scott used the verb transitively. See Dalgleish's *English Grammar*, § 155, *a.*

49. *A couch was pulled.*—The materials for the couch, which consisted of heather and bracken, were *pulled.*

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

51. *Fair.*—An adjective used as a noun in the vocative or nominative of address. When the adjective is so used, it is generally accompanied by the definite article—*the fair, the good, the rich, the poor.* The adjective and article so used generally name either a class (*the poor* = poor people) or an abstract quality (*the good* = goodness). But Cowper (*Task*, Book I., line 7) uses "the fair" for an individual—

"For the *fair* commands the song."

There is, therefore, a double peculiarity in the text: the adjective without the article names an individual.

52. *A fay.*—A fairy. [Fr. *fée*, Lat. *fatum*, fate.]

53. *Sufficed.*—Could suffice, or be equal to the task.

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

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

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

57. *Wot.*—Knew. But *wot* is properly the present tense of *to wit*, to know: the past is *wist.*

58. *Down.*—Hill. [A.-S. *dun.*] Hence the *Downs*, North and South—ridges in the south of England.

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

60. *Slowly enlarged.*—An elliptical concessive clause—"*though* slowly enlarged."

61. *Were.*—Conditional mood. The subjunctive is implied in *could rage*—"The heart were wild *if* it could rage."

62. *But she must bear.*—Negative clause of condition—"without her bearing," or "*if* she do *not* bear."

63. *My midnight orisons said o'er.*—An absolute phrase—"*When* my midnight orisons *are* said over." *Orison* is a prayer. [Fr. *oraison*, Lat. *oro*, I speak, beg, pray.]

CANTO SECOND.

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

2. *Roused.*—Past tense; while *glides*, in the dependent clause of time, is present tense. See *Marmion*, Canto II., Note 18; Canto IV., Note 14.——*A minstrel grey.*—The Highland chieftains retained, to a late period, a bard or minstrel in their service, as a family officer. He had frequently intrusted to him the education of the children of his chief. He celebrated in verse the triumphs of the clan, and sang these effusions for the entertainment of the lord and his guests. Originally these bards held a position of honour, and were much respected; but as their calling was generally exercised over their cups, and often in low company, the office gradually fell into disrepute.

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

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

5. *Brianchoil.*—A point on the southern side of the lake.

6. *To the windward as they cast.*—As

they brought round the side of the boat to the wind.

7. *Brave.*—Grand, showy. See Canto I., Note 5.

8. *Mark.*—Like *see* in the preceding line, is the infinitive, complement to *might*.

9. *Chanters.*—The *chanter* is "the flute-like tube of the bagpipe on which the tune is played" (Jamieson); but the *chanters* is the name sometimes applied to the pipes collectively, and hence to the whole instrument.

10. *Pibroch.* — Literally, *pipe-music* [Gael. *piobaireachd*], but specially a Highland martial air in which varying moods and passions are expressed. "Some of these pibrochs," says Dr. Beattie, "being intended to represent a battle, begin with a grave motion resembling a march; then gradually quicken into the onset; run off with noisy confusion and turbulent rapidity to imitate the conflict and pursuit; then swell into a few flourishes of triumphant joy; and perhaps close with the wild and slow wailings of a funeral procession." The transitions of feeling are vividly described in the succeeding verses.

11. *Gathering.*—The war-cry or gathering-word of the clan; the *slogan*.

12. *Mimic din.*—The *din* of battle imitated by the bagpipe. *Din, pause, charge, shout, retreat,* and *bursts,* are nominatives in apposition with *all*—"all were there."——*Ward.*—Parry. The same word as *guard,* which is a Norman-French modification of the root. Such double forms are common—the one taken direct from Anglo-Saxon, the other through the medium of French: *e.g.*—

Ward.....	A.-S. *weard.*
Guard.....	Fr. *garde.*
Wise (manner).....	A.-S. *wise.*
Guise.....	Fr. *guise.*
Wage.....	A.-S. *wed.*
Gage.....	Fr. *gage.*

Legal and *loyal, regal* and *royal*—the first forms coming from Latin direct, the second through the medium of French—present a similar phenomenon.

13. *With measured sweep the burden bore.*—Made his singing and his rowing keep time, so that the strokes of the oar marked the beats in the rhythm of the song. Compare—

"Faintly as tolls the evening chime,
Our *voices* keep tune, and our *oars* keep time."—MOORE.

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

"This sompnour *bar* to him a stiff *burdoun.*"
Prol. Canterbury Tales, line 673.

"*B*urden *b*ore" is an example of alliteration.

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

"*All hail,* Macbeth! *hail* to thee, thane of Glamis."
Macbeth, Act i., Scene 3, line 48.

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

15. *Shelter and grace.*—Nominatives in apposition with *Tree.*——*Our line* is our clan or family.

16. *Bourgeon.*—To bud. [Fr. *bourgeon,* a shoot or bud.]

17. *Agen.*—Old spelling of *again.* [A.-S. *ongean,* agen.]

18. *Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu.*—Black Roderick, son of Alpine, or of the family of Alpine. *Dhu* in Gaelic is *black,* and *Vich* is *son of.*

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

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

"The monarch owes
His firm stability to what he seems—
More fixed below, the more disturbed above."
Task, Book I., line 382.

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

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

22. *Echo.* — Imperative, third person plural.

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

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

25. *The Douglas.* — This Douglas, afterwards particularized as Lord James Douglas of Bothwell, is a fictitious character; but he has his prototype in Archibald Douglas of Kilspindie, uncle of the Earl of Angus, who was banished by James V. on his recovering his personal freedom and assuming the government in 1528. (See line 271.) Kilspindie, like the Douglas of the poem, had been James's instructor in manly exercises in his youth. This, however, did not save him from being cruelly spurned by James on his return from exile.

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

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

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

29. *Aught.* — The objective or accusative of reference—"in any respect."

30. *Then cast.* — Supply *he* as nominative to *cast*.

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

32. *The Bleeding Heart.*—The cognizance of the Douglas family.

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

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

35. *Enow.*—Enough. [Sc. *eneuch*.]

36. *The Links of Forth.*—The vale of the Forth below Stirling. *Links* means the windings of a river. [Ger. *lenken*, to bend or wind.]

37. *There are who.*—There are persons who. Latin, "Sunt qui."

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

39. *Astound.*—For *astounded*.

40. *Not that.*—That is not.

41. *Not Ellen more.*—Ellen is not more.

42. *By hasty wrath.*—Which are due to hasty wrath.

CANTO THIRD.

1. *Impatient blade.*—By a kind of personification, the quality of impatience, which belongs to the owner of the *blade*, is attributed to the *blade* itself.

2. *The ritual.*—The rite or ceremony of consecrating the *Fiery Cross*. "When a chieftain designed to summon his clan, upon any sudden or important emergency, he slew a goat, and making a cross of any light wood, seared its extremities in the fire, and extinguished them in the blood of the animal. This was called the *Fiery Cross*, also *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 alle-

giance to the chief.... During the civil war of 1745–6, the *Fiery Cross* often made its circuit; and upon one occasion it passed through the whole district of Breadalbane, a tract of thirty-two miles, in three hours." —*S.*

3. *Rowan.* — The *rowan-tree* is the mountain ash; called also *roan-tree*, and in Sc. *roun-tree.*

4. *Inch-Cailliach.*—The Isle of Nuns, or of Old Women, is a beautiful island opposite Balmaha, on the south-east of Loch Lomond.

5. *Of sepulchral yew.*—Made of sepulchral yew; a true genitive—the case which indicates the source whence something proceeds or is taken. The yew is called *sepulchral* from its sombre character, which has led to its use in grave-yards.

6. *Shall doom him wrath and woe.*—*Doom*, as a transitive verb, has a personal object, naming the person condemned. *Wrath and woe* must therefore be considered datives: "Shall *condemn* him *to* wrath and woe."

7. *Strook.*—Struck. See *Marmion*, Canto III., Note 20.

8. *Fell.*—A wild and rocky hill. See *Lay of the Last Minstrel*, Canto I., Note 12.

9. *The while.*—For *while;* during the time that. This use of the phrase *the while* as a conjunction is peculiar. Shakespeare uses it frequently as an adverb: "God help *the while*" (*I. Henry IV.*).

"I'll bear your logs *the while.*"

Tempest, Act iii., Scene 1, line 24.

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

"To do offence and *scath* in Christendom."

King John, Act ii., Scene 1, line 75.

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

10. *Flits.* — Used here transitively, in the sense of passes (the Cross) quickly. Construe: "When this Cross flits Vich-Alpine's summons to his clan from man to man."

11. *Burst be the ear.*—Imperative, 3rd person singular.

12. *No echo gave agen.*—The Amen was muttered so low in the awful earnestness that its echo could not be heard.

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

14. *Where they launched the boat.*—At the place at which they launched the boat.

15. *The huts and hamlets rise.*—Metonymy: the place for the inhabitants.

16. *Achray.* — A small loch between Lochs Katrine and Vennachar.

17. *Duncraggan.* — A farm or hamlet between Achray and Vennachar.

18. *Thy labour done.* — An absolute phrase.

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

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

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

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

21. *Speed thee forth.*—*Thee* is here an ethical dative. It means, Let it be your part to speed or hasten forth.

22. *Strath-Ire.*—The valley above Loch Lubnaig, watered by the Teith in its upper reaches.

23. *The chapel of Saint Bride.*—A wooded knoll, a short way below Loch Lubnaig, is still pointed out as the site of this chapel.

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

25. *Her troth Tombea's Mary gave.*—*Troth-giving*, which properly applies to *betrothal* or contract in promise of mar-

riage, here applies to the marriage ceremony itself. *Troth-plight* in Sc. is the act of pledging faith between lovers by exchanging tokens or presents. [A.-S. *treowth*, truth; *treowian*, to trust.] *Tombea*, or Birkhill, is a farm at the head of the Pass of Leny.

26. *The recent flood.*—The flood through which he had recently passed.

27. *Her Chieftain's trust.*—The trust which the Chieftain committed to the clan—namely, to preserve its honour.

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

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

30. *Coil.*—Bustle, stir. In this sense Shakespeare uses the word: "Here's such a *coil*" (*Romeo and Juliet*, Act ii., Scene 5, line 67.) In "When we have shuffled off this mortal *coil*" (*Hamlet*, Act iii., Scene 1), the same meaning is also the most prominent; but there is also a reference in *shuffled off* to the primary meaning of the word—convolution—like the tightening of a rope, or the *coil* of a serpent. [Lat. *colligere*, to gather together.]

31. *Balvaig.*—The nominative of address, or vocative. See Note 29.

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

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

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

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

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

37. *Loch Con.*—A small lake, in the midst of romantic scenery, two miles south of Loch Katrine. It forms the head-waters of the River Forth.

38. *Wot.*—Know. The past tense is *wist;* infinitive, *to wit.*

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

CANTO FOURTH.

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

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

2. *Witness.*—The 3rd person of the imperative: "Let every quaking limb, &c., bear witness that I have borne this for my Chieftain."

3. *Save he.*—The modern idiom is *save him*, *save* being regarded as a preposition; but it was originally the participle of an absolute phrase, and in this construction it is used by Shakespeare (*Julius Cæsar*, Act v., Scene 5, line 69):

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

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

4. *He saw.*—The object of this verb is the same as that of *avouch*—namely, "the *shapes* that sought my fearful couch."

5. *Which spills,* &c.—The correlative of *which* is *party* in the next line. *Foremost,* though an attribute of *life,* really belongs to *spills:* Whichever party *first* spills blood, that party conquers. This prophecy the hermit derived from the *Taghairm,* one of the modes by which the Highlanders inquired into futurity. "A person was wrapped up in the skin of a newly-slain bullock, and deposited in some strange, wild, and unusual situation, where the scenery around him suggested nothing but objects of horror. In this situation, he revolved in his mind the question proposed; and whatever was impressed upon him by his exalted imagination passed for the inspiration of the disembodied spirits who haunt these desolate recesses."—*S.* But the fate of a battle was often anticipated, in the imagination of the combatants, by observing which party first shed blood. "It is said that the Highlanders under Montrose were so deeply imbued with this notion, that on the morning of the Battle of Tippermoor they murdered a defenceless herdsman, whom they found in the fields, merely to secure an advantage of so much consequence to their party."—*S.*

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

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

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

9. *I love to hear of worthy foes.*—Compare Canto V., line 79:

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

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

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

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

11. *Fast by.*—Close to. Compare:

"Siloa's brook, that flowed
Fast by the oracle of God."

MILTON, *Par. Lost,* I., 11.

[A.-S. *faest,* firm, constant.]

12. *Rife.*—Plentiful. Qualifies *reports.*

13. *Else.*—A clause of condition expressed in a single word: "if that is not the case."—— *Cambus-kenneth's fane.*—The ancient Abbey of Cambus-kenneth, now a ruin, stands on a peninsula of the "Links of Forth," about a mile east of Stirling. It was founded by David I. in 1147.

14. *What I had done, had,* &c.—*Had done* is the principal clause, or apodosis, in the conditional mood: "what I *should have* done." *Had been* is the subordinate clause, or protasis, in the subjunctive mood: "*if* Douglas' daughter had been his son." These two moods in combination imply that the fact is contrary to the supposition.

15. *Bourne.*—Streamlet. [Sc. *burn,* a brook; Ger. *brennen,* a spring.]

16. *Scathe.*—Harm, danger. See Note 9, Canto III.

17. *Kern.*—A Highland soldier. Properly *kerne,* an Irish foot soldier armed with a sword and shield. Shakespeare uses the word as a term of contempt:

"I cannot strike at wretched *kernes.*"

Macbeth, Act v., Scene 7, line 17.

18. *Bochastle.*—See Canto I., Note 11.

19. *As some thought had crossed his brain.*—Elliptical, for "As *he would have done if* some thought had crossed his brain."

20. *They fared.*—They went. [A.-S. *faran;* Ger. *fahren,* to go.]

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

22. *Seemed nought to mark, yet all to spy.* —She seemed to see everything without intelligently recognizing anything.

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

24. *Blanche of Devan.*—The Devan, or Devon, is a stream which, rising in the Ochils, flows into the Forth at Cambus, a few miles below Stirling.

25. *Kindred ambush.* — Explained by "ambushed kin," three lines below.

26. *Them couldst thou reach.*—A condition, or protasis, with the conclusion implied: "*If* thou couldst reach them, *thou* wert safe."

27. *Darkling.*—In the dark. This adverb is used by Shakespeare in the same sense:

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

Lear, Act i., Scene 4, line 237.

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

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

29. *Not the summer solstice, there.*—The meaning is that the greatest heat of summer had no effect in these cold regions. The solstice is that point in the ecliptic, or sun's apparent course, at which he is farthest from the Equator, and appears *to stand still*. [Lat. *sol*, and *sto*.] The *summer solstice* is reached on the 21st June; the *winter solstice* on the 22nd December—the dates of the longest and shortest days respectively. The intervening points, where the ecliptic cuts the equinoctial, are the *spring* and *autumnal equinoxes* [Lat. *æqus*, and *nox*], reached respectively on 20th March and 23d September. Then day and night are equal all over the world.

30. *The wold.*—The forest, the *weald*. [A.-S. *weald*; L. Ger. *wold, woold*; Ger. *wald*; E. *weald* and *wood*.]

31. *Tangled and steep.*—Refer to *ways*.

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

33. *I dare! to him.*—That is, "I dare *call myself a foe* to him and all the band *whom* he brings," &c.

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

35. *Come Roderick Dhu.* — The imperative, 3rd person, expressing a wish: "Let them come, and let me rest, and I write," &c. *Write* is the present used for the future, to indicate the speaker's confidence in the result.

36. *Myself will guide thee.*—For *I myself*. See *Marmion*, Canto II., Note 10.

37. *Coilantogle's ford.*—A ford near the western extremity of Loch Vennachar, across the stream which flows from that lake. It is now superseded by a foot-bridge.

38. *Wreath.* — Properly a garland or chaplet. [A.-S. *writhan*, to twist.] In Sc. it is applied to a snow-drift (under the various forms *wreathe, wrede, wride*, and *ree*), because the wind *whirls* the snow in blowing it into a heap. See Canto VI., Note 34. In the text, it is applied to a heap of heather.

