

# IN MEMORY OF SCOTT

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§ 1.

“**A**MONG other feats when I was a young man, I was able at times to lift a smith’s anvil with one hand by what is called the *horn*—that projecting piece on which things are beaten to turn them round. It required my full strength, undiminished by the least exertion, and those who choose will find the feat no easy one.” This note Scott makes in his *Journal*, for his own satisfaction, merely to illustrate the fact that his mind worked best in the “forehead of the morning.” As all the world knows, the morning was his favorite time for composition. He would rise at five, shave, dress carefully, make his own fire, sit down at his desk, with the memorials of his mother neatly arranged on it, and run you off a chapter or two of a *Waverley* novel before breakfast, preliminary to a long day of attendance at court, meetings, hospitality, study, exercise, and more composition. Ideas came to him, problems solved themselves, difficulties vanished in those quiet morning hours. Among authors, Scott stands almost alone in this preference for daylight over the dark.

The physical feat, which he terms “not easy” seems well-nigh incredible; and it serves as an index of his herculean strength. Enormous muscular power, inexhaustible energy and strength of constitution are the mark of Scott. The infantile disease which crippled him did not prevent his growing into an exceptionally strong man. He was rather disfigured than disabled by his lameness. It did not interfere with the most athletic pursuits. He was “a bold rider, a deep drinker, desperate climber, a stout player at single-stick.” He was also a tireless marcher, covering thirty miles in a day without a symptom of fatigue.

This rich endowment of strength Scott never hoarded; he spent it royally. Lavish outpouring is the note of all his activities. He records that in the summer he hardly ever sat down, and in the winter he hardly ever left his chair. In his rambles with Shortreed, they would always take the ford instead of the bridge, and if they lost their footing in the current and got a ducking, it was only a

matter for mirth. As for changing wet clothes Scotsmen would scorn such a precaution.

With physical strength went its usual comrade,—courage. By nature he was an open air man, a lover of all athletic out-door sports, a fisherman, a hunter, a good shot, though his heart was too tender to enjoy killing. The look in the eyes of a bird which fell to his gun was too much for him, and he gave up shooting. Effeminacy clings to the idea of the scribe, the writer; it can never come near Scott. Most men are brave in an emergency, as war proves, but Scott had the aristocratic temper that loves danger and seeks it out. A sailor friend introduced him to a party in these terms, "As for Mr. Scott, mayhap you may take him for a poor lamiter, but he is the first to begin a row and the last to end it." When the Irish medical students in the theatre tried to howl down the National Anthem, Scott took part in the riot which followed, when sticks were freely used. One morning he showed his stick all cut and marked to his friend Clerk, and told how he had been attacked by three ruffians in the street the night before. He fought them for an hour. When his secretary, poor Weber sitting quietly at his side, suddenly developed homicidal mania, produced a pair of loaded pistols for a duel *a outrance*, then and there, Scott met the unforeseen emergency with the utmost coolness and tact. A desperate "black fisher" trying to bolt from the court-room, he stopped "with his own hands," as he arrested a rioter in the streets of Selkirk, during the elections of 1831, when he was an old, broken, dying man. At the same time, he faced with steady nerves, the angry mob at Jedburgh, that stoned and insulted him, and howled "Burke Sir Walter!" a cry which haunted him on his deathbed.

Such a man was a natural soldier. His part in raising the Edinburgh Light Horse, when invasion threatened the land was no accident. An anecdote related by Skene is too characteristic to be omitted. In the autumn of 1807, Scott was composing *Marmion* and drilling with his regiment, of which he was Quartermaster. "In the intervals of drilling, Scott used to delight in walking his powerful black steed up and down by himself upon the Portobello sands, within the beating of the surge; and now and then you would see him plunge in his spurs, and go off as if at the charge, with the spray dashing about him. As we rode back to Musselborough, he often came and placed himself beside me, to repeat the verses he had been composing during these pauses in our exercise." That is how poetry of action should be composed.

