SCOTT

THE INTERPRETER

OR

SCOTT

AND THE NOVEL

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DEDICATED
TO THE TWO GREATEST TEACHERS
I HAVE KNOWN, MY FATHER AND
PROFESSOR A. C. BRADLEY.

PREFACE.

This study of Sir Walter Scott is the fruit of two kinds of investigation pursued concurrently for over twenty years: first into the genius of Scott as a Master in Fiction, second into the attitude of the adolescent towards him. The writer has tried, though a teacher, to put forward suggestion rather than dogmatic conclusions, following in this the method of Professor Bradley. If in the introductory and the concluding Sections the demands of the writer are pitched somewhat low, the dual nature of his investigations must be held responsible: he has tried to get down to the level of the adolescent and, beginning there, to rise to the height of considered criticism.

O B J E C T I O N S and C R I T I C I S M S.

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Among those who have anything to do with the rising generation there is no view more generally held than that expressed by a prominent teacher when he declared "Do as you will , children do not will not, can not read Scott." Not only is this true of young people between the ages of (say) 10 and 14, - that is, when they begin to choose their own reading ; but this neglect, this disinclination, this incapacity to assimilate the Waverley Novels may be found to persist much later in life, so that it is possible to find in any ordinary audience a majority who have never got right through half-a-dozen of the best of Sir Walter. Of course it is quite possible to contend that the dazzling financial results of the Waverley Series from their first publication have blinded people to the fact that even at the height of their 'boom' the novels were not accessible to more than ten per cent of the population, and that since then the reading public has increased at least twenty-fold, so that the per-centage of real readers of Scott is as high as ever it was ; but the objection still holds good that in our day to the appeal of the Wizard of the North the majority of readers make the great refusal.

An Inquest or Inquiry into the alleged decease of Sir Walter seems therefore almost essential as preliminary to the discussion of his Aim and Appeal.

Here one is tempted to tread the ancient path of Dialogue, if not of Catechism, wherein the skilful instructor, more Sacratico, elicits, not to say elucidates, from his bewildered pupils, confession of their ignorance, and (conversely) his wisdom, or in the mode of the author of Sandford and Merton conducts an intellectual skittle-alley wherein each upreared question is deftly bowled over; but in view of the execration excited by these and similar catechists one resists the temptation.

However, the objections to reading Scott must be considered and as those of the young are generally naive, if not always frankly expressed, it may be well to begin with them and pass on to more reasoned critics and criticism later.

1. The Author's Greatness :-

First of these objections we may find in our author's admitted greatness. Full many an author lies buried beneath the marmoreal weight of his reputation, and 'Imperial Caesar dead and turned to clay may stop a hole to keep the wind away': in these two images one may find the reason of the decline and fall of many a writer's empire.

Familiarity with the writer's work:-

The characters, incidents, and sayings invented or chronicled by the great may become more or less common property, and as they become familiar descend through

base and baser uses till they reach the dust of common ways and have lost all their original brightness. I can well recall the shuddering contempt with which at the age of eight I listened to "Ye Banks and Braes", or "Annie Laurie" simply because these immortal lyrics were the last resort of the incompetent street singer and were associated with his baseness.

Awe of the author's reputation :-

Along with the contempt born of familiarity there may be the awe bred by the great man's reputation. The average school-boy may make shift with what he can shark up of the commoner elements of a great author's work, but he will fight shy of making a serious study of him, because he thinks so great a man will require too much of him, will demand greater powers of thought and application than he, the student, possesses. By most school-boys the term "high-brow" is undoubtedly applied to Scott's novels, and by that name any book is effectively and effectually damned to the school-boy - if only because of the suggestion of "swank" such study implies.

The great man as a Classic :-

The worst of all fates is that entailed on an author when he becomes a Classic. For centuries the term Classics was reserved for those books in the Latin and the Greek which by reason of their language and their style (rarely their thought and

never their morals) were deemed models for the scholar to imitate and which were accordingly hated with the deadly hatred reserved by the school-boy for all forms of compulsion. Can any boy enjoy doing a thing he is compelled to do? Observe Stalky & Co., children of the apostle of the army, "the banjo-bard of Empire" (as Stead called him), how they shudder away from everything compulsory, even cricket, and voluntarily swot up Browning, and cheerfully assume the yoke of the two modern forms of slavery - the stage, and the Press!

In the age of Pope certain English works began to be admitted to the ranks of the Classics, that is, to be used as school-books. I believe Shakespeare was long excluded because his morals were not up to the standard of Ovid and Co.: it was reserved for the 19th Century and Dr Bowdler to admit him of the immortals. Milton, Blair, Pope, Gray, Goldsmith, Gibbon, Burke, Johnson, Byron (in parts), and many historians, and some orators (of the pulpit or the senate), were enrolled, and forthwith for the most part were lost to view, buried, beneath a shroud of glossary, a pall of critical exposition, a tomb of grammatical and explanatory notes. The work of etymological experts like Trench and Max Muller, and the recommendations of Ruskin and others made the function and treatment of the Classic still more disciplinary and hortatory; until no school-boy

thought of a Classic book as anything but a mine for digging up unknown ores and shapeless pebbles, which his teachers assured him would one day prove richer than gold and more radiant than diamonds. Small wonder then that the young reader, always associating the classic author with this back-breaking slavery, never afterwards felt kindly towards him, and invariably avoided him, as a magician's ignorant apprentice might his master's tomes, knowing only their burdensome weight and nothing of their hidden spells.

The Answer to the School-boy Objection:-

Now to these objections, put forward, or at any rate felt, by the school-boy, and often cherished for a life-time by the adult, the answer is first, that to be familiar with a great man's work and yet deny him the courtesy of careful reading is unfair and unbecoming. To be ignorant of Scott is foolishness. What is the object of Reading ? Is it not, in part at least, to get acquainted with the thought of a great man, to enter into a kind of fellowship and friendship with him? To refuse to cultivate the acquaintance of a great man when the opportunity is offered is surely inexcusable in any sensible citizen.

Further, the fear of "high-brow" stuff is ridiculous, and most ridiculous applied to Scott. The reader who does not follow the thought of Scott

quite easily as regards his chief characters, their actions, and their speech, is not really trying. In any case, to rise to the dignity of reading a great Author, one acclaimed as one of the greatest, is surely worth the imputation of "swank", "side", or affectation, which is the invariable gibe of the lazy, the incapable, or the cowardly.

Literature as Entertainment :-

And what a revelation is there for the boy, who taking up Scott as a Classic discovers him as a novelist, looking on him as a teacher finds him to be a first-class entertainer! For our greatest geniuses, in this country at least, are invariably those who set out first of all to entertain : Chaucer, Spenser, Fielding, Lamb, Scott, Dickens, - all showmen, and the master-showman of them all - Shakespeare! It is worth while stressing the point with young people and exhibiting the true aim of literature as entertainment. Of course the wise teacher will see that the connotation of that term, Entertainment, is not left too shallow, but is shown to be capable of the noblest expansion and extension till it embraces the cultivation of all the highest qualities of body, mind, and spirit. But to begin with it is worth while noting how diligently Shakespeare (and after him Scott, and the others) strove to produce entertainment, and fit that entertainment to the popular taste.

Shakespeare as Entertainer - his titles :-

Take for a brief illustration one or two of the titles he chose for his plays. We all know that the true hero of "Julius Caesar" is Brutus, and that the great Dictator after feebly hectoring his way through the first two acts disappears at the beginning of the third, only reappearing in the fourth as a warning shadow; but Shakespeare knew the tremendous interest taken in the founder of the Roman Empire, so great an interest that his name alone connoted Emperor (still surviving as Kaiser in German, and Czar in Russia), and suggested all the glory and the grandeur that was Rome ; and so he gave his play that name which would most readily draw the pageant-loving crowd. Again it is perfectly obvious that in "As You Like It" the playwright is giving his audience four very popular things : (1) the artificial pastoral of Arcadia (2) the triumph of the Younger Son in Orlando, (3) the sudden conversion of Duke Frederick - against all probability, and (4) the pairing of no fewer than eight of the characters - wedding-bells with a vengeance, - Touchstone and Audrey being only a degree worse assorted than Oliver and Celia.

Finally the "Twelfth Night, or What You Will," recalls the wild hilarity of the close of the Roman Saturnalia (the Scotch "Daft-days") when on the last day of the feast the servants became masters for the nonce; for if the play be carefully exam-

examined it will be seen that servants and underlings play the most important parts, e.g., Viola, Malvolio, Feste, Maria, Sir Toby, - while the Duke, the Countess Olivia, and Sir Andrew Aguecheek are dominated by them and do their will.

It requires little investigation to find Scott following the master-showman even in this detail, and in his choice of titles exciting and maintaining the popular interest, as in Rob Roy, Old Mortality, the Heart of Midlothian, The Black Dwarf, etc.. It is also obvious from his introductions and his general attitude towards his work as a novelist that Scott (again like Shakespeare) quite frankly accepts the position of public entertainer although, (like Shakespeare once more) at times he rather despises himself for it, and laments that so trivial a task should occupy his genius.

One wonders whether the general contempt for the Jester, the first and only entertainer for centuries, was the source of this self-contempt. Did Shakespeare and Scott feel that as purveyors of public entertainment they were no better than the motley fool whonever earned applause unmixed with scorn ? Be that as it may it is indubitable that Scott is to be regarded as a great entertainer. The character of the entertainment will appear as we proceed.

2. Scott has had his day - a bygone day ?

2. Scott has had his day - a bygone day ?

Bygone fashions are a common source of mirth especially to young people : the dress of yesterday, how ludicrous it appears to those who have discarded it, the fashion of twenty years ago, how hopelessly ugly even to those who were its proudest exponents. Now and again for the purposes of pageantry or historical illustration old wardrobes are ransacked, and dresses, wigs, or dances are exhibited in the light of day, - a light often too strong for faded colours, for enamelled cheeks and powdered hair ; and beaux strut and belles simper on public highways and crowded streets, most unlike the dim-lit halls and formal gardens of long ago. Young people are apt to lay stress on fashion and to despise that which is not up-to-date and of the latest mode, and most of all do they despise that which was once the "rage" of the moment. They do not realise that in following the dictates of Fashion they are complying with the herd-instinct, the tendency to go with the crowd. Of course the leaders of fashion are or try to be original, and their followers, each according to his courage, seek some degree of distinction above their fellows - with the result that a painfully uniform level is attained by all, and each devotee is undistinguishable from the rest of fashion's flock.

While it may be admitted that fashions change in Literature as in dress or manners, it is obviously dangerous to assume, as young folk are apt to do, that

what was popular (or fashionable) in book-reading a generation or a century ago is bound to be out of date and old-fashioned. The devotee of Fashion is apt to reason that just as a mode adopted by the million has become hopelessly vulgar, so the enormous popularity of "Waverley" or "Pickwick Papers" stamps these works as belonging to a day, or as gratifying a taste that is common and coarse. There are even critics who fall into this error and look with contempt upon the "vogue" attained by a writer as a sure proof that his appeal is low, his tone vulgar, his thought weak and undistinguished. The critics of the century after Shakespeare found countless faults of taste, of art, of construction, of ignorance, of omission and commission, in the dramas of the master, while these dramas still held the stage ; and this fault-finding was really due to the reluctance to admit that what was popular could ever be artistic. Modern criticism has reversed the decisions of these criticasters and shewn the popular judgment to be sound.

The fact is that one of the features of genius is that it makes a general appeal, touches chords of emotion in the heart, evokes thoughtful assent from the brain, raises to a state of exaltation the spirit of every man, no matter how common.

It is of course a legitimate demand that Literature of any kind should have a message for its own age and should conform to the standards of the day in which it was written. The German novelist Fontane says:

"The Novel should be a picture of the time to which we ourselves belong, at least a reflection of a life at the border of which we ourselves stood, or about which our parents related". But while it is obvious that at the present day a vast amount of fiction concerns itself with present-day problems and seeks to portray life in the modern world with the accuracy of (say) the press photographer, it is not too much to say that the task of producing a coherent and artistic picture of modern life as a whole, political, social, industrial, artistic, religious, has not yet been achieved. The difficulty of selecting the salient facts, of avoiding unnecessary detail, of maintaining true proportion, above all of measuring the momentum of the movements of the day is one which has baffled every literary genius in the past - if one excepts the Hebrew Prophets, whom no one will rank among fictionists.

On the other hand it is possible for the genius to depict <u>the past in terms of the present</u> as did Chaucer, and Dante ; or <u>the present in terms of the past</u> as did Spenser - much more successfully than some critics hold; for the magnificent parallel between the Faery Queene surrounded by her adventurous knights, and Elizabeth surrounded by her knightly adventurers, is not to be lightly cast aside as impossible or unreal allegory. Milton when he descended into the arena of conflict

failed to be more than a somewhat dusty gladiator, but in his great Epics he stated the Protestant view of Religion, the theory of the Universe and its Creator, the relationship between Man and God; while in Samson Agonistes he embodied the conflict of the Puritans with their enemies, or rather the state of things after the conflict had ceased at the Restoration.

Shakespeare is of course the great Recorder, who, not only in his series of Chronicle Plays - the dramatic Epic of English History, but in all his writings, even in"Venus and Adonis", graved the character of the England of his day - energetic, enterprising, adventurous in action ; witty, spirited, independent in thought; joyous, humorous, emotional in its amusements; law-abiding, patriotic, religious in conduct.

Similarly it will be found that Scott taking the Past for his subject embodies the leading characteristics of the Britain of his day, and we, standing in almost the same position as our compatriots of a century ago, - at the close of a great War, in which the national strength and the national spirit were strained to the uttermost, may find more to entertain and enlighten us in Scott than in most of our post-war fiction.

3. Are Scott's descriptions dry ?

Another objection seriously urged by many young people may be illustrated by reference to Stevenson's views, which here, as frequently, represent youth or at anyrate modern youth, "In anything fit to be called by the name of reading the process should be absorbing and voluptuous; we should gloat over a book, be rapt clean out of ourselves, and rise from the perusal, our minds filled with the busiest kaleidoscopic dance of images, incapable of sleep or of continuous thought." But many of our young folks are unable to 'gloat' over the novels of Scott because, they say, the interesting parts are smothered by long passages of dry description.

Now, when, as in some cases, the term description is applied to those passages where our author seems impelled to give a complete biography of a character before he allows him speech or action, or where he prefaces or concludes interesting incidents with archaeological details or didactic moralising, it must be admitted that these are blemishes to be endured in the good Sir Walter as story-teller. Without suggesting that the beauty of the oasis may be enhanced by the journey through the arid desert, one may hint that the desert is not so barren as may appear to the impatient, and, as Saintsbury points out, even the otiose opening of Waverley has great interest for the literary student, for it

shows that at the outset of his career Scott "had not knowledge or courage to strike straight out into the stream of action and conversation, but troubled himself with accumulating bladders and arranging ropes for his rescue in case he fell into difficulties."

Scott's position in the development of the Novel:-

The position of Scott in the development of the novel is really responsible for much of his difficulty; he had to create the historical novel with nothing but the feeblest models.

"The historians of the 18th Century, who saw or expected the realisation of the ideal in their own day, took up the position rather of orators than of authors; they occupied themselves with theoretical questions of government and civilisation, without consideration of the influence of climatic and geographical conditions, ~~or of~~ the past history of a nation, the past history of a nation as a race seldom suggested itself to them. Scott on the other hand made it his endeavour as a writer of historical fiction to give a vivid impression of the peculiarities of certain periods and countries. " + Southey in 1801 called attention to the fact that "there exists no tale of romance that does not betray gross and unpardonable ignorance of the habits and feelings prevalent at the time and in the scene."

+ G. Brandes.- Main Currents of 19th Century Literature Vol. IV. Nationalism in England.

The tendency to be prolix inherited by Scott from his predecessors arises partly from the didactic ideal which was the bane of English prose for long enough. The prose writer, whether essayist, satirist, moralalist, critic, or storyteller, could not rid himself of the idea that his function was to enlighten the ignorance, and correct, or at least direct, the morals of his audience. Hence he was not content to weave a scheme of mingled incident and dialogue, he had to interpose tracts of explanation, of comment, of illustrative learning, or of reflection. And the product of this combination the reading public accepted and acclaimed in the 18th century novel. The divagations of that novel from the standard of the great six (Richardson, Fielding, Smollet, Sterne, Goldsmith, and Johnson) into the region of the sensational, the mysterious, the grotesque, the sentimental, the super-natural, the political, and the pseudohistorical, as we find it in Horace Walople, Mrs Radcliffe, Fanny Burney, Henry Mackenzie, Susan Ferrier, Wm. Godwin, Jane Porter, and the rest, were popular, not because of their greatness,but because they enlarged the scope of the novel, and laid stress on the essential elements of plot, incident, characterisation, and dialogue. Scott was not uninfluenced by this phase of fiction, but in the matter of discursiveness he harked back to the earlier masters. A second reason may be found in Scott's historical aim, about which something will be said later,but

which it suffices at the moment to say must be the source of the definite historical summaries, admirable in texture, and generally accurate in detail and just in judgment, but not essential to the romantic action, in such novels as, The Fortunes of Nigel, A Legend of Montrose, Peveril of the Peak, Woodstock, Quentin Durward &c.

Further we have to bear in mind the breadth and variety of Scott's learning, the enormous fund of knowledge drawn from observation, antiquarian study, and reading of the widest description, combined with a memory that rivals Macaulay's for the tenacity with which it clung to information once acquired. Hence for Scott to mention an ancient custom, an interesting ruin, a quaint profession or trade, a local pastime, an obsolete branch of learning, or a wandering band of gipsies, is to open a flood-gate that bears the reader into a back-water, charming in itself yet leading no whither and necessitating a return to the main current of the narrative, or like the distributary channels of the Euphrates and Tigris winding irriguous round and through a rich plain full of teeming life, only to rejoin the parent stream not much nearer the final goal of its journeying. To the young and impatient readers with a limited conception of the aims and purposes of fiction such deviations from the straight track of the plot interest are intolerable ; but they are part and parcel of Scott's nature, and, as we hope to shew later, almost an inte-

integral part of his method.

Description of Scenery - background :-

To object to his descriptions of Scenery as interruptions of the plot is like demanding pictures without background : such pictures may be made, but they are not more convincing or true to life than those in which man and nature are found combined and conjoined. Carlyle gibes at "the new malady of view-hunting". "Never till after The Sorrows of Werther was there man found who would say: Come let us make a description! Having drunk the liquor, come let us eat the glass!" But as this follows the magnificent passage on Mountain scenery (in Sartor Resartus) it is clear that he is distinguishing between description that may be called sentimental, and that which suggests or supplements the thought or action. Yet there are those to whom any kind of scenic description is a bore and a nuisance. In such individuals the faculty of imagination needs development: either from faulty education, laziness, or other reason, they cannot visualise pictures from words. Possibly the Motion - Picture, supplying a mechanical reproduction of natural scenery, is a potent agent in destroying or benumbing the faculty; but there is considerable danger in apportioning blame in matter of this kind, and at any rate it is necessary only to suggest that objections to scenic description are more frequently confessions of personal defect than criticism of an author, particularly Scott.

4. Want of Excitement :-

Another criticism which is this time quite definitely attributable to the influence of the Motion-picture or Cinematograph is that which complains of want of excitement in Scott. The incidents in his novels which provide the reader with a thrill are not numerous. Compared with the fare provided weekly or bi-weekly by the cinema-film of hairs-breadth escapes and moving accidents by flood and field, the ordered progress of any one of the Waverley Novels is mild and unenterprising. But even the accelerated life of the 20th century does not provide the succession of exciting events suggested by the screen-drama, - which is in fact no other than an old friend, viz:- melodrama. Now, melodrama whether in the hands of the playwright or those of the novelist generally involves a succession of exciting events which in themselves, or as a series, are impossible or highly improbable. The interest evoked by the melodramatic tale is the same as that excited by the performance of a juggler or a circus rider, it is merely a passing sensation and has no relation to real life. Yet that is not to say that the stirring situation, the thrilling episode, need be awanting in great narrative any more than in real life - the achievements of Lawrence of Arabia, the career of Lt. Col. Freyburg, V.C., the attack on Zeebrügge, outdo anything that the novelist could

invent; and in the total sum of the Waverley romances, the items of thrilling interest mount into hundreds, ranging from battles, sieges, tournaments, combats, to trials, pageants, feasts, and all infinitely varied so that no incident duplicates another. More than that, these seenes evoke in the reader more than mere vulgar wonder, they touch the purest emotions : to Scott as to Shakespeare were given those golden keys, -

> "This can unlock the gates of joy,
> Of horror that, or thrilling fears,
> Or ope the sacred source of sympathetic tears".

Scott is a master of the whole orchestra of human emotion, so that not only the stirring drum, the martial trumpet, the barbaric cymbals, clash, and blare, and roll in his symphonies, but the piercing flute, the soft-whispering recorder, the yearning violin, the throbbing harp, and the glorious human voice, all conjoin and harmonise in one grand unity. Not only is that so but the striking themes grow out of the characters and appear only in their appointed places.

5. Why so much of the Supernatural ?

Most modern readers feel some exasperation with Scott's use of the supernatural, which he introduced into so many of his novels without, apparently, refuting beliefs which the 19th Century regarded as irrational and unscientific. Almost every known medium whereby the invisible world is, or was, held to impinge on human life is en-

enlisted by the Wizard of the North, and one can classify the manifestations under these headings:-

(1) Actual spiritual appearances, like the Bodach Glas in Waverley, The White Lady of Avenel in the Monastery, and the wraith of Old Alice in the Bride of Lammermoor.

(2) Supernatural powers professed or claimed by Meg Merrilees, in Guy Mannering, the sybil Norna in the Pirate, Hayraddin in Quentin Durward, and Alan Macaulay in the Legend of Montrose; or pretended, as by Dousterswivel in the Antiquary, and Galeotti in Quentin Durward.

(3) Predictions based upon old rhymes or traditions as in the Antiquary, Guy Mannering, Peveril of the Peak, the Bride of Lammermoor; upon the pseudo-science of Astrology as in Guy Mannering; and upon old superstitious practices or beliefs as in the Fair Maid of Perth, and the Bride of Lammermoor.

In addition to these there are a great many instances where the belief in the supernatural is used to further the action. Thus Wayland Smith in Kenilworth, and the Black Dwarf, in the novel of that name, are taken by superstitious rustics as embodiments of ancient spiritual figures traceable to prehistoric times. Again there are occasions when deliberate mystification is introduced, as in Woodstock, where the ghostly phenomena are manifestly the work of what our American friends would call "spoof spooks."

Compared with Shakespeare Scott is much more prodigal of supernatural interventions, more than two thirds of his plots involving one or other of the manifestations classified above. Yet it can be shown that nowhere in Scott does the supernatural

play so important a part as in Hamlet, A Midsummer Night's Dream, Macbeth, and The Tempest. The only supernatural phenomenon to which Scott assigns a prominent if not indispensable part in the machinery of the plot is the White Lady of Avenel. Perhaps it is on that account that the author does not introduce into the tale those criticisms and explanations which he is careful to insert in every other novel involving the use of supernatural agency. For herein lies the difference between Scott and Shakespeare in this matter. Shakespeare reproducing the thought of his time introduces no criticism of the supernatural, the only point of doubt being that regarding the origin of the phenomena, whether they are real spirits or cunning simulaera devised by the Devil. Whatever Shakespeare's own views, he had to face a very strong body of public opinion in favour of the existence of supernatural agencies, with a further view, largely ecclesiastical and sponsored by Royalty no less, that Satan was their principal author. (The theory that King James was the contriver of the part assigned to the Witches in Macbeth is fascinating, - at any rate there can be no doubt that in this, as in other features of the play, the Master-Showman had his eye on his royal patron.) Scott writing in the 19th century has to consider, if not represent, the modern

scepticism regarding the supernatural. In the 1830 introduction to the Monastery the novelist frankly confesses the device of his "recourse to the beautiful though almost forgotten theory of astral spirits or creatures of the elements, surpassing human beings in knowledge and power but inferior to them, as being subject, after a certain space of years, to a death which is to them annihilation, as they have no share in the promise made to the sons of Adam." In this effort therefore Scott was attempting the mode of the Fairy Tale, a mode which Hans Christian Andersen was about to make so delightful an entertainment; but in spite of his devotion to Pet Marjorie and his own children Sir Walter seems to have lacked that sympathy with the child-mind which is necessary for the true teller of Fairy Tales. For tales of magic belong to the childhood of the race, they represent unreflective but vivid conceptions of the world that lay outside of ordinary experience, and primitive man, past and present, finds no difficulty in crediting the apparently impossible. (Not only so but he likes to think that the impossible may happen, that dreams may come true, the weak overcome the strong, the good be rewarded and the evil punished, that for him "the clouds would open and show riches ready to

drop upon him." Uncivilised and semi-civilised peoples accept the white man's aero-planes, machine-guns, gramophones, 'cinemas', and 'wireless', as mere magic, without attempting to probe the mystery or reflect upon the sources of these wonders. So the child-mind passes through the Nursery-tale stage and for a time after it has relinquished belief in the possibility of Fairy-tales clings to the type as representing a world that is more satisfactory than the world it is getting to know. Not only so, but many adults never get beyond the Fairy tale class of fiction and live in a mental world that is as unreal as a dream.

But the essence of the Fairy-Tale lies in the faith of the narrator who must do his story-telling in one of three ways - either (1) he must tell the things as a simple believer, - it may be in the person of a dweller in the days when belief in such things was natural, of which type the Ancient Mariner is the illustrious and immortal example; or (2) he must tell it as one who believes that it did so happen though he cannot explain it, the attitude common alike to the plain man and the greatest genius, the attitude of suspended judgment; an attitude only tolerable in these two. For the plain man says "I am only telling you a story. I don't pretend to explain it." While the genius says "In the great chart of life that I unroll before you there is

this little corner unexplored - will you overlook that in view of the continents I have unveiled ?;" or (3) he must give to the narrative a colour like allegory, or humour, such as is given by Spenser, Bunyan, Tennyson, and, in some degree, Shelley and Byron, on the one hand, and Pope, Dickens, and Thackeray, on the other.

In the case of the Monastery Scott naturally does not believe sufficiently in his White Lady to give her reality, and he does not lay sufficient stress on the original begetter of the tale, whom he brings forward in the Introduction, and who as a Roman Catholic and an antiquarian might have been saddled with a devout belief in the tutelary spirit of his family. I am not sure that our great Romancist ever does take the trouble to keep up the character of the imaginary recorder; for even in the novels of Rob Roy and Redgauntlet the narrator differs so little in personal characteristics from Scott himself that the style cannot be distinguished from that of any other novel. Perhaps his most successful essays in this type of fiction, of which Goldsmith, and Meredith, and Browning are well-known exponents, will be found in the Introductions where his fancied interlocutors, Peter Pattieson, Jedediah Cleisbotham, Captain Clutterbuck, Sergeant More Macalpin, Dick Tinto &c., speak in language and express thought that is quite in keeping with

their attributed character. Even in Wandering Willie's Tale, otherwise a chef-dœuvre, one may detect elements of rationalism as regards the supernatural that could easily have been left out in the case of a character like Wandering Willie. In Stevenson's Catriona, a tale of almost the same period as Redgauntlet, we find the Story of Tod Lapraik, embodying the faith of those times in witchcraft and, without committing the narrator, producing an atmosphere of awe and grotesquerie which is redolent at once of an earlier day and also of the Scottish character.