CANTO FIFTH.

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

"A Cristofer on his brest of silver *schene*."

CHAUCER, *Prol. Cant. Tales*, line 115.

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

2. *By.*—To be connected with *muttered*, in the sense of *through* or over.

3. *As short and rude.*—Supply "as their matins."

4. *That o'er.* — An absolute phrase: "that being over."

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

6. *The guide led slowly.*—After "*so* toil-

some," we must supply "*that* the guide led slowly."

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

8. *Shingles.*—Stones and rocks embedded in the hill side. [Norw. *singl*, gravel; *singla*, to jingle: or Ger. *schindel;* Lat. *scindula*, from *scindo*, I cut.

9. *Bracken.*—The female fern, which in the Highlands of Scotland grows to the height of three or four feet, in masses covering valleys or hill-sides, and affords excellent cover for game. The *brackens* are cut and dried in the autumn, and are highly valued as bedding for cattle.

"Far dearer to me yon lone glen o' green *breckan.*"—*Burns.*

See Norman's song:

"The heath this night must be my bed,
The *bracken* curtain for my head."
Canto III., Stanza 23.

[Sc. *brachen*, *braiken*, and *breckan;* Sw. *stotbraakin.*]

10. *Like the loose crags.* — Adverbial phrase of manner to "they hung," six lines below.

11. *The Chief.*—A dative: "Returned his haughty stare *to* the Chief."

12. *Come one, come all!*— Adverbial clauses of concession to *shall fly:* "though one, though all come;" or taken alternatively, "whether one come, or all come." *Come* is subjunctive mood.

13. *Foemen worthy of their steel.* — Compare Canto IV., Note 9.

14. *Copses.* — See Canto I., Note 5. [Compare *shingles* (Note 8), from Lat. *scindo.*]

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

"Yet cheerfully thou *glinted* forth."
BURNS, *To a Mountain Daisy.*

"The risin' sun, owre Galston muirs,
Wi' glorious light was *glintin.*"—BURNS.

[Sc. *glent*, O. E. *glissen*, Ger. *gläuzen*, to glitter, and *gleissen*, to shine; same root as *glass*, *glisten*, *glitter*, *glance.*]——*Last.*—Means last preceding, not latest or final; for "the next" follows it.

16. *Jack.*—A spear or pike. Observe that *jack* and *pike* are applied both to a spear-head and to a voracious fish with a pointed snout.

17. *Delusion. . . dreadful dream.*—Triple alliteration.

18. *Lay.*—Depended, or was at stake.

19. *Move we on.*—Imperative, 1st person plural, for "let us move on."

20. *Deeming this path you might pursue.*—Attributive to "you" in the preceding line; but it explains the "reed" there referred to, and has the force of an adverbial of cause: "I only meant to show that you leant upon a reed, when you thought that you might pursue this path without a pass from Roderick Dhu."

21. *Three mighty lakes.*—Lochs Katrine, Achray, and Vennachar.

22. *Where Rome, &c.*—"Upon a small eminence, called the *Dun* (Hill) of Bochastle, and, indeed, on the plain itself, are some intrenchments which have been thought Roman." — *S.* See Canto I., Note 11.

23. *Threw down his target and his plaid.*—A round target (or targe) of light wood, covered with strong leather, and studded with brass or iron, was a necessary part of a Highlander's equipment.

24. *Vantageless.*—Without *vantage;* an abbreviated form of *advantage.*

25. *Who spills, &c.* — See Canto IV., Note 5.

26. *If thou wilt. . . . the King shall.*—Observe the correct use of *wilt* and *shall.* *Wilt* indicates that the event lies within the power of its subject (Roderick); *shall*, that the event lies beyond the power of the speaker.

27. *Kern.*—See Canto IV., Note 17.——*Ye.* — As *ye* is the proper nominative plural, and *you* objective, it seems more correct, in using the plural instead of the singular *thou*, to use *ye* and not *you.* But the usage in this particular appears not to have been regulated by strict rule. It seems to be due to the fact that *ye* is a lighter and less emphatic form than *you.* The former, indeed, may be nothing but a rapid pronunciation or slurring of the latter: *you* = *y'* = *ye.* Comp.:

"*Ye* shall, my lad."
Richard III., Act iv., Scene 2, line 86.

And see *Abbot's Shakespearian Grammar*, § 236.

28. *Fear not, doubt not.* — A rather cynical allusion to Roderick's courteous speech in lines 103, 104.

29. *The lea.*—Turf, field, pasture-land. [A.-S. *leag*, unploughed land.] Used also as a proper name; compare:

"And warn the Currors o' the *Lea*."
Jamie Telfer, a Border Ballad.

30. *Coil.*—See Canto III., Note 31.

31. *The braid.*—The lock of Blanche of Devan's hair, intertwined with that of her husband. See Canto IV., line 285.

32. *Weed.*—Clothing. See Canto IV., Note 21.

33. *Boune.* — Ready. See Canto IV., Note 10.

34. *'Tis James of Douglas.* — When Douglas of Kilspindie returned from exile, to throw himself on the clemency of his former pupil King James, he was recognized in a similar way by the King. "As James returned from hunting in the park at Stirling, he saw a person at a distance, and turning to his nobles, exclaimed, 'Yonder is my Gray-steil, Archibald of Kilspindie.'"

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

36. *Fatal mound.*—An eminence on the north-east of the Castle, where state criminals were executed, called the "Heading-hill."

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

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

39. *I'll....play my prize.*—I'll exercise my skill in competing for the prize.

40. *If.*—Whether.

41. *His boyish wonder.*—When the King was a boy, the Douglas had been his tutor in manly sports, and had earned his admiration by his skill.

42. *Stout Earl William.* — See *supra*, Note 34.

CANTO SIXTH.

1. *Caitiff.*—An unfortunate or wretched man; not in this case in its opprobrious sense of a despicable fellow. [O. E. *caytif*, wretched; Fr. *chêtif;* It. *cattivo;* Lat. *captivus*, from *capio*, I take; E. *captive.*]

2. *Battled.*—Embattled, furnished with battlements.

3. *The kind nurse of men.*—Sleep. Compare:

"Sleep! O gentle sleep!
Nature's soft *nurse.*"
II. Henry IV., Act iii., Scene 1, line 5.

4. *Tullibardine's house.*—The family of Murray. The earliest title of the ducal house of Atholl was Baron Murray of Tullibardine. Tullibardine Castle is near Auchterarder in Perthshire.

5. *Ill suited to the garb and scene.*—In form, an attribute to *face and mien*, but logically an adverbial of cause to *might bear;* = *being* ill suited—*i.e., because it was* ill suited.

6. *Errant.*—Notorious, infamous. [A.-S. *arg*, wicked. Others say from Lat. *errans*, wandering, therefore loose.]—*Damosel.*—A maiden. [O. Fr. *damoisel;* Fr. *demoiselle;* dim. of *dame*, the mistress of a house; Lat. *domus.*]

7. *In semblance mean obscurely veiled* — This, like *to worth unknown*, in the preceding line, refers to the *Lady.*

8. *Please you....repose you.*—May it please you to repose yourself. *Please* is imperative; *repose* is infinitive.

9. *I marshal you the way.*—A noun clause, object of *permit. You* is a "dative of advantage." "Permit that I marshal the way for you."

10. *Guerdon.*—Reward—*i.e., re-guerdon.* See Canto II., Note 12. [O. Fr. *guerredon;* A.-S. *widherlean.*]

11. *Barret-cap.*—Helmet or battle-cap. [Sc. *barrat*, contention; Ice. *barrat*, battle.]

12. *My lady safe.*—An absolute phrase: "My lady being safe."

13. *But I loved.*—Clause of negative condition = "*if* I loved *not.*" The apodosis or conclusion is, *I had not*, for "I would not have." *But* (= be-out), whether a relative pronoun or a conjunction, is always negative, and has a corresponding negative in the apodosis. "*Leave out* that I loved to chase the deer, and I should *not* have been an outcast here." The adverb *but*, only, is an abbreviation of *not-but* = *not* or *nothing but:* There are *but* few = There are not but

few—*i.e.*, leave out that there are few, and there are none.

14. *Unhasp.*—Unclasp or undo. [*Un-*, and A.-S. *haeps*, a hasp or buckle.]

15. *The Leech.*—The physician or healer. [A.-S. *laece*, a physician, from *lac*, *laec*, a gift; E. *leech*, the blood-sucking worm used in remedies.]

16. *The Chief he sought.*—That he sought the chieftain. *Chief* is objective, governed by *sought*.

17. *Prore.*—Prow. [Lat. *prora*, from *pro* before.]

18. *Her sides.*—A continuation of the simile of the ship.

19. *Some might.*—Some might flee.

20. *For thy clan.*—As regards, or with reference to, thy clan.

21. *Glanced.*—Participle, attribute to *picture*.

22. *Shall vanish . . . . for the fair field.*—Shall give place to the fair field. "I shall fancy myself in the field of battle, and die fighting."

23. *The strain was sung.*—Noun clause, in apposition with *it* in *'twas*. "It was, or it happened, *that* the strain was sung from a turret," &c. The "imprisoned huntsman" is Malcolm Græme.

24. *I were.*—Conditional mood, implying that he *is not;* the condition is implied—If that were possible.

25. *An almost orphan.*—Because she is uncertain of her father's fate. Observe the use of *almost* as an attribute to *orphan*, which is here used as an adjective.

26. *I can but be thy guide.*—I can be *nothing except* thy guide. See *supra*, Note 13.

27. *At morning prime.*—At earliest morning. But *prime* is here a noun, and *morning* an adjective. Compare "Aboute *prime*" (CHAUCER, *Knightes Tale*, line 1331).

28. *As to a brother's arm.*—Adverbial clause of manner to *clung:* "she clung as *she would cling* to a brother's arm."

29. *As when.*—"As *it glows* when." *It glows*, here, like *it was brilliant*, and *it glowed*, above, is the impersonal (more correctly *unipersonal*) construction; and *it* is an indefinite pronoun, referring not to any special subject, but to the action of the verb: *it glowed*=glowing went on.

30. *By . . . . stayed.*—Beside . . . . remained. Observe that *stayed* is here intransitive, to *remain:* in line 242 it is transitive, to *make to stand*, to support.

31. *Port.*—Bearing, carriage.

32. *Might.*—Supply *which* as subject of *might*.

33. *Sheen.*—An adjective. See Canto V., Note 1.

34. *Wreath of snow.*—Snow-drift. See Canto IV., Note 38.

35. *The while.*—See Canto I., Note 47.

36. *Fair.*—See Canto I., Note 51.

37. *The vulgar crowd.*—Refers to the tumult at the burgher sports at Stirling, described in Canto V., when the people rallied round Douglas and demanded his release.

38. *The friend and bulwark.*—The secondary complement, or factitive object of *own*, in apposition with the primary object, *Bothwell's Lord*.

39. *To speed.*—To success, to a successful issue.

40. *When disguised I stray.*—King James V. was fond of roaming in disguise amongst the peasantry, and in the least frequented parts of the country; partly to learn the actual condition of his people in their homes, and to "right the injured cause;" partly to gratify his love of adventure. From his familiar, easy manners, his people gave him the title—of which he was justly proud—"The King of the Commons." But the name which he generally assumed in these wanderings was the *Gude-man* (or "farmer") *of Ballangiech*. Scott says the two excellent comic songs, entitled "The Gaberlunzie Man" and "We'll gae nae mair a rovin'," are said to have been founded on the success of King James's adventures when travelling in the disguise of a beggar. "The latter," Scott adds, "is perhaps the best comic ballad in any language."

41. *The name of Snowdoun.*—"William of Worcester, who wrote about the middle of the fifteenth century, calls Stirling Castle Snowdoun. Sir David Lindesay bestows the same epithet upon it."—*S.*

42. *Glaive.*—Sword. See Canto IV., Note 7.

43. *Full.*—Very. See *Marmion*, Canto III., Note 10.

44. *Lightening.*—Relieving, or making lighter.

45. *Grace.*—Pardon; generally attributed to him who grants, not, as here, to him who receives it. *The grace of Roderick Dhu* means "the grace, or pardon, of the King for Roderick Dhu."

THE LORD OF THE ISLES.

INTRODUCTION.

"THE LORD OF THE ISLES" may be considered Scott's farewell to poetry. To use his own figure, he had already surrendered the champion's belt to Byron; and before writing this poem he had begun to exercise his powers in prose fiction—the field in which his greatest triumphs were won. The composition of this poem and that of *Waverley* were carried on at the same time. It is not wonderful, then, that the attractions of his new love should have made him cold and formal in his attentions to the old one. Indeed the poem is in great measure mere task-work, partly forced upon him by pecuniary considerations, partly undertaken to cover the mystery of his advance as a novelist. When he had a long poem to show as his year's work, people were less likely to suspect him of the authorship of one elaborate novel (*Waverley*), published a few months before, and of another (*Guy Mannering*), published five weeks after it.

The Lord of the Isles was published early in 1815. It was the least successful of his poems. A sale of only fifteen thousand copies was accepted as an adverse verdict. On hearing this, Scott remarked to Ballantyne: "Since one line has failed, we must just stick to something else."

Though the poem abounds in marks of haste and slovenliness, and is, as a whole, much inferior to Scott's first three poems, some of the descriptive passages—particularly those relating to the Coolin Mountains and Lake Coriskin—are worthy of the author of *The Lady of the Lake;* and the battle scene in the last Canto, with the incidents of the deaths of De Boune and De Argentine, is but little inferior to the corresponding scene in *Marmion.* Scott gathered the materials for the descriptive passages chiefly during a six weeks' tour on the west coast with the Lighthouse Commissioners. For the historical details, he acknowledges his obligations to Lord Hailes's "Annals of Scotland," and to Barbour's "Metrical History of Robert Bruce." To the latter his indebtedness, in particular passages, is very considerable.

CHARACTERS OF THE POEM.

EDITH, *the Maid of Lorn, betrothed to* RONALD of Somerled, *Lord of the Isles.*
MORAG, *Edith's foster-mother, or nurse.*
THE LORD OF LORN, *Edith's brother.*
OWEN ERRAUGHT, *Seneschal of Artornish.*
FERRAND, *a Minstrel.*
ROBERT BRUCE, *King of Scotland.*
EDWARD BRUCE, *his brother.*
ISABEL BRUCE, *his sister.*
DE ARGENTINE, *an English Noble.*
TORQUIL of Dunvegan.
Abbot.
ALLAN of Donagaile, *Ronald's Page.*
FATHER AUGUSTINE, *Abbot of Saint Bride's.*
LORD CLIFFORD, *the English Nobleman in possession of Carrick Castle.*
DOUGLAS, LENNOX, RANDOLPH, *Scottish Lords, followers of the Bruce.*
FITZ-LOUIS, *a Scottish Squire.*
SIR HENRY DE BOUNE, *an English Knight.*
EDWARD II., *King of England.*

SCENES: *The Western Coast of Scotland; the Island of Arran; the Coast of Ayrshire; the Field of Bannockburn, near Stirling.*

TIME: 1307–1314.

CANTO FIRST.

THE ARGUMENT.

EDITH, the Maid of Lorn, awaits in the Castle of Artornish the return of her betrothed lover, Ronald, Lord of the Isles. The company is assembled, and she is decked for the celebration of the nuptial rites. The Maid loves Ronald; but she is conscious that her love is coldly returned, and that on his part it is a union of policy, and not of heart. While adverse winds delay Ronald's fleet, they drive upon the coast below the Castle a solitary bark, whose crew is forced to seek the hospitable shelter of Artornish. It bears a royal freight—Robert the Bruce, Earl of Carrick, his brother Edward, and his sister Isabel. They claim the hospitality of the Castle as simple strangers, without revealing who they are: for the Lord of the Isles is the ally of the English King, whose representative, De Argentine, is then his guest; and the Bruce is outlawed and excommunicated for the murder of Comyn. They are admitted to the Castle, and to its festive hall, which has already been entered by Ronald and his followers.

