

HIS FALLEN FORTUNES.

AS SUDDENLY AS THEY HAD RISEN THEY WERE SWIFT AWAY.

Scott's Earnings and How Quickly They Were Lost—Not a Hero in His Wonderful Tale Could Match Him in His Wonderful Tale With the Rudeness of Adversity.

A trouble, not of clouds, or weeping rain Nor of the setting sun's pathetic light Engendered, hangs o'er Eddon's triple height; Spirits of Power assembled there conspire For kindred power departing from their sight While Tweed, best pleased in chanting a blithe strain, Sighs his voice again and yet again. Lift up your hearts ye mourners; 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 know, Follow this wondrous Potentate. Be true, To winds of ocean, and the midnight sea, Waiting your charge to soft Parthenope.—Wordsworth on Scott's Departure for Italy.

Alas, that the biographer must reserve a portion of his space and skill to record the failures and sorrows of his hero! We have looked upon a magnum in the field of letters, generously prodigal, even to excess. What a revenue had been his! "I suppose," says Howitt, "popular as Lord Byron was, the whole which he received by his writings did not realize £30,000. Scott cleared that by any two of his novels. He could clear a third of it in three months. A well might he think to lay field to field, and house to house, and plant his children in the land as lords of the soil, and titled magnates forever!"

But they look for the permanence of rainbows and sunset clouds who expect the stability of human fortunes. What splendid life, like that of Raleigh, or Leicester, or Essex, but to it the shadows have come? And when they come late they depart not, but to return. And in such an hour as we think not the blow falls by which even the temple of our heart is shattered to ruins, and the amusive panorama of our life dissolves, leaving us in tears. So there came to England's finances a dark day when, like a flood that bears all before it, the accumulations of years were borne away when even the Bank of England was shaken, and Archibald Constable was insolvent, and the fortunes of the great Minstrel were swept down forever. "As the fabric of this glorious estate had arisen as by the spell of a necromancer, so it fell. It was like one of those palaces, with its fairy gardens and lawns, scattered with diamonds instead of dews, in the Arabian Nights, which, with the destruction of the spell, passed away in a crash of thunder. A house of cards is proverbial, and this house of books fell at one shock, and struck the world with a terrible astonishment. It was found that the poet was not carefully receiving his profits and investing them; but was engaged as a partner in the printing and publishing of his works." His publisher and his printers, drained on the one hand by the vast outlay for castle-building, land-buying, and the maintenance of all comers; and, on the other, infested with the monstrous scene of acquisition which was revealed to their eyes—were moving in a slippery course, and at the shock of the great panic in 1826, went to the ground; leaving Scott debtor to the amount of £120,000, besides a mortgage of £10,000 on his estate!

Let the prudent, scandalized by such a record, scourge his memory; with ease, censure is forgiven. He grasped the mimic world, say you, and the golden ball slipped into the sea. Let us moralise, and say, ha! ha! But we cannot deal thus with a soul so magnanimous; great the shock, the surprise; woe! the dismay; and whatever of folly you attribute to him, there is no dark wrong, and it is a man beloved, who lies prostrate. The need is for a kindly and encouraging word; for he who was the object of our admiration, calls, by his very circumstances, for aid and sympathy, and has become the subject of pity. Nothing is left him now but "insubstantial fame." Nothing? Ah, nay, but there is home, there are hosts of friends, there is hope, and there is a strong heart in this bosom, and cunning in his right hand. Are these nothing? But who may image to himself the darkness of that chill January night, when the blow fell, and he knew that the product of a lifetime of labor was lost; when he, who was chief lord of a world's merriment and true master of wonder and of tears,—"the centre of his land's desire," and cynosure of many eyes,—the associate of kings and nobles, the intellectually great in all lands,—had fallen from the height of his ambition,—lay stunned amid the prostrate pillars of his temple of honor, with all he had struggled so earnestly to attain fading like a

*Scott had been in the habit of receiving from Constable & Co., very large sums not as payment only for novels already published, but for others of which he had not yet written a line; and but for these supplies it would have been impossible for him to have carried out his building schemes, or to have continued his lavish expenditure. For this purpose recourse was had to accommodation bills to an almost fabulous amount; and these bills, added to the heavy losses of the firm, which were to a great extent brought about by Scott's imprudent meddling with business matters resulting in a crash in which the fortunes of both author and publisher alike perished; and though it may seem wonder that a man like Scott, who possessed so fully all the prophetic throwaways of his countrymen, should be led into such extravagance and want of common foresight, it cannot possibly be, though any one that such folly should result in utter ruin, or that our author should find himself debtor to the amount of £120,000 besides personal liabilities to the extent of £10,000.

vision of the morning—a splendid, but a painful, because a vanishing dream. The anguish that wrung his heart found vent in the words with which he accosted Skene, his life-long acquaintance.—"My friend, give me a grasp of your hand: mine is that of a beggar!"