But while Scott uses supernatural machinery to add to the interest of his romances he never again allows it to be a prominent agency in his plots. Indeed, as Saintsbury points out, the author of Waverley owes much, in this matter of the treatment of the supernatural, to his predecessors in the development of the novel. The successors of Richardson and the other novelists made quest for new and exciting subjects of fiction, and did not fail to make use of the mysterious and the supernatural. The mystery tale began with Horace Walpole's Castle of Otranto and enjoyed a long spell of popularity. Mrs Radcliffe followed with the Mysteries of Udolpho, and her method particularly seems to have been Scott's model. "She uses the supernatural to produce

an atmosphere of terror - persuades you that something terrific is going to happen or has just happened. By a succession of serious mystifications and non-comic much ado about nothing she induces her readers to suspend their critical faculties sufficiently to enable them to take it all seriously."

With authors and work like this preceding him Scott could claim that the element of the supernatural he did introduce was much more plausible and better proportioned; but the tendency to mystification and non-explanation is doubtless due to the influence of his fore-runners.

Scott's three attitudes - (1) Commonsense:-

We therefore find that towards the supernatural Scott has three attitudes. The first is that of the average thinking man of his day, who, where the superstitious found confirmation of their beliefs in cases of supernatural agency like the fulfilment of prophecy in Guy Mannering, the Antiquary, Quentin Durward etc., saw only a natural happening or at best a mere coincidence. This commonsense attitude is well expressed by Hob Elliot in the Black Dwarf when he says, "I am in the mind that witches and warlocks havena half the power they had lang syne; at least, sure am I that ae ill-deviser, like auld Ellieslaw, or ae ill-doer like that villain Westburnflat, is a greater plague and abomination in a countryside than a haill curnie o' the warst witches

that ever capered on a broomstick."

2. - And yet ---

And yet there are instances in Scott where one feels that he has personally a mental reservation as of one who shares Hamlet's

"There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,
Than are dreamt of in your philosophy."

Andrew Lang observes that Scott "was very much interested in phantasms and withcraft, and never knew the precise frontiers of his belief and disbelief." Particularly is this the case with those forms of the supernatural for which personal evidence of a kind is forthcoming, e.g., the supernatural powers of Highlanders and of Gipsies. One supposes that he found difficulty in rejecting the evidence of Highland gentlemen on behalf of Second-Sight and family wraiths, or of Border lairds anent the gipsies and their powers. Again that which has been acknowledged and attested by so many authorities human and divine from time immemorial is not to be lightly set aside by a 19th century Tory. Yet he admits reasoning against such belief and disproves such powers, - in A Legend of Montrose, for instance, where one would expect the reverse to be shown.

3. The genesis of belief in the supernatural:-

It may be said that as a modern gentleman Scott weighed the evidence for the supernatural and found it on the whole inconsistent with reason; as a

romancist and an antiquarian, he found a fascination and a charm in the multitude of instances that constituted so large a portion of legend and tradition; but as a careful student of human nature he was able not only to record those bygone beliefs but to trace the process whereby they were evolved. In the English Parnassus the editors (Professors Macneille Dixon, and H.J.C. Grierson) point out how the supernatural in Tam O'Shanter is based on "the traditions and imaginings of the excited peasant mind, - on the disturbed and excited imagination, - the source of disturbance being some violence done to the moral nature, to the elemental instincts and affections of the heart." A still grander instance is found in The Bride of Lammermoor. In this work Scott shows the Past working in the Present, and, by a series of natural happenings, - the complaints of the old retainers of the ruined house of Ravenswood, the fatuous devotion of Caleb Balderston, and above all the muttered converse of the three old crones, - not witches but merely old women rendered malevolent by their dependence on charity, - sitting by the tree at the church door awaiting the bridal procession, like the three Norns under the Tree Igdrasil, suggests not only the mysterious malignancy attributed by the Scandinavians to the Norns, but also the whole idea of Fate, inevitable, ineluctable, an

Agency outside and beyond the power of Man, that is, the Supernatural. This psychological study of the genesis and evolution of belief in the supernatural is one of the greatest achievements of Scott's pen, and is responsible, I think, for the very high position given the Bride of Lammermoor - some authorities placing it highest among Scott's works.

Compared with the master touches of Scott the pen of Hardy labours heavily with much less success, to produce a similar result in Tess o' the D'Urbervilles. A lighter but similar effect is attained by Hawthorne in the House of the Seven Gables, where by skilful suggestion he produces the effect of a procession of family ghosts.

6. Plot-Invention :-

While some youthful critics complain that Scott is not exciting enough for their palates, and others that he dabbles too much in the Supernatural, still others grumble that the author of Waverley relies upon plots that bear no semblance to real life. They assert that the theme of the Lost Heir, already old in Shakespeare's day, recurring in Ramsay's Gentle Shepherd, and in 18th Century novels, is used by Scott as his principal "motif" at least thrice, in Guy Mannering, The Antiquary, and A Legend of Montrose, and as a subordinate theme even oftener, e.g., The Heart of Midlothian, The Abbot, The Pirate,

Redgauntlet, St. Ronan's Well, and The Fair Maid of Perth. They further allege that in several of these and other romances the succession of the hero to his family estate, or to his legitimate rights, or to lofty rank abroad, or to the ambitions and prejudices of his race, is the subject of the story (vide Guy Mannering, The Fortunes of Nigel, The Talisman, Quentin Durward, Waverley, The Bride of Lammermoor); and such mainsprings of Romance, they suggest, may commend themselves to a Scots lawyer, but they do not connote much power of Invention, nor does their frequent recurrence convey an impression of reality.

This rather whimsical criticism touches at last upon a point put forward by older, more advanced critics, who do find something to cavil at in the apparent unreality of Scott's plots or in the apparent poverty of his invention. But before considering this charge it may be well to consider the question of Plot construction along with other Criteria of Fiction.

C R I T E R I A of F I C T I O N.

1. CONSTRUCTION.
   - Definition of the Novel.
   - Weakness of Love-Interest - Scott's diffidence in love-episodes.
   - True interest of Plot - Contest.
   - The Fighting Instinct.
   - Example of Construction - St. Ronan's Well.

2. CHARACTERISATION.
   - Methods.
   - (1) Enlargement.
   - (2) Realistic.
   - (3) Touched up original or Composite.
   - Carlyle's criticism - reply of Lang.
   - S's fertility approaches Shakespeare.
   - Heroes weak (a) influence of 18th cent. (b) static position in Historical Novel (c) Scott's personal position.
   - Heroines - Ruskin's view.
   - Other characters (1) Royalties etc. (2) Agents - major and minor (3) Illustrative - (Genre).

II.

Criteria of Fiction:-

Without elaborating the reasons for adopting these standards of judgment it should be enough to say that in estimating the work of novelists or story tellers they have been found useful in guiding the unpractised and inexperienced. The twelve criteria are not of equal value, nor mutually exclusive, but it will be found that it is possible for a writer to be known for one and, it may be, one only of them all. They are as follows:

1. Construction.
2. Characterisation.
3. Description of Action.
4. Description of Scenery.
5. Representation of Speech.
6. Representation of Thought.
7. Humour.
8. Pathos.
9. Truth to Nature or to History.
10. Information.
11. Style.
12. Message.

1. Construction.

The first Criterion of the Novelist, as also of the Dramatist, is the Power of Construction, or the management of the Plot - not necessarily the Invention of the Plot.

The Novel, like the Drama, is simply a section

of human history, public or private, revealed to the reader with every possible adjunct of reality: that is, not only does the writer chronicle human speech and action, as the historian does, but he reveals the thought that precedes speech or action, he shows the relationship between one action and another, unveils mysteries, resolves dubieties, assigns the meed of praise or blame, reward or punishment - takes upon himself in Lear's words 'the mystery of things
As if we were God's spies'.

In other words the novel is an attempt at perfect history. The historian ascertains the facts, collates, selects, and arranges them so as to bring out their importance and their relationship, uses his imagination to make clear and vivid his pictures of men and events, and dignifies his narrative with a polished and impressive style - and what can he more? It is left to the novelist to add verisimilitude by the addition of details that are not chronicled or deemed worth chronicling. It is left to him to colour his descriptions with humour or pathos; to give his characters reality by reproducing their very accent and dialect; to use his knowledge of the heart of man in probing their motives, conjecturing their thoughts, weighing their knowledge.

It is one of the advantages of the novel over formal history that it does not need to confine its efforts to exceptional happenings: the commonplaces of life are the staple of ordinary conversation, and

startling events are rare in the lives of ordinary folk, consequently the task of the novelist is to produce a picture of reality, - not, be it observed, a perfect record of reality, but a picture which will convey the impression of truth. This impression will be produced by enlisting the interest of the reader, and maintaining it up to the end, while the tension will be lightened and the entertainment varied by the insertion of details and episodes drawn from life and nature. The main difficulty of the novelist lies in maintaining due proportion between the elements of his imaginative edifice. In the words of Captain Clutterbuck, the story should be "natural and probable; commencing strikingly, proceeding naturally, ending happily - like the course of a famed river, which gushes from the mouth of some obscure and romantic grotto - then gliding on, never pausing, never precipitating its course, visiting, as it were, by natural instinct, whatever worthy objects of interest are presented by the country through which it passes - widening and deepening in interest as it flows on; and at length arriving at the final catastrophe as at some mighty haven, where ships of all kinds strike their yards." (Introductory Epistle to The Fortunes of Nigel). The management of the plot is one of the things in which some critics declare Scott to be deficient, and indeed he himself in the

same introductory epistle declares, "I have repeatedly laid down my future work to scale, divided it into volumes and chapters, and endeavoured to construct a story which I meant should evolve itself gradually, and strikingly, maintain suspense and stimulate curiosity; and which, finally, should terminate in a striking catastrophe. But I think there is a demon who seats himself on the feather of my pen when I begin to write, and leads it astray from the purpose. Characters expand under my hand; incidents are multiplied; the story lingers while the materials increase; my regular mansion turns out a Gothic anomaly, and the work is closed long before I have attained the point I purposed. - When I light on such a character as Bailie Jarvie or Dalgetty, my imagination brightens and my conception becomes clearer at every step which I take in his company, though it leads me many a weary mile away from the regular road and forces me to leap hedge and ditch to get back into the route again."

Weakness of the Love Interest:

Not only does Scott admit this tendency to 'stravaig' from the path of the Love Interest in his novels, but the average reader is likely to find Scott's lovers and his love-scenes by far the least satisfactory features of his productions. There is not one of the seven and twenty romances without at least one pair of lovers, and the fortunes, adventures,

distresses, entanglements, oppositions encountered by one or both mark the course of the ostensible plot. Yet very few of these lovers, qua lovers, excite much interest: some of them like Reuben Butler in the Heart of Midlothian, Nigel Olifaunt in the Fortunes of Nigel, Sir Kenneth in The Talisman, Earnscliff in the Black Dwarf, never utter a word of love; others like Ivanhoe, Waverley, and Darsie Latimer, show some animation when they are in danger of becoming attached to the wrong partner, but when their wandering fancy is recalled and brought to heel subside into silent devotion.

Failure of love-dialogues.

The stiffest and most unreal scenes ever portrayed by Scott are his love-scenes, the most stilted and wooden language used by any of his characters, or by any human being - is uttered by his lovers, and the most unnatural, sentimental, conventional actions are to be expected of them. In The Antiquary, Lovel and Miss Wardour address each other as if they were in Parliament or at least upon some stage where dignity and decorum must be preserved at any cost. "I only wish", said Miss W. "as your friend, and as one who is obliged to you for her own and her father's life, to entreat you to suppress this unfortunate attachment - to leave a country which affords no scope for your talents, and to resume the honourable line of the profession which you seem to have abandoned."

"Well, Miss Wardour, your wishes shall be obeyed - have patience with me one little month, and,if, in the course of that space, I cannot show you such reasons for continuing my residence at Fairport, as even you shall approve of, I will bid adieu to its vicinity, and, with the same breath, to all my hopes of happiness."

"Not so, Mr. Lovel; many years of deserved happiness, founded on a more rational basis than your present wishes are, I trust, before you - But it is full time to finish this conversation: - I cannot force you to adopt my advice - I cannot shut the door of my father's house against the preserver of his life and mine - but the sooner Mr. Lovel can teach his mind to submit to the inevitable disappointment of wishes which have been so rashly formed, the more highly he will rise in my esteem - and in the meanwhile, for his sake as well as mine, he must excuse my putting an interdict upon conversation on a subject so painful."

Who would imagine from this stately colloquy that the two were deeply in love, that they had lately been face to face with death, and that the only obstacle was the crazy pride of "one of her kinsmen has a most weak pia mater!"

In Rob Roy, the one outburst that Francis allows himself - "The world can afford me nothing to repay

what I must leave behind me" does not seem to merit Diana's appeal to "curb this unmanly burst of passion", and is much more accurately defined by Francis himself as his "half declaration of love." The playwright who adapted Scott's novel to the stage had the greatest difficulty in giving even a semblance of reality to the lovers, which he meets by the invention of a quantity of love-dialogue, and the insertion of a number of love-lyrics converting the play into a kind of opera. In spite of these additions the play owes its popularity to the scenes where in figure the bold outlaw and his clan, or the douce figure of the Glasgow Bailie and his commercial and domestic attendants, or both together at the pass of Loch Ard.

In Old Mortality there is a passage which describes real feeling: "He was at her side, almost at her feet, pressing her unresisting hands, and loading her with a profusion of thanks and gratitude which would be hardly intelligible from the mere broken words, unless we could describe the tone, the gesture, the impassioned and hurried indications of deep and tunultuous feeling with which they were accompanied." But whenever the lovers open their lips the usual constraint is apparent. "I have taken a strange step Mr. Morton - a step that perhaps may expose me to censure in your eyes - But I have long permitted you to use

the language of friendship - perhaps I might say more - too long to leave you when the world seems to have left you." Thus Edith Bellenden, and in reply Henry Morton, "Be what it will - it is to me from this moment the most welcome incident of a weary life. To you, dearest Edith - forgive me, I shiuld have said Miss Bellenden, but misfortune claims strange privileges - to you I have owed the few happy moments which have gilded a gloomy existence; and if I am now to lay it down, the recollection of this honour will be my happiness in the last hour of suffering."

Later on they assume the parliamentary style and address each other in stately rhetoric worthy of the Gentleman's Magazine. e.g. Miss B: "Can I approve of a rebellion which has made such a man, formed to ornament, to enlighten, and to defend his country, the companion of gloomy and ignorant fanatics, or canting hypocrites, the leader of brutal clowns, the brother in arms to banditti and highway murderers? Should you meet such an one in your camp, tell him that Edith Bellenden has wept more over his fallen character, blighted prospects, and dishonoured name, than over the distresses of her own house, - and that she has better endured that famine which has wasted her cheek and dimmed her eye, than the pang of heart which attended the reflection by and through whom these calamities were inflicted." And in reply Henry Morton:-

"The person who has lost such a highly valued place in your esteem has yet too much spirit to plead his cause as a criminal; and, conscious that he can no longer claim a friend's interest in your bosom, he would be silent under your hard censure were it not that he can refer to the honoured testimony of Lord Evandale that his earnest wishes and most active exertions are, even now, directed to the accomplishment of such a peace as the most loyal cannot censure."

Compare Edith's reflections on parting with her lover with those of her maid in the same situation: "Civil feuds and domestic prejudices (thus the lady) may render it necessary for me to tear his remembrance from my heart; but it is no small relief to know assuredly that it is worthy of the place it has so long retained there."

"Deil's in the fallow (thus Jenny, wiping her lips and adjusting her headdress) he has twice the spunk o' Tam Halliday after a'. - Coming, my leddy, coming - Lord hae a care o' us, I trust the auld leddy didna see us!"

It is only in the tragedies of The Bride of Lammermoor and St. Ronan's Well, in each of which we find an element of Fate commingled with the Love-Interest, that the speech and action of the lovers become simple, natural and life-like. Lucy Ashton assures her lover of her constancy in these simple

words, "Though I will never wed man without the consent of my parents, yet neither force nor persuasion shall dispose of my hand till you renounce the right I have given you to it."

What is the reason for Scott's diffidence in love-episodes?

For Scott's diffidence in dealing with love-episodes various reasons may be given. It may be that, as Henderson suggests, the writer having passed the meridian of life before he began his career as a novelist, found it difficult or impossible to enter into the fiery emotions of youth, and assumed towards his lovers the attitude of a kindly father, who feels that a great deal of the passion of youth is disproportioned and not to be trusted.

The unhappy fortune of his own first love affair, and the staid development of his second, — which has almost the air of a 'mariage de convenance' and certainly owed much of its colour to his wife's French upbringing and outlook, may further explain his distrust of passion and his disinclination to delineate it.

But one is tempted to find in the conventions of the eighteenth century, its preference for restraint, its objection to violence, its fondness for display, as evidenced alike in the dress of the period and the prose style of Johnson and Gibbon, the source of the conventional language and behaviour of his lovers. The curious point of

style that gives many of the speeches of such characters in the third person is undoubtedly inherited from his predecessors in novel-writing.

However it be, it is to be deplored that Scott, whether from temperament, or experience, or mere convention*, never made his lovers speak or act with the simplicity and truth of Juliet, or Rosalind, or Viola. He comes very near it in Lucy Ashton, but even in her case the interest of the reader is less in the beauty of her love than in the tragedy of her fate.

One has a good deal of sympathy for the love of Margaret Ramsay and Rose Bradwardine, but it is marred by its desperate one-sidedness and the exasperating readiness of the male objects to fall in finally with a convenient arrangement.

The process of falling in love is well described in Quentin Durward: "They spoke not of love, but the thoughts of it were on both sides unavoidable; and thus they were placed in that relation to each other,

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* Note: I am not too certain that Scott or his contemporaries thought there was much wrong with the conventional speech and actions of his lady-and-gentlemen characters. He certainly found the convention a nuisance and very depressing to use, but seeing he told Washington Irving "Fine ladies and gentlemen are much the same all the world over," he may have held that it was the only way to depict them speaking and acting. Of course this limitation makes him all the more representative.

in which sentiments of mutual regard are rather understood than announced, and which with the freedoms which it permits and the uncertainties that attend it, often forms the most delightful hours of human existence, and as frequently leads to those which are darkened by disappointment, fickleness, and all the pains of blighted hope and unrequited attachment." The conclusion of the passage is no doubt an echo of Scott's love-disappointment.

Is the Love Interest the most important element in Plot-Construction?

It is, however, important to consider whether the novelist himself, as well as his critics, has not taken a wrong or at any rate a narrow view of the task of plot-management or construction. To begin with, the theory of the Novel as concerned solely with the Love-Interest is surely a narrow and limited one. In his introduction to his edition of Shakespeare, Dr. Johnson remarks upon the prevalence of the Love Interest in the Drama of his day. "upon the stage" he says, "the universal agent is love by whose power all good and evil is distributed and every motion quickened or retarded. To bring a lover, a lady, and a rival into the fable; to entangle them in contradictory obligations, perplex them with oppositions of interest, and harass them with the violence of desires inconsistent with each other; to make them meet in rapture and part in agony; to fill their mouths with hyperbolical joy and outrageous sorrow; to distress them as nothing

human ever was distressed; to deliver them as nothing human ever was delivered, is the business of the modern dramatist. For this probability is violated, life is misrepresented, and language is depraved. But love is only one of the many passions, and as it has no great influence upon the sum of life, it has little operation in the dramas of a poet, who caught his ideas from the living world, and exhibited only what he saw before him."

And if the Love Interest is not paramount in Shakespeare + no more is it in Scott. To end the narrative on a note of rapture, the rapture of union and possession in love, may be the first instinct of the story-teller, and the first demand of the audience (And did they live happily ever after?); but the high note at the end of the song has gone out of fashion, the novel has come to be much more than a mere fabric of events woven round one central dominant passion, - it is now realised to be a record of Contest. In every good novel, as in every good play, there will be found two sides ranged in opposition, and though the issues at stake may not be perfectly clear, the conflict will be seen to swing this way and that, keeping the reader interested till the end. The greatest stories of mankind have always been records of Contest, or Conflict.

+ Note: This is too strong perhaps: there are plays where the Love Interest is paramount, e.g. Romeo and Juliet, and Shakespeare's lovers are much more interesting than Scott's; but generally speaking it is the case that there are many other plot-bases in Shakespeare's drama.

The Fighting Instinct.

It may be interesting in passing to consider the origin of this delight in conflict, this permanent interest in fighting. Can it be that the Fighting Instinct is an inalienable, ineradicable part of Man's nature?

The oldest Myths record the battles of gods and men, the fight, that is, between Man, individually or collectively, against the forces around him. The contest, curiously enough, is rarely, if ever, equal, the weaker side unexpectedly triumphing, or at any rate escaping with life from its deadly antagonist. These tales, we begin to perceive, are the earliest forms of history: they chronicle stages of the development of Mankind. The earliest enemies of men were the over whelming forces of nature, the fiery desert-sands, the swelling floods of rivers, the many voiced billows of ocean; and out of their unequal conflict with these relentless, undying enemies the great races of men drew their strength.

Especially is it so in the case of the Sea. The old Roman poet found something impious (that is, contrary to the will of the gods) in the man who first tempted the deep in his frail bark. Our Nordic ancestors went further and pictured the sea as a great dragon-monster, clad with wings and spouting fire, of such dimensions that it could snatch up a war-galley manned with a hundred fighting-men and soar screaming

through the air to hurl it to fragments on adamantine cliffs of ice, the crystal walls of the Jötun city of the far north. Yet this monster they faced and from the conflict with it drew their might.

The dwellers in the swamps of Mesopotamia and the Nile Delta contended, as their legends and Myths proclaim, with dragons and hydras, shifting samds and devastating floods, till they wrested from the conflict the secret of reviving the buried Osiris, and turned death into life. The Greeks came out of an age-long contest with the mountains of the Balkan Knot, and the stormy seas of the Aegean, to rear on the ashes of the Mycenaean civilisation the enduring fabric of their Art, Philosophy, and Literature. The Phoenicians drew from the lap of danger, from the gorgon-headed monster that haunted their shores, the spirit of trading enterprise that was to bring them wealth and empire. The Norseman, hemmed in between the ocean monster and the forest slopes of their icy mountains, used the one to conquer the other and from the conflict gathered that fierce energy that was to send them raiding, conquering, governing, all over Europe. Perhaps the most sublime achievement of mankind was that attained by the Semitic Race who out of long ages of conflict with the Desert and its terrific ministers, winged with darkness or wielding flaming swords, i.e.

sand storms and the scorching rays of the sun, could draw the idea of God omnipotent, the germ of the highest religions of the world.

And if the Fighting Instinct goes back to the earliest stages of Man's development we find it still pervading all human activities. The most familiar metaphor for Life is that of a Battle, the Battle of Life, the struggle we all have to wage against hunger, cold, disease, and death. Are not our bodies veritable battle-fields where the white corpuscles of the blood, the Phagocytes, contend continuously against invisible yet potent enemies of life?

This primitive instinct finds many outlets of which war is only one and not by any means the most important. - In fact, it may be reasonably held that War so far from being a natural exercise of the Fighting Instinct is but a perversion of it, for War makes for Death, but the true objective of the Fighting-Instinct is not Death but Life. Hence men contend against each other in Athletics, and games of skill; in the arena of politics and public polemics; in literature, art, and Science; in making, buying, and selling goods; in teaching, guiding and leading men to truth; and in every sphere the real aim is that of the Founder of Christianity who said, "I am come that ye might have Life and that ye might have it more abundantly."

THE FIGHTING INSTINCT then, being a reality and a part of the nature of civilized man, the more civilized the latter becomes the stronger grows his interest in conflict, and when he is not fighting he delights in hearing of it: hence his preoccupation with records of contests - Football games, Boxing Matches, Horse-Racing, Athletic Competitions, reported in the popular press, and, in the same chronicles, the encounter between the Criminal and the Law, not because of the reader's sympathy with crime, but from his enjoyment of the spectacle of a fight, and if his sympathy is with the criminal it is not because he is a criminal, but because he is making a fight against very unequal odds, one poor individual against the machinery of the Law, the organisation of Society.

Similarly the fair defendant in a divorce case is admired, not because of her frailty, but because she is fighting a battle, an amateur against professional gladiators hired to prove her guilty. A similar interest enthrals men in the record of travel and exploration, in the attempts to conquer the snows of Everest and the Poles.

In spite of the deficiencies or faults already dealt with, such as the weakness of thelove-interest, the introduction of supernatural machinery, [redacted] the conventional character of some of the plots, the Waverley series as mere novels, apart from the historical connection, (found in all but a very few, e.g. St. Ronan's Well, the Surgeon's Daughter, The Two Drovers, &c.) and also apart from Scott's ultimate aim, which

will be dealt with later, will be found to be really successful examples of Construction. To begin with, they awaken interest in the characters and their contest with each other or with opposing circumstances. The plot moves on through the rising action or complication till it reaches the climax or crisis, followed by the falling action or solution, ending in the denouement or catastrophe. The introduction of episodes varies the tension, and though they sometimes awaken fresh or new interest that threatens to eclipse the interest in the original theme, the author invariably resumes the main subject and works out the contest to its inevitable conclusion. Scott describes his method in these words: The Author "lights upon some personage or combination of circumstances, or some striking trait of manners, which he thinks may be advantageously used as the basis of a fictitious narrative: bedizens it with such colour as his skill suggests, ornaments it with such romantic circumstances as may heighten the general effect-invests it with such shades of character as will best contrast with each other, - and thinks perhaps he has done some service to the public if he can present to them a lively fictitious picture for which the original anecdote or circumstances only furnished a slight sketch". (Introduction to Peveril of the Peak).

To illustrate this faculty of construction we may take St. Ronan's Well which, in spite of a touch of melodrama, is a favourite with some good critics. The opening chapter introducing Meg Dods of the

Cleikum Inn, a well-drawm humorous character, also brings in the vicissitudes of the Mowbray family and the village of St. Ronans. The hero now appears and exhibits interest in the family of Mowbray and particularly Clara Mowbray, and he in his turn excites interest at the Spa of St. Ronans the society whereof is described with a somewhat caustic pen. The company with its artificial tone and its frivolous amusements is not congenial to the hero, Francis Tyrrel, who quarrels with Sir Bingo Binks - an obvious descendant of Sir Andrew Aguecheek, though his mentor and abetter is not Sir Toby Belch, but Mr. Mowbray the squire of St. Ronans. The main theme now appears in a meeting between Tyrrel and Miss Mowbray who appear to have a mysterious and unhappy bond of common interest arising from events dating back seven or eight years. The frequenters of the Spa ~~egg on~~ instigate Sir Bingo to challenge Tyrrel, and the duel, though less humorous than that in Pickwick, has a similar effect in holding up to ridicule the practice of duelling, and in its comic relief, really serves as a variation in the tension. On the other hand the weight of Clara Mowbray's mysterious secret renders her indifferent to the danger of being ruined by her brother's gambling proclivities. A country lawyer, an eccentric 'nabob', and a studious country clergyman of the same breed as Dominie Sampson are next introduced, and though they are of considerable interest as characters their connection

with the plot is also adumbrated. The villain now appears on the scene in person, though his influence has long been felt, and the full extent of his villainy is still to be revealed. He is the Earl of Etherington and allowing Mowbray to win a considerable sum of money makes proposals for Miss Mowbray's hand. He alleges a grand uncle's will under which he has to marry a lady of the house of Mowbray. A letter written by Etherington reveals a relationship with Tyrrel, and tells how, hating Tyrrel, he met him in the neighbourhood and forced a duel upon him in which Etherington was wounded and fainted, to find on recovering that Tyrrel had disappeared.

