

MEMORIES OF SCOTT.

PASTOR FELIX TALKS OF SCOTT THE GREAT UNKNOWN.

His Early Life and Surroundings—The Ideal Home at Ashiestiel—Its Beautiful and Inspiring Situation—Favorite Nooks of the Great Writer—Marmion and Waverley.

"The Lay and Marion hee'd him up
To Fame's bright, shining portal,
Till Waverley filled up the cup,
And he became immortal."

Scotland, at that date, particularly in the Highlands, was vastly different from what the tourist finds it now. Tourist there then was not, save in such a solitary instance as that of Dr. Johnson, who went to find a new literary theme. As the wilderness had been unbroken, so the primitive manners remained unchanged. Scott saw in the wilds he has pictured in "Waverley," the daughters of a laird loading a cart with manure; who, in the evening reappeared in full dress, with radiant complexions, and displaying no little wit, intelligence, and good breeding. He saw two half-naked Celts, bring in the haggis in its wicker basket, while "the piper strutted fiercely behind them blowing a tempest of discordance." He shook the hand and listened to the lore, of Stewart of Inverrathay—a man who had measured swords with Rob Roy, an old Jacobite, who had "been out with Mar and with 'Charlie'" invited the son to his Highland home, where his experiences resembled those of Waverley with Fergus M'Ivor and of Francis Osbaldistone in the McGregor country. How far are we from these now? But the poet arrived just in season to snatch them from oblivion. Even into Liddesdale, he went to cottages and hamlets beyond any beaten roads; the wheels of his gig bore him where such a conveyance had never carried curious visitor before. From the hut of the shepherd to the humble manse of the minister, there was only a foot path; but there was a rough and jolly welcome when the homestead was reached. Lockhart dwells most interestingly on this portion of his story. "To this ramble," he says, "Scott owed much of his minstrelsy of the Scottish Border, and not less of that intimate acquaintance with the living manners of those unsophisticated regions, which constitutes the chief charm of one of the most charming of prose works." And his poet friend, Shortreed, says,—"He was makin' himself at the time, but he did not know, maybe, what he was about till years had passed. At first he thought o' little, I dare say, but the queerness and the fun. Eh, me! see an endless fund o' humor and drollery as he then had wi' him! Never ten yards but we were either laughing, or roaring and singing. Wherever we stopped, how brawlie he suited himself to everybody! He aye did as the lave did; never made himself the great man, or took any airs in the company." Yes indeed; what a blithe soul he ever was; but most exuberant in this care-free time, and before the day of crushing burdens and melancholy decline. What a delicious glimpse is that the Arthur of "Rab," and of "Mayorie" gives us of Scott's good fellowship and merry humor, and his rollicking, yet tender glee with children, before the grasshopper had become a burden, in those manly middle years, that meant so much for Scotland and for fame.

It was in the last month of the eighteenth century that Scott was appointed to the sheriffdom of Selkirk; and he left Lasswade eventually (1804) for a home nearer to Ettrick forest, the scene of his duties, namely the "lovely but solitary Ashiestiel." It was a place more wildly beautiful than even his former abode, and more lonely; but more wholesome joy of nature life knows not than blossomed lavishly on this woodland farm by the bank of the Tweed. If Lasswade was the cradle wherein his poetical fancy nascent, here it rose up in the strength of a radiant youth, and flourished. With no spot in Scotland are there more cheerful and social memories blended than with this home in the midst of a solitude, standing by the side of a deep ravine, covered with trees, down which a brook finds its way to the Tweed, from which river the mansion is separated by a narrow strip of beautiful meadow. All around are the silent hills; not another house is in sight, and the nearest town, Selkirk, is seven miles away. "Pastoral melancholy is the pervading feeling of the spot, although it is a melancholy more akin to joy than sorrow, and which one would not exchange for a millennium of coarse misadventured delights."