Who is to redeem Abbotsford, and save the honor of a poet? Who, but his own undaunted self! Supporters were not wanting with their aid, but he declined to lean upon them. He will not declare himself bankrupt, or take refuge in any legal subterfuge. "My own right hand shall pay my debts." Time and the Wizard of the north—they should at the last be triumphant. Ah me! and they would have been, if flash and blood failed not of endurance. The brightness has begun to depart, the days of leisure are no more. That bubbling well of joy is clogged as if with stone, and the clear glad waters that gushed of old, now ooze feebly up through the obstructions, and make a music whose undertone is melancholy. "In some instance the darkness and difficulty come in the early stages [happy if they come then!] and wind up in light and happiness; in others, the light comes first, and the darkness at the end. These latter are tragedies, and the romance of Scott's life was a tragedy. How sad and piteous is the winding up here to contemplate! The thunder-bolt of fate had fallen on the 'Great Magician.' The glory of his outward estate was over, but never did that of his inner soul show so brilliantly.

Gentle and genial, and kindly to all men, he had shown himself in his most prosperous days; but now the giant strength of his fortitude, and the nobility of his moral principle, came into magnificent play. He was smitten, sorely smitten, but he was not subdued. Not a hero whom he had described could match him in his contest with the rudeness of adversity. He could have paid his dividend, as is usual in such cases, and his prolific pen would have raised him a second fortune. But then his honor! no, he would pay to the uttermost farthing! And so, with a sorrowful but not murmuring or desponding heart, he went to work again on his giant's work, and in six years, with his own hand, with his single pen, paid of £16,000 a year! That is an achievement which has no parallel. With failing health, with all his brilliant hopes of establishing a great family dashed to the ground, with the dearest objects of his heart drooping and perishing before him; he went on, and won £60,000, resolved to pay all, or perish! And he did perish! His wife shattered by the shock, died; he was left with a widowed heart to labor on. A awful pang and full of presage seized his own frame; a son and a daughter failed, too, in health; his old man, Tom Purdie, died suddenly; his great publisher, and one of his printers, died too, of the fatal malady of ruined hopes. "All these old connexions, formed in the bright morning of life, and which had made his ascent so cheering and his toil so easy, seemed now to be giving way; and how dark was become that life which had exceeded all others in its joyous lustre;

"Yet, in the darkness how the invincible soul of the heroic old man went on rousing himself to fight against the most violent shocks of fortune, and of his own constitution, 'I have walked the last on the domains I have planted; at the last in the halls I have built; but death would have taken them from me if misfortune had spared them. My poor people whom I loved so well; I have just another die to turn against me in this run of ill luck; i. e. if I should be at my magic wand in the fall from this elephant, and lose my popularity with my fortune! . . . But I find my eyes moistening, and that I do not do; I will not yield without a fight for it. . . Well, exertion, exertion. O invention rouse thyself! may man be kind! may God be propitious! The worst is, I never quite know when I am right or wrong." "Sleep ill, not having been abroad these eight days; now a dead sleep in the morning, and when the waking comes, a strong feeling how well I could dispense with it for once and forever. This passes away, however, as better and more dutiful thoughts arise in my mind." Poor man! and that worst which he feared came. His publishers told him, though reluctantly, that his power had departed, and that he had better lay by his pen! To a man like Scott, who had done such wonders, and still labored on to do wonders as great, that was the last and the bitterest feeling that could remain with life.

"Is there anything in language more pathetic than the words of Sir Walter, when at Abbotsford he looked round him after his wife's death, and wrote thus in his journal!—"When I contrast what this place is now, with what it has been not long since, I think my heart will break."

