

mere sight. As Mr. Ruskin has pointed out, his 'landscape' painting is almost all done by the lucid use of colour. Nevertheless, this bluntness of organization in relation to the less important senses, no doubt contributed something to the singleness and simplicity of the deeper and more vital of Scott's romantic impressions; at least there is good reason to suppose that delicate and complicated susceptibilities do at least diminish the chance of living a strong and concentrated life—do risk the frittering away of feeling on the mere backwaters of sensations, even if they do not directly tend toward artificial and indirect forms of character. Scott's romance is like his native scenery—bold, bare, and rugged, with a swift deep stream of strong, pure feeling running through it. There is plenty of colour in his pictures, as there is on the Scotch hills when the heather is out. And so too there is plenty of intensity in his romantic situations; but it is the intensity of simple, natural, unsophisticated, hardy, and manly characters. But as for subtleties and fine shades of feeling in his poems, or anything like the manifold harmonies of the richer arts, they are not to be found, or, if such complicated shading is to be found—and it is perhaps attempted in some faint measure in "The Bridal of Triermain," the poem in which Scott tried to pass himself off for Erskine—it is only at the expense of the higher qualities of his romantic poetry that even in this small measure it is supplied. Again, there is no rich music in his verse. It is its rapid onset, its hurrying strength, which so fixes it in the mind.

It was not till 1808, three years after the publication of "The Lay," that "Marmion," Scott's greatest poem, was published. But I may as well say what seems necessary of that and his other poems, while I am on the subject of his poetry. "Marmion"

has all the advantage over "The Lay of the Last Minstrel" that a coherent story, told with force and fullness, and concerned with the same class of subjects as "The Lay," must have over a confused and ill-managed legend, the only original purpose of which was to serve as the opportunity for a picture of Border life and strife. Scott's poems have sometimes been depreciated as mere *novelettes* in verse, and I think that some of them may be more or less liable to this criticism. For instance, "The Lady of the Lake," with the exception of two or three brilliant passages, has always seemed to be more of a versified *novelette*—without the higher and broader characteristics of Scott's prose novels—than of a poem. I suppose what one expects from a poem as distinguished from a romance—even though the poem incorporates a story—is that it should not rest for its chief interest on the mere development of the story; but rather that the narrative should be quite subordinate to that insight into the deeper side of life and manners, in expressing which poetry has so great an advantage over prose. Of "The Lay" and "Marmion" this is true; less true of "The Lady of the Lake," and still less of "Rokeby," or "The Lord of the Isles," and this is why "The Lay" and "Marmion" seem so much superior as poems to the others.

They lean less on the interest of mere incident, more on that of romantic feeling and the great social and historic features of the day. "Marmion" was composed in great part in the saddle, and the stir of a charge of cavalry seems to be at the very core of it. "For myself," said Scott, writing to a lady correspondent at a time when he was in active service as a volunteer, "I must own that to one who has, like myself, *la tête un peu exaltée*, the pomp and circumstance of war gives, for a time, a very poignant and pleas-