The reader who will turn to "Marmion" and note the introductions to the Cantos,—objectionable, maybe, if considered obstacles to the story, on a first hurried perusal; but exquisite as personal sketches for them few reminiscent tones,—he will find them not only dated from "Ashiestiel Ettrick Forest," but abounding in descriptions of the scenery around this favorite home of Scott. So, with the very beginning:

"November's sky is chill and drear,
November's leaf is red and bare;
Late, grazing down the steepy line,
That hems our little garden in,
Low in its dark and narrow glen,
You scarce the rivulet might ken,
So thick the tangled green-wood grew,
So feeble trilled the streamlet through:
Now, murmuring hoarse, and frequent, seen
Through bush and briar, no longer green,
An angry brook, it sweeps the glade,
Brawls over rock and wild cascade,
And, foaming brown with doubled speed,
Hurries its waters to the Tweed."

No longer Autumn's glowing red
Upon our Forest hills is shed;
No more, beneath the evening beam,
Fair Tweed reflects the purple gleam;
Away hath passed the heather-bell,
That blossomed so rich on Needpath-fell;
Sallow his brow and russet bare
Are now the sister-heights of Yair.
The sheep, before the pinching heaven,
To sheltered dale and down are driven,
Where yet some faded herbage pines,
And yet a watery sunbeam shines;
In meek despondency they eye
The withered sword and wintry sky,
And far beneath their summer hill
Stray sadly by Glenkannon's rill;
The shepherd shifts his mantle's fold,
And wraps him closer from the cold;
His dogs no merry circles wheel,
But cowering glance they often cast,
As deeper moans the gathering blast.

Ab, could we paint in brief, a picture of the beautiful home life here, when Fortune smiled on the heartsome loving man, of wondrous genius and easy industry! Could we condense those fascinating pictures his biographer has drawn of this marked and happy period of his life! Then, he was the doting husband and father; then the little Frenchy wife, with that charming accent, was with him in his pride and joy, and the children were growing amiably around them. He was amid the most fruitful of his poetic toils, and with every new burst of border-melody there was a louder and longer acclaim from the admiring public, and a new inflow of golden guineas to his coffers. The border balladry had in some degree prepared his way; but when the "Last Minstrel" struck his harp there was a universal cry of pleasure and surprise. William Pitt was delighted with it, beyond measure, and said on reading one portion of the "Lay"—"This is a sort of thing I might have expected in painting but could never have fancied capable of being given in poetry." The boy, Macaulay, picking up the book for an hour when with his father at the house of a friend, received from it so vivid an impression, that, on his return home, he recited it to his mother as long as she would listen. Among British poets there was now none more popular than Scott; and he began to say—Not law, or trade, but literature, for me; I have yet other palms to bear away. Happy for him, and for his household, and maybe, for his fame, had he adhered more strictly to this fitting resolution; but he was a restless, venturesome soul, and he loved to have "many irons in the fire." He must combine business with pleasure and publishing with authorship; and when his old school-fellow, Jamie Ballantine, sets up as printer in Edinburgh, he must become a secret partner, and invest his available resources and even mortgage his future,—a proceeding he had reason bitterly to regret. And all this with one end in view—scarcely worthy of him—to found a Scottish house and leave his descendants a lordly heritage as well as a poet's renown. And no wonder as one says, that such hopes might rise! No master in literature ever so turned his pen into a divining rod, to show where the cave of gems and of golden nuggets lays. With £15,000 out of the fan of writing romantic poetry; and, besides his other sources of income, from £5,000 to £12,000 for a single prose romance, whenever he choose to write it, apparently about as easily as a healthy man breathes and digests his dinner, what might he not hope for? Well might his expectations tower to an unprecedented height! "The spirit of poetry and romance revelled in his brain, and began to show itself not only in the construction of volumes but in the building of a castle, an estate, a family to stand amid the aristocratic families forever. The name of Walter Scott should not only descend with his children as that of an illustrious writer, but should cloth them with the world-honored mantle of titular rank. And everything was auspicious. The tide the wind of fortune and public favor set in wondrously. Work after work was thrown off, enormous sums were netted, publishers and printers struggled for his patronage; but Constable and the Ballantynes, acquaintances of his youth, were selected for his favor, and great became their standing and business. There seemed not one fortune, but three, secure of accomplishment. The poet in the romantic solitude of Ashiestiel, or galloping over the healthy hills in the neighborhood, as he mused on new and ever-succeeding visions of romances, among them conceived the most fascinating scheme of all. It was to purchase lands, to raise himself a fairy castle, to become, not the minstrel of a lord, as were many of those of old, but a minstrel-lord himself. The practical romance grew, on the banks of the Tweed, then began to raise the fiery castle. Quiet and beautiful as one of his descriptions, it arose; lands were added to lands; over hill and dale spread the dark embosment of future woods; and Abbotsford began to be spoken of far and wide. The poet had chosen his seat in the very land of poetry itself. At three miles distance stood the fair pile of Melrose, which he had made so attractive by his "Lay." Near that showed themselves the Eildon hills, the haunts of Tru's Tactica; at their feet ran the classic stream of Huntly burn. The Cowden-Knowe lifted its black summits farther down the Tweed; and upwards was a whole fairy-land—Carterhaugh, Mary's tower, Ettrick forest, St. Mary's Lake, and the "Dowis Dens of Yarrow." There was scarcely an object in the whole country round—neither hill, nor wood, nor stream, nor single rock—which was not full of the associations of