"WAKE, Maid of Lorn!" the minstrels sung.
Thy rugged halls, Artornish! rung;[1]
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.[2]

"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!"[3]

Retired her maiden train among,[4]
Edith of Lorn received the song,
But tamed the minstrel's pride had been[5]
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.
But Morag, to whose fostering care
Proud Lorn had given his daughter fair,—
Grey Morag sate a space apart,
In Edith's eyes to read her heart.
Wistful a while she gazed—then pressed[6]
The maiden to her anxious breast

In finished loveliness—and led
To where a turret's airy head,
Slender and steep, and battled round,[7]
O'erlooked, dark Mull! thy mighty Sound,[8]
Where thwarting tides, with mingled roar,[9]
Part thy swarth hills from Morven's shore.[10]
" Daughter," she said, " these seas behold,
Round twice a hundred islands rolled;
Or mainland turn, where many a tower
Owns thy bold brother's feudal power;—
Think'st thou, amid this ample round,
A single brow but thine has frowned,
To sadden this auspicious morn,
That bids the daughter of high Lorn
Impledge her spousal faith to wed [11]
The heir of mighty Somerled![12]
Ronald, from many a hero sprung,
The fair, the valiant, and the young,
Lord of the Isles, whose lofty name
A thousand bards have given to fame!
From chieftain's tower to bondsman's cot,
Who hears the tale, and triumphs not?
Yet, empress of this joyful day,
Edith is sad while all are gay."

Proud Edith's soul came to her eye;
Resentment checked the struggling sigh:
" 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.
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!"—
" Hush, daughter, hush! thy doubts remove;
More nobly think of Ronald's love.
Thy Ronald comes, and while in speed
His galley mates the flying steed,[13]
He chides her sloth!"—Fair Edith sighed,
Blushed, sadly smiled, and thus replied:
" 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 viewed by fits the course she tries."—[14]

Sooth spoke the Maid. Amid the tide
The skiff she marked lay tossing sore,
And shifted oft her stooping side,
In weary tack from shore to shore.[15]
Yet, to their destined purpose true,
Undaunted toiled her hardy crew,
Nor looked where shelter lay,
Nor for Artornish Castle drew,
Nor steered for Aros-bay.[16]

Thus while they strove with wind and seas,
Borne onward by the willing breeze,
Lord Ronald's fleet swept by,
Streamered with silk, and tricked with gold,[17]
Manned with the noble and the bold
Of Island chivalry.
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.
And thou, Lord Ronald, sweep thou on,
With mirth, and pride, and minstrel tone!
But hadst thou known who sailed so nigh,
Far other glance were in thine eye![18]
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!
Yes, sweep they on!—But with that skiff[19]
Abides the minstrel tale,
Where there was dread of surge and cliff,
And toil that strained each sinew stiff,
And one sad maiden's wail.—[20]
All day with fruitless strife they toiled,[21]
With eve the ebbing currents boiled
More fierce from strait and lake;[22]
Rent was the sail, and strained the mast,
And many a leak was gaping fast,
And the pale steersman stood aghast,
And gave the conflict o'er.

[*They resolve to seek for the night the hospitality of Artornish Castle, trusting, despite the unfriendliness of its lord, to "the sacred name of guest."*]

Beneath the Castle's sheltering lee[23]
They stayed their course in quiet sea.
Hewn in the rock, a passage there
Sought the dark fortress, by a stair

So strait, so high, so steep,[24]
With peasant's staff one valiant hand
Might well the dizzy pass have manned,
'Gainst hundreds armed with spear and brand,
And plunged them in the deep.
His bugle then the helmsman wound;
Loud answered every echo round,
From turret, rock, and bay;
The postern's hinges crash and groan,
And soon the warder's cresset shone[25]
On those rude steps of slippery stone,
To light the upward way.
"Thrice welcome, holy sire!" he said;
"Full long the spousal train have stayed,
And, vexed at thy delay,
Feared lest, amid these wildering seas,[26]
The darksome night and freshening breeze
Had driven thy bark astray."

"Warder," the younger stranger said,
"Thine erring guess some mirth had made[27]
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 breathed upon by May.
And for our storm-tossed 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?"—
"Warriors—for other title none
For some brief space we list to own,[28]
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.[29]
Grant us the trivial boon we seek,
And we in other realms will speak
Fair of your courtesy;
Deny—and be your niggard Hold
Scorned by the noble and the bold,

Shunned by the pilgrim on the wold,[30]
And wanderer on the lea!"—[31]

"Bold stranger, no—'gainst claim like thine
No bolt revolves by hand of mine,
Though urged in tone that more expressed
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 great ally, England's Lord;
Or mail upon your shoulders borne,
To battle with the Lord of Lorn;
Or, outlawed, dwelt by greenwood tree
With the fierce Knight of Ellerslie;[32]
Or aided even the murderous strife,
When Comyn fell beneath the knife [33]
Of that fell homicide The Bruce,[34]
This night had been a term of truce.—
Ho, vassals! give these guests your care,
And show the narrow postern stair."—
To land these two bold brethren leapt
(The weary crew their vessel kept),[35]
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 leaned her head,
And down her long dark tresses shed,[36]
As the wild vine, in tendrils spread,
Droops from the mountain oak.
Him followed close that elder lord,
And in his hand a sheathèd sword,[37]
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.

The raised portcullis' arch they pass,[38]
The wicket with its bars of brass,
The entrance long and low,
Flanked 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 unbarred,
And all the passage free
To one low-browed and vaulted room,

Where squire and yeoman, page and groom,
Plied their loud revelry.
And "Rest ye here," the warder bade,
"Till to our lord your suit is said."
* * * *
But now appeared the Seneschal,
Commissioned 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.

CANTO SECOND.

THE ARGUMENT.

While they feast in the hall, the cunning of De Argentine, provoking the impetuosity of Edward Bruce, leads to the discovery that the elder stranger is the exiled Earl of Carrick. The retainers of Lorn draw their swords, and bloodshed seems unavoidable. But the Abbot who was to perform the nuptial ceremony arrives, and both parties appeal their quarrel to him. Called upon to curse the Bruce, he is overpowered by his penitence and his noble bearing, and pronounces a blessing instead of a curse. The Abbot refuses to perform the marriage ceremony, and withdraws to his boat. Edith escapes with him in disguise.

I.

With beakers' clang, with harpers' lay,
With all that olden time deemed gay,
The Island Chieftain feasted high;
But there was in his troubled eye
A gloomy fire, and on his brow—
Now sudden flushed, 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.
But one sad heart, one tearful eye,
Pierced deeper through the mystery,

And watched, with agony and fear,
Her wayward bridegroom's varied cheer.
She watched—yet feared to meet his glance,
And he shunned hers;—till when by chance
They met, the point of foeman's lance
Had given a milder pang![1]
Beneath the intolerable smart
He writhed;—then sternly manned his heart
To play his hard but destined part,
And from the table sprang.
"Fill me the mighty cup!" he said,[2]
"Erst owned by royal Somerled.[3]
Fill it, till on the studded brim[4]
In burning gold the bubbles swim,
And every gem of varied shine
Glow doubly bright in rosy wine![5]
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!"—

"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,[6]
As some poor criminal might feel,
When, from the gibbet or the wheel,
Respited for a day.
"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 presence seems to grace,
And bid them welcome free!"—
With solemn step, and silver wand,
The Seneschal the presence scanned[7]

Of these strange guests; and well he knew
How to assign their rank its due:
For though the costly furs
That erst had decked their caps were torn,[8]
And their gay robes were over-worn,[9]
And soiled their gilded spurs,
Yet such a high commanding grace
Was in their mien and in their face,
As suited best the princely dais[10]
And royal canopy;
And there he marshalled them their place,[11]
First of that company.

Suspicious doubt and lordly scorn
Loured on the haughty front of Lorn.[12]
From underneath his brows of pride
The stranger guests he sternly eyed,
And whispered closely what the ear
Of Argentine alone might hear;
Then questioned, high and brief,
If, in their voyage, aught they knew
Of the rebellious Scottish crew,
Who to Rath-Erin's shelter drew,[13]
With Carrick's outlawed Chief?
And if, their winter's exile o'er,
They harboured still by Ulster's shore,[14]
Or launched their galleys on the main,
To vex their native land again?—
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,[15]
Despite each mean or mighty foe,[16]
From England's every bill and bow,[17]
To Allaster of Lorn."—
Kindled the mountain Chieftain's ire,
But Ronald quenched 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 whispered Argentine,—[18]
"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.

[*The Minstrel sang the Song of "The Brooch of Lorn,"*[19] *commemorating the triumph of the Lord of Lorn in tearing that jewel from the Bruce. This song led to the discovery that the strangers were Robert Bruce, his brother Edward, and his sister Isabel. Lorn calls for vengeance upon the murderer of his kinsman Comyn. Swords are drawn, and bloodshed seems imminent. De Argentine and Torquil of Dunvegan interfere, and succeed in effecting a pause, in the midst of which the arrival of the Abbot is announced; and to him they agree to refer their quarrel.*]

II.

The Abbot on the threshold stood,
And in his hand the holy rood ;[20]
Back on his shoulders flowed his hood,
The torches' glaring ray
Showed, in its red and flashing light,
His withered cheek and amice white,[21]
His blue eye glistening cold and bright,
His tresses scant and grey.
"Fair lords," he said, "Our Lady's love,
And peace be with you from above,
And Benedicite !—[22]
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 summoned to unite[23]
Betrothèd hearts and hands ?"—
Then, cloaking hate with fiery zeal,
Proud Lorn first answered the appeal:
"Thou comest, O holy man,
True sons of blessèd 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[24]
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."[25]

Then Ronald pled the stranger's cause,
And knighthood's oath and honour's laws ;
And Isabel, on bended knee,
Brought prayers and tears to back the plea ;[26]

And Edith lent her generous aid,
And wept, and Lorn for mercy prayed.
"Hence," he exclaimed, "degenerate maid!
Was't not enough to Ronald's bower
I brought thee, like a paramour,[27]
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![28]
Hence! till those rebel eyes be dry."—
With grief the Abbot heard and saw,
Yet nought relaxed his brow of awe.[29]

Then Argentine, in England's name,
So highly urged his sovereign's claim,
He waked a spark, that, long suppressed,[30]
Had smouldered in Lord Ronald's breast;
And now, as from the flint the fire,
Flashed 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 mockery crowned with wreaths of green,[31]
And done to death by felon hand
For guarding well his fathers' land.
Where's Nigel Bruce? and De la Haye,[32]
And valiant Seton—where are they?
Where Somerville, the kind and free?
And Fraser, flower of chivalry?
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[33]
Never be gorged with northern blood?
Was not the life of Athole shed[34]
To soothe the tyrant's sickened bed?
And must his word, at dying day,
Be nought but quarter, hang, and slay!—
Thou frown'st, De Argentine,—My gage[35]
Is prompt to prove the strife I wage."—

"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,)[36]
Let Rome and England do their worst,
Howe'er attainted 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."—
The Abbot seemed with eye severe[37]
The hardy Chieftain's speech to hear;
Then on King Robert turned 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 questioned 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?
Such is the dire and desperate doom
For sacrilege, decreed by Rome;
And such the well-deservèd meed
Of thine unhallowed, ruthless deed."—

"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.[38]
Nor blame I friends whose ill-timed speed[39]
Fulfilled my soon-repented 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,[40]
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,[41]
Fair Scotland from her thrall relieved,
Shall many a priest in cope and stole
Say requiem for Red Comyn's soul;

While I the blessèd cross advance,
And expiate this unhappy chance,
In Palestine, with sword and lance.
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."—
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 ;
Flushed is his brow ; through every vein
In azure tide the currents strain ;
And undistinguished accents broke
The awful silence ere he spoke :

" De Bruce ! I rose with purpose dread
To speak my curse upon thy head,
And give thee, as an outcast, o'er
To him who burns to shed thy gore ;—
But, like the Midianite of old,[42]
Who stood on Zophim, Heaven-controlled,
I feel within mine agèd breast
A power that will not be repressed.
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'er-mastered yet by high behest,
I bless thee, and thou shalt be blessed ! "—
He spoke, and o'er the astonished throng
Was silence, awful, deep, and long.
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 vanquished on the battle-plain,[43]
Thy followers slaughtered, fled, or ta'en ;
A hunted wanderer on the wild,
On foreign shores a man exiled ;

Disowned, deserted, and distressed,—
I bless thee, and thou shalt be blessed !
Blessed in the hall and in the field,
Under the mantle as the shield.
Avenger of thy country's shame,[44]
Restorer of her injured fame,
Blessed in thy sceptre and thy sword,
De Bruce, fair Scotland's rightful lord,
Blessed in thy deeds and in thy fame,
What lengthened 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 blessed thee, and thou shalt be blessed !—
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,
Embarked, raised sail, and bore away.[45]

CANTO THIRD.

THE ARGUMENT.

When Edith's disappearance is discovered, her brother orders a search and chase ; but to no purpose. De Argentine challenges Bruce to single combat whenever they meet in battle, and gives him his glove as a pledge. At midnight Ronald and Torquil of Dunvegan seek the chamber of Bruce, and swear allegiance to him. It is arranged that Torquil shall raise the Island Chieftains, while Edward rejoins Lennox in Arran ; and that Bruce, in the meantime, accompanied by Ronald, shall seek shelter in the Isle of Skye. Landing on that island, they meet with a band of Highland robbers, in whose company they find a mute captive; who is, though unknown to them, the Maid of Lorn in the disguise of a dumb page. The Highlanders treacherously attack them in the night, but are overpowered and slain.

Who the Chieftain's rage can tell,
When, sought from lowest dungeon cell[1]

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 remark,
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 feignèd prophecy!"—
As, impotent of ire, the hall[2]
Echoed to Lorn's impatient call,
"My horse, my mantle, and my train!
Let none who honours Lorn remain!"
Courteous, but stern, a bold request
To Bruce De Argentine addressed.
"Lord Earl," he said—"I cannot choose
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 launched 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,[3]
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."—

"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,[4]
Be sure the honoured 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 redressed."—
Now torch and menial tendance led
Chieftain and knight to bower and bed;
And beads were told, and Aves said,[5]
And soon they sank away
Into such sleep as wont to shed[6]
Oblivion on the weary head,
After a toilsome day.[7]
But, soon uproused, the Monarch cried
To Edward, slumbering by his side,
"Awake, or sleep for aye!
Even now there jarred a secret door—[8]
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 stepped forth, and with him came
Dunvegan's chief;—each bent the knee
To Bruce, in sign of fealty,
And proffered him his sword,
And hailed him, in a monarch's style,
As King of mainland and of isle,
And Scotland's rightful lord.

They proffered aid, by arms and might,
To repossess him in his right.
Then Torquil spoke: "The time craves speed!
We must not linger in our deed;
But, till this fresh alarm pass by,
Secret and safe my liege must lie
In the fair bounds of friendly Skye,
Torquil thy pilot and thy guide."—[9]
"Not so, brave Chieftain," Ronald cried;
"Myself will on my Sovereign wait,[10]
And raise in arms the men of Sleate;[11]
Whilst thou, renowned where chiefs debate,
Shall sway their souls by counsel sage,
And awe them by thy locks of age."—
"The scheme," said Bruce, "contents me well;
Meantime, 't were best that Isabel,
For safety, with my bark and crew,
Again to friendly Erin drew.[12]
There Edward, too, shall with her wend,[13]
In need to cheer her and defend,[14]
And muster up each scattered friend."—
Here seemed it as Lord Ronald's ear
Would other counsel gladlier hear;

But, all achieved as soon as planned,[15]
Both barks in secret armed and manned,
From out the haven bore;
On different voyage forth they ply,—
This for the coast of wingèd Skye,
And that for Erin's shore.