Nor was it an accident, in the days of the Code, that Scott evinced a perfect readiness to fight a duel. In his *Life of Napoleon*,

he accused Gourgaud, a young French fire-eating general, who accompanied his master to St. Helena, of treachery, in "giving the English Government private information that the Emperor's complaints of ill usage were utterly unfounded, and afterwards aiding and assisting the delusion in France as to the harshness of Sir Hudson Lowe's conduct towards his captive." Scott was sure of his facts, he wrote what he thought, and he was prepared to take the consequences. In those days, a too vivacious sentence in a review might lead to a challenge. Moore and Jeffrey had a "meeting" on that account, and Macaulay, on his return from India, narrowly escaped exchanging shots, with a Mr. Wallace whom he had "castigated" in an article. Scott's entry in his *Journal*, reveals his state of mind. "I have done Gourgaud no wrong, every word imputed to him exists in the papers submitted to me as historical documents, and I should have been a shameful coward if I had shunned using them. At my years it is somewhat late for an affair of honour, and as a reasonable man I would avoid such an arbitrament, but I will not plead privilege of literature. The country shall not be disgraced in my person, and having stated why I think I owe him no satisfaction, I will at the same time most willingly give it to him.

Il sera reçu  
 , Biribi,  
 A la façon de Barbarie,  
 Mon ami.

The expected challenge never came; but it was not Scott's fault.

With abounding health, strength, energy and courage went other natural associates,—high spirits, gayety of temper, genial humour, a generosity of mind which found its natural reflex in his efforts to help with his time, influence, money, such as needed his help, throughout his life. He always was helping lame dogs over stiles.

Scott was a man beloved, a man of many friends, high and low, rich and poor, men, women and children. He had

"A noble and a true conceit  
 Of godlike amity."

He was "Fellow to a prince and brother to beggar, if he be found worthy". The six men to whom he addressed the epistles in *Marmion* are types of a host. Once a friend always a friend. At

the Edinburgh High School, he had for companion "Lordie" Ramsay, heir to one of the oldest and proudest titles in the Scottish peerage. Each goes his own way, the predestined writer, and the predestined soldier. Lame Watty Scott becomes "The Wizard of the North", a poet with world-wide fame. Little red-haired "Lordie" Ramsay becomes Lord Dalhousie, a distinguished general, decorated for his services in the Peninsula, in the list of those thanked by both Houses of Parliament for his services at Waterloo, and honored most of all in his native Scotland. They meet again as old men, but their friendship is unbroken. They visit and dine together and exchange reminiscences, just before the soldier departed for his last command in India. Here is Scott's opinion of *Fundator Noster*. "Lord Dalhousie has more of the Caledonian *prisca fides* than any man I know now alive. He has served his country in all quarters of the world and in every climate; yet, though my contemporary, looks ten years my junior. In all instances of his life he has been the same steady, honest, true-hearted Lord Dalhousie, that Lordie Ramsay promised to be when at the High School. How few such can I remember, and how poorly have valour and honesty been rewarded."

Scott was emphatically a man's man; but he had women friends as well. Saintsbury thinks that his "correspondences with ladies—show him at his very best. For in them he plays neither jack-pudding, nor coxcomb, nor sentimentalist—and they form not the least of his titles to the great name of gentleman." The most famous of his friendships is with Pet Marjorie, the child of genius, who died at the age of eight, and who lives for ever in Dr. John Brown's undying pages. How much finer, in every way, is the relation between this poet and this child than the attachment of Goethe and Bettina!