A scene of open-air theatricals organised by the Spa habitues brings together most of the principal characters except Tyrrel, and thereafter the plot reaches the crisis. Etherington, perhaps the most thorough-paced villain in Scott, proves to be the half-brother and supplanter of Tyrrel alike in his inheritance and his love affair with Clara Mowbray, having contrived to marry her in Tyrrel's place - though how this was done without protest from the unhappy lady is one of the weak points of the story. The knot being tied, however, Tyrrel's one thought is the happiness of Clara, and he negotiates to allow Etherington to remain in possession of his title and land on condition of his forbearing to molest her. Etherington, however, is determined to retain his

bride as well as his title, and though his various devices are brought to nought partly through the old nabob, Serogie Touchwood, partly through Mowbray who challenges the Earl and kills him in a duel, Clara, distraught by her unhappy position and her brother's reproaches, rushes through a night of storm and ultimately reaches the Clergyman's house in time to hear the dying confession of her former maid, but herself sinks under the douole weight of physical and mental exhaustion.

Her death practically ends the story.

The movement of the plot is very rapid once the climax is reached, the last ten chapters occupying only a few days.

The variation in tension is admirably managed, and the tragedy is lightened by scenes of satirical humour and pure comedy. It may be objected that the plot depends too much on eccentricity, or extraordinary characters and relationships, and that more strength of will on Clara's part might have broken the flimsy bond between her and Etherington, out the fact remains that both eccentric and romantic characters are still to be found, and that from such characters actions are to be expected of the kind that are the staple of fiction. It is a wise remark of Scott's that Scrogie Touchwood's disappointments, i.e. the unhappy events of the tale, "were in some measure precipitated by his own talent for intrigue and manoeuvring."

CHARACTERISATION.

Almost as important as the art of Construction is that of character drawing, for just as the novelist (or dramatist) must make the events he narrates look like a section of real history, a perfect picture of real life, so he must produce characters that act and talk like real human beings. Three methods used by the Photographer can be and are practised by the artist in fiction, viz: (1) Enlarging. (ii) Snapshotting, (iii) Touching-up. In the first method the portrait need not be taken from real life, it may have for its basis an old idealised picture, or a clever sketch which lays stress on certain features, but whatever the original the aim of the artist is to produce a striking figure very much out of the common, easily distinguishable from the ruck of humanity. To this class of character belong the heroes, heroines, and villains that reach superhuman dimensions, like Marlowe's Tamburlaine, Shakespeare's Richard III, and a great many of their later followers like Zanoni, Rochester, Raoul de Bragelonne, 'She', Dr. Nikola, Sir Percy Blakeney, Sherlock Holmes, and, I fear, the saintly Pamela. It is one of the dangers of 'enlarging' that the proportion to reality is lost, and the presentment impresses one as misty and unreal, if not impossible. In any case the number of such characters in real life, and even in history, is very limited, and besides,

the reader is apt to grow suspicious or at least weary of a constant succession of super-normal figures, just as he does in a wax-works.

The second method, which involves taking the exact features of a definite individual and putting him in the composition, is not without its dangers, as the party represented is rarely satisfied that the repreentation is true - and rightly so, for a 'snap-shot' or a 'thumb-nail' sketch may show an aspect that is wholly unfamiliar to the subject delineated; and in any case the aspect shown can be only one of many aspects and hence may be untrue as a presentment of the whole character. Perhaps the most daring exponent of this mode was Disraeli in his political novels, though others than novelists have made similar sketches of their contemporaries, e.g. Dryden of Shaftesbury in 'Absalom and Achitophel,' Pope of Addison, Swift of Walpole, &c. And just as 'snap-shotting' suggests a spice of malice on the part of the photographer as of one less concerned with beauty or truth than with lapses from grace, or beauty, or dignity, so does this type of portraiture in the novelist.

The third plan, of using the principal characteristics of a person observed and adding details which differentiate the resultant figure from the original, is the most common and yet by no means so successful as might be imagined. The difficulty lies in seizing the salient features of a character, the personal

idiosyncrasies that differentiate him from every other, and yet endowing him with the elements of common humanity so that the reader finds something of himself or his own experiences in the being created by the novelist. Even when the characters of a novel are well delineated the writer may not succeed in making them act and talk in accordance with the nature he has assigned them, still less may he succeed in exhibiting their development in the stress of circumstance.

Of course it may be objected that in the historical novel the analogy of photography breaks down as the novelist has to pourtray characters he has never seen except in old portraits and in their recorded actions. But the principle is still the same; for neither novelist nor dramatist can get away from his own time, and whatever costumes the characters wear, whether the Roman toga or the Elizabethan doublet, the kilt and plaid of the Highlander, or the wigs and knee breeches of the 18th century, the personality of each must be drawn from the author's experience of men.

Thus it can be held that Shakespeare uses the 'enlargement' method in the case of several of his early characters, such as Richard III, Queen Constance, Prince Hal, and, I think, Nick Bottom. It is also possible that he 'snapshotted' some of his contemporaries in such figures as Mercutio, Mr. Justice Shallow (Sir Thomas Lucy) Theseus, Le Beau,

and perhaps Antonio of Venice, for each of these has an air of individuality that seems to suggest a rapid portrait from life not quite complete in detail and yet with features that are not essential to the play.

But it is clear that the vast majority of his people are developed by the dramatist out of portraits which he 'touches up', or combines with others, and the resultant character is cognisable at once as an Elizabethan. Even Caliban is an Elizabethan idea of a savage (even to his parentage) and the fairies Puckand Ariel are also Elizabethan.

SCOTT'S CHARACTERISATION.

Regarding Scott's power of characterisation opinions vary. Benedetto Croce animadverts rather strongly on Scott as "a mere industrial producer, intent upon supplying the market with objects for which the demand was as keen as the want was legitimate", but, he continues, "when we have ended the reading our souls are empty. The narrative is without epic feeling, without passion of love, without religious or any other passion. The characters exist for themselves; they afford a spectacle to the eye or to the fancy". (European Literature in the 19th century).

Yet Croce discussing the Heart of Midlothian pays a tribute to some characters, e.g., "Who can avoid being delighted with the lead-like heaviness

yet timidly sentimental lovemaking of the Laird of DumbDikes (sic), or fail to admire the character of crazy Madge, malign and generous, clever for all her madness at outwitting suspicions, and although described in a most realistic manner yet enfolded in pity."

Carlyle's well-knowm criticism is even more pungent: "Your Shakespeare fashions his characters from the heart outwards; your Scott from the skin inwards, never getting near the heart of them. The one set become living men and women; the other amount to little more than mechanical cases, deceptively painted automatons". To which Andrew Lang replies: "Never near the broken, stoical heart of Saunders Mucklebackit; or the fallen Bradwardine, happy in unsullied honour; never near the heart of the maddaned Peter Peebles; never near the flawless Christian heart of Bessie Maclure; or the heart of dauntless remorse of Nanty Ewart; or the heart of sacrificed love in Diana Vernon; or the stout heart of Dalgetty in the dungeon of Inverary; or the secret soul of Mary Stuart, revealed when she is reminded of Sebastian's bridal masque and the deed of Kirk o' Field?"

Yet the judgment of the older critic is not wholly repelled by Lang's rhetorical pleading. In the first place, Scott has no characters than can be set anywhere near the level of Hamlet (the world-hero), Falstaff (the supreme fun-lover), Iago (the evil intellect), and Cleopatra (the eternal feminine), none that can compare with the Macbeths (husband and

wife), the Lears (Father and daughters), Prospero, Coriolanus, Brutus; none with Puck and Ariel and some of the Fools. We find echoes of Shakespeare in Wamba the Jester, Isaac the Jew, and Rebecca (who resembles Portia or Isabella rather than Jessica); and if in the star-crossed loves of The Bride of Lammermoor Scott comes nearest to the Dramatist in tenseness of interest and emotion, who can exclude the influence of Shakespeare's immortal lovers!

Again, in Shakespeare, with the doubtful exception of Shylock, and the certain one of Falstaff, (in whose case, as Professor Bradley points out, Shakespeare's pen seems, for once, to have run away with him), the principal characters in the plot, the protagonists in the contest, are the characters that stand out most clearly, and the subordinate figures are definitely subordinate and kept in their places. Now with Scott the reverse is the case - the romantic heroes and heroines (almost wholly absent from Lang's list, quoted above) are those that Scott admits he spends least energy upon and is glad to forget at times in the interest awakened in himself (and the reader) by a subordinate character.

Of course the difference between Shakespeare's characters and Scott's is due mainly to the difference in the men - for no one in our literature, however great, but is overtopped, head and shoulders at least, by the divine William; but the difference is

also a matter of method, the dramatic as against the epic. When instead of giving definite speech and action the writer contents himself with a report of these movements, he is at least using a method that is not unnatural to the ordinary man, The average man is diffident about his own dramatic powers and instead of giving the exact speech of his personages, which would involve variation of voice and feature, he will content himself with the impersonal indirect form "He said that he ..... "

It is in the fertility of his creative power that Scott approaches Shakespeare. The number of his characters is enormous, and while all do not stand out with the clearness of the dramatist's figures, they do impress themselves upon the reader's memory and sometimes his affections.

THE ROMANTIC CHARACTERS - THE HEROES.

Carlyle's criticism can certainly be applied to the romantic characters, the heroes and heroines, who as ladies and gentlemen have the traits of the 18th century when people of rank and fashion cultivated the art of cold self-restraint and were ever, as it were, acting on a stage where grace, dignity, wit, morality, and art were permissible, but not emotion, energy, humour, enthusiasm and human nature. Except Henry Morton, Quentin Durward, Henry Gow, Ivanhoe and Edgar Ravenswood, the heroes do little or nothing towards the action, and they, except Ravenswood, in common with the rest of the principal male romantic figures,

do not speak out their emotions, and hence we are left to infer their natures from the remarks of other characters, or the comments of the author. Nigel Olifaunt does make some pertinent observations on himself in his soliloquy in the house of Trapbois, which lead one to infer some development in his character, - which is clearly what Scott intended, - the tale being meant for a kind of pedagogic romance- but he is not allowed much scope thereafter, his actions, including his marriage to Margaret Ramsay, being those of a 'perfect gentleman'. Edgar Ravenswood certainly speaks clearly at times, but he is too conciliatory on the one hand, and too darkly Byronic on the other. His conflict with Fate is deeply interesting and his melancholy end quite in keeping with the main thesis of the story, the inevitable supersession of the Old by the New; but his resistance to the hardships and humiliations entailed upon him by the follies of his ancestors and the machinations of his enemies is too passive, - and his love for Lucy Ashton, while deep and sincere, leads in the same direction, hindering instead of inspiring action. Of course the spectacle of a noble, high-spirited youth like the Master of Ravenswood, or Orestes, impotent in the toils wound round him by an ineluctable Fate is one of the things that enthral mankind everywhere, and the more impotent the hero the stronger and grander appears the Power working against him. "The epic writer looking at the life of

the past sees an accumulation of events, of details, of instances, but in them all he divines a synthesis, and sees one throb of the great heart of the world; and behind them all he feels one life-principle working itself out and carrying men with it as a tide carries the foam or as the Spring brings the buds". (The Historical Novel by H. Butterfield). It is because Scott is an epic writer that his heroes are for the most part static; they are caught in a movement so much greater than themselves that their own movements are of little avail one way or another though their fate still interests us.

THE HEROINES.

When we come to the heroines we still find the benumbing influence of the 18th century on their speech, though not so much on their action, though that may be because their action is for the most part limited to influence. (Ruskin's view of Scott's heroines must be based on the latter feature). Catherine Seyton, Diana Vernon, Margaret Ramsay, Catherine Glover, and Jeanie Deans are the only heroines that seem to do anything, and except the last none of them are 'errorless' in their purpose as Ruskin would have us believe. Of course they are none the less interesting on that account - in fact these five seem the most human of the lot. But their power to inspire pure affection, 'to warn, to comfort and command', is insisted on by the novelist and occasionally illustrated, though not too copiously,

as in the case of Annot Lyle, Edith Plantagenet, Amy Robsart, Rowena, and others. The secondary heroine is generally more interesting - and one wonders whether Jeanie Deans was not meant to be secondary to Effie but proved too strong for her creator, - Rebecca, Flora McIvor, & Norna being cases in point.

The rest of Scott's characters fall into three categories, viz.,

(1) Royalties, nobles, or quasi nobles (e.g. Cromwell and Rob Roy) who have played a part on the stage of history.

(2) Agents in the plot, principal or subordinate.

(3) Illustrative characters who give background and reality to the story.

(1) HISTORICAL CHARACTERS.

Of the first class the Royal house of Stewart provides a goodly array, viz: Robert III, Albany, Rothesay, Mary, James VI & Charles I, Charles II., the regent Moray, and Prince Charles Edward, besides James IV in Marmion, and James V. in The Lady of the Lake. Other royal figures are Elizabeth, Richard I., John, Saladin, Louis XI, Orleans, and Charles the Bold. Great nobles are Leicester, Raleigh, Dunois, Montrose, Argyle (two, the Marquis and the Duke) Claverhouse. Cromwell, Robin Hood, and Roo Roy might be regarded as quasi nobles - in which class George Heriot may also be enrolled.

Of these hardly one is held to be unfair or untrue to history, though the heroic side of Richard

and of Claverhouse and the unheroic of the Marquis of Argyle are considered by some to be overstressed. The touches whereby in particular Mary, Elizabeth, James VI., and Louis XI are made to live in Scott's pages are convincing to most people.

(ii) AGENTS IN THE PLOT.

The Agents in the plot vary considerably in their reality, the weakest, next to the heroes and heroines, being the villains, most of whom are somewhat melodramatic. Ellislaw in the Black Dwarf is too lightly sketched to be very impressive, and Etherington in St. Ronan's Well is the most melodramatic of all. De Bois Guilbert interests the reader by reason of the struggle between his passion for Rebecca and his ambition; Cleveland (the Pirate) has a spice of humour that redeems him, while Redgauntlet in the nobility of his loyalty to the fallen Stewarts enlists our sympathy to a degree that removes him from the category of villains altogether; there is not a better example in all Scott's writings of skilful unfolding of character. Varney and Dalgarno are perhaps intended as types produced by the corrupt influence of court life, cold-hearted masters of intrigue, serving themselves by pandering to the folly or ambition of their patrons. Rashleigh may be viewed as one of the evil products of Roman Catholic or Jesuit training, just as Diana Vernon herself, Roland Graeme, and Edward Glendinning, are fair flowers of the same religion. Richard Middlemass in The

Surgeon's Daughter may owe his proclivities to heredity partly, but also to the unfortunate circumstances of his birth and his military experiences. That the honourable profession of the law lends itself to the development of selfish aims by legal quirks and quiddities is a commonplace that Sir Walter does not hesitate to confirm by his creation of Glossin and Sir Wm. Ashton, though in the former case he is careful to place him in direct opposition and contrast to a fellow practitioner of unassailable probity, Mr. Pleydell.

Of all the other Agents we may note that the nearer to common life they approach, the lower they descend from the pedestal or platform of rank and fashion, the more real they become. In fact we may question whether there is an agent in any of the great novels prior to 1821, always excepting the heroes and villains, who is not cognisable as a fellow human being, a flesh and blood mortal. Eccentric, 'queer' differing from other men in complexion, features, gait, speech, habits, thought, religion, yet peculiar in only some of these; and sharing with the rest of mankind, - and their own nation especially, - the same physical and intellectual make-up, the same or similar capacity for happiness or misery; these characters are by far the most interesting of the 'dramatis personae' of each novel, and the novels that have few or none of these are the least successful. And the reason is obvious: Jonathan Oldbuck, David

Deans, Dandie Dinmont, Dominie Sampson, Bailie Jarvie, Cuddie Headrig, Dugal Dalgetty, Edie Ochiltree, Andrew Fairservice, Richie Moniplies, Caleb Balderstone, Ludovic Lesley, - each an individual with his own mental physiognomy, different from all the rest yet markedly one with them in nationality; all belong to the most intimate circle of Scott's knowledge and experience, they are the kind of people he knew best, and they represent for him, as for us, the truest elements in the nation he loved so well. His most successful women characters, Jeanie Deans, Catherine Glover, Jenny Denison, Meg Dodds of the Cleikum Inn, Meg Merrilees, Bessie Maclure, Mause Headrigg, Mrs. Mucklebackit, Margaret Ramsay, are his own countrywomen, canny, shrewd, independent, straightforward, ruled by common sense, yet capable of devotion and self sacrifice of the highest order.

OTHER GENRE CHARACTERS.

These characters are of the type called 'genre' and many others fall to be added of the same order. Among the Lowlanders we find Davie Gellatly, Bailie McWheeble, Andrew Fairservice, Triptolemus Yellowley, David Ramsay, Saddletree, Peter Peebles, Wandering Willie, Mrs. McCandlish, Oliver Proudfute, Henbane Dwining, Simon Glover, Caleb Balderstone, Mortsheugh, Annie Winnie, Ailsa Gourlay. These represent the middle and lower classes, from the

lowest kind of dependant, like the three old crones in The Bride of Lammermoor, the old family retainer, other servants of varying degree, peasants, farmers, fisherfolk, 'packmen', shopkeepers, innkeepers, tradesmen, merchants, soldiers, up to professional men, lawyers, doctors, ministers. On the skirts of these we find beggars, gipsies, smugglers, outlaws, and even the lesser gentry, like Milnwood and Dumbiedykes.

Differing from these mainly as belonging to an earlier stage of civilisation but possessing many common characteristics are the Highlanders, - clansmen like Evan Dhu, Dougal Macgregor, and Ronald McEagh, chiefs such as those in A Legend of Montrose, and professional soldiers like Francie McCraw and Capt. MacIntyre.

When we turn to the novels that deal exclusively with England and English characters we find that while the principal agents and historical characters are welldrawn there is not the same profusion of subordinate characters, and there is a tendency to rely upon other elements like pageantry, romance, and melodrama, to sustain the interest. Here and there we get sketches like Deborah Debbitch, Gurth the Swineherd, Ganlesse, Phoebe Mayflower, Herasmus Holiday, Gammer Sludge, Giles Gosling etc. but few will hold that these compare with the Scottish Characters of the same type; and other characters like Tristan l'Hermite, Locksley, Friar Tuck, Wamba, Wayland Smith, Flibbertigibbet, Sir Geoffrey

C R I T E R I A (Continued).

3. ACTION.
S. master of description of Action.
Avoids clash of masses - interested in individuals.
Note skill of placing of Action.

4. SCENERY.
(1) Love of Nature, - background, ally of Man.
(2) Love of Scotland - part played by Nature in his own life and in that of his Countrymen.
(3) Faculty of Association. -

5. DIALOGUE.
Reproduction of Speech.
Formality of 18th Century Speech.
Invention of Historical mode of Speech.
Accuracy of 'genre' characters' dialogue.

6. PSYCHOLOGY.
S. a kind of pioneer.
Examination of thoughts of characters on the 'swither' famous.

Hudson, etc. are skilful adaptions from history, romance, or literature. Jews, Gipsies or Bohemians, Outlaws, Saracens, Monks, Friars, Alsatians, and Courtiers, are from the same sources, and while they are marvels of imaginative construction, they fall short of the reality of the homelier figures drawn from the author's personal experience.

Taken therefore "as the creator of a vast throng of living people of every grade, and every variety of nature, humour and temperament", we can agree with Andrew Lang in his conclusion," that Scott, among British writers is least remote from Shakespeare."

III.

Criteria of Fiction:- Description of Action.

Having got his plot properly constructed and his characters set, the novelist has to keep the interest of his readers alive by introducing scenes which raise the tension to a high point. These should generally arise out of the action of the plot and should be a definite clash of the principals in combat, or in trial of skill, or wit, or determination. Other scenes may occur which are humorous, pathetic, or illustrative of the characters of one or more of the principals, or they may be mere embellishments arising out of the author's exuberant imagination, or overflowing information: but the effect of these latter is almost invariably to lower the tension and divert interest from the main theme. The skill of introducing the episodes at the

proper time belongs to the constructive genius of the writer, but the power of making them thrilling and exciting, or absorbing and convincing, so that the reader feels himself a spectator, almost an actor in the scene, is a separate faculty that almost every good novelist exhibits at times. Many novels, otherwise second-rate in structure and characterisation, are remembered for one or two such scenes of action thrillingly described.

SCOTT'S DESCRIPTION OF ACTION.

It cannot be gainsaid that in describing action Scott still ranks among the masters of fiction. Whatever their attitude towards the novels as stories or as works of literary art, the young are still thrilled by the innumerable scenes of struggle, of conflict between masses of men or combats between individuals, of 'hairbreadth'scapes and moving accidents by flood and field', of stately pageants or solemn trials, of hunting, of revelry, of ambuscades, and of assassination.

Naturally he seldom introduces battles of national importance. It is significant that Bannockburn and Flodden occur in his poems, for the reason, perhaps, that they demand real epic treatment and overshadow the characters in the story. Prestonpans and Inverlochy are well described, but not so minutely as to make the reader forget the illustration they afford of the characters of Waverley and Dalgetty.

So with the battle scenes in Old Mortality and Quentin Durward, - one overlooks the greater issues at stake in one's interest in the hero's part in them.

There may be something due to Scott's intense individualism, his disinclination to look upon mankind in the mass, his refusal to deal with national aims or democratic aspirations, in this avoidance of great national or international conflicts. Like Homer, Scott is interested in the leaders, the heroes, beneath whose steel the nameless multitude are but as sheep. And, as in Homer, it is when these heroes clash in conflict that the reader is stirred and thrilled with the joy of battle. Single combats abound in his pages, whether we take the stately tournament in Ivanhoe, the clash of East and West in Sir Kenneth's encounter with Saladin in the Talisman, the duels in Rob Roy, St. Ronan's Well, The Antiquary, The Fortunes of Nigel, or the savage struggles of Burley and Bothwell in Old Mortality, and the death wrestle of Dirk Hatteraick and Glossin in Guy Mannering. Feats of arms like those of the Black Knight, Quentin Durward, and Henry Wynd, of strength and courage like those of Dandie Dinmont and Rob Roy; or skill and daring like that of Lovel in The Antiquary, hold the reader enthralled while they last. Still more poignant perhaps are the pictures of violent death at the hands of the assassin like that of Trapbois, of Meg Merrilees; and scenes of terror and woe are not wanting as in the death of Rothesay (in the Fair Maid of Perth) of

Amy Robsart, and of Lucy Ashton.

The excitement of these scenes of action is, however, admirably kept in check by the skill of the master, who never allows them to accumulate in one part of the narrative or to occur so frequently as to produce the impression of unreality To a man of Scott's temperament, with a peculiar delight in action, as is evident in his life and his letters, the temptation to gratify himself as well as his readers with pictures of action, with rapid movement and thrilling episodes, must have been tremendously strong, but it is to his credit as an artist that he never succumbed. "The chief stock-in-trade of Melodrama, thrilling situations, great episodes, have their source in little things, and convey no lesson to us unless we know something of the source from which they spring. In all works by the masters of fiction the supreme moments, the crises, have grown steadily, remorselessly, fatefully out of the lines of their dramatis personae, and have not been invented merely to thrill or shock the reader" (Leslie Stephen) Not only is this so, not only do the exciting incidents grow out of the lives of the characters, but they are so placed that the 'tension' before them and after is lower, so that they stand out in the reader's eye and yet have their place in the general action.

CRITERIA OF FICTION. 4. DESCRIPTION OF SCENERY

The place of scenic description in the novel is one that ought to be unquestioned. If the novelist is to give a true representation of a section of

human life, he is surely entitled to describe the background of the action, - nay, more, may he not embellish the narrative with pictures of natural beauty such as he has observed with joy, and seek to make the reader sharer in his rapture? Yet in the insertion of descriptions of scenery, no matter how beautiful, there is a two-fold danger: it may delay the action to the extent of making the reader lose interest, or it may fail to produce the impression aimed at. The best descriptions are those which are either actual backgrounds to the action, or inspiration to the thought, feeling, or deeds of the characters. Highest of all, perhaps, is the art which brings in nature as one of the protagonists, as a definite participator in the action. This we find exhibited especially by Victor Hugo in "The Toilers of the Sea", and Conrad in several of his romances.

SCOTT AND SCENERY.

The place of scenery in the novels of Scott is almost as important as the number of his characters. This is due to three very definite reasons, viz.,

(i) His Love of Nature.

(2) His Love of Scotland, and

(3) His faculty of association.

(1) SCOTT'S LOVE OF NATURE :

The revival of Romance in the 18th century has sometimes been called the Return to Nature. Of all the prophets of that revival Wordsworth is probably the

greatest, but no one did more than Scott to popularise and establish on a firm basis the modern love of Nature, and this he did more by his novels, perhaps, than by his poems. The lofty idea of Nature as a revelation of the Thought or the Love of God is not to be found in his writings; it is rather the feeling that Nature is the ally and co-worker of Man, as a wife is of her husband, that appeals to Scott. He could appreciate the beauty and grandeur of mountain and moorland, of moving waters in waterfalls and stormy seas, of fertile plains and rolling woodlands; but it is as the background of human emotion or action that his imagination dwelt on Nature most fondly.

2.SCOTT'S LOVE OF SCOTLAND.

Allied to his love of Nature is Scott's passionate love of his native land. He explored Scotland as few of her sons have done, from the Mull of Galloway to the Shetlands, from the Hebrides to the Tweed. He knew and could recall intimately the beauty spots of every county in the land, but his deepest affection was reserved for the home of his fathers, the Borders and especially Tweedside.

It seems as if the part played by Nature in his own life led him to think of the part she had played in the upbringing of his countrymen. The influence of the lonely moors and silvan valleys on the Borderers and the Covenanters, of the stern mountains and rugged glens upon the Highlanders, of the iron cliffs and misty seas upon the Orcadians, these influences

producing the men he loved and admired fell upon his own soul and evoked the sympathy he felt.