ballad fame. Here, then, he lived like an feudal lord, with his bounds and his trusty vassals; some of the latter, as Lidd-law and Tom Pardie, occupying the station of those humble, faithful friends, who tend so much to complete the happiness of life. His lovely wife, the lady of the domain; his children shooting fast up into beautiful manhood and womanhood; his castle and domain built, and won as they were, from the regions of enchantment; and friends and worshippers flocking from every country to behold the far-famed minstrel. Princes and nobles, and men of high name in every walk of life were his guests."

But we have anticipated. Our present concern is with his life at Ashiestiel, and his simpler, happier life, with these grand dreams and his first poetical successes. In the early part of 1806 Scott had added to his sheriff deputyship the appointment of a principal clerk of session, for which service he added to his income the sum of £800 per annum. The times of session embracing some six months of the year—from May 1st to July 12th, and from November 12th to the 12th of March—made it necessary to reside in town. This gave him the pleasantest part of the year—the early autumnal season—at his country home; and no locality could be found more fit to stimulate poetic labors on the part of a mind so sensitive as his to the loveliness of nature. Teeming with life and action as he was riding over hill and down dale, "conversing with his favorite dog and friends, along the hill of Yair," this Ashiestiel solitude fell on his fevered spirit like dew, and renewed his heart with calm and refreshment. Then, at evening, of some day of beauty, on the verge of Autumn, he with merry friends burned the water in the deep and dark Tweed, which rolled sounding on beneath the forest tacks below his house—that is, he speered the salmon by torch-light. His poems but momentary occupations, inferior pastimes, were discharged hurriedly; while his chief business, in which he was eager, and untiring, seemed to be in this rural pursuits. He worked and enjoyed hugely and his sleep was soft as Elysium. Lockhart pictures him after having finished his morning task in the study—for the early hours were golden ones to his invention—song thrilling episode of "Marmion" or lovely picture of the "Lady of the Lake,"—descending the stairs with lusty steps, rubbing his hands gleefully; and having breakfasted from the ample provisions of a Scotch gentleman's breakfast table, sallied forth to the hills for his well-earned recreation. Bith, bland, genial, no better host than he. See him striding about, with "Camp" and "Maida" at his heels; or galloping over the hills with a group of friends to a picnic at Melrose or Cauldshields Loch; or off for a day to the haunts of his youth, the Tower of Smalholm. Howitt says: "I believe Scott resided about seven years at Ashiestiel; and it is amazing what a mass of new and beautiful compositions he worked off there. It was here that his poetic fame grew to its full height; and he was acknowledged, though Southey, Wordsworth, Campbell and Coleridge were now pouring out their finest productions, to be the most original and popular writer of the day. There was to be one fresh and higher flight even by him, that of "The Great Unknown," and this was reserved for Abbotsford. There the fame of his romances began, there grew into its full-blown greatness; but here the sun of his poetic reputation ascended to its zenith. In particular, the poem of "Marmion" will for ever recall the memory and the scenery of Ashiestiel. The introductions to the different cantos, than which there are no poems in the English language more beautiful of their kind, are all imbued with the spirit of the place. They breathe at once the solitary beauty of the hills, the lonely charm of river, wood, and heath, and the genial blaze of the domestic hearth; on which love, and friendship, and the gladness of spirits of childhood, and the admiration of eager visitors to the secluded abode of "The Last Minstrel" had made an earthly paradise. The summer rambles up the Ettrick or Yarrow, by Wawark tower, St. Mary's Loch, or into the wilds of Moffatdale, when:

"The lavrock whistled from the cloud;
The stream was lively, but not loud;
From the white thorn the May flower shed
Its dewy fragrance round our head;
Not Ariel liveth more merrily
Under the blossomed bough than we!"