Perhaps the heart of Scott is shown as clearly as anywhere in his love of dogs. They were his constant companions. When Washington Irving's chaise neared Abbotsford, it roused "a whole garrison of dogs." Later, when he went for a walk, with the laird, a retinue of dogs attended them. The American visitor observed that "he would frequently pause in conversation, to notice his dogs, and speak to them as if rational companions." He was painted with his dogs, Camp, Percy, Douglas, Bran. When Camp died, Scott refused a dinner invitation on account of "the death of an old friend;" it was no conventional excuse or affected grief. His daughter remembered the solemn interment in the garden of 39, Castle St. Lockhart noted, "he was a gentleman even to his dogs." He gave them parts in his poems and romances. Bevis, and Fangs,

and Elphin, and Lufra, and Roswal, should be included in the *dramatis personae*. When the world was all agog over the unknown author of *Waverley*, one friend identified him as Scott from his references to dogs. When he left Abbotsford on his last sad journey, he gave Willie Laidlaw written instructions "to be very careful of the dogs." From Naples every letter to his friend had something in it about the poor people and the dogs. One of the most pathetic scenes in "that heartbreaking book," the *Life*, is Scott on his return, alternately smiling and sobbing over the welcoming dogs until the cloud settled on the sick brain.

A man who has friends must show himself friendly. The tailor who used to go about the countryside from great house to great house, plying his trade, said the final word. "Sir Walter spoke to everyone as if they were blood relations."

## § 2.

How did a man of this energetic, athletic, open air temperament ever become a writer?

One answer is that he drifted into literature. Another, almost equally convincing is that, by his antecedents, origin and character, such a man was predestined to write what he did, and as he did. From first to last, his work has a very definite unity. The man and his work make one harmony. He is the same man in whatever he lays his hand to.

Argument for the theory of drift may be drawn from the fact that he was established in life, settled in his profession of law, with a sufficient income to warrant marriage and with fair prospects before he produced anything of real importance. His poems and novels were a side issue. In his own phrase, he made literature his walking-stick, not his crutch.

The inevitable tendency to write what he did and as he did is equally plain. As a sickly child he was sent to his grandfather's farm to recover his health, and his infant consciousness expanded in one of the most romantic spots of the romantic Border country. His first learning was the old tales, songs, ballads, traditions of the countryside. He says himself "The local information had its share in forming my tastes and pursuits." Poetry of action fixed itself in his memory. He learned "Hardyknute" from kind Aunt Janet's reading, and loved to shout aloud the ringing verses. At the end of the journey, coming from the monastery, La Trinita della Cava in the chestnut forest near Naples, he declaimed the ballad to Sir William Gell.

His own account of how his early environment influenced his mind is found in the third epistle of *Marmion*.

It was a barren scene and wild  
Where naked cliffs were rudely piled.  
And ever and anon between  
Lay velvet tufts of loveliest green.  
And well the lonely infant knew  
Recesses where the wall flower grew,  
And honeysuckle loved to crawl  
Up the low crag and ruined wall.  
I deemed such nooks the sweetest shade.  
The sun in all its round surveyed."

Heaven lies about us in our infancy. The child is close to Mother Earth and has his own tiny scale of measurement. Smail-hom castle is a bare peel, but the genius of Turner has transfigured it into the image of magnificence that filled the eyes of the little lame boy of genius, who saw it, lying on the ground, wrapped in the raw sheepskin.

And still I thought that shattered tower  
The mightiest work of human power  
And marvelled, as the aged hind  
With some strange tale bewitched my mind  
Of forayers——"

There is a companion picture of little Walter drinking in the winter tales told about the blazing ingle of Sandy Knowe.

"And ever, by the winter hearth  
Old tales I heard of woe, or mirth  
Of lovers' slights, of ladies' charms  
Of witches' spells, of warriors' arms;  
Of patriot battles won of old  
By Wallace wight, and Bruce the bold;  
Of later fields of feud and fight,  
When, pouring from their highland height,  
The Scottish clans in headlong sway  
Had swept the scarlet ranks away.

Most significant also is the fact that the child dramatized the tales he heard, and translated them into concrete form.

“—Stretched at length upon the floor,  
Again I fought each combat o'er.  
Pebbles and shells in order laid  
The mimic ranks of war displayed;  
And onward still the Scottish lion bore,  
And still the scattered Southron fled before.”

