

SIR WALTER SCOTT AND THE DRAMA

(With some account of the Theatre in Edinburgh.)

by

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'Tis pleasant sure to see one's name in print:  
A book's a book, although there's nothing in't.

- Byron.



Edinburgh, 1933.

To

Two Who Believed in a Second Chance.

## PREFACE.

No apology, I hope, is necessary for "another book about Scott". As a contribution to that unique intimacy which Lochart and the rest have made possible, mine is not, perhaps, large or very important. I have aimed, nevertheless, at presenting a phase of his career, the extent and significance of which has been rather overlooked. That much new information about Scott himself should be brought forward is hardly to be expected, but on some related matters such as the conditions in the old Theatre-Royal of Edinburgh, and the dramatized versions of Scott's poems and novels, I have been able to add a fair amount of original material.

When one has devoted a good deal of thought and effort to a study of this sort, it becomes difficult to see things in their real perspective. Anyone who has ever attempted anything of the kind, therefore, will understand the difficulty I found of suppressing details that I myself found interesting, or which seemed to make for completeness. In fairness to the reader, of course, I have tried to relegate as much as possible to the footnotes and appendices, but there may be, I fear, more boring pages than I should wish. If this be so, I can only plead enthusiasm, and hope that merits may be found to overtop the defects.

My acknowledgments and thanks are due to the librarians and their assistants at the British Museum, especially of the Department of Manuscripts, the National Library of Scotland, the Mitchell Memorial Library of Glasgow, the University of Glasgow, the University of Harvard and the University of London. I am particularly grateful to the staff of my own university, who have been unfailingly kind and helpful, and to that of the Edinburgh Public Reference Library, which recently opened a new department of books, pamphlets and periodicals about Edinburgh and its history, without which I could scarcely have written my first chapter at all.

Professor H.J.C. Grierson, under whose eye I began my work, was obliged to steal from his great work of editing the Centenary Edition of Scott's letters the few but valuable moments that he was able to give me. I should like to acknowledge also the friendly help of Professor Allardyce Nicoll of London University, who put me on the track of material I might easily have missed, and made some extremely useful suggestions out of his own experience. My friend, Professor Charles L. Bennet of Dalhousie University, also, was kind enough to spend several hot summer hours with me over the manuscript in its earlier stages. I feel that I owe most of all, however, to the sustained help of Dr George Kitchin of Edinburgh, who has patiently waded through the entire book, without benefit of typist, and given me encouragement and criticism for which I am very grateful. To these and dozens of other kind friends, I can only say an inadequate 'thank you!'

Edinburgh University.

Gordon Dustan.

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I must take full responsibility for two errors which occur in certain parts of this study. I must ask the reader to overlook them.

For "Convent Garden", therefore, please read "Convent Garden;" and for "Lochart" and in some places "lockart", read Lockhart.

CHAPTER I.

SCOTT'S THEATRE - The Edinburgh Theatre-Royal.

One hundred years ago to the day as I write these lines, the Edinburgh Observer<sup>(1)</sup> noted the bad attendance at the Theatre-Royal and candidly advised the manager to shut up shop: last week at the Edinburgh Empire a new play by the popular author of The Ghost Train<sup>(2)</sup> drew me and eighteen others to an Upper Circle designed to hold over four hundred.

I have no intention of trying to explain why the drama is so badly patronised in Edinburgh to-day. In the age of Sir Walter Scott, however, the problem was simpler. The unpopularity of the theatre at that time was due, it seems to me, to six chief causes.

The first of these, which I suppose few Scotsmen will grant me, was <sup>interest</sup> interest in the people themselves. It is suggested by Charles Lamb<sup>(3)</sup> in his not altogether fanciful

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(1) The Observer (London) Nov. 18. 1932.

(2) Arnold Ridley's Recipe for Murder had been tried out with some success in Glasgow the previous week, and had an average run in London.

(3) Imperfect Sympathies.

theory of the literalness of the Scot. The make-believe of the stage, and the delicate sort of innuendo on which so much of its charm depends could make but little appeal to minds grappling with predestination and the problem of infant damnation.

The second reason was the fact that the theatre was long an appendage of an unpopular Court. The oppressive and dissolute conduct of the Stuarts aroused toward the stage plays which they patronised a stubborn spirit of opposition that persisted long after the cause was removed. It may well have been, too, that persons who feared and disliked playacting for other reasons were brought to hate the Stuarts still more because they encouraged it, thus setting up a sort of vicious circle fatal to the free development of dramatic art in Scotland.

A third cause, I suggest, was the character and the policy of the Scottish clergy, who had become, in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries, a dominant force in politics as well as a power among the people.<sup>(1)</sup>

"In Scotland at this period" [circa 1750] says N. R. Lawton,<sup>(2)</sup> "they were about the most gloomy and ascetic set of moralists that ever clouded the face of civilised society. Not the stage alone, but dancing, singing and every conceivable form of human enjoyment found in them declared enemies. Sabbath after Sabbath innocent pleasures were preached against till a fire of bigotry had been kindled among the ignorant masses that rendered them dangerous to their more enlightened neighbours. They would not tolerate even private gatherings for recreation and in the early part of the last [the Eighteenth] century when a lady invited

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(1) See Arnot, History of Edinburgh (1729) p.366.

(2) Time, May, 1886.

her friends to a dance she ran the risk of having her door bored through with red-hot spits, and possibly her guests assaulted when they went away." (1).

The stigma of <sup>ba</sup>vabondage and roguery attached by the law to all players but those of the two patented theatres in London <sup>(2)</sup> may be the fourth cause. The feelings of apprehension which to-day attend the visit of the circus were those of prudent townsfolk - and not without cause! - toward the bands of strolling players who roved the countryside and sometimes ventured north of the Tweed.

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- (1) Mr. Lawton's source of information has been probably Jackson's History of the Scottish Stage (1793) p.417-8. Compare Life of Mrs. Bellamy, Vol.4, p.59-60, for a story of how the Glasgow Theatre was set afire by a mob which had been incited by a preacher. Cf, again, Jackson, op.cit. p.105. The chief objections of the clergy according to Jackson (p.418) were:
- I the dangerous allurements held out to youth
  - II the offence by their licentiousness to the public at large, and
  - III that they were injurious to the poor.
- I cannot forbear to add as a contrast the exquisite passage from a cathedral service last week during the "coming-of-age" celebrations of the Liverpool Repertory Theatre, the "Playhouse":

"Let us give thanks for every manifestation of the comfort of tears, of the tonic of laughter, and of the surprise of beauty which is ours as we remember the adventure of living, celebrated in the coming-of-age this week of our own Repertory Theatre."- Observer, November 20th. 1932.

- (2) Convent Garden had received the royal authority or patent in Drury Lane was authorised in 1662.

In 1714 an Act was passed, partly for this reason, and partly at the instigation of the clergy

"for the more effectual punishment of rogues, vagabonds, sturdy beggars and vagrants" which included "all fencers, bearwards, common players of interludes, jugglers &c." and providing that if the justices before whom they were dragged thought proper, they "might be ordered to be stripped naked from the middle and openly whipped until his or her body be bloody", or "they might be sent to the House of Correction, there to be kept at hard labour, or to the next common gaol of the said county, there to remain until the next Quarter Sessions." (1).

Add to this contemptuous proscription the popular belief fostered by the clergy that actors were literal children of the Devil and were often visited by their Master, (2) and it can hardly be wondered that the drama was so long in winning a foothold in Edinburgh. (3)

Since the days of Charles the Second the licentiousness of playactors has<sup>s</sup> been traditional. The character and reputations of the performers themselves, I think, is the fifth cause. For though undoubtedly there have been many players with spotless private lives, it is futile to deny that the majority were rather free in their way of

- (1) 12th Anne (quoted by Jackson, p.300) In 1736, by 10th George II. c.28, these laws were made to apply specifically to unlicensed players. Some companies managed to maintain a precarious footing in certain towns (see infra p. 13. ) but there is nothing to disprove that, on the whole, the laws were carried out with unrelenting brutality.
- (2) Durham On the Ten Commandments - Address to the Reader and Postscript. See also Jackson p.18 f. ;
- (3) It might be added that although this cause applied also to England it had not there such a devastating effect because of the greater wealth of dramatic tradition and the leavening influence of the London theatres.

living. Mrs. Ward, and later, Mrs. Bellamy, for instance, lived openly with West Digges during his management of the Edinburgh Theatre,<sup>(1)</sup> and Mrs. Yates, according to Dr. Carlyle, often appeared on the stage "more than half-seas over".<sup>(2)</sup> Besides, until much less than a century ago theatres were more often than not the accepted haunts of gamblers, rakes and prostitutes, and there were often scenes to which few men, however much they loved the drama, cared to expose their wives and families.<sup>(3)</sup>

The sixth cause - perhaps after all the greatest - was the comparative poverty of the Scots at that time. "Scotland, when contrasted with England," says a contemporary commentator, "must be allowed to be a poor country, in which the generality of fortunes are scarcely sufficient to support the dignity their possessors are anxious to keep up. Trade, commerce and manufacture are in Edinburgh but trifling".<sup>(4)</sup> The high cost of admission to the theatres quite possibly led many to make a virtue of their necessity and stay away. After all, charges of three and four shillings for the Boxes, half-a-crown for the Pit and a shilling for the Gallery, (equal, at least, to six times that amount to-day) must have been little short of

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(1) See Love-Letters by Digges and Mrs. Ward (1833): Lee Lewes: Memoirs. Vol.III. 42 f: 47

(2) Quoted by Dibdin p.161.

(3) See infra pp 91c.

(4) Storer: A New Picture of Edinburgh. 1811.p.177.

prohibitive to many people who had in any case other reasons for not caring to attend.

Such, I think, were the main causes of the relative failure of the drama in Edinburgh. The theatre, as we shall see presently, was neither large nor well attended. The policies, actors and plays were copied or imported from England, so that in the great days of Smith, Mackenzie, Jeffrey, Scott and Wilson, it was little more than an imitation of the London houses, with most of their faults and not all of their virtues. The one important influence in return upon the drama of England was the personal interest of Sir Walter Scott and the dramas made from his Waverley novels.

§ 1.

## HISTORICAL SKETCH OF DRAMA IN EDINBURGH.

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In order to appreciate fully the mutual influences of Walter Scott and the Drama it is necessary to consider the history of the Edinburgh Theatre-Royal, of which he was a shareholder and regular supporter. I have not found it possible to include in this introductory essay a great deal of new material, but I have consulted every available source and tried to make it clear and concise.<sup>(1)</sup> The portion which aims at presenting an account of the theatre and its circumstances as Scott himself knew them however may be fairly said, I think, to be new.

The early history of the Drama in Scotland is much like that of England. Dr. Anna Mill<sup>(2)</sup> has gathered evidence of mystery and morality plays much like those of the Chester and Norwich cycles, primitive dramas on religious subjects, which were played in the church or its neighbourhood. At the time of the Reformation, however, all plays on divine subjects were prohibited and performances on Sunday forbidden.<sup>(3)</sup> Thus excluded from the churches, plays upon

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(1) For a full list of the books I have used in preparing this section the reader is referred to my bibliography. I should like to state at this point, however, my particular obligations to John Jackson's quaint go-as-you-please History of the Scottish Stage (1793); J.C.Dibdin's quite uncritical but amazingly full Annals of the Edinburgh Stage (1888); and Robb Lawton's more concise and very readable History of the Scots Stage, (1917).

(2) Mill, A.J. Medieval Plays in Scotland. See also Arnot's History of Edinburgh. I.ii.

(3) Book of the Universal Kirk. p.145.161.

profane subjects were acted in the open air. The usual place in Edinburgh was the Greenside well, a hollow at the bottom of the south-west side of the Calton hill, not far from the site afterwards chosen for the Theatre-Royal.

These plays at first were more of a round game than drama,<sup>(1)</sup> but they increased so fast and were probably some of them of such a broad and boisterous kind as to give alarm to the moralists of the day. They were accordingly suppressed by the magistrates at the instigation of the clergy.<sup>(2)</sup> Meanwhile dramatic art was developing, and about 1535 a play called The Pleasant Satyre of the Three Estates<sup>(3)</sup> had been written and acted. Similar pieces must have followed, for there was an attempt made in 1601 to open by royal authority, a house for the representation of stage plays. Against this the city clergy thundered so loudly, even threatening excommunication to those who attended such entertainments,

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(1) See Arnot. op.cit. 76-9.

(2) Mary, Parliament 6 cap.61, 1555 (This act is quoted Jackson p.414 note).

(3) By Sir David Lindsay of the Mount. An account of the play, quoted from "a letter to the Lord Privy Seal of England, dated 26th January, 1540 [from] Sir William Eure (Envoy from Henry VIII)" is given by Scott in the Essay on Drama (Prose Works, Vol.6.p.272). The play has been published in a number of editions, the most convenient of which perhaps, is that of the Early English Text Society, 8°, 1868.

that the king took offence and restrained their wrath.<sup>(1)</sup> Since they were still supported by the local civil power, however, the attempt to establish the Drama in Edinburgh was not very successful, though bands of English actors occasionally visited the city.<sup>(2)</sup> During the national troubles of the next half century, of course, the drama, as in England, was forgotten altogether.

Until after the Restoration there was, except an occasional pageant, no sign of the drama in Edinburgh. In 1663, however, was published a genuine play, a tragi-comedy called Marcanio, or The Discovery.<sup>(3)</sup> It is believed to have been written by William Clark, a member of the Scottish bar, and was, according to the title-page, acted "By a Company of Gentlemen" before the High Commissioners, and other noblemen "at the Abby of Holyrudhouse." The preface takes a vigorous slap at the clergy:-

"It was easie to cast the horoscope of this piece before it peep'd into the world, it being to appear in a Country where the cold air of men's affections nips such buds in their very infancy..... Although then it is not necessar then to apologise for Playes in general, at the publishing of any particular one, yet..... the peevish prejudice of some persons, who know nothing beyond the principles of base greazy,

- (1) Maitland's History of Scotland II.p.1204: Spottiswood's History, p.456.
- (2) The company to which Shakespeare belonged performed in Edinburgh in 1601. It is pleasant to think he was with them, so long as we admit that apart from this visit of the company and a joking allusion by Ben Jonson in a letter to Drummond of Hawthornden, there is no evidence of the fact. See Chamber's Journal, July 1835 and Dibdin p.23-5.
- (3) 4<sup>o</sup> Edinburgh, 1663.

arrogant illiterate Pedants, who, like the grasshoppers of Egypt, swarm in every corner of this Nation, and plague all the youth accordingly is such that they cannot have patience to hear of a comedy, because they never see one acted."

There is a record of certain comedians in Edinburgh about 1670 in the note-book of Sir John Foulis, Bart., of Revelstoun, quoted by Mr. Dibdin.<sup>(1)</sup> A most interesting note is that of March 9th 1672, which indicated that Macbeth was played. This, Mr. Dibdin states, is the first record of a Shakesperian play in Scotland. In that year, also, a law was passed forbidding people to dress above their station: an exception is made, however, in favour of actors "as to the cloaths they make use of upon thestage."<sup>(2)</sup>

James VII (or II) held court as Duke of York in Edinburgh from 1679 to 1685, and brought with him from England a company of actors from the two London theatres.<sup>(3)</sup> Dryden in one of his prologues, has given a rather highly coloured picture of their quality:

"Our brethren brave, from Thames to Tweed departed,  
And of our sisters, all the kinder-hearted,  
To Edinburgh gone, or coach'd, or carted.  
With bonny blue cap, there they act all night,  
For Scots half-crowns, in English - threepence height.

(1) P.27.

(2) Charles II. parl. 2. sess. 3.c.10.

(3) <sup>John</sup> Genest, VII.p.120. <sup>Some Account of The English Stage (1832)</sup>

*It might be interesting to state that the scrapbooks kept and used by Genest are available in the library of Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass.*

One nymph, to whom fat Sir John Falstaff's lean,  
 There with her single person, fills the scene.  
 Another with long use and age decayed,  
 Died here old woman, and rose there a maid.  
 Our trusty door-keeper, of former time,  
 There struts and swaggers in heroic shrine.

.....      .....      .....      .....      .....  
 Laced linen there, would be a dangerous thing  
 It might, perhaps, a new rebellion bring;  
 The Scot that wore it would be chosen king." (1)

Even in the time of James VI (I) the authority of the king had been necessary to curb the attacks of the clergy, and in the years that followed it became clear that the influence of the Stuarts was all that stood between the Drama and the fanaticism of the bulk of the Scottish people. The personal unpopularity of James VII (II) as Duke of York, and the political fever of his reign, served to increase the hatred of the stage he patronised. We can hardly wonder, therefore, that when the support and countenance of the Court was withdrawn, theatrical history in Scotland ceased. Even in the Augustan Age, as the reign of Anne is called from the wealth of English achievement in literature and the arts, Scotland remained without the Drama. During the controversy over the Union, which raged for four or five years between London and Edinburgh, there was little thought of amusement in the north, but after the passage of the act in 1707, things began to resume their normal course. The poor player began to show himself again, and in 1715

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(1) Quoted by <sup>1640</sup> Arnot, <sup>History of Edinburgh (18 )</sup> p.369; Dryden's Poems III. p.309.

theatre advertisements had begun to appear in the Edinburgh newspapers, (1) which indicate, as Mr. Lawson suggests, (2) that these performers were something better than mere booth-ranters. (3)

The first regular theatre of any sort was established by a Southron named Tony Alston (4) who in 1726 gave performances in a close on the north side of the High Street, near Smith's Land. In spite of the patronage of some of "the nobility and gentry of the district", he too met with violent opposition and did not long survive. In his optimistic opening prologue written by Allan Ramsay, he alluded to the curiously Scottish mixture of opposition and indifference:

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- (1) Courant, June 27th. 1715. Like Mr. Dibdin I must record my obligation to W.H. Logan whose rare pamphlet Fragmenta Scots-Dramaticæ (1835) has preserved many dates and curious facts no longer readily available.
- (2) Time, 1886, p.597.
- (3) The performances, according to an advertisement in the Courant December 16th. 1715 were "at the old magazine house at the back of the foot of the Canongate."
- (4) Arnot, (op.cit. p.366) seems to be responsible for the story (repeated by Jackson op.cit. p.22) that Signora Violante (whom he calls a "virago") added plays to her rope dancing performances in Carubber's Close about 1715. See Dibdin p.34.

"Experience bids me hope; though south the Tweed  
 The dastards said "he never will succeed:  
 What! such a country look for any good in  
 That does not relish plays, nor port, nor pudding!"(1)

We hear no more of Aston: the Scots continued to prefer claret, cakes, and ecclesiastical contraversy.

About this period(2) a company of itinerant actors occasionally acted in a place called Taylor's Hall (3) in the Cowgate. They seem somehow to have been successful in avoiding the wrath of the clergy and the Baillies and are often alluded to in the 1730's as "The Edinburgh Company of PLAYERS".(4) The drama had thus begun to find a foothold in the very camp of its enemies, and its supporters encouraged the players, though still proscribed by the brutal 12th of Queen Anne, and stigmatised as rogues and vagabonds, to persevere in their work. In order to protect them against the letter of the law many of the nobility and gentry, Jackson tells us, took them under their protection nominally

- (1) Ramsay's Poems II P.196. Prologue for Mr. Anthony Aston gives "pork" in the last line. While this is probably correct, the above reading seems better. Recall the lines that Scott often quoted "Drink port, the English statesman cried/ He drank the poison and his spirit died."
- (2) See Courant, October 17th. 1728.
- (3) So called from 1733.
- (4) e.g. Caledonian Mercury, June 4th. 1732.

as butlers, footmen and serving maids. (1)

At a theatrical banquet in 1827, Scott proposed a toast to Allan Ramsay as "the father of Scottish Drama". A century before, Ramsay had begun in rather an aimless way a short idyll of the Pentland Hills. This was Patie and Roger, the success of which encouraged him to write a sequel called Maggie and Jennie. The idea pleased him, and in 1725 he published these two scenes with additions under the title of The Gentle Shepherd, a Scottish pastoral that still breathes the freshness and charm of the long sweet stretches of the Pentlands. Not only was it beautiful; it was actable, and may be considered the first popular Scottish drama.(2)

Allan Ramsay had long been interested in the drama, and had written a number of prologues and epilogues for plays.(3) He was one of the supporters of Aston's theatre and of the company at Taylor's Hall. About 1735, he became in Mr. Dawson's phrase, "thoroughly stage-bitten," and giving up his book-shop, began the remodelling of a building in Carubber's Close which had lately been used by "the famous Madam Violante", a tight-rope dancer and entertainer. The

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(1) Jackson, History of the Scottish Stage, p.16.

(2) The Pleasant Satyre of the Three Estates, by Sir David Lindsay, (1534) (See supra p. 8. ) which is strictly speaking, the earliest national play, and William Clark's Marcantio (see supra. p. 9. ) published after the Revolution, were intended not for the people, but for courtiers and scholars.

(3) See Poetical Works.

first mention of the new theatre is an advertisement in the Caledonian Mercury of September 16th.1736, announcing that it was to open early in November and that season tickets costing thirty shillings were to be had of Allan Ramsay. Mr. Dibdin in chronicling this fact, does not fail to point out that Ramsay's was the first regular theatrical establishment ever erected in Scotland.<sup>(1)</sup> The pawky little book-seller lost a good deal of money on his venture, however, and retired from the profession in disgust within a year.

Some two years later, an act having been passed to suppress unlicensed playhouses <sup>(2)</sup> there was a movement by an influential body of noblemen and citizens to bring the theatre of the Scottish capital under the protection of the act for legalizing dramatic performances under letters-patent, as enjoyed by Convent Garden and Drury Lane. The ministers and the Town Council, however, opposed it so shrewdly that nothing could be done.<sup>(3)</sup> The Playhouse Bill, as it was called, was withdrawn before the second reading in the House of Commons, "the hon. gentlemen who brought it into parliament observing the same was against the sentiments of the magistracy, University <sup>(4)</sup> and principal citizens."<sup>(5)</sup>

(1) P.47.

(2) An.10. Geo.II.c.28. (Quoted in full Jackson p.300-1).

(3) Caledonian Mercury April 5.1739; April 9.1739; Scots Magazine Vol.1. p.89, 1737; 1739.

(4) This need surprise no one, as the same men were in authority in both.

(5) Caledonian Mercury, April 16, 1739. See also Journals of House of Commons, March 28th and April 10th.1739, and the Admonition and Exhortation 1751 (quoted in full, Jackson Appendix XIV).

For over five years there was again no regular drama in Edinburgh, though concerts with dramatic interludes had begun to appear by 1742.<sup>(1)</sup> At length, however, the spirited supporters of the Playhouse Bill resolved upon a daring stroke, the scheme, no less, of building a theatre and conducting it without a license in defiance of the penalty of £50 per night provided by the law.<sup>(2)</sup> An actress named Mrs. Ward, a lady with enthusiasm and a persuasive tongue, found means to procure subscriptions, and in the month of August 1746, the first stone was laid on the south side of the fashionable Canongate by Lacy Ryan, an actor in the Convent Garden Company.<sup>(3)</sup> The Cannongate Theatre held between £ 70 and £ 80, which indicates considerable size, for the admission prices were only Boxes 2s.6d. Pit 1s.6d and Gallery 1s.<sup>(4)</sup> The scheme for avoiding the law was a simple and shrewd one which had already been successful in the Taylor's Hall.<sup>(5)</sup> They simply announced

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Courant

(1) /March 12. 1742.

(2) An. 10. George II. Cap. 28.

(3) Arnot op.cit. p.368. Arnot says John Ryan but Jackson corrects the name (p.24)

(4) Ibid p.372, note.

(5) Courant, March 12th, 1742.

a concert as the amusement of the evening, to be followed by a play, which was free. One of their bills taken from the Caledonian Mercury, January 19th. 1749 is interesting:

"At the Concert Hall in the Cannongate, on Monday next, being the 23rd current, will be performed a CONCERT OF MUSICK.... After the first part of the Concert will be presented (gratis) the true and ancient History of King Lear and his Three Daughters, written by Shakespear..... To which will be added (gratis) a Tragi-Comi-Pastoral Farce, called the What d'ye call it."

During the first season the success of the new theatre was enhanced by a benefit production of Ramsay's Gentle Shepherd, the first of which there is any record, though it is pleasant to hope that the author must have seen it worthily performed in his own theatre in Carruber's Close. An unfortunate printer, one Robert Drummond, had been sentenced by the magistrates to pillory and a year's banishment from the city for printing and publishing a lampoon reflecting on the Duke of Cumberland and other zealous Whigs for their conduct during the rebellion of 1745. In consequence of Drummond's sentence, his printing house was shut up and his journeymen and apprentices thrown idle. Not relishing the idea of starvation, they decided to give in the Cannongate theatre a sort of benefit to assist his family and to keep the business running during his absence. They were familiar with The Gentle Shepherd, having just been printing a new edition, and selected it for their play. As the sentence against Drummond was thought rather severe, and as the whole had been taken up as a party affair, the scheme of a play performed by his workmen excited great interest, and <sup>the piece</sup> was repeatedly

performed before such crowded audiences that it was found necessary to erect tiers of benches on the sides of the stage itself.<sup>(1)</sup> The first performance was for the benefit of the printer and the second for the performers, but subsequent ones were for the profit of the manager, and from the great run this play had, his finances were stabilized considerably. Most important of all, I should think, the public being thus induced to patronize the theatre from the joint principles of charity and party zeal, found, many of them, a love for the drama, and were thus induced to become supporters of an establishment still lying under the ban of the law.

Under Mrs. Ward's management the theatre carried on with fair success until the year 1752. During this period it was visited occasionally by performers of merit from London, among whom was a Mr. Lee, of Drury Lane, who had been one of Garrick's company, but having quarrelled with him was now anxious to establish himself in Scotland. Most of the original claimants upon the theatrical property in the Cannongate were dead, and Lee, backed by a number of dramatic enthusiasts, some of whom were judges of the Court of Session, purchased the property for £648 and pensioned off the surviving lessees with annuities of £100 each.

Lee, however, was unable to make ends meet, and was

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(1) Arnot (op.cit.p.368) says "galleries over the stage."  
He is corrected by Jackson (p.310 note).

forced at last to convey the property to his backers who formed a committee and appointed one of their number, a merchant named Callender, as manager. They also engaged West Digges, a performer from Dublin, as their stage manager and principal actor. The ramifications of this transference of the property cannot be entered into here, but it seems to have been a pretty shady bit of business of which Lee was the victim. (1)

Under the new management, things continued to go badly.

The theatre was on the brink of bankruptcy when it was saved by the Rev. John Home's Douglas, just as Rob Roy saved it sixty years later. The tragedy of Douglas was first performed in Edinburgh on the 14th of December 1756, and met with instant success. Although its first run could not have been more than seven nights (2), even this was a record for Scotland, and it was often acted afterwards. This play, which caused such a furore of popular applause and clerical indignation - "Whaur's yer Wully Shakespeare noo?" (3)

- (1) The information about Lee is largely autobiographical. See ~~bibliography~~, Address to the Public (1767) and a Pamphlet "A Narrative of a Remarkable Breach of Trust, etc." (1772) See also p. 24. Lee died at Bath in 1781.
- (2) The whole subject is admirably treated by Mr. Dibdin, Chapter VI.
- (3) This was the exultant cry of a canny Scot in the gallery, carried away by the fire of Young Norval's speeches. (Dibdin op.cit. p.87).

and "An Argument to Prove that the Tragedy of Douglas should be Publicly Burnt at the Hands of the Common Hangman"<sup>(1)</sup> - is now completely dead. Two generations ago it was still remembered, but only as containing that pitfall for unwary reciters:-

"My name is Norval: on the Grampian Hills  
I fed my father's flock, " etc. (2)

Reading Douglas now-a-days it is scarcely possible to believe what a storm it raised among the more bigoted clergymen of the Kirk of Scotland. After they had railed against the "House of Satan" for nearly two centuries, however, it must have been a bitter pill to see the galling success of a play written by one of their own order and attended by several more. In alarm they took immediate steps. They called before them such ministers within their district as had witnessed the play and suspended them from office for various terms. One man, Mr. J.H. Burton, ~~Edinburgh~~ tells us, caustically, received a mitigated sentence of six weeks, because he pled that although indeed at the play, he had made himself as inconspicuous as possible, to avoid giving offense!<sup>(3)</sup> At the same time they wrote circular letters

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(1) A pamphlet by Dr. Alexander Carlyle of Inveresk. While it is in point of fact a piece of none too subtle irony, it actually represented the feelings of many people. See Autobiography, p.312, and infra p. concerning the Douglas pamphlets in the collection of the Edinburgh Public Library.

(2) Act II. <sup>c.f</sup> Garrick's "Wit", Jackson p.359.

(3) In a note to his edition of Carlyle's Autobiography, p.315.

to other presbyteries, giving the names of such of their members/had been present and recommending similar punishments. They also drew up an Act and Exhortation which was read in the churches and published in one or two periodicals.<sup>(1)</sup> This document sets forth the questionable complaint that the Bible forbade and the Church had even<sup>f</sup> condemned theatrical representations, and proceeds to

"warn, exhort, obtest, and plead with all within their bounds, to discourage the illegal and dangerous entertainments of the stage: and to restrain those under their influence from frequenting such seminaries of vice and folly."

Besides the Act and Exhortation, there appeared a number of independent pamphlets, some ironical, but most of them earnest, bitter, and often very silly indeed. Some of them even go to the extent of repeating the ancient balderdash about playacting Devils and earthly Hells.<sup>(2)</sup>

Against the play itself their objections were fairly specific, and do not appear to have been altogether against plays in the abstract. Douglas they attacked on account of

- (1) e.g. Scots Magazine Vol.19. p.18. It is also quoted by Jackson as Appendix XVI.
- (2) Pamphlets of this sort are generally left to waste their sweetness in the grocers' shops when tossed aside by the singular few who may have been induced to buy them. A dozen or so, sermons, addresses, and pamphlets, have been preserved in the Edinburgh Public Library. They make rather interesting reading in a certain mood. A list is given in the bibliography.

its irreligious and immoral tendency, alleging in support of their charge that there were in it certain mock prayers and an expression of horrid swearing. The passages particularly objected to were Norval's exclamation "By Him that died on the accursed tree!"(1) and Glenalvon's "No, priest! no, priest! I'll risk eternal fire!" both of which the author himself suppressed in subsequent performances and the printed editions of the play.

Home, however, did not himself suffer the discipline of the presbytery, for when he saw the turn things had taken(2) he resigned his ministry and so escaped much unpleasantness. Some of his brethren were not so fortunate. Among those who drew upon themselves the wrath of the presbytery was the famous Dr. Carlyle of Inveresk, who was charged with going to the theatre and witnessing a play. Home appeared personally before the Synod and beseeched the members to lay Dr. Carlyle's fault at his feet. Probably this helped, for the Synod merely "declared their high displeasure with Mr. Carlyle for the step he had taken in going to the theatre; and strictly enjoined him to abstain therefrom in time coming." Dr. Carlyle replied that he received the injunction with

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(1) Jackson (op.cit.p.322) has called attention to the fact that this oath is taken almost verbatim from the old English ballad Adam Bell Clym of the Clough in Reliques of Antient Poetry.

(2) See Jackson p.316.

respect<sup>(1)</sup>, but later, in his memoirs, he shows plainly that he considered it a narrow-minded intolerance that clergymen should be excluded from the drama.<sup>(2)</sup> With his trial ended the accusations which arose out of the performance of Douglas but although it continued to be acted with great success and won for the Cannongate house not only prosperity but new interest and support, there were many intelligent and well-disposed persons, such as Walter Scott, senior, who continued to look upon the theatre askance.

We may pass quickly over the history of the next decade. Callendar soon retired from active management and was succeeded by David Beatt, well known in Edinburgh for having proclaimed Charles Edward at the Cross in 1745.<sup>(3)</sup> It is clear that the actual managing was done by Digges until 1758 when Beatt found a flaw in his contract and dismissed him. Callendar left altogether in 1759 and Beatt took as his partner, first an actor named Love<sup>(4)</sup> and later, a fairly wealthy man from Newcastle, one Dowson, whose

(1) Scots Magazine, Vol. XIX, p.218.

(2) Autobiography, Chapter 8.

(3) Beatt was evidently a bankrupt, for an announcement of his creditors meeting was published in the Caledonian Mercury, Feb.22. 1743. (~~Fragmenta Scotia Dramatica~~).

(4) Jackson op.cit. p.32.

previous experience as an inn-keeper must have fitted him admirably for the post of a theatre manager! At any rate, he remained Beatt's partner for several years. Later, however, when bad business showed the need for skill as well as capital, they sent for Digges, who returned to Edinburgh as principal actor in 1759, and remained for many years. John Jackson who later became prominent in Edinburgh as manager and historian of the stage, made his debut on January 9th 1762.<sup>(1)</sup>

During Beatt's management a disturbance took place which shows the total insecurity of theatrical property at that time.<sup>(2)</sup> A dispute arose between two of the actors which resulted in the dismissal of one of them, a man called Stayley. A party of his friends attended the theatre and by their violent conduct extorted from the managers a promise that he be re-engaged. This compulsory consent was next day retracted, and a handbill<sup>(3)</sup> issued declaring the theatre closed until the management was assured of proper protection.

After remaining shut for two weeks, the managers decided all was quiet and ventured to re-open. But they were mistaken; a party had been formed who considered certain statements published by the managers and performers, to

(1) Jackson op.cit. p.32.

(2) Ibid p.59.f.: Dibdin 138-143 and notes.

(3) In the collection of the Edinburgh Public Library.

require an apology, and this being demanded and refused, a riot took place in which the scenery was destroyed, the benches torn up and broken, and the interior of the house totally demolished. The proprietors immediately brought action for damages against the ringleaders. The rioters in turn brought a counter-action against the management for allowing plays to be performed in their house, contrary to act of parliament, a move that proved successful, for since the theatre was illegal no reparation could be given for such damages. (1) The theatre was hastily and temporarily repaired and opened once again, this time in comparative peace.

As we have noted, the Edinburgh Theatre had so far been carried on under the evasion of a concert of music with the addition of a free play. Now it was again resolved to apply to the authority of parliament for a license. A bill preparing to be presented for the extension of the royalty afforded a ready opportunity. Accordingly, a clause was inserted (2), enacting "that it may be lawful for his Majesty, &c., to grant letters patent for establishing a

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(1) The rioters, says a contemporary pamphlet, were mostly students and apprentices. It further suggests that although legally the theatre did not exist, the benches and so forth were real property and their destroyers could certainly have been prosecuted with success. Considerations on the Proposed application . . . . for the Establishment of a Licensed Theatre in Edinburgh. (1767) pp.1 and 2.

(2) At the expense of the proprietors of the theatre (Arnot, op.cit. p.371). The Original Act is in the possession of the Edinburgh Public Library.

theatre or play-house in the city of Edinburgh, or suburbs thereof, which shall be entitled to all the privileges and subjected to all the regulations to which any theatre in Great Britain is entitled and subjected". By virtue of this act, a patent was obtained on the 2nd of September, 1767, valid for twenty years, in the name of Henry Davidson, solicitor at law, agent for the proprietors of the old theatre. The management was awarded and the patent assigned to David Ross, of Convent Garden, who secured the privilege by paying off the £1100 debt incurred by the management of the theatre in the Canongate. Poor Lee was also a candidate for the post and published a piteous address to his friends requesting their support.(1)

The first thing Ross did was to build a new theatre. The extension of Edinburgh by the projection of the New Town had rendered the Canongate an unfavourable spot for a prosperous theatre, and it was decided in accordance with the advancing spirit of the times to build it on the far side of the new bridge, which was then only three parts finished. The site chosen was that of an ancient ruin where, as is well known, the Edinburgh General Post Office stands to-day. In the meantime, performances were carried on in the Cannongate theatre, which seems to have been so dilapidated that a public notice was necessary stating that

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(1) Already referred to supra p. 19. A copy of it is in the Edinburgh Public Library. It was also published in the Caledonian Mercury, December 5th. 1767.

it had been inspected and found to be quite safe! (1) The first legalized performance was given there on the evening of December 9th, 1767. A prologue written by James Boswell celebrated the occasion. Among the lines were:

"This night lov'd George's free enlighten'd age  
 Bids Royal Favour shield the SCOTTISH STAGE:  
 His Royal Favour ev'ry bosom cheers;  
 The Drama now with dignity appears."(2)

The unforeseen collapse of the fourth arch of the North Bridge in November 1769 was a great blow to the new theatre. (3) It cut off at one fell swoop, the best communication between the city and the scantily populated New Town and the temple of the drama, which opened a month later, on December 9th. 1769, two years to a day from the first legalized performance in the city. Jackson suggests that the manager, moreover, depended too much on the novelty of his building decorations and scenery and neglected that essential of success - a competent, though not necessarily a brilliant company. The indifference of his troop and the difficulty of access

(1) Courant. November 15th. 1767.

(2) Quoted by Jackson p.77.

(3) The theatre stood by itself on a lonely slope with no new town near it except for a few stragglng houses, (we read, in Old and New Edinburgh). Ladies and gentlemen were obliged to come from the Old Town by way of Leith Wynd in Halkerston's Wynd "which in the slippery nights of winter, had to be thickly strewn with ashes for the bearers of sedan chairs." (p.342).

to his theatre proved Ross's undoing.<sup>(1)</sup> Disgusted, he let the theatre to the famous Samuel Foote<sup>(2)</sup> who by a daring and successful coup, not only made the house pay, but is said to have made a clear £1000 in his first season. He brought up his whole company from the Haymarket Theatre, which, possessing only a limited patent, was closed during the winter months. The importance of Foote's undertaking, an experiment not repeated for nearly ninety years, is emphasised by Mr. Dibdin, who calls it "a monument to the enterprise of the man who conceived it and carried it through to a successful issue."<sup>(3)</sup>

The cares of two strenuous seasons a year, however, was not worth £1000 to Foote. He retired, therefore, from the Edinburgh management and gave over his lease to Messrs. Digges and Bland. They were in turn succeeded by Corri, a musician who often gave concerts in Edinburgh and who used to say ruefully that if he were to set up as a baker people would stop eating bread, and by Tate Wilkinson of the York Circuit. In 1781 the management fell to John Jackson,

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- (1) "Moreover the house was so indifferently lighted, when a box was engaged by a gentleman he usually sent a pound or so of additional candles." (Ibid) See Jackson, op.cit. p.78.
- (2) Foote was the first actor of real note to perform in Edinburgh (March 20th. 1759). See his Memoirs (p.92), and those of Tate Wilkinson (II p.72 f) etc.,
- (3) P.153

who had been for fifteen years a member of the company,<sup>①</sup>  
 and to whose ill-named but interesting "History" we owe much  
 of our knowledge of the Theatre in Edinburgh.