We find him describing the Border country in no fewer than six of the novels, viz. Melrose in the Monastery and the Abbot, Liddesdale and the Solway shore in Guy Mannering, Innerleithen in St. Ronan's Well, and the Debateable Land in The Black Dwarf and Redgauntlet, not to speak of passing references in other books. The East Coast appears in the Antiquary, the Abbot, The Surgeon's Daughter, and The Bride of Lammermoor. Perthshire is a scene of action of Waverley, The Fair Maid of Perth, Rob Roy, and A Legend of Montrose; while Lanarkshire is the chief theatre of Old Mortality and Castle Dangerous.

The wildly romantic in Nature is of course most emphasised in his poems: the magnificent variety of scene in the Trossachs, the gloomy grandeur of the mountains of Skye and Arran, the hills and dales of the Southern Uplands, have all something of enchantment about them for Scott which he communicates to his readers.

(3) SCOTT'S FACULTY OF ASSOCIATION

But, as I have already said, it is in the novels that his love of Nature communicates itself more directly to the reader, because in them it is associated with Man and the works of Man. "It is," says Henderson, "one of the cardinal idiosyncrasies of his imaginative production that his inspiration is partly derived from scenes and the fascination is greatly

aided by his exceptional mastery of scenic arrangement - His minute knowledge of the exteriors and interiors of old keeps and castles, of ancient domestic habits and customs, of modes of ancient combat, of antiquated military apparel and weapons, and of the observances and pageants of chivalry, had to obtain a particular setting, a definite environment for the incidents, before his imaginative genius could be adequately kindled".

In Lockhart's 'Life' we read of Scott visiting romantic scenes and invariably inquiring for stories connected with them, and if such were not forthcoming indicating his readiness to invent them. His imagination was invariably stimulated by crumbling walls and mouldering earthworks, by ruined abbeys, chapels, and cathedrals, by fallen towers and keeps and castles, by mountain passes and lonely valleys, by silent tarns, and shimmering lakes, by woodland and moorland; whatever suggested "old, unhappy, far-off things, and battles long ago," or tales of enchantment and wizardry, or the pranks of fairies and brownies, or the power of the spirit of man, cast a spell upon his mind that set it to recreating the Past.

Hence it is idle to object to Scott's descriptions, for they are an intimate part of his method. The Scene and the Story are indissolubly wedded; in his mind the one suggests the other. For example, The Black Dwarf, a comparatively modern tale, draws its complexion and its features from the region where

it is set, and from the ancient supernatural being that tradition recorded as haunting the Cheviots. So in Waverley the atmosphere of romantic loyalty that charmed the hero into temporary adhesion to the Jacobite cause becomes strongest in the Highlands where the patriarchal system made it the most natural thing, and fades away in the lowlands despite the personal fascination of the princely Adventurer. Even the douce Glasgow magistrate and merchant once past the Highland Line becomes insensibly more martial and romantic, just as his bold kinsman is more prosaic and practical in the Lowlands.

This feeling for the Setting is due not only to Scott's love of Nature, nor even to his patriotic passion for Scotland, but to a sense of the intimate connection between the soil and the people. He felt that the Scottish nation is what it is largely because of its natural surroundings. "Caledonia, stern and wild' is not only 'meet nurse for a poetic child', but also the Mother from whom the whole race draws its character. The chief explanation of the actions of the Scottish people is, he saw, Scotland. Thus he is the revealer and interpreter of his native land to the whole world, just as he is the revealer and interpreter of his people, and the two are indissoluble.

There is something of the same feeling in his descriptions of other lands, England, France, Switzerland, Palestine, India, but he is on less sure ground except where the scenery resembles that

of Scotland, as in Anne of Geierstein. It seems to me that in spite of his magnificent power of visualising the scene his descriptions of scenery outside of Scotland are more conventional, less intimate, and less firmly welded to the action.

CRITERIA OF FICTION. 5.-DIALOGUE.
THE REPRODUCTION AND DESCRIPTION OF SPEECH.

The reproduction of the true accent and dialect of men has long been a difficulty in literature. Obviously the early poets found it impossible; the convention of verse is in every language alien to the speech of the ordinary man, It is possible to imagine a set of lofty characters rising to the height of some great argument, expressing deep emotion or elevated thought in a mode of speech that impresses the hearer or reader as eminently beautiful or distinguished, but its very beauty or distinction differentiates it from the style of expression natural to the ordinary man. Nor has the ordinary man, so far as we have record, ever objected to the poet or the dramatist for sublimating the language of his heroes into modes and conventions suitable to the needs of lofty poetry but alien to those of ordinary life. Yet we can see Shakespeare using one device after another to disguise his poetry and make it seem more natural, and almost unconscious. Beginning with the young poet's natural delight in beautiful sound, he uses rhyme and rigid black verse, but soon passes on to a use of prose for the less elevated scenes, then to a discontinuance of rhyme and to a blank verse that

becomes more and more flexible, until in the end he has attained a form of verse that can be spoken like prose and yet retain its subtle poetic beauty. Even his vocabulary, in spite of the steadily increasing burden of thought that threatens at times to overload it, becomes simpler and more natural.

The prose writer, without the poet's excuse that verse being his first consideration the dialogue or speech must be made to fit into it, nevertheless imagined that Literature demanded something better than ordinary speech and hence in recording the spoken words of men he dressed them up for their public appearance. Even when, as in the prose drama, the language of the common man reached the literary platform, the story teller and the historian both persisted in tagging it withthe finery of the muse (e.g. Euphues), or at least tiring it in the robes of priests or professors (e.g. Johnson). Yet Johnson himself says: "If there be in every nation a style which never becomes obsolete, a certain mode of phraseology so consonant and congenial to the analogy and principles of its respective language as to remain settled and unaltered; this style is probably to be sought in the common intercourse of life, among those who speak only to be understood without ambition of elegance. The polite are always catching modern innovations, and the learned depart from established forms of speech, in hope of finding or making better: those who wish for distinction forsake

the vulgar, when the vulgar is right: but there is a conversation above grossness and below refinement, where propriety resides and where this poet (Shakespeare) seems to have gathered his comic dialogues." The Translators of the Bible having their eye on the common man, and not being concerned to shew their learning or their art, were among the first to succeed in giving the true vernacular, albeit with a touch of the archaic. Hence Bunyan in spite of the burden of allegory, and the subject of religion - about which the average Englishman is not fluent, as we see in Silas Marner and Dolly Winthrop, - succeeds in reproducing something of the common man's speech, for the same reason, and also because he was steeped in the Bible.

But it was long before dialogue was freed from the fetters of literary convention and became a true representation of the actual spoken words of men. Scott has to be taken in his proper place in the order of development. As has been already remarked, his heroes and heroines often speak in a mode of speech that is, to the twentieth century at least, stilted, affected, and unnatural. But it is quite possible that, on the one hand, the perfection to which modern fiction has carried reproduction of speech - so that few fiction writers fail to give the speech of their characters in true vernacular, - and on the other the change in the standard of speech since Scott's day, may be partly responsible for the impression. Again it must be

noted that in the historical novel Scott had to invent a mode of speech which would suggest the period he was chronicling and yet be intelligible to his audience. Bearing this in mind we cannot but acknowledge his success in the latter aim, while we hold that in the reproduction of the speech of his genre characters he is still unsurpassed, even by the best practitioners.

CRITERIA OF FICTION.6. - PSYCHOLOGY.

A mode of description that has also developed somewhat in modern fiction is that which described the thoughts and emotions of the characters. Here again the early novelists felt a difficulty in assuming a knowledge of the workings of a character's mind, Their diffidence might have been dispelled by a study of Shakespeare's soliloquies wherein he makes his characters reveal their very souls, or such descriptive passages as that in "Much Ado about Nothing". -

"By noting of the lady I have marked
A thousand blushing apparitions
To start into her face, a thousand innocent shames
In angel whiteness beat away those blushes:
And in her eye there hath appeared a fire
To burn the errors that these princes hold
Against her maiden truth".

and again

"When he shall hear she died upon his words,
The idea of her life shall sweetly creep
Into his study of imagination

And every lovely organ of her life
Shall come apparell'd in more precious habit,
More moving delicate and full of life,
Into the eye and prospect of his Soul
Than when she lived indeed."

But what the dramatist could do the novelists thought was denied them. Hence Scott is something of a pioneer in recording the processes of thought and emotion in the minds of his characters. His discussion of the development of the love of Lucy Ashton and Edgar of Ravenswood may not be very romantic, but their mental movements, the involutions of their emotions kneaded by varying influences are very natural and ring true to life. The coolness with which Scott in Redgauntlet recalls his own early love-affair may be assumed, but the truth of the psychology is not to be denied. "The lover's pleasure, like that of the hunter, is in the chase; and the brightest beauty loses half of its merit when the willing hand can reach it too easily. --- There must be doubt, there must be danger, there must be difficulty - without some intervening obstacle that which is called the romantic passion of love in its high poetical character and colouring can hardly have an existence."

Waverley's 'swithering' mind is also skilfully analysed, while the struggles in the minds of Brian de Bois Guilbert and Leicester are admirably depicted. We may say in fact that but for the novelist's

C R I T E R I A (concluded).

7. HUMOUR.
   Joy of Life.
   Truth "
   Irony "

8. PATHOS.
   Associated with Humour.
   Sense of Loss - e.g. Losing side.
   Sorrows of the Poor - c.p. Shakespeare.

9. TRUTH to NATURE or to HISTORY.
   Inevitable Truth.

10. INFORMATION.
   Knowledge of S. bewildered his contemporaries.

11. STYLE.
   Faults - reasons.
   Wrote as he talked.
   Sometimes very great - seldom obscure.

12. MESSAGE.
   Danger of ethical aim.
   True message of Dickens, Thackeray.
   S. has a message as Interpreter of his Country and his time.

penetrating examinations and discussions of the thoughts of his leading characters we should have very little data for a knowledge of their nature.

IV.CRITERIA OF FICTION,- 7 - Humour.

The greatest novelists have with few exceptions, been masters of Humour. This is easy to understand. The principal springs of Humour arise in the writer's sense of the Joy of Life, or the Truth of Life, or the Irony of Life. Because they enjoy life greatly the great writers rejoice in the boundless variety of human character and its departures from the normal; because they see things truly they laugh at the distortions that seek to pass for truth; because they know and believe in the Ideal, they smile at the irony of human achievment.

In addition to that, Humour fills a double purpose in the novelist's practice: first, as a relief to the tension of the plot, second as a mode of advancing the action, of which processes Caleb Balderstone is the classic example (like the Fool in King Lear), for while his exploits are full of humour that helps to relieve the tragic gloom of the story, they are at the same time indispensable to the action.

SCOTT'S HUMOUR.

There can be no doubt that Scott's humour is one of his greatest qualities. To begin with, he had an abiding sense of the Joy of Life. "The way to keep us old customs is to enjoy old customs; the way to be satisfied with the present state of things

is to enjoy that state of things. Over the "cavalier" mind the world passes with a thrill of delight; there is an exultation in a daily event, zest in the 'regular thing', joy at an old feast. Sir Walter Scott is an example of this." (Walter Bagehot - Estimations in Criticism).

This feeling for the joy of life is the fount from which springs the humour of Dandie Dinmont, King Richard, Rob Roy, Edie Ochiltree, Cleveland, for they all play 'pliskies' that depend on rude health and strength, or on primitive wit and cunning, or on coolness and daring. Scenes in taverns for example in Waverley, Rob Roy, Old Mortality, St. Ronan's Well, scenes on the common highway, as in Kenilworth, Waverley, The Antiquary, Heart of Midlothian; scenes of rural sports as in Old Mortality, the Abbot, all suggest happy and hearty good humour.

But there is the Humour that springs from the knowledge of Truth, from the perception of the normal in life, - so keen a perception, that any departure from the normal is instantly seized upon. Thus we have the humour of Dominie Sampson, of Dumbiedykes. of Triptolemus Yellowley, Richie Moniplies, and many other characters; of the Jail scene in Rob Roy, the ride to Drumclog in Old Mortality; and many other characters and scenes that impress the reader as variations from the theme of common life. Finally we have the Humour that springs from the knowledge or at least a hope of the Ideal. The con-

contrast between human effort and human achievment runs all through the Antiquary - Dousterswivel, Sir Arthur Wardour, the Antiquary, Lovell himself, are dupes of their own hopes, and so long as the consequences are not too serious the reader can smile at the humour of the various situations that arise. In the Black Dwarf the irony is more sombre so that the reader is in doubt, and though in St. Ronan's Well the irony of the scenes at the 'Hottle' is at first light-hearted and joyous, later, as also in The Bride of Lammermoor, the Irony becomes tragic so that we laugh almost against our will and in order to keep back our tears. Perhaps The Pirate, Quentin Durward, The Fortunes of Nigel, Redgauntlet, and The Fair Maid of Perth are the best examples of well-balanced Irony such as escapes the casual reader but becomes more and more perceptible on intimate acquaintance. The critics who place Scott's best work before 1821 do not seem to have noted this development in his art, which it undoubtedly is.

CRITERIA OF FICTION - 8. Pathos.

It is a general observation that an author may be distinguished for Pathos as well as Humour, and for the same reason. If Humour arises from the writer's sense of the Joy of Life or the Truth of Life, no less does Pathos. The departure from the normal which excites risibility in the case of Dominie Sampson, or Guse Gibbie, or Bailie Jarvie moves the onlooker to tears when it is related to loss or disappointment. Davie Gellatly and the Black Dwarf are humorous only in

their externals, a brief acquaintance with them reveals the pathos that underlies their differencefrom the rest of humanity. So in Macbeth little Macduff in his argument with his mother is humorous in his precocity and in his arraignment of his father, but the smile dies on our lips when we realise his danger, and mirth becomes grief at the fate of so much promise.

All death is pathetic because it marks the end of one life with all its hopes and aspirations, but though it is the greatest form of loss, other things than death can evoke great pathos, e.g. Queen Constance on her son, Meg Mucklebackit on the life of the fisherman, Meg Merrilees on the eviction of the gipsies. The poignancy of pathos may be reduced by other circumstances that overshadow it, such as, for example, dignity in the deaths of John of Gaunt and Col. Newcome, excitement in that of Marmion and that of Umslopogaas in Alan Quatermain, justice in that of Hamlet, revenge and national triumph in that of Samson

'Nothing is here to wail
Or knock the breast; nothing but well and fair
And what may quiet us in a death so noble."

The pathos of the losing side is of course the most recurrent form of pathos in Scott. Baron Bradwardine in the day of proscription, Bailie Jarvie's account of Rob Roy's ruin, Redgauntlet in the final failure of his schemes, Queen Mary on Loch Leven Castle; but of course thetwo novels that abound most in scenes of pathos are St. Ronan's Well and The Bride of Lammermoor, which are also most noted for their

humour. In addition we have to note the dignity as well as pathos that Scott lends to the sorrows of the commonest and poorest, as in the death of Meg Merrilees, the funeral of Steenie Mucklebackit, and that of Oliver Proudfute, not to speak of the affliction of Davie Deans. In thus dwelling on the sorrows of plain folk Scott surpasses Shakespeare, who, except for that one magnificent passage in King Lear

"Poor houseless wretches wheresoe'r ye are &c"

seldom introduces the lower orders save for purposes of humour.

"Scott cares little for the pathetic but when he does write in that strain few if any writers can surely equal him in beauty of expression or intensity and purity of thought." (Alison)

8. TRUTH TO NATURE OR TO HISTORY.

The danger attending the use of Humour and Pathos alike is that of over emphasis on either aspect so that the thoughtful reader feels that there is a departure from reality, a lack of proportion, a breach in the laws that govern life. When the humour becomes farce, when pathos becomes maudlin (mere sob-stuff), when action becomes melodrama, the reader may be impressed on a first reading, but when he seeks, as a good reader should, to renew the impression, he finds it not deeper but shallower, and the reason is that the scene is not true to life. This may be due to the writer's obtrusion of himself

and his views on the occasion, or it may arise from a low desire to 'draw the waters', or it may proceed from a definite want of proportion. The opening chapter of Martin Chuzzlewitt is an instance of humour that is somewhat forced and out of proportion, and the closing scene of the action in the same story is melodramatic and stagey in its assembling of the principal characters. Similarly Dickens is found to elaborate his pathos to an almost intolerable degree in the deaths of Paul Dombey, Jo the crossing sweeper, and even little Nell, though the latter is more in keeping with the action of the story than the others.

Similarly with regard to events and dialogue, they must appeal to the reader as likely, and not merely possible, but inevitable. Verisimilitude is often gained by the inclusion of details that seem almost unnecessary, - in fact the writer must run the risk of boring his reader with a beggarly account of trifles in order to produce the effect of reality. This gift is found in the earliest masters of fiction, Defoe and Swift, but it is none the less essential.

Truth is sometimes stranger than fiction, and the writer of historical romance may include strange facts or traditions, provided he has verified his authorities. It is possibly because of this that Scott now and again records incredible things, such as the splitting of the willow wand by Locks-

Locksley's shaft. The matter of chronological exactitude is one which may also be considered under this head. For a writer to traverse the facts of history, to produce a false picture of actual events or personages, as Dumas sometimes does, and as the Baroness Orczy does in The Scarlet Pimpernel, is to run serious risk of being set down as a liar, and therefore to lose credence as a recorder of fictional truth. Even an honest ex parte version of history like Aytoun's Lays of the Scottish Cavaliers is obviously untrustworthy as history.

There can be no doubt that Scott made many errors in historical detail. Hardly one of the historical novels is absolutely accurate in every point. Famous examples can be adduced from Kenilworth, where the date of Amy Robsart's death is known to have been some years prior to the great fête at Kenilworth, and where Raleigh quotes Shakespeare's famous lines complimentary to Elizabeth at least twenty years before they were written; from the Abbot where Mary's attendants, particularly Catherine Seyton and Mary Fleming, could not have been in attendance at Lochleven Castle; from Ivanhoe where Friar Tuck appears before any Friars had come to England. Other anachronisms are noted by Graham (Social Life in Scotland in the 18th century), who states that "Bailie Jarvie paraphrases the description in A Tour through Great Britain 1747, (Vol.IV.p.129)

but when he quits his authority the Bailie makes a blunder in adding 'we are making a fair spell in cotton and muslins' - forty years before they were manufactured in Scotland." and "Mause Headrigg's indignation at Cuddie Headrigg's working in the Barn 'wi' a new-fangled machine for dightin' the corn frae the chaff, thus impiously thwartin' the will o' divine providence' - antedates the invention by fifty years."

Though many more anachronisms such as these can be cited they do not vitally affect the narrative's truth to history, for the novelist is not concerned to produce a picture accurate in every detail but aims at a representation of a struggle such as could have taken place between the forces or the characters at the time chosen. In several cases, as in Quentin Durward, and Peveril of the Peak, Scott avowedly transposes events and otherwise takes liberties with facts that are fairly well known. But just as his characters are for the most part true to nature so are their actions. and, as shall be shown later, the real plot is always true to Scott's view of history.

9. <u>INFORMATION.</u>

A good writer of fiction need not set himself to inform his readers of anything but the facts necessary to the understanding of his narrative and his characters, and yet in so doing, he may impart a considerable quantity of knowledge. It may not be necessary for him to go the length of Hugo and write

a treatise on the sewers of Paris, or an account of the horrors of quicksands, because the hero has to pass through them, any more than it is incumbent on him to discuss the life history of agorilla because the hero has shot one; but the insertion of details of costume or of habits and customs, especially in historical romance, is generally necessary to the comprehension of the period and the mental and moral outlook of the characters. Further, the characters themselves if they are true to nature are to be allowed to talk of themselves and their interests. Beatrice and Hero on the eve of the latter's wedding naturally talk 'dress'; Fra Colonna in The Cloister and the Hearth naturally discusses the debt of the church to the ancients; the hero in Arnold Bennet's The Glimpse naturally expatiates on the theme of modern music because he happens to be specially interested in that subject. Each of these topics demands information of a kind not accessible to the ordinary reader, and hence the writers have themselves to acquire the knowledge they impart. While it is possible that some of the learning so displayed has been "swotted up" for the occasion, it is nevertheless true that fiction can make the dry bones of historical, scientific, or psychological facts live. When we consider that some of the most glowing chapters of Westward Ho, and 'Tis never too late to Mend, were compiled from the study of books, we realise the value of the imaginative

treatment of facts as we find it in fiction. There is, of course, the danger of the "pill" being too bulky to be sophisticated by the 'jam', so that the reader suspects the narrator of educational or instructional aims, and when this occurs the interest in the novel is apt to evaporate. It is for this reason that Rasselas rarely appeals to the young - Dr. Johnson in his most school-masterly vein has no great fascination.

A quotation from an early critic of the Waverley Novels - John Scott in the London Magazine for January 1820 - will serve to show how his contemporaries were impressed with the "treasures of appropriate terms and anecdotes which surprise us by proving a learning equal to his natural faculties." After premising the author as one interested in field sports he continues: "but is it probable that this endued person will be at the same time deeply read in genealogical Latin, Troubadour poetry, the writings of the prophets, and the history of the Thirty Years' War? -- It is possible that more persons than one may yet manifest tastes and talents fitting them to be armourers to Knights-errant, - to dress John of Gaunt, or instruct the Baron of Bradwardine how he should stoop to take off his prince's boot; but is it to be imagined that any second author would at the same time be fond of getting into his altitudes at Clerihugh's, - and

have also a particularly acute relish for the system of bookkeeping by double and single entry as practised by the worthy Mr. Owen in the house of Osbaldistone and Tresham? Lastly we do not absolutely despair of the existence of some as warm and successful lovers of nature in her sublimest seats and wildest recesses ; nay, as enthusiastic admirers of the ardent, disinterested, imaginative character, which was fostered by persecution, and fashioned and endowed by a theology as gloomy and as sublime as the caves and the mountains that gave refuge to its conscientious adepts; but the insurmountable difficulty lies in supposing that to these feelings and faculties will be added an intimate acquaintance with the mysteries of the dog-kennel, an off-hand familiarity with the forms of court-etiquette and the smartest customs of town-life."

And this bewildering impression must have deepened as the years rolled on and the later novels poured forth still more prodigious and astonishingly diverse knowledge, proving acquaintance with the ancient Scandinavian customs of the Shetlands as with the origin of the mysterious Bohemians or Gipsies and the riotous court of Duke Hildebrod of 'Alsatia' , with the practices of monks and hermits, the details of ancient pastimes and pageants, and the methods of apothecaries, weavers, saddlers, and

other tradesmen.

To me as a boy Scott's notes at the end of the novels always had a fascination, and yet they were the mere overflowings of his fountain of knowledge. The difference between the notes and the text is noteworthy: in the novel the author could give his information whatever colour or texture, humour or pathos, sympathy or hostility, its position in the plot required; but in the added information the statement is plain and straightforward without bias or amplification, and almost invariably conveys the impression of truth-telling and reasonableness.

II. STYLE.

It may be granted that if Rasselas is read at all nowadays it is perused for the sake of the grave and sonorous style of the writing. Yet it is doubtful whether if nothing of Johnson had survived but this book it would command many readers. The reason is that the style has gone completelely out of fashion. And that is a reason why style is one of the last things desired of the novelist or looked for by the reader.

Style is the expression of a writer's individuality, but in a novel the individuality of the writer is not to be obtruded except at the expense of the general effect of the book. Lucidity, energy, and command of language are the desiderata

expected of the master of fiction; and the other qualities of great prose, conciseness, felicity, eloquence, balance, sonorousness, dignity (not to speak of epigram and paradox) are not always aids to the understanding. George Meredith is one of the great figures in the last years of the 19th century, but it is not certain whether his brilliant style is not a drawback to his popularity, or, it may be, lasting fame. The extraordinary style of Sterne forbids him to many readers; and it is a point of discussion regarding Stevenson whether his devotion to style, eminently successful as it is, did not cloud over his other qualities, and leave him to posterity a charming personality, and a great artist in words, but not a great novelist.

It is significant that Stevenson found much to cavil at in Scott's style. And indeed many faults are easily found in the pedestrian parts of the novels, these places where he is sparring for an opening, or laboriously filling in the gap between scenes of interest, of action, humour, or pathos; where he is carelessly pouring forth a flood of information, or hastening on at the top of his speed through scenes and activities that he himself enjoys though he is not too sure of his reader's enjoyment.

RAPIDITY OF PRODUCTION

For the many wearisome passages, the many

clumsy expressions, the redundancies, repetitions, Scotticisms, lapses in grammar and syntax, loose sentences, and badly linked paragraphs, one reason may be given, viz: the novelist did not so much write his novels as 'talk' them. If ever a man wrote as he talked Scott did. How else could he have produced his twenty folio pages a day (in three or four hours of that day) if his pen, or that of his amanuensis, had not travelled almost as fast as his tongue could? We learn from Lockhart of the difficulty his amanuenses, especially Willie Laidlaw, had in keeping up with the speed of his dictation.

Further, it stands to reason that as inspiration can not possibly be commanded day and daily (to the extent of twenty folio pages), there are times when, though the even flow of speech goes on, he is fumbling for ideas, talking round his subject, divagating into familiar but irrelevant topics, 'peizing the time' till vision or emotion shall once more seize him by the hair and breathe into his ear the words that burn, the thoughts that live.

Furthermore, possibly from that contempt of his art which he often vented, he disdained revision, rarely rewrote, and seldom waited for 'le mot juste' to perfect an expression. What he could do when he chose to spend time on his style we see, as Henderson points out, in the M.S. of Wandering Willie's Tale, where "wearisome passages are con-

condensed, errors and defects of style corrected, redundancies removed, inconsistencies weeded out, and the plot more carefully adjusted."

But when we have made allowances for those defects that arise from the writer's rapidity of production, and turn to the excellences that abound in Scott's inspired work, we are filled with amazement at the felicity of his expression, the certitude of his choice of words, the beauty of his descriptions, the fidelity of his characterisations, the reality of his dialogue (that is, most of it, the exceptions being noted above), the swing and verve of his action, the clearness and sanity of his comments. In his great passages Scott is not surpassed by any prose writer in the language for directness, vividness, energy, and lucidity, and the other qualities of good prose, eloquence, felicity, dignity, beauty, and even at times terseness, can be exemplified from his writings.

Style in our author's hands is merely a tool for shaping his thought, for producing true images and lasting forms of beauty, not a lapidary's drill for cutting and polishing gems of thought or expression.

12-<u>MESSAGE</u>.-

"In the heart of the speaker there ought to be some kind of gospel tidings, burning till it be uttered". (Carlyle).

