

out over the vast and dense Caledonian forest.

Then it is not difficult to find here and there the keeps or fortalices, such as Smailholm, where, long before the Abbey was built, the Border chiefs kept watch and ward, and from which they made their forays.

Not three miles away in a little meadow circled by a loop of Tweed, we can still see at least the site of a far older sanctuary, where in 650 A.D. a pioneer missionary of the Culdees from Iona, Aidan by name, founded what in time became the forerunner of the larger and more famous Abbey of Melrose.

It was in 1138 that the monastery at Melrose was founded by a body of Cistercian monks, who dedicated their establishment to the Virgin Mary. Of it not a fragment remains. As a matter of fact the monastery proper, a vast building, has been utterly destroyed, and only here and there in odd corners do some traces of its foundations and walls remain. When we consider the history of the Abbey, this is scarcely to be wondered at. It is a marvel that it survived its disasters at all. Lying right in the pathway of armies, it suffered all that could be suffered at the hands of "oor auncient enemies of England." Twice within seventy years, in 1322 and 1385, it was completely destroyed, but its final visitation came later, when the regrettable iconoclasm of a narrow bigotry wrought havoc in many a shrine that otherwise to-day might have been a fair and lovely House of God. Nothing makes a Scotsman sadder than to see how the "wrath of man" has piled in ruin the beautiful old shrines of his native land, and then to see in England how similar structures have been kept almost intact.

What we see at Melrose now is but the torso, if one might so express it, of the old Minster or Monastery church. It was

built in the latter half of the fourteenth century, and is almost the only example in Scotland of that decorated style in which gothic architecture found its most complete fruition. In Jedburgh and Dunfermline Abbeys we have fine examples of Norman work; in Glasgow Cathedral, of the early English, but it is reserved for Melrose to be the richest and loveliest example of Scottish mediæval architecture. In ancient days, before the hand of men fell so heavily upon it, it must have been such a temple as the Psalmist thought of when he wrote,



MELROSE ABBEY : Old Mill mentioned in Scott's "Monastery."

"Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth is Mount Zion. Walk about Zion and go round about her; tell the towers thereof." In those days kings delighted to honor her. King Robert the Bruce bequeathed his heart to her. Edward III. of England spent a Christmastide there, and many a Scottish king and noble gave benefactions to and sought the benediction of the monks of Melrose. Many a day's high revel was held in these cloisters, and that the monks were merry men is attested by the old rhyme:

The monks of Melrose made guid kail  
On Fridays when they fasted,  
And neither wanted beef nor ale  
As lang as their neebours lasted.

But it is time we had a closer look at the Abbey. Now we wish to be unconventional and so instead of entering in

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