① 1762-3; 1768-1781.

§ 2.

STRUGGLES OF THE EDINBURGH THEATRE--ROYAL.

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We have now brought our historical sketch down to the age of Walter Scott. In 1781, when Jackson became manager, Scott was a lad of ten, intelligent beyond his years, and already interested in the Drama.<sup>(1)</sup> Since the earliest reminiscence he has left us of the Theatre-Royal happens also to be the high-light of Jackson's régime, it may serve as a new starting point.

Scott remembered, he told his hearers at the famous Theatrical Fund banquet of 1827,<sup>(2)</sup> both the rising and the setting star of Sarah Siddons,<sup>(3)</sup> the great actress who, after a false start in Garrick's company, had returned in triumph to reign for nearly forty years as the empress of the English stage. In the spring of 1784, Jackson engaged her at the tremendous cost of nearly £1000 to appear in Edinburgh.<sup>(4)</sup> The sensation was tremendous and the scenes about the theatre were unbelievable.<sup>(5)</sup> Servants waited

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(1) See infra pp. 122f

(2) See infra pp. 217 m. 3.

(3) The story of Mrs. Siddons' career has been often told. I have used chiefly the biography by Thomas Campbell. See bibliography.

(4) In present currency at least £5000.

(5) Jackson, op.cit. pp. 6, 120     Dibdin p. 187-8.

all night, sleeping on bundles of hay, in order to be at the box-office when it opened. Huge crowds queued up all day for seats, and since only six hundred were available, thousands were turned away. On the first evening such crowds besieged the doors that order was impossible, and many who had stood patiently for hours found themselves eddied to the outskirts of the mob while others less deserving, but more fortunate, were whirled into the theatre.<sup>(1)</sup> So thoroughly had the excitement gripped Edinburgh that every corner of the house was crammed, and the line of carriages setting down the box-holders, Chambers relates, extended half a mile down Princes Street.<sup>(2)</sup> Nor was this all: we read in Dr. Carlyle's Autobiography the astounding fact that the General Assembly which was meeting at the time had to arrange its important business for the odd days when Mrs. Siddons was not appearing, because all the younger members, laymen and clergy alike took their places in the queues by three o'clock in the afternoon! When the great actress appeared in the character of Belvidera in Venice Preserved, however, her only welcome was a deep silence. Thomas Campbell, her biographer, has given an account of her emotions that night. "The grave attention of my Scottish countrymen," he says, "and their canny reservation of praise until they were sure

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(1) Dibdin tells about a young girl who was merely passing by, who got caught in the crowd, and eventually found herself in the pit (p.133).

(2) Chambers: The Rise and Progress of the Theatre in EDINBURGH. p.10.

she deserved it had well nigh worn out her patience. She had been used to speak to animated clay; but now she felt as if she had been speaking to stones. Successive flashes of her elocution that had always been sure to electrify the south fell in vain on these northern flints. At last, as I well remember, she told me she coiled up all her powers to the most emphatic possible utterance of one passage, having previously vowed in her heart that if this could not touch the Scotch, she would never again cross the Tweed. When it was finished, she paused and looked to the audience. The deep silence was broken only by one voice exclaiming 'That's no bad!' This ludicrous parsimony of praise convulsed the Edinburgh audience with laughter. But the laugh was followed by such thunders of applause that, amidst her stunned and nervous agitation, she was not without fear of the galleries coming down".<sup>(1)</sup>

This laugh, as Christopher North once remarked, shewed that the Scots were, after all, a civilised people.

Throughout her engagement the enthusiasm continued. Among the women, indeed, the passion for fainting and hysterics became a fashionable mania! <sup>(2)</sup> Some contemporary

(1) I. 259.

(2) Francis Watt (The Book of Edinburgh Anecdotes, p.93) has a good story of Alexander Wood, the surgeon: "When the great Mrs. Siddons was at the theatre it was a point of fashion with ladies to faint by the score. Wood's services were much in requisition, a good deal to his disgust. 'This is glorious acting,' said someone to him. 'Yes, and a d - d deal o't too', growled Sandy, as he sweated from one unconscious fair to another." c.f. Courant July 20th 1785: "Several ladies fainted and others were carried out in fits."

verses give a picture of the scene, the pit "all porter and pathos, all whisky and whining", while

"From all sides the house, hark the cry how it swells,  
While the boxes are torn with most heart-piercing yells -  
The misses all faint, it becomes them so vastly,  
And their cheeks are so red that they never look ghastly:  
Even ladies advanced to their grand climacterics  
Are often led out in a fit of hysterics;  
The screams are wide-wafted east west south and north,  
Loud echo prolongs them on both sides the Forth." (1)

All Edinburgh had a share in her reception,- Blair, Beattie, Hume, Mackenzie, Home, all attended her performances; and Campbell tells of a poor serving wench with a basket of greens on her arm who one day stopped near her in the High Street and hearing her speak, cried, "Ah well do I ken that sweet voice that made me greet sae sore the streen!"(2)

(2) Continued from previous page (32):

Dr. Chambers relates an anecdote which will be of special interest to students of Byron. His mother was overcome with hysterics at Mrs. Siddons' performance of Rowe's Isabella or The Fatal Marriage (July 30th 1785) and was assisted from her box screaming the last words she had heard from the stage. "Oh, my Biron! My Biron!" A year later she met for the first time and married Hon. John Byron. Chambers says that several people in the theatre that night never forgot her ominous words.

(1) Scots Magazine. June 1784.

(2) Campbell. (op.cit.)I. 257.

As for Scott, he was a life-long admirer of the great actress and has recalled how worth-while he thought even the discomforts of her first Edinburgh engagement. (1)

Most of the great performers of the time were engaged by Jackson. John Kemble, (2) the highly talented brother of Mrs. Siddons, and afterward the intimate friend of Scott, made several short visits; the famous and unhappy Mrs. Jordan: (3) Pope of Convent Garden, and his bride, lately Miss Younge: (4) Mrs. Kennedy, the vocalist; (5) Lee Lewes (6) with his comic "Lecture on Heads"; Miss Kemble (7) the sister of Sarah and John; and half a dozen others like Thomas King (8) Mrs. Percy and Elizabeth Farren (9) appeared to augment the permanent company, which does not seem at this time to have been any more than adequate.

(1) Chronicles of the Canongate Vol.I. Appendix XLII.

(2) See infra pp. 145f.

(3) (1762-1816) She was long the mistress of the Duke of Cumberland (William IV). As an actress she was admired by Lamb, Hunt and Hazlett.- D.N.B.

(4) (1763-1835) (1744-1797) Some details of their careers are given in the D.N.B.

(5) Or Mrs. Farrell, a contralto; pupil of Dr. Anne.

(6) (1740-1803) See his Memoirs, which we have used, and D.N.B.

(7) I am not sure whether this was Frances, Elizabeth or Anne.

(8) (1730-1805) King was something of a dramatist as well as comedian. He died of drink.

(9) Afterwards Countess of Derby. She died in 1829.

Jackson appears to have found himself in serious financial difficulties after ten years of indifferent success and the share-holders brought in Stephen Kemble, another of that famous family, as manager. Kemble was to pay a rent of £1300 and turn over to Jackson half the profits. The inns and outs of the business need not detain us for Jackson <sup>(1)</sup> accuses Kemble of shady dealing, and Lee Lewes <sup>(2)</sup> puts the whole blame on Jackson. At any rate though Jackson remained a half proprietor, Kemble took complete charge and even refused him admittance to the theatre. <sup>(3)</sup>

When this agreement expired in 1793, Kemble resolved to commence a new establishment on his own account and set about converting the Ampitheatre or the Edinburgh Equestrian Circus into a theatre. This building, on the site of the present day Theatre Royal in Leith Walk at the corner of Broughton Street, had been opened in 1790 and run as an entertainment and a riding academy by one Jones. Kemble's venture was not successful, for the law was invoked by the patent-holders and he was forced to finish the season with concerts and the like. <sup>(4)</sup>

Next season, however, he was able, by paying off some of Jackson's debts, to obtain the Royal for himself. He remained manager for six years, and though he probably did

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- (1) Jackson (p.201) says that his sole motive in writing his History was to expose Kemble.
- (2) Lewes devotes much of his third and fourth volumes of Memoirs to this topic.
- (3) Jackson, p.212.
- (4) His advertisements in the newspapers during the year are interesting.

his best, met with such implacably severe criticism that  
 he was forced to leave the theatre. <sup>(1)</sup> There seems little  
 doubt that he had false ideas of economy and tried to save  
 money by presenting an inferior company of actors. On  
 the whole Kemble's campaign was a very unsuccessful one, and  
 is memorable only by the occasional visits of his brother  
 and sister and a couple of riots in the theatre. <sup>(2)</sup>

The first of these took place during the progress of  
 a piece called The Royal Martyr, or The Life and Death of  
 Charles I., on April 7th, 1794, and was the cause of Scott's  
 first recorded connection with the theatre. To demonstrate  
 their sympathy with the French Revolution which was then at  
 its height, a party of Irish students in the pit began to  
 hiss loudly during the performance. At once someone called  
 on the orchestra for "God save the King" and when the  
 democrats refused to uncover during the anthem, they were rather  
 roughly treated. At the next representation of the piece, a  
 similar scene occurred, and on the Saturday evening following,  
 the two parties assembled in all their force, simply looking  
 for trouble. Naturally the national anthem was the only  
 signal needed for a desperate and enthusiastic battle in  
 which fists, chairs, and cudgels were freely used, and  
 bruises, blood and even broken bones were plentiful.

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(1) See infra p.p. 88

(2) <sup>See</sup> Dibdin, Chapter XIV.

Scott, then newly fledged as an advocate, distinguished himself among the Loyalist party, and broke heads with the best of them. In after life he never wearied of telling of this fight, and especially of a Highland solicitor's clerk who on hearing someone hope that there would be no blows struck, exploded "Plows, by Got!" and set about the democrats with desperate earnestness. Scott always referred to him, Lochart tells us, as "Plows-by-Got", and thirty years later was influential in getting him an important position in the Exchequer. <sup>(1)</sup> The Tory victory seems to have been complete, and although the theatre was heavily policed for some time, no further trouble occurred, although in the sequel, Scott and four of his friends were brought up before the magistrate and severely admonished. <sup>(2)</sup>

The other disturbance took place at Kemble's farewell <sup>(3)</sup> in 1800. His conduct as a manager, especially his meanness and his big unfulfilled promises, had apparently made him unpopular. The general opinion was stated by a writer calling himself Crito when he addressed the manager thus: "The lovers of the drama, disgusted with the troubled management of Jackson and the unsteady exertions of Mrs. Esten, hailed in the brother of Mrs. Siddons a new era of theatrical brilliancy. These were your prospects; these were the

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(1) Lochart I 304f

(2) Letters I. 30.

(3) July 30th.

expectations of the public when you assumed the management. It required even ingenuity to fail, and you have succeeded in doing so."<sup>(1)</sup> At any rate, when Kemble came forward to deliver his farewell, he was met with hisses, which increased when he said: "I once thought to have left Edinburgh without a single enemy behind me." Paying no attention, he continued, "It is however not wonderful that I am disappointed, for even our great Redeemer had his enemies; and after His great example" (here, Timothy Plain says, he clapped his hands on his great fat paunch) "I will be meek and submissive!" The row that followed these words was tremendous, and Manager Stephen Kemble made his last exit from the Edinburgh stage in deadly fear of being pelted according to the gentle custom of the time.<sup>(2)</sup>

The next season saw the return of John Jackson, who in conjunction with Aicken, of Liverpool, took over the management again. The close relationship of the Edinburgh and Liverpool companies provided the company with a few new faces<sup>(3)</sup> but on the whole Jackson was as severely criticised though better patronised than his predecessor. A writer called "Candidus" thus describes the re-opening of the theatre: "We crowded to the house to mark the

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(1) Crito's Letters in Edinburgh Theatrical Reports for November and December 1800(1801).

(2) Plain. (Aug. 2.1800) p.282.

(3) Crito. Nov.26.1800.

necessary alterations upon it; but what did they amount to? The outside was whitened like a pye shop, the inside loaded with unnecessary gilding. Permanent boxes were erected upon the stage. The stage was diminished by adding some few seats to the pit; the scenery most deficient, broken crystals patched with tin plates. In short, everything shewed that the manager alone was changed"<sup>(1)</sup>. Nevertheless, the actors were better, though they too did not escape the "strictures" of the critics. Such well-known performers as Sarah Smith,<sup>(2)</sup> afterwards a leading actress at Drury Lane, Miss Duncan,<sup>(3)</sup> who also met success in London, making the part of Juliana in The Honey-Moon, and Charles Young,<sup>(4)</sup> one of the leading tragedians of the period, were all members of Jackson's company in the early seasons of the century. Henry Siddons, the son of the great Sarah, and himself an actor of considerable merit, and later, his wife, Harriet Murray, destined to become the brightest ornament of the Scottish stage,<sup>(5)</sup> were also in the company. During Jackson's seven years of management, the theatre was visited by most of the stars of the London stage. John Kemble, Mrs. Siddons,

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(1) The Letters of Candidus. Introd. XXII.

(2) See infra p. 141

(3) See infra p. 63

(4) See infra p. 141

(5) She married Henry Siddons in 1801. See infra p. 63

"the monstrous favourite", T.P.Cooke, (1) Dwyer, (2) Incedon, (3)  
 the younger Bannister, (4) Trueman the singer, (5) Mrs. Elizabeth  
 Billington, (6) Joseph Munden (7) and John Fawcett, (8) the  
 comedian, and others, made at least one visit; Young and  
 Miss Smith, now grown famous, returned several times.

Edinburgh, I'm glad to say did not wholly succumb to the  
 craze for infant prodigies which so curiously disgraced the  
 London taste of the time. It is well known that there  
 thousands flocked to see these gifted children incongruously  
 playing lovers or husbands to mature actresses, who, much  
 as they must have felt the silliness of it all, were forced  
 to go through their parts with all seriousness. Only the  
 great Sarah Siddons (9) dared refuse. Several of these  
 extraordinary children visited Edinburgh, including the  
 most famous, Master Betty, "the young Roscius".

- (1) (1786-1864) Reputed the "best sailor that ever trod the stage". - D.N.B.
- (2) Dwyer finds no place in the D.N.B. His name often appears, however, in contemporary reports.
- (3) (1763-1826) An Operatic tenor of some note.
- (4) John, the son of Charles, comedian who enjoyed considerable popularity - he retired in 1815.
- (5) Trueman enjoyed a rather ephemeral popularity in romantic rôles.
- (6) (1768-1818) Called by D.N.B. one of England's greatest singers.
- (7) (1758-1832) One of the most celebrated comics of his day.
- (8) (1768-1837) He was held next to Cook the greatest Falstaffe of his day.
- (9) This is discussed well in Nicoll, History of XIV Century Drama 1800-1850. Ch.1.

His appearance in 1804 aroused a considerable controversy. The Courant critic was unimpressed, but in other quarters there were both silly praises and unfair attacks. Jackson published a pamphlet Strictures upon the Merits of Young Roscius,<sup>(1)</sup> a limited but quite sensible defense of the talented child. On the whole, however, Edinburgh gaped as at a freak-show and tacitly refused its countenance.<sup>(2)</sup>

With the end of Jackson's management in 1809, began Scott's intimate connection with the Edinburgh Theatre, a connection which Dibdin considers the most regenerative force in the history of the Scottish drama. In a broad consideration of the forty years existence of the Theatre Royal and the stage in general, he says:

"If we leave out of account occasional bright gleams of better things, its history must be considered stale, flat and unprofitable. The great influence that Garrick had exercised upon the stage - an influence felt even as far north as Edinburgh - had ceased with his death; Sheridan, though so great an author, left the social, moral and intellectual status of the profession lower than he had found it; Mrs. Siddons was no more than a great actress, but not by any means a vital part of the theatrical organisations of her day. John Kemble alone served as a backbone to the whole concern, strengthening it and giving tone to its reputation during part of the forty years under consideration. In a few years a new light was to burst upon the dramatic firmament, with a glory that was not only dazzling in its brilliancy but whose influence has permeated

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<sup>8° Glasgow</sup>

- (1) (1804) Dibdin p.248. I have not seen the pamphlet.
- (2) Courant, June 30th. 1804: Scott himself was very unimpressed. He refers several times to these extraordinary youngsters but always in a slighting way. e.g. Periodical Criticism I. p.36. (Prose Works XVII) and more particularly Ibid IV 219; c.f., however, Letters III 23.

through all the ups and downs, revolutions and counter-revolutions even to this present time [1888]. In 1809, however, Kean was but a strolling player and the drama sadly lacked intelligent and powerful backing to bring it again into that repute with the public in which position alone it could prosper in a healthy manner. Whether that support came from within or without really mattered little. In England, it came from within, in the person of Edmund Kean; in Scotland from without, and Walter Scott was the person who aroused it from lethargy and stagnation. This was not done by any particular word or deed upon his part; nor did he, least of all men, know the important change he was working in this direction." (1)

While I cannot quite agree with Mr. Dibdin that the amazing, gifted and dynamic, but regrettably amoral Kean ever raised the stage into much repute with the public, or even that he was after all so significant a figure in dramatic history, I do believe, for reasons presently to be stated, that he is quite right in giving Scott the credit he does.

In this year Scott strongly backed the candidacy of Henry Siddons for the managership, and purchased a share in the Theatre-Royal, which he retained until his death, taking an active part in the affairs of the theatre as a <sup>trustee for</sup> ~~member of~~ <sub>the Public.</sub> (2) ~~the Executive board.~~ The moment Siddons had the patent safely in his pocket, however, he turned his back on the Theatre-Royal and set about refitting Corri's Rooms <sup>(3)</sup> as a playhouse, which he called the New Theatre-Royal. Siddons' famous mother and uncle performed in this theatre and the

(1) Page 257 .

(2) ~~Lochart~~ → See infra pp. 766 f

(3) See supra pp. 35

permanent company seems to have been quite excellent. The Manager and his wife, his brother-in-law, William Murray, who later managed the theatre for nearly forty years, David Terry, an intimate of Scott's and the adapter of several Waverley novels for the stage, Berry, a low comedian, Mrs. Nicol, Mrs. W. Pierson and others undoubtedly made a (1) talented and well-rounded group.

In 1811, on the advice of Scott and other friends, Siddons returned up the hill to the theatre in Shakespere Square, though he bound himself to pay (by instalments of course) £42,000 for the property, and left himself heavily in debt over the Leith Street venture. But despite his best efforts and the excellent company he headed, Edinburgh remained only luke-warm to the drama. Siddons tried every possible expedient, - new pieces were brought out in rapid succession, and stars imported wholesale - the Kembles, Sarah, John and Charles, Braham, Bannister, Jack Johnston, Charles Mathews, Miss Smith, Miss Booth, Inledon, Emery and a score of others popular in that day, but it was no use. Theatres taken at Dundee and Perth with the idea of establishing a circuit were not good speculations, and poor Siddons, borne down by his cares, died in 1815, leaving the affairs of the theatre sadly involved and a family of six to be supported (2) by it.

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- (1) The Edinburgh Annual Register for 1809 contains an account of the dramatic activity of the year. It has been attributed to Scott by Cunningham (Lives of Eminent Englishmen. VIII. p. 378). This however I think completely disproved by Letters II. p. 525.
- (2) See Murray's statement to the public (1816).

Mrs. Siddons bravely resolved to carry on as proprietor with her brother as manager. So began the long connection of W. H. Murray with the Edinburgh Theatre Royal, which lasted for over forty years. After a rather unsuccessful apprenticeship to the art of acting Murray had developed under Siddons's management into a competent and popular comedian. He soon proved that he had other talents as well, and that the reins could not have been given into better hands. He was a man of good judgment, ready tact, and excellent address, with a distinct flair for the production of spectacular pieces, exactly fitting the tastes of the time. <sup>(1)</sup>

The first few years of his management were overshadowed by the mountain of debt left by poor Siddons and he would undoubtedly have failed but for the so-called "National Dramas", adaptations of the novels of Walter Scott. Meanwhile the theatre was sometimes well filled. The first visit of the now famous Edmund Kean in 1816 electrified - or shocked - the playgoers of Edinburgh and proved profitable to the manager; Miss O'Neill, <sup>(2)</sup> the celebrated "successor" of Mrs. Siddons, drew large houses and enthusiastic notices in the newspapers; and that splendid old lady herself made a few appearances for the benefit of her grandchildren; and John Kemble made his farewell to Scottish audiences, acting

(1) See infra p. 74f.

(2) (1791-1872) She retired from the stage when she married William Becker in 1819. See Jones.C.I. Memoirs of Miss O'Neill.

over all his famous characters with the spirit of his best years, and reciting on the last evening a speech written for him by his friend Scott. (1) "We lose in him," wrote Sir Walter, "a most excellent critic, an accomplished scholar and one who graced our forlorn drama with what little it has left of good sense and gentleman-like feeling." (2)

"The Edinburgh Theatre at this period was worth a visit," says Dr. Chambers. "Sir Walter Scott who gave the tone to the literary society for which Edinburgh is so famed, often led his friends to Shakespeare Square, to be amused with the drolleries of Will Murray. Hogg, J.G. Lochart, Professor Wilson and the Ballantynes and many other critics whose words were law to both author and actor, nightly graced the house. Sir Walter had a warm and affectionate feeling for Mr. Murray, and has often spoken of him with great kindness and regard." (3)

Yet despite this leadership of Scott and his friends the theatre had a hard struggle for existence. Edinburgh people who went to the theatre but seldom had yet a very human desire to see the very best when they did go; and when they found the offerings of Mr. Murray inferior to those of the London managers who, with a much larger public, and the reasonable expectation therefore of a longer run for their pieces, could afford to spend much more on production, they stayed away altogether, - as fine an example of the vicious circle as one could wish. Something more was needed to break that circle and save the game but sinking little theatre.

(1) See Poetical Works.

(2) March 23rd. 1817.

(3) Rise and Progress of the Theatre in Edinburgh. p.17.

Murray tried everything, new plays, visiting stars, melodrama, pantomime, light opera, even trained horses, but though he was sometimes successful for a few nights there were many when the benches were in the newspaper phrase "not fashionably or even tolerably filled,"<sup>(1)</sup> and the wolf growled menacingly at the stage-door.

In 1819, however, when according to Robb Lawson,<sup>(2)</sup> a form of arrestment had been served by a crowd of clamorous creditors, Murray announced that a play was in preparation called Rob Roy, with the original scenery, costumes and decorations of its successful London production, some months before. Meanwhile, another version of the novel, which Mr. Dibdin<sup>(3)</sup> has proved to be the first in Britain, had been produced<sup>(4)</sup> at the house in Leith Walk, but without noticeable enthusiasm.

It would have needed a proficient prophet to foresee the tremendous success of this play before the curtain rose on February 15th 1819. It mattered little that the critics,<sup>(5)</sup> though all favourable, were not equally enthusiastic, for public opinion took matters into its own hands and stamped Rob Roy one of the greatest hits of all-time. It ran in the Theatre Royal for forty-one consecutive nights, a record

(1) e.g. Courant Jan.1. 1816.

(2) <sup>op. cit.</sup> Lawson, p.143.

(3) p.337.

(4) Then called The Pantheon, under Corbett Ryder's management

(5) Courant, February 18th.1819; Scotsman, Feb.20th.1819.

for that day, and has been so often revived even down to  
 the Twentieth Century, <sup>(1)</sup> that it fully merits its title,  
 "The Managers' Sheet-anchor". Chambers says it brought  
 the treasury a surplus of £3000, <sup>(2)</sup> and that long after  
 the excitement of its first run it could be depended upon  
 to draw a £70 house. <sup>(3)</sup>

Upon the heels of this success followed the rest of the  
Waverley dramas, sometimes in London versions, but more  
 often in special ones written by Murray, or J.W.Calcraft, <sup>(4)</sup>  
 a leading actor with some flair for literary work. Although  
 none of them attained the success of Rob Roy, they were very  
 popular in the North, though it cannot be denied that  
 Murray lacked judgment in repeating them too often. The  
 impression one got from such outspoken little papers as  
The Dramatic Censor is that the manager was disposing of  
 the celebrated goose by boring it to death. <sup>(5)</sup>

(1) See infra. p. 312.

(2) Chambers. op.cit. p.18.

(3) Remark attributed to Murray, Dramatic Omnibus. Sept.22.  
 1849. c.f. The Theatre, Feb. 1. 1852: "Rob Roy still  
 draws in Edinburgh a better house than the heaviest  
 of Shakespeare's plays."

(4) Such was the nom de théâtre of J.W.Cole, who for many  
 years managed the Dublin Theatre. He later became  
 secretary to the younger Kean and wrote his biography.

(5) "We have been nauseated with 'Rob Roy' till we have  
 actually grown squeamish on the subject..... we are  
 benumbed by the mere idea of Helen M'Gregor or her  
 train of hairy-legged Celts....we think it now ought  
 to be laid on the shelf..... and we therefore in  
 right good earnest call upon the Manager to abolish  
 this national Opera." Dramatic Censor. Nov.25.1829.

The Theatre Royal had been saved again, but the manager's position was still no bed of roses for he had more to contend with than the mere apathy of the city. The building in Leith Walk which had had such a varied career was now become a serious rival. In 1817 it had again been fitted up as a theatre under the name of The Pantheon.<sup>(1)</sup> Bannister, the manager, had not been a serious rival, but it was taken over by Corbett Ryder in 1822 and called The Caledonian. Ryder produced operas, pantomimes, burlettas, and melodramas, such pieces, in short, as were not protected by the patent of the Theatre-Royal.<sup>(2)</sup> Although it was plain to most of the unbiassed playgoers of the time that the competition prevented slackness and inattention, and so was good for both theatre and public,<sup>(3)</sup> Murray naturally disagreed and went to law in defense of his patent. In 1825 he was successful

(1) This place began its career in 1788 as a Circus. It was then converted by S.Kemble as a theatre (1790). When he left, it was for a time used as a place of worship. From 1794 to 1800, it was once more a circus and an auction mart of horses. It was then fitted up by Eugene Corri as a Ball and Concert Room, and transformed again into a theatre by H. Siddons in 1810. When he returned to the other house, the place reverted to dancing and concerts, only to be fitted up once more as The Pantheon in 1817.

(2) For a discussion of the rights of the Minor Theatres see the Report of the Trial between Mrs. H. Siddons and Corbett Ryder, 1825, and Nicoll. Vol. I. pp. 4. 22. 26 etc.

(3) There was an interesting controversy on this point in the Edinburgh Dramatic Recorder, Nos. 4 and 5. February and March 1825. A gentleman named Acria takes the negative and is overborne by Agrestis, Acrior and Candidus.

in his suit, and the Caledonian, though not crushed, was obliged to tread upon his toes more circumspectly. ~~Being~~ <sup>owing</sup> to its rather checkered past, it never really gained the support of the better class of people. One writer dismisses it as "neither a Theatre nor a stew. We know little of it except that it is a cavern of horrible smells and disgusting appearances with lamentably abortive attempts at acting by the company," <sup>(1)</sup> an obviously unfair but rather revealing sort of statement. Scott makes no mention whatever of the Caledonian, which strikes me as rather curious, for at least a dozen of his dramatic grand-children - as he called the Waverley dramas <sup>(2)</sup> - and two of his own plays were produced there. I can hardly believe, shareholder and staunch supporter of the Theatre-Royal though he was, that he did not occasionally at least, visit the Minor house. <sup>(3)</sup>

The remainder of the theatre's history does not bear so directly upon our subject, and so may be briefly sketched. In 1830, the patent again expired and was taken for the full period of twenty years by Murray himself, at the advice, he said later, of Sir Walter Scott. While there is no doubt

(1) Observations..... on the British Stage, etc. (1826) p.16.

(2) Letters II. p.411.

(3) c.f. however, infra p.

that this was though a daring, the wisest plan, Scott was probably concerned in the manager's decision only as a member of the executive board. At any rate, Murray remained the manager and patentee of the Theatre-Royal until his retirement in 1852, without signal success but with considerable credit. For twenty of those years also, he operated the Adelphi, as he renamed the Caledonian, as a summer theatre, a plan which cut out the bulk of his competition but drew upon him a good deal of criticism. In 1854, the Adelphi went up in flames, <sup>as</sup> like so many old theatres did. Four years later, the site of the Theatre Royal having been purchased by Her Majesty's Government for the new General Post Office, the old house was pulled down, after ninety years of service.

And to-day, though stencilled postbags have replaced the painted canvasses, bills of A Trip to Brighton have become Air Mail to Iraq and the sonorous tones of a Kean or a Siddons are lost in the clatter of automatic post makers, I refuse to believe that Drama has yet gone from Shakespeare Square.

§ 3.

THE THEATRE AS SCOTT KNEW IT.

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When the Theatre-Royal opened in 1769, two years before Scott was born, it stood alone on a windy slope at the northern end of the ill-fated bridge. <sup>(1)</sup> Not until 1772 was the Register Office built opposite on Moultree's Hill, and not until 1774 did Shakespeare Square, the little enclosure of humble tenements and public houses, begin to hem it in eastward and behind. <sup>(2)</sup> The west side remained until the end only the rough rubble wall of the bridge.

THE HOUSE - The theatre was hardly a gem of artitecture. It was oblong in shape, and measured one hundred feet by fifty. The height was forty or fifty feet, or about that of an ordinary three-storey building. The roof was perfectly plain and pitched at an easy angle about one hundred and thorty or forty degrees. Most of the contemporary descriptions <sup>(3)</sup> agree on its plainness; but it

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- (1) See p. 27. : The bridge was not made passable until 1772, and not until 1778 were the houses finished, the shops occupied and the street open for carriages. (Edinburgh Literary Journal, Dec. 6. 1828)
- (2) One of the oyster houses was kept (1815-1826) by the father of Johnston, the famous singer. (Old and New Edinburgh, 343).
- (3) Storer's New Picture of Edinburgh. Pollock's New Guide through Edinburgh: Gower's Edinburgh in the days of our Grandfathers, etc.



seems to have been much like other provincial theatres of  
 the time, (1) especially that of Bristol. (2) There were  
 many who thought it really ugly. The skeleton-like form of  
 Hugo Arnot fairly quivers with indignation as he stands on  
 the North Bridge:

"It produces the double effect of disgusting  
 the spectator with its own deformity and obstructing  
 the view of the Register Office, perhaps the  
 handsomest building in the nation." (3)

The façade was a little better, though its bareness  
 was relieved only by three large ornamental windows and a  
 portico with a pediment supported by six Ionic columns of  
 freestone. (4) When the stone began to assume the greenish  
 tint acquired by so many old buildings, it was sometimes  
 treated with oil paint. In 1800, for instance, an indignant  
 gentleman snorts that it had been "whitened like a pye-  
 shop." (5). In 1788, the roof was decorated by three  
 large statues, Shakespeare at the peak, and Comedy and  
 Tragedy at either side. The Grecian note in the architecture,

(1) Edward Topping, Letters from Edinburgh, 8<sup>o</sup> 1776, p.101.

(2) Arnot History of Edinburgh p.372.

(3) Ibid. p.371.

(4) Not added until 1788, however. See Courant April 18.  
 1788. The three statues alluded to below were also  
 erected at this time.

(5) The Letters of Candidus. Introd. XXII.

however, was not helped by a narrow and very ugly three-storey building containing the Box Office and the Manager's quarters which was thrust right up against the eastern wall,<sup>(1)</sup> but aside from that, and the rather absurd novelty of a pediment crowning a recess, the theatre had quite an attractive and business-like appearance.

There is no one now living, of course, who remembers the Theatre-Royal of those days, but forty years ago in the Weekly Scotsman some interesting reminiscences appeared by the late Mr. John Sinclair:

"Perched on the southern fringe of the ground skirting Moultrie's Hill and almost sliding down into the deep valley below where nestled the Church and hospital of pious Mary of Gueldre and where among the muddy remains of the Nor'loch the tall rushes still yielded crops in plenty stood this barn-like home of Thespis, relieved only by its pillared front and somewhat hidden by the tall tenements and wall called Shakespere Square. On the next stood "the box" in the little windows of which John Gray displayed his weekly North British Advertiser and which had about as many visitors as the theatre itself; while a few paces off stood massive Sarah Sibbald with her little fruit stall and purple face, shadowed by her demon husband and justly meriting the grand appellation of "Apple Glory!" This part of the roadway, bounded on one side by the theatre, led steeply down by the playhouse stairs (the arches of which are still distinctly to be seen) to the old Physic Gardens. It was upon this side that the pit door opened. On the east side of the theatre was a row of lodgings, public houses and oyster shops, opposite which was the stage door, and the back of the square was also fringed with tenements of the same description.

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(1) When Jackson's family lived there, the Theatre was "haunted" - The story which has never been explained is in Old and New Edinburgh, p.347.

To the front, the box entrance was on the left and the two galleries were at the back of the pillars. Under this portico was a favourite lounge and on Sunday nights a preaching station.

It was here that during the Siddons and O'Neill manias the Highland porters and servants took up their nightly quarters to await the opening of the box office the next day and here in later times might have been seen dear old Charles Mackay sunning himself of an afternoon ere he would dive into the dismal looking hole of a stage door for the day's rehearsal. Or if you paused a while, a stout sagacious looking gentleman, all eyes and ears, sometimes clad in a Spanish cloak, but at all times grave cautious and with looks on business bent, would cross from Leith Street and disappear past the Cerberus at the door. This was the great manager himself, ever ready, ever punctual, ever exacting when duty called.

Inside the theatre, it is very questionable if with all our advancement and lavishness of cash we have in our city a prettier house than the interior of the old Royal. It was neither large nor gaudy but it was always embellished with taste and skill. Generally the colours were pale ivory and gold while from the ceiling hung a huge crystal chandelier and along the whole fronts of the tiers were ranged rows of crystal lustres of a smaller size. The act drop scenes were always of a superior type such as we seldom or never now see."(1)

In truth the interior seems to have belied the plainness of the outside, for all the descriptions agree that it was brightly and tastefully decorated. Although there seems to be no one who took the trouble to describe the interior, we can piece together a fairly accurate picture. The whole of the ground floor was the Pit. Above it rose two rows of  
(2)  
Boxes, corresponding to the Dress and Upper Circles of

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(1) The Old Theatre Royal: Glories of Bygone Days, by John Sinclair - Weekly Scotsman, Sept. 16. 1893.

(2) Professor Nicoll (op.cit. p.12.note) says his first encounter with the term "Dress Circle" is in Oxberry's Theatrical Inquisition for 1828, p.36. The term was in general use however, as early as 1822. See e.g. London Magazine, Feb. 1822. p.180 and Edinburgh Dramatic Review Nov. 16. 1822. In the Edinburgh Dramatic Review, Nov. 16. 1822. The quotation which I have used in another connection, may be seen infra p. 60 - ~~note~~ note #3

modern theatres, but not so capacious. At each side was a third tier of boxes, called the Slips. On the same level and in the centre was the Gallery, extending upward and backward to the very roof.

The theatre-goer of to-day would hardly care for the seating arrangements. The comfort of the stall with its arm-rests and pull-down seat was quite unknown to the Spartans of those times, for even the Boxes were equipped only with hard wooden benches without upholstery or backs. One of the few pictures we have of Scott in the theatre describes him as "leaning on his staff on the back seat of one of the boxes", <sup>(1)</sup> not an easy position to keep for <sup>(2)</sup> three hours or more. At the beginning of the winter season of 1825, however, the management showed signs of consideration for their patrons' comfort.

The number of boxes in the Lower Circle having been reduced [says an advertisement in the Scotsman] the disadvantage and confusion arising from the same door serving as the entrance to two or more boxes have been avoided; while the removal of one row in each box has allowed an increase in width to those remaining to which also backs have been added.... In the Pit, according to the plan adopted in the London Theatres, backs have been added to each alternate row, while resting places have been contrived in front of those seats unprovided with backs. (3)

Neither do there seem to have been any heating arrangements whatever before 1816, when the following

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- (1) Charles Mackay's farewell address. April 25th. 1848. *Convent April 27.*
- (2) See infra p. 77.
- (3) Scotsman, October 23rd. 1825. *p* This had been done at the Drury Lane a year before. (Blackwood's XIV.p.470).

*the italics are my own.*

announcement appeared:-

"The Theatre is now warmed and ventilated by the New Stoves erected under the direction of Mr. Robertson of the High Street". (1)

A day or two later the Courant critic says:-

"Every night more fully convinces of the great advantage of the newly erected stoves. They keep the Theatre sufficiently warm without being oppressive." (2)

The methods of lighting, too, were very different.

In the first place, the lights were not dimmed during the performance, but left burning brightly. In the early days of the theatre, the lighting was done with candles. (3)

(4)  
Topping says they were of wax in 1775, but in the frugal days of Bland, Corri, Wilkinson and Jackson, they were evidently smelly tallow ones, for when Kemble opened on January 19th 1792, the following note appeared at the foot of his play-bills:

N.B. The THEATRE will be lighted up with WAX. (5)

This was a bit more comfortable for the patrons, but the chief disadvantage of candles is that they often dripped and ruined the clothes of those beneath. (6)

(1) Courant, December 12th 1816. That the Caledonian was still absolutely unheated in 1823 is clear from a letter in the Dramatic Review, February 6th. 1823.

(2) Courant, December 14th. 1816.

(3) Commonsense suggests that lamps were also used, but curiously enough I have failed to find a single mention of them.

(4) Topping op.cit. Letter XIII.

(5) Caledonian Mercury. Wax had been used sometimes on Benefit nights according to Dibdin, p.215.

(6) Letters of Candidus. p.16. C.f. an advertisement Courant Mar.18.1772 "Great care [has been] taken to fix the bottoms of the sponces so that no damage can be done to the ladies cloaths."

Not until 1818 was the theatre equipped with gas lighting<sup>(1)</sup>, a tremendous step forward, though not so much in the auditorium as upon the stage. The chief advantage, of course, was the facility with which it could be used to produce effects till then undreamed of. Gas lighting was probably one of the greatest factors in the evolution of the modern "picture-frame" stage. No longer were the actors obliged to "come forward" beyond the stage boxes in order to be properly seen.<sup>(2)</sup>

The stage in the Theatre-Royal was not a large one - one critic complains that there is not enough room for horses<sup>(3)</sup> - but it was quite sufficient for legitimate drama. It is interesting to trace its evolution from the "apron" style to the modern picture-frame. Clearly it extended beyond the proscenium arch up to 1800, for there is frequent mention of "coming forward" and of "stage boxes", neither of which terms should puzzle the reader. The apron began to diminish in 1800, when we read in a very crossly

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(1) Scotsman, December 5th, 1818. (Two articles).