Whether a novelist should have a definite ethical aim, or a characteristic view of life or

society, or any purpose in his work other than entertainment, is, of course, a matter of opinion. But it may be argued that, taken as a whole, the work of few great writers is lacking in definite purpose. To 'hold the mirror up to nature' is in itself a great ethical aim, for it involves the persistent pursuit of truth. The degree of truth attained by the novelist in his presentation of life, and not the lessons he seeks to inculcate, is, therefore, his true 'message'. The 'novel with a purpose' may succeed as propaganda, but its success as a novel is often gained in spite of its purpose. For instance, Wilkie Collins's "Man and Wife" with the two-fold thesis of the dangers of over indulgence in athletics and of the Scottish Marriage-Law, owes its popularity to the fine description of the four-mile foot-race and the thwarting of the athlete-villain by the working of that same marriage-law. Mrs. Henry Craik's insistence, in "John Halifax", on the astounding fact that a manufacturer may be agentleman, - especially if he inherits a Greek Testament from his father, - leaves us cold, but we can admire her presentation of middle class domestic life and the solid Victorian virtues. Dickens exposed the evil of Debtors' prisons, the working of the poor-law, the exploitation of children in private schools, the law's delays, the circumlocution office, and so on; but his real message, the sacredness of human affection especially among the simple and the poor,

is independent of the abuses he hated so much just because they were destitute of humanity. In like manner Thackeray is interested in the true nature of aristocracy, what constitutes a gentleman in the highest sense of the word, and how far modern conditions assist or hinder his development. His scoffing at social distinctions, his inability to find a hero or a heroine in the ranks of society, his refusal to allow glory, or grandeur, or even dignity in the nobility of his country, was certainly due not to cynicism, not to a preference for the seamy side of life, not to disbelief in goodness, or distrust of human nature, but to hatred of evil in any rank of life, an idealism that was continually disappointed, a love of humanity that transcended social barriers.

Of all writers Scott is the one to whom a low commercial ideal, the production of "best-sellers" has been attributed most persistently. If Milton lived in order to write Paradise Lost, Scott wrote Waverley in order to live in his own fashion. "He wanted", says Leslie Stephen, "to live his romance more than to write it". But if, in spite of his "commercialism" Scott by his representation of life taught his age anything, and has something still to teach our generation, we may hold that he has a Message. Scott the interpreter of his country and his Time has undoubtedly as high an aim and as strong an appeal as any of the great masters. This will be set forth in the pages following..

V.

THE EQUIPMENT OF THE NOVELIST.

1. OBSERVATION.
   Faculty belongs to highest genius.
   Note - possibly great mental strain.
   S's opportunities unique.

2. STUDY.
   Student asks questions.
   Danger of over-absorption.
   Extent of Scott's reading probably unique in his day.

3. EMOTION OR SYMPATHY.
   Note S's distrust of sexual emotion - personal!
   - Also reaction against Presbyterianism of his father.
   Wide sympathy of S.

4. IMAGINATION.
   (1) Nature and Man.
   (2) Action.
   (3) Conflict.
   (4) Speech.

5. REFLECTION.
   Abstract ideas no attraction for S.
   Can see both sides of a controversy, - trace sources of action in Character, and therefore shews great Constructive capacity.

6. JUDGMENT.
   Sincerity beyond question.
   As novelist holds the balance even.
   Less partisan than almost any other Historian.

V.

THE EQUIPMENT OF THE NOVELIST.

In considering the claim just set forth of Scott as the Interpreter of his Country and his time it may be well to consider his equipment for this task.

1. OBSERVATION.

A faculty for receiving impressions and for recording them so deeply that they become a part of Memory seems characteristic of the highest genius. Dante, Chaucer, Shakespeare, Cervantes, seem to remember everything they have seen, and Scott is of the brotherhood. In Browning's "How it strikes a contemporary" he lays stress on this quality in the poet, e.g.

'He took such cognisance of men and things,
If any beat a horse, you felt he saw;
If any cursed a woman, he took note;
Yet stared at nobody, - they stared at him.
And found, less to their pleasure than surprise,
He seemed to know them and expect as much,
- a recording chief inquisitor
--- this man walked about and took account
Of all thought, said, and acted, then went home
And wrote it fully."

The mental effort in observing and recording in the memory everything in their experience worth noting was probably a conscious one and may have helped as much as anything to exhaust their energies. All the more exhausting, perhaps, because the genius did not seemto be toiling, but went out and in among men,

sharing their amusements and gaieties, without betraying for one instant the pulsation of that mighty engine behind the placid brow registering and recording every separate impression, docketing and filing it for future reference, collating, comparing, and revolving.

We know that Dickens consciously cultivated the art of observation, so that he could go down one side of a street and up the other and mentally note the contents of every shop window. We know also that single impressions did abide with Scott, as when he repeated to Hogg a poem that Hogg himself had once repeated to him and had forgotten.

No aspect of Humanity or of Nature seemed to escape the eye of Sir Walter, and having been observed it was graven in his memory. So far as his opportunities went he acquired a knowledge of Scotland and his fellow Scots that is one of his principal assets. And his opportunities were unique. Living in Edinburgh at a time when its intellectual life was perhaps at its highest level under Dugald Stewart, Henry Mackenzie, Francis Jeffrey, to mention only three, was in itself a stimulus to a brain like Scott's. The Scottish Capital was then more nearly a microcosm of Scotland than ever before or since, so that it was possible to meet in the law-courts, or in the market place, or on the quays of Leith, representatives of every class, examples of all the racial elements, types of all kinds of character in the nation.

Yet the life of Sir Walter provides us with one of the most curious paradoxes in literary biography - a jovial, hearty man, fond of open-air sports and diversions, a lawyer apparently indebted for preferment as much to his political and family connections as to his legal acquirements; he must have surprised many of his casual acquaintances by breaking into verse, (like Silas K. Wegg) and the novels must have been a bewilderment to those of his intimates who were in the secret, and a frank impossibility in the view of those who were not. Something of the same bewilderment is probable in the minds of Shakespeare's contemporaries. And the reason is the same in both cases: men may appraise a man's achievement in action, or the extent of his acquirement in learning, or the correctness of his judgment as a critic or a magistrate, but they fail to understand how, looking on the same world as they, he can see so much more than they do.

2. STUDY.

For the acquisition of knowledge, personal observation is undoubtedly the best method. The tenacity of information so acquired may be due to the association of sense impressions, - sight and hearing, and even touch, taste, and smell; and of course in knowledge acquired through experience the element of emotion is generally present, whether as joy or sorrow, pleasure or pain, defeat or triumph, fear or dominance, so that the brain imprint of that which

we have seen, that which we have heard, is doubly or trebly incised. In the case of Scott we can see the child lying in its sheep-skin on the braes at Sandy-knowe watching with wide eyes the actions of the farm folk or the storm among the hills, and listening to the ballads and tales of his old nurse; and we can hardly doubt that the physical disability which he then suffered, and which was to cling to him all his life in the form of lameness, - whether the pain was actually physical or merely that of deprivation - was a strong factor in developing his memory of action and stories of action. And so through all his novels we find that much of his very best work is that which is based on personal observation and we can almost trace the joyful occasion when the impression was acquired. Which leads to the interesting conjecture that the inception and maintenance of his anonymity may be due partly to Scott's consciousness that his knowledge was so personal that those who shared his company when he acquired it must be able to identify the occasion and so the wonder would cease. Of course he overlooked the fact that his acquirement and theirs were of very differing degree, but still there is much to be said for the view that those who companied with him must have been mystified at the knowledge he gleaned from the opportunities they shared.

In the absence of opportunities for personal observation the next best thing is to ask questions. For it is obvious that the student is a man who asks

questions of living men or dead ones, and save he asks questions he will get little good of books or professors. The best novelists have been generally men of very wide reading, for it is obvious that mere personal observation will hardly suffice for a modern writer's equipment. Luck good or bad may throw unusual, and therefore valuable, experiences in a man's way, but there is an element of self-determination and purpose in a man's choice of reading that commands our respect. Study is of course fascinating in itself, and it is quite possible for a man to be a student without acquiring knowledge that is 'impartible'; and besidesthere is the danger of a writer's swamping his own individuality with a load of other men's opinions. Without troubling with the extreme case of Dominie Sampson, one might take the case of Milton whose twenty years' absorption in public affairs may have saved him from the penalties attending over-absorption in study. If at the age of 29 he considered his genius not fully equipped and that in 'Lycidas', for instance, he is plucking the fruit before it is ripe, it is not impossible that something of the lethargy that descended on Cowley, or on Coleridge, might have fallen on the Puritan poet had he continued his efforts to complete his equipment. And yet what a treasure of knowledge he had already laid up is evidenced in the multitude of illustrations and references that rise in the blind poet's mind when

he lays down the weapons of statecraft to take up the pen of the poet that he may rise 'to the highth of that great argument, and justify the ways of God to men'.

Not only was Scott a keen student of humanity and nature as he found it around him, he was also an indefatigable student of books. Four kinds of writing appealed to him and gave answer to his questing mind, viz., Romance, whether in Poetry or in Prose; History, whether in chronicle or tradition; Antiquities whether in heraldry or archaeology; and Law, whether in statute or custom. - In addition he studied the remnants and relics of the past in architecture, dress, arms, sports, pastimes, superstitions, religion, and, in some degree, speech. He was well enough acquainted with the classics though he knew better than exhibit his learning in his fiction except when it was required to illustrate a character like Dominie Sampson or Baron Bradwardine.

The extraordinary extent of Scott's reading was probably unique in his generation. Coleridge might be better acquainted with philosophy, De Quincey with the Classics, Lamb with the Elizabethans, but no man had traversed the fields of literature, - to say nothing of the more arid acres of history, archaeology, astrology, law, and theology, more widely or to better purpose. And just as in his Observation Scott made the know-

knowledge he acquired part of his personality, so that the casual visit to a scene became an abiding vision of beauty or an inspiration of human activity, so in his Study his information became so real, so intimate a part of himself that Hutton can truly remark "He had something like a personal experience of several centuries."

3. EMOTION OR SYMPATHY.

The power of feeling deeply is not given to every man and it is perhaps as well that most of us are not capable of the intense passion of a Burns or a Byron. The pitfalls of emotion are only too obvious in the career of almost every great writer. Yet the man who has the capacity for deep feeling is generally able to enter into the feelings of others and hence develops the faculty of sympathy. This faculty enables the novelist to portray the emotions of his characters as well as their thought, and as the majority of human beings are swayed much more by emotion than by thought the faculty is of the highest value.

Scott's physical history may be partly responsible for the absence of passion, - at least sexual passion, from his novels. The period of illness in his early youth, and his subsequent permanent lameness, may have retarded his sexual emotions, just as it is almost certain, Burns's early development and the severe physical labours he underwent in doing a man's work at fourteen assisted to produce the poet's terrific capacity for passion. Byron's beauty and his associations with boys at a great public school probably counteracted the effect of his lameness.

But though Scott's passions remained normal and under severe restraint, his capacity for sympathy was probably fostered and increased by his own early

suffering and by his association with kindliness and devotion in his youth. Of course, in addition to the reasons already adduced for Scott's failure in portraying lovers there is the quite obvious one of his nationality: as a Scotsman he shared his countrymen's distrust of glibness in talking of love. (Cp. Leeby and Jamie in "A Window in Thrums"). Probably much of Froude's misconception of the Carlyle 'menage' would have been removed had the couple indulged in public endearments, or at least words of affection; but as they delighted instead in rating and baiting each other, sometimes by way of fun, the bewildered Englishman wrote them down at their face value - an unhappy, ill-mated couple, - whereas it was only their Scotch way of concealing - or expressing, a very deep attachment.

Undoubtedly Scott's childhood at the Border farm brought him into contact and sympathy with the gangrel bodies, the beggars and gipsies, the poachers and farm labourers, the milkmaids and old wives, the foresters and farmers of his beloved Border country, while his boyhood in Edinburgh gave him acquaintance with gutterbloods, hostlers, and tavern-keepers and frequenters, with weavers and other tradesmen, merchants and manufacturers, with lawyers and their clients, and all the types that tend to gravitate to an ancient capital. Much of his knowledge of the Highlanders was probably acquired from the litigants who had exchanged their old methods of clan warfare

for the new ones of the law, and it was only amplified by his subsequent journeys and voyages in the North; just as his south country acquaintance was extended by his famous 'raids' on the Borders, lifting not cattle but ballads.

The stern Presbyterianism of his father evoked a re-action in the mind of Scott giving him a broad sympathy with the true spirit of Religion wherever manifested, so that while his personal preference was for the more ornate service and aristocratic polity of the Scottish Episcopal Church, he could enter into the heart of the dour Cameronian deploring the broken covenants, as into that of the faithful Romanist clinging to the ancient ceremonial and the sacred symbolism of his unpopular faith.

The society of Edinburgh, with its legal, political, social, artistic, and literary activities, was one well calculated to stimulate the mind and heart of the growing boy, while the mouldering survivals of Jacobite devotion and sentiment appealed to his chivalry and pity. To all these stimuli Scott's temperament responded so vigorously that his general sympathy, his faculty for entering into the feelings of people of every station, creed, and calling, of getting beneath the skin of the outer man, penetrating to the heart of so many individuals, is second only to that of Shakespeare.

4. IMAGINATION.

Stevenson says somewhere that a man who could

recollect his childhood perfectly would be a perfect genius, and the reason is this: the most vivid impressions recorded by the senses are those received in the young and plastic stage of their development; memory of these impressions will therefore be vivid, and their reproduction, or combination with other impressions constitutes the principal stuff of Imagination. The faculty works by association, so that the sight of a natural object, a striking view, an ancient ruin, an old weapon, calls up either a personal experience or a picture of past days drawn from the storehouse of memory. "A man whose mind is full of historical associations somehow communicates to us something of the sentiment which they awake in himself. Scott could never see an old tower, or a bank, or a rush of a stream, without instantly recalling a boundless collection of appropriate anecdotes. - A proper name acts upon him like a charm. It calls up the past days, the heroes of the '45, or the skirmish of Drumclog, or the old covenanting times, by a spontaneous and inexplicable magic."

This power of reproducing the life of the past, of making a living picture out of dead facts, is manifested by Scott in four ways.

Nature and Man.

1. To begin with, though he had the keenest admiration for Nature wild and unadorned; a beautiful scene, a lonely glen, a storm beaten shore, were all alike regarded by him as associated with Man. The thought

suggested might be the power of Nature over her child; its influence in moulding his thought, his action, his religion; or it might be Man's conquest over Nature, his success in taming her savageness, in wresting a livelihood from the sea or the mountains, in working his will in spite of her resistance; or it might be merely the appropriate background for a scene of love, or conflict, or death.

Action.

2. Similarly he delighted in reproducing Action. Every kind of contest appealed to him, whether in the realm of sport, as in the Stag hunt in the Lady of the Lake, the salmon spearing in Guy Mannering, the Archery contest in Ivanhoe; or the innumerable forms of War, the siege in Old Mortality, Ivanhoe, the Betrothed, Castle Dangerous, Peveril; the Battle in Waverley, Old Mortality, the Legend of Montrose; the single combat in Ivanhoe, the Talisman, the Monastery, Guy Mannering, the duel in the Antiquary, and the tournament in Ivanhoe; or escape from death at the hands of Man or by the power of the sea, as in Old Mortality, Ivanhoe, Heart of Midlothian, The Antiquary, The Pirate; or violent death in The Bride of Lammermoor, the Fair Maid of Perth, the fortunes of Nigel, Quentin Durward, St. Ronan's Well.

Conflict.

3. The sense of conflict is of course present in all his novels in the contest of the Plot. The power of presenting not one or two but many personalities all

contending each for his own ends, but working out one complete and coherent result, is the greatest faculty of the Imagination. "To imagine not only one but many personalities interacting in social life; to imagine a society of people is a stupendous act of power, it is the greatness of Shakespeare, of Dickens, or of Scott." (The Art of the Novelist - H.B. Lothrop, p.154)

~~Imagination~~.

4 Speech.

It may be said that the nearer a writer gets to reproduction and the farther from description of speech the more conviction does he carry. Possibly no part of the Novelist's art has been carried to greater perfection than this: few fiction writers nowadays fail to give the speech of their characters in plain English or Vernacular accurately enough. Now there are times when Sir Walter's historical sense overpowers his dramatic and so he reports, often in the third person, the speech of his important characters rather than reproduces verbatim their true diction and accent. There are times when it looks as if he distrusted the propriety of some of his romantic personages speaking the language of common men. There is also just the possibility that Scott accustomed though he was the best literary society of Edinburgh had yet something of a provincial's distrust of his command of the best 'Society English'. It is quite clear that Burns in spite of intellect possibly unequalled in his day for breadth and agility, suffered from an inferiority

inferiority complex when it came to using the King's English, as can be seen from the 'Letters to Clarinda'; and something of the same kind may have afflicted Scott though in less degree.

However it is clear that his subordinate characters, with few exceptions, speak their native tongue, whether Tweedside or Mearns, Lothian or West country with rare fidelity to their accustomed dialect, - even the 'argot' of London thieves or Border Gipsies does not ring false to the reader.

Of course it must be noted that nowhere does Scott give a perfect reproduction of dialect either in vocabulary or in phonetics, but just enough of both to suggest individuality and reality, never enough to puzzle and distress the reader with linguistic mysteries. Thus many Scotch words that differ from the English form only in pronunciation are spelt in the English way; and, to take the case of the Orcadian dialect, the very great difference between that tongue and that of the Mainland, - due of course to the very large element of Scandinavian in the language as in the blood of the islanders, is very lightly suggested. Still it must be conceded that no writer has succeeded so well as Scott in representing the speech of the Scottish nation with all its local variations, of which there are at least ten discernible in his works, viz: Orcadian, Aberdonian, Mearns, Perth, Fife, Lothian, Border, Dumfries, Lanark, and Glasgow and West Highland. He also reproduces some English dialects, e.g. Northumbrian, Cumbrian,

Yorkshire and Cockney. In fact the only important modification of English that Scott does not give examples of is Irish and it is noteworthy that he never attempts an Irish character, It is not improbable that in this he wisely recognised the limits of his experience, but it is quite likely that he definitely refused to enter the same field as Miss Edgeworth, and he certainly avoided Ayrshire and the mother-dialect of Burns and Galt.

5 Reflection :

To the faculties of sympathy and imagination the Novelist must add the power of Reflection, that is, he must be able to keep those faculties in control, and to select from the information gained by observation or study just the amount necessary for his purpose. Perception, Understanding, Comparison, Selection, and Arrangement are the processes his material must pass through before it is finally adapted, and his watch words must be Truth and Reality. Only the greatest writers are capable of sustained Reflection - in fact there is danger when a novelist philosophises a great deal, for the action and feeling of the novel may suffer - but the faculty is exercised satisfactorily when the novelist produces the impression of Truth.

Scott was no philosopher. In Peacock's trenchant criticism the absence of general ideas in the Waverley novels is commented on. But for Scott abstract ideas had no attraction, and his theories of life and conduct were never clearly, or consciously, reasoned

out. This arises from his natural preference for action and emotion, not from lack of high powers of reason. His ability to gather his material, to select and arrange his incidents, to penetrate the workings of men's minds, and to see all sides of a controversy, is evident in his best novels, and denotes no mean intellectual ability. Above all his understanding of men and his capacity to set forth their clash and conflict as a clear and intelligible part of human history, shewing their actions arising out of their characters and developing inevitably and inexorably, are proofs of that constructive capacity which belongs to a high order of intellect.

6 Judgment.

If Reflection is perhaps rarer than those other faculties of the novelist already mentioned, still more rare must be the faculty of judgment which is indeed beyond the power of many otherwise respectable writers. The difficulty lies in the fact that judgment is made up of two kinds of opinion, particular and general. It is not beyond the ordinary man to give an opinion on a single incident or character, but when it comes to declaring a verdict on a complete period or a number of historical figures, on a question of national politics or religion, the prejudices of the den and the market place are apt to come into play. In short the judgment of a novelist will be more or less bound up in his message. It is perhaps significant that Lytton,

whose qualities of learning and imagination are undoubted, and whose reflections are often very acute, is generally ranked below Dickens and Thackeray and George Eliot, and the reason is probably this, that for some reason or other Lytton's judgment was frequently at fault, and we find it difficult to believe in his sincerity.

Now the sincerity of Scott is beyond question. He may have little preferences for a paternal feudalism, or distastes for extremes of any kind, but his devotion to Truth and justice is unmistakeable. He is seldom if ever unfair or one-sided in his estimate of men. If occasionally he let the romantic aspect of a figure like Claverhouse overshadow that of the latter's cold-hearted support of 'crowned and mitred tyranny', he could make amends by the unflattering portrait in Wandering Willie's Tale in Redgauntlet; if he stressed the harshness and inhumanity of the extreme Covenanters, he gave Davie Deans, the uncompromising Cameronian, the heart of a father. In fact it is one of the curious things about Scott, that while as a politician he could be one-sided and partisan, and as a judge harsh and vindictive, as a novelist he holds the balance even and rarely succumbs to prejudice or preference.

Of course it might be argued that it is easy to be just in cases where the contestants are dead and gone and their cause or their claim decided by history or judged by posterity, but even the

THE OLD AND THE NEW.

1. THE NEW ERA.
   c.p. Tudor period.
   Absence of Unity, presence of Conflict.

2. OLD v. NEW.
   Scott's sympathies not entirely with Old.
   c.p. Plot of Waverley.

SCOTT'S DREAM.
- A new order preserving discipline and beauty of the old - allowing energy and enterprise of new. Shakespeare's 'Epic'.

THE CONTEST.
The two opposing classes - Landed and Manufacturing Aristocracy. - Note pride of old Aristocracy in War.

CONFLICT OF OLD AND NEW. - the Motif of the NOVELS.

IVANHOE, - Old Spirit - Racial hatred etc. new = fusion.

OLD MORTALITY :- Cavalier and Covenanter against Toleration in person of H.M.

GUY MANNERING :- A Legal Romance.

THE ANTIQUARY :- Past attempts to control Present.

THE BLACK DWARF:- Represents new force of Union.

A LEGEND OF MONTROSE - Note importance of Dalgetty - Efficiency.

ROB ROY - Romance v. Materialism - almost a draw.

THE BRIDE OF LAMMERMOOR -
Fate no blind Fury = Past working in Present.
Shakespearean conception - suffers in execution.

historian finds it difficult to avoid a certain degree of partizanship as can be seen in Hume, Gibbon, Macaulay, Froude, and even Carlyle. Scott is much less partizan than almost any other historian, especially as regards (1) well-known historical figures, (2) suoordinate characters, (3) the evolution of action from character, and (4) the main thesis of the contest of the Old against the New, in which, in spite of Scott's preference, the victory is invariably to the New.

VI.

VI. THE OLD AND THE NEW.

1. The New Era.

There are periods in human history when the contrast, the conflict between the Old and the New engrosses the minds of all thoughtful observers. Such a period is perceived in the Renaissance accentuated by the Reformation and the Discovery of the New World; such a period is repeated, with a difference, in the era of the Industrial Revolution accentuated by the French Revolution. For it was the Industrial transformation of Great Britain more than the possible political changes that impressed Scott most. He saw the passing of the old landed aristocracy that had given good service in Church and State, had officered the Army and Navy, and had made and administered laws since the Restoration at least; he saw it confronted by a new and energetic body of captains of industry whose ambitions no less than their abilities threatened the old dominancies. His sympathies were not

wholly against the new leaders. He recognised the value of their service, he took full advantage - to his sorrow - of their development of credit, for instance, in his own ousiness as a publisher; he rejoiced in the advances of science, and the spread of good literature, much of which was made possible only by the interest and patronage of those new leaders.

And he recognised the decay that had overtaken the ancient institutions of his country and the corruption and degeneration of the modern representatives of the old ruling caste.

2. SCOTT'S DREAM.

Professor Laurie Magnus says: "Cervantes in Spain was the antitype of Scott in Britain - Scott's function was to revive the spell of chivalric history in the minds and hearts of his countrymen. Cervantes' aim was precisely the reverse. He sought to justify to Spain the breach with her historic past and to estop, as he succeeded in doing, the flood of feigned ardour and fictitious sentiment." But Scott's aim was not merely to revive the spell of chivalry, it was to depict the conflict of his own day in terms of the past, to show the struggle between the Old and the New, and to hold the balance even between the sides. It is a mistake to write down the Wizard of the North as one who came "with his enchantments and by his single magic checked this wave of progress, and even turned it back; set the

world in love with phantoms, with decayed and swinish forms of religion, with decayed and degraded forms of government; surrounded with a roseate glory the sham civilities of an empty and foolish chivalry - revived the duel, revived inflated and bombastic speech, and resuscitated all the evils and fopperies of a useless so-called civilisation which has long been dead and out of charity ought to be buried." (Mark Twain)

Scott knew perfectly well that the past he dealt with was dead, or at any rate beaten from the field, and that the only thing left was to fix the terms of surrender, the amount of the indemnity. So sure is he of this, that not once in the whole series of his novels does he allow the old ideas to triumph or the new to be worsted even where, as in The Bride of Lammermoor, the losing side enlists all our sympathies. The historical success of the persecuting cause in Old Mortality, again, has to yield to the forces of time and toleration, not to say romance, at the expense of a serious hiatus of at least ten years in the narrative. The fulfilment of the prediction of Meg Merrilees, reinforced by the horoscope cast by Guy Mannering, is the nearest approach to victory allowed the old ideas; and as these supernatural proclamations influence not one single person in the action - for even Meg Merrilees relied on better evidence than her Gipsy lore, and Col. Mannering seems to forget all about his astrological experiment, their success is only a side

issue in the general contest where the New triumphs over the Old as usual.

But while Scott holds the balance fairly, and even allows the success of the New to be inevitable and invariable, he depicts no runaway victory, no overwhelming glory for one side and depressing disgrace to the other. (One is reminded of a room in the Berlin National Gallery, where scores of pictures depicting the war of 1870 exhibited terror-stricken Frenchmen fleeing before Prussian warriors with such uniformity that one was tempted to ask, Wherefore the triumph over so mean a foe? The Berliners were rather piqued when one suggested that a stern conflict where the issue was hanging in the balance would have redounded more to the credit of their national valour). The contest in the Waverley Novels is real, and the sides not unequally matched. But the important thing to remember is that in the mind of the novelist the real 'motif' is this struggle between Old and New, and not that between the romantic lovers and their enemies. The weakness which Scott good-humouredly admits in the plots of his novels is mainly due to this misconception of the plot as the history of the love-interest, and in some cases is absolutely non-existent.

<u>The True issue in Waverley</u> :

Thus in Waverley the opening five chapters, so much condemned as an otiose and cumbersome not to say

clumsy introduction to the action of the plot, are of great interest when regarded as stating the true issue, viz: the contrast between the modern spirit and the ancient. Richard Waverley, Whig M.P., and Politician, is put in direct contrast with his brother the Jacobite landowner. In Waverley himself, his interest in the chivalric history of his family, his sympathies with the picturesque in nature, his interest in romantic literature, his imaginative reerections of scenes of stirring action or moving pathos, are definitely at war with his loyalty to his father, and with his recognition of the fact that these things are not in keeping with the practical modern world, that their day is done, and that he cannot see a way of recalling them to life. When, however, in the later chapters, he is confronted in the Highlands with a living survival of the old order, semibarbarous and uncouth as it is, his interest is redoubled, and the skilful intrigues of the modern representatives of the old system draw him into a temporary adhesion to their cause. Yet even as a rebel he is curiously unconvincing. just because his modern spirit is out of touch with the bold ambition of Fergus McIvor, the loyalty of Flora, the devotion of Evan Dhu, to say nothing of the fantastic feudal claims of Baron Bradwardine and the other Jacobite leaders. The humanity which made him give up shooting when he had learned to handle a gun, and which comes to the fore when he tries to

save Colonel Gardiner, and succeeds in saving Colonel Talbot, is decidedly modern, but it surely conflicts with the military spirit! The Court at Holyrood suits him very well because it is largely modern, it stimulates his social powers, it supplies an atmosphere wherein his personal charm, his wit, his knowledge, his imagination, are given full play, and we can well imagine that the waste of valuable time and the neglect of the practical purpose of the Rising do not weigh heavily on his mind. Like a man in a dream who knows he is dreaming, he is not anxious to wake to the realities of life which he knows await him.