Lockhart, in his life, pays a fine tribute to the integrity of Scott's character. "Where else shall we better taught how prosperity may be extended by beneficence, and adversity confronted by exertion. Where can we see the follies of the wise more strikingly rebuked, and a character more beautifully purified and exalted than in the passages through affliction to death?" "His wife died in the very year of his ruined fortunes. This was a still keener anguish. His letters and diary bear witness to the affection entertained for 'this lost Charlotte' and very mournfully he laments over the loss of his 'widowed couch.'"

This he indeed did. The old conjuring power was over as his publisher had to assure him, and he was driven to drudge at hard work, like a veritable dillinger of Great Street.

Lonely, aged, deprived of his family—all but poor Anne; an impoverished and embarrassed man, deprived of the cheer of his thoughts and counsels, who could always talk down any sense of the calamitous apprehensions which break the heart that must bear them alone.

"Sir Walter was the Job of modern times. His wealth and prosperity had been like his, and the fabric of his fortune was smitten at the four quarters at once by the tempest of calamity; but his patience and resignation rivalled even those of the ancient patriarch. In no period of his life, though he was admirable in all, did he display so soft a nobility, of nature as in that of his adversity. Let us, who have derived such boundless enjoyment from his labors, praise with a fitting honor his memory. How descriptive are the words of Prior, which in his last days he applied to himself:—

"Whatever thy countrymen have done, By law and wit, by sword and gun, In thee is faithfully rected; And all the living world that view Thy works, give thee thy praises due."

At once instructed and delighted. "We will not linger over the melancholy period of decline, nor image, longer than can be momentarily done, the victim of so much pain and sorrow, white-headed, bowed, and wearied-looking, as he walks about his grounds, or through the halls of vain splendor, which could bring him happiness no more. Nor will we more than rapidly trace his useless wanderings in search of health; his survey of the lands of fame and beauty out of eyes from which the light and lustre were departing. . . The momentary gladness, dashed with instant grief, upon his home-arrival; the flickering of hope in its socket; the brief return of the old humor, relapsing in the querulousness or sadness; the peaceful, beautiful closing scene,—we leave them all, for who can tell them better than his biographer, whose story is in every mind. That tragic reverse which bowed down himself and so many of those who had shared with him in his happiness, did not stop with his death. His daughters and one of his sons soon followed him. . . There is no heir of his name. . . As in the greatest of his nines in general, in Milton, Shakespeare, Byron the direct male line has failed in Sir Walter Scott. 'The hope of founding a family,' says Lockhart, 'died with him.'"

We have a view—a fanciful view of him—sitting on the hill-side, in the midst of the scenes he had so long loved and so prominently celebrated. It is the same figure that Rascabel painted for Archibald Constable, sitting at the base of the old tower, maybe, at Sandy Knowe; but ah! how changed! The years have dulled his sense, and darkened round him, and he has fallen on the evil days. He looks for friends and finds them not; he gazes over the landscape, but the old glory is gone. There is a haze before him; the tears are rushing to his eyes. He will look no longer, for even the dearest scenes are desolate; they cannot restore to our youth, nor bring back the days that are no more;—

"The sun upon the Weir-dale Hill, In Ettrick vale is sinking sweet; The westland wind is hush and still, The lake lies sleeping at my feet. Yet, not the landscape to my eye Bears those bright hues that once it bore; Flashes o'er the hills from Ettrick shore. With little loss along the plain I see Tweed's silver current glide, And coldly mark the hoar fane Of Melrose rise in ruin'd pride: Too quiet lake, the blim'ry air, The hills, the streams, the flowers, the trees,—Are they still such as once they were; Or is the dreary change in me?" "Alas, the warp'd and broken board, How can it bear the painter's dye! The harp of strain'd and tuneless chord, How to the minstrel's skill reply! To achieve eyes each landscape lowers, To feverish pause each gale blows chill; And Andaby's or Eden's towers Were barren as this moribund hill."

But, for us a legacy of delight; for him there is no more of sorrow. Why should we spin out this Ecclesiastes page longer? "The glory dies not, and the grief is past."