[*Bruce and Ronald, overtaken by a storm, land on the Isle of Skye. Accompanied only by Allan, Ronald's page, they go in search of deer, leaving their ship in charge of the crew. They soon reach the shores of Loch Coriskin.*]

"This lake," said Bruce,—"whose barriers drear[16]
Are precipices sharp and sheer,
Yielding no track for goat or deer,
Save the black shelves we tread,—[17]
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 griesly gulphs and slaty rifts[18]
Which seam its shivered head?"—
"Coriskin call the dark lake's name;[19]
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 for scenes like these.
I would old Torquil were to show[20]
His Maidens with their breasts of snow;[21]
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 Corryvrekin's whirlpool rude,[22]
When dons the hag her whitened hood—
'Tis thus our islesmen's fancy frames,
For scenes so stern, fantastic names."—

Answered the Bruce, "But late you said
No steps these desert regions tread?"—
"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 arrayed,
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,
But less the loss should Ronald fall.[23]
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 numbers even."—
"No, not to save my life!" he said;
"Enough of blood rests on my head,
Too rashly spilled—we soon shall know
Whether they come as friend or foe."—
Nigh came the strangers; and more nigh,[24]
Still less they pleased the Monarch's eye.
Men were they all of evil mien,
Down-looked, unwilling to be seen;[25]
They moved with half-resolvèd pace,
And bent on earth each gloomy face.
The foremost two were fair arrayed,
With brogue and bonnet, trews and plaid,[26]
And bore the arms of mountaineers,
Daggers and broadswords, bows and spears.
The three, that lagged small space behind,
Seemed serfs 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 caitiffs bore in hand,[27]
A club, an axe, a rusty brand.

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 proffered greeting brief and rude;
But acted courtesy so ill,
As seemed of fear, and not of will.[28]
"Wanderers we are, as you may be;
Men hither driven by wind and sea,
Who, if you list to taste our cheer,[29]
Will share with you this fallow deer."—
"If from the sea, where lies your bark?"—[30]
"Ten fathom deep in ocean dark![31]

Wrecked 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 glowed?"—
"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."—
"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,[32]
Yet rugged brows have bosoms kind;
We will go with them—food and fire
And sheltering roof our wants require.
Sure guard 'gainst treachery 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."

They reached the dreary cabin, made
Of sails against a rock displayed,
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 marred by care,
His eyes in sorrow drowned.
"Whence this poor boy?"—As Ronald spoke
The voice his trance of anguish broke:
As if awaked from ghastly dream,
He raised his head with start and scream,
And wildly gazed around;
Then to the wall his face he turned,
And his dark cheek with blushes burned.

"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,[33]
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?"—
"Ay; so his mother bade us know,
A crone in our late shipwreck drowned;[34]
And hence the silly stripling's woe.[35]
More of the youth I cannot say,
Our captive but since yesterday;
When wind and weather waxed so grim,
We little listed think of him.—[36]
But why waste time in idle words?
Sit to your cheer—unbelt your swords."—
Sudden the captive turned his head,
And one quick glance to Ronald sped.
It was a keen and warning look,
And well the Chief the signal took.

[*The Bruce insists on "a separate board and separate fire." After supper, he arranges that Ronald, himself, and Allan should keep watch during the night by turns. The first and second watches pass quietly; but while the page keeps his watch drowsily, he is stabbed by one of the ruffians. Bruce and Ronald start up, and after a desperate struggle, overpower and slay the whole gang. They prepare to leave the hut with the mute captive.*]

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 widowed mother tell,
That, ere his bloom, her fairest fell!—
Rest thee, poor youth! and trust my care[37]
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.

THE ARGUMENT.

In the morning they are met by Edward Bruce, who has come in search of them with the news that Douglas and Randolph, and other lords, are gathering forces in support of the Bruce; and that Lennox has mustered a force in Arran, and is ready to make a descent on the Carrick shore. Taking with them the mute, mysterious page, they set sail for Brodick-Bay. On their way, Ronald makes proposals to Bruce for the hand of his sister Isabel, declaring that the Maid of Lorn has forfeited her troth by her flight; and that her brother has now vowed to unite her to Lord Clifford, the English nobleman who has possession of Turnberry Castle. Bruce replies that the Church must decide the question, and that in the meantime Isabel has been placed for safety in the Convent of Saint Bride, in the Isle of Arran. The mute page weeps bitter but silent tears on overhearing this conversation. Arrived at Brodick, Bruce is joyously received by his followers. Accompanied by the page, he takes an early opportunity to visit his sister, and lay Ronald's proposals before her. But she declares that she cannot entertain them until Ronald can give her the ring with which he was betrothed to Edith.

Through the wild scenes the champions passed,
When bold halloo and bugle-blast
Upon the breeze came loud and fast.
"There," said the Bruce, "blew Edward's horn!
What can have caused such brief return?[1]
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."—
Loud Edward shouts, "What make ye here,
Warring upon the mountain-deer,
When Scotland wants her King?
A bark from Lennox crossed 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-tossed fleet hath won its way
With little loss to Brodick-Bay;[2]
And Lennox, with a gallant band,
Waits but thy coming and command
To waft them o'er to Carrick strand.[3]
There are blithe news!—but mark the close!
Edward, the deadliest of our foes,[4]

As with his host he northward passed,
Hatl on the Borders breathed his last.—
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 clenched his palsied hand,
That pointed yet to Scotland's land,
As his last accents prayed
Disgrace and curse upon his heir,
If he one Scottish head should spare,
Till stretched upon the bloody lair
Each rebel corpse was laid!
Such hate was his, when his last breath
Renounced the peaceful house of death,[5]
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!"

[*They then embark, and sail for Arran. Ronald renews his fealty to Bruce; and as they proceed beacon-fires summon the Islesmen to join the standard of their lord.*]

Ever the breeze blows merrily;
But the galley ploughs no more the sea,
Lest, rounding wild Cantire, they meet
The Southern foeman's watchful fleet:
They held unwonted way;—[6]
Up Tarbat's western lake they bore,
Then dragged their bark the isthmus o'er,
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 alder groves.
Deep import from that selcouth sign[7]
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.—
Now launched 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"—[8]
Gave his grim peaks a greeting kind,
And bade Loch Ranza smile.[9]
Thither their destined course they drew:
It seemed the isle her monarch knew,
So brilliant was the landward view,
The ocean so serene;
Each puny wave in diamonds rolled
O'er the calm deep, where hues of gold
With azure strove and green;
The hill, the vale, the tree, the tower,
Glowed with the tints of evening's hour—
The beach was silver sheen;
The wind breathed soft as lover's sigh,
And, oft renewed, seemed 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!

Is it of war Lord Ronald speaks?
The blush that dyes his manly cheeks,
The timid look, and downcast eye,
And faltering voice, the theme deny.[10]
And good King Robert's brow expressed
He pondered 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 recalled his promised plight,[11]
In the assembled Chieftains' sight.
When, to fulfil our fathers' band,
I proffered 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."—

"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,—[12]
The mood of woman who can tell?
I guess the Champion of the Rock,[13]
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,[14]
Our ruined 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."

As thus they talked in earnest mood,
That speechless boy beside them stood.
He stooped his head against the mast,
And bitter sobs came thick and fast—
A grief that would not be repressed,[15]
But seemed to burst his youthful breast.
His hands, against his forehead held,
As if by force, his tears repelled;
But through his fingers, long and slight,
Fast trilled the drops of crystal bright.[16]
Edward, who walked the deck 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 streamed 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 tongue[17]
Could tell me who hath wrought thee wrong!
For were he of our crew the best,
The insult went not unredressed.[18]

Come, cheer thee! Thou art now of age[19]
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 grove,
Or speed on errand to my love;
For well I wot thou wilt not tell
The temple where my wishes dwell."—
Bruce interposed: "Gay Edward, no!
This is no youth to hold thy bow,[20]
To fill thy goblet, or to bear
Thy message light to lighter fair.[21]
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 Augustine to share
The peaceful change of convent prayer,
Than wander wild adventures through
With such a reckless guide as you."—
"Thanks, brother," Edward answered gay,
"For the high laud thy words convey!
But we may learn some future day,
If thou or I can this poor boy[22]
Protect the best, or best employ.[23]
Meanwhile our vessel nears the strand:
Launch we the boat, and seek the land."[24]

To land King Robert lightly sprung,
And thrice aloud his bugle rung,
With note prolonged and varied strain,
Till bold Ben-Ghoil replied again.
Good Douglas then, and De la Haye,
Had in a glen a hart at bay;[25]
And Lennox cheered the laggard hounds,
When waked that horn the greenwood bounds.
"It is the foe!" cried Boyd, who came,
In breathless haste, with eye on flame—
"It is the foe! Each valiant lord
Fling by his bow, and grasp his sword!"—[26]
"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,[27]
If Bruce should call, nor Douglas hear!

Each to Loch Ranza's margin spring:
That blast was winded by the King!"—[28]
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,[29]
And clasped his hands, and wept aloud.
Veterans of early fields were there,
Whose helmets pressed their hoary hair—
Whose swords and axes bore a stain
From life-blood of the red-haired Dane;
And boys, whose hands scarce brooked to wield
The heavy sword or bossy shield.
Men, too, were there that bore the scars
Impressed in Albyn's woful wars,—
At Falkirk's fierce and fatal fight,[30]
Teyndrum's dread rout, and Methven's flight;[31]
The might of Douglas there was seen;
There Lennox with his graceful mien;
Kirkpatrick, Closeburn's dreaded knight;[32]
The Lindsay, fiery, fierce, and light;
The Heir of murdered De la Haye;
And Boyd the grave, and Seton gay.
Around their King regained they pressed,
Wept, shouted, clasped 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,[33]
And live or die by Bruce's side!

[*The next morning Bruce, accompanied by the mute page, visits Isabel in the Convent of Saint Bride, and lays Ronald's proposal before her. She refuses to entertain it until the ring and contract of his spousal with Edith are laid at her feet.*]

With sudden impulse forward sprung
The page, and on her neck he hung;
Then, recollected instantly,
His head he stooped, and bent his knee,
Kissed twice the hand of Isabel,
Arose, and sudden left the cell.
The Princess, loosened from his hold,
Blushed angry at his bearing bold;
But good King Robert cried,
"Chafe not—by signs he speaks his mind;
He heard the plan my care designed,
Nor could his transports hide.—
But, sister, now bethink thee well—
No easy choice the convent cell.[34]

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,[35]
And wouldst the ditties best approve[36]
That told some lay of hapless love.
Now are thy wishes in thy power,
And thou art bent on cloister bower!
Oh, 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!"—
"Brother, I well believe," she said,
"Even so would Edward's part be played.
Kindly in heart, in word severe,
A foe to thought, and grief, and fear,
He holds his humour uncontrolled;
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."

"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!
Nipped 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.[37]
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?[38]

It shall be so: some friend shall bear
Our mandate with dispatch and care;
Edward shall find the messenger.
That fortress ours, the island fleet[39]
May on the coast of Carrick meet.—
O Scotland! shall it ere 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,
Oft pausing on the steep descent,
And reached the spot where his bold train[40]
Held rustic camp upon the plain.

CANTO FIFTH.

THE ARGUMENT.

THE next morning, Isabel finds, on the floor of her cell, Edith's betrothal ring. On inquiry, she finds that the mute page had been seen in the neighbourhood, and at once concludes that it is Edith in disguise. She sends Father Augustine to her brother at Brodick-Bay, imploring him to send to her the page. When he arrives, the expedition is on the point of starting for the shore of Carrick. Bruce discovers that his brother Edward has sent the page on a secret mission to the mainland, instructing Cuthbert, a friendly hermit, to light a beacon if it is safe for them to land. The signal-fire is lighted, and they immediately set sail. Arrived at the coast, they find that no signal had been given, but that a phantom fire has allured them to the mainland. They nevertheless resolve to continue their march inland. Ronald takes the mute page under his charge, and aids him in the rough march until he sinks down exhausted, when he wraps him in his plaid and conceals him in the cleft of an ancient oak. Here, in the early morning, he is discovered by the English huntsmen, who bear him to Lord Clifford and the Lord of Lorn, in Carrick Castle. He is condemned as a spy, and is ordered to be hung on the oak in which he was discovered. But help is at hand. From their ambush Bruce and Ronald are spectators of the page's evil plight. Douglas, with fifty men, is sent round to take up a position between the English and the Castle. Edward Bruce, with forty spearmen, is to secure the drawbridge and the Castle gate as soon as he hears the din of strife. When their plans are completed, Ronald rushes out upon the English company. The woods ring with the cry of, "The Bruce! the Bruce!" The English are overpowered and take to flight. The flyers are met by Douglas and his band, and put to the sword. Not one escapes. Meantime Edward Bruce has secured the Castle gate. Clifford is slain. Lorn escapes in his boat; and "The Bruce hath won his father's hall."

I.

Sung were the matins, and the mass was said,
And every sister sought her separate cell,
Such was the rule, her rosary to tell.[1]
And Isabel has knelt in lonely prayer:
The sunbeam, through the narrow lattice, fell

Upon the snowy neck and long dark hair,
As stooped her gentle head in meek devotion there.
She raised her eyes, that duty done,[2]
When glanced upon the pavement-stone,
Gemmed 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 further 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[3]
Her who was Edith once of Lorn!"—
One single flash of glad surprise
Just glanced from Isabel's dark eyes;
But vanished in the blush of shame,
That, as its penance, instant came.
"O thought unworthy of my race!
Selfish, ungenerous, mean, and base,[4]
A moment's throb of joy to own,
That rose upon her hopes o'erthrown!—
Thou pledge of vows too well believed,
Of man ingrate and maid deceived,[5]
Think not thy lustre here shall gain
Another heart to hope in vain!
For thou shalt rest, thou tempting gaud,[6]
Where worldly thoughts are overawed,
And worldly splendours sink debased."
Then by the cross the ring she placed.

Next rose the thought,—Its owner far,[7]
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 brushed anew;[8]
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 frayed,
As if some climber's steps to aid.—[9]
But who the hardy messenger,
Whose venturous path these signs infer?[10]
"Strange doubts 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 prayed him pass
To chapel where they said the mass;
But like an arrow he shot by,
And tears seemed bursting from his eye."—
The truth at once on Isabel,
As darted by a sunbeam, fell.—
"'Tis Edith's self!—her speechless woe,[11]
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,[12]
With that mute page he loves so well."

[*But Bruce has left at daybreak for Brodick-Bay. Thither Isabel sends Father Augustine to demand that the mute page should be sent to her under his charge. He goes, and arrives in the midst of the bustle of embarkation.*]

Through that wild throng the father passed,
And reached the Royal Bruce at last.
He leaned against a stranded boat,
That the approaching tide must float,[13]
And counted every rippling wave,
As higher yet her sides they lave;[14]
And oft the distant fire he eyed,
And closer yet his hauberk tied,[15]
And loosened in its sheath his brand.
Edward and Lennox were at hand;
Douglas and Ronald had the care
The soldiers to the barks to share.—[16]
The monk approached 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 hest of Isabel.—[17]
"Now by Saint Giles," the Monarch cried,
"This moves me much!—this morning tide,[18]
I sent the stripling to Saint Bride,
With my commandment there to bide."—[19]
"Thither he came the portress showed;
But there, my liege, made brief abode."—
"'Twas I," said Edward, "found employ[20]
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
Flashed joyful at the glad surprise.
He bounded to the skiff, the sail
Was spread before a prosp'rous gale,
And well my charge he hath obeyed;
For, see! the ruddy signal made,
That Clifford, with his merry-men all,
Guards carelessly our father's hall."

"O wild of thought, and hard of heart!"[21]
Answered 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,[22]
Edward, my crown I would have given,
Ere, thrust on such adventure wild,
I perilled thus the helpless child."—
Offended half, and half submiss,[23]
"Brother and liege, of blame like this,"
Edward replied, "I little dreamed.
A stranger messenger, I deemed,
Might safest seek the beadsman's cell,
Where all thy squires are known so well:
Noteless his presence, sharp his sense,[24]
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[25]
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."

