

BONNIE SCOTLAND.

THROUGH "THE LAND O' CAKES."

The Haunts of Scott—Melrose, Abbotsford, Dryburgh Abbey—The Historic Tweed.

It is but five minutes' walk from the station. Coming down from Edinburgh by rail, I crossed the Tweed a dozen times in an hour and a half; and thought all the while how the flashing waters of that pretty stream flow under the battlements of Abbotsford just as they used to do sixty years ago, when Sir Walter Scott, surrounded by his famous friends, made his palatial home a hall of royal revelry.

Melrose town is pretty enough, so is the valley of Tweed, to repay a visit, even were neither associated with the life and death of the poet.

A tidy maid admitted me into the ruined Abbey of Melrose, through a wooden gate thrown across the south aisle. There is a charge of fourpence at the gate, and a tempting stall within, where photographs and wooden trinkets are on sale. There are people lounging about, chatting, counting their guide-books, making purchases of curios, and seeming to be as most part rather bored than otherwise. It is ever thus. When you go to a shrine with your heart in your hand, you must carry your purse in your pocket as well, or you are driven into a corner by the professional sight-seer, who makes a business of furnishing his horses with the easily bought trifles of travel.

Melrose is a floral wilderness of stone; time can not weather it. Cromwell's batteries have succeeded only in embroidering some parts of it in a new pattern. Fire and fury, and the ruthless hands of the time-slayers, have left enough of the granite face of the original to save it from unavailing comparison with the ruins and remains that are scattered through Great Britain. The Abbey is carpeted with rich deep sod; the rocks are in the clinks of the walls, and look solemnly down from the broken arches, like sentinels. It is remarkable to note the proportion which these big black blocks bear to the ruined abbey. I am not a fan ever inclined to believe that the stones of certain cities inhabit the bones of the ruins, and are so bound together as to die.

There are some parts of the wall which are so solid and fair, though they seem to him who wrote of its transcendent beauty. By the way, Scott was right.

I do not ever to have seen the grand old Abbey under such circumstances, though he had for a number of years through the ruins of it.

In the east window—a successful and appropriate restoration—Alexander Hailes, a poet and near by is the heart of it. The Bruce, which Lord Douglas drove unhesitatingly to carry to the Holy Land. Many a monk and many a warrior has gone to dust under the moss at Melrose—St. Wulstan's. The second altar, among them. On an ancient stone in the eighth chapel there is a Latin inscription, with this appendix:—"Pray for the soul of Peter the Treasurer." I think there should be special prayers for all treasurers, inasmuch as their lives are beset with temptations. Tom Peary, Scott's faithful foot-stone, is buried in the churchyard, under a stone erected by his loving master.

It is the outer ruin of the once splendid edifice that appeals to you as you take your last look at Melrose. In the middle of the twelfth century it was completed and dedicated to the Blessed Virgin by the Cistercian monks, who lavished upon it that art and devotion can achieve. It has had two centuries it was destroyed by the English in their retreat under Edward I. Since then its history has been varied, but the last chapter is the most sorrowful of all. There it stands, roofed with the sky, shined upon, rained upon, blown through and through by the winds; a sweet, solemn, pathetic shadow of itself—a memory and a regret.

Driving over the hill, the carriage halted suddenly in the road, under a cluster of trees. We knew it was the spot we were seeking; for there were a half-dozen vehicles drawn up in the shade, awaiting the return of the guests, who were at that moment somewhere in the building. Yes, it was Abbotsford. Passing down a green lane, we turned under a wall of the garden thickly covered with ivy, entered a private gate, crossed a grass-plot, and came to an ante-room, or office, where about twenty people were waiting to be shown over the premises. We were kept in that dismal room for nearly half an hour. The custodian, who had taken one party in charge and carefully looked the door after him, had much to explain; and it was with some difficulty that he persuaded the listeners to return to the office when he had made his accustomed round and talked himself out.