Just before Scott's departure for Italy, Wordsworth and his daughter visited him at Abbotsford. On a Monday of the autumn of 1831 the two poetic travellers appeared, and thus the elder has spoken of his decayed brother minstrel: "How sadly changed did I find him from the man I had seen so healthy, gay and hopeful a few years before. The inmates and guests we found there were Sir Walter, Major Scott, Annie Scott and Mr. and Mrs. Lockhart, Mr. Liddell, his lady and brother, Mr. Allan, the painter, and Mr. Laidlaw. In the Mr. and Mrs. Liddell rang, and Mrs. Lockhart chanted old ballads on her harp; and Mr. Allan, hanging over the back of a chair, told and acted old stories in a humorous way. With this exhibition and his daughter's singing Sir Walter was much amused, and indeed, were we all, so far as circumstances would allow. On Tuesday morning Sir Walter accompanied us to Newark castle, on the Yarrow . . .

"I wandered in wondering Fossell, he looked sorrowfully about him, murmuring morosely and unconsciously, 'The city of the dead! the city of the dead!' Hearing as he prepared slowly to travel homeward; of the death of Goethe, he exclaimed, 'Alas, for Goethe! but he at least died at home. Get on to Abbotsford!' When he reached home, too far spent to consider any thing but home, and the long rest that comes to all, his son Charles had joined him, and he made haste to reach Scotland. He reached London, a physical wreck, June, 1832, of the year in which he died."

On our return in the afternoon we had to cross the Tweed directly opposite Abbotsford. . . A rich but sad light, of rather a purple than a golden hue was spread over the Eddon Hills at that moment, and thinking it probable that it might be the last time Sir Walter would cross the stream I was not a little moved.

On Thursday morning Sir Walter and I had a serious conversation tete-a-tete when he spoke with gratitude of the happy life, which upon the whole he had led. He had written in my daughter's album before he came into the breakfast-room that morning a few stanzas addressed to her; and while putting the book into her hand, in his own study, standing by his desk he said to her in my presence,—"I should not have done anything of this kind but for your father's sake; they are probably the last verses I shall ever write. They showed how much his mind was impaired; not by the strain of thought, but by the execution. Some of the lines being imperfect, and one stanza wanting corresponding rhymes." That day at noon, Wordsworth left Abbotsford, and parted from Scott, with many hopeful and kindly expressions; to which his brother-poet replied somewhat sadly in words that Wordsworth had himself written,—"When I am there [in Italy] although 'tis fair, 'twill be another Yarrow." Ah! indeed, his heart would still be at home! This interview and parting Wordsworth afterwards embodied in the latest, and least poetical, of his yarrow poems:

The gallant youth, who may have gained Or seeks a "mansuet Marrow," Was but an infant in the lap When first I looked on Yarrow; Once more, by Newark's Castle-gate Long left without a warder, I stood, looked, listened, and with thee, Great Minstrel of the Border! Grave thoughts ruled wide on that sweet day Their dignity installing In gentle bosoms, while our leaves Were on the bough, or falling; But breezes played, and sunbeams gleamed—The forest to embolden; Reddened the firs, hued, and shot Transparence thro' the golden: For busy thoughts the stream flowed on In foamy agitation: And slept in many a crystal pool For quiet contemplation: No public and no private care The freedom mind embathes, We made a day of happy hours, Our happy days recalling.

For then, O Scott! compelled to change Green Eddon-hill and Cheviot For warm Vesuvius's brooding waves; My classic fancy, linking With native Fancy her fresh aid, Preserve thy heart from sinking! O! while thy minstrel to thee, Each rhyne with the other, May health return to mellow Age, With strength, her ventures brother; And Tibet, and each brook and hill Renowned in song and story, With unimagined beauty shine, Nor lose one ray of glory!

... The circumstance, and his emotion are commemorated by the sonnet at the head of this chapter.

But if these lines bespeak the warning of Wordsworth's lyric and imaginative power, they show the largeness and tenderness of the minstrel's magnanimous heart. He afterwards alluded to Scott in verse after the death. The tear of pity distains not the eye of genius; and no scene is more fitting, as none is more touching,—than where one great minstrel pauses [to drop his sprig of laurel upon the bier of a brother who has preceded him Into the land of the Departed— Into the Silent Land! —PASTOR FELIX.

CIRCUMSTANTIAL EVIDENCE.

An Instance in Which It Sent the Wrong Man to the Gallows.