As a boy, the poetic impulse grew with his growth and strengthened with his strength. Pope's *Homer*, which he read to his mother, Ossian and Spenser, to which he was introduced by good Dr. Blacklock, and above all, Percy's *Reliques*, which he “could read for ever,” all fostered his natural bent towards the romantic and the heroic. His memory was as strong, if not as universal, as Macaulay's; he never forgot what struck his fancy. He took in continually and gave out in equal measure. At school he was a famous teller of tales, endlessly inventive and entertaining.

Then, as a young man, came his “raids into Liddesdale”, as he called his long walking tours of the Border, where he “had a home in every farmhouse.” Into this picturesque, primitive, unspoiled part of Scotland he went, year after year, on his vacations, in search of old songs, old tales, old customs. Later, his father's business took him north into the Highlands, where he met men who had made history. As a boy of fifteen, he met and conversed with actors in the stirring drama of “the Forty-five”, survivors of Prestonpans and Culloden Moor. These tours gave him an unrivalled knowledge of Scotland and of all sorts and conditions of Scottish men and women.

With such a preparation, what could be more natural than that he collect the old ballads, imitate them, and publish them? *The Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*, which appeared in 1802, may be said to have determined the line of Scott's literary activity. Everything flows from it.

From admiration to imitation is but a step. He loved ballads, and his first original poem is an enlarged and glorified ballad. The *Minstrelsy* was followed by *The Lay of the Last Minstrel*, and it took the reading world by storm. A long poem published in an expensive form sold by thousands of copies, something unheard of in the world of literature. The reason for this startling success is not far to seek. Scott came in between two poetical worlds, one dead, and one trying to be born. The classical school of Pope had had its day. The new romantic movement with Wordsworth and Coleridge for heralds, was misunderstood and involved in storms of controversy. Out of the blue came a poem

embodying the disputed principles without proclaiming them, a tale of love and war and ancient times, an impetuous narrative that carried the reader on its strong current. Like a three years child, the public listened to the new-old song. The Renaissance of Wonder had begun. All Scott's poems and his national novels grew out of the *Minstrelsy*, as branches grow out of the tree.

Scott knows what he is doing. A Tory in politics, he is a revolutionary in literature. The epistles of *Marmion* reveal him as a conscious artist, arguing for his ideas, designedly choosing romantic themes, and freedom in verse form in preference to the classical prescriptions of Pope. The ballads Scott loved are epic; and his poetry is the poetry of action. One stirring tale in verse succeeds another, until he feels that the vein is worked out. A new poet, George Gordon, Lord Byron, also begins to write tales in verse of greater popularity, and Scott retires in his favor without a sigh.

After his poems came his novels. *Waverley* had been written in part, and Scott mislaid the manuscript. Rummaging in an old cabinet for fishing tackle in the summer of 1814, he found it again and finished it out of hand: he wrote the last two volumes in three weeks. It was an immediate success and gave its name to the famous series, of which Scott wrote an average of two a year. Novels had been written before *Waverley*. Indeed, the first great age of the novel was over. Richardson, Fielding, Smollett, Goldsmith, Sterne had done their work. After these giants came a race of dwarves who purveyed the sort of stuff Miss Lydia Languish got from the circulating library, and hid when her aunt came into the room. Why in Scott's hand, did a contemptible literary form, at once acquire dignity, strength and popularity? What was the new element introduced?

The staple of most prose fiction, the so-called "love interest" Scott could not away with. Even as a boy in his reading age, he "abhorred" the domestic novel, "the whole Jemmy and Jenny Jessamy tribe", and he discovered a deeper interest, to take its place. He does indeed make concessions to the general taste by bringing into the saga a pair of young lovers, whom he goodnaturedly allows to wed in the last chapter, but his heart is with his major theme, some large moving action like the battle of Flodden Field, or the Whig rising of 1689. He presents an age, or re-creates an epoch. He made history live.