The library is a handsome room, sixty by fifty feet, with a ceiling of richly-

carved oak, and contains twenty thousand volumes. These books are kept behind a wire screen, and are never moved except at the annual dusting season. The portrait of his son hangs over the mantel. In the deep window is a cabinet of relics, some of the highly interesting. We were shown the last suit of clothes Sir Walter wore; a broad-skirted green coat, with big buttons, plaid trousers, heavy shoes, broad-brimmed hat, and stout walking stick. These he put off when he went to bed never to rise again. That silver vase, the gift of Lord Byron, is no longer in the library. The present proprietors of Abbotsford seem to fear the mob of tourists who besiege the gates in pleasant weather all the year round. There is much that is elegant and interesting in the drawing-room, especially the original sketches by Turner, illustrating Scott's "Provincial Antiquities."

The armory is so small that it seems like a playhouse of weapons. It resembles the entrance hall of almost any respectable private dwelling—I mean as for size,—but is very elegant in its appointments. This hall divides the drawing-room from the dining-room, but to the latter we were not admitted. In that dining-room, what feasts have not been given; what gatherings of royal souls, what bursts of wit, what convocations of noble fellowship! And in that room he died; yet we were not permitted to look in at the door for one little moment. The entrance hall is another museum of antiquities. I happened to see in the corner the crucifix of Queen Mary, and wondered how it felt there among the fragments of sculpture from crumbling abbays and the rest of the relics of less affinity.

We looked out of the broad windows into the lawn that slopes to the edge of the Tweed. The hills beyond looked hazy, and the river flowed silently by, under the spreading boughs that nearly swept its placid current. From another window, on the opposite side of the house, we saw the grave of one of Scott's pet dogs. There is a small stone with a name cut in it; but we were so hurried by our impatient custodian, and so crowded by our companions, that it was hardly possible to make it out. Having paid our shilling, it was our privilege to inscribe our names in the visitors' book, and retire by the same gate through which we entered.

Nothing of the garden or the grounds could we see over; not one half the ground-floor of the house was shown us. We were headed like sheep; there was a room full, and then we were driven through the apartments I have mentioned, and ushered out without more ado. They who live in the house of Scott no doubt find us very tiresome and persistent people; but we who love Abbotsford, and have come long pilgrimages to see it, think that of the two the residents are the more objectionable. We turned our backs on the fine old mansion with a heart full of the bitterest disappointment. O for a day such as Lewis spent there, and such as many another less worthy guest has been favored with! If the house were indeed open—untenanted by any save the ghosts of those who once frequented it in the flesh—how dear it would be to us, and how precious would be the remembrance of our pilgrimage!

Down a long road, over the hills beyond Melrose, with the vale of Lammermoor in view at one point, and delightful landscape always around you, over a swing-bridge, that makes you feel queer to fore you get across it and pay your penny toll up a lane that leads to a "penny path," deep, narrow, and densely shaded; and then off to the right, between a high wall and a row of thick-leaved trees, that make a perpetual twilight in the place,—it is thus you come upon all that is left of Dryburgh Abbey and the tomb of Scott.

Standing at the west doorway—a crumbling arch swathed in ivy,—you look up the grand path that was once the nave of the abbey church. At the far end still stands a fragment of the high altar and a foot full of rain-water. To the left of this altar is a chapel called St. Mary's Aisle, right against the north transept. This solemn and sacred ruin is a legacy of the twelfth century. In the chapel—the most beautiful that I know of in the range of abbey ruins—lie the remains of Walter Scott, his wife, his eldest son, and Lockhart, his son-in-law. Sitting in the sunshine of the soft English summer, and listening to the rocks that cry from the green summits of the tottering walls, I think of these haunts of Scott—of Melrose and Abbotsford, and all the pleasant paths that lie hereabout;—and I turn the pages of a volume that I have stumbled on, and read the record of the last days of the Wizard of the North. The Rev. Lorenzo Gilliland writes:

"At Edinburgh, on the morning of the 11th of June, 1832, Sir Walter was lifted into his carriage,—left, and knew no more that he was leaving. His own romantic town forever. He remained (till) descending the valley of the Gaha, he raised his head and began, like a man waking from a dream, to gaze about him. Suddenly he murmured: 'Gala Water, surely; Bucklehorn, Torwood!' When he saw the Eskons he became greatly excited; and when, turning on his couch, he suddenly caught sight of Abbotsford, he uttered a cry of delight and could hardly be kept in the carriage. His excitement continued unmanageable until he reached the threshold of the door. Laidlaw was waiting, and assisted in carrying him to the dining-room. Here he sat bewildered for a few minutes, when, resting his eyes on his old, kind friend, he said: 'Ah, Willie Laidlaw! How often, man, have I thought of you!'"