(2) A good discussion of the significance of gas lighting will be found in Prof. E.B. Watson's Sheridan to Robertson (1926) p 2 f. Gas was first introduced in the Olympic Theatre, London, in 1815. See Nicoll op.cit. p.34-35.

(3) Scotsman, February 25th.1824.

written paragraph about the alterations in the theatre.

"The stage was diminished by adding some few seats to  
the pit."<sup>(1)</sup> "Those old offenders twain" the proscenium  
doors,

That served for Palace, Cottage, Street or Hall -  
Used for each place and out of place in all; (2)

were removed in 1800, twenty-two years before Drury Lane  
managed to do away with them. Since, however, the  
critics, and very likely the manager himself, failed to  
realise the significance of the change, and the space  
was used for two stage boxes, we can hardly claim that  
Edinburgh led the way.<sup>(3)</sup> Nevertheless, it is worthy of  
note, for though one critic thought the doors "one of the  
greatest helps to stage effect,"<sup>(4)</sup> he says boldly that  
"The Stage Boxes are quite unnecessary if an ancient but  
absurd practice could be exploded."<sup>(5)</sup> When the stage  
boxes were finally done away with I have been unable to

(1) The Letters of Candidus. Introd. XXII.

(2) The address spoken by Terry at the opening of the new  
Drury Lane 1822. The Weekly Journal reports the  
speech but does not comment on the change (Oct.23.1822).

(3) Vesua to the Caledonian Mercury November 28th.1800;  
Crito to the Wednesday Packet, November 26th.1800

(4) The Letters of Candidus p.16.

(5) The Letters of Candidus. Introd.XIX.

discover, but since there is a reference to them as late  
 as 1825,<sup>(1)</sup> we may conclude that they probably remained  
 during Scott's life-time.

Every few years the house was painted and re-decorated,  
 usually in an increasing scale of magnificence. In 1775  
 "the ornaments are few and in an unaffected plain style,  
 which on the whole has a very elegant appearance."<sup>(2)</sup>

In 1793, the boxes were lined in "deep crimson and fringed  
 in front with gold lace. Over the stage is [sic] the royal  
 arms, and a motto "To hold, as 'twere the [sic] mirror up  
 to nature."<sup>(3)</sup>

In 1800 it was "loaded with unnecessary  
 gilding" while "broken crystals were patched with tin  
 plates".<sup>(4)</sup>

In 1811, it is remodelled and enlarged in  
 stage, pit and boxes for Siddons' re-opening. The Courant  
 remarks that a bit more light is needed, and suggests a

(1) Scotsman. November 16th. 1825.

(2) Topping's op.cit. Letter XIII.

(3) A new drop scene exhibited at the same time represented  
 the new college with a south-east view of the castle, and  
 in the centre the Genius of Scotland welcoming the Muse  
 with open arms. Diddin.p.219. Courant, January 14th.  
 1793. I fancy the <sup>above</sup> quotation, however, is nothing more than the care-  
 lessness of the journalist.

(4) Letters of Candidus. Introd. XXII.

lustre in the centre of each of the upper row of boxes "and two more to fill up the unaccountable blank at the back of the pit." (1) In 1815 it was re-decorated in pink and gold by an Edinburgh youth named Pyett. (2) In 1822, we read that:-

"The principal colours in which the Theatre has been painted, are pink and white. The front of the boxes have [sic] been altered much for the better. Instead of the paltry ornaments before used, the fronts are now ornamented with diamonds, formed of gold beading, in the centre of which are very neat gold thistles, roses and shamrocks, have been placed on a white ground..... Underneath each tier of boxes, a narrow crimson curtain with a gold edge has been substituted for the former one which was blue. The Scots Arms over the dress-circle (3) have been re-gilt on a white ground, in place of crimson, as also the ornaments over the stage doors. The blue curtain has been replaced by one of a crimson colour, which though it has a very splendid appearance, is somewhat too glaring, and, we are fearful, take away, in a great degree from the effect which ought to be produced by the display of any splendid scenery. The national arms over the proscenium are now placed on a ground similar to the curtain, and this alteration gives the whole proscenium a very warm appearance. The gas chandelier in the centre has undergone more material alterations than would strike the eye of the cursory observer. A great number of drops have been added which instead of falling straight down to the centre cross each other alternately. This together with the painting, gives the roof a unique appearance. The new drop curtain is an architectural view of Edinburgh from the westward and is painted with considerable taste." (4)

(1) Courant. November 30th. 1811.

(2) Ibid. November 20th and December 7th. 1815.

③ See *supra* p. 54. note #2.

(4) Dramatic Review. November 16th. 1822. c.f. Weekly Journal Nov. 19th.

(4) Scotsman, November 16th. 1825. Edinburgh Dramatic Journal Nov. 5th. 1828 and Scotsman, October 29th, 1828 give a fine picture of the theatre's magnificence three years later.

answer  
for note ①  
on page  
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Four years later the Scotsman so reported the new decorations:-

"We like the general effect, the prevailing tone - green - being more pleasing and grateful to the eye than that which formerly predominated. There is now less glare and on the whole more taste and comfort, although we do think the style in which the stage box pilastres is painted, heavy; and that the ceiling, though in harmony with the rest of the house is not so richly yet chastely tasteful as it was during a few of the past seasons. At present - although the feeling may wear off - it suggests to us the idea that something better than what we see has been imperfectly washed over." <sup>①</sup>

THE COMPANY:- It must be remembered that the Edinburgh Theatre-Royal, was, after all, a provincial house, and that at the time we are discussing, even the London theatres were in the thrall of the so-called "Star System". It would be impossible here to enter into any discussion of the general evil effects of this upon the drama, but in order to understand conditions in our theatre, a word or two is necessary.

The most casual glance at any of the theatrical reports of the time convinces that it was definitely the age of the actor. Dramatic criticism was largely a discussion of how the players performed their parts. Great actors such as Kemble, Keen, Matthews, and a dozen others monopolized the interest and travelled about taking the principal parts, supported by the more or less permanent stock company at each theatre. The danger to dramatic art is evident. When one man so engrosses all the attention the

① (Printed by error on previous page.) See p.60 note 4.

subordinate parts are likely to be "walked through" in a half-hearted and slipshod way; moreover, the production itself has no spur to do more than merely get by, and was often therefore very slovenly. The stars also, by their demands for exorbitant salaries, raised the whole salary scale out of all fair proportion to the receipts of the theatre, so that as Professor Nicoll observes, little could remain for the poor author. (1)

"Theatrical managers," says the Edinburgh Literary Gazette, "have found it impossible to reject the terms for which these persons stipulate; for should they decide otherwise, they have nothing to expect but total destruction. Indeed the delusion into which the public has been carried by the mere magic of a name is most astonishing. The question has ceased to be asked 'What is to be performed?' It is now 'Who is to perform?' This is a predicament which we very sincerely lament." (2)

As we have seen, all of the leading actors of the day played in the Edinburgh Theatre-Royal, and their visits naturally were looked upon as the most important theatrical events of the year. They were supported by a permanent stock company of five or six principals and about a dozen minor actors, which performed throughout the season. The general result was empty benches one week and suffocating jams another, which, considering the exorbitant fees

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(1) op.cit. p.68.

(2) July 4th. 1829. See also Jackson, p.124, and Scott Letters II. p.88.

(1)  
 demanded by the "exotics" was bad business for the harassed manager.

In spite of the constant charges that inferior talent was the managerial policy, the permanent company seem to have been fairly adequate. After all, the same charge was levelled against nearly every theatre of the time, and often with better cause. Many eminent actors, such as Stephen Kemble<sup>(2)</sup>, Charles Young, Daniel Terry, Sarah Smith and Miss Duncan served their apprenticeships in Edinburgh, and Henry Siddons, his wife (formerly Harriet Murray), William Murray and Charles Mackay, were all actors who could have been very successful in London. It can hardly be denied, however, that there were now and then some pretty feeble specimens, but on the whole the players were probably quite as capable as could be expected.

As the result of a quarrel between the manager and a little daily sheet called the Edinburgh Dramatic Review, an unofficial list of the salaries paid in the theatre was published in 1822.<sup>(3)</sup> It shows rather a lamentable state of affairs. The entire salary list was barely £45 per week, and of this no actor was receiving more than four guineas.

(1) So Jackson calls them in his History (e.g.p.121)  
 C.f. Wilkinson's Memoirs III. 45.

(2) See supra p. 37. Kemble did rather well in London, however, from 1800 to 1816. He died in 1822.

(3) November 30th. 1822.

The average wage was about £2, and several of the minor  
 players got as little as fifteen shillings. (1) These amounts,  
 as the Review pointed out, were payable only during the  
 actual season, an average of thirty-five weeks in the year,  
 and their benefits, (2) after expenses had been paid seldom  
 netted more than £15 to £50 additional. When this is  
 compared with the demands of the London stars for such  
 fees as "half the house and a free benefit" (3) (which would  
 amount to about £2000 for a fortnight's engagement!) it is  
 clear that the Star System was not at all a good thing for  
 the Edinburgh stage.

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- (1) The salaries in 1775 were even worse. Topping (op.cit.  
 Letter XIV) says that only one or two exceeded a  
 guinea a week "which in Edinburgh, where the necessities  
 of life are almost as dear as in London, is scarcely a  
 subsistence." In 1797, Timothy Plain says (p.101)  
 the highest salaries were those of Woods and Locke, £2 each
- (2) At the end of the season, each actor had the privilege  
 of renting the theatre for a night at a fixed rate (in  
 Edinburgh £30 to £45) and keeping as profit anything  
 over expenses. It was a speculative business and  
 benefits often failed completely. In one of his Farewell  
Addresses (p.54) Murray relates an amusing story of a  
 French actor whose benefit always failed. In vain he pled  
 with the manager, but no! he was entitled to a benefit  
 and a benefit he must have. One year the Frenchman was  
 asked how his benefit came off. He replied delightedly:  
 "Oh magnifique! superb, beautiful, une grande benefice  
 dis year! Only lose five pounds!" Often two or more  
 actors shared a benefit. Another disadvantage of the  
 system was the syncophancy involved in an actor's being  
 responsible himself for the sale of tickets. Benefits,  
 however, were not done away with until late in the century.
- (3) Such were the demands of John Kemble and Mrs. Siddons.  
 (See Dibdin p.260). Cf Jackson op.cit. 128-134.

It can scarcely be wondered then, that sometimes the subordinate parts were very badly played. Indeed in the Courant (1816) we read that in Romeo and Juliet the subordinate parts were "well-sustained - a thing that has not been given proper attention in Edinburgh heretofore." (1) And less than a week later ~~he~~<sup>it</sup> finds occasion to reprove several of the actors for "inattention and insufficient study." (2) Minor players were the bane of John Kemble's life, (3) and he had an annoying habit of coaching them while actually on the stage. The Courant refers to this during his visit in 1813:-

"As we chance to know how singularly patient Kemble is in his rehearsals, this awkwardness was the more unexpected and annoying; still we should take the liberty to hint that it would have been less painfully palpable to the general eye had his own notice of it been less obvious." (4)

- (1) January 11th. 1816.
- (2) January 15th. 1816.
- (3) His sister had the same trouble. During her second visit to Edinburgh, for instance, her performance of Isabella was nearly ruined by awkward blunders of the supporting players. Courant, July 20th. 1785. C.f. also Scott's Letters II.p.254 "when a ludicrous effect may easily be produced by the stupidity of a low actor, or by his willful buffoonery it is dangerous to lead him into temptation. The dying scream of Polonius and the crowing of the cock in Hamlet never fail to be greeted by the laughter of the audience."
- (4) Courant, February 4th. 1813. c.f. Scott, Periodical Criticism IV.212.

Again in 1816, during his <sup>at Edinburgh</sup> engagement, the actor playing Polonius to his Hamlet missed his cue behind the arras and kept Kemble fuming for half a minute before he cried "Help! Help!" thus paralysing the scene which followed. The electrical "Is it the King?" must have fallen as flat upon the ears as if Polonius himself had spoken it! (1)

As late as 1829 a critic says of Barton's Joffier in Venice Preserved:

"We would also advise him against a certain ungainly custom which he exhibited last night, - we mean that of falling a-picking his nose when he ought to be deeply wrapped in the fate of his Friend on the scaffold." (2)

EQUIPMENT - Much the same may be said of the scenery and stage mechanics in general. At times during the early days they were very bad indeed. In 1775, Topping tells his friend that "the deceptio visua, if such it could be called, was so miserable that the poor players themselves seemed ashamed of it." (3) And during the next fifteen or twenty years (4) poverty prevented much improvement.

After 1800, however, and especially during Murray's management, they must have been very fair. Nevertheless we

(1) Courant, March 21st. 1816.

(2) Dramatic Censor, December 5th 1829, see also Playing about II (quoted Dibdin p.314).

(3) Op.cit. Letter XIII.

(4) See Dibden, Chapter X - XIV. In 1793 a new drop scene was acquired representing the College with the east view of the Castle and on a rock in the centre the Genius of Scotland receiving the Muse with open arms. Courant, January 14 1792.3

find evidence of some unhappy and sometimes ludicrous lapses. The Letters of Candidus abound with them: for instance a new scene representing a fine building and a body of water must be taken for Bond Street; <sup>(1)</sup> another city street seems to be in the midst of a forest; <sup>(2)</sup> Bellarius in Cymbeline commands his companions to stoop as they enter a cave that "would have admitted a giant whose height did not exceed twenty feet." <sup>(3)</sup> Such early examples are not very serious, but it is surprising to find, in 1824, such a criticism as this:-

The side scenery was shamefully managed. The Forum - the market-place of Rome - was exhibited amidst a grove of trees; but as if this was not enough, every public place in that proud capital - nay, even apartments in dwelling-houses, were surrounded with foliage. In the scene preceding the last the scene was so deficient in size, that the audience actually saw, through the spaces left open at the side, the rostrum brought in, and the mob congregating; and, in particular, a very dirty looking fellow deliberately scratching his leg. Our recollection of Roman antiquities requires to be refreshed, but, if we mistake not, the Consuls were invested with a purple toga, and sat upon curile chairs. Last night, however, they were the candida casa, and sat upon repentance stools. (4)

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(1) P.69.

(2) P.50.

(3) P.64.

(4) Edinburgh Dramatic Review, January 30th 1824. See also March 5th. 1824.

Murray, according to the taste of the time for pageantry and showy scenery, spent a good deal of money on stage settings, and often achieved spectacular and beautiful effects. The drop scenes were painted by such such thorough artists as young Pyett, (1) the Grieves, (2) Alexander Nasmyth, (3) Hugh Williams, (4) and David Roberts, (5) and the critics are often very complimentary. (6). A number of "letters to the editor" in the middle 'twenties, however, indicates that the manager was resting a little on his ears. One correspondent of the Dramatic Review in 1823 observed caustically: "In a lady's chamber in Seville we have a snug sitting room with a large blazing fire in it; for a scene in any tropical region we have an English cottage with hollyhocks in front of it and for a street in any city of the known world, we invariably have Temple Bar or Westminster Abbey," (7) and Junius comments that:

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- (1) He first comes to public notice in the Courant Nov.20 1815, and later became invaluable to the manager.
  - (2) William and Thomas. The D.N.B. tells something of each.
  - (3) Father-in-law of Dan Terry - a well known Edinburgh landscape painter and scientist.
  - (4) "Grecian" Williams was a noted Edinburgh traeller and water-colourist. See Letters II. p.411.
  - (5) A scene painter who became a Royal Academician - See D.N.B.
  - (6) e.g. Scotsman Feb.26th.1820; Dec.22nd.1821. Courant Jan.17th.1811. Nov.20th.1815.
  - (7) Dramatic Review November 1823.

"There is one shabby blue chamber which has an excessively dirty appearance, and there are some trees which should be immediately converted into firewood; for although age in general commands respect, an old scene is an exception." (1)

COSTUME - Stage costume was in Edinburgh as in all the other theatres still rather primitive. We who go to theatres reformed and made almost mon<sup>st</sup>erously realistic by such men as Kemble, Charles Kean and Tom Robertson (2) may perhaps sympathise with Burbage acting Brutus in hose and doublet, but the thought of Garrick representing Macbeth (3) in "a scarlet and gold-laced general's uniform, or of Edmund Kean wearing a huge Grecian casque and plume with gloves and a corslet in Richard III (4) is almost too much for us. There is an engraving of Ross as the great Essex (5) (published in Mr. Dibdin's book) showing him dressed in what seems to be the hat and lace collar of Charles the First's time, and the breeches and stockings of George the Third's. Such dress seems to have aroused no comment, but

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(1) Ibid. Dec. 4th. 1827. C.f. Ibid Oct. 22nd. 1825.

(2) Some attempt to estimate Robertson's influence has been made by the present writer. Old Tom Robertson - The Genius of the Commonplace (1931) unpublished thesis in the library of the University of Toronto. C.f. Page 149 infra.

(3) Planché Recollections I.p.58.

(4) Theatrical Repertory. Oct. 24th. 1801. Quoted Nicoll OP.CIT. p.40.

(5) P.210. It is dated 1776.

in 1784 when the tragedian Henderson appeared in Macbeth in some sort of Spanish costume and a tartan sash(!) the Courant awoke to the absurdity:

It is surprising that there should not be a proper Scots dress on the stage in the metropolis of Scotland, and that a Spanish dress, or indeed any other, should serve as a Highland dress by the addition of a piece of tartan drawn awkwardly across the shoulder as if it was the insignia of an order of knighthood. The characters in Macbeth indeed exhibited the dresses of all nations, and one might have thought that a dealer in Monmouth Street had been airing his stock-in-trade to prevent its being eaten by moths. (1)

That excellent critic Candidus comments sarcastically on the appearance of Young who seems to have worn as the costume of a fashionable Newmarket jockey the dress of a postilion. (2) In another letter he says "Let the dresses be decently appropriate, that is enough;" (3) and more significantly, of the clothes of the actors in Lock and Key "Can you inform me if this kind of dress was the fashion

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(1) Courant, Aug. 9th.1784. It should be mentioned that as early as Dec. 26th.1757 the playbills of Macbeth had announced "The characters are to be new dressed after the manner of the ancient Scots". (Fragmenta Scots Dramatics p.22). Several months later The Gentle Shepherd gave the actors another chance to use "the Scots dresses" (April 29th.1758, Ibid). When Johnston acted Young Norval in Douglas (July 23.1794) he abandoned the *trews* and jacket of his predecessors and appeared in full Highland costume, he was cheered to the echo by the delighted audience.

(2) Letters of Candidus p.76.

(3) Ibid. p.15.

(1)  
when the play was written?"

It seems clear, therefore, that although the possibilities of correct costume had not yet wholly dawned upon the managers or the actors themselves, Edinburgh was at least as aware as London of the need for reform. The credit for the change has been variously given to John Kemble, J.R. Planche, and Sir Walter Scott.<sup>(2)</sup> It was not accomplished suddenly, however, and there were sad lapses both in London<sup>(3)</sup> and Edinburgh. As late as 1815, for instance, Donaldson says he saw Macbeth acted in Scotland dressed in a red coat and blue pants with a sash, Hessian boots and a cocked hat!<sup>(4)</sup> We shall have more to say on the subject in another place;<sup>(5)</sup> meanwhile a paragraph of Benson Hill's sarcastic memoir may indicate the state of affairs in the Theatre-Royal as late as 1826:-

"One of the company piqued himself on having been the original representative of several of Sir Walter Scott's heroes. Nature had partly fitted him for two. He had Rob Roy's arms and Balfour's eyes. For this puritan he

(1) Ibid p.45. N.B. The italics in this case are mine.

(2) For a more detailed account and discussion see infra pp. 149

(3) See Nicoll op.cit. p.40.

(4) Recollections of an Actor.

(5) In

wore Coeur de Leon chain armour; sported silver-mounted pistols in Macduff; crowded his person with Birmingham foil stones and had one dress of general utility in which to play Don Felix, Benedick, Pierre, Sir Giles Overreach, and Sir Edward Mortimer. I proposed Durimel, Archer, Plume, Lord Townley, Marc Antony, Comus, Shylock and Othello as additions to the list." (1)

In 1828, a performance of As you Like It took place, with new costumes from Planché's designs for Convent Garden. A copy of the playbill which lists Planché's authorities, is given by Dibdin, <sup>(p. 325)</sup> who comments:- "An excellent cast, splendidly mounted at great expense, and yet played only one night!" ~~note on page 325~~ (p. 325)

PLAYS - The plays performed in the Theatre-Royal are not interesting for their own sake. (2) The traditional repertory of the time, - Shakespeare, Jonson, Messenger,

(1) op.cit. p.64.

(2) The comparatively few plays first brought in Edinburgh are very unimportant indeed. They are mostly "National Dramas" appealing mainly to Scottish audiences. See discussion of Douglas infra pp. Here are a few such plays taken at random from my notes: A Tale of the Castle; or Who is She Like? (Apr. 6. 1793; Friend of the Family (Feb. 24th. 1810). Caledonia; or The Thistle and the Rose (Dec. 12th. 1812); Heiress of Strathern, or The Rash Marriage (Mar. 24th. 1813). It should be observed that the numerous dramas made from the poems and tales of Scott were themselves not only essentially spectacular and melodramatic, but were in nearly every case performed in London in one form or another before being produced in Edinburgh. See infra Chapter IV and Conclusion.

Rowe, Southern, Wyckerley (!) Farquhar, Vanburgh, Addison, Goldsmith, Gay, Sheridan and others - was familiar to Edinburgh audiences. Nearly all the contemporary plays, however, were brought from London theatres. At the beginning of the century Candidus complains of the uncritical way in which they are imported:

Many of our best Dramatic works rest in oblivion, which everyone must admit, deserve a better fate. The immortal plays of Shakespeare are seldom exhibited on the Edinburgh stage, except, perchance a KEMBLE or a COOKE should condescend to visit us for a week or two in the summer months, for the purpose of appearing in the principal characters. However bad our Company may be, yet many of these plays might be performed with much greater effect than some of the German pieces with which we have so long been tormented, were it not for the prevalence of a childish rage for novelty that stamps our present opinion of Dramatic writings. If we are informed, that a play has been performed for upwards of forty nights at Convent Garden Theatre, with the most unbounded applause, this is sufficient recommendation for it in Edinburgh: here, all enquiry rests, though it should be the most wretched piece which ever disgraced a Stage. In this respect we are completely led by the nose, (if I may use a very significant colloquial phrase,) and we never once think of judging for ourselves. The play must be good if a Convent Garden audience accounts it good, and there cannot be so goodjudges in a country audience as in an audience composed of the most judicious part of the metropolis. Excellent logic indeed." (1)

Nevertheless, throughout its history, the Theatre-Royal continued to produce London plays, and Edinburgh audiences to witness them. Like Pooh-Bah, it revolted them, - but they did it.

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(1) The Letters of Candidus. p.72.

And as a rule the London opinion was echoed in Edinburgh, for as Scott put it "Saunders is meanly jealous of being thought less critical than John Bull, and may despise to be pleased with what was less fortunate in London."<sup>(1)</sup> Melodramas, spectacles, pageantry and farces, as now performing with unbounded applause at Such-and-Such Theatre were brought out by Murray in rapid succession to a definite demand for novelty.

The critics, of course, criticised. The Courant (1816) speaking of the recent good houses asks sharply if the cause be a revival of Shakspeare, Massenger, or Beaumont and Fletcher? "No! a pretty tale of a Magpie has been brought from Paris, and to this entertainment all the children, great and small, are flocking nightly."<sup>(2)</sup> But the Scotsman (1818) observes philosophically "The whole mechanism is excellent; and is calculated by its brisk and rousing effect to gratify the love of sensation in the audience. In our closets we have despised such entertainments, and have found them provoke a sneer at our table; but we confess that in the theatre, while listening to, or rather looking at

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(1) To Joanna Baillie: Lochart's Life. 518. Quoted Lochart vii, 231.

(2) Courant, February 8th.1816. c.f. March 1814. (The Magpie, or The Maid? by Isaac Pocock, adapter of several of Scott's novels, was produced at Convent Garden. Sept.15. 1815 and at the Edinburgh Theatre-Royal Jan.29.1816. c.f. Edinburgh Reflector. January 27th.1819.

(1)

The Broken Sword, we have been captivated," and The Dramatic Review defends at more length the manager's policy:

" The activity of the Manager at the commencement of last season in bringing out the choicest products of the comic muse, and the want of any correspondent alacrity of the public to witness them satisfies us that it is most unjust to exact from a manager a strict obedience to the requisitions of good taste. It is too much to expect that a Manager is to make sacrifices for the purpose of reforming the taste of the public; it is enough that he does not sedulously corrupt it. It has ever been held as one of the obligations of a manager to consult the taste; and this he does when he brings out what is most popular and attractive. It is no great paradox to assert that a manager best discharges his duty when he realises most money. Those pieces which are the most worthless in a literary point of view are ever the most expensive, and we cannot imagine that any manager would prefer them to works of intrinsic merit, were they not the most popular." (2)

This, it seems to me is a very fair vindication of the manager, for it is rather too much to ask of any man that for the sake of an ideal he empty his own purse in giving the public what they have definitely indicated they do not want. A correspondent of The Edinburgh Literary Journal, signing the initials of J.M.W., undoubtedly expressed the regret of many citizens, however, when he wrote:

"There has been a good deal said about the march of intellect, but the apathy at present existing in this city on the subject of the Drama reflects but little credit on our public taste or spirit. Shall it be said that Edinburgh - the capital of Scotland - the storehouse of her literature - the centre of her genius - could not support one theatre - one, only one! Will the

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(1) Scotsman, January 25th. 1817.

(2) Edinburgh Dramatic Review. December 22nd. 1824. ~~own~~ X

city which contains the authors of "Waverley", "The Isle of Palms" and the "Man of Feeling" - the city that gave birth to Miss Paton and to Sinclair - that possesses a Siddons or a Murray - that has been justly called the Modern Athens from other and nobler causes than its local appearance - will it remain insensible to the power and the interests of the Drama? It is surely only slumbering a moment."<sup>(1)</sup>

GENERAL CONDITIONS - Playgoers got a lot for their money a hundred years ago. In the earlier days of the Theatre-Royal it was usual to begin the performance at six thirty and finish about ten o'clock.<sup>(1)</sup> The fashionable dinner hour in Edinburgh in 1763 was two o'clock.<sup>(2)</sup> As the fashion changed the time grew later until in 1815 it was at four or even five o'clock.<sup>(3)</sup> In 1807 a play bill gives the information that the doors would be open at six and the performance begin "precisely at Seven."<sup>(4)</sup> The usual performance/<sup>was</sup> a full length comedy or tragedy of four or five acts followed by a two or three act farce, which was surely enough for the most determined playgoer. By the end of

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- (1) Playbill May 26th. 1784. When Jackson first came to Edinburgh, the doors opened at five and the play began at six! (op.cit.Appendix p.18).
- (2) William Creech: Letters.... respecting the Mode of Living, Arts, Commerce, Literature, Manners, etc. of Edinburgh in 1863 and Since That Period (1793)p.32.
- (3) A Description of the Old and New Cities of Edinburgh 1815. p.23.
- (4) Playbill in Edinburgh Public Library, Aug.22nd.1807.

Scott's lifetime, however, the performances had grown to an extravagant length. One Timothy Squaretoes <sup>(1)</sup> protests that now we have "a five-act play, overtures by a military band, songs between the play and the farce dances, 'Bucks have at ye all' <sup>(2)</sup> and a melodrama" so that a man doesn't get to bed until after the watchman has gone his two o'clock rounds."

At a time in theatrical history before either stalls or reserved seats <sup>(3)</sup> had been heard of, we find an interesting note of modernity - scalpers.

(1) Edinburgh Saturday Register, January 12th. 1832.

(2) Garrick's Picture of a Playhouse or Bucks have at ye all was a popular interlude.

(3) Professor Nicoll (op.cit. p.12, note 5) quotes E.B. Watson's citation of a French Lyceum advertisement (1828) as the earliest reference to stalls and a note in the Dramatic Magazine of 1829, p.159-60, as the earliest mention of reserving seats: "A new regulation has been adopted at the box-keeper's office.... On taking places in the boxes, a slip of paper is given to the party containing the date on which places were taken, the name of the party and the number of places, and the number of the box". An advertisement of the old Cannongate Theatre appeared in the Courant December 30th., 1754, stating that the box-keeper would grant tickets "marked with the date of the day and description of the places taken on sight, whereof every gentleman or lady must be satisfied of the seats being secure without the least confusion". This was designed to prevent people from engaging a box when they intended filling only one row of it. However, as late as 1802 Candidus (Introd.XIX) complains that a lady taking a box large enough for twenty or thirty people is entitled to undisturbed possession of it until the end of the first act, though she may pay only for her single seat. Clearly this system of taking "places" is far from what we know as reserved seats. From the similarity of the two quotations I suggest therefore that Professor is premature and that his alternate date of 1843 (from Odell, Shakespeare from Betterton to Irving II. p.242-3) is nearer the mark. In the Theatre Royal, especially when a crowded house was expected, it was customary to send servants to occupy the seats until their masters arrived. See e.g. Letters of Candidus p.68; playbill in Edinburgh Pub. Library, June 25.1805 (during Mrs. Siddons' engagement) and Jackson p.137. On stalls see infra p 86-7.

The dodge of selling bogus tickets had already been tried (1) at the Theatre-Royal in 1811, apparently with some success. An advertisement in the Courant (1815) indicates that the (2) scalping has come to Edinburgh. The Courant is horrified but suggests remedies which seem to have been carried out the next season:-

There is little doubt that these fellows actually contrive to defeat all the Manager's endeavours to act impartially to the public by....engaging boxes in false names that they may sell the tickets at an advanced price. If it be true, as we are assured it is, that one of these men sometimes engrosses six boxes at once, surely this may easily be got the better of, by the simple and reasonable enactment, that no person whatsoever shall be permitted to engage more than a single box. (3)

Before leaving this part of the subject, I cannot forbear mentioning one or two amusing contretemps which occurred in the theatre during Scott's lifetime, and which he may well have seen. (4) We have already smiled at the righteous ire of John Kemble when his Hamlet was ruined by a heedless Polonius behind the curtain. (5) There is a good story about Kean when he was playing the lead in Maturin's tragedy Bertram (6) related by a gentleman who was

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- (1) Courant Advertisement, March 16th 1811 threatening prosecution.  
 (2) Courant Advertisement, August 10th 1815.  
 (3) Courant August 12th.1815. c.f. Advertisement in Courant November 13th.1815.  
 (4) There is, however, no record of Scott's having been present.  
 (5) See supra p. 66  
 (6) (1816).

present.

"The hero", he says, "had been shipwrecked and carried to a monastery. The scene opened with Kean on a sofa asleep, dreaming and writhing and muttering in his slumbers, surrounded by monks moralizing on who he was. A voice from the gallery exclaimed, "You lazy fellows, instead of preaching and praying, give the poor man a tumbler of warm punch!" Kean was convulsed with laughter; down came the green curtain with a run, and down came the house with a thunder of applause. The criticism of the gallery god was correct. The play proceeded, but the dreaming scene was not that night repeated." (1)

The spectators must have had a hilarious evening when The Cataract of the Ganges was played, judging from a report in the Dramatic Review next day:-

The Military Band having been engaged for the Fancy Ball, Mr. Murray appeared at the end of the fourth act of the play to apologise for their absence and state that he had mustered another. And such another! Mr. Prichard's horse in the first scene, kicked up a dust by rolling on its back, to the annoyance of the orchestra. The Moon took fire, and was extinguished by a Hindoo. A soldier trod upon the puissant Mr. Miller's foot; and he so scowled upon the soldier, that the gods hissed him, and then he so scowled upon the gods; and Denham, Stanley and Lynch laughed at his virtuous rage and ran off - and the Hindoos were converted without a speech. (2)

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(1) The Edinburgh Stage from 1816 - 1821.

(2) Edinburgh Dramatic Review. March 15th. 1824.

*add line  
Scott's tumbler  
Spacie head in  
march*

4.

THE AUDIENCE AT THE THEATRE-ROYAL.

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The casual reader of an account of the Edinburgh stage, such as Chambers' or even Dibdin's, is unlikely at first to understand that the Theatre was essentially unpopular. He gets a picture of great crowds of people flocking to applaud Mrs. Siddons, Kemble, Miss O'Neill, or Matthews without realising how placidly these mobs sat at home between such big (and expensive) attractions, while the permanent company played to empty benches. "The Edinburgh theatre," noted a visitor in 1811, "is diminutive paltry and little frequented . . . . Here people spend their evenings generally at home - their main dependence for happiness is there." <sup>(1)</sup> Most of the time, as we have seen, the theatre had to fight tooth and nail for its very existence.

Some of the reasons for this disaffection we have already noted. We now may add another: it was not fashionable. The same observer, speaking of his attendance at the Theatre-Royal on February 11th. 1811, when Bannister <sup>(2)</sup> was performing says caustically:-

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(1) Journal of a Tour and Residence in Great Britain during 1810 and 1811, etc. by a French Traveller. The two quotations used are quoted from a review in the Scots Magazine 1815.p.534. and the Courant July 20th.1816.

(2) See supra p. 40.

The house was empty - not a single person in most of the boxes; and all this because of a concert where BRAHAM sings, (1) - a more fashionable amusement than the theatre, which is deemed... rather a vulgar amusement. The following days we have again partaken of the pleasures of the vulgar. (2)

In the Scotsman (1818) the critic says:-

"The Theatre does not seem to be a very fashionable amusement in Edinburgh. Why this should be, we do not see clearly, for although our dramatic corps is not very strong, it is, after all, considered the best out of London." (3)

The same is true in 1824:-

"The want of an audience has made the house cold. This, we believe, has partly arisen from its not being fashionable to attend the Theatre. But we had imagined that there was a population in Edinburgh requiring some easy intellectual amusement which, independently of mere fashion would have afforded moderate support to dramatic exhibitions." (4)

The pleasures of Society were not for the middle classes, of course, but many of them could and did take part in the one public amusement abandoned by the "fashionables" - the Theatre. (5) When it is considered that this is the very

(1) (In 1774-1856) A famous tenor described by Scott as "an angel of a singer but a beast of an actor [in a letter to Terry - Lockart ~~300~~ 286.]

(2) Journal, etc. by a French Traveller. see supra, 80

(3) Scotsman, March 7th. 1818.

(4) Ibid. December 11th. 1824.

(5) According to A Description of the Old and New Cities of Edinburgh (p.22) it was the only public amusement they did frequent.

class of society where morality and prejudice, (and ~~where~~ the bawbees) are most cannily weighed against values, it becomes clearer why the Edinburgh theatre was filled only on special occasions.

Such a generality must not hide the fact, however, that there was certainly a small class of people, of which Scott and his circle are examples, who enjoyed the drama for its own sake, and felt with the Scotsman critic that one of the greatest pleasures of the theatre was "that which every cultivated mind receives from having in its power to join with others in a common feeling of fear, dislike, (1) respect, esteem and admiration."

In the Edinburgh theatre, says the same writer, -

"We are neither awed by huge magnificence, nor reduced, as it were, to atomic littleness, as a stranger is apt to feel himself in the boundless space and innumerable crowd of a London theatre. We see nothing of the heavy state and unpeopled benches of Glasgow, nor are we annoyed with the filth and darkness that we lately witnessed in what is called, and what might really be made, a theatre in Dundee. In Edinburgh we sit as comfortably and with as many facilities for studying the characters of those around us, as if we were merely in a large drawing room..... The starched Physician, the formal consequential Lawyer, the Town-country gentleman, with his sleek dignity, The Fixture-Dowager with her tawdry or furious wig and untasteful drapery are all objects of interest in their way, especially when relieved by occasional groupes of youth and beauty with eyes and ears still open and hearts still susceptible, or by the innocent prattle or not less pleasing bursts of wonder or hilarity of some family of children carried there for the sole

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(1) Scotsman, March 18th. 1818.

purpose of being amused and gratified. Parts are acted in the house, as well as on the stage; and the former are sometimes as much deserving of attention as the latter. A little world of feeling and passion is occasionally to be seen in a single countenance.(1)

Another writer gives us a picture of the theatre on a crowded night:- Mr. Robertson's stoves seem to be excelling themselves -

From floor to ceiling every seat - every inch of room was occupied. We were jammed up in a corner of the highest slips, peeping down upon the stage like an angel from heaven. Then such a heat; the region on the other side of the Styx must have been a joke to it; and such a display of pretty faces and all that sort of thing(2) in the boxes, really it made the place a hundred times hotter..... What a devil of a nuisance is a crammed house.

Sooty bawling,  
Jenny Squawling,  
Mammy simpering,  
Baby whimpering,  
Pittites squeezing,  
Boxites teasing,  
Fiddlers thrumming,  
Audience bumming,  
Bodies broiling,  
Passions boiling,

Oh what a devil of a scene it is!(3)

The house was divided according to custom into Boxes, Pit and Gallery, distinctions at first largely social, for so far as comfort, and in so small a theatre, view and hearing were concerned, the different parts were much alike(4)

(1) Scotsman, August 13th.1823.

(2) I don't even pretend to know what the gentleman means.

(3) Dramatic Censor, November 25th.1829.

(4) A certain difference in taste also was supposed to distinguish each part. A prologue "from J.Harris, by Mr. Philips riding on an ass" (1749) quoted by Jackson(p.310) alludes to this:

"In the gallery, side boxes, on the stage, in the pit,  
What's your critic, your beau, your keeper, your wit."  
The gentry who sat about on the stage, happily, have disappeared; but the other three classes were always represented.

THE BOXES - The most fashionable, of course, was the lower row of boxes, where sat the belles and bucks of Edinburgh Society with their grave and dignified elders, and the inevitable scattering of hangers-on and parvenues. By 1815, it was no longer considered obligatory for the gentlemen to be "indress", but the ladies continued to spend a good deal of time about their toilette for the theatre. <sup>(1)</sup> The scene must have been one of great splendour and vivacity when the bright lights from the box lustres and the great centre chandelier shone upon the gay faces and "elegant" dresses of the ladies as they flirted their fans at the white cravats and handsome uniforms of their escorts. That these fine ladies and gentlemen were not always quite considerate is clear from the indignation of our friend Candidus about what he calls "Tattling", an obnoxious habit which seems to have been soon shamed from the theatre:-

I know the fashion now is to go there with the sole view of enjoying the company present. Which is the finest face, which the finest figure, or who sports the most knowing dress, are general topics of conversation during the performance; but surely the fashionable disputants may discuss these without offending their neighbours. Some very small share

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(1) A Description..... of Edinburgh, 1815, p.23.