One element in the success of *Waverley* and its successors was that they dealt with this history of Scotland. The first eight may be described as national. In his romances as well as his poems



he has but one heroine,—Scotland, and, like a knight of old, he made his mistress famous. How his native land had been regarded by the world at large may be inferred from Johnson's remarks in his journey to the Hebrides. Compared with England, it was a barren, desolate, poverty-stricken land. When poor, snubbed Boswell tried to put in a good word for the scenery, the Great Cham silenced him with, "Depend upon it, sir, the finest prospect a Scotchman ever sees is the highroad which leads him to England." Washington Irving was struck by the same bareness, when he visited Abbotsford in 1817. Scott took him for a ramble to admire the scenery. The American saw "a mere succession of grey waving hills, line beyond line, as far as my eye could reach, monotonous in their aspect—destitute of trees—and the far-famed Tweed appeared a naked stream, flowing between bare hills, without a tree on its banks." In the next breath, Irving reveals the mental attitude of countless travellers, who come from the ends of the earth to visit Scott's Scotland. "And yet such had been the magic web of poetry and romance thrown over the whole that it had a greater charm for me than the richest scenery I had beheld in England." That "magic web" was spread over all the land by the Wizard of the North.

The title of magician was well deserved. There was something miraculous in the rapidity and profusion with which poured forth his poems and romances. He shook them out of his sleeve. It was a flowing tide without an ebb. And this joyous creative activity brought him wealth and fame such as had never come to man of the pen before. He was too happy, too prosperous.

### § 3.

In the autumn of 1825, Scott bought a blank book, eight inches by nine, furnished with strong Chubb locks. It was bound in vellum, a handsome book, "such as might do for a lady's album." Along with the sister volume, written within and without, it is laid up at Abbotsford like the relic of a saint. Their record is one of the treasures of English literature. No nobler revelation of an heroic soul, no deeper tragedy of suffering and struggle drawn unconsciously by the protagonist's own hand is known to man. The first sentence runs: "I have all my life regretted that I did not keep a regular journal." The reason for his regret is that he has lost recollection of much that is interesting, and deprived his family of curious information. Begun simply as a convenience for memorabilia, it became almost at once a record of calamity, and grew into the saddest, bravest book ever written.

The same year marks the climax of Scott's prosperity. In the summer, he made a tour of Ireland, where he was "almost killed with kindness.—The Irish have been most flatteringly kind in their reception—I have been—almost worried by crowds and acclamations." When he appeared in the Dublin theatre, the audience rose and cheered; when he went along the streets, the tradesmen and their wives bowed and courtsied to him. It was like a triumphal progress. He came home, and on December 18, he learned that the crazy publishing firm in which he was a partner had gone bankrupt. His financial ruin was complete; and he found himself burdened with an enormous debt. Next year Lady Scott died. Cruel pain assailed him; his infirmities increased; old friends passed away; the *Journal* began so light-heartedly becomes a necrology. Nor was this the worst. As his body weakened, his mind began to fail, and he was conscious of this most terrible of failures. The end came after a series of paralytic strokes.

The *Journal* is like the opening of the *Book of Job*. On the head of the happy, prosperous man, falls calamity after calamity. One bearer of evil tidings has scarcely told his errand before another rushes in. Scott has been too happy, too prosperous, too successful. Everything that men commonly desire was his; the world was at his feet. If his career had continued with ever increasing splendor, it would have seemed to contradict all human experience in reaching an ideal perfection. A Hebrew prophet, a Greek tragic poet would have shuddered at the spectacle of such unclouded success.

But extremity is the trier of spirits. This record of calamity shows the heroic proportions of Scott. With failing powers of body and mind, he set himself the gigantic task of writting off this enormous debt, and he almost succeeded. His method was to set himself a definite task, so many pages of manuscript per day; and, no matter what his state of mind or body, he forces himself to do the stint assigned. Three of his "leaves" was equivalent to sixteen pages of octavo print; and some days he turned out ten such "leaves" When he employed an amanuensis, he sometimes worked from six in the morning till six at night, having his meals brought into the room. Just before his failure, he had begun *Woodstock* and his *Life of Napoleon*. He wrote the novel in three months; and he completed the history, a work of about a million words, in eighteen. In that time he earned nearly twenty thousand pounds for his creditors. The incredible list of his works in the last five years of his life includes seven novels or stories, four series of *Tales of a Grandfather*, a history of Scotland, a work on Demonology, besides long reviews and odd jobs of literary work.