"By this time his dogs assembled around him; they leaped on him, and licked his hands. He now sobbed and now smiled, till exhausted nature laid him asleep in his own Abbotsford."

Referring to the close of Scott's life, the same writer adds:

"This came about half-past one in the afternoon of September 2, when, in the presence of all his children, the sun of autumn shined softly in the open window, and the Tweed uttering its silver monody, the spirit of Scott was released from its body of death."

THE GREAT NORTH-WEST.

MGR. LAFLECHE GIVES HIS VIEWS.

The Progress of the Country—The Advancement Made by the Church—Hopes for the Future.

On his return from the Pacific Coast, the Bishop of Three Rivers, commenting upon his trip, said: "The bishops cannot engage French Canadians to leave the Province of Quebec. We have here a fine heritage left us by our fathers. An extensive field for colonization still remains to us. This should first be settled. This is our first duty. But as a large number of our countrymen wish to emigrate anyway, the best we can do is to direct them towards the West. For my part I will never advise a Canadian to settle in New England. I have often expressed my mind on this subject, and I am clearly of the opinion that it would be more advantageous for our compatriots to settle in Manitoba, or on the banks of the Saskatchewan rather than in the United States where very few of them succeed. They will meet with more real material and religious advantages in the West. From a religious point of view they will have the help of the Church and of a complete ecclesiastical organization. In each important group they will find, at least, a chapel. At certain places, such as Rat Portage, Calgary and Victoria, there are some very fine churches. The church in the latter town is a very pretty one. It is built on the same plans as the Longueuil church."

PROGRESS OF THE CHURCH.

Mgr. Lafleche, when a missionary, went to the North-West thirty-five years ago. This time he met some Indians who had been converted to Christianity by him. His Lordship went to Manitoba in 1844, a year before Mgr. Tache, with three Gray Nuns. There are now twenty-one convents and 167 religious. In 1844 in the whole west there was one bishop, Mgr. Brander and three priests, Rev. Messrs. Thibault, Belmont and Darveau. There is now one archbishop, four bishops, 100 priests, of whom 90 are Oblates. There are now 150 clergies and 4000 pupils attending the schools. The bishop left Lafleche, April 25, 1844, and returned Winnipeg, June 21. From Winnipeg to the Pacific coast the journey occupied three months. This time the bishop covered the distance in 62 hours to Winnipeg, and from there to Vancouver in 72 hours. His Lordship is of the opinion that the Indian races in the North-West are dying away yearly, and that eventually the only vestiges of them to be found will be the children educated at the Industrial Schools and taught agriculture. The Indians are fast disappearing since the buffalo has gone.

AGAINST CHINESE IMMIGRATION.

Mgr. Lafleche, speaking of the Chinese immigration, said that the West "is treated with an invasion from the Empire of the Sun." "China," he said, "has a population of nearly 400,000,000 more than the whole of Europe. This population is increasing rapidly and economically. It lives with but little and possesses an aptitude for work with which the whites cannot compete. I visited at New Westminster a large store kept by Chinese. All the wares were of Chinese manufacture. I was astonished at the industry, ability and perfection revealed by these articles. Some of the objects were really admirable. It is easy therefore to foresee the results of a competition that a people so numerous, so ingenious, and who spend so little for a living, can make on the white people. All the Chinese who come to America economize and send all their economies back to their native country. There exist in China powerful companies of capitalists who lead money to the poor who come to America. These immigrants reimburse this money out of their earnings by the month or week. Mgr. Blondel told me, while speaking of a small town in the West, that the savings of the Chinese there reached \$1,000 per week, over \$50,000 per year. All of this was religiously sent to China. This race exercises a disastrous effect. It brings no industry into the country, but on the contrary, makes a ruinous competition to the white people and removes from the country a considerable amount of capital which is needed to develop the national industries. In the West the people approve of the American law of Chinese exclusion. The Canadian Government imposes a \$20 tax on each Chinaman coming into Canada. This is not sufficient and will not prevent the Chinese from settling in Canada."

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