The same fine descriptive writer, and genial man, shall give us his account of a visit to Ashiestiel,—with which we close this paper. When we commence again, it will be with Scott's residence in Edinburgh. "It was on a fine, fresh morning, after much rain, that, with a smart lad as driver, I espied in a gig from Galashiels up the valley on the way to Ashiestiel. The sweet stream of the Ga's water ran on our left, murmuring deliciously, and noble woods right and left, amongst them the classic mansion of Torwoodlee, and wood-crowned banks, made the way beautiful. And we came out to the open country, bare but pleasant hills, and small light streams careering along the valleys, and shepherds, with their dogs at their heels, setting out on their long rounds for the day. There was an inspiring life and freshness in everything—air, earth and sky. The way is about six miles in length, from Galashiels to Ashiestiel. About three parts of this was passed, when we came to Clovenfoot, a few houses amongst the green hills, where Scott used often to lodge for days

and weeks at the little inn, before he got to Ashiestiel. The country about Ashiestiel consists of moorland hills, still showing the darkness of the heather upon them. It is wilder, and has an air of greater loneliness than the pastoral mountains of Ettrick and Moffatdale; and the pleasant surprise is the more lively, when at once, in the midst of this brown and treeless region, after going on where this Ashiestiel can have hidden itself, not a house or a trace of existence being visible, but bare hill beyond hill, you suddenly see before you, down in a deep valley, a mass of beautiful woodlands emerging into view; the Tweed displays its broad and rapid stream at the foot of this richly wooded scene, and a tasteful house on the elevated bank beyond the river shows its long front and gables over the tree tops. This is Ashiestiel, the residence of Scott, where he wrote "Marmion" and commenced "Waverley." We descended to the Tweed, where there is no bridge, but a ford, called by Scott "none of the best, that ugly ford," which after long rains is sometimes carried away, and instead of a ford becomes a gulch. I remembered the incident of Scott himself being once pushed into it, where his horse found no bottom, and had to swim across; and of a cart bringing the kitchen-range being upset, and leaving the much desired fireplace at the bottom. The river was now much swollen, but my stout-hearted lad said he did not fear it. He often went there; and so we passed boldly through the powerful stream, and up the woodland bank to the house. The proprietor and then occupant, a Mayor General Sir James Russell, a relative of Sir Walter's was just about to mount his horse to go out, but very kindly turned back and introduced us to Lady Russell, an elegant and very agreeable woman, the sister of Sir James and Captain Basil Hall. They showed me the house with the greatest pleasure, and pressed me to stay for tea. The house, Sir James said, was in Scott's time much less than at present. It was a farm-house made of an old border tower, by his father, and in the room looking down the Tweed, a beautiful view, Scott wrote "Marmion" and the first part of "Waverley"; as well as the conclusion of the "Lady of the Lake," and the whole of the "Lady of the Lake." That room is now the centre sitting-room, and Sir Walter's drawing room was then Sir James' bedroom. Sir James has greatly enlarged and improved the house. He has built a wing at each end, running at right angles with the old front, and his dining-room enjoys the view which Scott's sitting-room had before. The house is very elegantly furnished, as well as beautifully situated. The busts of Sir Walter and Capt. Basil Hall occupy conspicuous places in the dining-room, and recall the associations of the past and the present. The grounds which face the front that is turned from the river and looks up the hill, are very charming; and at a distance of a field is the mound in the wood called the "Shirra's knowe," because Scott was fond of sitting there. His views are now obstructed by the growth of the trees, but if they were opened again would be wildly woodland, looking down on the Tweed, and on a brook which rushes down a deep glen close by, called Sidel burn. The knowe has all the character of a Cairn or barrow, and I should think there is little doubt that it is one. It does not, however, stand on Sir James' property, and therefore it is not kept in order. Above the knowe, and Sir James' gardens, stretch away the uplands, and on the distant hill lies the mound and trench called Wallace's trench.