Never was a human brain driven at such cruel speed. Breakdown was inevitable.

On Christmas Eve, 1827, he was able to congratulate himself on what he had achieved, earning £25,000 for his creditors, receiving their thanks, "and the conscious feeling of discharging my duty. I see before me a long tedious and dark path, but it leads to true fame and stainless reputation. If I die in the harrows, as is very likely, I will die with honour. If I achieve my task, I shall have the thanks of all concerned and the approbation of my own conscience. And so I think I can fairly face the return of Christmas Day."

So he toiled on. During his Irish tour, a woman asked alms of on the ground that she was "an old struggler." Scott adopted the phrase and applied it to himself. His greatest poetic triumph is his tale of the lost battle in *Marmion*, and the magnificent last stand of the flower of Scotland, about their fated king.

"No thought was there of dastard flight."

Scott fought his losing battle with the same courage and unbroken resolution.

In the spring of 1830, he had a stroke of apoplexy. His speech became affected. "When I begin to form my ideas for conversation, expressions fail me," he notes in January, 1831. He is "plagued with a giddy feeling;" and he finds, "I have a hideous paralytic custom of stuttering with my pen, and cannot write without strange blunders." Later, he notes: "The plough is coming to the end of the furrow;" and, "I often wish I could lie down and sleep without waking." In the autumn, the government put the *Barham* man-of-war at his disposal, to take him to the Mediterranean. For a time he rallied, but at the last, an agony of homesickness came upon him. He longed for Abbotsford, and he was taken back overland by way of the Tyrol, and the Rhine. For the most part, his brain was clouded, and he lived in a stupor.

The final scenes have been often cited. Lockhart's narrative runs,

"As I was dressing on the morning of Monday the 17th of September, Nicolson came into my room and told me that his master had awoke in a state of composure and consciousness, and wished to see me immediately. I found him entirely himself, though in the last extreme of feebleness. His eye was clear and calm—every trace of the wild fire of delirium extinguished. 'Lockhart,' he said, 'I may have but a minute to speak to you. My dear, be a good man—be virtuous—be religious—be a good man. Nothing

else will give you any comfort when you come to lie here'—he paused and I said—'I shall send for Sophia and Anne?'—'No,' he said 'don't disturb them. Poor souls! I know they were up all night—God bless you all! With this he sunk into a very tranquil sleep, and, indeed, he scarcely afterwards gave any sign of consciousness, except for an instant on the arrival of his sons.—They, on learning that the scene was about to close, obtained a new leave of absence from their posts, and both reached Abbotsford on the 19th. About half-past one p. m. on the 21st of September, Sir Walter breathed his last, in the presence of all his children. It was a beautiful day—so warm that every window was wide open—and so perfectly still, that the sound of all others most delicious to his ear, the gentle ripple of the Tweed over its pebbles, was distinctly audible as we knelt around the bed, and his eldest son kissed and closed his eyes."

§ 4.

Personal popularity wanes and literary fame is the sport of time. They say that Scott is not read now; booksellers will not even stock his works. The new generations have become accustomed to a more exact art in novel writing and to a more careful and precise style. Purveyors of fiction and their readers are interested in the present, not the past. The themes which engage the attention of both are chiefly domestic and social. Realism is in the ascendant, not romance; and the staple of present day fiction is sex. The critics also turn away, though not all. Stevenson, while admiring Scott's effects, thought that he missed opportunities, and sinned against good English through want of care. He has the right to speak for the many who echo this judgment.