[*Thereupon all embark, and make for the mainland, guided by the beacon-fire. Edward Bruce is the first to spring ashore.*]

Wide o'er the sky the splendour glows,[26]
As that portentous meteor rose;
Helm, axe, and falchion glittered bright,
And in the red and dusky light
His comrade's face each warrior saw,
Nor marvelled it was pale with awe.
Then high in air the beams were lost,
And darkness sunk upon the coast.—
Ronald to Heaven a prayer addressed,
And Douglas crossed his dauntless breast;
"Saint James protect us!" Lennox cried;
But reckless Edward spoke aside,
"Deem'st thou, Kirkpatrick, in that flame
Red Comyn's angry spirit came,
Or would thy dauntless heart endure
Once more to make assurance sure?"—[27]
"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."—
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 scattered 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;[28]
Augmented, too, that very morn,
By mountaineers who came with Lorn.
Long harrowed 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.[29]
Doubtful of perilous event,
Edward's mute messenger he sent,
If Bruce, deceived, should venture o'er,
To warn him from the fatal shore.[30]

[Bruce, by the advice of his nobles, resolves to persevere in his expedition.]

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?"—[31]
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?[32]
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,—[33]
Fear, toil, and sorrow, lost in love!

[Ere long, Amadine, overpowered by fatigue, sinks down exhausted. Ronald wraps him in his plaid, and leaves him in the cleft of an aged oak. There he is found by a hunting party from the Castle, and is taken before Lord Clifford. By the advice of the Lord of Lorn, he is condemned, as a spy, to be hung on an arm of the tree in which he was found. He is instantly led forth to execution.]

II.

But other witnesses are nigh,
Who mock at fear, and death defy!
Soon as the dire lament was played,
It waked the lurking ambuscade.
The Island Lord looked 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[34]
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,[35]
Between the flyers and their hold:
A spear above the copse displayed
Be signal of the ambush made.—[36]
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,[37]
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."—
Like war-horse eager to rush on,
Compelled to wait the signal blown, [38]
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 clusters round the direful tree
That slow and solemn company,
While hymn mistuned and muttered 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;[39]
Upon them, Ronald!" said the Bruce.

"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 astonished Southron gazed at first,
Where the wild tempest was to burst,[40]
That waked in that presaging name.
Before, behind, around it came!
Half-armed, surprised, on every side
Hemmed in, hewed 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,[41]
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.
Not on their flight pressed Ronald's brand,
A gentler duty claimed 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
Betrayed the secret kept by fear;[42]
Once, when, with life returning, came
To the boy's lip Lord Ronald's name,
And hardly recollection drowned
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.

A harder task fierce Edward waits.[43]
Ere signal given, the Castle gates
His fury had assailed;
Such was his wonted reckless mood,
Yet desperate valour oft made good,
Even by its daring, venture rude,
Where prudence might have failed.
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 threshold ledge,
'Twixt door and post a ghastly wedge!
The gate they may not close.
Well fought the Southron 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 lopped and life-blood poured,

The cry of death and conflict roared,
And fearful was the din!
The startling horses plunged and flung,
Clamoured the dogs till turrets rung;
Nor sunk the fearful cry,
Till not a foeman was there found
Alive, save those who on the ground
Groaned in their agony!
The valiant Clifford is no more,—
On Ronald's broadsword streamed his gore;
But better hap had he of Lorn,
Who, by the foemen backward borne,
Yet gained with slender train the port,
Where lay his bark beneath the fort,
And cut the cable loose.
Short were his shrift in that debate,[44]
That hour of fury and of fate,
If Lorn encountered 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!

The Bruce hath won his father's hall!—[45]
"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 crossed—
Then on the board his sword he tossed,
Yet streaming hot; with Southern gore
From hilt to point 'twas crimsoned o'er.
"Bring here," he said, "the mazers four,[46]
My noble fathers loved of yore.
Thrice let them circle round the board;
The pledge, fair Scotland's rights restored!

And he whose lips shall touch the wine,[47]
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,[48]
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;
Warn Lanark's knights to gird their mail,
Rouse the brave sons of Teviotdale;
Let Ettricke's archers sharp their darts,—[49]
The fairest forms, the truest hearts!
Call all, call all! from Reedswair-Path [50]
To the wild confines of Cape-Wrath:
Wide let the news through Scotland ring,
The Northern Eagle claps his wing!

CANTO SIXTH.

THE ARGUMENT.

THE earliest care of Bruce, after his victory, is to consign the speechless page to the care of his sister Isabel, in the Convent of Saint Bride. Here she resumes again her proper dress, and remains for some years as the companion of Isabel, who is now a nun. During these years Bruce has been gradually regaining his lost territories, and expelling the English from castle after castle. At length all the strongholds are recovered excepting Stirling Castle, which the Bruce besieges with all his powers. The garrison agree to surrender unless they are relieved by the King of England before "John the Baptist's Eve." Edward II. raises a vast army, and hastens northward for the relief of Stirling. News of these proceedings reaches the Convent of Saint Bride. Isabel urges Edith to make trial of the penitence of Ronald by donning again her male attire, and judging of his fidelity by her own heart and eye. After much hesitation she consents, and leaves for the royal camp under the care of Fitz-Louis. King Robert, to whom Isabel has revealed Edith's secret, is anxious to bring about a union between his ally, the Lord of the Isles, and the Maid of Lorn, as the best means of keeping the Western Islands at peace. Fitz-Louis's band reaches the field on the eve of the Battle of Bannockburn, at the very time when Bruce is engaged in single combat with De Boune. The next day they view the battle from a hill in rear of the Scottish position. When Edith sees De Argentine rallying the scattered English, and threatening to surround the Islesmen, she forgets in her excitement her assumed dumbness, and appeals to those around her to rush to the rescue. The multitude, moved by what they consider a miracle, seize whatever arms are within their reach, raise aloft mimic ensigns, and bear down like a bannered host upon the exhausted English. The latter, deeming it the arrival of reinforcements, turn and flee. But De Argentine, remembering the pledge he left with Bruce, couches his spear, and shouting his battle-cry, rushes upon

the Highlanders, and is slain. Edith again betrays herself by one word when she meets Ronald returning from the pursuit. But it is a word which brings about peace and reconciliation. King Robert appoints a solemn thanksgiving to be held in Cambuskenneth Church, to be followed on the morrow by—"The bridal of the Maid of Lorn."

I.

BELIEVE, his father's castle won,[1]
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
Concealed 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 regained,
The lovely maid of Lorn remained,
Unnamed, unknown, while Scotland far
Resounded with the din of war;
And many a month, and many a day,
In calm seclusion wore away.
These days, these months, to years had worn,[2]
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 retained no more,
Northward of Tweed, but Stirling's towers,
Beleaguered by King Robert's powers;
And they took term of truce,[3]
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,
Prepared to raise fair Stirling's siege,
With buckler, brand, and spear.
The Bruce's summons warned the land,
That all who owned their King's command
Should instant take the spear and brand,
To combat at his side.

[*Meantime Isabel induces Edith once more to don her page's dress, and to join the camp of Bruce (who knows her secret), in order to try her lover's penitence.*]

It was on eve of battle-day
When o'er the Gillie's-hill she rode.
The landscape like a furnace glowed,

And far as e'er the eye was borne,
The lances waved like autumn corn.
In battles four, beneath their eye,[4]
The forces of King Robert lie.
And one below the hill was laid,
Reserved for rescue and for aid;
And three advanced, formed vaward-line,[5]
'Twixt Bannock's brook and Ninian's shrine.[6]
Detached 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.
Thick flashing in the evening beam,
Glaives, lances, bills, and banners gleam;[7]
And where the heaven joined with the hill,
Was distant armour flashing still,—
So wide, so far, the boundless host[8]
Seemed in the blue horizon lost.

Down from the hill the maiden passed,
At the wild show of war aghast;
And traversed first the rearward host,[9]
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 ranked their files,[10]
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 arrayed,
With the plumed bonnet and the plaid
By these Hebrideans worn;
But oh! unseen for three long years,[11]
Dear was the garb of mountaineers
To the fair Maid of Lorn!
For one she looked—but he was far
Busied amid the ranks of war;
Yet with affection's troubled eye
She marked his banner boldly fly,

Gave on the countless foe a glance,
And thought on battle's desperate chance.
To centre of the vaward-line
Fitz-Louis guided Amadine.
Armed all on foot, that host appears
A serried mass of glimmering spears.

Here must they pause; for, in advance
As far as one might pitch a lance,
The Monarch rode along the van,[12]
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,[13]
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;[14]
And clasped within its glittering twine
Was seen the glove of Argentine:[15]
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,[16]
Paused the deep front of England's war,
And rested on their arms a while,[17]
To close and rank their warlike file,
And hold high council, if that night[18]
Should view the strife, or dawning light.
O gay, yet fearful 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,[19]
Could then his direful doom foretell!—
Fair was his seat in knightly selle,[20]
And in his sprightly eye was set
Some spark of the Plantagenet.
Though light and wandering was his glance,
It flashed 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 Argentine,
"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
Dashed from the ranks Sir Henry Boune.

Of Hereford's high blood he came,
A race renowned for knightly fame.
He burned before his Monarch's eye
To do some deed of chivalry.
He spurred his steed, he couched 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,
Spurred 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 shunned 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 passed,[21]
Fell that stern dint—the first—the last!
Such strength upon the blow was put,
The helmet crashed like hazel-nut;
The axe-shaft, with its brazen clasp,
Was shivered 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!

One pitying glance the Monarch sped,
Where on the field his foe lay dead;
Then gently turned his palfrey's head,
And, pacing back his sober way,
Slowly he gained his own array.
There round their King the leaders crowd,
And blame his recklessness aloud,
That risked 'gainst each adventurous spear
A life so valued and so dear.
His broken weapon's shaft surveyed
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[22]
And elder brother's love were there.
"Fear not," he said, "young Amadine!"
Then whispered, "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 vanquished, 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[23]
(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—farewell."
And in a lower voice he said,
"Be of good cheer—farewell, sweet maid!"

[*Next morning the hosts are marshalled for the battle.*]

II.

Earl Gilbert waved his truncheon high,
Just as the Northern ranks arose,—
Signal for England's archery
To halt and bend their bows.
Then stepped 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 bowstrings ring,
Ten thousand arrows fly!
Nor paused on the devoted Scot
The ceaseless fury of their shot;[24]
As fiercely and as fast
Forth whistling came the grey-goose wing
As the wild hailstones pelt and ring
Adown December's blast.[25]
Nor mountain targe of tough bull-hide,
Nor lowland mail, that storm may bide;
Woe, woe to Scotland's bannered 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 gained 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![26]
We'll tame the terrors of their bow,
And cut the bowstring loose!"

Then spurs were dashed in chargers' flanks;
They rushed among the archer ranks.

No spears were there the shock to let,[27]
No stakes to turn the charge were set,[28]
And how shall yeoman's armour slight
Stand the long lance and mace of might?
Or what may their short swords avail,
'Gainst barbèd horse and shirt of mail?[29]
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!
A while, with stubborn hardihood,[30]
Their English hearts the strife made good;
Borne down at length on every side,
Compelled 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;[31]
For the blithe archers look in vain!
Broken, dispersed, in flight o'erta'en,
Pierced through, trode down, by thousands slain,
They cumber Bannock's bloody plain.

The King with scorn beheld their flight.
"Are these," he said, "our yeomen wight?[32]
Each braggart churl could boast before,[33]
Twelve Scottish lives his baldric bore![34]
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 showed 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 formed 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 thundered to their tread,
As far as Stirling Rock.

Down! down! in headlong overthrow,
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 acton, and the spear,[35]
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![36]
They came like mountain-torrent red,
That thunders o'er its rocky bed;
They broke like that same torrent's wave
When swallowed 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!

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[37]
Is firm as Ailsa Rock;
Rush on with Highland sword and targe,
I, with my Carrick spearmen charge;
Now, forward to the shock!"—
At once the spears were forward thrown,
Against the sun the broadswords shone;
The pibroch lent its maddening tone,[38]
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!"—
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 reeled,
And still makes good the line.
Brief strife, but fierce, his efforts raise
A bright but momentary blaze.

Fair Edith heard the Southern 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,
Appeared, 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?"—

The multitude that watched afar,
Rejected from the ranks of war,
Had not unmoved beheld the fight,
When strove the Bruce for Scotland's right;
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;
The choice, 'twixt death or freedom, warms
Our breasts as theirs—To arms, to arms!"—
To arms they flew,—axe, club, or spear,—
And mimic ensigns high they rear,[39]
And, like a bannered host afar,
Bear down on England's wearied war.—
Already scattered o'er the plain,
Reproof, command, and counsel vain,
The rearward squadrons fled amain,
Or made but doubtful stay;—
But when they marked the seeming show
Of fresh and fierce and marshalled foe,
The boldest broke array.
O give their hapless prince his due!
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 turned his bridle rein,
And forced him from the fatal plain.
With them rode Argentine, until
They gained 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.[40]
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."—

Again he faced the battle-field,—
Wildly they fly, are slain, or yield.
"Now then," he said, and couched 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 unharmed—a lance's point
Has found his breastplate's loosened joint,
An axe has razed his crest;
Yet still on Colonsay's fierce lord,
Who pressed the chase with gory sword,
He rode with spear in rest,[41]
And through his bloody tartans bored,
And through his gallant breast.
Nailed to the earth, the mountaineer
Yet writhed him up against the spear,
And swung his broadsword round!—
Stirrup, steel-boot, and cuish gave way,[42]
Beneath that blow's tremendous sway,
The blood gushed from the wound;
And the grim Lord of Colonsay
Hath turned him on the ground,
And laughed in death-pang that his blade
The mortal thrust so well repaid.—
Now toiled the Bruce, the battle done,[43]
To use his conquest boldly won;
And gave command for horse and spear
To press the Southron's scattered rear,
Nor let his broken force combine,—
When the war-cry of Argentine[44]
Fell faintly on his ear!
"Save, save his life!" he cried, "O save
The kind, the noble, and the brave!"—[45]

The squadrons round free passage gave,
The wounded knight drew near.
He raised his red-cross shield no more,
Helm, cuish, and breastplate streamed 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 failed 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."—
Bruce pressed his dying hand—its grasp
Kindly replied; but in his clasp
It stiffened 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,[46]
For late-wake of De Argentine.[47]
O'er better knight on death-bier laid,
Torch never gleamed nor mass was said!"—

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 kneeled,

Durst not look up, but muttered low,
Some mingled sounds that none might know,
And greeted him 'twixt joy and fear,
As being of superior sphere."—
Even upon Bannock's bloody plain,
Heaped then with thousands of the slain,
'Mid victor Monarch's musings high,
Mirth laughed in good King Robert's eye.
"And bore he such angelic air,
Such noble front, such waving hair?
Hath Ronald kneeled 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 Cambus-kenneth straight he 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.
Ourself the cause, through fortune's spite,[48]
That once broke short that spousal rite,
Ourself will grace, with early morn,
The bridal of the Maid of Lorn."

NOTES TO THE LORD OF THE ISLES.

CANTO FIRST.

1. *Artornish.*—A castle, the ruins of which still exist, in Argyleshire, on the mainland side of the Sound of Mull. It was one of the principal strongholds of the Lords of the Isles.

2. *To keep the diapason of the Deep.*—To preserve the harmony of the music of the ocean. *As* is elliptical = "As if it was their duty."

3. *And wake thee.*—The infinitive, governed by *bid:* "We bid thee (to) wake thyself."

4. *Retired.*—A participle, attributive to *Edith.*

5. *Had been that had....seen.*—A hypothetical sentence, in which the conditional conjunction is absorbed in the relative: "The pride would have been tamed (conditional mood), *if* it had seen (subjunctive mood) her cold demeanour."

6. *A while.*—The objective of time = for a time. *While* is properly a noun. [A.-S. *hwil*, time.]

7. *Battled.*—For embattled; furnished with battlements.

8. *Sound.*—*Lit.* an arm of the sea which may be swam across. [For *swumd;* A.-S. *sund*, from *swimman*, to swim.]

9. *Thwarting.*—Crossing. [A.-S. *thwerg*, cross.]

10. *Swarth.*—Swarthy, dark. [A.-S. *sweart;* Ger. *schwarz*, black.] —— *Morven's shore.*—The shore of Morven, or the Great Mountain—a tract north-west of Loch Aline.

11. *Impledge.*—A stronger form of *pledge.* The prefix *im-* is intensive.