A crusty old person named Observer complains in the Dramatic Review (June 29th 1824) that "In London and Paris ladies never appear in theatres in what is termed "full dress", i.e. undress. Here fashion requires that they should confront [the rest of the audience] in a certain degree of denudation..... utterly disgusting almost anywhere but altogether intolerable and incongruous in a Theatre. Exposing themselves to the riotous stare of a multitudinous Pit! Really this is bad taste."

of respect might at least be paid to those who do not care a pin for any figure on any dress in the Boxes, but whose sole desire is to spend their time in a rational manner, by endeavouring to enjoy the play as much as they can..... The well-bred tattleers I leave to the contempt and resentment they so richly deserve." (1)

THE PIT - The Pit was long considered the intellectual part of the house, for here, since the days of Dryden and Wycherley had sat the eager and critical lovers of dramatic art. That was the tradition, and the pittites always enjoyed being flattered about their keenness and insight. One can imagine, for instance, the pleased looks on their faces when at the opening of the Caledonian the manager referred to them as holding "judgment benches in the court of wit." (2) As a matter of fact, however, the Pit was, by Scott's time, a rather mixed lot: the "multitudinous Pit" one writer called it. The days of its exclusive maleness had passed, and by 1820 it had assumed a distinctly "family" appearance. The large bonnets worn by ladies in the Pit were a constant source of annoyance, evidently. In 1822, two gentlemen who sign themselves No Giant (3) and Five Feet Six (4) complain to the Dramatic Review that these "coal scoops"

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- (1) The Letters of Candidus p.78 c.f. however Dramatic Review Feb.12. Dec. 29,1824; Feb.13.1825.  
 (2) H. Johnston's speech reported in the Dramatic Review Jan. 13th. 1822.  
 (3) Dramatic Review, November 22nd. 1822.  
 (4) Ibid December 9th. 1822.

make it impossible to see the stage. The editor can only suggest asking the ladies to remove them. Three years later, <sup>however,</sup> his correspondents are still complaining! (1)

In 1775, Topping writes to his friend, the Pit and Boxes were the same price. The democracy of the Pit had not yet begun:-

"The Pit seems considered here as the Parterre of the French theatre, into which gentlemen go who are not sufficiently dressed for the Boxes. On very crowded nights, the ladies sometimes sit here, and then that part of it is divided by a partition." (2)

In this may be seen the origin of the Orchestra Stalls of the present day theatre which are considered the best part of the house, while the pit is pushed back to a few rows under the balcony. The change took place in London during the 1840's and brought about, as Professor Watson (3) has shown, a definite improvement in the technique of acting. It is amusing to read in The People's Journal (1843) the protest of a short-sighted die-hard who considers it a gross invasion of the rights of the Pit. (4) The practice of partitioning off a part for the use of ladies or to take care of the overflow from the boxes however, does not seem to have continued long in the Theatre-Royal. Unfortunately it was seldom necessary. Orchestra stalls, which might well

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- (1) Ibid. February 5th. 1825.  
 (2) op.cit. Letter XIII.  
 (3) E.B. Watson, op.cit. p. 89.  
 (4) People's Journal (London).

have originated in Edinburgh did not come there until 1851, when R.H.Wyndham remodelled the house. (1)

The admission of ladies to the Pit undoubtedly made that part of the house less rowdy. The ladies who sat there, during Murray's management at any rate, were thoroughly respectable, so that there were seldom "disquieting and riotous scenes" (2) such as disgraced the Pit in London and Dublin. The comparative quietness of the Edinburgh pittites may be illustrated by an incident which took place in Dublin about 1830. Calcraft, the manager, relates that the Pit and Gallery would throw anything on the stage.

"There was a tremendous row one night, sir, and there comes lolopping up from the pit a huge lump wrapped in green baize. I thought it was one of the benches, but on going nearer, by G. - sir, it was an old woman the fellows had thrown at us." (3)

THE GODS - In many ways the gallery of a theatre is the most interesting part. The people who go there now-a-days are generally real lovers of the drama who cannot afford the more comfortable seats; any anyone daring to make a disturbance would be speedily ejected by the indignation of his fellows. But even though this is quite true, the gallery has not yet lived down its <sup>rich</sup> reputation for boisterousness, disorder and physical repulsiveness.

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(1) Wyndham carried out extensive alterations, in which the interior became more like the sort of theatre we know. Upholstered stalls replaced the seats in the front of the pit. The pit itself was made to extend beneath the first row of boxes and the lighting was completely re-arranged.

(2) So Scott calls them. Letters II. p.264.

(3) Edinburgh Literary Journal, July 30th.1831.

It must be agreed, especially considering the vice and unruliness of the rest of the audience, that a certain amount of impatient clamour was only to be expected in the huge caverns of London, where the gods could scarcely see, much less hear what was going forward on the stage. The Edinburgh gods were not nearly so badly behaved. In 1775, they seemed to a visitor

"very compassionate Divinities. You sometimes hear the murmurings of displeasure at a distance; but they never rain down oranges &c. on the heads of the unfortunate actors. They suffer them very quietly "to strut their hour upon the stage", and if then they dislike them, they are literally "heard no more." (1)

The influence of London was too strong, however, and about 1800 it had become common enough to demonstrate their displeasure by "pelting" the unfortunate from the stage. Even Stephen Kemble fled, according to Timothy Plain, "amid the hootings and hissings of the <sup>(2)</sup> whole house; indeed with every degree of contumely short of personal chastisement." An incident of a more serious nature is related by Candidus:

Some sailors in the upper Gallery who, it is said, had been liberally supplied with liquor by the orange-woman of the Theatre, and had been constantly disturbing the audience during the night, concluded their business by throwing a quart bottle at the actors, which broke one or two lamp-glasses on the Stage, terrified the actors; and, had it gone not quite so far would certainly have killed one of the performers in the Orchestra..... The audience ....

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(1) Topping. op.cit. Letter XIII.

(2) The Letters of Timothy Plain p.283; see Ibid.p.38.

sat for some minutes in stupid amazement, not venturing to say or do anything, till a Gentleman in the Boxes cried out, "Sieze him",.....and there seemed to be some stir among the spectators for that purpose; but when we reached the door, we found the ladies and gentlemen, particularly the last, hurrying as fast as possible to get home.....The culprits through Mr. Jackson's exertions were soon siezed by a part of the guard at the Register Office, and carried to the guardhouse there; after which the farce was allowed to be concluded..... I cannot close without giving a hint to the managers, to take care who they admit into the Upper Gallery.(1)

Candidus later ends with satisfaction that the sailor, Henry Moody, was sentenced two weeks later to two months in Bridewell for the offence. (2)

The behaviour of the gallery patrons in 1823 is complained of by Friar Tuck who suggests that police or attendants should be stationed there to keep them in order. The editor, for some reason, does not completely agree, but fails to tell why. Says the Friar:-

Those celestials not content with pestering their neighbours with shouts for "order" and silence, wantonly dart their thunderbolts in the shape of rotten apples and orange skins on the unfortunate inhabitants of the lower regions, accompanied with shouts and yells.

If any one in the boxes or the pit were to disturb the piece [sic] of the house thus, he would immediately be put out. What privilege has the mob to it? Now if Mr. Murray would station a band of policemen in the passage and diligently proceed to single out the author of these outrages, and resolutely cause them to be forced from the Theatre, I'll venture to affirm that the gods in a week's time will sit as quietly as those in the boxes.(3)

(1) The Letters of Candidus p.93

(2) Ibid. p.94.

(3) Letter to the Edinburgh Dramatic Review, Feb.5th.1825.

A more amusing account of the gallery gentry is given by Benson Hill:-

Every evening before the performances commence there, the air of our National Anthem is played, and received with the customary marks of respect. The gods, knowing this, as soon as the musicians enter the orchestra, call out - "Feddlers! God Save the King!" When it begins they shout to their fellow spectators "Stand oop!" and at the close "Sit down!" Then laugh over and applaud their own monotonous "wit" though to the actors they are rather coldly attentive. (1)

Another curious thing about the gods in the Theatre-Royal was their assumption of the rôles of chief critic and moral censor to the house, and the weak acquiescence of the rest of the audience. Speaking of the characteristic lack of applause in the theatre, the Edinburgh Dramatic Recorder says:-

We have besides remarked with some vexation that the solitary "whist" from a pea-eating chimney sweep, or an orange-sucking urchin, from the one shilling gallery, overawes and controls the auditors in the lower parts of the house and not infrequently checks the expressions of satisfaction which the performers or performance were proceeding to elicit, and the good people - like snails touched in their horns, or hedgehods discovered by dogs - draw or roll themselves up and remain dull, snug and silent for the rest of the evening. (2)

In the Scotsman (1822) we find this:-

An incident of a somewhat disagreeable nature occurred on Monday evening. The Gods as usual took cognizance of the police of the theatre. They observed a want of decorum in a single instance and insisted on calling on the offender to leave the house.

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(1) op.cit. II. 62.

(2) Number 7 (March 1825).

The cure in some of these cases may be worse than the disease; but without wishing to press hard on the unfortunate, it is perhaps due to the feelings of the youthful and tender part of the audience to exclude the object of attention, even though repentant, for the rest of the evening. (1)

THE "SLIPS" - Still another part of the house remains to be considered - the third row of Boxes level with the gallery on each side of the house. Though the admission price was double that of the gallery, it was, unfortunately, the least respectable part of the house. It was here that the women of the town were admitted at a reduced rate and "are permitted [writes Observer] to perform evolutions with any drunken youth who chooses to disgrace himself, or who has no character to lose." (2) It seems to modern minds incredible and scandalous, but prostitutes were actually so encouraged to come to the theatre. Another correspondent of the Dramatic Review in 1825 protests:-

"While poor orange-women are obliged to pay full price for admission to the pit or galleries, common prostitutes are admitted on a certificate of bad character, to the slips at half price. The morality of this distinction admits of some comment. .... Some months ago we extracted an article by Sir Walter Scott, censuring with great justice and severity the open profligacy to be observed in the London theatres. But probably there it does not appear with that audacious front as in our own well regulated Theatre where it is actually encouraged

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(1) Scotsman, August 24th. 1822.

(2) In a letter in the Edinburgh Dramatic Review, June 29th. 1824.

and the most conspicuous part of the house made a brothel of."(1)

While praising the justice and sincerity of this gentleman's remarks, I think it scarcely fair to say that Edinburgh was worse than London, for there they infested all parts of the house, and were allowed to solicit<sup>in</sup>/the the very lobbies. (2) It is true that the ladies were more exposed in the upper boxes, but probably that very exposure was designed to prevent such breaches of decency as might take place in the more crowded pit. The manager was unable to keep them out - after all it was a public theatre - so that his plan of giving them seats in the Slips at Pit prices was probably the best. (3) In the Slips they were at least segregated, and, in effect, labelled.

That the abuse was abolished altogether in the Theatre Royal about 1830, we know from Peregrine Spitfire, who is replying to a pamphlet on the decline of the drama. (4)

(1) February 5th. 1824.

(2) A fuller discussion of this unsavoury subject will be found in Watson op.cit.pp : Nicoll, op.cit.10-11; History of Late Eighteenth Century Drama p.p. ; The Development of the Theatre pp. : Scott - Essay on Drama.(Prose Works Vol.VI.p.392).

(3) Recently I came across an autograph letter from John Kerr, the Prompter in the Pantheon under Bannister's management, to an unknown correspondent. He suggests their taking over the Pantheon as partners and mentions the changes he would make - such as doing away with horsemanship, covering the ring in with seats and "endeavouring to restore that credit to the Pit which it lost by the introduction of the Women of pleasure." [The date is obliterated.] E.P.L.

(4) I have failed to trace this pamphlet "The Causes of the Decline of the Drama" by F.M.I. It is mentioned in Nugae Histrionicae (see p.93, note 1.)

Having called the writer an ass, Peregrine continues:

" Had this incipient moralist been at all acquainted with the interior of the Theatre Royal, Edinburgh, he would have found that there is no such place as he talks of - "the slips" having long since slipped away. Does he wish to convert the "good old" Theatre-Royal into a Methodist meeting-house? If so, these "prostitutes" have as much - I may say more - need of a word in season than any of the apparently modest females of whose delicacy their champion is so fastidious." (1)

DISTURBANCES - Another regard in which the Royal of Scott's time differed favourably from the London theatres was in its comparative peace and freedom from the lawlessness of party faction. Although it is quite true that there was a serious riot in 1794 in which Scott himself took part, there was never anything like the O.P. ("old prices") Riots (2) which so long and so clamorously disturbed the peace of Convent Garden Theatre in 1809, or the political rows that (3) often took place in Dublin.

Disturbances there were, of course, One rather serious one that better illustrates the times than pages of description took place in 1798.

It has long been an established rule in this theatre [says Timothy Plain] that no person whatever could be admitted behind the scenes; but on this occasion, almost from the opening of the play, some persons in the dress of officers, and others, constantly obtruded themselves upon the stage:- This naturally

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- (1) Nugae Histrionicae, edited by W.H.Logan, p.7. Further evidence is found in a letter from Philo-dramatique to the Edinburgh Theatrical & Musical Review (June 6.1835) complaining that that class of damsels "whose sensibilities are disturbed by no second avocation" still contaminate the Adelphi. "This nuisance has been swept from the Theatre-Royal."  
 (2) R.W.Lowe's Bibliography of the British Stage devoted four pages to these riots; books and pamphlets appeared galore <sup>see also</sup> Scott's Life of Kemble (Periodical Criticism Vol.IV.)  
 (3) Such as that described in the Edinburgh Annual Register for 1822. p.315.

produced clamour and disturbance, but the calls of the audience were paid no attention to. At the beginning of the 5th act one of the officers had the insolence to come forward almost to the front of the stage from whence he would not move; and after being tolerably well pelted with oranges &c, he thought proper to return the compliment - nay, he even pulled down a couple of candles from one of the lustres upon the stage, which, with their sockets, he threw into the pit, by which a lady was severely cut in the breast. At last several gentlemen sprung from the pit to the stage, upon which the officer was joined by his companions, but they were all soon turned off and were seen no more during the course of the evening."

The manager made an apology of sorts, but Timothy is very bitter in ascribing, (and rightly so,) the whole blame to him. In the outcome the offenders were fined.

During the next ten or twelve years, there were probably slight disturbances at times but none was of a seriousness worth reporting in any of the papers. A paragraph in the Courant (1812) speaking of the fate of Helga which had been hissed, suggests that this was due to "malicious and pre-concerted opposition" and infers that such an attempt had been made at the production of The Family Legend, but this is scarcely a riot.

Two slight disturbances are recorded in 1821. Partizan feeling ran rather high in the matter of the King's estrangement from Queen Caroline and

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(1) Letters of Timothy Plain p.88.89.

(2) Ibid. p.98.

(3) Courant, Jan.25th.1812 - Some account of Joanna Baillie's drama, and Scott's great interest in it will be found on p.p.169f.

"On Saturday evening the name of Her Majesty "The Queen" was called out pretty loudly and for some time, but it was not persisted in to the annoyance of the house; nor while we were present was the "King's Anthem" performed at all." (1)

That this judicious omission of the "King's Anthem" was intentional on Murray's part is shown by an account, worth quoting in full, of an incident some weeks before.

A boxful of ultra-Tories, whose names we are in possession of, did, on Saturday last, give a great deal of annoyance to the audience. These wise men forgetting the outrages which a Holy Alliance are just committing on all right and justice in the case of Naples, and not merely the illiberal but despotic acts of the various governments of Europe, took mighty offense at the approbation, most naturally, and, as far as we know, properly given to the liberal sentiments which recur more than once in the dialogue of Henri Quatre. The applause thus bestowed on what will never cease to be praiseworthy, was converted into symptoms of a bad spirit; and that a bad spirit - a very bad spirit - was in the house, was heard repeatedly to fall from the lips of these ultras. To correct this spirit, therefore, or rather as others would have imagined, to provoke hostility - for who likes to be dictated to? - the ultra box-holders called out for "God save the King!" This call they repeated; but as it produced no effect, they went behind the scenes - and then the MANAGER came forward, and stated, most properly, that it was unusual, and indeed entirely out of course to give "God save the King" at such a time - that he would not, if it was in his power to prevent it, allow the Edinburgh Theatre, as some of the London houses had been, to become the scene of contention between two political parties; but that as the air had been specially requested he would give "God save the King" as a national anthem and not as a test of party feeling. The anthem was commenced by the orchestra; but the ultras were not satisfied. They now became more noisy than ever for

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(1) Scotsman. May 26th. 1821.

vocal performers, and when Miss Nicol came forward in compliance with this call, she was received in such a manner by the rest of the audience that Mr. Murray saw it to be desirable to lead her off. The ultra call was continued afterwards, amidst considerable confusion but the manager paid no regard to it. He went too far indeed in giving the piece even as an anthem; for if he should ever lend himself to such injudicious - we would in consideration of their consequences, say criminal calls, the Theatre would soon either be deserted or become the scene of riot, confusion and perhaps bloodshed. (1)

We may state in passing that there was apparently no constable or attendant stationed in the house until about 1818, although the Courant(1814) had called the matter to the manager's attention. (2) At any rate the play bill for the opening night of the 1818-19 season (December 3rd) states that "An Officer of Police will constantly attend the Theatre." Murray was, however, a host in himself. Benson Hill tells an amusing story of the nemesis that overtook some drunkards in the Slips who had dared to throw oranges at the actors:-

"We heard a brief abrupt exclamation behind the scenes; now we saw and the offenders felt its cause. Thump! Whack! By the blood of the Murrays, our zealous little Manager had rushed up to the disgraced part of his Theatre, and vigorously flooring these unprovoked ruffians, had them carried off to durance vile. The decent portion of the audience applauded him and us; we finished our scene." (3)

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- (1) Scotsman, March 3rd.1821. The Dramatic Review reported a row in the theatre on March 2nd.1824, but some days later (Mar. 5th) corrected itself. It was only a gentleman slightly drunk who got obstreperous when Murray went into the Pit to reason with him. He was turned out and later ordered to pay £5 damages which Murray gave to the Infirmary.
- (2) January 20th. 1814.
- (3) Playing About.II. p.71. Compare Candidus's account (p.94. in part quoted supra p.89. )of Jackson's similar personal touch. See also Jackson's History p.382.

It may surprise many readers that there were occasional bursts of indecorum in the theatre which fit strangely with the rigid morality not only of the Scot but of the theatre itself at that time. The Scotsman is horrified - "they disgraced Edinburgh" - at the behaviour of the audience at a performance of "She Stoops to Conquer," led by some bloods in the Boxes. So far as one can make out, they applauded and so gave point to certain parts which the Scotsman thinks should never have been written at all. That the moral Scots bore as a rule with very free language is noted by Benson Hill: "Snoods were split by laughter..... and matches dropped off shaken by his [Combe] Polu flos boyo (I quote Greek by ear)."

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE EDINBURGH AUDIENCE - In the audiences of Scott's day we notice a complete lack of self-consciousness about showing emotion, which seems characteristic. The hard-boiled modern, though he may shed a furtive tear in a dark cinema and sometimes even get an embarrassing snuffle in the theatre, must be amazed at the naivete of a century ago. "There was not a dry eye in the house"; "all laughed and cried"; "You heard nothing but sobs on all

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(1) Courant June 2nd. 1784.

(2) C.f. T. Dibdin's Reminiscences, p.157.

(1)  
sides" are by no means uncommon expressions in reports of performances. I find something very delightful in this. The audiences often paid their respects to popular citizens and visitors by an ovation as they took their places. Among those so honoured in the Theatre-Royal may be mentioned Lord Erskine,  
(2)  
Scott and Tom Moore. When the latter visited the house with Scott in 1825 he was given a charming compliment which could never have happened in these self-conscious days. The band was playing alternate Irish and Scottish melodies, and when they came to "Here's to Her" a man in the Pit faced Moore's box and sang, -

With golden key Wealth thought  
To pass, but 'twouldn't do;  
But Wit a diamond brought  
And cut his bright way through.(3)

In most theatres of that time applause and disapproval were enthusiastic. One player may get "three distinct rounds" of applause, another may be hissed from the stage. In 1775 Topping notes the Edinburgh audiences were not very severe.

"A boisterous fellow in England [he says] who thinks it part of his privilege to do what he thinks proper, provided neither the laws nor magna charta forbid it, when he takes a dislike to an actor, drives all the players off the stage, puts an end to the performance and insults the whole audience.

- (1) Scott's Letters II.pp.290 (~~Lockart~~)  
 (2) Scott does not approve. He thinks applause is for the players alone (See Journal October 30th 1826)but is delighted that Edinburgh received Moore so well.  
 (c.f.infra.pp.222-3)  
 (3) Playing About II.p.105.

A Frenchman and a Scotchman whom an arbitrary government in one instance and the remains of it in the other, has softened and refined, keep their quarrels to themselves, consider the poor players as incapable of resistance and show their dislike to them only by not applauding them."(1)

By the time when Timothy Plain wrote his "strictures" however, audiences certainly used to hiss when they felt like it! Timothy often refers to it as giving a player "the goose"<sup>(2)</sup> (which is not far from the modern "bird"). While compared with London, there are very few examples of plays completely "thrown over" in Edinburgh, we find occasionally in the papers such an account as this:

Last night Mr. Pinkerton's new tragedy, The Heiress of Strathern, or the Rash Marriage was produced at our Theatre. It was heard with great patience during the first acts, but towards the close, the opposition became so violent that when Mr. Siddons came forward to announce its repetition, he could not obtain a hearing. We understand that it has since been withdrawn. (3)

Nor was applause "unbounded" as a rule. While there are many recorded instances of great enthusiasm, - especially during the visits of Matthews whose humour was very popular in Edinburgh<sup>(4)</sup> the following criticism from the Dramatic Recorder (1825) seems just:-

(1) op.cit. Letter XIII.

(2) e.g. p.217.

(3) Courant, March 25th. 1813. c.f. Ibid. Jan.28th.1812; Jan. 15th.1816 and infra p.

(4) c.f. for instance Courant August 16th.1813. Matthews in return thought them (Diary, Jan.19.1818) "The only real theatrical audience in the three kingdoms"! See infra pp.

An Edinburgh audience is proverbially formal stiff and inanimate; at no time excessively given to censure, but even most sparing of their praise..... and..... indeed..... on ordinary occasions, the approbation is more frequently given in the wrong than the right place. When, however, the deserving [misprint for discerning?] few do think it necessary to exhibit symptoms of applause, it is generally so feeble that it is more akin to the "damnation of faint praise" than a proper tribute to merit and art. We are not advocating noise nor wish to see the proper enjoyment of the play broke in upon, or interrupted by clamour and bawling - we merely recommend a judicious portion of judicious applause judiciously bestowed as a gratification to the audience and the actors. (1)

In an article in the Courant (1812) the critic of that paper insists that while an Edinburgh audience may be sometimes severe, it has never been considered as illiberal

(2) or unjust. "Severity," says the Scotsman critic in 1819, (3) "is not the characteristic of the Edinburgh audience."

The Edinburgh Dramatic Recorder (1825) says that though the Edinburgh people are cold and indifferent to theatrical

performers in general, they are invariably kind and most liberal..... to respectable and meritorious performers; (4) and the Scotsman (1824) remarks the complacency of the audience. (5)

An article in the same paper may serve to give a key to this difference of opinion. I shall quote it in full:

(1) Number 7, March 1825. C.f. Playing About, quoted supra p.

(2) January 25th. 1812.

(3) February 20th. 1819.

(4) April 23rd. 1825.

(5) May 26th. 1824.

I do not think Edinburgh audiences - such as they generally are - good judges of any dramatic performances.... An Edinburgh audience is composed of those who cannot lead, or who will not trust either their judgment or feelings. The fashionables are nothing; they attend irregularly, and when they do, it is not so much by way of fervour, as to be almost an insult, to some meritorious person here, or is it blindly to swell the triumph - awarded first in the metropolis - of some performer from the South. The general public, again, are not yet inoculated. They go to the theatre on stray nights only, or when they wish to shew courtesy to some country cousin or acquaintance. From want of knowledge or experience, they do not feel the confidence either to applaud or censure. The drama can be supported, in a proper style, in a very populous city only. There must be wealth enough to produce humours; independence enough to indulge them; and such a flow of strangers as to form nightly, a corps of individuals who will decide impartially, without bias, fear, or favour. As yet, this is not the case of Edinburgh. There is too little variety in the circumstances, conditions and habits, physical and mental, of that intellectual city. (1)

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(1) April 2nd. 1823. ~~e.f. also infra.~~ p.

§ 5.

DRAMATIC CRITICISM IN EDINBURGH DURING SCOTT'S LIFETIME.

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If audiences were too lenient, the critics did their best to avoid any such fault. Such theatrical notes as are not obviously "puffs", paid for or influenced by the management, often strike one as unnecessarily severe, as if the writers were trying thus to show how "impartial" they were. It might be interesting now to trace rather sketchily the development of dramatic criticism in Edinburgh during the lifetime of Sir Walter.

The first criticism of the Theatre Royal was published about a month after it opened, a pamphlet called the New Rosciad containing rhyming criticisms of the company. Mr. Dibdin<sup>(1)</sup> describes it as follows:

"In this, Mrs. Baker was very highly spoken of, while Mrs. Jackson was somewhat severely handled. This called forth a reply, chiefly devoted to extolling Mrs. Jackson and running down Mrs. Baker. It is very likely from the style of the writing, that the reply came from Mr. Jackson's pen. In the first publication the talents of the majority of the company are discounted in a marked manner, and judging from all appearances, the criticisms although disparaging, were mainly just."

A similar production appeared in 1775, under the title of The Edinburgh Rosciad.<sup>(2)</sup> It awards praise and blame in no

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(1) p.152. I have not seen it, or Jackson's reply.

(2) Price 6d.!

uncertain way, but in the most fearful rhyme. One example will serve, perhaps:

HAMILTON has some merit in the fop;  
 Ne'er let him quit the buskin for the sock;  
 If he the public favour wants to win  
 Let him more pains take and drink less of gin.

During the first thirty years of the theatre's life, there was no regular attempt at reporting etc., doings. Occasional paragraphs appeared in the newspapers, but seldom did they contain anything in the least significant. At best they are theatrical rather than dramatic criticism. The Courant, for instance, became rather severe with Wilkinson's company during the season of 1780, and especially with a tragedy by John Jackson on the subject of Wallace. Jackson, with more spirit than wit, replied, defending his play and raging at the critic. It's not very entertaining reading. Most of these rare items about the theatre however were obvious "puffs" inserted by the actors themselves, or some of their friends. An extraordinary example of this appeared in the Courant of March 11th. 1786. Opening with a sentence or two about the aim of the Muses, it continues:-

" Next to the Poet a good and skilful Actor claims our attention. 'Tis he who displays those passions in their strongest colours, illustrates the author's ideas and sends them to the heart with redoubled vigour. I am led to these reflections by the great pleasure I received from Mr. Nicholson Steuart on Thursday last in Hamlet..... In all these situations Mr. Stewart acquitted himself with astonishing judgment and propriety, and seemed animated with an uncommon share of that magic power with which the poet wrote..... After the play Mr. Steuart

spoke an Epilogue, in which great comic power was displayed..... Mrs. Kemble's Ophelia deserves the highest praise; her scenes of distraction were affectionately and delicately painted.

M. "

Some of the bound volumes of the Courant in the Edinburgh Public Library were apparently part of the official office file, for week by week the charges for the advertisements are entered in ink. The amusing thing about M's effusion (1) is that it cost him, whoever he was, a round four shillings!

During the season of 1786, a more independent type of criticism made its appearance in the form of letters to the editor of the Courant. The first of these correspondents, who called himself Peter, wrote:

" To check in future the forwardness of the petulant performer, to encourage modest merit, to give credit to the prudence, or to point out the blunders of the manager, it is necessary that our public prints should admit of such animadversion on the Edinburgh stage as may tend to its encouragement and reputation. In this service I stand forth as a volunteer." (2)

A week later a short letter appears by one Penna makes the first really significant remark I have seen:

(1) Another delightful example appears in the issue of April 17th. About three inches of letter-press extol the merits of Messrs. Wilson and O'Reilly. Upon it, however, is written laconically "4/6 Mr. O'Reilly"; quite evidently

"the O'Reilly  
They speak of so highly"!

(2) January 16th. 1786.

"He that wishes to act naturally must never seem to take any notice of the audience at all." (1)

which compares very favourably with the remark of Leigh Hunt about Bannister in London twenty years later:-

"The stage appears to be his own room, of which the audience compose the fourth wall; if they clap him he does not stand still to enjoy their applause." (2)

The advertisements of the theatre, of course, appear regularly in several papers, but apart from these, the theatre is often not mentioned for weeks at a time. (3)

Just about the turn of the century there was a renaissance of dramatic criticism, again in the form of letters to the editors of various newspapers. Certain gentlemen calling themselves Timothy Plain, Crito, and Leon undertook to point out the failings and excellences of the Edinburgh theatre and its company. They were refreshingly whole-hearted about it; they pried inquisitively into every detail, treated the management with asperity, and advanced their doctrines with a boldness that made later critics appear patterns of good-natured forbearance. Plain, for instance, writes in the Scots Chronicle (1797):

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- (1) January 25th.1786. For completeness sake I should mention the observations of John Peppercorn (Feb.1st) but they are not important, though rather interesting.
  - (2) Critical Essays on the Performers Etc. 1807.p.60. Professor Nicoll (op.cit.p.40) calls attention to the fact that this is a mention of "the fourth wall" much earlier than the citation of the N.E.D.
  - (3) For an example of the "criticism" of this decade I suggest the Caledonian Mercury for March 16.1792.
  - (4) These letters were collected and published in 1800 as The Letters... of Timothy Plain. Timothy is said to have been Moncreiff Threipland, Advocate. Of the identity of Crito and Leon I have no information.
  - (5) See Crito's Letters to the Manager of the Edinburgh Theatre 1800. One or two of his letters also appeared in Edinburgh Theatrical Reports for Nov. & Dec. 1800(1801). (Cont next p.)

"Doubling parts is bad, but I never till now saw them tripled. Poor Hallion (even with a lame foot) had three parts in Hamlet. I by no means, however, blame Mr. Kemble for making dupes of the Edinburgh audience so long as they themselves permit it." (1)

A month or two later he continued:-

"Mr. Kemble has palmed upon the public indulgence a race of beings whom Nature never designed for public notice; and vaunts of his experience, no doubt as reproaching us for ingratitude in not giving him as much money as his merits entitle him to." (2)

And again, in July 1798:-

"The after season being now closed, I cannot omit putting Mr. Kemble in mind of his promise to repair the house. I think it was at the end of last winter season I read it; and, Heaven knows, there would be little thanks due to him, altho' he had fulfilled it; because laying embellishment out of the question (which I do not expect from a frugal manager, in these days of scarcity) the hands of the carpenter are absolutely necessary, to prevent the winds of Heaven from visiting the audience too roughly. Repairs, to this extent must be made; otherwise the house will go into ruin; and consequently the manager's golden hopes will be blasted." (3)

Crito was less constructive, but even more bitter.

The following examples will serve to illustrate his style:

"What return have you made to the people of Edinburgh for their unbounded support, their generous efforts made in your favour? Your entrance into office was distinguished by the expulsion from the theatre of some of the oldest favourites of the town..... To make way for whom? The refuse, the scum,

(4) (Continued from Page 107)

They were addressed to the Editor of the Wednesday Packet.

(1) The Letters of Timothy Plain. p.75.

(2) Ibid. p.98.

(3) Ibid. p.182.

the rubbish of those wretched strolling parties who in village barns earn a miserable subsistence from ignorance and stupidity. Need I mention their names? You save me the trouble. Your own playbills for the last seven years contain the most striking assemblage of incapacity which ever presumed to entertain a discerning public..... Not thinking you altogether a fool, I can only ascribe your conduct to two motives - parsimony on your part and jealousy on that of your wife." (1)

"All the alterations I could discover were the white-washing of some of the boxes and a little water-colour daubed over the ceiling."

This drew an angry letter to the Editor of the Caledonian Mercury from one Cassandra, who says:-

"The splendid appearance of the Theatre, obvious to everyone, affords the best answer to this gross calumny." (2)

The manager and the players, however, were not without their champions also. A writer calling himself Vexus protests to the same paper:

"I cannot close without reprobating, in the strongest terms those critics, as they are called, on the performers and performances at the Theatre, which have been on late with great industry obtruded on the public. It is absurd to expect that any company whatever should be composed entirely of first-rate players, and it is not to negligence, or inaccuracy, that these authors confine their invective, but every player is damned that is not perfect in everything. A real lover of the drama, desirous to see the Edinburgh Theatre on a respectable footing would not by these assassinations of character attempt to deprive the industrious actor of that encouragement and applause by which he is stimulated to fresh exertion, and modest merit is seen and rewarded; by which his abilities are gradually expanded, till, nursed by public favour and support, he becomes an ornament to his profession.

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(1) Crito's Letters to the Manager of the Edinburgh Theatre.  
See also supra p. 158 n. 3.

(2) Edinburgh Theatrical Reports.

"Those critics of the stage  
Who, like barbarians, spare nor sex nor age,"

would do much injury to our dramatic amusement, were not their writings so glaringly malicious as entirely to defeat their purpose, and so deficient in judgment and true criticism as to have no weight with any discerning person." (1)

This, in turn, provoked an answer from (presumably) another writer named Amicus Veritatis, who calls this letter "a managerial manifesto" and agrees with Crito that there is much wrong with the Edinburgh theatre. "The attack upon critics," he concludes,

"merits no answer. It is the right of every gentleman who pays for his entertainment to communicate his sentiments of it to the public who are benefited by it. The clash of contending opinions produces truth; the greater the number of critics, the better chance have the public of judging truly (sic) upon the merits of Theatrical representation. It benefits the performer - it whets his industry - it excites his powers and produces an emulation to excel;

'they oft are cruel only to be kind'

..... To expose such characters to the contempt and scorn of the public is the duty of every friend of the drama. If it produce not his reformation, it at least drives him from a sphere in which he is unfit to move, and leaves a vacancy for..... a more deserving performer. (2)

(3)

In 1802, appeared the letters of Candidus, whom I consider the keenest critic of the lot. While he applauds his predecessors, Crito and Timothy Plain who "disappeared

(1) Ibid.

(2) Ibid.

(3) Candidus is said to have been Henry Mayo. His criticisms were addressed to the editor of the Herald and Chronicle. They were published in a collected form with an important introduction and additions as The Theatre, or The Letters of Candidus, 1802.

*but this cannot be true.*

with the papers they patronized", (1) he points out that the severity of their criticisms rather nullified their effect, (2) and announces his intention of observing without prejudice and reporting without malice the performances in the Theatre-Royal. (3) Already a number of his observations have helped us to form a picture of the theatre of his day, (4) and it is scarcely necessary to quote further. None the less, it might be interesting to see how even as good a critic as he may sometimes be bound by tradition:

"Shakespeare..... knew little or nothing of the essential rules of dramatic composition. Hence in many of his plays, the unity of time, place and action is alike disregarded; and the spectator must sometimes witness the events of a dozen years in the course of a couple of hours, and must reconcile himself to the transportation of the dramatic personae, over land and sea, with the facility of one of the genii in an Arabian tale." (5)

A small theatrical publication called The Thespian Inquisitor appeared for about a dozen issues in 1803. It is much on the style of the Edinburgh Theatrical Reports, except that the correspondents' names are not signed. It is not worth detailed notice.

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(1) The Letters of Candidus. Intro. XVII.p.3. Candidus overstates. The Caledonian Mercury continued for many years. The Wednesday Packet, however "was withdrawn on Dec.30th.1801 and nothing has been discovered concerning it." (W.J.Couper. The Edinburgh Periodical Press(1908)II.p.254).

(2) Ibid. p.11.

(3) Ibid. p.9. f.

(4) See supra pp. 56, 58, 59, 70. infra pp. :

(5) Ibid. p.61.

Another rhymster published in 1807 some observations on the company of the theatre under Rock's management, but (1) neither his criticisms nor his verse are very valuable. During this decade also the Monthly Review published a few theatrical notes, but little that could be called dramatic (2) criticism. (3) Mr. Dibdin quotes occasionally from a Theatrical Inquisitor which seems to have appeared between 1812 and (4) 1816. I have not seen it, unfortunately. In 1816, a gentleman called Mr. Pitt brought out a little paper called The Thespian Citizen or Theatrical Censor. Half a dozen numbers, probably all that were published, are in the Edinburgh Public Library. Mr. Pitt is chiefly concerned with the strength of the company which he considers insufficient. He criticises Murray's choice of entertainments in good round terms, referring to

"the unblushing attempt to extend the monopoly already too wide in theatrical concerns to the feats of a Rope Dancer, the grimaces of a Clown or a Tailor's Journey to Brentford. Entertainments of this kind are very well in their place; and Mr. Murray would better consult his own interest and improve his yet unearned interest with the Town by a fair competition with

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- (1) Friendly Hints - Addressed to The Manager of the Theatre-Royal, Edinburgh. 1807. Some of the verse is quoted infra p.
- (2) We may possibly except May 1808.
- (3) e.g. pp. 267 - 274.
- (4) Another little dramatic paper, The Theatre, by E. Range, is mentioned in Scottish Notes and Queries, March 1892 (p.151). It seems to have appeared only eight times in 1813. From the same source I learn of a Thespian Censor or Weekly Dramatic Journal published in 1818. No.1. January 19th. No.111. Feb. 2nd. There seems to be no record of any more.

Grimaldi's humorous and Sachi's agility." (1)

He also writes rather sensibly on the first visit to Edinburgh of Edmund Kean, remarking that "Mr. Kean's acting in general pleases less than it astonishes." (2)

Meanwhile a new note was creeping into Edinburgh newspaper criticism. During the first decade of the century such scattered notices of the theatre as appeared at all seemed definitely influenced by the Advertising Department. In 1811 or 1812, however, they became fuller and more independent, both of the theatre and the public. In 1811, on the one hand, the Courant does not hesitate to say of the drama from The Lady of the Lake, that although the seeker for showy pageantry would be satisfied, it has few chances for the severe critic; (3) and, on the other, in 1812, that "after the fate of the Prince of Tunis, the narrow escape of the Family Legend and the failure of Helga, it will be folly (4) in any dramatic writer to trust an Edinburgh audience!"