"Speaking of circumstantial evidence," said an old attorney, "I am free to confess that I consider it hardly the thing to hang a man on, though it has been done in many cases. I can recall an instance when I was a youngster of 12 or 14, in which my father, who was a leading criminal lawyer, defended a man who was hanged on merely circumstantial evidence. The facts were as follows: Living just in the edge of our town was a man of wealth, who had a grand house, occupied only by himself and servants. There were various stories about how rich he was and what large sums of money he always kept near him, but he was never disturbed until one night shortly after midnight, there was a terrific disturbance in the old house, accompanied by pistol shots, and when the people who came to see what the matter was got in they found the owner dead with a bullet through his eye, and the butler, with his hands full of jewelry and watches, lying in the doorway of the old gentleman's room, with a bullet somewhere in his head, but he wasn't dead.

"He noticed that his master's door was partly open at the far end of the hall, and hurried toward it. As he approached it he

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False Economy.

In many forms of advertising one notices how good ideas are sometimes spoiled by parsimony. A booklet is got out in a cheap style, and is simply thrown away as soon as, or even before, it is looked at, whereas just a little more expense would have made it one hundred per cent. more attractive, and consequently, more useful. Space is taken in a newspaper whose chief recommendation is cheapness of price rather than its circulation or result-producing power. Fifty dollars is spent with comparatively little effect, where a hundred would have come back with interest, and so on through all the details of advertising.

heard his master speak to some one asking who was there, and with that there was a pistol shot, and he jumped into the room, grabbing a burglar as he did so, and at the same time getting a shot in the head from his master's pistol. Beyond that he remembered nothing more. His story was generally disbelieved, for there was no evidence of any other person in the house with evil designs, and all the plunder that he had not caught in his hands was lying on the floor about him, so that there was no apparent reason why a burglar should be there. All the doors were found locked by those who came in response to the alarm, and there was absolutely no signs of any burglarizing from the outside.

His revolver lay by his side and as far as could be seen the whole story was told right there. The butler, who had been in the house only about six months, had attempted to rob his master, had been caught in the act and shot, but had killed the old man in the fight. That was the only translation of it, and there was no other for several days, because the butler had a very serious wound and was delirious for a week. However it was not fatal, as as soon as he was himself he made a statement to the effect that he had been awakened in the night by footsteps and had taken his pistol, which had only two loads in it, out of five, and gone down into the hall below to see what the noise was.

"Another strong point was that the bullet which was found in the butler's head exactly fitted the pistol of his master, showing conclusively that it was the master and not the burglar who shot him. This was the condition of affairs when my father took charge of it, and the man was finally hanged.

"A year later a burglar was shot by a policeman in the city square, and he confessed on his deathbed that he was the murderer of our rich man. He had hidden in the house early in the evening, had collected all he could of jewelry and other portable valuables and was about getting out when he was caught by the old gentleman and the butler, and that the butler had got the bullet intended for him, as he had run into the room just as the old man fired. Dropping everything in his sudden surprise, he rushed downstairs and hid in the hallway, from where he had slipped out as the front door was opened. In the excitement he was not observed, and he got away without any trouble at all, as the nearness to the city made strangers so common that their presence excited no suspicion. I'll never be in favor of the death penalty on circumstantial evidence. Even Lynch law is less unjust," and the writer felt that the attorney was more than half right.—Washington Evening Star.

Stunning Posters—Do you Collect?

The fad for collecting posters may be only a passing whim, but it is certainly a very active craze just now and advertisers seem vying with each other to see who can get the most artistic and yet striking productions to call attention to their wares. And there is unquestionably a great deal of art displayed in many of the sheets which enliven the bill boards nowadays, making it easy to understand that a good collection would have much interest to the owner. A really good poster, to be a success either in the eyes of the advertiser or the collector, must have individuality enough to attract the attention of every passer by, the colors must be pleasingly harmonious and the poses graceful, and (the 'tis matters not to the collector) there must be some appropriateness and connection with the goods or events advertised. Among the best sheets posted up recently is the 'Fibre Chamois Girl', it is unique and attractive with its light, blending colors and graceful figures, catching the eye at once and holding it by its artistic claim. If what we hear is true about its being followed shortly by another equally fine design prepared in New York for the Fibre Chamois Co., the 'poster fad' may well rejoice at adding two such splendid sheets to his collection.

His Revelation.

"Doesn't your husband feel the heat in town dreadfully, Mrs. Diamond?" "I don't think so; when I'm away he hasn't any one to hear him grumble."—Chicago Record.

B.B.B.

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