How Scott was regarded in his own day was beyond question. Never was there such popularity for a writer in the world before. His novels sold by thousands of copies and he produced on an average two a year. Not Scotland alone, but cultivated Europe snatched up his romances as they came from the press. They were translated, dramatized, turned into operas. They brought him in an income of £15,000 a year. Abbotsford was over-run with visitors. Lockhart mentions fifteen parties of tourists arriving in one day. When Scott came back from Italy to die, he had to halt in London. Allan Cunningham walking home late one night "found several working-men standing together at the corner of Jermyn Street, and one of them asked, as if there was but one deathbed in London—'Do you know, sir, if this is the street where he is lying?'" The newspapers teemed with notices of his condition; and there was

hardly a member of the royal family that did not send daily to enquire for him.

Wordsworth had the hard stiff North Country nature, which does not readily give its affection, but when it does, gives it for ever. After the first meeting with Scott at Lasswade in 1804, he wrote the usual letter of thanks a visitor sends in acknowledgement of hospitality. It closes, "My sister and I often talk of the happy days we spent in your company. Such things do not occur often in life. If we live we shall meet again; that is my consolation when I think of these things," and he subscribes himself "your sincere friend, for such I will call myself, though slow to use a word of such solemn meaning to any one."

Lockhart tells of their last meeting in 1831, and the Fenwick note to "Yarrow Revisited" gives precious, painful details, which Wordsworth remembered to the close of his life. It was a sad occasion. Scott wrote in Dora Wordsworth's album lines which show how "his pen stammered." As he put the book into her hand in his own study, standing near his desk, with Wordsworth by, he said, "I should not have done anything of this kind but for your father's sake:" (Scott much disliked writing in albums) "they are probably the last verses I shall ever write." Returning from Yarrow, Wordsworth "was not a little moved" by "a rich but sad light of rather a purple than a golden hue—spread over Eildon Hills", as he thought that probably that was the last time Scott would cross the Tweed. The result was the deep-hearted sonnet on the departure of Sir Walter Scott from Abbotsford, for Naples, which begins "A trouble, not of clouds or weeping rain." The poet adjures the mourners to lift up their hearts,

"for the might  
Of the whole world's good wishes with him goes;  
Blessings and prayers, in nobler retinue  
Than sceptred king, or laurelled conqueror knows,  
Follow this wondrous Potentate."

The great names of Scott, Carlyle and Goethe are bound together in a curious relationship. The two famous Scots began their literary careers with admiration for the famous German. Scott translated *Goetz von Berlichingen*; and Carlyle translated *Wilhelm Meister*. And Goethe admired the genius of Scott: he considered him the greatest writer of his time, "without his like or without his equal." His daughter-in-law told Mrs. Jameson, "when my father got hold of one of Scott's romances, there was no speaking to him

till he had finished the third volume, he was worse than any girl at a boarding-school with her first novel." In January 1827, Goethe wrote a most stately and courteous letter to Scott, telling him, among other things, that translations of his works "abounded" in German, and that they were largely read in the original. This letter he entrusted to Carlyle to transmit to Scott; and Carlyle, the unaccredited hero, was looking forward to meeting "the great man, and having delivered my commission, wish him good morning." About a month later Scott received the letter, and made this entry in his *Journal*. "I make it a rule seldom to read, and never to answer, foreign letters from literary folks. It leads to nothing but the battle-dore and shuttle-cock intercourse of compliments, as light as cork and feathers. But Goethe is different, a wonderful fellow, the Ariosto at once and almost the Voltaire of Germany. Who could have told me thirty years ago, that I should correspond, and be on something like an equal footing, with the author of *Goetz*?" Goethe's letter he did reply to, in terms which do honor to them both; but though the most punctilious of correspondents, he failed to answer Carlyle's, and Carlyle felt hurt. The younger man could not know the tragedy revealed in Scott's contemporary journal. Bereavement, financial ruin, agonizing pain, loneliness, a brain decaying, but driven at inhuman speed to meet overwhelming demands might excuse the lack of civility, of which Carlyle complains. One of Scott's reasons for wishing to return from Naples by way of the Tyrol and Germany was that he might have an interview with Goethe at Weimar. Goethe died on March 22nd, and the news quickened his impatience to return to Scotland. "All his fine dreams of recovery seemed to vanish at once—'Alas, for Goethe!' he exclaimed: but he at least died at home—Let us to Abbotsford."