His love for Flora MacIvor is part of his romantic interest in the old order; when he loses taste for the enterprise, on account of the deceit, intrigue, and jealousy it winds around him, he turns to Rose as belonging to a simpler, more congenial order of things.

Tully Veolan is an example of an 18th century Scots nobleman's dwelling, with Bailie McWheeble, Sanders Sanderson, Davie Gellatly, as Lowland types in contrast with the Gaelic types of Fergus McIvor's entourage, and still more with the free-booter Donald Bane Lane, and the antithesis is between two stages of civilisation, the latter moving back towards the primitive, the former towards the culture of Scott's own time.

In Waverley's journey to the Lowlands the same contrast between old and new appears. This time, 'Gifted Gilfillan' represents the old irreconcilable religious fanatic still surviving in Scott's day, while Mr. Morton is the 'moderate' presbyterian of the 18th century.

There is no doubt that this continual contrast and conflict between the old order and the new, with humour and pathos and natural description skilfully varying the tension, was the true source of the public interest in the novel when it first appeared. And the interest in the novels continued and grew largely because the public of Scott's day were just as conscious as he was of the tremendous gap, not to say gulf, between the 19th century and the centuries preceding. It may have been the world-earthquake of the French Revolution, destroying old institutions and erecting new political theories; it may have been the twenty years' war with France with the excitement of defeats and victories, excursions and alarms of invasion; it may have been the fever of British industrial activity running its course with natural fluctuations during the whole period of Scott's literary life; it may have been all three influences together with that exercised by the discoveries of physical science, that induced the idea that the modern era was totally different from the age immediately antecedent, that the year 1800, or say 1789, marked a complete break with the past.

And just because the new era seemed so different, did men turn to the past not to revive it but mainly, and in the first instance at least, to plume themselves on the superiority and supremacy of the present. Yet Scott had other motives, of which two may be mentioned here; first, to rescue if possible the beauty and grandeur and glory of the old order from total oblivion, to show that in its day it fulfilled a purpose and answered a definite end, and to prove that men and women in the past were as human as those of to-day; second, to save his own age from the evils that inevitably accompany progress, and to build if possible an edifice combining the virtues of the old and the new.

In other words, Scott had a dream of a new order of society which should preserve the discipline and beauty of the old order while allowing the energy and enterprise of the new. Without doubt what was in his mind was the state of Society in England under Elizabeth, when an apparent union of Old and New, a combination of the breeding, polish, grace and high spirit of the nobility, with the energy, determination, practicality, and common sense of the middle and lower classes, raised the national temper to a height of unity and magnanimity such as made possible the greatest achievements in national enterprise, in commerce, and in literature. It is quite possible that he had in his mind's eye the example of Shakespeare who in his ten chronicle plays (King

John, Richard II, Henry 1V. Parts 1 & 2., Henry V., Henry Vl. Parts 1, 2 & 3, Richard III, and Henry VIII), wrote a national epic, embodying the Elizabethan ideals in politics, society and religion. Thus Henry V. is undoubtedly a Tudor monarch, fond enough of gaiety and pleasure, but at bottom sternly efficient and patriotic. John is a ururper but he is forgiven much for his opposition to papal and French instrusion into English concerns, and his final crime is submission to the overlordship of the pope. Richard II is a pathetic figure, interesting but palpably non-efficient, while his opponent and successor, beginning his career with something of the suavity and grace used by the Tudors to mask their ruthless purpose, falls away in popularity as his reign goes on just as Mary Tudor did. (Of course the contrast between Henry 1V. and his successor is heightened by Shakespeare for dramatic purposes, but the similarity between this contrast and that between Mary and her successor would probably impress his audience.) The fault of self-seeking at the expense of their country's wellbeing characteristic of the rivals in Henry Vl. 1 and 2., becomes the crime of national division and fratricidal war in the third part. The possible outbreak of civil war in Elizabeth's reign, either on dynastic or religious grounds, or both, seems to have haunted the minds of many in that era, and the horrors of the Wars of the Roses three generations old, the religious wars in Germany, the Netherlands, France, and Scotland, must have given the poet

an especial hatred of intestinal strife, a hatred that is perhaps the most recurrent motif in all his plays, for besides the Chronicle plays we have Julius Caesar, Macbeth, King Lear, Coriolanus, Antony and Cleopatra, Cymbeline, all dealing with phases of the subject and all exhibiting its repellant aspect. One feels that though Scott found it easy to admire and even condone rebellion, Shakespeare found the one impossible and the other very difficult.

The deathful egotism of Richard III must have represented to the Elizabethans the infinite resource and hard-hearted valour of the Spanish Conquistadores, Cortez and Pizarro, rather than the craft of Machiavelli.

There are some grounds for supposing that Henry VIII was designed as a trilogy to illustrate the dangers attending greatness in the state,-Buckingham, Queen Katherine, and Wolsey, being the chief protagonists, - a subject only too familiar to Shakespeare and his contemporaries, but, it may be, left unfinished on account of the difficulty of handling it without offence to the ruling power, and so pieced together by Fletcher as a pageant play. Patriotism, order, national unity, an interpenetration of classes, a love of pageantry and display, a sense of material prosperity and wellbeing, a distaste for extremes in religion, and a hatred of oppression and tyranny may be said to be the features of that epoch in England, and they find their reflection and interpretation in Shakespeare.

3. THE CONTEST.

But the parallel between Elizabethan times and the second half of George III's reign is far from perfect. For one thing, the nobility of the Tudors was largely a new nobility erected on the ruins left by the Wars of the Roses, sprung from the professional and mercantile classes, created for service or on accountof service, and therefore dependent on the Crown, and retaining for a generation at least some of the energy that won its elevation. It relied less upon tradition, family prestige, and old servitudes, than upon royal favour, political influence, and the advantage of gaining or increasing wealth. The aristocracy of Scott's day depended much more upon inheritance, privilege, and prescription. Not only so but they had grown in power partly by accident. Thus they had come to control parliament owing to the state of things that developed under the first two Hanoverian Kings, who knew little of the country and its language, and the kind of lethargy, the lassitude born of the 17th century struggles, into which the nation had sunk. New methods of agriculture added to their wealth as enclosures of commons added to their acres, while even the industrial revolution provided a market for the wool produced on their sheep farms, and the numerous wars up to 1815 kept prices high. They buttressed their social supremacy by legislation such as Corn Laws and game laws and by interpretation of the law such as the Speenhamland decision which enabled them to keep wages low.

This landed aristocracy found itself confronted

by a new race of leaders, excelling it in energy and ability, commanding greater resources of wealth, controlling the destinies of thousands of their fellow-countrymen, and therefore challenging the monopoly of political power and social prestige held by their rivals.

For another thing the unity of the nation was not the same. The war against Spain was as much a commercial as a political enterprise, as much a religious as a patriotic crusade, and hence the unanimity of the nation was strongly marked in Elizabeth's day; but the manufacturing classes of Scott's time were not enamoured of war; it was a hindrance to trade and a waste of the national resources, and besides its management was mostly in the hands of the hereditary nobility, who might allow sons of wealthy manufacturers to buy commissions but octracized them in the Officers' mess. The maintenance of the fighting services as a preserve for the sons of noble houses, and the predominance of interest, i.e. influence, in matters of promotion, are features of Britain's social organisation that are slow to disappear. In one way it is a good thing that the land-owning class should look on it as their duty to serve their King and country by leading in the army and navy; but divine right is no more inherent in an aristocracy than in a reigning family, and to claim the monopoly of such service is absurd. The admission of the wealthy classes to a share of political power and to some degree of equality in the services was to be the problem of the 19th century, complicated by the

rise of democracy demanding equal opportunities for all.

There was thus already in progress a contest between these two power-owning classes; the manufacturers, proud of their achievement in the multiplication of wealth, the raising of the standard of living, the increase of comfort, all the advantages of speedy transport and labour saving devices, together with the diffusion of culture and refinement, all which they held, not unjustly, to be advances in civilisation; the landowners, proud of their age-long position as local and imperial rulers in church and state, especially proud, one must believe, at the close of the great war, as having furnished the leaders to that British Army and Navy that had saved not only Britain but the rest of Europe from a tyranny feared and hated by all. Indeed one may observe that the war and its outcome really complicated men's ideas of the issues in the contest. On the one hand the men of family contended that no class had sacrificed so much, had lost so many of its members, had given such examples of heroism and devotion as they had, and men like Carlyle and Disraeli even imagined, until they were undeceived, that the hope of the nation lay with the disinterested efforts of gentlemen by birth. No doubt the follies, mistakes, and crimes of the money-spinners gave point to the appeal. The creation of slums, the oppression of the workers, the blatant materialism of their ideals rendered the industrial magnates suspect to many thoughtful observers. The claim that the Trade of

Britain was the paramount interest of the nation was paraded before every demand for social reform from the abolition of the slave trade to the Factory Acts.

The struggle between these two powerful elements in the body politic had already begun before Scott published his first novel, and it is therefore as a faithful mirror of his own day that Sir Walter depicts a similar conflict in his novels.

THE CONFLICT OF OLD AND NEW- THE MOTIF OF THE NOVELS.

In the scape of this brief survey there is no room for a detailed analysis of each of his novels showing how the true plot of each is to be looked for, not so much in the fortunes of the hero and heroine as in the conflict between past and present, old and new, in which they are more or less involved; but a consideration of sundry novels, chosen promiscuously, may suffice.

THE MOTIF OF IVANHOE.

Take first a typical romance - Ivanhoe. Here the vigour of the action, the splendid pageantry, the variety of the characters, might be considered to hold out sufficient interest to the reader, but it will be found upon examination that the usual contrast between the usual elements is present. The casual reader is apt to conclude that the contest is between Saxon and Norman, but the true fight is between the Old in Saxon and Norman alike, the racial hatred between the two, the pseudo-internationalism of the Templars, the arbitrary independence of the feudal lords, the selfish

aims of Prince John; and the New exemplified in the racial fusion typified in the friendship of Richard and Ivanhoe, and in the joint attack of Saxon yeomen and Norman knight on Torquilstone, the new humanity shown by Wilfrid to Isaac and Rebecca, and the new conception of the sovereign, not merely as Lord superior of his baranage but as King whose justice is accessible to all his subjects. One might add that though the spirit of romance may cry out against the marriage of Ivanhoe and Rowena, demanding his union with Rebecca as more in keeping with their relations in the story, the spirit of history says no; for Ivanhoe to have wed the Jewess would have been not only to begin a hopeless contest with every power of his day against him, Church and State, Norman and Saxon, high and low, but also to 'wreck the peace' which had been achieved.

Old Mortality :

Take again Old Mortality.- Leslie Stephen says "Scott hated theCovenanters like a good Jacobite, and yet he can describe them kindly and sympathetically." With all due deference to the great critic one is tempted to query both the antithesis and the paradox; but what Sir Leslie means, I suppose, is simply that Scott did sympathise with both Covenanters and Cavaliers, and though the failure of the Jacobite cause was due to the Whigs he could do justice to the qualities of the political ancestors of the latter. But the thesis of the book is not merely the struggle

for religious liberty against tyranny, neither is it the glorification of the cavalier, the military adherent of the royal authority against disorder and breach of law by intransigents; it is the much more modern view that religious faith is not a subject for force of any kind or from any side. As Henry Morton says in that fine speech on the departure of Burley "Farewell, stern enthusiast, in some moods of my mind how dangerous would be the society of such a companion. If I am unmoved by his zeal for abstract doctrines of faith, or rather for a peculiar mode of worship, can I be a man, and a Scotchman, and look with indifference on that persecution which has made wise men mad? Was not the cause of freedom, civil and religious, that for which my father fought, and shall I do well to remain inactive, or to take the part of an oppressive government if there should appear any rational prospect of redressing the insufferable wrongs to which my miserable countrymen are subjected? And yet, who shall warrant me that these people, rendered wild by persecution, would not, in the hour of victory, be as cruel and intolerant as those by whom they are now hunted down? --- I am weary of seeing nothing but violence and fury around me - now assuming the mask of lawful authority now taking that of religious zeal." This contention for Toleration has to run its course right up to the Revolution and even after it before the good sense of the community endorses it sufficiently to ensure its permanence.

Thus the hero seeks to put himself en rapport with his fellow-citizens at the wappenschaw on Lanark moor, and proves his powers of balance and dexterity in the sport for ages associated with these qualities, namely markmanship, i.e. in the shooting at the popinjay; but in the next scene the arrival of the dragoons at Neil Blane's howff throws him out of touch with the situation and brings home to him the unhappy state of his countrymen. He refrains from useless debate however and leaves for home only to be joined by the fanatic Burley. Thereafter he is buffeted between the rival parties, finding support only in his own strength of soul, the generous help of his rival Lord Evandale, the womanly instincts of Lady Bellenden, the warmer interest of Edith, the faithful adherence of Cuddie Headrigg, and the personal affection of Major Bellenden. The pictures of the Covenanters, Burley, Mause Headrigg, Kettledrummle, Ephraim Macbriar, Habbakuk Mucklewrath, are not flattering, though Macbriar's hectic enthusiasm is touching; but they are drawn as protagonists in the struggle not against the courtly Claverhouse, the Scottish Privy Council, the brutal soldiery, who are just as much in the wrong, but against the principle of Toleration, represented by the one lonely figure, deserted by friendship, by love, by those even for whom he made his sacrifice, but silently supported, one would gladly think, by thousands of decent, sober-minded, right-living Scotsmen, more thoughtful than Cuddie, less self-absorbed than Jenny Dennison. Even the

feminine devotion of that blind saint Bessie Maclure is astray in its glorification of the irreconcilable attitude, though her kindly humanity and simple purity of heart are wholly admirable.

Guy Mannering - A Legal Romance

It is curious to note that Scott began Guy Mannering with the idea of working out the Astrological prediction in Harry Bertram's life, but he clearly aoandons it and instead traces the contest between the Law and the forces (and the individuals) that refuse its domination or misuse its powers. The misfortunes of Godfrey Bertram arise from litigation, and the loss of his heir from his amateur dabbling in legal administration. The Gipsies, a lawless race, yet subject to a kind of jurisdiction exercised by Meg Merrilees, the smugglers, more or less popular, yet losing sympathy and support on account of the desperate crimes their occupation leads to; Gilbert Glossin, the wily attorney whose tortuous skillmight have brought him success such as many a lawyer in his day attained, at the expense of his clients, but whose association with criminals led him to crime; all these represent the opposition to the law in general, and to the legal rights of the hero. On the ~~other~~ side of law and order, we find Dandie Dinmont, the plain man whose common sense and love of fair play are invaluable on a Jury; Colonel Mannering who throughout sits in judgment and though sometimes wrong gives an honest decision on the facts as he sees them; Mr. Pleydell who

represents the Law itself; and Julia Mannering, (in her letters), as counsel for the hero, about whom we should otherwise know too little, for like Scott's other heroes he is not given much to do. A touch of modernity is to be observed however, in the development of Harry Bertram's character, the strength and energy of which are to be attributed less to his parentage than to the hardships of his youth.

The Antiquary - the Past revived in vain .

The period of the Antiquary is so modern that the interest is thrown on the attempt of the Past to control the Present. Jonathan Oldbuck himself in spite of his pursuits is not really on the side of the Old; but the dead hand of the Past lies heavy on the hero, through Sir Arthur Wardour's exaggerated views of the importance of lineage, through Miss Wardour's mistaken idea of filial devotion, through the malice of the old countess Joscelind. The vain attempt of the baronet to rehabilitate his fallen fortunes by the magic of the German adept, Dousterswivel, is of course ludicrous, but not much more so than the speculations of many gently-born dabblers in stocks and shares, who would seem to hold that providence is bound to favour their 'flutters', - in other words, owes them success because of their long descent. Incidentally one notes the interesting contrast between the false 'hand of glory' of Dousterswivel and the true hand of glory belonging to the despised Lovel.

The counter Agencies in the Antiquary are all singularly

democratic - the printer's descendant being ably aided in his efforts on Lovel's side by the fisherman Steenie Mucklebackit and his family, and the wandering beggar, Edie Ochiltree. The splendid good sense and noble patriotism of the latter, exhibited in his protest against the duel and his claim to join in repelling the threatened invasion, are among the best things in Scott. In further proof of Sir Walter's true democracy it is held by some that the true thesis of the book is this: that illegitimacy should not be laid as a stigma on a man's character, and that it does not hinder him from being truly heroic. The revelation of Elspeth Mucklebackit is dramatically interesting, but it adds nothing to our appreciation of the hero that he should be found to be the heir of the Glenallans except as a reward for his sufferings. We are much more delighted to find him a gallant officer in the forces against despotism, a leader to whom men naturally turn in the hour of danger. This hero, however, suffers from a tendency occasionally exhibited by Scott to 'huddle up the cards' and bring the book to a speedy conclusion. This is even more noticeable in the case of The Black Dwarf, which is obviously shorter by about a third than the original design. Apart from incidental circumstances which may or may not have curtailed his plan of the book it seems to me that to maintain what is almost certainly an allegorical figure representing the Union of the Parliaments of England and

Scotland in complete touch with reality was a task which Sir Walter found too arduous even for his genius. Instead he combines the old Border vendettas with a Jacobite plot and frustrates them by a melo-dramatic revelation. The characters drawn from real life, Hob Elliot and his 'clan', do not get much scope. The contest in the plot, is, however, still the same as in the other novels, Old versus New.

A Legend of Montrose :

The same conflict is to be found in most of the other Waverley novels especially in the first five years of the Great Unknown's triumphal progress. Thus the importance of Dalgetty in A Legend of Montrose is really true to the theme. The patriarchal system with its clan feuds, and its quick-tempered chiefs ready to quarrel on some trifling punctilio of honour or precedence, had to give ground before the matter-of-fact efficiency of the professional soldier; just as the vague claims of the oldest & most savage clan of all, the Children of the Mist, were superseded by the skill and cunning of their more modern neighbours on both sides, Campbell and Graham alike The element of coincidence in the example of the supernatural (in Alan Macaulay's second sight) is clearly modern, while the reconciliation of old enemies is likewise prophetic of the new order.

Roo Roy :

In Rob Roy the whole story turns upon the theft of commercial documents, a theft designed to precipitate

a Jacobite rising. Even Rob Roy is no true patriarchal chief but a bankrupt cattle dealer who having failed in ousiness takes to what might be termed an Insurance line. His Jacobitism is rather a doubtful quality; as it was in actual historical fact, and even his passion for revenge is mingled with a spirit of mischief and even entertainment that is again historical; and so he ranges himself on the side of the New rather than that of the Old. For real seriousness on the side of the Old we have to turn to Helen MacGregor whose implacable spirit is rather melodramatic, or to the Bailie, whose honest soul is moved to sympathy by his own recital of his kinsman's wrongs, and who, across the Highland Line, exhibits a spirit not unworthy of his forbears, whether his Celtic grandmother or his Whig father the Deacon who drew his sword at Bothwell Brig. We might say that the contest in Roo Roy is not so much between Old and New as between Romance and Materialism and it is part of the greatness of the book that the struggle is exhibited in the heart of almost every character; if Rashleigh and Helen are exceptions it is because both are distorted out of common humanity, the one by injustice, the other by physical misfortune, and, it may be, evil training.

The Bride of Lammermoor :

In the Bride of Lammermoor, written or rather dictated when Scott was suffering severe pain, so that his recollection of it was almost nil, the sense of overmastering fate is so marked as to challenge com-

parison with the tragedies of Aeschylus. Yet here the conflict is the same, for to Scott Fate was no blind Fury, no mysterious Agency of Chance, but simply the Past working in the Present. The family of Ravenswood, like many other families, like the French noblesse for instance, had squandered their inheritance, had abused their privileges, had neglected their duties; and above all, intime of national stress and division, they had taken the wrong side, the side of oppression and intolerance, the side that refused to march with the times, that looked to the Past rather than to the Future. For this they suffered, and not only they, but, in accordance with natural law, their blameless descendant. Such cases were bound to be lively in the mind of Scott and his contemporaries, and hence the inevitableness of the doom of the Master probably shocked them less than it does, or did, people unaccustomed to catastrophe. The meanness and selfishness of the new masters of the time, set in fine contrast with the nobility and generosity of the ruined Master, were also cognisable as concomitants of change, especially revolutionary change. The design of the book is indubitably great, perhaps the greatest conceived by Scott, but, possibly owing to his physical condition, it is not perfectly executed. The foil of Caleb Balderstone's humour is Shakespearean in its

conception, but as Caleb only appears in scenes of extravagant devotion to his master and the honour of his house he appears stagey and overdrawn. So with Edgar himself, he is almost continually facing either his poverty or his enemies and his attitude is not always consistent, being at one time hostile at others conciliatory. Not that this varying attitude is unnatural - it is almost inevitable when his own noble instincts and his love for Lucy conjoin. The fact of the matter is, that the author, in his haste to complete his task, or from physical aversion to anything but the most salient features of the contest, or because his consciousness of the conflict was so overwhelming as to banish the thought of minor details, devoted less attention than usual to the human setting of the story, 'the little nameless unrecorded acts' that bring the characters into relationship with their kind, the commonplace happenings that relieve the tension and for a time soothe the reader's excitement. The book makes a good play, a very good Opera, and, I believe, produces a profound impression when read aloud.

VII.

VII SCOTT'S AIM.

1. Supply and Demand.

It may be conceded that the majority if not all of the Waverley Novels were written to supply a commercial demand, - "The official function which he (Scott) performed, namely that of an industrial producer,

S C O T T ' S A I M.

1. SUPPLY AND DEMAND.
   Factors (1) Excitement of War.
   (2) Patronage of new manufacturing aristocracy.
   (3) Intrinsic merit.

2. PATRIOTISM.
   Chronicler and Interpreter of S. national character.
   e.g. Themes of first nine novels.
   (note omission of Reformation).

3. RECONCILIATION.
   (1) to reveal Scot to Englishman and vice versa.
   (2) to exhibit the essential unity of N. & S. Britons.

intent upon supplying the market with objects for which the demand was as keen as the want was legitimate". (Benedetto Croce - European Literature in the 19th century) Precisely, and the same function was performed by Shakespeare in his day. And just as the commercial function was compatible with the highest literary, not to say ethical, aims in the one, so was it in the other.

The demand was there undoubtedly. How did it arise? The main factors in the production of the demand for literary entertainment were probably these: (1) The excitement of the long war, which must have lasted some years beyond the Congress of Vienna, and which demanded some anodyne; (2) the growth of wealth in the hands of the industrialists which gave them the power to patronise the new author, who was none the less interesting because he seemed to spring, like themselves, from obscurity. Besides, it seems probable that many of the men who had risen to wealth or competence were genuinely interested in literature, and were determined to prove their capacity for culture by patronising the arts. The same thing had happened in Italy at the time of the Renaissance, when the patrons of Art and Literature were merchant princes rather than hereditary nobles. Such men must have had some degree of intellect, and they, resenting the slurs cast upon them by their university-trained rivals, may have sought to surpass the latter by acquaintance with the best literature.

(3) In the third place the intrinsic merit of the new novels and their manifest superiority to anything of that description in English letters of that time must still have a large proportion of the credit. But apart from fulfilling this legitimate demand we can observe in Scott several other and equally legitimate aims.

2. Patriotism - Scottish History:-

Leslie Stephen says: "Scott's whole life was moulded by the passionate desire to carry on the old traditions and preserve the ancient virtues of his race." To be the chronicler and interpreter of his country and his nation was undoubtedly one of the principal aims of our novelist. By training and temperament Scott was passionately interested in Romance, and, as the editors of The English Parnassus say "To war with the present seemed the function of romance, to lay siege to the towers and defences of the city that is built". Again the same distinguished critics remark, "No epoch of the past was so rich in imagination stirring quality, so varied in emotional content, so capable of supplying the poet with moving subjects as the great Christian age, the age of faith, that built the cathedrals, the age of chivalry and knightly ideals, of spiritual symbolism and passionate loyalties. -- The colour and pomp and pageantry of the Middle Ages, its picturesque features in dress and armour, its glittering splendour had too their influence".

To no one more than Scott did the Past make its appeal. To be just, it was not only the life and colour of the Middle Ages but the whole pageant of Scottish History that fascinated him. The order in which he wrote the series of the Waverley Novels is evidence that it was not merely the beauty and splendour of the past that intrigued him, but the life-story of his own people. His first three books were avowedly intended to recall to his contemporaries the days of their grandfathers (Waverley) the days of their fathers (Guy Mannering), and the days of their own youth (The Antiquary). Next he cast back to the earlier Jacobites in Rob Roy, next the Covenanters in Old Mortality, the Highland Cavaliers in The Legend of Montrose, and Lowland Jacobites or anti-Unionists in The Black Dwarf. The Heart of Midlothian deals with the Porteous riot in 1736, and The Bride of Lammermoor with the period following the Revolution. In these nine books he touches upon almost every historical manifestation of Scottish National character, all in fact but one - the Reformation; Bannockburn and Flodden - the nation's triumph and the nation's disaster, had already appeared in his poems. Scott seems to have been reluctant to tackle the Religious Revolution in Scotland and turned aside to illustrate his favourite theme, the war between the old and the New in an English setting - Ivanhoe. When Scott touches the Reformation he seems to be ill at ease and to be striving to lighten the suoject by the introduction

of the supernatural (but non-religious) agency of the White Lady of Avenel, and the satirical portrait of the Euphustic Knight, Sir Percy Shafton. The Monastery was not so successful, perhaps because of these devices, and also perhaps because Scott while a true Protestant seems to regret the Reformation as a violent break with much that was of great religious value, to say nothing of its social and artistic aspects. In The Abbot he passes on to a new source of interest, already suggested in Ivanhoe, the study of a great historical figure associated with the incidents and characters of the story. Thereafter we find Richard the Lion Hearted, (~~Ivanhoe~~ The Talisman) the unhappy Mary Queen of Scots, (The Abbot), her more astute sister Queen Elizabeth (Kenilworth), James I. (Fortunes of Nigel), Charles II. (Peveril of the Peak) Louis XI. (Quentin Durward), Cromwell (Woodstock). In the next period of his literary life we find Scott writing for dear life under the crushing load of debt, and it is significant that the subject of Failure seems to be his leading motif. The failure of the Spa at St Ronan's together with the unmerited doom of the strangely parted lovers; the failure of the strong-willed Redgauntlet, of the great Cromwell himself (Woodstock), of the ill-fated clan and its chief (Fair Maid of Perth), of Middleton the adventurer in The Surgeon's Daughter, are all suggestive enough.