In the spring of 1814, John Kemble came for a four weeks' engagement. The critic's sigh of relief is audible over a hundred years:-

"After the greater part of our theatrical season has been spent in the exhibition of scenery and spectacle, "inexplicable dumb show and noise" we have at length had the rational and refreshing enjoyment of seeing the first actor of his day in one of Shakespeare's finest tragedies; and it is an enjoyment upon which we heartily congratulate that part - must we say that small

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- (1) November 25th. 1816.  
 (2) Ibid.  
 (3) Courant, January 17th. 1811.  
 (4) Ibid. January 25th. 1812.

part? - of the public who prefer the gratification of the intellect to that of the eye." (1)

That the newspapers were not considered quite the place for dramatic criticism, however, is shown by the opening sentence of an article headed THE THEATRE in the Gourant in 1816:-

"We trust that we shall not be considered as departing from the legitimate province of a newspaper in making a few remarks connected with a branch of amusement which has, or ought to have, a certain degree of influence upon public manners and even upon public morals." (2)

The founding of the Scotsman in 1817 further strengthened newspaper criticism. The Scotman's references to the theatre were not frequent, but always showed fairness, independence and good sense. In the first issue <sup>(3)</sup> appeared a long discussion of the present state of the theatre and its company, a constructive mixture of praise and blame. Subsequent articles, appearing usually once or twice a month keep up the same excellent standard. In 1821, however, the critic writes:-

"For some time, we have said nothing on the Theatre, because in truth we had nothing to say..... and therefore unless something new - and something more than a mere pageant - is brought out, where is there room for remark or criticism?" (4)

- (1) Courant, March 10th.1814.  
 (2) May 3rd. 1816. Nearly sixty years before the Edinburgh Chronicle (1759-60) had attempted a regular account of theatrical doings, but was forced not only by lack of support, but even violent opposition, on the part of its readers, to give it up. See Dibdin, p.110.  
 (3) January 25th. 1817.  
 (4) March 3rd. 1821.

The most ambitious attempt at regular dramatic criticism was the Dramatic Review a little four page daily which began to appear in 1822. The Scotman's notice of it is so interesting that I give it practically in full:-

Of the Theatre, little more can be said than that it is open to the public without being filled. The company is more lame than weremember to have seen it. This, we should think, was an ill-chosen time for commencing a "Dramatic Review"; but it has been commenced; and from the modesty with which it has been sent forth, both as <sup>its</sup> price appearance and manner, we should wish it success rather than failure. It may be had daily at the moderate expense of one penny - not too much to be given for a play-bill, which the Review contains, along with a notice of the preceding night's entertainments. An indolent man is thus saved the trouble of taking down Mrs. Inchbald's Theatre, or some other book of that description from his library; while if pleased with gentle criticism on performances which could not bear up against severity, he may find some other gratification to boot. Had the Review not been of this humble cast, we should have had grave doubt of its being able to live. Even as it is, we think that the author has more good sense and good feeling than ought to be thrown away on so ungrateful a task. Edinburgh does not supply food enough for dramatic criticism. The performers must generally be of a secondary order. Now and then, it is true, we have an aspirant of talent; but he soon leaves us; and with the exception of one or two respectable individuals, who may be detained by connexions, or other pursuits, our boards are occupied by those who have been unsuccessful, or have little hope of being successful elsewhere. Our dramatic critiques, therefore, must either be very tame, or very unfeeling. We have seen individuals perform night after night and season after season, whom it would be cruel to name; and as to those who deserve better, their merits are either so well known as to give everything which can be said of them an air of commonplace, or so rare, or so moderate, as to give the critic very little occupation..... Even in London, which attracts nearly all the dramatic genius and talent of

the country to itself, and which forstalls the provincial journals, theatrical criticism is often a sort of uphill labour; and if it require forcing, and getting up there, what must it require in Edinburgh?"(1)

Nevertheless, the Dramatic Review flourished, although the "gentle criticism" referred to by the Scotsman did not last. During its first season, it earned the hearty dislike of the Manager by publishing an unofficial but fairly accurate list of the actors' salaries, a statement which showed a deplorable state of affairs. (2) A day or two later, it went even further and printed an estimate of the receipts expenses and profits of the theatre, which showed clearly that Murray was either a bad manager, or a well-to-do man. (3) Murray answered the charges in the Weekly Journal, but without great conviction. (4)

Possibly the most monotonous blemish on this excellent paper was its violent persecution of the actor, Calcraft, whom it singled out for many particularly biting and personal criticisms. Calcraft was not a Kemble or a Macready

(1) October 12th. 1822. See Ibid October 26th.

(2) November 30th. 1822. It is most interesting to note that the idea was suggested in a letter published a short time before (Nov. 20) from Candidus, whom we have no reason to suppose was not our old friend of twenty years before. Candidus apparently collected and supplied the information.

(3) December 3rd.

(4) Weekly Journal December 4, 1822 See also the Review's reply to the reply, published in a supplement of four pages to the issue for December 5th.

(1)

on £3 a week, but he probably did his best.

According to modern standards of dramatic criticism, the Review devoted too much space to the acting and too little to the play itself, it was seldom dull and seems to have enjoyed a deserved popularity. It continued to appear until about the middle of 1825.

The Review had quite a number of imitators, none of which survived long. In these mushroom leaflets, however, may be read the story of the Edinburgh stage during the last year of Scott's life. It is not inspiring. The Theatrical Observer, a daily similar to the Review, ran merrily - and rather capably - for a season in 1823. The Literary Cynosure (1824) had even a shorter life. I have seen only the first number; there may have been one or two more, but it doesn't matter much. The Dramatic Recorder, a two-penny weekly of eight double-column pages appeared for a time in 1825. Some of its articles are useful, and rather well written. I regret its demise. Another weekly called The Dramatic Review and Thespian Inquisition, ran for a month or so in 1827, but without the success of its namesake. In the following year two

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(1) Calcraft (see ) published An Address to the Public (8<sup>o</sup> 1822, Price 6d) in which he took up the cudgels in defense of the management and of his own acting. That these attacks were the result of personal bitterness is clear from a significant letter in the Review, March 26.1825. "I happened last summer to meet the person who started the Dramatic Review first; he made no secret of the hatred he had for Mr. C. [Calfcraft]".

more papers sprang up and died, the Theatrical Journal and the Weekly Dramatic Review. The latter published only six issues. An ambitious Dramatic Censor (by <sup>72</sup>Proteus Porcupine, Esq.) began to appear twice-a-week in September 1829. At first it sold at a half-penny, but Proteus was forced to double his price early in November and made a graceful exit a month later. Another paper called the Theatrical Speculum had a brief career during the summer season of 1831.

With the exception of the weeklies, the Edinburgh Literary Gazette, the Edinburgh Literary Journal and the Weekly Journal,<sup>(1)</sup> which did make some attempt to report the doings in Shakespeare Square, the larger Edinburgh papers by this time were content as a rule to leave the subject to the little theatrical reviews and only occasionally published notices. The editors of all the local papers, except the Scotsman,<sup>(2)</sup> however, were on the free list of the theatre, and they seldom published anything that might displease the manager. One writer says "The tone of indiscriminate eulogium, that, almost without exception<sup>(3)</sup> disfigures their columns, is truly sickening."

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- (1) See infra. 717-8  
 (2) Letter to the Edinburgh Dramatic Recorder, February 16th. 1825. Compare the Dramatic Censor of Nov. 12th. 1842, in which a list of the newspaper pass-holders is given. The Scotsman at that time had at least three.  
 (3) A Cap and Bells for those whom it may Fit, "emanations from the pen of Peregrine Spitfire, Gent." in Nugae Histrionical, 1834. *is given "Add. B. 1"*

Porteus Porcupine, too, lived up to his nom-de-plume:-

"The blockheads of some papers are mere reporters, who speak of the Drama as they would of a Justiciary Trial or a meeting of the Committee of Improvements." (1)

Above all, some of them seem to have been not too conscientious about seeing the play before they ventured to write about it. The Chronicle was once caught out when it spoke kindly about the performance of Mr. J.Mason; the Dramatic Review and Thespian Inquisition dryly pointed out that young Mason was then on the other side of the Channel. (2) Even the Weekly Journal was apparently not infallible, for Porcupine accuses it, too, of having remarked on a play which was not performed. (3) Next day, he decided to show up the Scotsman, the Weekly Journal and the Mercury. "We don't know," says he maliciously,

"but that for the fun of the thing we will occasionally amuse ourselves with probing their nonsense and showing the public what a set of raving idiots, (with exceptions) at present preside over the theatrical taste of Edinburgh." (4)

Had he not mentioned specifically The Weekly Journal, I should have thought it one of the exceptions to which he referred, for this paper certainly bore an excellent

(1) Dramatic Censor. November 25th. 1829.

(2) November 15th. 1827.

(3) Dramatic Censor. October 16.1829.

(4) Ibid. Oct. 17th. (c.f. Dramatic Review. Oct. 11th.1822. on the Observer)

reputation for critical acumen and integrity. Until 1817 practically no theatrical news or comment appeared in its pages, but when the Editorship was taken by James Ballantyne it began to publish them with some regularity. Several of the other papers have praised the Journal in the highest terms. The Scotsman (1821) thinks it perhaps "too laudatory" but "never conducted on blackguard principles; and on dramatic and musical subjects [it] has been generally more than respectable. <sup>(1)</sup> The Dramatic Recorder (1825) goes further and calls its editor "the best dramatic critic in Edinburgh". <sup>(2)</sup>

Unfortunately, most of the Edinburgh dramatic critics wrote anonymously. James Ballantyne is perhaps the only one we know by name though there is a strong probability that the Scotsman articles were written by the editors themselves, William Richie, and Charles Maclaren. W.H. Logan, whose Nugae Histrionicae and Fragmenta Scots<sup>a</sup> Dramatica are useful to the student of theatrical history, was in 1835 the editor of The Edinburgh Theatrical and Musical Review, and was probably connected earlier with some other paper. Old Cerberus, the entertaining critic of the Literary Journal has told me no more than that he was a member of the Six-foot Club and felt that "the highest happiness to be enjoyed on earth consists in seeing a Christmas pantomime."

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- (1) August 11th. 1821. Ballantyne had already done the theatres for some years for The Courant - See Bibliography under his name.
- (2) March 6th. 1825.

In 1859, Dr. Chambers wrote of the theatre forty years before:-

"Hogg, J.G.Lockart, Professor Wilson, and the Ballantynes, and many other critics whose word were law to both author and actor, nightly graced the house." (1)

This, however, is hardly accurate, for though James and John Ballantyne certainly had a reputation as critics the others contributed little. Wilson occasionally mentions the theatre and the players in the Noctes<sup>(2)</sup>.~~xxx~~ I have found no evidence that Lockart attempted dramatic criticism at all; but if we may judge by his absurd remark about Scott's Auchindrane - that the passage "where the murdered corpse floats upright in the wake of the assassin's bark..... may bear comparison with anything but Shakespeare"<sup>(3)</sup> - he had little talent in that direction. Jamie Hogg seems to have intended to write about the Edinburgh theatre in his Spy, but only one unimportant article ever appeared.<sup>(4)</sup> We are left with "many other critics", which is not after all very helpful.

Such, then, were the thestrical conditions in Edinburgh as Scott knew them. We shall in the next section notice how intimately connected he was not only with the Edinburgh theatre but with the English drama in general, a connection

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- (1) Op.cit. p.17.  
 (2) e.g. Blackwood's Magazine, June 1826; etc.  
 (3) Life of Scott.  
 (4) November 24th.1810. This particular article is unsigned, but was probably by Hogg. "Greatly more than one-half the articles were written by himself". (Edinburgh Magazine. February 1818).

thought by Mr. Dibdin to be the most important single influence toward regeneration of dramatic art in Scotland, and one also from which Scott himself derived definite benefit.

## Chapter II

### SCOTT'S LIFELONG INTEREST IN THINGS DRAMATIC.

CHAPTER II.SCOTT'S LIFELONG INTEREST IN THINGS DRAMATIC.

Although we may agree with the late William Archer that in the early Nineteenth Century, our drama passed through its winter solstice, this drab and uninspired period of its history is brightened to some degree by the interest and influence of Sir Walter. That this interest should have been more than dillitante is scarcely, I think, to be expected. I am rather surprised, none the less, that although ample material is to be found in the different biographies and memoirs about him no one has thought it worth while to present concisely the story of his lifelong connection with the theatre and its folk. (1) This I propose to do, therefore, in this chapter. So well known are the general circumstances of his life that we need touch upon them no more than is necessary (2) to follow his own advice, and preserve a certain continuity.

(1) Since writing this paragraph I have seen the very concise article on the subject by Dame Una Pope-Hennessy in the Scots Magazine. (1932) September

(2) c.f. Periodical Criticism I. p.82.

§ 1.

YOUTH.

Unlike many children of his time and circumstances, Scott tasted early of the sweets of the theatre. He saw his first play before he was yet four, at Bath, when he had been sent with his aunt in the hope of curing his lameness. It was his uncle, Captain Robert Scott, who introduced to him this magic land. "The play," Scott tells us in his autobiographical memoir thirty years later, "was As you like It, and the witchery of the whole scene is alive in my mind at this moment." (1) His review of Boaden's Life of John Kemble, in 1826, provided a happy opportunity of giving a fuller account of his sensations that evening. He recalls with delight

"The unusual form of the house, filled with such groups of crowded spectators, themselves an extraordinary spectacle to the eye which has never witnessed it before, yet all intent upon that wide and mystic curtain whose dusky undulations permit us now and then to discern the momentary glitter of some gaudy form or the spangles of some sandaled foot that trips lightly within; then the light, brilliant as that of day! - then the music, which in itself a treat sufficient in every other situation, our inexperience mistakes for the very play we came to witness - then the slow rise of the shadowy curtain, disclosing as if by actual magic, a new land with woods and mountains and lakes, lighted, it seems to me, by another sun, and inhabited by a race of beings different from ourselves, whose language is poetry,

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(1) Lechart I. 30.

whose dress, demeanor and sentiments seem something supernatural and whose whole actions and discourse are calculated not for the ordinary tone of everyday life but to excite the stronger and more powerful faculties - to meet with sorrow - overpower with terror - astonish with the marvellous - or convulse with irresistible laughter - all these wonders stamp indelible impressions on the memory. Those mixed feelings also which perplex us between a sense that the scene is but a plaything and an interest which ever and anon surprises us into a transient belief that that which so strongly affects us cannot be fictitious - those mixed and puzzling feelings also are exciting in the highest degree. Then there are the bursts of applause, like distant thunder, and the permission afforded to clap our little hands and add our own scream of delight to a sound so commanding. All this, - and much - much more, is fresh in our memory, although when we felt these sensations, we looked upon the stage that Garrick had not yet left. It is now a long while since, yet we have not passed many hours of such unmixed delight. " (1)

At Bath, also, Scott met John Home, the venerable author of Douglas, who had come to the watering place with his invalid wife. The Homes were friends of the Scott family, and the lad was often invited to accompany them driving on the Downs. Later they took a small villa not far from Edinburgh and Walter often visited there in his boyhood. His recollection of the dramatist, though pleasing, was not a very strong one for in discussing Home's work for the Quarterly in June 1827, he recalled only

Home's pale ghost just gliding from the Stage.

About four years after the holiday at Bath, he went with his aunt on another health trip, this time to the sandy beach of Preston Pans. To the charm of his Aunt Jenny

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(1) Periodical Criticism IV. 155.

Scott probably owed the interest of George Constable, a retired lawyer and friend of his father who might otherwise have taken little notice of an eager-eyed child with a lame foot. Upon this ally of his Scott later based something of the character of Jonathan Oldbuck in The Antiquary, though he himself admits that his friend was not so decided a hater of womankind as his representative Monkbarns.<sup>(1)</sup>

"I derived," Scott tells us, "a great deal of curious information from George Constable, both at this early period, and afterwards. He was constantly philandering about my aunt and of course very kind to me. He was the first person who told me about Falstaff and Hotspur and other characters in Shakespeare. What idea I annexed, I know not, but I must have annexed some, for I remember quite well being interested on the subject. Indeed I rather suspect that children derive impulses of a powerful and important kind in hearing things that they cannot entirely comprehend; and therefore that to write down to children's understanding is a mistake: set them on the scent and let them puzzle it out." (2)

This seems to have been precisely what young Walter did. His reading, both that which Mrs. Scott encouraged her children to do aloud in the family circle and that which he soon learned to do for himself, would amaze the modern child of twice his years, and tended rapidly to develop his appreciation of the greater and more difficult forms of literature. Such books as Pope's Iliad, Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress and the mighty Paradise Lost were

(1) Scott's note to Autobiography (Lochart I.33) c.f. The Antiquary, (Advertisement, iv) and the introduction to Chronicles of the Canongate, xvii.

(2) Autobiography:(Lochart I.33.)

certainly never "written down" for this astonishing boy of six. In 1778 he began to attend the second class of the Grammar School, or as it is called, the High School of Edinburgh. Here he was, he tells us, "a brighter figure in the yards than in the class."<sup>(1)</sup> At this tender age he was subjected, according to the barbarous custom of the time, to Caesar, Livy and Sallust in prose, and Vergil Horace and Terence in verse; but Scott, though quick to understand and appreciate the meaning of the author,<sup>(2)</sup> was not a brilliant classical scholar. On the otherhand he devoured with eagerness volumes of poetry, travels and history, "not forgetting the usual, or rather ten times the usual quantity of fairy tales, eastern stories, romances"<sup>(3)</sup> and whatever else he could lay his hands on.

It was inevitable that he should early discover the joys of the text of Shakespeare. His mother, who was evidently a woman of taste and discernment, used to have him read from Pope's translation of Homer, and occasionally from the Evergreen of Allan Ramsay, but she seems to have allowed him to discover Shakespeare for himself. Although his tutor thought it almost a sin to open a profane play or poem,<sup>(4)</sup> the performance of As you like It and the conversation of George Constable had stirred young Walter's

(1) Lochart I. 41.

(2) None the less he had no hesitation years afterward in disagreeing with "the ingenious Schlängel" over some point in Greek drama. (Essay on Drama, Prose Works VI p. 257)

(3) Autobiography (Lochart I.49).

(4) Ibid.

imagination as strongly as his own reading had developed his intellect and taste. He found, he tells us, in his mother's dressing-room, where he was sleeping at the time,

"Some odd volumes of Shakespeare, nor can I easily forget the rapture with which I sate up in my shirt reading them by the light of the fire in her apartment, until the bustle of the family rising from supper warned me that it was time to creep back to my bed where I was supposed to have been safely deposited since nine o'clock." (1)

Nor was the practical side of the drama neglected. Several times, in his critical pieces, Scott has called attention to the love of representation inherent in human nature. In the article on Kemble he says:

"The very first amusement of children is to get up a scene, to represent, to the best of their skill, papa and mama, the coachman and his horses; and even He, formidable with the birchen sceptre is mimicked in the exercise ground by the urchins of whom he is the terror in the school.

"At a more advanced period of life we have mimicry of tone and dialect, and masques and disguises; then little scenes are preconcerted, which at first prescribe only the business of a plot, leaving the actors to fill up the language extempore from their mother wit; then one of more fancy is employed to write the dialogue." (2)

Scott himself has failed to record anything more definite about the fireside dramatics in George Square, but Lochart is more helpful.

"I am reminded," he says, "by a communication from a lady of the Ramelstone family that Mrs. Scott, who had, she says 'a turn for literature quite uncommon among the ladies of the time' encouraged

(1) Autobiography (Lochart I. 49)

(2) Prose Works XX. 154.

her son in his passion for Shakespeare, that his plays and the Arabian Nights were often read aloud in the family circle by Walter and served to spend many a happy evening hour' - nay, that however good Mitchell [the Presbyterian tutor] (1) may have frowned at such a suggestion, even Mr. Scott made little objection to his children and some of their young friends, getting up private theatricals in the drawing-room after the lessons of the day were over. The lady adds that Walter was always the manager and had the whole charge of the affair, and that the favourite piece, unsuitably enough, used to be Jane Shore (2) in which he was the Hastings, his sister the Alicia. I have heard from another friend of the family that Richard III was also attempted and that Walter took the part of the Duke of Gloucester observing that 'the limp would do well enough to represent the hump.' (3)

Years later Scott recalled in conversation other amateur dramatics of his boyhood, when Murray, Clerk, Adam Ferguson and he used to act plays at Simprim, assisted by Dr. Robertson, Murray's tutor. Ferguson was prompter, orchestra and audience, and as Scott said, representing the whole pit, kicked up an O.P. row by anticipation.(4)

In addition to Scott's natural bent for reading, his circumstances combined to give him ample if unwelcome opportunity. While he was convalescing from the haemorrhage of his thirteenth year, his bed, we read "was piled with a constant succession of works of imagination, and sad realities were forgotten amidst the brilliant

(1) See Scott's description of him, Autobiography (Lochart I.41.)

(2) Rowe's play founded on the well known story of Edward III's mistress, who preferred a life of gaudy pleasure with the monarch to one of domestic felicity with a fond and doting husband. Like most of Rowe's works it is rather flowery, but has many tender and beautiful scenes. It was at that time often played in English theatres.

(3) Lochart I. 154.

(4) Lochart I. 301; VI.261.

day-dreams of a genius drinking unwearied from the eternal fountains of Spenser and Shakespeare."<sup>(1)</sup>

At the same time we have more than one hint that the attractions devised by Messrs. Digges, Wilkinson and Jackson drew him more than occasionally to the struggling little playhouse on the north side of the Bridge. In 1786 he had entered into indentures as his father's apprentice, and although he hated the confinement and the dry legal drudgery, he was ambitious and willing to work "hard and well." His task was alleviated somewhat by the three-pence per folio page that he was paid for copying legal documents, which small income he divided into a small fund for the menus plaisirs of the circulating library and the theatre, and this, he remarks, "was no trifling incentive to labour."<sup>(2)</sup> Occasionally he wrote one hundred and twenty folio pages, which must have amounted to at least ten thousand words within twenty-four hours!<sup>(3)</sup> In a letter to Morrit, written long afterwards, he recalls that as a youth he used often to sit in the Box of old Lady Balcanes, she of the brilliant family of girls.<sup>(4)</sup> About this time, also, Scott tells us in the General Introduction to his "Magnum Opus", the lapse of two years during which he was left to the exercise of his own free will, was

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- (1) Lochart I. 174.  
 (2) Autobiography (Lochart I. 61).  
 (3) Lochart I. 182.  
 (4) Familiar Letters. I.228.

followed by a temporary residence in the country where he was again very lonely but for the amusement derived from a good old-fashioned library.

"The vague and wild use which I made of this advantage I cannot describe better than by referring my reader to the desultory studies of Waverley in a similar situation which were imitated from recollections of my own. It must be understood that the resemblance extends no farther."(1)

The description referred to was that in the third chapter of Volume One, describing the education of the hero, who was at that time some fifteen years of age. He had

"read and stored in a memory of uncommon tenacity much curious though ill-arranged and miscellaneous information. In English literature he was master of Shakespeare and Milton, of our earlier dramatic authors and of many picturesque and interesting passages from our old historical chronicles."

Scott's testimony about his own range of knowledge is characterized by Lochart as well below the mark. "I shall only add," he observes, "that..... in almost every case, he appears to have under-rated his own attainments."(2) This testimony gives us still more reason, when Scott speaks of himself even by proxy as "master" of Shakespeare, to regard it as significant.

As autobiographical, too, we must regard much of Redgauntlet. Here, suggests Dr. Brewer, "I believe anyone familiar with Scott's early life will agree we have portrayed in Alan Fairford and Darsie Latimer respectively,

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(1) The Waverley Novels, General Introduction, 1828.

(2) Lochart I. 175.

Scott and William Clerk, his closest friend of this period..... In addition to the quotation on the title page of this novel, I have found twenty-nine references to eighteen plays [of Shakespeare.] A very large part of them occur in the correspondence of the two young men. It is worth observing that Darsie, who represents Clerk is, if anything, better informed than Alan.<sup>(1)</sup>

In later years, Clerk remained an intimate of Scott's, although as John Buchan says, he was a Whig in politics, and had no share in his literary and sporting interests.

Another intimate of this early period was William Erskine, a young advocate who had derived from Andrew MacDonald, the unfortunate but ingenious author of Vimonda, a strong passion for Elizabethan literature, more especially the Elizabethan dramatists. The influence of this companion was, however, particularly serviceable to Scott in steering him through the mingled absurdities and subtilities of German literature which began doubtless about this time to take a prominent place in his mental development.<sup>(2)</sup>

The German studies which engaged Scott and his friends about this time form the gateway to his literary career. The sudden interest taken in German literature by Scotsmen may be traced, Scott tells us in one of his prefaces,<sup>(3)</sup> to a paper read in 1788 before the Royal Society of Edinburgh by

(1) Wilmon Brewer: Shakespeare's Influence on Sir Walter Scott (1925) p.16.

(2) See Lochart I. 279.

(3) Essay on the Imitation of the Ancient Ballad. See Lochart I. 276.

Henry MacKenzie, the venerable author of The Man of Feeling.

"The literary persons of Edinburgh were then first made aware of the existence of works of genius in a language cognate with the English and possessed of the same manly force of expression; they learned at the same time that the taste which dictated the German compositions was of a kind as rarely allied to the English as their language; those who from their youth were accustomed to admire Shakespeare and Milton became for the first time acquainted with a race of poets who had the same lofty ambition to spurn the flaming boundaries of the universe and investigate the realms of Chaos and Old Night; and of dramatists who, disclaiming the pedantry of the unities, sought at the expense of occasional improbabilities and extravagance to present life on the stage in the scenes of wildest contrast and in all its boundless variety of character." (1)

In Edinburgh, Scott goes on to say, the remarkable similarity of German and lowland Scottish encouraged a number of his friends to form a class to study the language which met regularly for some years. When their teacher, Dr. Willick, a medical man, had done his best, and the young students had acquired a respectable working knowledge, they turned each to his own pursuits. Some, like John Macfarlane, were attracted by the intricacies of Kantian philosophy, but Scott, with Clerk and Erskine, found his chief interest in the popular belles lettres of Germany. The result of this we shall see presently.

Mention has already been made of Scott's part in the riot at the Theatre-Royal, in April 1794, which resulted in his being, with five others, bound over to keep the peace. In

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(1) Ibid.

(1)  
 a letter to Simprim shortly afterwards he chuckled that he had no less than three broken heads laid to his charge, and seems rather more pleased than ashamed of his first and only non-professional appearance before the magistrates. Sir Alexander Wood, another of the Loyalist party in the fight said long afterwards:

"Walter was certainly our Coryphaeus and signaled himself splendidly in this desperate fray; and nothing used to afford him more delight afterwards than dramatizing the incidents. Some of the most efficient of our allies were persons previously unknown to him, and of several of these whom he had particularly observed, he never lost sight afterwards. There were, I believe, cases in which they owed most valuable assistance in life to his recollection of the playhouse row." (2)

Lochart adds in illustration that when Scott's interest was requested on behalf of Donald McLean, a Writer to the Signet, for some Exchequer office thirty years later, his reply was "To be sure! did he not sound the charge upon Paddy? Can I ever forget Donald's 'Sticks by G - t!'" (3)

Scott's attention was now divided between the business of the courts of law and his studies particularly in German literature. It was undoubtedly the stimulus of the early translation of Schiller's Robbers by his friend  
 (4)  
 Tytler that brought about his own experiments in the same line. Though he had written and discarded a poem called

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(1) Patrick Murray of Simprim. See Letters I. 30

(2) Quoted by Lochart I. 306.

(3) Ibid, note.

(4) A.F.Tytler's translation was published in 17 X See Lochart I. 278.

the Siege of Granada, probably before 1790, his literary work up to 1798 consisted mainly of "a few sonnets to his mistress's eyebrow."<sup>(1)</sup> In this year he published his first volume, a series of translations from the German of Bürger. Though it certainly possesses considerable merit, we must stay only to mention it and proceed three years to its successor, another translation, this time from Goethe, a poet for whom Scott had a lifelong admiration.<sup>(2)</sup> Goetz von Berlichingen is neither the sublimest nor the most popular of Goethe's dramatic works, and though Scott made a commendable job of it, his first ambitious venture into the field of letters was rather ill-timed.<sup>(3)</sup>

"To have had a fair chance with the English public," says Lochart, "his first drama ought to have been translated ten years before. The imitators had been more fortunate than the master, and this work which constitutes one of the most important landmarks in the history of German literature had not come even into Scott's hands until he had familiarized himself with the ideas which it first opened in the feeble and puny mimicry of writers already forgotten. He readily discovered the vast gulf which separated Goethe from the German dramatists on whom he had heretofore

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- (1) Lochart I. 184, 333. Mr. Davidson Cook has just published a number of early poems which were discovered while preparing the Centenary Edition of the Letters. The poems are addressed to a young woman called Jenny \_\_\_\_\_, of Kelso.
- (2) See his correspondence with Goethe, quoted by Lochart (IX. 91 - 7).
- (3) Among his other German translations at this time was a translated version of Schiller's Fiesco of which Lochart seems to have been unaware, as well as several others which seem to have been lost. Scott told Mrs. Hughes, however, that he thought Fiesco a finer thing than Goetz (See Letters and Recollections of Sir Walter Scott, by Mrs. Hughes p.224).

been employing himself; but the public in general drew no such distinctions, and the English Goetz was soon afterwards condemned to oblivion through the unsparing ridicule showered on whatever bore the name of German Play by the inimitable caricature of The Rovers." (1)

Scott appears to have received twenty-five guineas for the copyright, as well as a certain amount of recognition as a literary man. (2)

Later in the same year appeared The House of Aspen, a tragedy adapted from the work of Viet Weber, a minor German writer. This play, though refused at the time by John Kemble, was actually produced in London and Edinburgh after its publication in 1829. Scott himself never considered it very seriously. (3)

Scott's marriage to Miss Carpenter took place at Christmas 1797. Lady Scott had all the Frenchwoman's love of the gaities and intellectual stimulation of the theatre, and we scarcely need Lochart's evidence that the Scotts often spent an evening in Shakespeare Square. "Scott and Erskine," he says, "had always been fond of the theatre; the pretty bride was passionately so - and I doubt if they ever spent a week in Edinburgh without indulging themselves in this amusement." (4)

- (1) Lochart II. 15. The Rovers was a successful burlesque of the wild absurdities of German drama of the Kotzebue school by Canning and Ellis, and published in The Anti-Jacobin Review.
- (2) Ibid. 14. Scott's translation, none the less was considered good enough for inclusion in the English edition of Goethe's works published in 1851.
- (3) See infra p. 252 for details of this play.
- (4) Lochart II. 4.

It is clear, also, that Scott had been doing a certain amount of critical thinking on the subject of English drama. As we know, he had already made himself master of Shakespeare, and read all he could get of the Elizabethan and Restoration dramatists. Of Marlowe's Dr. Faustus he had in 1797 jotted in his note-book "a very remarkable thing. Grand subject - end grand."<sup>(1)</sup> In 1805, hearing that William Gifford was planning an edition of Beaumont and Fletcher, he offered to give him the benefit of some miscellaneous notes, which he had "long since made upon the margin of their works."<sup>(2)</sup> Although he certainly projected such an edition, as well as one of Shakespeare, uniform with his Massenger Jonson and Ford, Gifford never completed the work. Scott himself mentioned the lack of an editor to Constable in 1808, "which makes me sincerely regret my hands being so full, as it is a task I should have liked excessively."<sup>(3)</sup> The notes which he mentioned were later used in 1810 by poor mad Weber, whose edition Scott dismissed as "too carelessly done to be reputable."<sup>(4)</sup>

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{1} Quoted Ibid I. 362.

{2} Ibid II. 205. It might be of interest to note that in introducing his war song for the Edinburgh dragoons, he made use of a long speech from Bonduca. See Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border IV. p.230.

{3} Letters II. 112.

{4} This particular phrase occurs in his Journal March 10th 1826. c.f. Lochart III.302. In 1811, however, we find him writing to Weber about his edition of Ford: "which I think sets you up as an admirable dramatic editor." (Letters III.32). Weber, it will be remembered, once tried, in a fit of insanity, to kill him. (Lochart IV.148-9).

In 1805, when The Lay of the Last Minstrel was published, Scott had reached the age of four and thirty. We have seen his definite interest in the drama and the theatre, an interest that showed itself in many different ways. On the threshold of his career as a popular writer we may perhaps make a sort of digression and discuss, in a piece, as it were, another and more personal aspect of his interest, his friendships, with some people of the theatre.

## § 2.

THEATRICAL FRIENDSHIPS.

Most of Scott's biographers have alluded to his intimacy with some of the leading actors and actresses of his day, and he himself has written with charm on the pleasure and value of such friendships.

"We are not," he says, late in life, "to be contented with the scraps which can be collected about Burbadge and Alleyn, Kempe and Taylor:- we must also learn what can be told of the distinguished performers of our own time. We want to see these when divested of the pomp and circumstance with which the scene invests them. We desire to know whether we may venture to speak above our breath, or be guilty of a smile in the presence of Mrs. Siddons; whether it be possible to look grave in that of Siston; whether Matthews has as many dramatic portraits in his gallery as he can paint in his own person; if he who plays the fool on the stage can be a man of sense in the parlour; and if the heroine looks still the angel after she has laid aside her chopine and come down a step nearer to the earth.

"And let it not be said that this enquiry into the private history of the scenic artists is capricious or resembles that of a child who cries to have the toy which has been shown him placed in his own hand that he may see what it is made of. On the contrary there is a natural touch of philosophy in our curiosity. It is rational enough to wish to discover what sort of persons are those who can assume or lay aside at pleasure the semblance of human passion, and who, by dint of sympathy compel the smiles and tears of others, when they have dropped their magic mantle and retired into the circle of social life." (1)

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(1) On Boaden's Life of Kemble for the Quarterly in 1826. (Prose Works, XX, p.162).

Scott's friendship and business connections with his old school-fellows, James and John Ballantyne, gave him an opportunity of meeting most of the theatrical people who came to Edinburgh; for the brothers (whom Scott delighted to call Aldiborontiphoscophornio and Rigdumfunnidos after two characters, a grave and a gay, in a farce of Henry Carey's <sup>(1)</sup>) were excellent critics and took a warm personal interest in the success of the theatre. <sup>(2)</sup> One of the most amusing passages in Lochart's biography is his description of these two, who played so curious a part in Scott's <sup>(3)</sup> career.

"They both entertained him," he says with some puzzlement, "they both loved and revered him; and, I believe, would have shed their heart's blood in his service; but they both as men of affairs deeply injured him - and above all the day that brought John into pecuniary connexion with him was the blackest in his calendar. A more reckless, thoughtless improvident adventurer never rushed into the serious responsibilities of business; but his cleverness, his vivacity, his unaffected zeal, his gay fancy, always seeing the gay side of everything, his imperturbable good humour and buoyant elasticity of spirits made and kept him such a favourite that I believe Scott would as soon have ordered his dog to be hanged as harboured, in his darkest hour of perplexity, the least thought of discarding "jocund Johnny"." <sup>(4)</sup>

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- (1) Chrononhotonthologos (1734). Carey is more noted, however for his song Sally in our Alley which is still known, and because he was the great-grandfather of the famous Edmund Kean. Scott was fond of these delightful names, and used them to distinguish Boaden and Kelley in his review of their work in the Quarterly (1826 - Prose Works XX). See also a quaint allusion to them in a letter to Sharpe. (Letters III.17).
- (2) James, especially. See supra p.118 and Lochart III.p.215.
- (3) III. 117. f. (Chapter 18).
- (4) Ibid, 121.

Another contrasting picture is given, much later in Lochart's account,<sup>(1)</sup> of dinner parties at the homes of James and John. James had his solid spacious residence in St. John Street, adjoining the Cannongate. Here Aldiborontiphoscophornio loved to preside over a feast of aldermanic display mustering all he could of the dignity of John Kemble, and rising with the cloths to spout sonorously the formula of Macbeth -

"Fill full!

I drink to the general joy of the whole table!" and afterwards to sing some of his fine songs or solemnly read extracts from the latest novel then in his press by the mysterious author of Waverley. A dinner with John was a different sort of affair even though most of the guests were the same. He lived near Trinity by the Firth of Forth in a villa which he called Harmony Hall, a retreat of gardens and perfumed conservatories, which the little man had contrived to invest with an air of its own, contrasting most strikingly with the solid bourgeois snugness of his brother's house off the Cannongate. John too, says Lochart, was a married man, but he had provided himself with a private wing, safe-guarded by entrances "so narrow that it was impossible for the handsome and portly lady who bore his name to force her person through any one of them."

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(1) Lochart V. 343 f.

John's trips to Paris had furnished the means and opportunity of furnishing his place with many objects of virtu and his rooms were as gay and comfortable as any in the country. On the walls, amid his innumerable mirrors, we read, were many pictures of theatrical subjects - many of them portraits of beautiful actresses, - the same Woffingtons, Bellamys and Kitty Clives that later found their way into the gallery of Charles Mathews at Highgate.

"Here that exquisite comedian's own mimicries and parodies were the life and soul of many a festival; and here, too, he gathered from his facetious host not a few of the richest materials for his at homes and monopolylogues. But indeed whatever actor or singer of eminence visited Edinburgh, of the evenings when he did not perform several were sure to be reserved for Trinity. Here Braham quavered and here Liston drolled his best - here Johnstone and Murray and Yates mixed jest and stave - here Kean revelled and rioted - and here the Roman Kemble often played the Greek from sunset to dawn. Nor did the popular cantatrice or danseuse of the time disdain to freshen her roses, after a laborious week, amid these Paphian arbours of Harmony Hall." (1)

Here, too, Scott was fond of a more than occasional dinner and an evening of conviviality in such jolly company.