Carlyle's review of Lockhart's *Life* suffers undoubtedly from the fact that he did not read the seventh volume, which details the heart-breaking final scenes. If he had, Scott would not have been wounded in the house of his friends. Perhaps the best remembered sentence in that critique is, "No sounder piece of British manhood was put together in the eighteenth century of Time." The essence of Carlyle's judgment is contained in the entry in his *Journal*.

"Sir Walter Scott died some days ago. Goethe at the spring equinox, Scott at the autumn one. A great spirit is then wanting among men. Perhaps he died in good time, so far as his own reputation is concerned. He understood what *history* meant; this was his chief intellectual merit. As a thinker, not feeble—strong rather, and healthy, but limited, almost mean and *klein-*

*staedtisch*. I never spoke with Scott (had once some small epistolary intercourse with him on the part of Goethe, in which he behaved not very courteously, I thought) have a hundred times seen him, from of old, writing in the Courts, or hobbling with stout speed along the streets of Edinburgh, a large man, pale, shaggy face, fine, deep-browed grey eyes, an expression of strong homely intelligence, and, perhaps (in later years among the wrinkles), of sadness or weariness. A solid, well-built, effectual mind; the merits of which after all this delirious exaggeration is done, and the reaction thereof is also done, will not be forgotten. He has played his part, and left *none like* or second to him. *Plaudite*."

Carlyle read the *Waverley* novels as they came out, and recommended them to his brother John as part of education. Undoubtedly he learned not a little from Scott. Frederick Harrison says that without Scott, "our very conception of human development would have ever been imperfect." No contemporary eulogist surpasses Harrison in his enthusiasm for this aspect of Scott's genius. He calls him "the inexhaustible painter of eight full centuries and every type of man." He has done for the various phases of history what Shakespeare has done for the manifest types of human character." "The poetic beauty of Scott's creations is almost the least of his great qualities. It is the universality of his sympathy that is so truly great, the justice of his estimates, the insight into the spirit of each age, his intense absorption of self in the vast epic of human civilization. What are the old almanacs that they so often give us as histories beside these living pictures of the ordered succession of ages?"

The chorus of praise is swelled by many voices. Washington Irving calls Scott "that golden-hearted man", and well he might. It was under his "kind and cordial auspices" that the author of *The Sketch Book* began his career in Europe. Irving met Scott first in 1817 and has left a luminous account of his descent upon him at Abbotsford. Two years later, he came again to England, to push his fortunes, not having succeeded at home. He wanted Murray to publish *The Sketch Book*, but Murray declined in a letter which may stand as a model of Chesterfieldian refusal. Irving wrote to Scott, who threw himself into helpful projects with his wonted energy and kindness. He got Irving the post of editor for a new journal, and, when his friend declined it, he persuaded Murray to take *The Sketch Book*." It is only one out of many instances of Scott's benevolence and brotherly helpfulness. Many another in difficulties had reason to call him "that golden-hearted man."

The list of tributes to the genius of Scott might be extended indefinitely. Perhaps the pithiest is by Tennyson. How many will share in this aspiration!

O great and gallant Scott!  
 True gentleman, heart, blood and bone.  
 I would it had been my lot  
 To have seen thee, and heard thee, and known.

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## A NEW SONG

ROBERT NORWOOD

The world waits for a new song,  
 A glad song, a true song—  
 A song without the semblance of a tear;  
 Full of hilltops and the heather  
 In a day of summer weather,  
 And a comrade who is infinitely near.

The world waits for a joy song,  
 A girl song, a boy song—  
 A song that arrows upward like a lark,  
 Till the sky is torn asunder  
 As with lightning after thunder,  
 And a sword of sunrise drives away the dark.

O come and sing a day song,  
 A hill song, a way song—  
 A song to heal the halt and blind and dumb,  
 Till they rise to follow after  
 The wild music of our laughter,  
 And their glad feet make the murmur of a drum!