This brief resume of Scott's themes together with that of his Tales of a Grandfather will make it clear that his second aim was to unfold to the world the history of Scotland.

3. Reconciliation.

A third aim may be found in the earlier as well as in the later novels - the aim of Reconciliation. If Waverley revealed the Highlands and their inhabitants to Southrons it did not set up the Jacobites as a set of angels but as men bravely fighting for mixed motives as most men do. Similarly Scott carries the tale across the Border and emphasises the point of unity between the Scots and their old enemies in the Border novels. But when as in Ivanhoe he took a purely English subject and showed his knowledge and understanding of English character, he enlarged his audience considerably.

In Kenilworth it is clear that Scott intended to portray the glory and majesty of Elizabeth and her times in spite of the jealousies and rivalries of her courtiers. The tragedy of Amy Robsart notwithstanding, the picture of a free, enlightened, and cultured people, court, and queen, is one that is clearly congenial to the author. And so all through his works it was Scott's aim to reveal Scot to English man and Englishman to Scot ; to show the better qualities of both without obscuring their defects ; to exhibit the essential unity of North and South Britons just as he does that of Saxon and Gael. In

S C O T T T H E I N T E R P R E T E R.

1. OF HIS AGE.
   S. most representative man of his time.
   Reflection of Mood of Nation.
   Problems of the time.
      Note conception of Castle Dangerous.

2. OF SCOTLAND.
   Local colour.
   Scottish National Character moulded by the soil.
   Theory of Environment.

3. OF THE SCOTTISH NATION.
   Scott v. Burns ?
   Scottish types.
   Individuality - e.g. vast number of characters.

4. OF HUMAN NATURE.
   (1) as an Historian - represents several periods and countries.
   Shares with Burke the conception of Conservative principles.

   (2) OF HUMAN LIFE.
   Reality due to reality of environments, accessories and the humanity of characters especially the minor agents.

the matter of language even, he was careful to stress the unity of Scotch and English by using English spelling where the word was the same in both tongues though pronounced differently. Fergus McIvor is careful to go to meet Waverley in ordinary Lowland garb, as one gentleman meeting another. Rob Roy traverses north England like any ordinary dealer, and indeed exhibits a good many characteristics that are usually associated with Lowlanders.

VIII. Scott the Interpreter.

1. Of his Age.

It will be obvious from what has already been said that although Scott's conscious Aims are as has been stated, he achieved other and greater ends without consciously aiming at them. There is no doubt that "Scott held that the man of action was superior to the man of letters. He wondered that the Duke of Wellington should condescend to an interest in the author of a few 'bits of Novels' - did not dream that the achievments of a novelist were comparable to the winning of battles or the making of laws" (Leslie Stephen - Shakespeare as a Man) While it may be questioned whether in the view of posterity Wellington is in any way comparable to several of his contemporaries, leaving his name out of consideration, the other names that suggest themselves as dominant figures will be those of Wordsworth, Byron, and Scott. And of these three it may be held that

in scope and achievment. Scott is the most representative. Byron's elemental energy, Wordsworth's philosophy of Nature and Man, may be in themselves unique, but it may reasonably be contended that in the Waverley Novels the great Scotsman succeeded in giving an interpretation of his day and generation that is unequalled. For, as we have already noted, the great writer generally interprets his age in terms of the past. Certainly Scott does so. Although, as Professor Mair says : "Scott was not a fair guide to contemporary conditions; his interests were too romantic and too much in the past to catch the rattle of the looms that caught the ear of Galt, and if we want a picture of the great fact of modern Scotland, its industrialisation, it is to Galt we must go"; yet, as I have endeavoured to show, the great political fact, the conflict between the old landowning aristocracy and the new manufacturing one, between men of family and men of wealth, between the old order and the new, is the leading motive of most of Scott's work. And it is significant that never, except in St Ronan's Well where the New is ephemeral and unworthy to succeed, does the Old triumph. We can even trace the reflection of the mood of the nation in the mind of the author. The first nine novels suggest the opening of the conflict, the hosts ranging themselves in opposition. Not only in politics, as in Waverley and the Legend of Montrose, but in the Law (Guy Mannering), Commerce (Rob Roy),

Religion (Old Mortality) and especially in Society, as in The Antiquary, Black Dwarf, Heart of Midlothian, and Bride of Lammermoor, does the clash of the characters suggest the problems of the four or five years after the close of the great War with France. During the next five years when the excitement of the Coronation of George IV., the controversy between the latter and his unhappy Queen, and the visit of George to Scotland, were bulking largely in the public eye, there was also rising in the two great forces in the state a demand for leaders, for champions to maintain their rights or enforce their demands. Pageantry and pomp are therefore conspicuous in Ivanhoe and Kenilworth, and besides Elizabeth we have the ill-fated Mary skilfully presented. Yet it is significant that the high-placed figures, whether Queens, or Kings, or Ministers of State, are none of them happy or wholly successful. The doughty Richard for all his prowess is unable to check either the folly and selfishness of John or his own fiery temper; Elizabeth has to deny her heart for the good of the state ; Mary, despite her charm (as of wizardry or witchcraft), is forced over the Border into the power of her rival Queen ; James, despite the luck that gave him triple dominion for single, wealth for poverty, power for weakness, respect for scorn, could not maintain even his dignity, but gambled away the resources fortune had flung him ; and the great establisher of the French Monarchy, the man who made the Justice of the King a reality in

France, is shown as a superstitious unscrupulous schemer balked in his plans yet saved from the consequences of his rashness by the plain honesty and valour of a Scot abroad. The parallel with Scott's own day is obvious yet so skilful as to preclude identification with individuals. The problem of finding leaders sufficiently strong to guide the state parties through the troublous times in store for them seemed to Scott insoluble. He could see the issues, no man clearer, he could estimate the forces arrayed against each other, but he seems to have felt the weakness of all the possible champions. After the War when the glamour of heroism still hung round the soldier it was easy to turn to the man of arms as a heaven-sent ἄναξ ἀνδρων ; but the problems of modern life are not to be solved by force, and the virtue of a good stout blow is neutralised by the fact that it cannot be used. Even the heaven-inspired commander-in-chief, the victor of Waterloo himself, was but a commonplace politician, deficient in imagination and resource. The Poets, who rule by charm as queens do, were either too old or too young. Wordsworth had sequestered himself to work out a philosophy of nature or nature-religion, Coleridge was dumb or merely talking; Southey had become a tame cat ; and the younger generation of poets were too much in the clouds for the ordinary man to follow. One imagines that Scott had some hope of Byron becoming something of a guide, a prophet

of sanity, but he went into the wilderness, and 1825 saw the fitful blaze of his genius finally extinguished.

Thus the great novelist seeing the problems of his time clearly envisaged, and seeing no one able to guide the nation aright, no one able to reconcile the old and the new, to utilise the benefits of the one and preserve the good of the other, must have felt exasperated that action was denied him, and that all he could do was 'bits of novels.' Yet he was clearly aiming at some kind of reconciliation, was endeavouring after a kind of unity, such as was to be partially attained on his side of politics by the creation of the Conservative party, when the blow fell that shattered his fortunes, and still more his hopes. Yet it is not merely his personal failure that clouds the horizon of his later books; it is the feeling of impotence in the face of crisis, weakness in the hour of decision, that obsessed the government of the day and led to Catholic Emancipation and the First Reform Act. The very last of his novels, Castle Dangerous, was meant to show a noble Englishman striving nobly yet in vain against three forces, a great leader, a nation in arms, and the principle of freedom, a good enough parallel, one imagines, for the average gentleman of birth in face of the Reform agitation.

2. Of Scotland.

The scenery of Scott's novels is undoubtedly inseparable from them and as the majority of them are laid in Scotland they form together with his poetic romances a fairly comprehensive guide to the country. It is to be noted, however, that, possibly in order to preserve his anonymity, Scott rarely named the definite locale of his story. In spite of that the innumerable scenes laid in Scotland are either identifiable or characteristic. Leaving Ayrshire to Burns, he has the rest of the Lowlands, Tweed Valley, Clydesdale, The Solway and Galloway, and the Lothians, all represented by characteristic scenes. Crossing the Forth he has many scenes in Perthshire and the West Highlands. Forfar probably supplies the scenery of The Antiquary and the Shetlands that of The Pirate.

Not only does "local colour" enter into fiction for the first time with Scott, for, as Stevenson points out, in Scott compared with Fielding, we become suddenly conscious of the background, but the author quite definitely fits the story to the background, so that in some cases Nature seems an actual participant in the action. The reader will recall scenes in the Antiquary, The Pirate, The Bride of Lammermoor, and all the Highland Novels, where the configuration of the landscape suggests the action. Not only so, but Scott goes a step further in holding that the 'habitat' of men may and does colour

their temperament, character, and action. "The configuration of the soil decides many of men's actions, and the earth is more man's accomplice than people believe". (Victor Hugo - Ninety-three) Thus while the novelist has given the world a very clear idea of the Scottish National Character, as moulded by the climate, the soil, and history, he distinguishes types of character, just as he does dialects of the language, according to the locality that produces them. In this way he differentiates between the Children of the Mist (Legend of Montrose) and the sons of Ivor (Waverley), between the Solway fishermen (Guy Mannering, Red gauntlet), the Forfarshire (Antiquary) and the Shetland seafaring folk (The Pirate), between the Lanark peasant (Old Mortality) and the Border one (Monastery, Guy Mannering). He even exhibits Bailie Jarvie becoming insensibly more martial in Rob Roy's country, while the Highland freebooter himself grows more 'canny' and practical in the Lowlands. Most significant of all is the fact that characters who practically reflect Scott himself, like Waverley, Francis Osbaldistone, Darsie Latimer, and Guy Mannering, are all influenced by the region they sojourn in for any length of time.

The theory of Environment had not been formulated or at any rate promulgated, in Scott's day, but we feel that he would subscribe to it in some measure at least. He would at any rate note the three

elements in character shaping, - Heredity, Education (in its widest sense of up-bringing), and Environment or Locale, and of these three the last is not the least. Thus Maitland, in the Surgeon's Daughter, does not become a thorough-paced villain till he has been sometime in the atmosphere of India, which atmosphere is credited with the corruption or enervation of those who yield to its influence. The climate of Scotland, had Maitland remained at home, might have had a more bracing effect, though heredity and education might still have been too much for it.

Seriously, the energy, seriousness, thoughtfulness, and imaginativeness, with which the Scot is credited are possibly emphasised by the climate and scenery of the country, and there can be no doubt that Sir Walter, loving the country as he did, and himself being particularly susceptible to its influence, represents Scotland in the world 's literature most adequately.

"Scott is greatest in his Scotticism. It is as a painter of Scottish life, an interpretor of Scottish beliefs and Scottish feelings, a narrator of Scottish history, that he attains to the height of his genius. He has Scotticised European literature. He has interested the world in the little land. It had been heard of before ; it had given the world some reason to be interested in it before; with, at no time, more than a million and a half souls

in it, it had spoken and acted with some emphasis in relation to the bigger nations around it. But since Scott, the Thistle, till then a road-side weed, has had a great promotion in universal botany, and blooms, less prickly than of yore, but the identical Thistle still, in all the gardens of the world. All round the globe the little land is famous ; tourists flock to it to admire its scenery while they shoot its game ; and afar off, when the kilted regiments do British work, and the pibroch shrills them to the work they do, ask whence they come, the answer is "From the land of Scott." (Masson)

3. Of The Scottish Nation.

It is an old discussion whether Scott or Burns is the greater Scotsman, but without entering into comparisons it may be said that Burns is the representative of the pure Scot while Scott stands for the Anglo-Scot or North Briton. The glowing lyrics of Burns find an echo in the heart of every Scotsman, and his pictures of rural life in Tam o' Shanter, The Cotter's Saturday Night, The Twa Dogs, and Hallowe'en are unsurpassed for energy and truth. Scott takes a wider scope and it is just to say that much more is to be learned from him about Scotland and the Scots than from Burns.

As an instance of Scott's power of representation in this matter one may take The Heart of Midlothian. In this novel there is a contest of ideals,

not two but several e.g. the stern Cameronian views of David Deans, the less extreme more tolerant yet uncompromising devotion to duty of Jeanie, the Edinburgh mob's view of Justice, the selfish and criminal, yet brave and adventurous ideas of Stanton, and so on. Especially have we to note the Edinburgh mob, lawless and desperate, yet orderly and disciplined, surely one of the most remarkable mobs in history. The main contest is between the aristocratic, self-pleasing, self-indulgent sentiments of Effie and Stanton, and the democratic self-sacrificing, yet self-dependent ideals of Jeanie. This contest has to go on long after the settlement of Jeanie and Reuben Butler in their manse at Roseneath, in order that the great lady her sister Effie may realise the penalty of her folly, in the death of the wild youth who proves to be her son. The magnificent self-sacrifice of Jeanie, not incompatible with a vein of practicality and realism, as we see from her letters, is Scott's tribute to his fellow-countrywomen. He has drawn no greater or truer heroine. The minor characters in the book, including the incomparable Dumbiedykes, are all well-drawn and individual and yet typical Scots .

And so throughout the whole of the Scotch Novels the typical characters crowd on the canvas. "In no other country, surely, did there exist such marked individuality of character. Each one might

retain his or her peculiarity, his or her whim of mind, oddity of life, of fancy, of dress, in country seat or city flat — the bench of judges - a veritable menagerie of oddities, chokeful of whims, absurdities and strange idiosyncrasies, and of queer humour, conscious or unconscious , dignitaries without dignity &c. (Henry Gray Graham - Social Life in Scotland in the 18th century)

This development of individuality is not, however, peculiarly Scottish; it is claimed by some modern writers as Teutonic, or as they prefer to term it Nordic. The fact is that where men have a constant conflict with nature, a conflict where they hold their own and do not succumb to their environment, like the Eskimos, they tend to develope individuality, and strength. The three most hostile forces in nature are The Sea, The Mountains, and The Desert. It is noteworthy that great fighting nations have been evolved in such regions. Thus the Norse, the Swiss, and the Arabs respectively are the products of these regions. Where Mountains and Sea conjoin in opposition to man the result is even more striking in individuality. Such conditions are present in Scotland together with a touch of the desert in the Moors, so that the strength and individuality are acquired and transmitted to the offspring who may pass from these conditions. A most interesting point in this connection has been submitted by a modern thinker, viz., that it is when individuals are

transferred from such conditions to more favourable conditions that these individuals make greatest progress - hence the success of the Scot abroad. Another reflection communicated to me by a humbler person, a gardener, is to the effect that plants near the northern limit of their cultivation tend to develop more brilliant colours and better seed. This he put forward as an explanation of the glow of colour in the flower description of poets like Dunbar; but it may apply to the development of individuality in the Scottish and other northern races.

Be that as it may, Scott has exhibited innumerable types of our national character, each individual, yet unmistakably Scottish. The greatness of his achievement is to be noted from the fact that hardly a dozen other Scots characters have become household words in Scotland, to say nothing of the world in general. Of these Stevenson's Alan Breck and David Balfour are perhaps his best, with Barbara Grant as a good third. Geo. Macdonald has David Elginbrod and Malcolm, Mansie Waugh (by Delta - D.M. Moir) was familiar two generations back, but I'm afraid his place is taken by Robbie Doo (Waugh) Tammas Haggart and Gavin Dishart are perhaps Barrie's most typical figures. Cleg Kelly (Crockett) is perhaps not so well known as Wee

Macgregor (J. J. Bell) as a city product. John Buchan's Dickson McCunn (in Huntingtower) may survive, and John Splendid (Neil Munro) is a good Highland type. Some of these manifestly owe their inspiration to Scott and some have been evolved in the nation since his day, while many of his types have clearly passed e.g., most of the Highland clansmen, - chiefs as well as henchmen. "The Highland chiefs - no longer supreme in their mountain castles, and bereft of feudal power and pomp - became acute tradesmen. The highest bidder came and the unremunerative cotter went. These landed gentry had more money now at their disposal to spend, but they spent it in society; their hearts might be in the Highlands but their bankers were in London." (Henry Gray Graham) It is all the more valuable, and because its day was passing, that the Scotland of his day and before it should have had so faithful a chronicler as Scott. Especially must he be valued because, contrary to a common impression, he is concerned not with the high and lofty, but with the poor and lowly, not with the romantic and picturesque but with the simple and realistic. "He sought his modes, not in the higher social spheres, where the forms of Society (sitte) take the place of naturalness, and where the law of prudence and good manners subdues the passions, but he studied life and human character rather among the lower classes of his home : the farmers and peasants,

with their rough wholesome joyousness, their humorous peculiarities, their hot-head pugnacity". (Mielke- Der Deutsche Roman).

4. Of Human Nature.

In common with the Great Masters our Novelist has the power of speaking not only to his own age but to future generations. Just as Dante in interpreting his own era, and Shakespeare in his, appeal to later ages in virtue of the eternal principal of human nature that underlies their presentations, so Scott in his work exhibits the same eternal principle. This he does in two ways, first, as an historian, second, as a painter of common life.

(1). As an Historian.

" His design was to please the modern world by presenting a tale of the Middle Ages and to do this he had to combat wide ignorance and lackof sympathy with history; to create without a model homely as well as histrionic scenes of ancient life; to enliven and push on the narrative by incessant contrasts, the high with the low, the tragic with the facetious, the philosophical with the adventurous." (Edmund Gosse).

There are those who hold that Scott's true vocation was that of Historian, and that had he chosen to write a history of Great Britain he would have produced a work, at once accurate and fascinating, probably superior to that of any other recorder of history ancient or modern, and certainly of great moment to mankind and particularly his own countrymen. B e that as it may, it may be answered that his presentation of history in his novels is of great value and has given facts and views of history to thousands of readers that they would not and could not otherwise have acquired. "Not as a dead tradition but as a palpable presence, the past stood before us. There they were, the rugged old fighting men ; in their doughty simplicity and strength, with their heartiness, their healthiness, their stout self help, in their iron basnets, leathern jerkins, jackboots, in their quaintness of manner and costume; thus they looked and lived: it was like a new-discovered continent in literature." So Carlyle speaks of the Waverley novels, and though, as he says further: "Much of the interest of these novels results from what may be called contrasts of costume, the phraseology, fashion of arms, of dress and life belonging to one age, is brought suddenly with singular vividness before the eyes of another"; the objection to these externals as mere Wardour Street antiquities and accessories is not very vital, when the

other elements in the author's art, vivid description of action and of scenery, lively characterisation, humour, pathos, and all the other criteria already enumerated, are considered.

The reality given to the life of each epoch he dealt with has been noted as a remarkable feature in Scott. Herein he differs from Shakespeare and Chaucer, - whose knowledge of the ages of the past being necessarily small, their representation of them was imperfect - in fact it may be held that their own age is the only age these masters reproduced. But it is possible to distinguish the Saxon peasant of the 12th century from the Scots peasant of the 15th and the latter from that of the 16th and so on. The ideals of the crusader chivalry differ from those of the 15th century as we see from the Talisman compared with Quentin Durward. In the Black Dwarf, Redgauntlet, and Guy Mannering, three distinct stages of Border life are quite distinguishable. The life of London throbs with a different beat in Peveril from that in the Fortunes of Nigel, just as that of the Scottish Metropolis varies between that of the Abbot and that of the Heart of Midlothian, or Waverley.

Scott's interpretation of History is, naturally, his own. No one, perhaps, ever loved the Past more passionately, and in portraying it he spoke like a lover of his mistress, extolling its beauty, its grace, its truth. What was ugly and repulsive, what

what underlay the glory and grandeur he admired he was not concerned to show. Walter Bagehot admirably sums up Scott's love of the Past - thus :- "Every habit and practice of old Scotland was inseparably in his mind associated with genial enjoyment. To propose to touch one of her institutions, to abolish one of these practices, was to touch a personal pleasure, - a point on which his mind reposed, a thing of memory and hope."

But it is not merely the enjoyment of the Past that marks Scott's interpretation of it; his feeling lies deeper; it is that of the Conservative that seeks to preserve the best of the Past. "His vision of the growth of society, his sense of something mysterious and divine at work in human institutions and prejudices, of something at once sacred and beautiful in the sentiments of chivalry, loyalty, and honour in the stately edifice of the British Constitution with all its orders, in the ancient civilisation of India - all these have in them more than Scott's love of a romantic and picturesque past.

— Nothing but the overruling providence of God could have evoked from the weak and selfish natures of men the miracle of a free state with all its checks and balances and adjustments to the complex and manifold wants of the physical and spiritual nature of man; and in a moment the work of ages might be undone, the nice equipoise overset, the sentiment and prejudices of ages destroyed and

philosophy and 'Jacobinism' be among us bringing with them anarchy and the end of all things."(Prof. Grierson - Burke). When we realise this as Scott's view we perceive that just as Macaulay was to write History from the standpoint of the Whig so Scott interpreted History from the standpoint of the Tory. We may even hold that Scott aiming at the reconciliation of the two great governing classes, the landowning and the industrial magnates, is as much entitled as Burke to the credit of conceiving, if not of founding the Conservative party. And the achievement is no mean one, for whatever views one holds it is a great thing to have the first principles of conservatism set forth and illustrated from history. The lessons of Reference for the Past and of Continuity with it are to be neglected by no nation; and in every people, especially after a violent breach with the past, there arise those who point back to the things left behind and seek to recover some of the "glory that was Greece and the grandeur that was Rome" or whatever the older days had worth preserving. Thus we have St Paul after the Christian breach with the Jewish faith emphasising its continuity with it; Virgil and Livy and Plutarch stressing in the early days of the Empire the pristine virtues of the republican Greeks and Romans ; Froissart and Malory in the era when gunpowder was levelling mail-clad knight and leather-jerkined

peasant, harking back to the time when every day brought forth a noble deed and every deed a noble knight. So Scott looking backward beyond American revolution and French revolution, beyond Industrial revolution and Social revolution, to the days when kings governed and leaders led, when lords were true law-wards and law-givers, when a law of S ervice bound together every class of the community, when Religion was at least acknowledged by all, when Courage, Resolution, and Generosity brought some kind of reward ; looking, that is, to a Past when the nobler virtues seemed to flourish in fairer abundance, and when individuality seemed to have freer scope than in his own day, became the spokesman and the appraiser of the Past, like a herald pronouncing the names, titles, and dignities of the potentate he serves. And if the glory of the herald eclipses at times that of his imperial theme, if the magic of his voice enhances the dignity of the titles he proclaims, if in the procession he marshals our eyes wander from the glittering vanguard of princes and rulers to the humbler, homelier figures of peasants and servants and brown-faced men-at-arms, as much more real, life-like, and like ourselves ; so much the better - the Wizard of the North is the Interpreter, we find, not only of History but of Human Nature.

2. Common Life.

Modern criticism is departing from the view of Scott as a mere chronicler of historical events and

personages, still less as a eulogist of dead days, moribund theories, and decaying customs. Whatever of reality they discover in his pictures of such things they find to be due to the reality of the environment he gives them, to the accessories he adds to them, and especially to the true humanity of the figures he introduces, figures of men and women, even of animals like horses and dogs. For just as Swift gives an air of reality to his tale of pigmies and giants and speaking-horses by putting it in the mouth of Lemuel Gulliver, a respectable ship's surgeon, living in ROtherhithe, as Defoe does the same to his immortal tale by recording the futile experiments, the foolish tremors and fears of Crusoe, so does Scott give actuality to his romances by linking them to common life. In the enumeration and classification already made (pp. 58-60) of Scott's characters the vast number of inferior agents has been shown. It is therefore only necessary to repeat that these inimitable figures impart reality to the romances. These characters, while they are individual and local, - "it requires only a general knowledge of human nature to feel that they must be faithful copies from known originals" (Jeffrey) - nevertheless make the picture a complete copy of human nature. "The historical novel," says Saintsbury, "appeals to the human delight in humanity, the pleasure of seeing men and women of long past ages, living, acting, speaking as they do, but

in each case with the portrayal not as a mere copy of particulars but influenced with that spirit of the universal which is the secret and the charm of Art". The same critic is almost the only one to point out the value of Scott's introductions: "The incomparable little conversations and scenes and character sketches of the Introductions - show that Scott could have dispensed with all out of the way incident had he chosen." I am inclined to go further and award them a very high place indeed as pure fiction, - designed, be it remembered, to 'spoof' the public and mystify it still further regarding the authorship of the novels, yet full of human nature and sound judgment. The character of Jedediah Cleishbotham the editor of the MSS of the lamented Peter Pattieson, is almost as real as that of Dr Primrose, while Dick Tinto and Sergeant More McAlpine suggest real originals. The epistles from Laurence Templeton Esquire and Dr Dryasdust are in keeping ; but perhaps the best example of clever self-revelation combined with sound literary judgment is to be found in the reported colloquies of the Author with Captain Clutterbuck in the introduction to the Fortunes of Nigel. It must be confessed that these sportive sketches sometimes bewilder and lead astray young readers, as for example in Old Mortality, where the first Chapter is still introductory.

The universality which the best critics find in Scott they attribute not to his plots, nor to his

reconstruction of history, but to the extraordinary number of characters and scenes that suggest real life and nature. His method is that of the great painters. Like them he depicts episodes from life or history, and like them he chooses events and personages that demand for their treatment mastery of design and colour, scenes of pride, pomp, and circumstance, or moving accidents by flood and field; but the true interest for the beholder lies in the composition, (the construction of the novel), the setting or scenery, the physiognomy and attitude of the figures that are least disguised by costume or convention, and these are generally the minor characters. And just as in the greatest artists their nationality is manifested by their scenery and their models, so that it is no dispraise to speak of a painter as a Dutch, Flemish, Spanish, or Italian master, so in the case of the great novelists they are identified with the land of their birth, and their fidelity to their country and their countrymen is a mark of praise. Of all the 18th Century novelists Fielding is the one whose characters most clearly smack of the soil, and it is noteworthy that he is Scott's favourite novelist; but Scott surpasses Fielding not only in variety of character and incident but in historical sense and scenic description. One may hold that Scott, just because he is so faithful to Scottish human nature and scenery, is not only the

first but also the best interpreter of human nature in general, as exhibited in fiction.

"You can scarcely lay down any novel of Scott's without a strong feeling that the world in which the fiction has been laid and in which your imagination has been moving is one subject to laws of retribution which though not apparent on a superficial glance are yet in steady and constant operation, and will be quite sure to work their due effect if time is only given them ; that more than any novelist he has given us fresh pictures of practical human society, with its cares and troubles, its excitements and pleasures; that he has delineated more distinctly than any one else the framework in which this society inheres, and by the boundaries of which it is shaped and limited ; and that he has made more clear the way in which strange and eccentric characters grow out of that ordinary and usual system of life; that he has extended his view over several periods of society, and given an animate description of the external appearance of each and a formal representation of its social institutions ; that he has shown very graphically what we may call the worldly laws of moral government ; and that over all these he has spread the glow of sentiment natural to a manly mind, and an atmosphere of generosity congenial to a cheerful one."

(Walter Bagehot - Estimations in Criticism).

IX.

SCOTT'S APPEAL.