But though he owed to the Ballantynes most of his early theatrical acquaintances, he continued many of them on his own account. As early as his circumstances permitted him to practice extended hospitality, he began to

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(1) Ibid V.349.

entertain several of these friends at his own home. The first of his guests seems to have been the tragedian Charles Mayne Young, <sup>(1)</sup> of whom he speaks in 1803 not only as a friend but as a valuable addition to the society of Edinburgh. <sup>(2)</sup> Young, 'as yet unknown to fame', had played leads in Jackson's company during the whole 1802 season; and his friendship with Scott, begun at that time lasted until the end, for never did Young come to Scotland without visiting him. <sup>(3)</sup>

About the same time he became acquainted with Sarah <sup>(4)</sup> Smith, afterwards Mrs. George Bartley, who had come originally from Bath, and spent three years in Edinburgh under the management of Stephen Kemble. She had in 1801 retired from the stage in disgust, but was forced by circumstances to return. As early as 1807 Scott said he <sup>(5)</sup> thought her second only to Mrs. Siddons, and she later became, in fact, one of the leading claimants for the dramatic throne so reluctantly vacated by the great actress. In August, 1807 Scott wrote some verses for her benefit night, but unfortunately they arrived too <sup>(6)</sup> late for her to deliver. He corresponded regularly with her during the next few years, giving her help and

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- (1) Young was considered by many as Kemble's most serious rival in Hamlet. See Memoirs by his son, Julian (1871)
- (2) Lochart III.212. c.f. Letters II.30,88.
- (3) Ibid.
- (4) See D.N.B. under her married name.
- (5) Familiar Letters I. 78
- (6) In Poetical Works. See Dibdin. op.cit.251.

good advice. In the spring of 1812, she came to Edinburgh for a short engagement while Scott was busy moving to Ashestiel. He writes to a mutual friend:

"I was honoured, my dear Lady Avanley, by the kind letter which you sent me with our friend Miss Smith, whose talents are I hope receiving at Edinburgh the full meed of honourable applause which they so highly merit. It is very much against my will that I am forced to speak of them by report alone for this being the term of removing I am under the necessity of being at this farm to superintend the transference of my goods and chattels, a most miscellaneous collection, to a small property about five miles down the Tweed, which I purchased last year."

A day or two later he continues from Edinburgh:

"I have got here at length and had the pleasure to hear Miss Smith speak the Ode on the Passions (1) charmingly last night. It was her benefit and the house was tolerable, though not as good as she deserves, being a very good girl, as well as an excellent performer." (2)

Opinions differed about Sarah Smith's ability. W.C.Macready dismisses her in his *Reminiscences* as only an unsuccessful imitator of la Siddons.

(1) In this Ode of Collins', the reciter has to personify the passions in their greatest activity, which implies such extravagance in the delivery that nothing can possibly save it from being ludicrous but the purest taste and most skilful elocution. Donaldson, op.cit.49, declares that she delivered it in a style that defied all competition.

(2) Letters III. 122.123. The Edinburgh newspapers, however, which three years later published columns at a time in praise of her rival Miss O'Neill seemed to have ignored this engagement entirely. Even the voluminous Dibdin merely mentions it (p.315) c.f. Letters III. 454.

"She has," he says, "a good voice and what would be called a good stage face; but of the soul which goes to the making of an artist, there was none. Vehemence and noise were with her as with so many mediocre performers, the interpreters of passion."(1)

Macready tells with some gusto how Young "cured" her of a nightly fainting fit that quite ruined the single good speech of a young actor called Huntley. However right or wrong Macready may have been, she remained for many years one of Scott's favourite performers and valued friends. His remark to Joanna Baillie in 1813, however, is interesting:

"She is the leading tragic actress after Mrs. Siddons, but the interval is more distant than I could wish for the sake of my little friend who is nevertheless an excellent Actress." (2)

Charles Mathews, the comedian, was often Scott's guest while in the north, as well as a familiar companion when Scott happened to be in London. Mathews, whom Edward Fitzball once called "the theatrical eel with the golden skin" (3) was always good company, and he and Scott were mutual admirers. Lochart has given us a picture of the group about the table when Mathews was gaily slipping in and out of his golden skins:

"Indeed I have seen this Proteus dramatize the whole Ballantyne group with equal success - while Rigdumfunnidus screamed with delight and Andiborontiphoscophornio faintly chuckled, and the Sheriff, gently smiling, pushed round his decanters."(4)

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(1) W.C. Macready, Reminiscences I.160.

(2) Letters III. 390.

(3) Fitzball Edward - Thirty-five Years of a Dramatic Author's Life. II. 163.

(4) Lochart III. 225. The following note (1839) is worth quoting: "Perhaps the richest item in Matthew's social budget was the scene alleged to have occurred when he himself communicated to the two Ballantynes the new titles which the Sheriff had conferred on them. Rigdum's satisfaction with his own cap and bells, and the (Cont.p.144.

Another picturesque anecdote of Mathews is given by Benson Hill, from whom we have already drawn valuable information about the Edinburgh Theatre and its affairs.

Mathews told us, chuckles Hill,

"of a recent meeting with his idol, Sir Walter, at a literary dinner party. I exclaimed 'That must have been delightful'. 'No it wasn't; to be with the very best talker on earth, not excepting Coleridge or the King would have been Heaven, but just place yourself in my situation! Out of the men and women present two were victims of nervous affections. Of course one sat opposite to me, the other on my right hand. Mr. Palsy and Mrs. Paralysis. The man was a poor galvanized object, worse than Paddy W[eeke?]. The lady a sweet creature but for those accursed nods, becks and twitches. I wished to be attentive for her father's sake and her husband's. But - how could I? No rest for either eyes or ears. Snort goes one. Start goes t'other! Waggle here, bounce there! Now why will persons who can't keep themselves still for one moment ever venture into society? So very distressing! and nobody else seemed to mind 'em; used to it, liked it!' Throughout this speech the foe to nervous fidget was unconsciously indulging his organ of order by placing everything on our little table at right lines; as he ceased he confirmed our opinion of his perfect quietude by running his fingers through his hair and uttering a snop of Mackaw-like sonorosity." (1)

In his review of Kelly's Reminiscences in 1826, Scott speaks of him as "driven from the public stage to make way for puppets and pageants and compelled to exert his talents, so extraordinary for versatility and inexhaustible resource, in making his own fortune instead of enriching the patentees." (2)

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(4) CONTINUED FROM Previous Page (No.143):-

other's indignant incredulity passing by degrees into tragical horror made a delicious contrast."

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- (1) op.cit. II. 75.  
 (2) Prose Works. XX.243.

Others of his friends were the comedian Liston "whose face is a comedy and whose mere utterance makes a jest out of dulness itself,"<sup>(1)</sup> and Jack Bannister "honest Jack, who in private character as upon the stage formed so excellent a representation of the national character of Old England - Jack Bannister whom even footpads could not find it in their heart to injure."<sup>(2)</sup>

Of one of the chief of his theatrical cronies - if such be not too incongruous a term to apply to "the Roman" John Philip Kemble, - Scott has written at some length in his review of Boaden's Life of Kemble in 1826. He appears to have met the actor and his famous sister Sarah Siddons during his spring visits to London after the first establishment of his poetical celebrity and he often recounted them at Bentley Priory, Lord Abercorn's villa near Stanmore, then the resort of the most distinguished part of the world of fashion.

Theatrical people, even the greatest, were not in that age the social lions that they have become in our own democratic and perhaps less critical society,<sup>(3)</sup> and it is therefore worthy of the more note that John Kemble had the entrée to some of the most exclusive homes in the

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(1) Ibid.

(2) Ibid 244 and note.

(3) See W. J. Fyfe: Edinburgh under Sir Walter Scott (1706 )  
216.

country. He was, Scott tells us, a very frequent and familiar visitor of the Marquis of Abercorn's and

"with the noble landlord, the late Payne Knight, (1)

The travelled Thane,  
Athenian Aberdeen (2)

and an eminent person, whom graver and more important duties have now withdrawn from the muses, [Scott himself], made evenings of modern fashion resemble a Greek symposium for learning and literature." (3).

Kemble lived in the same close intimacy, Scott continues, with the successive guest of Lord Holland, the classical translator of Lope de Vega. (4)

As an actor, Scott had a very high opinion indeed of his friend. In 1813, he wrote to Lady Abercorn from Abbotsford:-

"J.K. is I think greater than himself and that is twenty times greater than any actor I ever saw. I attended him most faithfully until we left Edinburgh and to my very great amusement indeed." (5)

A letter to Joanna ten days earlier, however, shows that Scott was not uncritical:

"It is a pity he shews too much of his machinery. I wish he could be double caped as they say of watches. But the fault of too much study certainly does not belong to many of his tribe. He is I think very great in those parts especially where character is tinged by some acquired and systematic habits like

(1)

(2) See A.H. Gordon (Lord Stanmore) The Earl of Aberdeen (1873).

(3) Prose Works XX, 183.

(4) Ibid, 184.

(5) Letter III. 240. cf. Ibid.249. An interesting sidelight on Kemble's dignity on the stage is given by Cunningham (Lives of Eminent Englishmen, VIII, 264). Kemble, he says, was able to make sublime even the line in The Critic: "The father relents, but the governor is fixed."

those of the Stoic philosophy in Cato (1) and Brutus (2) or of misanthropy in that of Penruddock (3). But sudden turns and natural bursts of passion are not his forte. I saw him play Sir Giles Overreach (4) (the Richard III. of middling life) last night. But he came not within a hundred miles of Cooke (5) whose terrible visage and short abrupt and savage utterance gave a reality almost to that extraordinary scare in which he boasts of his own successful villany to a nobleman of worth and honor of whose alliance he is so ambitious. Cooke contrived somehow to impress upon the audience the idea of such a monster of enormity as had learned to pique himself even upon his own atrocious character. But Kemble was too handsome too plausible and too smooth to admit its being probable that he should be blind to the unfavourable impression which these extraordinary Vaunts are likely to make on the person whom he is so anxious to conciliate. (6)

In his Quarterly article (7) and elsewhere (8) Scott voiced much the same opinions.

- (1) Addison's most famous tragedy.
- (2) Scott refers here to Julius Caesar and not to the Brutus by J. Howard Payne in which Kean and Vandebroff made a success. Brutus was not produced in England until after Kemble's retirement (Drury Lane, Dec. 12th. 1818) Payne, by the way is the author of Home Sweet Home.
- (3) A soured recluse in Cumberland's play The Wheel of Fortune (1779).
- (4) A monster of villainy in Massenger's A New Way to Pay Old Debts (1628).
- (5) George Frederick Cooke (1756-1811). The D.N.B. says: Cooke did not play many parts well, but..... he played those which he did play well better than anybody else."
- (6) Letters III. 236.
- (7) Prose Works XX. 190 - 201.
- (8) Letter to Mrs. Clephane, March 23. 1817. Quoted Lochart V.208.

Kemble's love of black-letter learning, especially  
of dramatic antiquities <sup>(1)</sup> afforded a strong bond of  
fellowship with Scott who liked to call himself "a dramatic  
antiquary". <sup>(2)</sup> Kemble, Scott tells us, studied earnestly  
and long ere he could fix his own ideas of the true meaning  
of doubtful passages, and often illustrated them by what  
is called a new reading, though he was careful to express  
that he did so by the punctilious accuracy of the corres-  
ponding action and enunciation. Indeed Kemble, a profound  
scholar in his art, was metaphysically curious in express-  
ing each line of his part with the exactly appropriate  
accent and manner. <sup>(3)</sup> Observing that the slight tendency  
to over-precision and the delayed action which this  
characteristic of Kemble's caused "such imperfections  
as arise from over-study"(and which were after all neither  
frequent nor offensive( were the only faults he could  
observe in this great actor, he then proceeds to mention one  
point at least where he thinks Kemble carried antiquarian  
pedantry too far. This was his insistent pronunciation  
in the face of popular and critical opposition, of aches  
in a speech of Prospero's <sup>(4)</sup> as a two-syllable word.

"Night after night he threatened Caliban with itches  
and night after night was for so doing assailed by  
a party in the pit with a ferocity worthy of Caliban  
himself." <sup>(5)</sup>

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- (1) Lochart III. 213.  
(2) e.g. Introductory Epistle to Nigel, XLII.  
(3) Prose Works XX. p.186.  
(4) The Tempest, I. ii. 370.  
(5) Prose Works XX. 188 cf. Journal January 4. 1827..

On the subject of correct historical costume on the stage, Scott and Kemble were agreed. We have already spoken about some of the absurdities with which audiences had had to put up, because of inattention to this detail. (1) Scott himself had seen Macbeth and his wife in the cast off court dresses of the nobility, and Jane Shore in stays and hoops. "We have see Miss Young as Zara incased in whalebone to an Osman dressed properly enough as a Turk, while Nerestan, a Christian Knight in the time of the Crusades, (2) strutted in the white uniform of the old French guards." Although he certainly mentions Macklin's innovations in the previous century, Scott gives Kemble full credit for reforming these anachronisms and reforming the wardrobe of the stage.

"During his whole life, Kemble was intent on improving by all means which occurred, the accuracy of the dresses which he wore while in character. Macbeth was one of the first plays in which the better system of costume was adopted, and he wore the Highland dress as old Macklin had done before him. Many years afterwards he was delighted when, with our own critical hands we divested his bonnet of sundry huge bunches of black feathers which made it look like an undertaker's cushion and replaced them with the single broad quill feather of an eagle sloping across his noble brow; he told us afterward that the change was worth to him three distinct rounds of applause as he came forwards in this improved and more genuine headgear." (3)

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- (1) Supra p. 69. Should the reader have access to a copy of Their Majesties' Servants, By Dr. Doran, he would find many of the illustrations apposite. I am particularly fond of Lady Macbeth (Mrs. Yates) in a tremendous hoop - skirt and Coriolanus (Quin) in an absolutely indescribable costume of flowered brocade and a plumed helmet worn over a periwig!
- (2) Prose Works XX. 203.
- (3) Ibid 205. c.f. Planché (op.cit. I.59) who says Kemble was wearing the head-dress of the old 42nd. Highlanders.

Scott's own interest in the subject is clear. He once said that "If I were to write anything for the stage, it would be for the delight of dressing the characters after my own fancy,"<sup>(1)</sup> and we often find him giving advice about proper costume to his theatrical friends. As we shall see presently he practically produced Joanna Baillie's Family Legend in 1809, supervising all the minutiae of dress and stage-management.<sup>(2)</sup> "I have got from Mrs. Maclean," he writes her, "a drawing of the ancient dress of a Highland lady - also the colours of the tartans worn by the Macleans and Campbells which contrast strongly and mark the different parties on the stage."<sup>(3)</sup> Next year when he learned that Sarah Smith was going to play Helen in this play in Dublin, he said "I wish I was near enough to give you my instructions about the proper dress,"<sup>(4)</sup> and some months later wrote her at length on the proper dresses for The Lady of Buccleuch, an adaptation of his own Lay of the Last Minstrel.<sup>(5)</sup> When Rob Roy was produced in Edinburgh in 1819, he left his box to remind Murray that Mattie "must have a mantle with her lanthorn": and in his own plays he took some pains to describe in the stage-directions what the characters should wear.<sup>(6)</sup>

(1) Letters II. 472.

(2) Infra p. 169

(3) Letters II. 197. c.f. 218.

(4) Ibid., 385.

(5) Ibid. 471. c.f. Ibid. 412 and Familiar Letters I. 198 .

Concerning the play see infra p. 297f

(6) Infra p. 261

Kemble, to return to our more immediate subject, was a frequent and welcome guest at Ashiestiel. Lochart and Skene have given us several anecdotes of these visits which we cannot pause to retell, but gay were the days and nights when Scott played host to his friend. "I have heard Scott say," observes Lochart, "that the only man who ever seduced him into very deep potations during his middle life was Kemble."<sup>(1)</sup>  
<sup>(2)</sup>

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- (1) Lochart III. 213. c.f. James Skene: Memories of Sir Walter Scott (1909).
- (2) Ibid. A most interesting sidelight on "glorious John" as a visitor is given by Tom Dibdin in his Reminiscences(II.p 40). He and Kemble he says, were once fellow-travellers on a stage journey of some length. Somehow or other Kemble got on the subject of the rights and obligations of visitors and his whimsical remarks show both his common and his dramatic sense. He maintained that independence of the servants of one's host is always most advisable. "Calling for warm water of a morning, for instance, only advises that Mr. So-and-So is about to get rid of his beard; whereas if one is man enough even in mid-winter to use cold, you enter the breakfast room with a true spirit of independence above the necessity of pernicious assistance, and the neatness of your toilet receives double effect from the silent and unassuming way in which you have made it."

Scott summed up his remarks on his friend in these flattering words:

"As a moral character his integrity was unsullied, and the whole tenor of his life was equally honourable to himself and useful to his art. At proper times and in gentlemen's society, he could show himself one of the old social school, who loved a cup of wine without a drop of allaying Tiber, (1) but this was only, as Ben Jonson says, to give spirit to literary conversation; and indeed when we have heard Kemble pour forth the treasures of his critical knowledge over a bottle, we were irresistibly reminded of the author of Epicene giving law at the Mermaid or the Apollo." (2)

Most intimate of all his theatrical friends, however, was Daniel Terry, at one time co-manager of the Adelphi Theatre in London, and who, though never as eminent upon the stage as Kemble, had, nevertheless, many qualities to endear him to a man like Sir Walter. Terry was not only a skilled and pleasing actor but a keen student of his profession, with a passion for the curiosities of early dramatic literature. The letters to Terry quoted by Lochart, Douglas and Professor Grierson afford us a thousand and one glimpses of Scott's interests and affairs.

I think it unnecessary to say a great deal about Dan Terry at this point, for his name will be bound to keep cropping up throughout the remainder of our survey. It is well known that he played an interesting part in the career of his friend, who looked upon him as a trusty

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(1) Scott speaks of him elsewhere as "swallowing his wine in pailfuls". (Lochart V.208).

(2) Prose Works XX. 231.

(3) With Frederick Yates, May 1825 to April 1828. (See Lochart VII.368: IX, 248).

henchman, accepted his/<sup>help</sup>and advice, and in return aided him professionally and financially. Terry, by the way was one of the charmed circle who shared the secret of Waverley.

(1)

Daniel Terry was a native of Bath, where he had received a good education, and been trained as an architect; but he had early abandoned his pencils and squares and taken up the stage as a profession. He came to Edinburgh from Liverpool in 1809 to join Siddons' company at the Theatre-Royal, and met Scott at a Ballantyne dinner party.(2)

So began a friendship, that on Terry's part, scarcely paused this side idolatry, and led him to an imitation of Scott that only the sincerity of his devotion kept from being utterly ludicrous. Lochart tells us that as their letters lie before him he can scarcely believe them not all penned by the same hand. So zealously did Terry imitate his friend's writing "that Scott used to say if he were called on to swear to any document, the utmost he could venture was that it was either in his own hand or in Terry's!" This was not all.

"The actor, perhaps unconsciously mimicked him in other matters with hardly inferior pertinacity. His small lively features had acquired, before I knew him, a truly ludicrous cast of Scott's graver expression; he had taught his tiny eyebrow the very trick of the poet's meditative frown; and to crown all he so habitually affected his tone and accent that, though a native of Bath, a stranger could hardly have doubted he must be a Scotchman. These things afforded Scott and all their mutual acquaintances much diversion; but

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- (1) See the article in the D.N.B. and any of the references there given.  
 (2) Lochart III. 223.

perhaps no Stoic could have helped being secretly gratified by seeing a clever and a sensible man convert himself into a living type and symbol of admiration." (1)

Scott had always a high opinion - and justly so - of Terry's professional ability. The first mention of him in Scott's correspondence is just after the performance of Miss Baillie's Family Legend in 1810: "A Mr. Terry, who promises to be a fine performer went through the part of the Old Earl with great taste and effect." (2) A year later he wrote to Sarah Smith that "a young man of uncommon taste and accomplishment, (Mr. Richard Terry) played Roderick Dhu delightfully. He is a rising actor, studies hard and is a man of extensive reading, fine taste and amiable manners. He often came to read Shakespeare to me of an evening. I fear his voice will never be strong enough for the immense concavity of a London house, but his conceptions are admirable and as he has good sense and principle I am certain he will one day make a figure." (4) After Terry had gone to London, Scott missed him greatly. "We have a woeful want of him here both in public and in private for

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(1) Ibid, 224. Lochart here tells a delightful story of Matthews' chaffing of Terry after a gig upset. "Dooms Daaniel," he said, "what a pity that it wasna your luck to get the game leg, mon! Your Shirra wad hae been the very thing ye ken, an' ye wad hae been croose till ye war coffined!"

(2) Letters II. 291.

(3) Scott's slip for "Daniel". He never, however, used the Christian names of his friends, apart from his old school-fellows.

(4) Ibid, 464.

he was one of the most easy and quiet chimney corner companions that I have had for these two or three years past." (1)

I may be less discerning than Mr. J.C. Dibdin, but I do not see the condescension which he finds in Scott's later letters to Terry.

"It is true," he continues, "that Scott befriended Terry about this time in a most substantial manner; he would probably have done so again had occasion demanded such a proof of friendship..... but this did not prevent his holding an opinion of actors as individuals different to what he had held twenty years previously. It is perhaps vain to try to find out now what the reason of this was. The Bohemian nature of the actor's life, which suited him so well in 1809 or 1810, may have become irksome in 1827; but it is difficult to believe that adulation freely bestowed had caused Scott to treat with patronising airs such men as Terry or Murray." (2)

It must be remembered, however, that Scott, genial as he was, was punctilious about the niceties of social status. He was not, of course, peculiar in that respect -

(1) Ibid, III, 390. Cunningham (op.cit. VIII, 378) quotes a long critique of Terry's acting from the Edinburgh Annual Register for 1809, which he says was written by Scott. Scott certainly wrote <sup>on</sup> poetry for this publication (Letters II, 283); it is fairly clear that Cunningham is wrong, however, for in a letter to Joanna Baillie (Ibid, 525) Scott criticises the article in question for its errors and imperfections about The Family Legend. (~~c.f. infra. p~~)

(2) Op.cit. 321. The reference to Murray alludes to an entry in the Journal (February 24. 1827) about the Theatrical Fund Banquet "The performers performed very like gentlemen especially W. Murray." - See Infra p. 218.

it was the Edinburgh way of his day, as it is to some extent even in ours. This sense of status would always be present however much he might associate with actors and enjoy their Bohemianism. But until recent years, actors, even the greatest, were but tolerated pariahs (Garrick, Sheridan and Kemble being exceptions); and in 1827, Scott's Bohemian days were long past. <sup>(1)</sup>

It would be idle to deny that even in his middle life Scott disliked the general run of actors, and not without cause. Their curious mixture of arrogance and servility, ill-breeding, ignorance, depravity and power disgusted him, for he naturally took the side of the unfortunate authors they held under their thumbs; but to his friends among them, he was always faithful. As for Terry, there can be no doubt that his dilatory nature and failure to profit by good advice had disappointed Scott, and perhaps made him more than a little angry; but that, I think, is all. When he died in 1829, Scott wrote simply "Many recollections die with poor Terry." <sup>(2)</sup>

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(1) I should like to acknowledge here the kind help of Mr. Donald Carswell, one of Scott's recent biographers, to whom I owe the substance of this paragraph, contained in a personal letter. Mr. John Buchan was also good enough to express a similar opinion.

(2) Journal, July 9th. 1829.

We must now return a few years, and take up the thread of Scott's career where we left it, just after the appearance of The Lay of the Last Minstrel in 1805.

## § 3.

YOUNG MANHOOD.

With the publication of the Lay, Scott became definitely one of the literary figures of his time. His critical work, which has since become so overshadowed by the later poems and the novels, was much sought by the leading journals, and he had now few hours of idleness. As early as 1805 we know that he was planning an edition of the complete works of Dryden, a poet sadly neglected at that period. He consulted among others of his literary friends Ellis and Heber, and Lochart quotes several bits of the lively correspondence on the subject. <sup>(1)</sup> From the mass of helpful letters that poured in from Scott's friends, his biographer singles out for quotation in full only that in which Wordsworth offers advice and any <sup>(2)</sup> assistance in his power.

During the next three years Scott worked at his heavy task. At the same time he was engaged in writing Marmion, and without doubt the two served each other as recreations. Marmion was published on the 23rd of February 1808. It was followed two months later by "The Works of John Dryden", now first collected; illustrated

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(1) Chapter XIV.

(2) Lochart II. 287 - 9.

with notes, historical critical and explanatory with a Life of the Author, - by Walter Scott, Esq. Eighteen volumes 8 vo." Neither the unexpected financial success of this work, its literary merit, nor its value to poetry need delay us at this point. <sup>(1)</sup> We may leave aside, I think, his opinions of Dryden's non-dramatic poetry, and look chiefly at his ideas on the plays. Professor Saintsbury may be correct in accusing him of deprecating them, especially the comedies, out of disgust for their indelicacy; yet he seems to discriminate sufficiently between indelicacy and dulness. As a matter of fact he came very near taking Ellis's advice to Bowdlerize, but luckily he thought better of it: <sup>(2)</sup> "I will not castrate John Dryden. I would as soon castrate my own father..... In making an edition of a man of genius's works for libraries and collections..... I must give my author as I find him, and will not tear out the page, even to get rid of the blot, little as I like it." <sup>(3)</sup>

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(1) The second edition of Scott's Dryden appeared in 1821; it was re-edited by Professor Saintsbury in 1882-93. It remains the first and only complete and uniform edition of Dryden's works. The dramatic works had appeared in folio in 1701, and as edited by Congreve, whose text Scott used, in 1717. Prof. Saintsbury said in his preface: "It certainly deserves the credit of being one of the best-edited books on a great scale in English, save in one particular, - the revision of the text.

(2) Lochart II, 281.

(3) Ibid. 282. c.f. Life of Dryden (Prose Works I. ) pp. 380, 413. and Hallam's criticism in the Edinburgh Review 1808.

Scott thought, however, that Dryden's comedies were rather heavy; flashes of wit there were, of course, but the humour seemed to him laboured, like the comedy of situation and character. (1) His tragedy style struck the editor more favourably, for it varied with improving taste and perhaps with changing manners. He admired Dryden for having abandoned the sounding temptations of heroic drama for something more pure and chaste, which professes the representation of human beings rather than the creation of ideal perfection or fantastic character. (2) As a critic however, he appealed most to Scott, who termed the Essay of Dramatic Poesy "the first sympathetic piece of criticism which our literature has to exhibit." Though he may be accused, Scott writes, of opening wider the door of the theatre for his own selfish convenience,

"we are as much obliged to Dryden for resisting the dominion of Gallic criticism as we are to the fanatics who repressed the despotism of the Crown." (3)

One of the most interesting features of the preparation of Dryden however, is the wide acquaintance with the successors of Shakespeare, which he thus acquired, and whom he discussed with such sound criticism here and elsewhere. (4) Of Ben Jonson, "the dry and dogged Jonson" he speaks in high terms of praise, but he thus compares him to Shakespeare: (5)

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(1) Life of Dryden, p.413.

(2) Ibid, 412.

(3) Ibid, 444.

(4) Principally in the essay on Drama for the Encyclopaedia Britannica (Prose Works Vol. VI. )

(5) Scott's Dryden XV, 337. (See also Prose Works Vol. VI p. 332 and Hawthornden in Provincial Antiquities.)

"In reading Shakespeare we often meet passages so congenial to our nature and feelings that beautiful as they are, we can hardly help wondering they did not occur to ourselves; in studying Jonson we have often to wonder how his conceptions could have occurred to any human being." (1)

Scott was, as we know, familiar with Beaumont and Fletcher, from whom he often quoted; (2) he once referred to Massinger as "the most gentleman-like of all the old English dramatists; (3) and he voiced, in Swinburne's phrase, "the first word of modern tribute to the tragic genius (4) of Thomas Middleton," when in 1804 he remarked upon some "horribly striking" passages in The Changeling. (5) He was acquainted also with the works of Ford (to Weber's edition (6) of whom he made some excellent glossorial comments), Webster (to an obscure passage in whose Merry Devil of Edmonton he alludes in an early letter) (7) and probably Shirley and Dekker as well. (8) Of Dryden's contemporaries he had an equal knowledge. In 1808 we find him collecting

(1)

*blank I have temporarily mislaid my reference & can't take time to search it out just now. Very sorry & miss!*

- (2) As an offhand example see the apt quotation with which he ends his Edinburgh Review article on (of all things) Two Cookery Books, (July 1805; Prose Works XIX, 111.)
- (3) See under Scott in S.A. Allibone: Dictionary of British and American Authors and Literature (1870) II, 1968
- (4) Swinburne's preface to Middleton in the Mermaid Edition VIII.
- (5) Sir Tristram Fytte II, v. 56, note.
- (6) Letters III. 32-3.
- (7) Ibid II. 175. c.f. his remarks on The Duchess of Malfi, quoted infra p. 163.
- (8) I have not found a reference to these writers excepting that in the Essay on Drama. (Prose Works VI) p. 344. It need hardly be said that these other authors are discussed there as well.

the plays of Shadwell - which he thought "by no means  
 merit<sup>(1)</sup> ing the utter neglect into which they have fallen," -  
 for his brother Tom, who meditated an edition. He thought  
 the comedies of Congreve to contain "probably more wit  
 than was ever before embodied upon the stage" while yet  
 distinguishing carefully between the jests of the higher  
 and lower characters; and that the talents of Otway, in  
 his scenes of passionate affection "rival, at least, and  
 sometimes excel, those of Shakespeare."<sup>(2)</sup> Lee, he saw as  
 little more than a ranter,<sup>(3)</sup> though he admitted his knowledge  
 of stage effect;<sup>(4)</sup> and as for Wycherley (whom Mr. Archer<sup>(5)</sup>  
 thought the most scabrous of the lot) he very fairly termed<sup>(6)</sup>  
 him the standard bearer of the Jonsonian school.<sup>(7)</sup>

He once advised Sarah Smith to read the old drama<sup>(8)</sup>  
 whenever she could, if only as professional training; at  
 another time he noted in his Journal that "The dramatic  
 poets of that time seem to have possessed as joint-stock  
 a highly poetical and abstract love of language so that the  
 worst of them often remind you of the very best."<sup>(9)</sup> Most

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- (1) Letters II. 130. Lochart III, 147,n; Article on Molière,  
Foreign Quarterly Review, February 1828.  
 (2) Essay on Drama (Prose Works VI) See p. 360  
 (3) Ibid, p. 356  
 (4) Letters III. 443.  
 (5) Prose Works VI. p. 357  
 (6) op.cit.  
 (7) Prose Works VI. p. 362.  
 (8) Letters III.31.  
 (9) August 1. 1820.

revealing of all, perhaps, are his remarks on Webster's Duchess of Malfi to the Marchioness of Stafford in 1811:

"There is in it an odd and in some degree a terrific mixture of what is wild and extravagant with the simple, pathetic, and even childish turn of other places. I have not, I believe, a very good head for criticism, for it certainly is not selon les règles to be more affected by this patch-work, than by regular scenes where every thing mean and trifling is completely [sic] excluded, and the mind visited by nothing but what is meant to be in unison with tragic feeling. I do not know whether it is the spirit of contradiction, or whether the very pains taken to render every thing uniform, which never actually occurs in nature, but I feel terribly inclined to be hard-hearted in the latter case, whereas I often light upon passages in these old neglected dramatists, which, from the strange and unexpected manner in which they are introduced, make the very blood tingle." (1)

In April, 1808, we find him writing to James Ballantyre who was then in London: "See if you can find me a few 4to. volumes of old plays about the age of Charles II. They sell for about 5 or 7/ (2) a volume & are to be found chiefly in old Book shops," (3) and a day or so later "Don't omit to pick up all the 4to. volumes of plays you can find. I have various projects about them." (4) A month later he made the same request of Constable, but warns him "not however at connoisseur prices." (5)

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- (1) Letters III. 541.  
 (2) Letters II. 44.  
 (3) Presumably, for the first is undated.  
 (4) Ibid, 45.  
 (5) Ibid, 63.

What these projects were becomes clear in the light of letters quoted - so far as I know - for the first time in the Centenary Edition. In October, he writes to William Miller, the publisher:

"Ballantyne tells [me] you are to stop the ancient plays at two volumes in which case I think you should announce your intention to publish a third for which there are more than ample materials, nay even a fourth or fifth. - But a 3d volume will be necessary to complete the work. You can feel the public pulse with the two now ready. I thought of taking in the rarer plays of Otway & others of Charles iind's age as Don Carlos &c." (1)

It is obvious that he refers to The Ancient British Drama published by Miller, printed by the Ballantynes and only credited in a few catalogues to Scott. Lochart does not mention the work at all. There were three volumes.

Dr. Margaret Ball, writing in 1907, thought it possible that Scott had had a hand in the work, and further suggested that Modern British Drama, in five volumes, 1811, by the same publisher, might also have been edited by Scott. She bases her assumption on three brief introductions, which she thought, showed "a striking likeness to some parts of the Essay on Drama, written several years later, and it is not probable that Scott took his criticism ready-made from another author." Although there does not seem, however, to be any further evidence available, I am inclined on the strength of this internal sleuthing and the fact of Scott's

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(1) Ibid, 112. c.f. 177.

undoubted interest, to agree with Dr. Ball that he probably took some part in this effort to keep the Ballantyne presses rolling.

While Scott was still at work on his Dryden, he met in London Joanna Baillie, of whose Plays on the Passions he had been an enthusiastic admirer from their first appearance in 1798. <sup>(2)</sup> Each was pleased with the other, and the acquaintance thus begun, became one of the most perfect of Scott's friendships. He never went to London without making several calls in Hampstead. She visited the Scotts in Edinburgh for a week or two in 1808, and acquaintance and respect deepened into affectionate friendship. Mr. Carswell thinks they were even just a bit in love with each other. <sup>(3)</sup> The large number of letters which passed between them provide the biographer with many illustrations of Scott's tastes and habits, and add to the evidence <sup>(4)</sup> about the absurdly high opinion he had of her dramatic work.

Joanna Baillie won fame, which she ~~she~~ outlived completely - as the author of Plays on the Passions, which had been first published anonymously and been met with immoderate enthusiasm. Most of the well-known literary men of the day were in turn suspected of having written <sup>(5)</sup> them, but not until the second edition a year later was the

(1) Ball, Margaret: Sir Walter Scott as a critic of Literature (1907) p.52.n.

(2) Lochart II. 315.

(3) See his Sir Walter: A Four Part Study in Biography (1930) containing chapters on Hogg, Lochart, Joanna Baillie, and Scott. See p. 279.

(4) See infra pp. 292f.

(5) See Margaret S. Carhart: The Life and Works of Joanna Baillie, 1923, and D.N.B.

author revealed as this little Scotch spinster of Hampstead. De Montford, the most actable of them, was produced April 29th. 1800, by Kemble and his sister at Drury Lane, but without much success. A further series appeared in 1802 and another in 1804. No less than seventeen more of her plays were published between then and 1836, when the last volume was printed. (1) In 1808 Scott told her that his great ambition was "to get up some of your dramas (sic) and shew the people what plays ought to be." (2)

About this time, Scott's connection with the Edinburgh stage was becoming still more intimate. In 1809 the patent then held by Lord Hamilton and the Rt. Hon. Henry Dundas was due to lapse, and throughout the previous year the renewal was a matter of great interest to Scott, Erskine, Robert Dundas, Lord Dartmouth and others. Scott put the circumstances very clearly in a letter to Joanna in October:

"I am very busy just now endeavouring to get the Edinburgh Theatre put on a good footing. The patent is expired and it is proposed to renew it in a set of Commissioners to be trustees for the public and to lease it from time to time to a fitting Manager. I was to be one of these trustees, got fond of the plan and really hoped that the playhouse might be put on a most classical footing. But our bark has been almost

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- (1) Of these plays only a half dozen were ever produced. Constantine Paleologus seems to have been acted in Liverpool in 1808. The others, however, The Election (English Opera House, 1817) The Beacon (Edinburgh, 1815) Hensigney (Drury Lane, 1836) and The Separation (Convent Garden, 1836) undoubtedly owed much to Scott's enthusiasm.
- (2) Letters II. 118.

aground and I am like Robinson Crusoe on his raft straining every nerve to prevent the whole cargoe (sic) slipping into that ancient and Serbonian whirlpool called Job." (1)

Scott and his friends were particularly anxious to have that great actress, Mrs. Sarah Siddons, or failing her, Charles Young, take over the theatre. (2) They were opposed strenuously by the Jacksons, the present holders of the management, who wanted the appointment to go to the actor Rock, a most unsuitable person, and, Scott hints, a man of infamous private life. (3) After a good deal of string-pulling on both sides, the patent was awarded to a group composed of The Duke of Buccleuch, the Provost, the Dean of Faculty, Lord P. Murray, John Hay, Henry Mackenzie, George Home, William Erskine and Walter Scott. (4) The responsibility of being a trustee, Scott told Southey was "a thankless task", and the disputes were not completely settled until the end of 1810. (5) Shortly afterwards, he

(1) Ibid.

(2) Ibid. 46-7.

(3) Ibid. 100.

(4) See the numerous letters on the subject in the second volume of the Centenary Edition, especially pp. 46, 76, 100, 102, 118, 220. Professor Grierson suggests (46.n.) that Scott, judging from a letter in the Melville Papers (National Library of Scotland) had a financial interest of some sort in the matter. What it was seems impossible to discover.

(5) Ibid., 206.

wrote to Lady Abercorn:

"Our theatrical matters have been settled by an agreement between the parties principally interested; so thank Heaven there is an end to labour & solicitation on that subject. If anyone catches me in the situation of a trustee for the public or a theatrical patentee again I will give them leave to make me candle-snuffer to the playhouse for life." (1)

Mrs. Siddons herself did not accept the offer of the committee, but suggested her son Henry, "a very worthy and honourable man, but with very little of his mother's genius"<sup>(2)</sup>. Scott, we learn from Lochart, was firmly behind young Siddon's application and was delighted when he secured the appointment.<sup>(3)</sup> Such an arrangement would, he expected, give Edinburgh more opportunities of seeing Kemble and his sister, who were then the reigning monarchs of the British stage; and he hoped, moreover, that young Siddons himself would do much for the improvement of the theatre in Scotland. As we have already seen, however, the young manager was woefully unsuccessful, and had it not been for his talented wife Harriet, her brother William Murray, and most of all, for Scott himself, the little theatre might have failed ignominiously.<sup>(4)</sup>

(1) Ibid, 433.

(2) So Scott spoke of him some months later, Letters II.414. Another comment is rather amusing: "He has a bad way of planting his legs in attitudes which make me wish them broken on the wheel." (Ibid, 220).