12. *Mighty Somerled.*—Somerled was Thane of Argyle and Lord of the Isles about the middle of the twelfth century. From him two lines were said to be descended: the Lords of the Isles, or Hebrides, from his elder son Ronald; and the

Lords of Lorn, from his second son Dougal, from whom they took their surname MacDougal.

13. *Mates.*—Equals, or competes with.

14. *By fits.*—Properly refers to *course*= the fitful course.

15. *Tack.*—A zigzag course. A ship may beat up against an adverse wind by setting her sails obliquely, and putting down the helm on the larboard and starboard sides alternately. By this process the ship is carried first to the left and then to the right of her straight course, but each time a little advance is made. This is called *tacking*, from the *tack*, or lower windward corner of a sail, which is so called from the *tack* or rope used to hold that corner in its proper position relatively to the direction of the wind and the course of the ship.

16. *Aros Bay.*—A bay in the Island of Mull, nearly opposite to Artornish.

17. *Streamered.*—Furnished with *streamers*, or flags and ensigns. This, like *manned*, in the next line, is an example of the facility with which, in English, nouns may be converted into verbs. Other examples are —to *hammer*, to *thread*, to *chain*, to *book*, to *chair*.

18. *Were.*—Conditional mood, and singular, for *would be;* but the proper form to follow *hadst known* is *had been.*

19. *Sweep they.*—Imperative mood, third person plural.

20. *Wail.*—One of the nominatives to *was*, two lines preceding; the others are *dread* and *toil*. In strict grammar, *was* should be *were;* but when the verb precedes its nominatives it is frequently made to agree only with the first one, as if the writer were uncertain whether one or more nominatives would follow.

21. *All day.*—An objective of time. See *Lady of the Lake*, Canto I., Notes 1, 47.

22. *Fierce.*—For *fiercely;* an adjective used as an adverb. See *Lady of the Lake*, Canto I., Note 32.

23. *Beneath the Castle's sheltering lee.*—Under the *lee* of the Castle. *Lee* means shelter. [A.-S. *hleow.*] Hence applied to that side of a ship which the hull *shelters* from the wind.

24. *So steep.*—Must be followed by *that* at the beginning of next clause, which is a clause of effect modifying the adverb *so.* "The fortress of a Hebridean chief was almost always on the sea-shore, for the facility of communication which the ocean afforded. Nothing can be more wild than the situations which they chose, and the devices by which the architects endeavoured to defend them. Narrow stairs and arched vaults were the usual mode of access; and the drawbridge appears at Dunstaffnage and elsewhere to have fallen from the gate of the building to the top of such a staircase; so that any one advancing with hostile purpose, found himself in a state of exposed and precarious elevation, with a gulph between him and the object of his attack."—*S.*

25. *Cresset.*—Lamp, or torch.

26. *Wildering.*—Perplexing. See *Lady of the Lake*, Canto I., Notes 35, 48.

27. *Had made.*—Conditional, for *would have made.* The subjunctive (or protasis) is implied in the phrase *In mirthful hour:* "It *would have made* mirth, *if* the hour *had been* mirthful."

28. *We list.*—This is the modern construction. For an example of the ancient, see *Marmion*, Canto I., Note 11.

29. *That gives,*—Must refer to *import*, though the thought is not clearly expressed. Construe: "And these brief words, when sounded in a friendly ear, have dear import that gives us rightful claim to safe harbour and friendly cheer."

30. *Wold.*—A weald, or open country; *lit.* a forest. [A.-S. *weald;* Ger. *wald;* E. *wood.*]

31. *Lea.*—Turf, pasture land. [A.-S. *leag*, unemployed land.]

32. *The fierce Knight of Ellerslie.*—Sir William Wallace, Knight of Ellerslie, now Elderslie, a village of Renfrewshire, two miles west of Paisley. The Scottish patriot was executed in 1305.

33. *Comyn.*—On the 10th February 1306, Bruce stabbed John Comyn (the Red Comyn of Badenoch, Baliol's nephew) in the Church of the Grey Friars at Dumfries. Kirkpatrick, one of his followers, completed the murder. Bruce entertained designs upon the crown of Scotland, and he suspected Comyn of having betrayed these to King Edward.

34. *Fell.*—Cruel. [O. Fr. *felle;* A.-S. *fell;* Dan. *fael.* Sc. *fell*, biting, quick, *mettlesome*, is probably from the same root.]

35. *Their vessel kept.*—Remained in their vessel. This use of the transitive verb *keep* is colloquial.

36. *Shed.*—It is doubtful whether *shed* is transitive or intransitive in this passage. Taken as transitive, it gives the better sense:

"Her head *shed* her long dark tresses down." But the simile following is expressed as if *tresses* were the subject: "The tresses *shed* as the wild vine droops." In the latter case *shed* must mean fell or streamed.

37. *And in his hand a sheathèd sword.*—This cannot mean, "That elder lord followed him, *and* a sheathèd sword *followed* him." Neither is it satisfactory to supply *he carried* after *and*, for the clause is unworthy of being made a principal clause. Perhaps the best explanation will be found in taking *and* as equivalent to the preposition *with*. This construction thus explained is not without precedent—*e.g.* (*Henry VIII.*, Act iv., Scene 2, line 126):

"So may he ever do, and ever flourish,
When I shall dwell with worms, *and* my poor name
Banish'd the kingdom."

That is, "*with* my poor name banish'd the kingdom." Another explanation is probable. In the last extract *and* may coördinate the adverbial clause, "When I shall dwell with worms," and the adverbial (absolute) phrase, "My poor name *being* banish'd the kingdom." Similarly, in the text *and* may coördinate the adverb *close*, and the adverbial (absolute) phrase, "A sheathèd sword *being* in his hand."

38. *Portcullis.*—A sliding gate, formed of crossed bars of iron, suspended over a gateway. See *Marmion*, Canto VI., Note 23.

CANTO SECOND.

1. *Had given.*—Conditional mood, for *would have given*. The condition (or protasis) is implied in *foeman's lance:* The pang would have been milder, *if* it had been given by foeman's lance.

2. *The mighty cup.* — "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 MacLeod of MacLeod, the chief of that ancient and powerful clan."—*S.* The cup itself is made of wood (apparently oak); the ledge, brim, and legs are of silver. For *Somerled*, see Canto I., Note 12.

3. *Erst.*—Formerly; *lit.* earliest. [A.-S. *aerest*, superlative of *aer*, former.]

4. *The studded brim.*—The brim set with stones. In the cup referred to in Note 2 there are a number of regular projecting sockets, which appear to have been set with stones; two or three of them still hold pieces of coral, the rest are empty.

5. *Glow.*—Subjunctive mood, governed by *till;* like *swim*, two lines above.

6. *As glad.*—Elliptical, for "As *he would be if he were* glad."

7. *Presence.*—Personal appearance, demeanour.

8. *Erst.*—Originally, or formerly. See Note 3.

9. *Over-worn.*—Wasted from being long worn.

10. *Dais.*—The principal table, or the raised part of the floor on which it stood. See *Marmion*, Canto I., Note 19, where it is called the *deas*. [O. E. *dece;* O. Fr. *dais;* Ger. *tisch;* Lat. *discus*, a quoit; L. Lat. a table.]——*As,*—Following the demonstrative adjective *such*, is a relative pronoun, nominative to *suited*.

11. *He marshalled them their place.*—It would be difficult to explain or justify the construction of this sentence. *Their place* is redundant, being already implied in *marshalled: He marshalled them* = He assigned them their places.—*First of that company* is an adverbial phrase, in apposition with *there*.

12. *Front.*—Forehead. [Lat. *frons.*]

13. *Rath-Erin.*—A small island, called also *Rachrine*, *Rachlin*, and *Rathlin*, on the coast of Ulster, due west of the Mull of Cantire, from which it may be seen. Robert Bruce, with some two hundred followers, spent the winter of 1306–7 on this island when unable to maintain his position in Scotland.

14. *Harboured.*—Remained in shelter: here used intransitively.

15. *His banner Scottish winds shall blow.*—A noun clause, complement to *sworn:* "He has sworn *that* Scottish winds shall blow his banner ere thrice three days shall come and go."

16. *Despite each mean or mighty foe.*—Each mean or mighty foe being held in contempt. *Despite*, usually called a preposition, is really the participle in an absolute phrase, like *save, except, during, not-*

withstanding, and *pending*. See Adams's *English Language*, §§ 496, 497. [O. Fr. *despire*, to despise; Lat. *despicere*.]

17. *From England's every bill and bow.*—That is the one extreme, the representative of the *mean* foe, as *Allaster of Lorn* is of the *mighty*. *Every bill and bow* means the common billmen and bowmen of England.

18. *Whispered Argentine.—Argentine* is a dative complement=*to* Argentine. The object of *whispered* is the following clause, "The lay I named," &c.

19. *The Brooch of Lorn.*—Bruce, after his defeat at Methven, endeavoured to penetrate into the Argyleshire Highlands, but was repulsed by MacDougal, the Lord of Lorn. In the conflict, Bruce performed prodigies of valour. He struck down the Lord of Lorn himself. He slew two of his vassals, who came to rescue him. But as one of these held Bruce's mantle in his dying grasp, and as the other Highlanders pressed him hard, he was forced to unclasp his mantle, and to leave it as well as his *brooch* with the enemy. A studded brooch, said to have been that abandoned by Bruce on this occasion, was long preserved as a trophy in the family of MacDougal; but it is said to have been lost in a fire which consumed their temporary residence.

20. *And in his hand the holy rood.*—Here, as in Canto I., Note 37, we may either take *and* as equivalent to the preposition *with*, or as a conjunction connecting the adverbial phrase *on the threshold* and the absolute phrase *the holy rood* being *in his hand*. The *holy rood* is the cross.

21. *Amice.*—A priest's cloak or cape. [Lat. *amictus*, from *amicio*; and that from *ambi*, on both sides, around (Gr. ἀμφι), and *jacio*, I throw.]

22. *Benedicite.*—Properly the imperative active=Bless ye; not, Be ye blessed. It is taken from the title of one of the canticles in the Church service: *Benedicite omnia opera*—"O all ye works of the Lord, *bless ye* the Lord!"

23. *He comes summoned.—Summoned* is grammatically an attribute to *he*, but logically an adverb to *comes:* "He comes *as one who is* summoned."

24. *We should know.... nor lay him low.*—*Nor*=and not; but there is condition implied. "Well mayst thou wonder that we should recognize the miscreant here, *and not* at once lay him low"—that is, without laying him low.

25. *Decide.*—Subjunctive, for *should decide:* "I am quite willing, to end debate, that thy sainted voice *should decide* his fate."

26. *To back.*—To support by standing at the *back* of. So Shakespeare,—

"Call you that *backing* of your friends?"

I. Henry IV., Act ii., Scene 4, line 166.

27. *I brought thee, like a paramour.*—It was anciently customary in the Highlands to bring the bride to the house of the husband. Sometimes she remained there upon trial for a twelvemonth, during which period, and sometimes even afterwards, the bridegroom retained the option of refusing to fulfil his engagement.

28. *It shall be.*—Future imperative. *Shall* in the third person expresses the determination of the speaker: "I am determined that thy hand *shall be* his."

29. *Nought.*—The accusative of reference=in no respect or degree.

30. *He waked a spark.*—Adverbial clause of effect: "*So* highly, *that* he waked a spark."

31. *In mockery crowned.*—At his trial in Westminster Hall, Wallace, by Edward's orders, was made to wear a mock crown of laurel.

32. *Nigel Bruce, and De la Haye.*—Sir Nigel Bruce, a younger brother of Robert, was forced to surrender the Castle of Kildrummie to the Earls of Lancaster and Hereford after a valiant defence, and was condemned and executed at Berwick. Hugh de la Haye was made prisoner at the Battle of Methven, but he was not executed. Sir Christopher Seatoun, Bruce's brother-in-law, and Sir Simon Fraser, shared the same fate as Nigel Bruce. Thomas Somerville of Linton was taken prisoner with De la Haye at Methven.

33. *English Leopard's,*—Refers to the leopards in the royal arms of England.

34. *The life of Athole.*—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 with circumstances of great barbarity, shortly before the death of Edward I.; hence "To soothe the tyrant's sickened bed."

35. *Gage.*—Pledge of battle. It is the same word as *wage*, used as a verb in next line. See *Lady of the Lake*, Canto II., Note 12.

36. *By Woden wild (my grandsire's oath).*—The MacLeods, and most other distin-

guished Hebridean families, were of Scandinavian extraction, and some were late or imperfect converts to Christianity. *Woden* was the chief deity of the Scandinavians. His name is retained in *Wednes-day* = A.-S. *Wodenes-daeg.*

37. *With eye severe.*—An unfortunately loose expression. He did not hear the speech with his eye, but his eye was severe while he heard it.

38. *His country's foe.*—Adverbial adjunct to *died:* "He died as his country's foe would die," or "as a foe to his country."

39. *Whose ill-timed speed fulfilled,* &c.—A reference to Kirkpatrick. See Canto I., Note 33.

40. *To atone.*—Attributive to *purpose:* "Heaven knows that it is my purpose to atone the evil deed *as* far as I may."

41. *My first and dearest task achieved.*—An absolute phrase. The next line is an absolute phrase in apposition with this one.

42. *The Midianite of old.*—The prophet Balaam, who, when called upon by Balak to curse Israel, involuntarily blessed them. See Numbers xxiii., xxiv. But Balaam was not a "Midianite," but a prophet of Mesopotamia, dwelling at Pethor, a village near the Euphrates. See Numbers xxii. 5.

43. *Vanquished.*—This and the other participles following are attributes to *thee* in "I bless thee." *Wanderer* and *man* are objectives in apposition with *thee.* These lines have the force of a concessive clause: "*Though* vanquished, disowned, &c., *yet* I bless thee."

44. *Avenger.... restorer.*—Nominatives in apposition with *De Bruce,* which is the nominative of address.

45. *Embarked, raised sail, and bore away.*—The transition from the banquet-hall to the shore, implied in these closing lines of the canto, is too sudden. This is one of the instances of hasty composition which appear in the present poem.

CANTO THIRD.

1. *Sought.*—An attribute to *Lady Edith,* but logically an implied clause of concession = though she was sought.

2. *Of ire.*—A genitive of reference: impotent with respect to his ire.

3. *Soldier.*—Here an adjective, qualifying *grace,* the *grace* becoming a *soldier.* Wearing a knight's glove in one's helmet was a sign that his challenge had been accepted.

4. *For.*—As regards, or with reference to.

5. *Aves.*—Prayers to the Virgin Mary, from the commencement of the hymn "Ave Maria,"—Hail, Mary. *Aves* is here used as a common noun.

6. *As wont.*—As is accustomed. In *Marmion* (see Canto II., Note 33) Scott uses *wont* as a past tense. Here it is used as a present. Milton uses *wont* as a past = was accustomed:

> "That far-beaming blaze of majesty
> Wherewith he *wont* at Heaven's high council-table
> To sit."—*Hymn on the Nativity,* line 9.

7. *Toilsome.*—Full of toil. The suffix *-some* is added to nouns, adjectives, and verbs to form adjectives. It has three meanings. First, it signifies *full of* a quality; as, frolic-some, game-some, toil-some. Secondly, added to an *adjective,* it has an *intensive* force; as, glad-some, blithe-some. Thirdly, it signifies *causing;* as, weari-some, trouble-some, win-some. In *handsome* it means *full of* the qualities which belong to the hand—neatness and skill. In *buxom* the suffix combines with the root—A.-S. *bóc-sum* (from *búgan,* to bow). The suffix *-some* is A.-S. *som, sum;* Ger. *sam.*

8. *Even now.*—A moment ago. Comp.

> "What! four? thou saidst but two, even now."
>
> *I Henry IV.,* Act ii., Scene 4, line 218.

Sc. *e'enow,* presently.

9. *Torquil thy pilot and thy guide.*—An absolute phrase. "Torquil *being* thy pilot"—that is, "With Torquil for thy pilot and thy guide."

10. *Myself.*—For *I myself.* See *Marmion,* Canto II., Note 10.