1. ON THE THRESHOLD.
   Parallel between Scott's day and ours.
   S. - a guide - exhibits the conflict - indicates the terms of peace.

2. THE PRESENT IN THE PAST.
   S. not only revives the Past - interprets the Present.
   Present day Fiction - mostly diverts does not guide.

3. THE ARTIST.
   S. exhibits all the criteria of Artist in Fiction.
   Founder of 3 schools of Fiction.
   (1) Romance (2) Historical Novel, (3) Local and Vernacular.
   S. may not develope in Art - seems to develope in character.

4. THE MAN.
   Early ideals - entertainment.
   Feudal notions - Abbotsford.
   Business Methods - credit - speculation.
   Integrity - honour -
   Spectacle of last five years. (Note Journal).

IX.

IX. Scott's Appeal.

1. On the Threshold.

On the threshold of the New Age when vast discoveries are expanding the knowledge and the capacity of mankind beyond expectation, and almost, as some fear, beyond endurance, it is well to remember that a similar vista opened before the eyes of Scott and his contemporaries. The stride in his day from candle-light to gas-illumination, from the sailing-vessel to the steam-ship, from the stage-coach to the steam-carriage, from the single article laboriously made by hand to numberless commodities swiftly produced by machinery, from the primitive blacksmith's forge to the great iron and steel foundries, was perhaps more bewildering than the development in our day of the motor-car, the aeroplane, wireless telegraphy and telephony, and television. The Industrial Revolution, the transformation of the British nation from an agriculturalto a manufacturing community, the translation, as a modern writer puts it, of the majority of the population from field to factory, took place in Scott's lifetime, 1771-1832. And we must remember that Scott fully understood and welcomed the improvements that arrived in his time. We recall his famous 'crack' with Sir Humphrey Davy ; we learn that he not only lit Abbotsford with the new illuminant, gas, but was interested in more than one company for developing

its use ; and we ponder the statement that it was the (comparatively) new art of manufacturing paper credit that he took advantage of to the ultimate detriment of his own fortunes and those of his publishing firm. The mere fact that he, a descendant of Border reivers, connected, as he was proud to claim, with the almost princely house of Buccleuch, took to commerce and the buying and selling of commodities, proves that he was of the New time. It is this interesting combination of the far-seeing man of business, the enterprising purveyor and diffuser of knowledge, the supporter and promotor of new ideas, with the antiquary, the lover of the past, 'laudator temporis acti', - in other words of the practical man with the romanticist, that should appeal to present-day readers. One might say that Scott lived a double life, possessed a kind of double personality, a Jekyll-Hyde combination, in which, however, the Hyde or hidden side of his nature was as noble as the other. Outwardly a lawyer and a Tory, a lover of good-living and out-of-door sport, inwardly he was a toiling student of men and books, a Recorder of his time without bias or weakness.

2. The Present in the Past

And between his time and ours the remarkable parallel that can be drawn must impress every thoughtful mind. The close of a life-and-death

struggle between civilised powers, a struggle that left the combatants war-weary and loaded with crushing burdens of taxation, marks both periods. In both cases the break with pre-war days seems so emphatic as to preclude the possibility of a return to those halcyon days of peace. The prevalence of distress in all ranks of society, the feverish pursuit of pleasure or of gain, the threat of further struggle looming dark in the minds of men, and above all the bewildered sense of something unjust and cruel in the Direction of mundane affairs, so that men are losing their faith in religion and in God; these phenomena appear in both eras.

Now, as I have already endeavoured to show, it is really as a Guide to his time that Scott, consciously or unconsciously, came forward. He loved the Past, he felt the glory and the grandeur of the institutions of his country and the heritage of his race; but he never allows the Old to triumph over the New, he invariably ends the struggle between the contending forces in the success of the modern, the advancement of civilisation. He is a Guide because he not only exhibits the conflict but indicates the terms on which stable advance can be made, namely, by doing justice to the defeated side, not by exterminating or enslaving it, but by incorporating it and making use of its fine qualities. The old aristocracy of Britain was bound to lose, he saw

that, bound to pass before the new aristocracy of brains and usefulness; but he insisted, as Carlyle insisted, as Disraeli insisted, that the new era should make use of the noble qualities of the old, the culture, the loyalty, the devotion to duty that had distinguished the best of the old order. Such an appeal is not to be disregarded by any state or people, least of all by one which possesses a history so full of grandeur, so abounding in interest as that of the Scottish nation.

Scott's contemporaries did not perhaps realise how great a guide the novelist was. They may have failed to recognise their own day mirrored in the fascinating pictures evoked by the magic of the Wizard. They may have found in him a mere entertainer who gave them Romance to relieve the pains of Reality, instead of a competent Recorder of the Present in terms of the Past. From the life-fountain of the Waverley Romances they drew not a stimulus but an anodyne. So with Shakespeare. His contemporaries found in Sweet Will of Warwickshire most excellent diversion and little more. Itis perfectly obvious that in the Sonnets Shakespeare expressed his discontent and disgust with the role of mere entertainer assigned him by his time.

Again, in As You Like It ^ "A fool, a fool, I met a fool: the forest, Who laid him down and basked him in the sun And railed on Lady Fortune in good terms, In good set terms, and yet a motley fool!" In good set terms ---

how should a fool be other than a fool - a mere jester, entertainer ? Yet Shakespeare has become, age by age, the great Interpreter of his Era, the Mirror of Humanity.

So for us Scott should come to be more than a purveyor of Romance. He should appeal to us not merely as a reviver of the past but as the interpreter of the present. The true student of history ransacks the past to find lessons for the present. And to-day all are students of history. Never were men so interested in the doings of other men; memoirs, diaries, letters, records of all kinds from state-documents to considered studies of historical epochs, all have their readers. To the student of history, then, Scott's novels present the subject in most charming guise. From his pages the times gone by emerge clothed in colour and beauty, the men long dead live again and move in our eyes with something of reality. The old unhappy far-off things are brought near to us, and we hear the speech men used,-something like it at least, something different from our own, yet understandable ; we see them acting, loving, hating, suffering, and out of their drama comes to us the conviction that they and we are kin, that their nature is our nature and their problems like ours.

3. The Artist.

To-day there is pouring from the press an endless stream of fiction, countless examples of ingenuity and skill in plot-construction, innumerable flights of imagination in space and time, studies beyond reckoning of every sphere of human activity and every phase of human nature; but how few of these productions succeed, even when they aim higher, in doing anything but divert the mind from the present distresses. When we turn from the modern presentation of life to that given by Scott we find in the work of the Master more reality and truth. If for nothing better than a touchstone for testing modern fiction, a periodic rereading of Scott is valuable especially to the young. The new work may excel the old in excitement (thrills), or movement (speed), or plot (surprise); but two simple questions, viz., Could it have happened? Should it have happened? - are seldom answered satisfactorily by it, whereas the latter, no matter how romantic it may be, always fulfils these conditions. Not only so, but when one examines modern novels in the light of the criteria already set down (p. 33-) few of them succeed in fulfilling more than one or two and still fewer all or nearly all. Thus of the novelists succeeding Scott only Dickens approaches Scott in fertility of characterisation, Thackeray in truth to Nature, George Eliot in psychology. Later

writers - Meredith, Stevenson, Henry James, Hardy, Kipling, - have developed the technique of the Novel to a wonderful degree, but for a complete example of Construction, Characterisation, Description of Action, Scenery, Psychology, Dialogue, Truth to Nature, Humour, Pathos, Information, Style, and Message, in one book, one seeks in vain, just as one seeks in vain for a drama to rival Shakespeare's. This is not to decry the many distinguished exponents of fiction whose work commands just approbation and fame ; and it may be that some of these writers may hold that the sum of these criteria is not essential, and indeed that several of them are detrimental to a true work of art ; but the fact remains that in Scott they are excellences, and in view of them one is entitled to style him a truly great Master and indeed the Greatest.

The influence of Scott upon literature is ample proof of his greatness as an Artist. At least three Schools of fiction may look to him as their founder and exemplar, viz :-

(1) Pure Romance.

Curiously enough, Scott had few followers in this realm, except Lytton, till Stevenson, but thereafter their number multiplied.

(2) The Historical Novel.

Here he has been followed by almost every novelist of note in one or more examples. In some cases writers have achieved distinction by one essay in

this style of fiction - "John Inglesant " being an apposite instance.

(3) The Localised and Vernacular Novel.

Here for a time few dared follow - if we except George Eliot's Midlands novels, "Adam Bede, "Silas Mariner" "The Mill on the Floss." The Scottish Kailyard School, with Barrie, Crockett, Ian MacLaren, and George Douglas Brown carried on the Scottish tradition ; while Hardy with his Wessex novels is of course outstanding. Stevenson, Kipling, and countless others caught the trick of reproducing the life and speech of a definite area, thereby ensuring for themselves and their readers reality which they might not have attained by a wider canvas,

But the influence of Scott is not limited to English literature. On the Continent his works had a rapturous reception and stimulated fiction in almost every nation in Western Europe. In France Dumas is the follower of Scott in Historical Romance, while Hugo achieved masterpieces in "Les Miserables" and "Notre Dame" which compare with Scott's novels, if in some respects they do not excel them in breadth, variety, and intensity.

The Belgian novelist, Christmas, wrote a series of historical novels which are modelled upon Scott's. Similarly in Italy, Manzoni took Scott for his model and borrowed at least one of his plots. But it is in Germany that Scott's influence was perhaps the

the greatest and a whole School of historical Novelists copied his methods. Later his influence deepened to the extent of inspiring a vernacular type of novel. "It is the combination of romantic idealism and Heimatkunst that made Scott so popular in Germany, but it is as a realistic portrayer of the customs and variegated types of his countrymen that the novelist had the most beneficial influence on serious writers." (Lambert Armour Shears.)

The modern Vernacular school of fiction becomes a national school in the smaller nationalities and thus we find the Dutch and the Scandinavian races developing their own type of fiction, and owning their debt to Scott. Thus Strindberg says "When I wish to get myself into the proper mood and into the presence of the past I do the same thing I usually do when I am writing historical plays, I read Walter Scott."

Yet it is significant that Scott's literary descendants fall short of the stature of their progenitor in that they limit themselves to Romance, or History, or the Vernacular in fiction, and do not essay as he did to combine all three in one. This is clearly the point where Scott reaches his unassailable altitude, viz:- the combination of romance with historical fact, and both linked to reality by the action and speech of common folk. It is for this reason that the best critics appraise The Heart of Midlothian as the greatest of

all the Waverley series. On the same canvas the master portrays a picturesque historical fact, invests it with the growing colour of romance, dashed with the shadow of mystery; and yet he makes the central figure, sublime in her heroism, perfect in her womanhood, the peasant girl, Jeanie Deans. Not only so, but the minor agents from Dumbiedykes to Davie Deans, from Queen Caroline to Mrs Saddletree, are either commoners or exhibit traits of common humanity.

It may be conceded that the rapidity of his production induced defects which a slower pace of composition might have avoided. Yet those defects belong mostly to Style, which is rarely considered by the average reader. The other defects noted at the beginning of this essay have been shown to be either non-existent, trivial, or inherent in the author's historical position or in his method, and therefore negligible in view of the wider and grander effects he attains. Thus the use of Indirect Speech, like the language of his heroes and heroines, belongs to Scott's time and was not seriously objected to by the reading public. Similarly the Love Interest was found to be interesting and natural by his contemporaries. The weakness our younger critics find in his Plots disappears when it is found that the true plot is not concerned with Love or even with Romance but with the clash of great forces, the conflict of ideas. In like manner the tracts of

description and information that break the continuity of the movement of the love-story are generally found to be inherent in the wider design of the plot, either as relief of tension or as scaffolding essential to the plot-construction.

The heroes of Scott's novels are not really weak in character, they are simply deficient in interest, for the reason that in the larger issues they are involved in, they cannot be allowed to play a moving part. Henry Morton, Quentin Durward, and Ivanhoe are the most active because they each represent an historical principle, Ivanhoe Anglo Norman fusion, Durward - Scottish national character in the Scot abroad, and Morton - the Whig principles that triumphed at the Revolution. Rather curiously, we find Henry Gow less heroic, though much more energetic in the action of the story (Fair Maid of Perth) ; the reason being, I think, that though he is 'en rapport" with the principle that triumphs in the book, namely, Efficiency, he is in conflict with other principles (destined to remain ideals for at least a century longer) viz:- Reform in Religion, and Toleration, to say nothing of the application of Religion to life. Ten years after Waterloo the mere fighting-man, the Soldier, had ceased to appeal as an heroic type.

The other heroes, like Waverley, Francis Osbaldistone, Harry Bertram, Darsie Latimer, are

merely 'static', borne on the current of forces they cannot control, spectators rather than actors. I have already pointed out the deficiences in Edgar of Ravenswood, who was probably designed as a true hero, and who excites the deepest sympathy of all Scott's heroes. The only instances that appear in Scott of development or unfolding of character are exhibited in Nigel Olifaunt, and Redgauntlet.

And this leads to the consideration of Scott's development in his Art. Did he grow in mastery of technique, plot-construction, characterisation, restraint, proportion, concentration, style ? We can trace such growth in Milton and Shakespeare, even in Keats and Shelley, short as their lives were. Dickens avowedly modified his art to please his critics if not himself. The whole life of Goethe is a record of self-development and self-expression. On the other hand it is doubted if Thackeray and George Eliot ever surpassed their early novels such as Vanity Fair and Silas Marner as works of art.

It seems as if, owing to various circumstances, his years, the pronounced success of Waverley, the kindness of the critics, the advice of his friends, Scott made practically no attempt to improve his technique. Except for the instances noted of character-development, and what seems to me a decided growth of Irony in his later works, as, for instance, in The Pirate, Anne of Geierstein, The Surgeon's Daughter, he was content to use the mode

approved by his audience from the beginning of his fictional career,

But as regards development of thought there may be reason to hold that the novelist steadily advanced in thought. He evolved a personage, the Author of Waverley, a judicial, wise, impartial, sympathetic interpreter of his country, his countrymen, and his time. This figure differs from Scott the S heriff, Scott the Poet, Scott the 'bonvivant', in many respects, and probably helped to keep the secret of his authorship a mystery. He may have intended it to this end, but, I fancy, it simply grew upon him. As I have said already, he was the most representative man of his time ; he began with the aim of exhibiting from his own country and its history the age-long conflict of the Old and the New ; and he ended with becoming the Interpreter of his time. He accepted the role of public leader and teacher.

4. The Man.

It may be inferred from the above that the character of Scott as an author is superior to that of the Man, but the antithesis is perhaps unfair ; and in any case the private character of Scott as revealed in his Life by Lockhart, his Journal and his letters, is deeply interesting. We find from these sources the kind of life he led as boy and man. We realise the social and political circles he moved in, we understand something of the ideals he imbibed long before he began the novels. What were those ideals ? Reading Lockhart one is impressed with

with what Andrew Lang calls Scott's 'superabundance of joyous vitality'. This overflowing joy naturally gave the Man his first ideal - the diffusion of happiness. In order to diffuse happiness Scott laughed and joked with his fellow-humanbeings, he told them stories, he recited ballads, he joined in the hunt and the feast. - especially the latter. For truly one way of making others happy is to eat and drink along with them. - It is deeply significant that modern medical experts hold that much of Scott's physical pains and the final ailment that carried him off were possibly due to those habits of conviviality. Yet those habits were universal, and it was the unhappy fortune of Scott to be possessed of a constitution able to combine, for a time, those habits with those of the mental toiler, the secret burner of midnight oil.

To entertain, then, was clearly one of Walter's gifts and nobly did he exercise it. This is the secret of Abbotsford. To keep open house for rich and poor, to shelter the travelling philosopher and the wandering beggar, to welcome to his table the elite of society one evening and the farmers of Liddesdale or Ettrick the next, a kind of modern feudalism where the lord gave service instead of exacting it - this was the aim that possessed Scott, and possibly - though this is not certain - was the main source of the expenses that left him penniless when the crisis came.

But it is when he comes to the years of trial that we see Scott at his best. During the twelve years or so he spent in business we are not impressed with his commercial ability. Nor is he without blame for leaving so much to his partner, for allowing the firm to embark in foolish enterprises, for failing to keep strict account of his own and the firm's obligations. The best that can be said of him is that he trusted his partner, and his luck, too far. He seems to have been under a kind of hallucination regarding the power of credit, and pledged it to the uttermost. "He must pay the penalty" says Lockhart commenting on Scott 's tragedy, "as well as reap the glory of this life-long abstraction of reverie, this self-abandonment of Fairyland." When he wakes from his dream, however, he is his own man again. If, as Lockhart suggests, he had been largely actuated by the desire of creating for himself a material form of the Romance he loved he made splendid amends. The greatness of Scott shines out in those dark days of ruin. No character in his works exhibits more of the best Scottish traits, honesty, tenacity, determination, capacity for toil, and, with it all, cheerfulness and calm. It is in those latter days that he wrote that Journal which in itself is the most self-revealing document of his writing. Here we find revealed all his tenderness. One is reminded of Wordsworth. "To console the afflicted, to add sunshine to daylight by

making the happy happier, to teach the young and the gracious of every age to see, to think and feel, and, therefore, to become more actively and securely virtuous, - to break down and obliterate the conventional barriers that in our disordered social state divide rich and poor into two hostile nations ; - not by passionate declamations on the injustices and vices of the rich, and on the wrongs and virtues of the poor, but by fixing his imagination on the elemental feelings which are the same in all classes and drawing out the beauty that lies in all that is truly natural in human life." (Brimley.) This may be considered as much the ideal of Scott as of Wordsworth.

It is significant that in the last sad journey in the vain quest of health his mind continually dwelt upon his native country, and the one rally that he made in strength was when he got back among his native hills. This <u>love of country</u> was to the end one of his most cherished ideals.

Although he was a great gentleman with the most rigid code of honour (so that, though he denounces duelling in 'The Antiquary' and elsewhere, he was prepared to fight a duel with General Gourgaud), he was a true democrat, taking all men for his brothers.

So just as men a century ago found in Scott calmness and sanity, cheerfulness and courage, truth and reality in his conceptions of man and nature, so

X.

C O N C L U S I O N.

METHODS OF PUBLIC INTEREST IN SCOTT.

(1) Dramas - readings - pageants.
(2) Cinema adaptations.
(3) School - selections
Aoridged versions.

ELABORATION OF METHODS.

(1) Folk-plays.
(2) Good screen versions
pageants
(3) Extracts & aoridgments.

STUDY OF VERNACULAR

Scenery and Environment.
History.
Value of Reading Aloud.

Process of study for ordinary reader.

so can men to-day find that in Scott the Man

"The primal duties shine abroad like stars ;
The charities that soothe and heal and bless
Are scattered at the feet of men like flowers."

X.

X. Conclusion.

The revival of interest in Scott is not to be attributed merely to the approaching centenary of his death. Nor is it due to the development of Scottish Nationalism in politics and in literature. Rather is it to be assigned to the steady growth of interest in good literature. With all the spread of cheap literature and the debasing of popular taste by bad or empheral books, there exists in the minds of most a desire to know something of the best writers, to have an acquaintance with a great author, to possess a standard whereby to judge other books and their writers.

Not only so but there are three ways in which the public insensibly acquires a knowledge of Scott and from this knowledge may grow a taste for more.

(1) Drama and public readings based on the Novels.

It is an interesting fact, that, poor things as they are, the three plays 'Rob Roy', 'Guy Mannering', and 'Jeanie Deans' are the nearest approach to Folk-drama that Scotland possesses, and their popularity is still a stand-by with Scottish theatre managers in the height of summer when theatre patronage is at its lowest ebb. A somewhat better drama has been evolved out of 'The Bride of Lammermoor', and a famous

opera 'Lucia di Lammermoor' has the same subject. Two other novels at least have been made the subject of Opera, 'Ivanhoe', and 'The Fair Maid of Perth', and I think 'Kenilworth' has also been dramatised.

Readings by elocutionists, professional and amateur, have been adapted from these novels, and also from 'The Antiquary' (The Cliff Scene, The Duel &c.) 'Old Mortality' (Neil Blane's Change House, The Ride to Drumclog &c.), 'Redgauntlet' (Wandering Willie's Tale), 'Peveril' (Fenella speaks) &c. Again scenes from 'The Monastery', 'The Abbot', 'Legend of Montrose', 'Quentin Durward' &c., and the Poems, 'Marmion' and 'The Lady of the Lake', are often drawn upon for material for historical pageants such as are becoming popular.

(2) Cinema or Motion-picture adaptations.

Several of the dramatic versions of the novels have been further modified to adjust them to the needs, real or fancied, of the 'silver screen'; while some adapters, greatly daring, have taken themes from Scott and transformed them beyond recognition. However, versions of some of the great novels have been produced that are not unworthy of their great originals.

(3) Since education became compulsory, if not earlier, children in school have had presented to them selections from Scott adapted for School reading. These selections are of two varieties, first, passages of stirring interest, usually action; and second,

abridged editions of some of the more popular novels. These abridgments generally link the more striking scenes or events with a synopsis of the action of the story.

It thus follows that from some or all of these sources there springs a stream of interest in Scott that requires only to be broadened and deepened to become a flood of knowledge regarding his works. To complete the education of the public mind the same methods may be applied but with a difference.

Thus it seems to me Folk-plays based upon the 'genre' characters chiefly of, for example, 'The Antiquary', 'The Pirate',-as well as 'Rob Roy', 'Guy Mannering' and 'The Heart of Midlothian' re-written - with or without the element of romance - could be produced, especially in the districts in which they have their scenic or dialectal setting. The only plays that require the Romantic element as the dominant theme are those based on 'The Bride of Lammermoor' and the poems 'The Lady of the Lake' and 'Marmion.'

Again, it is probable that 'screen' versions of 'Old Mortality', 'Legend of Montrose', 'St Ronan's Well, 'The Monastery', 'The Abbot', in fact, of almost any of the novels could be made, faithful to the story and the setting, so as to give definition to the characters, the action, and the scenery,

which is the main function of stage or cinema versions of good books. For it need not be feared that such versions will stifle interest in the originals, they will rather stimulate it. Of course there is not much scope for the 'Star', whether of stage or cinema, in such productions. Wherefore it seems likely that companies of amateurs, with skilled professional assistance, would be the best producers. And this also would be to the good.

Again School, College, or general Pageants can easily be devised to represent an era, or a region, or contest, and the majority of the characters will generally come from Scott. Thus of the Stewart sovereigns they will find Robert III. (with his son, Rothesay, and his brother, Albany), James IV., James V., Mary, James VI. A district like Dumfries can find interest in the characters of Guy Mannering, Redgauntlet, Old Mortality, as well as in the Bruces, Baliols, Comyns, and Douglasses.

In commending Scott to children or to adolescents, the method of extracts and abridgments is not to be despised, except that the use for instance of an exciting description of action for linguistic and grammatical purposes is apt to destroy its literary value. Hence the use of plain texts is advisable. A good edition of the text, with notes, is useful for the teacher to enable him to answer the questions the pupils will certainly ask once they are interested.

As students get older, a very useful source of interest will be found in the vernacular. Let them follow Richie Moniplies to London, or Andrew Fairservice to Glasgow and the West Highlands, Lovel to the Mearns or Angus and observe the 'nuances' of speech, the divergences of character. Thereafter they may proceed to a study of scenery and the influence of climatic conditions as exemplified especially in the Highland novels.

But above all, the illustrations of History that can be drawn from Scott are of the highest value. The real reason for the failure of Montrose, of the Covenanters, of the Jacobites, are clearly discernible in his pages. And so in every historical theme he touches, the student will find our author one of the safest of guides.

Having interested students in Scott for the sake of action, character, scenery, and history, it should not be difficult to induce them to study him in the complete novels. The element of Romance will then come to be an added attraction, and it will be in its proper place, a thread of interest linking the other elements together. It will then be of importance to observe Scott's skill in Construction, to distinguish the Romantic plot from the true contest. The function of the vernacular or 'genre' characters in giving reality and solidity to the fabric can then be noted, and the sphere of humour and pathos delimited.

This method of study is not so artificial as it looks, and it has proved more successful in practice than that of compelling the student to take up the novels and plough through them unaided with the view of sitting an examination at the bitter end. Of those who are so compelled, few, not more than one in ten develop sufficient interest in Scott to continue his study.

For the general reader I would suggest a similar process, always with the proviso that as he reads for entertainment it will depend on his standard of entertainment. For him who wishes nothing more than a good 'yarn' I am afraid Scott will always be a 'back number'. For two reasons, first, because from various sources he will probably have an inkling of most of Scott's plots, and second, because he will find authors that will give him his yarn in half or third the time Scott takes. But assuming that the average person is willing to give Scott a chance the procedure suggested to him is this; First let him glance through the book, deliberately leaving introductions and solid blocks of explanation alone, and find passages that can be read aloud, to himself or an audience, it does not matter much. Having tried one or two and given them up he will ultimately hit upon something that 'sounds good'. This will be almost invariably dialogue or action. Having got interested in the speakers or actors he may either carry on trusting to find out something about them from the next dialogue or action, or he may go back to see what he can find out about them.

Having got some information he proceeds, and though now and again he will be annoyed at the appearance of fresh characters, he may by this 'skipping' process get some idea of the plot, the characters, and some of the humour and pathos. With this he may possibly rest content. If, however, he wishes to know more regarding the characters or the action, he will go back to the passages he has passed over and see what they give him. He will find the background of the action, for instance, of importance - not as scenery but as back-ground. He will find it interesting to take up a minor character and trace him through the book, finding out his function, whether as relief, or as agent, or both, however trifling. By this time he may feel that he has done enough, or he may go further still. This time what he has left to do is to read the book right on to the end, not consciously omitting anything. This process completed, he will find some new aspects of the book emerging. He will find he has made the acquaintance of a number of people who seem quite real, - some more than others, perhaps, and these not always the most important apparently. He will find that he knows something of the conditions under which they live, and some of the reasons why they act as they do. He will find that these folk have, perhaps accidentally, 'barged' into the middle of people or things that everybody has heard of, in other words men or events

famous in history ; and those characters he has got to know act in those circumstances not as he would like them to do, not even as the author would like them, but in accordance with their nature, and that nature - he is surprised to find, is very like his own. Here the reader, if he is an average person, probably passes on to another book. Only if he is a Scotsman there is a kind of glow in his bosom at the thought that this fine book is about his country, and the author is a Brother Scot.

It will take the student many re-readings, before, if ever, he masters the full content of a novel by Scott ; before he realises how complete is the Wizard's fulfilment of all the criteria of the novel; before there emerges a conception of the Master as something more than a novelist, an Historian; something more than an Historian, an Interpreter of his Country, his nation, and his time; a leader and a guide. And above all he will require to read and re-read all the novels, and the poems, and the biography, in order to realise what a Man, how truly Scottish yet representatively British, how vast in his knowledge yet humble in his assumption, how just in his judgments yet tender in his sympathies, how royal in his giving yet modest in his ambition, was vouchsafed by Heaven to Scotland, to Britain, and to the world, in WALTER SCOTT.

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