"One would have thought that Scott was sufficiently withdrawn from the world at Ashiestiel; but the world poured in upon him even here, and beside the visits of Southey, Heber, John Murray, and other of his distant friends, the fashionable and far-wandering tribes found him out. 'In this little drawing-room of his,' said Sir James Russell, 'he entertained three Duchesses at once; adding, 'happy had it been for him had he been contented to remain here, and have left the unbuilt castle of Abbotsford, so much more in the highway of the tourist, and offering so much more accommodation? That is true. The present house is good enough for a lord, and yet not too good for a private gentleman; while its situation is, in some respects, more beautiful than that of Abbotsford. The site of the house is more elevated, standing amid its fine woods, and yet commanding the course of the bold river deep beneath it, with its one bank dark with hanging forests, and that beyond open to the bare and moorland hills."

Alas! that the wise and great know not always the path that leads to happiness. It was happiness, the unalloyed, if there is such on earth,—at Ashiestiel; it was care and sorrow, and in the end a crushing woe, at Abbotsford. But so also are we, who pity and regret,

"Misled by Fancy's meteor ray,
By passion driven."

But for this shattered dream, however, we might never have seen the heroic and noblest side of Scott, the uncorrupted honor of the man.

PASTOR FELIX.



IT IS THE FACT, Think as You Please

It is not generally known, but it is a fact readily proven by the investigations of science, that the real danger from every known ailment of mankind is caused by inflammation; cure the inflammation and you have conquered the disease in each case. Inflammation is manifested outwardly by redness, swelling and heat; inwardly by congestion of the blood vessels and growth of unhealthy tissue, causing pain and disease.

External inflammation accompanies bruises, bites, cuts, stings, burns, scalds, chaps, cracks, strains, sprains, fractures, etc., and is the chief danger therefrom. Internal inflammation frequently causes outward swellings; as instances familiar to all we mention pimples, tooth-ache, stiff joints and rheumatism. Yet the great majority of internal inflammations make no outside show, for which reason they are often more dangerous than the external forms.

Inflammation of the nervous system embraces the brain, spine, bones and muscles. The breathing organs have many forms of inflammation; such as colds, coughs, pleurisy, bronchitis, etc. The organs of digestion have a multitude of inflammatory troubles. The vital organs form one complete plan mutually dependent; therefore inflammation anywhere is felt more or less everywhere, and impairs the health. The late Dr. A. Johnson, an old fashioned Family Physician, originated JOHNSON'S ANODYNE LINIMENT, in 1850, to relieve pain and cure every form of inflammation. It is today the Universal Household Remedy.

Send us at once your name and address, and we will send you free our New Illustrated Book, "TREATMENT FOR DISEASES," caused by inflammation. I. S. JOHNSON & CO., Boston, Mass.

Causes Every Known Disease!

Our "Model" Wood Cook Stoves

Thermometer in oven door shows exact heat of oven at all times, every cook will appreciate this. Oven ventilated and cemented, top and bottom, ensuring even cooking. Steel oven bottom. Steel nickled edge. Safety expansion top. Agitable fire grate.

The McClary Mfg. Co., LONDON, MONTREAL, TORONTO, WINNIPEG and VANCOUVER

For sale by R. J. SELFRIDGE, St. John

CARRIAGES! CARRIAGES!

Handsone and Comfortable; Well Constructed and Elegantly Finished.

HERE ARE TWO DISTINCT STYLES.

A Stylish Dog Cart.

Will carry Two or Four with comfort.

The Comfortable Bangor Buggy.

Perhaps one of the most serviceable and comfortable single Carriages built. Rides as easy as a cradle. Not too heavy and as light as you want it made.

For further Particulars and Prices inquire of

JOHN EDGECOMBE & SONS,

Fredericton, N. B.

ST. JOHN

Conservatory of Music

AND ELOCUTION

158 Prince William Street.

Full term opened Sept. 9th 1895. Branches taught: Piano, Violin, Vocal Music and Elocution. Free classes in Harmony, Physical Culture and Singing.

Miss Jessie Campbell Whitlock

TEACHER OF PIANOFORTE.

ST. STEPHEN, N. B.

The "Leschetizky Method"; also "Synthetic System," for beginners.

Apply at the residence of

Mr. J. T. WHITLOCK.