11. *Sleate.*—The *Sound of Sleate* is the name of the channel between the Island of Skye and the mainland. *Sleate Point* is the most southerly point of Skye. "The men of *Sleate,*" therefore, signifies the men of Skye.

12. *Erin.*—Not Ireland, but the small island of *Rath-Erin,* or Rathlin. See Canto II., Note 13.

13. *Shall....wend.*—Future imperative, expressing the will or command of the speaker.

14. *In need to cheer her and defend.*—

To cheer and defend her in time of need; an infinitive of purpose.

15. *All achieved as soon as planned.*—Everything *being* carried into execution (an absolute phrase) as soon as *it was* planned. Here again (see Canto II., Note 45) the movement is rather rapid. The interview took place in the dead of night; yet it does not appear that they started before dawn.

16. *This lake.*—In apposition with *its dark waves*, four lines below.

17. *Save,*—Usually called a preposition, is really the participle in an absolute phrase: "the black shelves being *saved*," or excepted. See *Adams's English Language*, § 497.

18. *Griesly.*—Grizzly. [O. Eng. *grisly*, Fr. *gris*, gray.]——*Gulphs.*—Hollows, or fissures; same as *gulf:* but Scott adopts this spelling when applying the word to land, and not to water.

19. *Coriskin.*—Loch Coruisk, in the Cuchullin (Coolin) Mountains in Skye.

20. *Were.*—The conditional mood, implying the contrary fact, for he is not here. *Were* = were here.

21. *His Maidens.*—Two outstanding peaks of the Cuchullin Mountains, so called from their resemblance to *breasts*. Compare the "*Paps* of Jura."

22. *Corryvrekin's whirlpool.*—The cape on the north of Jura is called Corryvrekin. The same name is given to the strait between Jura and Scarba. The tortuous tidal currents here assume the appearance of a whirlpool.

23. *But less the loss.*—Scott wrote "And less the loss." But the meaning obviously is, "Though my strength and skill in arms are inferior to yours, and I may therefore be vanquished, yet the loss would be less were I to fall than if you were slain." This meaning is destroyed by "and:" it is fully expressed by "but."

24. *More nigh, still less.*—We have altered the punctuation here. It is usually printed,—

"Nigh came the strangers, and more nigh;—
Still less they pleased the Monarch's eye."

As we have pointed the passage in the text it means: "Nigh came the strangers; and *the nearer* they came *the less* the Monarch liked them."

25. *Down-looked.*—With looks fixed on the ground, as if afraid to look up; with "a hang-dog expression."

26. *Brogue.*—Shoes worn by the Highlanders, made of horse leather.——*Trews.*—The Highland name for *trousers*.

27. *Caitiffs.*—Wretches, despicable fellows; originally the same word as *captive*. Chaucer uses *caytif* as an adjective = wretched. [It. *cattivo;* Lat. *captivus*, from *capio*, I take; Fr. *chétif*, poor, mean.]

28. *As seemed of fear, and not of will.*—That it seemed to spring from fear, and not from will.

29. *Cheer.*—Primarily, the countenance; secondarily, that which affects the countenance, by producing an expression of gladness: hence entertainment, fare.

30. *If from the sea.*—If *you come* from the sea.

31. *Ten fathom deep.*—Deep by ten times a fathom. *Ten* is a multiple of *fathom*, and *ten fathom* is the objective of measure.

32. *Of churlish kind.*—Of the class of *ceorls*, or countrymen. [A.-S. *ceorl*, a countryman; Sc. *carl, carle.*]

33. *Rote.*—A musical instrument; Jamieson says a *hurdy-gurdy*, a stringed instrument, in which the notes are produced by turning a wheel. [Lat. *rota*, a wheel.]——*Viol.*—A violin, or harp.

34. *Crone.*—An old woman; so called from *crooning*, or making a moaning sound. [Sc. *croyn, crune, croon*, a hollow moan.]

35. *Silly.*—Simple, witless; properly happy, blessed. [A.-S. and Ger. *selig*, happy; A.-S. *halig;* Ger. *heilig*, holy.]

36. *We little listed think of him.*—We little pleased *to* think of him. In O. Eng. the construction would be, "*us* little listed" = it pleased us little. See *Marmion*, Canto I., Note 11.

37. *Rest thee.*—For rest thou thyself—*i.e.*, take thy rest.

CANTO FOURTH.

1. *Such brief return.*—Not return for a short time, but after a *brief* interval.

2. *Brodick-Bay.*—A bay on the eastern coast of the Isle of Arran.

3. *Carrick.*—The southern division of Ayrshire. The northern division was called Cunningham, and the midland Kyle.

4. *Edward, the deadliest of our foes.*—King Edward I. of England, who died at

Burgh-on-Sands, near Carlisle, in 1307, when marching to Scotland to check the progress which Bruce was making in his efforts to deliver Scotland from the English yoke.

5. *Renounced the peaceful house of death.*—Edward's dying command was that his bones should be carried at the head of the English army till Scotland should be subdued.

6. *They held unwonted way.*—Tradition says that Bruce, instead of sailing round the Mull of Cantire, and reaching Brodick-Bay by the south coast of Arran, sailed up Loch Tarbat, and dragged his ship across the narrow peninsula to Kilmaconnel, and thence sailed southwards to Arran.

7. *Selcouth.*—Strange, unusual. [A.-S. *selcuth*, unknown; *cuth*, known, from *cunnan*, to know.]

8. *Ben-Ghoil.*—Ben-Ghaoil (its English name is Goat-field or Goat-fell), a lofty mountain in Arran.

9. *Loch Ranza.*—A beautiful bay at the northern extremity of Arran.

10. *The theme deny.*—Deny that the theme is of war.

11. *Plight.*—For *plighted*. Verbs ending in *t* and *d* have a tendency to drop the participial suffix. Instances of this are common in Shakespeare. He uses *convict* for *convicted*, *acquit* for *acquitted*, *content* for *contented*, *disjoint* for *disjointed*.

12. *For my sister Isabel.*—As regards, or with respect to my sister Isabel.

13. *I guess the Champion of the Rock.... had favour in her eyes.*—I guess *that* the champion, &c. Scott habitually omits the conjunction *that* before noun clauses: see six lines above, "Since rumours state (*that*) Edith takes Clifford for her mate." The unknown knight here referred to was Ronald himself.

14. *Nigel's fate.*—See Canto II., Note 32.

15. *Would.*—Here not an auxiliary, but a principal verb, the past tense of *will* in the sense of *to be determined: would not be* = was unwilling to be, or refused to be.

16. *Trilled.*—Trickled; an unusual signification of the word. To *trill* is properly applied to the voice, and means to vibrate or shake tremulously. Scott probably intended to apply the word in this sense, figuratively, to the tremulous motion of the tear-drops.

17. *I would to Heaven.*—*Would* is here also a principal verb, but in a different sense from that explained in Note 15. It means, *I should wish*, and is really a conditional clause, the subjunctive, or protasis, being implied in *to Heaven*—*i.e.*, appealing to Heaven, or if it were Heaven's will.

18. *Went not.*—Conditional mood = should not go. The subjunctive is *were he* = *if* he were.

19. *Cheer thee.*—*Thee* is used for *thyself*, as a reflexive pronoun—*cheer thou thyself*. Comp. *Rest thee*, Canto III., Note 37.

20. *This is no youth to hold thy bow.*—This is no youth fit to be used for the purpose of holding thy bow. *To hold* is an infinitive of purpose, attributive to *youth*. There is a similar construction in "Thou art now of age *to be*," in line 169.

21. *Fair.*—An adjective, used as a common noun. See *Lady of the Lake*, Canto I., Note 51.

22. *If thou or I.*—An alternative noun clause, in the objective case, governed by *we may learn*. The proper conjunction in this case is *whether*, when both alternatives are expressed. When only one is expressed, *if* is commonly used; as, "Witness *if* I be silent."

23. *The best.*—*The* in this construction is not the article, but an adverb of degree. It is properly the ablative of the demonstrative pronoun. [A.-S. *thý*.] It is usually reduplicated—*the*....*the*—the two words being correlative, as in the phrase, "*The* more, *the* better." [A.-S. *Thé mara, thé bettera*. Compare Lat. *Quo plus, eo melius*.]

24. *Launch we.*—Imperative, first person plural, in optative sense = *let us launch*.

25. *At bay.*—In check; a technical expression in stag-hunting. [Fr. *bayer*, to gape, to watch.]

26. *Fling....grasp.*—Examples of the third person singular of the imperative = "*Let* each valiant lord *fling* aside his bow."

27. *Dead were my heart.*—Conditional mood = "My heart *would be* dead."

28. *Winded.*—There are two verbs *to wind* in English. The one means to sound by blowing, by the wind. [A.-S. *wind*; Lat. *vent-us*.] The other means to coil or twist. [A.-S. *windan*.] *Winded* is the past of the former verb; *wound*, of the latter.

29. *Crowd and clasped.*—A present tense immediately followed by a past; obviously in deference to the exigencies of metre and rhyme.

30. *Falkirk's fierce and fatal fight.*—An example of quadruple alliteration. The reference is to the Battle of Falkirk, in

which Wallace, through the jealous lukewarmness of his followers, was defeated, in 1298.

31. *Teyndrum's dread rout.*—Tyndrum, on the western border of Perthshire, the scene of a skirmish between Bruce and MacDougal of Lorn, in 1306. ——*Methven's fight.*—Bruce was defeated by the English under the Earl of Pembroke, at Methven, a village a few miles from Perth, in 1306.

32. *Kirkpatrick, Closeburn's dreaded knight.*—Closeburn Castle, in Dumfriesshire, was long the seat of the Kirkpatricks. The *dreaded knight* is Sir Roger Kirkpatrick, who, when Bruce came out of the church at Dumfries, saying he feared he had killed Comyn, exclaimed, "I mak sicar!" (I'll make sure); and entering the church, despatched him with his sword. See Canto I., Note 33.

33. *The brunt to bide.*—To bear the fiercest shock of battle. To *bide* is to endure, in a transitive sense. Its primary use is intransitive: to *abide*, to remain. See Canto V., Note 19. [A-S. *bédan*, to wait.] *Brunt* is the *heat* of onset. [A.-S. *bryne*, burning; from *byrnan*, to burn.]

34. *No easy choice the convent cell.*—Supply *is.*

35. *That thou wert wont.*—In form, an attributive clause to *time;* in meaning, an adverbial clause to *long:* The time is not long (past) *since* thou wert wont. *Wont* is here an adjective. Compare Canto III., Note 6; and *Marmion*, Canto II., Note 33.

36. *Wouldst.... approve.*—*Wert wont* to approve. Compare:

"But still the house affairs *would* draw her hence."

Othello, Act i., Scene 3.

For other meanings of *would*, see Notes 15, 17.

37. *My own Turnberry.*—Turnberry Castle, now a picturesque ruin, on Turnberry Head, six miles from Girvan on the Ayrshire coast, was the chief seat of the Earls of Carrick. During the English possession, it was held for Edward I. by Earl Percy, until it was retaken by Bruce in the manner described in the next Canto. *Mainland towers*, in the preceding line, means towers upon the mainland.

38. *To show the time propitious.*—To show the time *to be* propitious, or to show that the time was propitious; a construction resembling the accusative and infinitive in Latin.

39. *That fortress ours.*—An absolute phrase of condition. That fortress *being* ours = *if* it were ours.

40. *And reached the spot where his bold train.*—The third foot is an *accentual trochee.* Scan thus:

And reached	the spot	*where his*	bold train.				
x	*a*	*x*	*a*	*a*	*x*	*a*	*x*

Scott frequently varies iambic verse by the introduction of accentual trochees, but generally at the beginning of a line; as,—

Bróther, | I well | believe, | she said.
Lóst to | the world, | King Rob | ert said.
Kíndle | a sig | nal flame, | to show.

CANTO FIFTH.

1. *To tell.*—Here used in its literal sense, to *count; i.e.*, the beads in her rosary.

2. *That duty done.*—An absolute phrase: supply *being.*

3. *Grudge not a passing sigh to mourn her.*—*Sigh* is objective, governed by *grudge; to mourn her* is an attribute to *sigh.*

4. *Selfish, ungenerous,* &c.—These adjectives refer to the subject, *to own.* The sentence is exclamatory: "How selfish, ungenerous, &c., is it to own a throb of joy!"——*Ungenerous.*—It is not necessary to contract this word into *ungen'rous.* The principle on which the Romantic verse is constructed, as explained by Coleridge, the greatest master of it, is that the lines shall contain the same number of *accents*, generally four, but not necessarily the same number of syllables. As a rule, the accents are separated by single syllables; but these intervals may consist of double syllables without destroying the rhythm. In the one case, a foot is represented by *x*—*a*, in the other by *ek-s*—*a.* The latter foot is an accentual anapaest. We scan the line thus:—

Selfish,	ungen-	erous, mean				and base.	
a	*x*	*x*	*a*	*ek-s*	*a*	*x*	*a*

5. *Ingrate.*—Ungrateful. [Lat. *ingratus.*]

6. *Gaud.*—An ornament; an O. E. word, whence *gaudy*, showy. [Ic. *gaedi*, to adorn.] Shakespeare uses *gawds:*

"The proud day....
Is all too wanton and too full of *gawds.*"
King John, Act iii., Scene 3, line 36.

7. *Its owner far.*—An absolute phrase: "Its owner being far distant, how came it here?"

8. *Anew.*—Lately; newly since it fell.

9. *As if some climber's steps to aid.*—The past perfect must be supplied here: "As if they *had been* used to aid some climber's steps."

10. *Whose penturous path.*—The second foot in this line—*turous path*—is an anapaest. See Note 4.

11. *'Tis Edith's self.*—*Self* is here a noun. Its construction with the possessive is analogous to the forms *my*-self, *thy*-self. But the pronouns in these compounds are properly accusatives, and *-self* is an adjective agreeing with them. See *Marmion*, Canto II., Note 10.

12. *Conjure him seek.*—For *to seek*. The *to* is here omitted by poetical license.

13. *Must float.*—An extremely condensed expression. *Must* implies that the boat was in such a position that the tide could not fail to float it. Observe that *float* is here a transitive verb, governing *boat*.

14. *They lave.*—The correlative of *they* is *every wave*, because *every wave* means *all* the waves *one* by *one*. This affords a good example of the difference between *each* and *every*, inasmuch as *each* could not be followed by a plural pronoun. *Each* is separative, *every* is collective. *Every* is a compound of *each*; it is *ever-ech*—*i.e.*, all, one by one.

15. *Hauberk.*—A coat of mail. [A.-S. *healsbeorg*, from *heals*, the neck, and *beorgan*, to protect.] Chaucer uses the diminutive *habergeon*.

16. *The soldiers to the barks to share.*—To distribute the soldiers amongst the barks.

17. *Hest.*—Command. [A.-S. *haes*, from *hátan*, to command: the usual word is *behest*.]

18. *This moves me much.*—He fears that some evil has befallen the page.

19. *To bide.*—An example of the intransitive use of this verb. See Canto IV., Note 33.

20. *'Twas I....found employ.*—Supply *who* (found). The nominative of the relative may be omitted when the correlative immediately precedes the relative clause. It is to be observed, that in such sentences the relative clause is attributive to *it*, and not to the word following the verb *to be*. *It* (viz., *he who* found employ) was I; or, I was he who found employ.

21. *Wild of thought....hard of heart.*—Examples of the "genitive of reference," the nouns indicating the parts affected by the quality,—*wild* in respect of *thought*, *hard* in respect of *heart*.

22. *Were my right restored....I would have given.*—Another instance of carelessness in the consecution of tenses. It should be either, "Were my right restored, I would give;" or, "Had my right been restored, I would have given."

23. *Submiss.*—Penitent, dejected; old form of *submissive*.

24. *Noteless his presence.*—His presence attracting no notice.

25. *Methinks.*—The subject of this verb, which means *seems to me*, is the noun clause following: "Yonder beacon's shine might expiate greater fault than mine." *Shine* is here a noun, meaning brightness.

26. *Glows....rose.*—The principal verb in the past tense, followed by a subordinate verb in the present.

