

THE LADY OF THE LAKE.

Many of the minor details of the story are based upon incidents with which Scott was familiar in Scottish legend, woven together to form parts of a new story. Throughout the poem Scott attempted to give an accurate account of the customs and manners of the Highland clans, of which very little was known even by educated people in his day. The geographical details are, of course, accurate.

Metre

The Lady of The Lake is written in what is known as *iambic tetrameter* metre. Each foot consists of two syllables, with the accent on the second syllable, and there are four feet in the line. Sometimes, for the sake of effect, a *trochaic* foot, (accent on the first syllable), is introduced, as, for instance, in the following:

Clo'se on / the hou'nds / the hu'nt/er ca'me ;
Hi'gh in / his p'ath / way hu'ng / the su'n ;

but aside from this there are few irregularities in the metre.

The introduction, or prelude, to each Canto is written in what is known as the *Spenserian stanza*, so called because the poet Spenser used it in writing *The Faerie Queene*. The Spenserian stanza consists of nine lines, with a fixed rhyme scheme, as follows *a b a b b c b c c*. The first eight lines are *pentameter*, that is, they consist of five feet ; but the ninth is *hexameter*, which consists of six feet. The iambic tetrameter measure in which the poem is written, is suitable for lively narrative ; but the Spenserian stanzas which form the introductions to the Cantos, are better suited to the expression of the poet's own reflections.

Passages Suggested for Memorization.

Canto I., ll. 1-18 ; 54-73 ; 343-61.

Canto II., ll. 341-84.

Canto III., ll. 19-40 ; 298-345.

Canto V., ll. 1-9 ; 196-227.

Canto VI., ll. 824-50.