(3) Lochart III.215. Siddons himself had been none too sanguine, as we see from Scott's remark to Terry years later. (Lochart VII.370)

(4) See supra p. 43

Scott was as good as his word, and the first new play produced under the Siddons management was Joanna Baillie's Lady of the Rock, under the altered title of The Family Legend, on January 29th 1810. (1) His letters to the author about the play occupy many pages in Lochart's account and in the Centenary collection of his correspondence, and show how indefatigably he laboured in its behalf. It was his first opportunity of taking an active part in the business of stage-craft, and his almost boyish enthusiasm is everywhere evident. "I shall put all the names to rights," he assures his friend in October, "and retain enough of personality and locality to please the antiquary without the least risk of bringing the Clan Gillian about your ears." (2) Lochart tells us that he was consulted about the minutiae of costuming, was constantly at the rehearsals, and supplied the prologue. (3) He seems also to have written personal letters to all the chiefs of the Highland clans, inviting them to attend and make the occasion a great Scottish occasion. (4) I think myself that the infectious ardour of the amateur supervisor had more than a little to

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- (1) It was also produced at Drury Lane, April 29. 1815. Scott and Byron saw it together. (Lochart V.43).
- (2) Letters II. 257.
- (3) Lochart III. 215. A "familiar, elegant and witty" epilogue was supplied by Henry Mackenzie, who also took a great interest in the production of this play. See W.H.Thompson: A Scottish Man of Feeling: Henry Mackenzie (1931) p.175 f.
- (4) Thompson, op.cit.

do with the play's triumph in Edinburgh. At any rate (1)  
 none of Joanna's other dramas ever approached its success.

The day after the play opened Scott wrote enthusiastically to Joanna:

"You have only to imagine all that you could wish to give success to a play and your conceptions will still fall short of the complete and decided success of the Family Legend. The house was crowded to a most extraordinary degree; many people had come from your native capital of the West, every thing that pretended to distinction, whether from rank or literature was in the boxes, and in the pit such an aggregate mass of humanity such as I have seldom if ever witnessed in the same space. It was quite obvious from the beginning that the cause was to be very fairly tried before the public, and that if anything went wrong, no effort, even of your zealous and numerous friends could have had much influence in guiding or restraining the general feeling. Some good-natured persons had been kind enough to propagate reports of a strong opposition, which though I considered them as totally groundless, did not by any means lessen the extreme anxiety with which I had waited the rise of the curtain.(2) But in a short time I saw that there was no ground whatever for apprehension, and yet I sat the whole time shaking for fear a scene-shifter, a carpenter or some of the subaltern actors should make some blunder and interrupt the feeling of deep interest which soon siezed on the whole pit box and Gallery as Mr. Bayes (3) has it."

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- (1) Joanna wrote to Mackenzie: "I would not give up the applause of your Edinburgh audience for all the plaudits of our London theatres for these ten years to come" (Ibid), which was perhaps just as well.
- (2) Compare Courant January 25th.1812. Scott had in any case "packed the house" to make sure:"In case of any blunder in the performance, however," he wrote in an earlier letter,"we have taken care to have an hundred of your admirers (for their name here is Legion) in the way of highland friends; that is through good report and bad report." (Letters II.288).
- (3) In The Rehearsal.

He goes on to speak of the scenes which had the greatest effect, the merits of the performers, and the scenery.

"The dresses were more tawdry than I should have thought proper, but expensive and showy. I got my brother John's Highland recruiting party to reinforce the garrison of Inverary, and as they mustered beneath the porch of the castle and seemed to fill the courtyard behind, the combat scene had really the appearance of reality.

"Mrs. Scott sends her kindest compliments of congratulations; she had a party of thirty friends in one small box which she was obliged to watch like a clucking hen till she had gathered her whole flock, for the crowd was insufferable. I am going to see the Legend to-night when I shall enjoy it quietly, for last night I was so interested in its reception that I cannot say I was at leisure to attend to the feelings arising from the representation itself."(1)

To Morrit he writes some time later:-

"Miss Baillie's play went off capitally here ..... We wept till our hearts were sore and applauded till our hands were blistered - what could we more - and this in crowded theatres." (2)

Early in May The Lady of the Lake appeared in in the usual quarto form (priced at two guineas), and in November Scott writes to Miss Baillie with ill-concealed delight:

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(1) Letters II. 290 - 92.

(2) Ibid. 307.

*please excuse  
numbering -  
turned over  
2 pages  
at once!*

"Meanwhile the lady of the lake is likely to come to preferment in an unexpected manner for two persons of no less eminence than Messrs. Morton and Reynolds play carpenters in ordinary to Convent Garden are employed in scrubbing, carmining [?] (1) and cutting her down into one of those new-fashioned sloops called a Melo drama, to be launched at the theatre; (2) and my friend Mr. H. Siddons, emulous of such a noble design is at work on the same job here." (3)

This is Scott's first mention of the adaptations of his work for the stage, which were later to give him so much pleasure.

A month later he told Miss Smith that he had not seen and did not intend to see a line of it

"because I would not willingly have the public of this place suppose I was in any degree responsible for the success of the piece. It would be like submitting to be twice tried for the same offense..... Though I have three theatrical grand-children as I may call them, I have seen none of them." (4)

- (1) In the original; Lochart suggests "careening".
- (2) Reynolds seems, however, to have had little to do with this play.
- (3) Letters II. 403.
- (4) Ibid. 411. These plays are discussed, infra Chapter IV. It is worthy of note perhaps that Scott did not know apparently that the two Dibdins had already adapted Marmion and The Lady in June and September respectively, or that it was Tom Dibdin's Surrey version that was produced in Dublin in 1810.

Scott was inclined at first to be rather resentful of "such persons as Reynolds and Martin garbling my unfortunate verses and turning that into dramatic dialogue which is but well enough as it stands in minstrel verse - and therefore once more do I wish the whole affair at the bottom of Loch Katrine."<sup>(1)</sup> He thought Eyre's play at the Theatre Royal in January "well adapted - so far as he could judge"; but on the mutilation of his lines into blank verse he commented that it had "the appearance of an old friend with a new face. You always missed the expected and perhaps the remembered rhyme which had a bald effect."<sup>(2)</sup> Throughout his life he refused to accept any credit whatever for the success of any of his "grand-children", though as he remarked to Joanna, "I would not willingly have you believe either that I affect or possess stoicism enough to be insensible to the applause of a crowded theatre."<sup>(3)</sup>

During all this time, and for years to come, he was a constant theatre-goer. Lochart assures us that he never "let a whole week go by without being in his box;"<sup>(4)</sup> indeed at this particular time he was often even more regular. Mrs. Scott, Erskine, the Ballantynes and other members of the circle were as enthusiastic as he. Percy Fitzgerald says:

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- (1) Ibid, 420.  
 (2) Ibid, 463.  
 (3) Ibid, 420.  
 (4) Lochart II. 4.

"The theatre was supported by Scott and his friends with a heartiness and personal interest which recalls the old relations between the theatres in the German towns like Weimer and its royal and noble patrons; and such cordial sympathy and direct exertion is a far more satisfactory guarantee for the success of the drama than the more vulgar notion of support - namely, paying at the doors. On this principle, the bringing out of Miss Baillie's turgid De Montford (1) had become a sort of festival for Edinburgh."(2).

His correspondence during the next few years affords many hints of his interest. He missed the theatre while he was "flitting" from Ashestiel to Abbotsford in the spring of 1812, but he got back to town in time to attend Sarah Smith's benefit night. In September he came in especially to see Kemble in Addison's Cato, one of his best roles. "It was absolutely enchanting and formed one of the few exhibitions which I could have seen begun again when the curtain had dropped." Early in 1813 he writes from Abbotsford:

"The night before we left Edinbr. I saw Twelfth Night acted very well indeed. Terry was the very Malvolio of Shakespeare and Mrs. Henry Siddons and her brother Murray from their good playing as well as their extreme likeness..... were most interesting in the characters of Viola and Sebastian." (6)

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- (1) An obvious slip for The Family Legend. De Montford was played in Edinburgh, but Scott was out of town at the time. Letters II.319.
- (2) The Kembles (1877) I.247.
- (3) Letters III. 122.
- (4) Ibid, 123.
- (5) Ibid, 155.
- (6), Ibid, 244. See James Ballantyne's remarks on this performance, Courant January 4th. 1813.

In the same letter he mentions "a dreadful botch of a new play" Caledonia, or The Rose and the Thistle which he calls "arrant nonsense and old nonsense into the bargain - a whole compound of petty larceny."<sup>(1)</sup>

A month or two later he tells Joanna that his great amusement for some time had been going almost nightly to see John Kemble (2), as he probably did also when Kemble returned in the spring of 1814.<sup>(3)</sup> He saw Pinkerton's ill-fated Heiress of Strathern which he had already read in manuscript,<sup>(4)</sup> but does not mention the tumult that followed the performance.<sup>(5)</sup> About this time he read Bertram, a tragedy by C.R. Maturin, the Irish novelist and dramatist. He recommended it first to Kemble, who declined it and then to Byron (at that time a director of Drury Lane) who showed it to Edmund Kean. Kean, after some hesitation, produced it at Drury Lane in May 1816 with such success that Maturin received £1000.<sup>(6)</sup><sup>(7)</sup>

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(1) An anonymous play which failed. cf. supra p.72.n.

(2) Ibid. 236. cf.241.

(3) Ibid., 423.

(4) See supra p.99 and infra p. 237.

(5) Letters III. 237 and note from Pinkerton's Correspondence II. 404 - 6.

(6) Ibid., 249.

(7) See article on Maturin in the D.N.B. and infra p. 234f.

Two other characteristic actions are preserved in these letters. In 1814, he suggests to Jamie Ballantyne that as a critic he might do well to notice Miss Douglas, a young actress in the Edinburgh company, <sup>(1)</sup> and a few months later he worked indefatigably for the success of a performance in aid of the Burns monument fund. "I have scarce a friend alive whom I did not assail." <sup>(2)</sup>

During this period, also Joanna Baillie's third volume of plays was published. Among them was Orra, a drama on the emotion of Fear, in the progress of which Scott had been interested. <sup>(3)</sup> When he read it he was "enchanted", and told her that her new series not only sustained but exalted her reputation as a dramatic author.

"After I had read Orra twice myself," he goes on, "Terry read it over to us the third time aloud, and I have seldom seen a little circle so much affected as during the whole fifth act. I think it would act charmingly except perhaps the baying of the hounds, which could not be happily imitated, and retaining only the blast of the horn and the haloo of the huntsmen in the distance. Only I doubt if we have now an actress that could carry through the mad scene in the third act, which is certainly one of the most sublime that was ever written." <sup>(4)</sup>

It seems clear that he was referring to Sarah Siddons who had made her "farewell" appearance on the London stage on June 30th. 1812. This ceremony like that of many another before and since, did not, however, prevent her appearing

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- (1) Letters III. 475.  
 (2) Ibid. 539.  
 (3) Lochart III, 290  
 (4) Ibid., 349 f.

at intervals until 1819, when he finally retired.

Even in April, 1812, Scott was sorry to hear that she had accepted an engagement at Convent Garden. "Surely she is wrong," he wrote to Joanna "she should have no twilight, but set in the full possession of her powers." <sup>(1)</sup> In 1813, we find him writing to Morritt:

"The owls of your good city who are subscribing to invite her back to the stage, not content with various indirect applications which I paid no attention to, at length formally applied to me (the sapient Capel Loft<sup>(2)</sup> [sic] being their representative) through the medium of no less persons than Messrs. Longman & Co. So I was obliged to open my oracular jaws and give this worthy federation my reasons for not joining them in asking Mrs. Siddons to do an unwise thing. Now although these were stated with great retenué with the highest praises on Mrs. Siddons past and Mrs. Siddons present, yet I am sensible that even doubts expressed as to Mrs. Siddons future will not be very agreeable to a palate which has been accustomed to the sugard eloquence of Mrs. Fitzhugh and Lady Milbanks. However, I must hold fast mine integrity, for I would not for the world do her the injury of even seeming to accede to such a foolish proposal." (3)

After her last farewell in 1819, Scott seems to have written to Joanna Smith somewhat slightly of her education and private manners, for his friend writes back defending the great actress warmly, and pointing out the difficulties of being for ever expected to do or say the striking thing.

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(1) Letters III. 101.

(2) Capell Lofft (1751-1824) was a minor literary man of the time. See the sketch of his career in the D.N.B.

(3) Letters III. 252. c.f. his reply, 243 and a letter to Sarah Smith, 248.

"She was received in Lady Randall as you would read in the papers, with great warmth and respect, and I have heard from those who sat near enough the stage to hear and see well, that she acted with all her wonted power, and still looked noble and beautiful. I heartily agree with you that we shall never see her like again, or one approaching within many degrees of her excellence." (1)

In the same letter, we find a mention of Terry whose intimacy with Scott, Lochart says, deepened noticeably with the purchase of Abbotsford. (2) He spent several weeks of the autumn of 1811 at Ashestiel, riding over daily to the new farm and giving Scott the benefit of his skill and training as an architect. Even after his departure for London early in 1812, he was constantly consulted about details of the remodelling and furnishing of Abbotsford. On May 20th of that year, the comedian made his debut at the Haymarket Theatre, and in 1813, he secured a good engagement at Convent Garden. (3) He continued to please London audiences until his last illness in 1829. Like most metropolitan stars, however, he made a visit or two north every year, and no ally, we are told, had more to do than he with the finished Abbotsford or with its collection of literary and antiquarian curiosities. (4)

The intimacy was kept up between whiles by correspondence,

(1) Familiar Letters II.47.

(2) Lochart LLL. 356.

(3) Scott's letter of congratulation is in Letters III. 366-7

(4) Lochart III.357.

and as has been said, few series in the huge collection of Scott's letters are more interesting or revealing than theirs. Scott's, on the one hand are written in the most warm-hearted and unselfconscious way, full of interest about his friend's professional career, and abounding with sound advice and good-natured confidence of his own secrets and projects; those of Terry, on the other, illuminate the actor's intelligent zeal as Scott's trusted ally, attending sales and keeping him posted about London life and affairs.

Although Terry was interested in Old English drama, and possessed many of the literary qualifications for critical or editorial work, it is doubtful whether he ever produced anything of note. Some catalogues ascribe to him The British Theatrical Gallery in five volumes, published by Lacy, with twenty portraits, (Folio) in 1822, but upon what authority I have not discovered. It is true, however, that ten years before he was toying with some such scheme, and had apparently asked a little shyly or deprecatingly for Scott's advice. Sir Walter replied,

"Pray stick to the dramatic work and never suppose either that you can be intrusive or that I can be uninterested in whatever concerns you." (2)

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(1) See Robert W. Lowe: A Bibliographical Account of English Theatrical Literature (1888) p. 329

(2) Letters III, 155. Lochart (IV.10) adds a brief note saying that he believes Terry projected such an edition.

The years between 1812 and 1815 were busy ones for Scott. Then appeared Rokeby and The Bridal of Triermain, the nineteen volume edition of The Life and Works of Jonathan Swift, and a novel that he had begun and discarded several years before, the three-volum<sup>ed</sup> Waverley. He wrote also for the Supplement to the Encyclopaedia Britannica a fine article on Chivalry and promised another on Drama.<sup>(1)</sup> Yet, as we have seen, his interest in theatrical matters was lively and unbroken during this period. His instinctive courtesy caused him in his writing as in his conversation to choose the topics most likely to fit the tastes and habits of his friends. His letters, therefore, especially those to Sarah Smith, Joanna Baillie and Dan Terry, reveal that as he approached middle life he was not only a regular theatre-goer and an acute critic,<sup>(2)</sup> but a keen theatrical business man.<sup>(3)</sup>

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- (1) I am sorry to note that Professor Grierson in the Contemporary Collection of Letters has failed to notice the discussion of the subject, infra pp. 187f. *Lochart's error about the date of this article. See*
- (2) See infra Chapter III.
- (3) See Familiar Letters I. 340, for an example.

## § 4.

MIDDLE LIFE.

The chief interest of the next five years or so of Scott's life, from the point of view of this study, is the dramatizations of the Waverley novels, adaptations of more or less competence and tremendous popularity, which found their way to the boards, some of them, almost before the ink of the successive novels were dry, and which even the caustic Mr. Archer has characterized as "by no means the least vital productions of their age."<sup>(1)</sup> It is proposed in another section to deal with them rather more fully than would be practicable at this point. Our present discussion will be therefore, as sketchy as possible.

Even before the publication of Waverley needy playwrights seeking for new plots and fresh characters had lighted upon The Lady of the Lake and her sisters, and several adaptations had already appeared. The Waverley series was sheer treasure trove, a store house of ready-made scenarios, fully illustrated and explained, and complete with plot, character and dialogue. In the appendix to our study are listed some 342 adaptations of Scott's poems and novels on the British, American and Continental stage. That these are separate and distinct versions probably cannot be maintained, for undoubtedly,

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(1) William Archer: The Old Drama and the New.

in many cases, adaptations were themselves re-adapted. The list demonstrates clearly, none the less, how very popular Scott became with the theatre-writers.

One of the most curious and interesting circumstances of this wholesale dramatization it seems to me, is Scott's lively and almost childlike interest in these "dramatic grandchildren" <sup>(1)</sup> of his. Though he had refused to accept any praise or responsibility for the earlier adaptations <sup>(2)</sup> of The Lady of the Lake he followed the successes of the Waverley Dramas, as we may call them, with a surprisingly uncritical attention. The closely-kept secret of the authorship of Waverley I should think removed the necessity for that self-conscious modesty expected of an author, and allowed him to speak of the plays at least, with enthusiasm. This is one of the dozens of interesting things which John Adolphus has to tell of his visit to Abbotsford in 1823. Speaking of his host's reticence in discussing anything connected with the novels, he says:-

"After all, there is perhaps hardly a secret in the world which has not its safety-valve. Though Sir Walter abstained strictly from any mention of the Waverley novels, he did not scruple to talk, and that with great zest, of the plays which had been founded upon some of them, and the characters as there represented. Soon after our first meeting he described to me, with his usual dramatic power the death-bed scene of 'the original Dandy Dimmont' <sup>(3)</sup> ~~of course~~ referring, ostensibly of course, to the opera of Guy Mannering. He dwelt with extreme

(1) He used this phrase to Miss Smith in 1810 (Letters II. 411).

(2) See supra p. 172, 2

(3) Guy Mannering Ch. XXIII n.

delight upon Mackay's performances of the Bailie and Dominie Sampson and appeared to taste them with all the fresh and disinterested enjoyment of a common spectator. I do not know a more interesting circumstance in the history of the Waverley novels than the pleasure which their illustrious author thus received, as it were at the rebound from those creations of his own mind which had so largely increased the enjoyments of all the civilized world."(1)

The first of these dramatizations was Guy Mannering, made by Terry and produced at Convent Garden in the spring of 1816. (2) There is plenty of evidence to show that Scott himself had a share in this first specimen of what he used to call the art of Terry-fying. (3) Lochart has inferred from his correspondence that not only did he contribute the dainty Lullaby but had assisted in adapting the plot and adjusting the dialogue for the stage. (4) (5) The success of Guy Mannering was not so marked as that of some of the others, but it remained for years a favourite piece, especially north of the Tweed.

Perhaps the success of Guy Mannering had something to do with Scott's first attempt at an original drama. At any rate it was scarcely a year later that he wrote to Terry

- (1) Quoted by Lochart VII. 190.  
 (2) Concerning this and other adaptations mentioned in this part, see infra. Chapter IV.  
 (3) Scott used this phrase in the Introductory Epistle to Nigel, "I believe my muse would be Terryfied into treading the stage even if I were to write a sermon." c.f. Lochart V.130.  
 (4) The familiar song beginning:  
     "Rest thee my babe  
     Thy sire is a knight".  
 See Poetical Works.  
 (5) Lochart V.130.

apparently in reply to a proposal of dramatizing The Black Dwarf and The Bridal of Triermain, the story of Castle Devorgoil which, it seemed to him, "had the infinite merit of being perfectly new in plot and structure" and which he proposed, should his health permit, to finish in a couple of weeks. (1)

Meanwhile a theatrical event took place in Edinburgh which concerned him greatly. John Philip Kemble, "glorious John" having announced twelve performances of his chief parts as a farewell to the northern stage, made his final bow to the Edinburgh audience on March 29th 1817. He appeared as Macbeth and in that character delivered the lines Scott had written him for the occasion. (2) He seemed determined, James Ballantyne tells us to leave behind (3) him the most perfect specimen of his art he had ever shown; and his success was complete. As he came forward to deliver his farewell words, the audience rose to receive him, and showed by sobs and tears their response to the beauty and effect of the lines and their exquisite delivery. Kemble's emotions, too, were conspicuous. He lingered long at the back of the stage as if loath to leave, while the house cheered him over and over again. (4)

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(1) Lochart V. 197 - 204.

(2) In Poetical Works XI. 348.

(3) Sale Room April 5th. 1817. (Also quoted by Lochart (V. 203.n)).

(4) Ibid.

"No one who witnessed that scene and heard those lines as then recited," says Lochart, "can ever expect to be again interested to the same extent by anything occurring within the walls of a theatre; nor was I ever present at any public dinner in all its circumstances more impressive than was that which occurred a few days afterwards, when Kemble's Scotch friends and admirers assembled around him - Francis Jeffrey (1) being chairman, Walter Scott and John Wilson (2) the croupiers"(3)

It may be mentioned at this point that Edmund Kean, whose star had risen so brilliantly as Kemble's was setting, made his second appearance in Edinburgh shortly after this and was more freely criticized than when he had electrified the audience of the previous year. Scott was never one of Kean's admirers, (4) a fact due in part no doubt to his staunch regard for Kemble. The same is true, I infer, of his attitude towards Miss O'Neill, (5) whose merits failed to shake his partizan feelings for Mrs. Siddons on the one hand and Miss Smith on the other. During their engagements in Edinburgh, he writes to Terry with gentle irony that "neither the genius of Kean nor the charms of Miss O'Neill could bring me from the hillside and the sweet society of Tom Purdie." (6)

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- (1) Best remembered perhaps as editor of the Edinburgh Review.  
 (2) "Christopher North" of Blackwoods.  
 (3) Lochart V. 210.  
 (4) Scott had been interested in Kean as early as 1814 (See Letters III. 423: and gives him credit for superiority to Kemble in several parts (Essay on Drama, Prose Works pp. C. 140). However in 1819 disgusted with his treatment of Bucke, the unfortunate author of The Italians, Scott called him "a copper-laced, twopenny tearmouth, rendered mad by conceit and success" (Lochart VI. 44). Something of Kean's quarrel with Bucke may be seen in Barry Cornwall's Life of Kean (1835) II. 178.  
 (5) Miss O'Neill retired in 1819. See supra p. 44. n.  
 (6) Lochart V. 168. Tom Purdie, as nearly everyone knows, was his game-keeper.

Early in 1818 he sent Terry sketches of the first two acts of the Fortunes of Devorgoil, or as it was later renamed, The Doom of Devorgoil, asking Terry to be perfectly frank with him in any discussion either of its merits or its production, and promising to do his best to satisfy. "The point is to make it take if we can: the rest is all leather and prunella." (1) At the same time he writes to Morritt:

"My immediate labour has been in behalf of my friend Terry, the comedian in whom on account of his sense, information and modesty I take a great interest. He has named a child after me and I am preparing a god-father's gift in the shape of a drama. But god-fathers, as in the time of conjurors and fairies, may append what conditions they like to their gifts and mine is that I take no concern in the merits or in the emoluments of the piece in case of success, so I shall only be damn'd by proxy if damn'd I am. In a word, Terry takes his chance, and I believe there will be no medium, for if it does not succeed very decidedly, it will be damned most infernally." (2)

Terry was probably never very enthusiastic about the success of the piece and it was never performed. Scott continued for a time thinking in terms of original drama, suggesting the possibilities in a piece on the concealment of the Scottish regalia during the civil war. (3) But it would interfere, he added philosophically, "with the democratic spirit of the times and would probably

'By party rage,  
Or right or wrong, be boosted from the stage'!(4)

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(1) Ibid.V.286.

(2) Familiar Letters II. 5.

(3) Lochart V.291.

(4) "Slightly altered from Doctor Johnson's prologue to the Comedy of a Word to the Wise" (Lochart V.291.n).

He was interested to learn soon afterwards in April of the success of Rob Roy at Convent Garden, though it still seemed to him rather "odd." He suggested nevertheless that there were dramatic possibilities "in his present work" (The Heart of Midlothian) and thinks of letting Terry have an advance copy to work on. As for himself, he had abandoned the idea of writing any more dramas on his own account. "Avowedly I shall never write for the stage; if I do 'call me horse'!"<sup>(1)</sup> A week or two later he says, however: "I trust we shall see you this season. I think we could hammer a neat comedie bourgeoise out of The Heart of Midlothian"<sup>(2)</sup>. I do not know whether or not Terry received the advance copy. Terry's version, in which Scott seems to have had no share, was not produced at Convent Garden, however, until April 1819, three months after the industrious Tom Dibdin had rushed his transcript through the wings of the Surrey. The success of Terry's work was not marked, but Scott writes him in June:

" I am sorry, not surprised that the H. of M.L. has done but so so, - better luck next time; if it does anything to do you good the end will be answered: the present set . . . . . will not dramatize, but something else will by-and-by."<sup>(3)</sup>

The Edinburgh Theatre-Royal, which had been making a gallant fight for its life, especially since the death of

- (1) Lochart V. 310.  
 (2) Ibid. 315.  
 (3) Familiar Letters II. 44.

Henry Siddons, was now under the management of his brother-in-law, William Murray the comedian, for whom Scott had a high regard. Scott was still a frequent attendant, as we know from Lochart, but considering his exertions at this time, it is not surprising to learn that still more did he enjoy an evening drive in his open carriage attended by one of his family or a single friend, either to Blackford and Corstorphine Hills or along the shore at Portobello. (1) His intense interest in the drama was, however, not at all impaired. He continued to be a frequent guest at the homes of both the Ballantynes, meeting on intimate terms many of the actors and actresses of the time (2) and he seems to have written about this time his largest contribution to the literature of the drama, an essay for the Supplement to the Nineteenth Edition of the Encyclopaedia Britannica, published in 1819.

Most bibliographies of Scott follow Lochart in saying that this article was written four years before, in 1814, while Waverley was not yet completed. "There was a

considerable pause," Lochart writes, "between the finishing of the first volume [of Waverley] and the beginning of the second. Constable had, in 1812, acquired the copyright of the Encyclopaedia Britannica, and was now preparing to publish the valuable Supplement to that work which has since with modifications been incorporated into its text. He earnestly requested Scott to undertake a few articles for the Supplement; he agreed - and anxious to gratify the generous bookseller, at

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(1) Lochart V.333.

(2) Ibid. 342 - 349 to which we have alluded supra 139f.

once laid aside his tale until he had finished two essays - those on Chivalry and the Drama. They appear to have been completed in the course of April and May [1814] and he received for each of them, -(as he did subsequently for that on Romance) - £100."(1)

Thomas Constable, however, in his biography of Archibald Constable, criticises this statement and quotes the following letter dated November 19th 1818, to his father from Cadell, the London partner of the firm:

"Mr. Scott when here yesterday was regretting the pose Drama had put this part of the Supplement to and said he could have done it in a fortnight. When I mentioned this to Napier (who had just called with the announcement for 21st Dec. as Mr. S. went out) he was most anxious to try and get a short article from him on the subject. I went to him about it, and on my stating the urgency of the case, he most cheerfully agreed to do a short article in time for it. All he said was 'It will stop something else a little; but if you must have it, you must have it.' He was, he said, very busy when I called, (2) and I strongly suspected for B[lackwood's] M[agazine]." (2)

Some pages later we learn that Scott was paid £105, with which he expressed himself as very satisfied, that he was anxious to see the format before the work was printed, and that he refused any further commissions of the sort  
(3)  
at the time.

Lochart seems to have overlooked a letter, quoted by himself, from Scott to his Grace of Buccleuch, November 20th 1818, in which we read:

(1) Ibid IV. 167 - 8.

(2) Thomas Constable: A. Constable and His Literary Correspondents (1873) III.49 and note.

(3) Ibid 128.

"At the same time I cannot help laughing at the miscellaneous trash I have been putting out of my hand, and the various motives which made me undertake the jobs. An article for the Edinburgh Review - (1) this for the love Jeffrey, the editor - the first for ten years. Do., being the article Drama for the Encyclopaedia - this for the sake of Mr. Constable, the publisher..... Do. for the Quarterly Review, (2) this for love of myself, I believe, or which is the same thing, for the love of £100 which I wanted for some odd purpose." (3)

Here the essay is mentioned cheek by jowl with two others which we know definitely to have been written in 1818.

There is also, (granting that the paragraph has not been interpolated, which is extremely unlikely) the strongest internal evidence that it was written about the time

Constable says concerning modern actors, Scott writes,

"We have lost Mrs. Siddons and John Kemble, but we still possess Kean, Young and Miss O'Neill. (4) "Kemble, as we recall, did not retire until 1817, and his sister until 1819. (5) (6) On the other hand, had Scott been writing in

1814, he would certainly have mentioned Sarah Smith, whom he believed at that time to be Mrs. Siddons' nearest rival. (7)

In view of this evidence Constable's contention must, I think, be admitted proved.

- (1) On Women, or Pour et Contre by Charles Maturin (Prose Works XVIII).
- (2) On Byron's Childe Harold Canto iv (Prose Works XVII).
- (3) Lochart VI. 6.
- (4) Prose Works VI. p. 388
- (5) See supra.p. 183.
- (6) See supra.p. 175.
- (7) See supra.p. 141.

The Essay on Drama, which we may pause a moment to examine, is an admirable survey of the subject, from the classical dramas of Greece down to his own day. In many respects, much of it is only hackwork, for it is evident that he often merely "abridged from the best antiquaries", especially I think, the Lectures on Dramatic Art and Literature, by Augustus William Schlegel which appeared in an English translation in 1815, and Lessing's Dramaturgie. Thus we need say but little about Scott's successful exposition of Greek and Roman drama, though to be sure he does not hesitate at times to disagree with his authorities on minor points. When he comes to the Modern period, however, one feels at once that he is writing about a subject he knows rather thoroughly. Even here, however, he did not pretend to have formed his own conclusions on every point and quotes every now and then from standard and obscure authorities. It is, I think, significant that while he does not seem to have been acquainted with the studies of Lamb, Hunt or Hazlitt, his agreement with these critics is remarkable. His ideas from whatever source they came, are clearly marshalled and vigourously expressed and though occasionally he seems perhaps to simplify matters rather too much, the article was admirable for its purpose. It was reprinted unaltered in the 1841 edition of the work. The chief interest to us apart from the opinions he expresses, is the enthusiasm for the subject which is evident throughout, and the substantial fact that he possessed not only a

particular knowledge of certain writers or periods, but a comprehensive appreciation of the whole field. (2)

At this stage in Lochart's account, we have a number of intimate pictures of Scott's home life. As a boy he had grown to love <sup>the custom of</sup> reading aloud about the fire-side, and continued it in his own home. The picture of the Scott drawing-room of a Sunday evening, when the sound of any music except the Metrical Versions would have horrified the very street-lamps of Edinburgh, is rather a charming one. To make amends for the silence of the harp, Scott usually

"read some favourite author for the amusement of his little circle; or Erskine, Ballantyne or Terry did so at his request. He himself read aloud high poetry with far greater sympathy, depth and effect than any other man I ever heard; and in Macbeth or Julius Caesar or the like, I doubt if Kemble could have been more impressive. Yet the changes of intonation were so gently managed, that he contrived to set the different interlocutors clearly before us without the least approach to theatrical artifice. Not so the others I have mentioned; they all read cleverly and agreeably, but with the decided trickery of stage recitation. To them he usually gave the book when it was a comedy, or indeed any drama save Shakespeare's or Joanna Baillie's. Dryden's Fables, Johnson's two Satires and certain detached scenes of Beaumont and Fletcher, especially that in the Lover's Progress where the ghost of the

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(1) e.g. He seems rather to over-estimate the influence of Charles II upon the English stage of the Restoration, and, as Dr. Ball remarks, (op.cit.57) in tracing the origin of French drama to romances.

(2) The value of this is made more apparent infra. Chapter III. His diagnosis of "What's wrong with the Drama?" (Prose Works VI pp. 3899) is discussed in the same chapter.

musical inn-keeper makes his appearance were frequently selected." (1)

Of Scott's ability as a reader Mr. Adolphus has told us that "he read a play admirably well, distinguishing the speeches by change of tone and manner, without naming the characters," (2) and Lochart has referred to the remarkable power of mimicry which he possessed as a boy, and which remained a life-long asset. (3)

Mr. Alexander Wolcott, in a study of the theatrical side of Dickens' career has suggested that in him there was much of the frustrated actor, and that his novels were merely a sublimation of his real desires. (4) Such, apparently, was not at all the case with Walter Scott, who seems to me to have been in this regard very like most of us, intensely interested in the stage and its folk, but without any real ambition himself to tread the boards. That he had many talents necessary for such a career is plain, and he notes in his diary the childish habit which he has not outgrown, of dramatizing himself and playing ideal little parts for his own amusement. (5) Yet it is probably true, as Lochart hints, (6) that his interests were quite unmixed with any desire to parade himself as an actor.

(1) Lochart V. 340-41.

(2) Ibid VII. 184.

(3) Ibid I. 121.

(4) Mr. Dickens Goes to the Play. (19 x)

(5) Journal, December 26th. 1825; March 23rd. 1827.

(6) Lochart V. 327.

Nor was he, outwardly at least, any more anxious for the palm of dramatic authorship. Though he had admitted years before that he was not insensible to the applause of a crowded theatre, he was during his correspondence with Terry on the subject of his goblin drama, always at pains to disclaim any great knowledge of dramatic technique, and ever ready to defer to practical experience.

About 1818, however, when the authorship of Waverley was more of a mystery than it later became, the sight of a man of proven ability as a writer apparently doing nothing more than an occasional review article gave rise to a newspaper rumour that he was engaged in writing a play. No one protests so loudly as the falsely accused criminal. Scott, who had just finished an anonymous - and unsuccessful - play, burst out to Southey, who had heard the rumour and predicted a brilliant success:

"I shall not fine and renew a lease of popularity on the stage. To write for low ill-informed and conceited actors, whom you must please, for your success is at their mercy. I cannot away with..... The only thing that would tempt me to be so silly would be to assist a friend in such a degrading task who was to have the whole profit and shame of it,"

and to Lady Abercorn: "I would much sooner write an opera for Punch's puppet show." We feel almost disposed to say

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- (1) See letter quoted supra p. 172.  
 (2) Compare with his remarks quoted infra. p. 265  
 (3) Lochart VI. 40.  
 (4) Ibid.  
 (5) Ibid. 44.  
 (6) Familiar Letters II. 26.

like Hamlet's mother 'The [laddie] doth protest too much, methinks'.

When versions of "Rob Roy" appeared at both the patent theatres in London in the spring of 1818, Scott naturally was interested. (1) But the dramatization that interested him most was the tardy one made from Pocock's Convent Garden version by William Murray and produced at the Edinburgh Theatre-Royal, February 15th. 1819, a production which the Annalist terms "the most memorable and important piece ever put on the Theatre-Royal boards." (2) We have already seen how this play set the tottering theatre upon its feet once more and gave pleasure to hundreds of audiences and profit to dozens of managers. (3) Another remarkable feature of the play which Scott himself comments upon (4) was the fact that the little company produced it most successfully without the aid of any outside talent whatever. For the first night, we read, the house was crowded and the piece received with great enthusiasm. The cheering began when Scott and his party entered his usual box. That Scott was the author was not known, but it was becoming generally suspected. The critic of the Scotsman probably expressed the feelings of a large part of the audience when he wrote

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- (1) Lochart V. 310.  
 (2) Dibdin's Annals, 286.  
 (3) See supra p.46. c.f. Lochart VI.62.  
 (4) Familiar Letters II. 42.

"Our recollection of the novel Rob Roy and the almost universal genius of the author, with the perfect conviction that he is a Scotsman and was then present in the theatre, gave sufficient interest to the drama at its commencement." (1)

Indeed, Lochart tells us, Scott seldom took his place without some demonstration of respect and affection from his fellow patrons; (2) he goes on to praise the delicacy and good taste of the Edinburgh audiences who, while the secret of his authorship was kept, never seized upon any pretext

"to connect these demonstrations with the piece he had come to witness, or in short to do or say anything likely to interrupt his quiet enjoyment of the evening in the midst of his family and friends." (3)

Scott was intensely interested. It was, we read, extremely diverting to watch the play of his features during this admirable realization of his conception. Between the acts he hurried through to the green-room to remind Murray that Mattie must have a mantle with her lanthorn, but on the whole he was completely satisfied with the performance. In his letters about this time are frequent references to the play showing his pride and gratification. He was particularly pleased with the acting of poor old Duff, who scored one of his few successes as the Dougeld Creature, with Murray's own Captain Thornton and above all with the

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(1) February 20th. 1819.

(2) See supra. 98.

(3) Lochart's account is in Vol.VI. See especially pages 29 and 30.

marvellous Baillie Nichol Jarvie of Charles Mackay, whose performance won the reward of Scott's continued interest and assistance. As Jedediah Cleishbotham, his current pen-name, the author sent a comic letter of congratulation to the actor, which Lochart reproduces in full; <sup>(1)</sup> and near the close of the phenomenal run he wrote to Terry:

"Murray has netted upwards of £3000 on Rob Roy; to be sure the man who played the Baillie made a piece of acting equal to whatever has been seen in the profession. For my own part I was actually electrified by the truth spirit and humour that he threw into the part. It was the living Nichol Jarvie; conceited, pragmatical, cautious, generous, proud of his connection with Rob Roy, frightened for him at the same time, and yet extremely anxious to interfere with him as an advisor. The tone in which he seemed to give him up for a lost man after having provoked him into some burst of Highland violence 'Ah! Rab, Rab!' was quite inimitable. I do assure you I never saw a thing better played!" (2)

Two years later when Mackay accepted an engagement to play the Baillie in London, Scott did his utmost to smooth his path. He wrote to Joanna Baillie and Lord Montague, entreating them to go to see this fine performer and give him the benefit of a Scotch countenance in a strange city. <sup>(3)</sup> Upon his public avowal of authorship, in 1827, he coupled <sup>(4)</sup> Mackay with himself in one of his most graceful compliments.

Late in 1819 we find Scott writing to Terry and offering him the MSS of Ivanhoe which he believes worth adapting, though as "a tale of chivalry, not of character"

(1) VI. 30 - 32.

(2) Ibid. 62.

(3) Ibid., 333, 337.