27. *Once more to make assurance sure.*—A reference to Kirkpatrick's share in the death of Comyn, and to his exclamation, afterwards his motto, "I mak siccar." See Canto IV., Note 32. Compare:
"But yet I'll *make assurance* double *sure*,
And take a bond of fate."
Macbeth, Act iv., Scene 1, line 83.

28. *Ware.*—Wary, on the watch.

29. *Unwitting.*—Not knowing. [*Un*, not, and *witting*, from A.-S. *witan*, to know.]

30. *To warn him.*—Infinitive of purpose to *sent*, but also the apodosis, or conditional clause = that he should warn him; answering to the protasis, or subjunctive clause, "If Bruce should venture o'er."

31. *Silly.*—Weak, feeble, fearful: this sense of the word is peculiar to Scotland. See Canto III., Note 35.

32. *Clan-Colla.*—The name of the clan or sept of the Lord of the Isles, one of whose strongholds, of which the remains may still be seen, was in the Island of Coll, north-west of Mull.

33. *Steepy.*—A poetical form of *steep*, adopted or invented to suit the rhythm.

34. *Abye.*—Pay the penalty. [O. E. *abie*, *abigge*; A.-S. *a-bicgan*; *a*, and *bicgan*, to buy.]

35. *Wold.*—An opening in the forest; literally a *wood*. See Canto I., Note 30.

36. *Be.*—Imperative, third person sin-

gular.——*Of the ambush made*=that the ambush is made.

37. *Port.*—Gate. [Lat. *porta;* said to be from *porto*, I carry, because the plough which furrowed the line of the walls of a new town was *carried* over the gateways.]

38. *The signal blown.*—The attribute here takes precedence of the substantive. It means, "The blowing of the signal;" or, "Till the signal was blown."

39. *I leave thee loose.*—I *let* thee loose, I permit thee to go loose. *Leave* is here a verbal use of the noun *leave*, permission, from A.-S. *lyfan*, to permit. To *leave*, to go away, is A.-S. *laefan*. The two words are probably from the same root. The ideas are fundamentally the same: to give permission is the same as to withdraw prohibition. The two words to *let* are similarly connected—A.-S. *laetan*, to allow; and *lettan*, to hinder.

40. *Where the wild tempest was to burst.*—This clause must be connected, not with *gazed*, but with *astonished*. *The Southron* was perplexed to know *where* the tempest was to burst.

41. *Were sped.*—Were hastened to death.

42. *Betrayed the secret kept by fear.*—Forced him to speak, while he feigned that he was dumb.

43. *Fierce Edward waits.*—Awaits fierce Edward.

44. *Short were his shrift.*—His confession would be short; he would soon die. *Shrift* is confession. [A.-S. *scrift*, from *scrifan*, to receive confession; probably from Lat. *scribo*, to write, to mark out a line of conduct, as in *prescribe*. O. E. *shrive*, to confess. See *Marmion*, Canto VI., Note 42.] *Were* is conditional= would be.——*Debate.*—Fight. This is the literal meaning of the word, though it is now limited in its application to a contention in words. [Fr. *de* and *battre*, to beat.]

45. *The Bruce hath won his father's hall.*—"I have followed the flattering and pleasing tradition, that Bruce, after his descent upon the coast of Ayrshire, actually gained possession of his maternal castle. But the tradition is not accurate. The fact is that he was only strong enough to alarm and drive in the outposts of the English garrison, then commanded, not by Clifford, as assumed in the text, but by Percy. [See Canto IV., Note 37.] Neither was Clifford slain upon this occasion, though he had several skirmishes with Bruce. He fell afterwards in the Battle of Bannockburn. Bruce, after alarming the Castle of Turnberry, and surprising some part of the garrison, who were quartered without the walls of the fortress, retreated into the mountainous part of Carrick, and there made himself so strong, that the English were obliged to evacuate Turnberry, and at length the Castle of Ayr."—*S.*

46. *Mazers.*—Drinking-cups or goblets made of maple-wood. [Ger. *maser*, the maple.]

47. *And he.*—There is no verb for this pronoun. The demonstrative is repeated in "*his* lot." This construction is not uncommon in poetry, when the relative precedes the demonstrative. The relative requires a demonstrative to lean upon, and the poet puts it in the nominative case for convenience, not knowing what case the subsequent construction of the sentence may require.

48. *The sun's bright beams.*—Supply *are*.

49. *Let Ettricke's archers sharp their darts.*—*Sharp* for *sharpen*. "The forest of Selkirk, or Ettricke, at this period, occupied all the district which retains that denomination, and embraced the neighbouring dales of Tweeddale, and at least the upper ward of Clydesdale. All that tract was probably as waste as it is mountainous, and covered with the remains of the ancient Caledonian Forest; which is supposed to have stretched from the Cheviot Hills as far as Hamilton, and to have comprehended even a part of Ayrshire. At the fatal Battle of Falkirk, Sir John Stewart of Bonkill, brother to the Steward of Scotland, commanded the archers of Selkirk Forest, who fell around the dead body of their leader."—*S.*

50. *Reedswair-Path.* — A pass in the Cheviots near Carter Fell, watered by the Reede, a tributary of the Northumbrian Tyne. *Swair* or *swire* signifies the descent of a hill. It was the scene of a skirmish (7th June 1575), celebrated in a Border ballad called "The Raid of the Reidswire." "From Reedswair-Path to the wild confines of Cape-Wrath," means from the south to the north of Scotland.

CANTO SIXTH.

1. *Believe,* &c. — Construe: "Believe that Bruce's earliest cares restore the speechless page to Arran's shore, *after* his father's castle was won, and his bold enterprise had been begun."—"Castle won," and "enterprise begun" are absolute phrases of time.

2. *To years had worn.*—An interval of seven years (1307–1314) elapses between the fifth and sixth cantos.

3. *They.*—Properly refers to "Stirling's towers," which must therefore be put, by *metonymy*, for the garrison. ——*Took term of truce* means, fixed a *term* or limit by agreement, within which they should surrender; the *term* being "John the Baptist's eve."

4. *In battles four.*—In four *battalions*, or divisions. Compare:—

"You, worthy uncle,
Shall, with my cousin, your right noble son,
Lead our first *battle.*"

Macbeth, Act v., Scene 6, line 2.

"What may the king's whole *battle* reach unto?"

I. Henry IV., Act iv., Scene 1, line 129.

[Fr. *bataille;* from *battre*, to beat.]

5. *Vaward-line.* — Vanguard-line. On *guard* and *ward.* See *Lady of the Lake*, Canto II., Note 12.

6. *'Twixt Bannock's brook and Ninian's shrine.*—Bruce's line of battle extended from the village of St. Ninians (about a mile south of Stirling) on the left, to the river Bannock, or Bannock-burn, on which his right wing rested. Bruce's army thus faced the south-east, having in their rear the slopes since known as "the Gillie's Hill."

7. *Glaives.*—Swords. [Fr. *glaive;* Lat. *gladius.*] See *Lady of the Lake*, Canto IV., Note 7.

8. *So wide, so far, the boundless host seemed.*—The latter clause is an adverbial clause of effect: "The armour flashed so wide, so far, *that* the host seemed lost in the horizon."

9. *Rearward.* — Rear-guard. Compare, *vaward* (Note 5); and, "The *rereward* came after the ark, the priests going on" (Joshua vi. 9).

10. *Ranked their files.*—Marshalled their forces: but the expression is not strictly accurate. *Rank* refers to the arrangement of men side by side; *file*, to their arrangement behind one another. Hence *rank and file* means the whole body of common soldiers. But a reference in *Macbeth* seems to imply that *file* was applied to non-commissioned officers, as distinguished from the lowest grade of soldiers:

"Now, if you have a station in the *file*,
Not in the worst *rank* of manhood, say it."

Macbeth, Act iii., Scene 1, line 102.

11. *Unseen for three long years.*—If we are to understand that Edith returned to the convent soon after the recovery of Turnberry (1307), the interval must have been longer than *three* years. See Note 2.

12. *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."—*S.*

13. *Wight.*—Strong, powerful. [See Ger. *wig*, Sw. *vid*, O.-E. *wight*, Sc. *wicht*, active, strong; whence *wychtness*, strength.] Compare *Marmion*, Canto VI., Note 32:

"O for an hour of Wallace *wight.*"

14. *Basinet.*—A light, undress helmet, in shape like a basin. [Sc. *bassanet, basnet;* Fr. *bassinet, bacinet*, a cap of steel, a pot-helmet.]

15. *The glove of Argentine.*— See Canto III., Note 3.

16. *Either host.*—Both hosts. This is the original meaning of *either* [A.-S. *aeghwa*, every one; and *-ther*, of two], every-one of two, or whichever of two. In this sense, it is a distributive pronoun = each. *Each* is used for *both* in Shakespeare, with a plural verb:

"Tell me
In peace what *each* of them by the other lose."

Coriolanus, Act iii., Scene 2, line 43.

——*Three bowshots far.*—At the distance of three bowshots. *Far* is an adverb modifying *paused; bowshots* is objective of time.

17. *A while.*—Also an objective of time = for a time;—*while* is properly a noun. [A.-S. *hwil*, time.]

18. *If.*—Whether.

19. *Battled.* — Embattled, arrayed in order of battle.

20. *Selle.*—Saddle. [Fr. *selle;* Lat. *sella,* for *sedula,* diminutive of *sedes,* a seat.] In *Macbeth,* Act i., Scene 7, line 27,

"Vaulting ambition, which o'erleaps *itself,*
And falls on the other,"

it has been plausibly proposed to read "which o'erleaps *its selle.*"

21. *The whiles.*—Whilst. Either the article or the *s* is redundant. Both *the while* and *whiles* (for *while as*) are used as conjunctions ; but *the whiles* is certainly peculiar. *Whiles* in Sc. is used as an adverb=sometimes.

22. *Speak.*—Tell, a transitive verb ; its object is the clause following.

23. *Not to regain,* &c.—*Not* modifies *would he forsake,* and *to regain* is an infinitive of purpose. "He hath sworn that he would *not* forsake his battle-post, even *to regain* the Maid of Lorn."

24. *Shot.*—Used in the literal sense of missiles—darts sent forth with force—not in its modern acceptation of globules of lead fired from guns. [A.-S. *sceotan,* to dart.]

25. *Adown.*—This, though rare, is the proper form of the preposition, which is really a compression of the phrase "*An down*" [A.-S. *a-dun*], from the hill.

26. *Forth, Marshal! on the peasant foe.* —"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 recovered." —*S.*

27. *To let.*—To hinder. [A.-S. *lettan,* to prevent ; *let,* to allow, is from A.-S. *laetan,* to permit. But the two verbs were frequently interchanged. They are probably connected in root, as the power to *hinder* implies also the power to *allow.*] See Canto V., Note 39.

28. *No stakes to turn the edge were set.*—A reference to the pits which Bruce had caused to be dug in the ground over which the English cavalry had to pass, described in the sequel.

29. *Barbèd horse.*—A war-horse clad in mail. [Lat. *barba,* a beard ; E. *barb,* a sharp point. Probably this use of the word is taken from the *barb* or point in the headpiece of a war-horse.]

30. *A while.*—For a short time : *while* is a noun ; its case is the objective of measure. See Canto I., Note 6; and *Lady of the Lake,* Canto I., Notes 1 and 47.——*Hardihood.*—Valour. See *Lady of the Lake,* Canto V., Note 5.

31. *That wont.*—That *were* wont. See Canto III., Note 6; also, *Lady of the Lake,* Canto I., Note 46.

32. *Wight.*—Strong, powerful. See Note 13.

33. *Braggart.*—Boastful. Though generally used as an adjective, this word is properly a noun, formed from the verb to *brag* (boast) by the augmentative suffix *-art;* which is the same as *-ard* in "drunkard," and *-heart* in "sweetheart."

34. *Twelve Scottish lives his baldric bore.*—The *baldric,* the belt in which the archer carried his arrows, or to which his quiver was suspended. Each arrow represented a life. Hence the proverb quoted by Ascham in his *Toxophilus,* and here referred to, "that every English archer beareth under his girdle twenty-four Scottes."

35. *The acton.*—A padded leathern jacket worn under the coat of mail. It corresponds with what Chaucer calls a *gepoun:*

"Of fustian he werede a gepoun
Al bysmotered with his habergeoun."
Prologue, 75.

The knight's jerkin was stained with his armour.

36. *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."—*S.*

37. *Lord of the Isles, my trust in thee,* &c.—"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.'"—*S.*

38. *The pibroch.*—The music of the bagpipe.

39. *And mimic ensigns high they rear.*—Tradition says that the decisive movement of the battle was made by the suttlers and camp-followers of the Scottish army, who were posted on the Gillie's Hill as spectators of the fight. Fastening on tent-poles and spears the blankets and sheets of which they had charge, they descended to the plain; and the English, thinking that a new army was coming to support the Scots, deemed the struggle hopeless, and turned and fled.

40. *Needs.*—Of necessity. The *s* is a genitive suffix, the same as we find in *certes, else* (O.-E. *elles*), *once, whiles,* &c.

41. *With spear in rest.*—With his lance couched. *Rest* in this sense is from the Fr. *arrêt,* from *arrêter,* to fasten, or fix.

42. *Cuish.*—Armour for the thighs. Shakespeare has *cuisses:*

"I saw young Harry with his beaver on,
His *cuisses* on his thighs."

I. Henry IV., Act iv., Scene 1, line 104.

[Fr. *cuisse,* the thigh.]

43. *The battle done.*—An absolute phrase.

44. *When the war-cry,* &c.—*When* is here a coördinative conjunction, equivalent to *and then.* This peculiar construction arises from an inversion of the clauses in a sentence, the primary action being made to determine the time of the secondary one, instead of *vice versâ.* Thus we say, "The author had just completed the first volume of his work, *when* he died," when we wish to intimate "that the author died *when* he had completed his first volume." So in the text, the meaning is, "The war-cry of Argentine fell faintly on the Bruce's ear, *while* he was toiling, &c., and *when* he had given command," &c. See *Dalgleish's Grammatical Analysis,* § 80 (c).

45. *The kind, the noble, and the brave.*—Adjectives used as singular nouns. An adjective, when used as a noun, is preceded by the definite article. It generally denotes a class, and is therefore plural; as, *the rich, the poor.* It may also denote an abstract principle, in which case it is singular; as, *the true, the good, the beautiful.*

46. *Ninian's convent.*—See Note 6. *Convent* is here used by metonymy for the monks. It is a greater peculiarity that it is a collective noun, as appears from the plural pronoun *their,* which refers to it.

47. *Late-wake.*—A corruption of *lyke-wake,* or *liche-wake,* the watching of a dead body during the night by the friends of the deceased [A.-S. *lic,* a dead body; and *wacian,* to watch], lest it should be interfered with by evil spirits. The custom still prevails among the lower classes in Ireland, where it leads to disgraceful scenes of debauchery and excess. The word *late-wake* has probably its origin in the fact that the *wake* is held during the night. *Wake,* the ceremony of consecrating a church, is the English equivalent of the Latin *vigil.* The ceremony began in the church on the eve of the saint's day, and ended the next day in the churchyard in scenes of mirth and riot. *Wakes* thus became equivalent to country fairs or markets.

48. *Ourself the cause.*—An absolute phrase; and notice again the compound used without the simple pronoun. The plural form is similar to the royal *we,* but it is peculiar, inasmuch as the singular *-self* is compounded with the plural *our.* Construe: "Ourself *having been* the cause, through fortune's spite, that once broke short that spousal rite, ourself will grace the bridal." He refers to his arrival at Artornish, described in Canto I. —— *Through fortune's spite.*—By the malice of fortune. *Spite* is a corruption of *despite* (Chaucer's *despyt*). [Fr. *despit;* from Lat. *despicere,* to look down upon.] The opposite of *through fortune's spite* would be expressed by "*in* spite of fortune," or "*in* fortune's spite." The difference seems to lie in the prepositions *through* and *in.* But more probably *spite* in each case represents a participle in an absolute phrase; in the one case the active participle, in the other the passive: in the former, *fortune despiting,*—*i.e.*, fortune having ill-will; in the latter, *fortune despited*—*i.e.*, fortune receiving ill-will.