(4) Ibid. IX. 142. See infra p. 215.

necessitating rather more scenery than some of the others. Terry, however, does not seem to have taken advantage of this offer, for though there were half a dozen separate versions played in 1820, none apparently is from his pen. He had, Lochart reports, another such opportunity about a year later. He was visiting Abbotsford at the time and had been presented the morning before with an advance copy of The Pirate. Scott appeared just before lunch with a sheaf of papers in his hand and said, "Well, lads, I've laid the keel of a new lugger this morning - here it is - be off to the waterside and let me hear how you like it." This was The Fortunes of Nigel, and Terry was delighted; - so much so that he seemed, in Scott's phrase, "to smell roast meat." On their return the actor expressed his opinion that these novels could be admirably Terryfied. "Sir Walter, as he took the MS from his hand, eyed him with a gay smile, in which genuine benovolence mingled with mock exultation, and then throwing himself into an attitude of comical dignity, he rolled out in the tones of John Kemble, one of the loftiest bursts of Ben Jonson's Mammon-

"Come on, sir. Now you set your foot on shore  
 In Novo orbe -  
 ----- Pertinax, my Surly,  
 Again I say to thee aloud, Be rich,  
 This day thou shalt have ingots." (2)

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(1) Ibid VI 142.

(2) Lochart VI. 414 - 5.

Terry, however, missed his chance once more. He seems to not have attempted a dramatization of The Pirate and his Nigel had an inglorious end. The novel was published in May, 1822, and Terry's version was underlined - as the theatrical phrase was - for production at the Haymarket in June. Whether it had faults which made the manager decide against it, or from some other cause, it was never produced at all.<sup>(1)</sup> The version by Fitzball at the Surrey appeared towards the end of the same month. Terry had also, it appears, adapted Kenilworth the previous year, but it, too, had failed to reach the stage.<sup>(2)</sup> Apart from these plays, the only record of his activity in the art which bore his name is an unsuccessful revision which he made of Isaac Pocock's play of The Antiquary at Convent Garden in 1820.<sup>(3)</sup> He was, true enough, otherwise engaged, as stage manager and comedian at the Haymarket Theatre, but the main cause of this failure to make good his opportunities was probably his own laziness. Scott once wrote to him "You must be aware of stumbling over a propensity which easily besets you from the habit of not having your time fully employed - I mean what the women very expressively call dawdling."<sup>(4)</sup> It was this habit undoubtedly that caused him despite his advantages to allow such energetic hacks as Dibdin, Pocock, Planche and Fitzball to best him

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- (1) Literary Gazette July 20th. 1822.  
 (2) London Magazine February 1821.  
 (3) See infra - Chapter IV.  
 (4) Lochart VI. 63.

in the races from bookstall to boards, and finally to give up altogether.

In 1822, Scott had another try at writing a drama, but this time he made it clear that the result was neither designed nor intended for the stage. <sup>(1)</sup> Halidon Hill, a short historical playlet was written for some charitable purpose of Joanna Baillie's. It was based, as we shall see in a fuller discussion later, upon an incident during the Scottish wars of Edward III, and written, Lochart informs us, in two rainy mornings. <sup>(1)</sup> When it was finished however, it was too long for its purpose and Scott began to look about for a still slighter subject for a dramatic sketch. An experience while on an antiquarian visit with the Blair-Adam Club provided him with the subject Macduff's Cross. <sup>(2)</sup> Meanwhile the copyright of Halidon Hill was eagerly snapped up by Constable for £1000, sight unseen. Constable, apparently quite pleased with this wild bargain wrote Scott that he wished he could persuade him to give them a similar production every three months, <sup>(3)</sup> and suggested enthusiastically to his partner Cadell that since this looked like the first of a long series of valuable and popular plays, they would do well to secure a monopoly at whatever the cost. <sup>(4)</sup> Halidon Hill was published in 1822, and probably meant a considerable

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- (1) Ibid VII. 18.  
 (2) Ibid  
 (3) Ibid, 22  
 (4) Constable op.cit.

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loss to the over-sanguine publisher. Macduff's Cross appeared about a year later, as planned, in Miss Baillie's Collection of Poetical Miscellanies.

The year 1822 is memorable on account of the visit paid to Edinburgh by King George IV, in which he shared with Scott the glory, if not the honour. Several full and detailed accounts of that gay week are readily accessible, (1) and to them we must leave the task of chronicling what took place. It is enough to say that it was a most colourful event, a blaze of pageantry, and perhaps also, as the caustic Carlyle termed it, "an efflorescence of flunkyism". (2) Scott was in charge of all arrangements, constantly consulted, and allowed fullest scope for his strong sense of the dramatic and the picturesque. Some even complained that he seemed (in Donald Carswell's phrase) to think that Scotland was spelled with two t's! It has been truly said at any rate, that he invented the modern Highlander. (3) The portly king delighted him by appearing in kilts, but was sharply criticised on the other side of the Tweed. Macaulay remarked that George apparently

"thought he could not give a more striking proof of his respect for the usages which prevailed in Scotland before the Union than by disguising himself in what, before the Union, was considered by nine Scotsmen out of ten the dress of a thief." (4)

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- (1) e.g. Oliver and Boyd's obnoxiously servile Historical Account etc. 8<sup>o</sup> 1822.  
 (2) Quoted by Watt, Book of Edinburgh Anecdote 126.  
 (3) Cornhill Magazine for 1871. p.288  
 (4) Quoted Ibid. Benson Hill, the actor, whose reminiscences we have already mentioned, called the whole affair "the tartan farce". He records one circumstance at least as funny and not so well known as that of Sir William Curtis' appearance in a kilt;

Scott had a wonderful time. Lochart cleverly describes it as

"a sort of grand terrification of the Holyrood chapters in Waverley; George IV anno aetatis 60, being well content to enact Prince Charlie with the Great Unknown himself for his Baron Bradwardine.(1)

As in Hamlet, there was a play within a play, James Ballantyne's Weekly Journal gives a brilliant picture of the scene in the theatre. (2) As a compliment to Scott and the nation, the King had commanded of Murray and his company a performance of Rob Roy, and appeared to enjoy the play immensely. It was a graceful and politic gesture and offended only one person, Edmund Kean, who happened to be playing an engagement in Edinburgh at the time and had confidently expected that the king would desire him in some such play as Macbeth. George, however, never so much as mentioned his name, and the actor concealed his humiliation by boasting over his wine that he was "a

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Footnote (4) Continued from previous page (200):-

[See Lochart VII 64, and Byron's Age of Bronze.] The Bradalbane pipers, prompted no doubt by Scott, claimed their ancient privilege of preceding the King. Fortunately but few knew the words to the piece they played:

"Geordie sits in Charlie's chair  
Deil tak them wha set him there"!

The harassed stage-manager could not attend to everything!  
- Hill - Playing About II. 62.

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(1) Lochart VII. 50.

(2) August 29, 1822. Quoted in part by Lochart VII.65-7.

greater man than ever I expected to be - I have a king for  
 an enemy." (1)

Scott had not neglected his editorial and critical work during these years. As he once remarked, there was danger that the public might tire of him in one role. In 1820 he offered his services to John Ballantyne as editor of a Novelist's Library, to be printed and published for Ballantyne's sole benefit. Naturally the offer was accepted on the spot, and a few days later Scott appeared with his admirable Life of Fielding for the first volume. In the course of his remarks on Fielding's plays, Scott discusses the relations of the novel and the drama, and what success the skilful writer of one would be likely to have in the other. The fate of Devorgoil was still rankling a little perhaps. At any rate Scott denies that the novelist should expect to be able to succeed as a dramatist, (2) This first volume of Ballantyne's Novelist's Library appeared in February 1821, and the others followed at frequent intervals. At the tenth volume, however, the series suddenly stopped, and no more were issued.

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(1) Calcraft in Dublin Review, May 1851.

(2) See the reply to this by "π" in Blackwoods, February 1826  
 There is some further discussion of this article,  
 infra p. 251.

It seems probable that Scott also undertook at this time his old project of an edition of Shakespeare. Constable (1) mentions the plan in a letter of February 15th.1822, and Scott replies candidly

"A Shakespeare, to say truth, has often been a favourite scheme with me; a sensible Shakespeare in which the useful and readable notes should be condensed and separated from the trash; but it would require much time and, I fear, more patience than I may ever be able to command. Then, when the world sees it, it would certainly be disappointed, for of a name of notoriety they would expect something new on a subject where there is nothing new to be said; and when they found it was only a selection and condensation of the work of other editors they would be apt to conceive themselves imposed upon. Yet so long ago as when John Ballantyne was in Hanover Street (2) I did think seriously of such a thing and I still think it is a desideratum in English literature." (3)

The work was begun about 1823 or 1824, however, and some three volumes of the proposed ten were printed before the failure of Constable in 1826.

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- (1) Constable, *op.cit.* III. 183 On this subject see an excellent article by W.S.Crockett, - Sir Walter Scott's Shakespeare, in Living Age (Boston) Feb.4.1922.
- (2) This would be about 1818.
- (3) Constable, *op.cit.* III. 192 Scott was warmly attached to James Boswell (the son of Johnson's Bozzy) and the editor of the Third Variorum of Shakespeare 1821 (Lochart, Chapter 56, note). He refers several times to the edition (e.g. Pirate I, Chapter 16; Woodstock II, Chapter 5, note). He was also acquainted with Francis Douce, whose Illustrations of Shakespeare and Ancient Manners (1807) he thought likely to be "caviare to the multitude". (Lochart III. 40 Scott always misquotes Hamlet's phrase. See Ibid 32). He once remarked wittily however that Variorum Editions were like the gratitude of the Gauls to the traitress of Rome, who was crushed to death beneath their gifts. (On Todd's Edition of Spenser - Prose Works, XVII, 101).

"It gives me great pleasure," Constable writes to Cadell in January 1825, "to tell you that the first sheet of Sir Walter Scott's Shakespeare is now in type. It will take ten volumes. The first volume contains a life of Shakespeare by Sir Walter. This I expect, will be a first rate property." (1)

The project was abandoned at the time of the crash, and the printed sheets, which had never apparently reached the binding room, were sold in London as waste paper. "It is even doubtful," says the younger Constable, "whether one copy be now in existence." (2) One, however, seems to have survived and is now in the Barton collection of the Boston (Mass.) Public Library.

"I have examined the three volumes," says Dr. Brewer, and feel confident that they are genuine. They are numbers II, III and IV - which tallies exactly with what we learn from Constable. They have the imprint 'Edinburgh. Printed by John Ballantyne and Co.' And in the short introduction what few passages are composed by the editor have distinctly the flavour of Scott." (3)

The most curious thing is that Lochart, who was to do under Scott's supervision most of the actual work on the notes and text while Scott wrote "the Prolegomena and Life and Times", never so much as alludes to the fragmentary edition, in his Life of Scott. Hack work never appealed to poor Lochart who was fated to do such a lot of it. (4)

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- (1) Constable, op.cit. III 241-7  
 (2) Ibid., cf. Wilmon Brewer: Shakespeare's Influence on Sir Walter Scott. (1925) 42.n.  
 (3) Brewer, op.cit. 43.  
 (4) Constable, op.cit. III 241 : A. Lang: Life and Letters of John Gibson Lochart (1897) I. 409: II, 13.  
B.S. Mackenzie: Sir Walter Scott; the Story of His Life (1871) 475-6.

Scott's correspondence with Terry and others during 1824 show that his interest in the theatre was still active and that he attended frequently when he was in town. In one letter he mentions James Russell, who was ambitious, like many comedians, to succeed in tragedy. Scott saw him act Sir Giles in Massenger's New Way to Pay Old Debts, and though he noticed some incongruities, he was not hyper-critical. Nevertheless, when Russell spent Christmas at Abbotsford, Scott probably made good his promise "to try and insinuate him to stick by the sock."<sup>(1)</sup>

His influence was still sought by budding dramatists, to whom stray references occur in his letters and Lochart's account. Back in 1813 he alluded to "a dramatic clergyman who insisted that I should either like his tragedy or tell him at length why I disapproved of it - a dilemma from which I escaped with great difficulty."<sup>(2)</sup> I suppose most people have heard of the packet he received from New York one day in 1818, and on which he had the privilege of paying £5 postage. When it was opened, it proved to contain a manuscript play called The Cherokee Lovers, by a young American lady who wanted nothing more than that

(1) Familiar Letters II. 183.

(2) Letters III. 347. I do not know whether or not this was the playwright alluded to in Scott's letter to Miss Baillie, quoted below.

he should read and correct it, equip it with a prologue and epilogue, procure for it a favourable reception from the management of Drury Lane, and make Murray or Constable bleed handsomely for the copyright. The sequel to this expensive bit of comedy was the arrival, also charges (1) collect, of a duplicate, lest the first had miscarried! In 1824, however, when Joanna asked his interest in behalf of a tragedy by Mrs. Hemans which had already been damned at Covent Garden, he replied:

"To hear is to obey, and the enclosed line will show that the Siddonses are agreeable to act Mrs. Hemans's drama. When you tell the tale, say nothing about me, for on no earthly consideration would I like it to be known that I interfered in theatrical matters; it brings such a torrent of applications which it is impossible to grant and often very painful to refuse. Everybody thinks they can write blank verse - and 'a word of yours to Mrs. Siddons', etc. etc. I had one rogue (to be sure he went mad afterwards, poor fellow) who came to bully me in my own house until he had almost made the mist of twenty years, as Ossian says, roll backwards from my spirit, in which case he might have come by an excellent good beating. I have great pleasure, however, in serving Mrs. Hemans, both on account of

- (1) Lochart V. 312-3.
- (2) The Vespers of Palermo, produced December 12.1823. It was published in 1823 and later in Dicks' Edition '155). It is also included in her Poetical Works. The Edinburgh Dramatic Review (April 5th. 1824) ascribes its failure to Miss F.H.Kelley, who, rather unhinged by rumours of an organized conspiracy against her, failed to make anything of her part, a circumstance which removes from the play itself, the Review thought, the discredit of failure.

her own merit and because of your patronage..... I wish Mrs. H. had been on the spot to make any alterations, etc., which the players are always demanding. I will read the drama over more carefully than I have yet done, and tell you if anything occurs." (1)

The Vespers had, in fact, a moderate success in Edinburgh on April 5th and 7th 1824. The Dramatic Review noticed it very fully.

"We confess that we have a decided partiality to this play, for one reason in particular, that the author shows no distrust of her powers by the invention of claptraps, (2) or incidents striking in themselves but unnecessary to the denouement." (3)

Scott had few hopes of its success. He told Joanna that he hoped the author's expectations were not very high

"for I do not think our ordinary theatrical audience is either more judicious or less fastidious than those of England." (4)

About this time, or shortly before, the vogue for Waverley dramas reached its peak. In return for his constant advice about the arrangement of Abbotsford and his services as a sort of literary agent in London, (5) Scott had continued showering Terry with opportunities of stealing a march on the other adaptors. In October 1823 he sent him an advance copy of St. Ronan's Well, (6) and some time later

(1) Lochart VII. 231-2.

(2) The real meaning of this phrase, as "a snare for applause" never occurred to me, I confess, until I read this sentence.

(3) Dramatic Review April 8th. 1824; see also April 5th and 6th.

(4) Lochart VII. 236-7.

(5) C.f. e.g. Familiar Letters II. 346 where Scott says: "Pray do you ever look into the bookshops now? Pray keep in mind the drama. I have always a £10 to spend on bargains of that

(6) Lochart VII. 206. sort."

offered him Redgauntlet, "which I think will be highly  
 (1) dramatic." The Grinder, however, does not seem to have  
 (2) done anything with them. When St. Ronan's Well, as  
 dramatized by Planché was produced in Edinburgh in June,  
 Scott wrote to Terry:

"We had a new piece t'other night from St. Ronan's  
 which though I should have supposed it ill-adapted for  
 the stage succeeded wonderfully, - chiefly by Murray's  
 acting of the Old Nabob. Mackay also made an excellent  
Mag Dods, and kept his gestures and his actions more  
 within the verge of female decorum than I should have  
 thought possible." (3)

Some six months later we find Scott sending Terry  
 some hints about Sheridan's borrowing from Cowley for a  
 theatrical history he seems to have planned; again, however  
 Terry seems to have abandoned the task. In the same  
 letter Scott suggests a professional visit to Edinburgh:-

"Indeed as you come down with a new halo of  
 London fame, I think it might be very successful, for  
 theatrical attraction always depends more on popularity  
 than on real merit. Besides you have now several  
 parts of your own which always infers novelty and  
 with a little help from friends and James Ballantyne's  
 blarney I have little doubt of the campaign, and I  
 will be personally responsible for a good benefit.  
 I speak this confidently, because circumstances  
 have forced me into wider connections of every kind  
 than perhaps I could have wished and a friend like  
 you should take the full benefit." (4)

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- (1) Familiar Letters II. 187. Scott is ambiguous, but  
Redgauntlet seems to be the work he was referring to.  
 (2) See Appendix.  
 (3) Lochart VII 211. See also the paragraphs on this  
 play infra p. 424f.  
 (4) Familiar Letters II. 187. I am not sure whether the  
 last sentence means that his connection with the  
 theatre management has become closer or whether it is  
 intended to be taken generally.

Scott had alluded rather frankly some years before to Terry's besetting sin of "dawdling"<sup>(1)</sup> and certainly the two never saw eye to eye on the subject of leisure, but Terry's failure to profit in the ways Scott suggested were caused by his preoccupation in another direction.

In July 1825, he went into partnership with Frederick Yates, another able comedian, as joint lessee and manager of the Adelphi Theatre in the Strand, one of the best of the minor houses. He applied to his Edinburgh friends for a loan, or at least the use of their credit. Scott's letters during these negotiations show a surprisingly canny knowledge of the gamble of management.

"I do not state these particulars," he said, "from any wish to avoid assisting you in this undertaking; much the contrary. If I saw the prospect of your getting fairly on the wing, nothing could give me more pleasure than to assist to the extent of my means, and I shall only in that case regret that they are at present more limited than I could wish, by circumstances which I shall presently tell you. But I should not like to see you take flight, like that ingenious mechanist in Rasselas - only to flutter a few yards, and fall into the lake." (2)

Ultimately, Lochart reports, James Ballantyne, who shared Scott's distrust for Terry's business acumen, became his security for some £500, and Scott similarly pledged his credit for £1,250. In the sequel, he was obliged to pay off both of these sums.<sup>(3)</sup>

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- (1) Lochart VI.63.  
 (2) Lochart VII. 370-77.  
 (3) Ibid, 369.

Scott's own affairs were becoming very involved. We need say nothing here of the train of circumstances that led in 1826 to the bankruptcy of Constable, or of his own involvement in the crash. It marked with catastrophic suddenness the end of a period of his career and the beginning of another.

§ 5.

THE LAST YEARS.

Though it might be expected that the last over-worked years of Sir Walter Scott would be rather barren of dramatic and theatrical interest, there is really a surprising amount to say. True, his actual connection with the stage was more limited, but three of his most important critical articles and two more dramas were written between 1826 and his death. The period also is covered by that beautiful record of a noble life, his Journal, - so that we get more glimpses of what he thought and felt, than is possible even in so intimate a biography as Lochart's.

One of his first thoughts when he was confronted by the mountain of debt, was his goblin drama of Devorgoil. Could it not, he mused, be added to Woodstock as a fourth volume?

"Terry refused the gift of it, but he was quite and entirely wrong; it is not good but it may be made so. Poor Will Erskine liked it much."(1)

and next day:-

"Spoke to J.B. last night about Devorgoil, who does not seem to relish the proposal, alleging the comparative failure of Halidon Hill. Ay, says Self-Conceit, but he has not read it - and when he

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(1) Journal, January 25th 1826.

does it is a sort of wild fanciful work betwixt heaven and earth, which men of solid parts do not estimate. Pepy's thought Shakespeare's Midsummer-Night's Dream the most silly play he had ever seen, and Pepys was probably judging on the same grounds with J.B., though presumptuous enough to form conclusions against a very different work from any of mine. How if I send it to Lochart by and by?" (1)

Nothing seems to have come of this project however. The play was not published until 1830, and then, according to the preface, only "for the convenience of those who possess former editions of the Author's Poetical Works." (2)

Scott set off in October for a visit to London and Paris. In London he saw a good deal of Terry, attending The Adelphi and dining with him in the "curious dwelling no larger than a squirrel's cage, which he has contrived to squeeze out of the vacant space of the theatre, and which is accessible by a most complicated combination of staircases and small passages. There we had rare good porter and oysters after the play." (3) In Paris he attended the Comedie Francaise to see Bonnechose's "Rosamund" (4) and the Odeon where he saw Deschamps and deWailly's opera of Ivanhoè.

"It was," he writes in his Journal, "superbly got up, the Norman soldiers wearing pointed helmets and what resembled much hauberks of mail, which looked very well. The number of the attendants and the skill with which they were moved and grouped on the stage were well worthy of notice.

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- (1) Ibid January 26th. 1826.  
 (2) Preface.  
 (3) Journal, October 21st.  
 (4) Ibid. October 30th.

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- (1) Ibid January 26th. 1826.  
 (2) Preface.  
 (3) Journal, October 21st.  
 (4) Ibid. October 30th.

It was an opera, and of course the story sadly mangled, and the dialogue in great part nonsense. Yet it was strange to hear anything like the words which I (then in agony of pain with spasms in my stomach) dictated to William Laidlow at Abbotsford now recited in a foreign tongue and for the amusement of a strange people. I little thought to have survived the completing of this novel." (1)

During the next two years he wrote three critical articles on theatrical subjects, which may, I think, be discussed together. The first of them, which appeared in the Quarterly, April 1826, was his review of James Boaden's Life of Kemble and Michael Kelley's Reminiscences, upon which we have already drawn freely in this chapter. Besides being a tribute to his friend John Kemble, this article gave Scott an opportunity of advancing lightly and yet seriously many of his own views on the drama and the theatre. Having recalled his own early experiences of the stage and his own recollections of Kemble, he discusses the moral aspects of theatre-going, (showing a surprising tolerance of narrow dissentients) the relationships of drama and history, and the favourable influence exerted by the well-conducted theatre upon manners and morals.

"In short," he concludes significantly, "the drama is in ours and in most civilized countries, an engine possessing the most powerful effect on the manners of society. The frequency of reference, quotation and allusion to plays of every kind, from the masterpieces of Shakespeare's genius down to the farce which has the run of a season gives dramatic colouring to conversation and habits of expression; and those who look into the matter strictly will be surprised to find how much our ordinary language and ordinary ideas are modified by what we have seen and heard on the stage." (2)

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(1) Ibid, October 31st.

(2) See Prose Works XIX. See his comments on the article in his Journal, April 25th. 1827.

In June 1827, he wrote for the same periodical a review of The Life and Works of the Author of "Douglas" by Henry Mackenzie ("The Man of Feeling"). Although a great part of the article is concerned with Home's life outside the theatre, Scott has something to say about dramatic criticism, the stage history of the Eighteenth Century, and Home's lesser-known tragedies. The failure of these he imputes not so much to a decay of genius as to the learned author's failure to realize that few audiences were familiar with such themes as the Ephori and the double kings of Lacedaemon. This article on his old friend, finally, provides a rich chapter of Scott's own reminiscences as well as many interesting sketches of Scottish literary society in an age of which Mackenzie was the last honoured relic, - the age of Hume, Robertson, Ferguson, Beattie, Blair and Adam Smith.

Early in 1828, Scott contributed to the Foreign Quarterly Review, as a free gift to the editor, Robert Gillies, an article on the life and works of Molière. He had already in his essay on The Drama discussed the place of Molière in the drama of France and of the world, and this article expressed opinions essentially the same.

(1) Lochart IX. 194.

(2) Based on Oeuvres de Moliere (1819-1827) by M. de l'Auger: and Histoire de la Vie et des Ouvres de Molière (1825) by J. Taschereau.

*1827/28  
Foreign  
Review*

Molière seems really to have been the only one of the great French dramatists with whom he was at all familiar; but he frequently quoted from him throughout his work and admired him greatly, as "the prince of writers of comedy." "We doubt," he said in this article, "if, with his utmost efforts [Moliere] could have been absolutely dull."

The evening of February 23rd. 1827 is forever memorable as the date of the dinner in aid of the Edinburgh Theatrical Fund, the occasion chosen by Scott to clear away forever the "mystery" of The Great Unknown and avow himself the sole author of the Waverley novels. Sir Walter was himself in the chair at Manager Murray's request. Lord Meadowbank threw the company into delirious enthusiasm by proposing his toast, not to the Great Unknown, but to Sir Walter Scott! When he could make himself heard above the deafening applause, Scott distinctly owned to being "the sole and undivided author", and concluded with a graceful compliment to "one who has represented several of those

characters, of which I had endeavoured to give the skeleton, with a truth and liveliness for which I may well be grateful. "I beg leave," he said, raising his glass, "to propose the health of my good friend Bailie Nichol Jarvie - and I am sure that when the author of Waverley and Rob Roy drinks to Nichol Jarvie, it will be received with the just applause to which that gentleman has always been accustomed, - nay, that you will take care that

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(1) Who had previously asked Scott's permission to do so.

on the present occasion it shall be PRO - DI - GI - OUS!"  
 and  
 The Assembly Rooms shook with boundless applause, /as the  
 first burst of enthusiasm subsided the good Bailie (Charles  
 Mackay) was heard saying

"My conscience! My worthy father the deacon could never have believed that his son would hae sic a compliment paid to him by the Great Unknown!"

which remark Scott amended

"The Small Known, now, Mr. Bailie!"

The honour was always a precious memory to Mackay, and on the occasion of his farewell in 1848, he spoke thus:

"Few, alas! very few are now present who witnessed my first appearance on these boards, now more than a quarter of a century ago. That appearance I owed chiefly to the success which had attended my humble efforts in the delineation of a certain character while a member of the Aberdeen Theatre. Shortly after coming to this theatre I was again trusted with the same character and on the first night that Rob Roy was performed on this stage, the Great Unknown, (for though Great, he was then unknown) was one of the audience.

"At this moment, as Hamlet says, I see him in my mind's eye, as he sat leaning on his staff on the back seat of one of the boxes. [Here Mackay pointed with his finger to the spot Scott had occupied.] Never shall I forget the sparkle of his eye, and the good-humoured smile on his face on that to me momentous night. It is to the pen of the mighty dead I owe my theatrical reputation. Had he never written, I should never have been noticed as an actor. To him then and to you, I am indebted for the little I have saved for the maintenance of my old age.

"The kindness of Sir Walter Scott was, ladies and gentlemen, as some of you know, only equalled by his genius - and on the night when he declared himself to be the author of the novels, you may judge of my surprise when he was pleased to say before the then assembled hundreds 'that the skeleton he had

drawn had been so faithfully clothed by his friend Bailie Nichol Jarvie that he was grateful'. My conscience!' grateful to me; there was a compliment! and from such a man! So far from clothing skeletons I felt that I was but labouring to embody the most perfect delineations that ever issued from the mind of man. No wonder then I have always been proud of the cognomen of Bailie Nichol Jarvie. Some friends have, at times, apologised for calling me the "Baillie", - little thinking all the time the pleasure I experienced in hearing it." (1)

The report of the Theatrical Fund Banquet was probably published in every newspaper of Great Britain and America, if not of Continental Europe as well. Lochart, of course, describes it fully. (2) Another excellent account may be found as Appendix I to the Introduction of Chronicles of the Canongate in Scott's Collected Works. It is interesting to note that when the article was shown him before printing he made but one correction, amending a passage which seemed to indicate an intolerance with people who did not conscientiously approve of dramatic entertainments. (3)

Although the affair made a great sensation, it was characteristic of Scott to consider it as of but little importance. He records only in his Journal:

"February 24 - I carried my own instructions into effect as best I could, (4) and if our jests were not good, our laughter was abundant. I think I will hardly take the chair again when the company is so miscellaneous; though they all behaved perfectly well. Meadowbank taxed me with the

(1) *Edinburgh Courant April 27, 1848.*

(2) Lochart IX. 77-84.

(3) Chronicles of the Canongate. Introd. App.I. xxxvi.

(4) See Lochart IX. 77-8.

novels, and to end the farce at once I pleaded guilty. So that splore is ended. As to the collection, - it has been much cry and little woo, as the deil said when he shore the sow. I got away at ten at night. The performers performed very like gentlemen, especially Will Murray." (1)

We have already referred to Mr. Dibdin's comment  
(2)  
on this last remark. There is little more to say.

Scott may have been a snob, but one must not forget that all actors were not gentlemen like his friends John Kemble, Daniel Terry and Charles Matthews. At that banquet, one may feel sure, there were many, perhaps even Murray himself, who did exactly what Scott says they did, - and the more credit to them.

The trouble which Scott had foreseen as far back as 1825 now descended on the partners in the Adelphi venture, and Terry was forced to retire from the management. Scott wrote kindly, sympathizing with his friend and offering what little assistance he was able, but advising him not to consider a permanent engagement in Edinburgh.

"My countrymen are not," he wrote, "people to have recourse to in adverse circumstances. John Bull is a better beast in misfortune." (3)

When the ruin of the theatre became public, the strain was too much for Terry's mental and physical powers, and he retired for some time to the Continent to recuperate.

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- (1) February 24th. 1827.  
(2) Annals 321 - see supra p. 155  
(3) Lochart IX. 249.

The Terrys seem to have wished to return to Scotland and take a small cottage near Abbotsford; but Scott was not in favour of such a plan, first because London was more suitable for a limited income, and secondly because

"such a plan would remove Terry out of his natural sphere of action. It is no easy matter to retreat from the practice of an art to the investigation of its theory; but common sense says that if there is one branch of literature which has a chance of success for our friend, it must be that relating to the drama. Dramatic works, whether designed for the stage or the closet - dramatic biography (an article in which the public is always interested) - dramatic criticism - these can all be conducted with best advantage in London - or rather they can be conducted nowhere else..... In Edinburgh there is nothing of this kind going forwards, positively nothing. Since Constable's fall, all exertion is ended in the Gude Town in the publishing business, excepting what I may not long be able to carry on." (1)

In accordance with his promise, Scott arranged for his god-son, Walter Terry, to enter the New Academy in Edinburgh. Terry himself, having returned from the continent, took an engagement at Drury Lane, where he played Polonius and Simpson, but finding his powers gone and his memory treacherous, he was forced again to give it up. On the 12th June, 1829, he suffered a stroke of paralysis and died ten days later. "With him," said Scott simply, "many memories die." (2) His widow made her home for some time in Edinburgh with her father, Mr. Nasmyth, but later re-married.

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(1) Lochart IX. 261-2.

(2) Journal, July 9th. 1829.

Scott's limited career as a dramatic author was not yet ended. In 1828, the long-forgotten drama of his youth The House of Aspen was sold for £500, and published in The Keepsake, a publication undertaken by Charles Heath, the engraver; and in 1829, while preparing a review of Robert Pitcairn's Ancient Criminal Trials, he was struck by the curious case of Mure of Auchindrane, back in the Seventeenth Century, and resolved to found another dramatic sketch on this terrible tale. The result was Auchindrane or The Ayrshire Tragedy published early in 1830. Lochart believes this superior to any of Scott's other attempts in the drama, and believes certain passages, especially that in which the murdered corpse of Quentin floats upright in the wake of Neil's ship, to be comparable to anything short of Shakespeare,<sup>(1)</sup> but is constrained to doubt whether the prose narrative in the preface be not on the whole more dramatic than the versified scenes.<sup>(1)</sup> On the 5th of June, 1830, the play was performed at the Caledonian Theatre, the Leith Street rival of Murray's establishment, but apparently without success; it seems to have been withdrawn after the first, or possibly the second, performance.<sup>(2)</sup> There is no mention of the performance in any of the papers relating to Scott's life, but he was then in Edinburgh, and it seems incredible that he should not have seen it played. Perhaps

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(1) Lochart IX, 335.

(2) Dibdin 348.

(1)  
its failure may account for the silence on the point.

The House of Aspen was also produced there and ran for a week but without marked enthusiasm.

Scott was not, however, during the last few years of his life, the regular theatre-goer that he had been. The first indication of his slackening interest is an entry in his Journal for December 12th. 1825:

"Dined at home and spent the evening in writing. - Anne and Lady Scott at the theatre to see Mathews; - a very clever man, my friend Mathews; but it is tiresome to be funny for a whole evening, so I was content and stupid at home."

A week or so later he writes after a visit to the theatre,

"Mathews last night gave us a very perfect imitation of Old Cumberland who carried the poetic jealousy and irritability farther than any man I ever saw..... Mathews has really all the will as well as the talent to be amusing." (2)

X (1) See infra p. 254, 255.

(2) Journal, January 12th. 1826.

In March 1827, he writes:

"A long seat at the Court and an early dinner as we went to the play. John Kemble's brother (1) acted Benedick. He is a fine looking man and a good actor but not superior. He reminds me eternally that he is acting; and he had got, as the devil direct it, hold of my favourite Benedick for which he has no power..... There were two farces; one which I wished to see, and that being the last, was obliged to tarry for it. Perhaps the headache I contracted made me a severe critic on Cramond Brig, (2) a little piece ascribed to Lochart. Perhaps I am unjust, but I cannot think it his; there so few good things in it and so much prosing transferred from that mine of marrowless morality called the Miller of Mansfield(3) yet it pleases." (4)

and again, a few months later:

"Frankenstein (5) is entertaining for once - considerable art in the man that plays the monster to whom he gave great effect. Cooper is his name; played excellently in the farce too, as a sailor - a more natural one, I think, than my old friend Jack Bannister, though he has not quite Jack's richness of humour."

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- (1) Charles Kemble - See D.N.B.
- (2) Cramond Brig, or The Gude Man of Ballageich, was by William Murray. Produced at the Theatre-Royal. February 27, 1826, and was long popular.
- (3) The King and the Miller of Mansfield, a <sup>dramatic tale</sup> ~~novel~~ <sup>by</sup> R. Dodsley. Acted at Drury Lane in 1737. From a traditional story of the time of Henry II. of England.
- (4) Journal, March 6th. 1827.
- (5) Mrs. Shelley's novel was dramatized by
- (6) Journal, June 6th. 1827.

Benson Hill gives a rather charming picture of one of these rare visits, made while Tom Moore was his guest in 1826:

"Just as it [the opening piece] terminated another party quietly glided into a box..... One pleasing female was with three male comers. In a minute the cry ran round "Ech, yon's Sir Wa'ter wi' Lochart and his wife; and wha's the wee bit bodie wi' the pawkie e'en? Wow, but it's Tam Moore, just - Scott, Scott! Moore, Moore!" with shouts cheers and applause. How happy looked the dear daughter and great son-in-law, to sit, as comparative nobodies, beside their chief. But he would not rise to appropriate these tributes. One could see that he urged Moore to do so; he, though modestly reluctant, at last yielded, and bowed, hand on heart, with graceful animation. The cry for Scott was then redoubled. He gathered himself up, and with a benevolent bend, acknowledged this deserved welcome. The orchestra played alternate Scotch and Irish melodies. When the 'feddlers' came to 'Here's to her', one man in the pit faced the boxes and sung -

'With golden key wealth thought  
To pass, but 'twouldn't do;  
But wit a diamond brought  
And cut his bright way through.' (1)

(2)

Then followed a drama, founded on The Abbot."

Scott who had received a tumultuous welcome in the theatre at Dublin four months before (3) was delighted by his fellow-townsmen's reception of Moore. "I could have hugged them," he wrote in his Journal, "for it paid back (4) the debt of the kind reception I met with in Ireland."

(1) op.cit. 89-91. The lines are from Moore's

(2) Mary Queen of Scots, or The Escape from Lochleven, by W.H. Murray.

(3) Lochart VIII. 21.

(4) Journal, Nov. 22.

The last recorded visit of Scott to the Edinburgh Theatre was in 1830 when he went to see the daughter of Charles Kemble, Miss Fanny, whose talents had saved <sup>(1)</sup> Covent Garden from disaster . He writes in his Journal:

"Went last night to Theatre and saw Miss Fanny Kemble's Isabella which was a most creditable performance. It has much of the genius of Mrs. Siddons, her aunt. She wants her beautiful countenance, her fine form and her matchless dignity of step and manner. On the other hand, Miss Fanny Kemble has very expressive though not regular features, and what is worth it all, great energy mingled with and chastised by correct taste. I suffered by the heat lights and exertion, and will not go back tonight, for it has purchased me a sore headache, this theatrical excursion. Besides the play is Mrs. Beverley, (2) and I hate to be made miserable about domestic distress; so I keep my gracious presence at home tonight, though I love and respect Miss Kemble for giving her active support to her father in his need, and preventing Covent Garden from coming down about their ears. I corrected proofs before breakfast, attended Court, but was idle in the afternoon, the headache annoying me much." (3)

There is but little more to tell. Probably the last dramatic performance he ever saw was during his health tour to Italy in the year of his death. In Naples he records together his grandson's death and his last visit to a theatre:

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(2) +

(3) June 17th. 1830.

"January 16 - Poor Johnny Lochart! The boy is gone whom we have made so much of. I could not have borne it better than I now do and I might have borne it much worse. - I went to the Opera in the evening to see this amusement in its birthplace, which is now so widely received over Europe."

Our last glimpse is as whimsical as it is sad. Scott is home again at Abbotsford, and Lochart and Laidlaw have wheeled him out into the warm July air.

"The sun getting very strong [Lochart says] we halted the chairs in a shady corner, just within the verge of his verdant arcade around the court-wall; and breathing the coolness of the spot, he said 'Read me some amusing thing - read me a bit of Crabbe'. I brought out the first volume of his old favourite that I could lay hand on, and turned to what I remembered as one of his most favourite passages in it - the description of the arrival of the Players in the Borough. He listened with great interest, and also, as I soon perceived, with great curiosity. Every now and then he exclaimed 'Capital - excellent - very good - Crabbe has lost nothing,' and we were too well satisfied that he considered himself as hearing a new production when, chuckling over one couplet, he said 'Better and better - but how will poor Terry endure these cuts?' I went on with the poet's terrible sarcasms upon theatrical life, and he listened eagerly, muttering 'Honest Dan!' - 'Dan won't like this'. At length I reached those lines -

"Sad happy race, soon raised and soon depressed,  
Your days all passed in jeopardy and jest:  
Poor without prudence, with afflictions vain  
Not warned by misery nor enriched by gain."  
'Shut the book,' said Sir Walter - 'I can't stand  
more of this - it will touch Terry to the very quick.'"

(1)

### Chapter III.

#### SCOTT AS A CRITIC AND PLAYWRIGHT.

CHAPTER III.

SCOTT AS A DRAMATIC CRITIC AND PLAYWRIGHT.

As Dr. Margaret Ball has pointed out, Scott's achievements as an imaginative writer have quite overshadowed the very excellent critical work which he did throughout his career. This is particularly true of his dramatic criticism. Although it must be emphasised that except for the long article on Drama for the Encyclopaedia Britannica, in 1819, and one or two periodical reviews of books on theatrical subjects, he did no systematic dramatic writing, the careful reader of his letters and his Journal cannot but be struck with the number of sound opinions he expressed from time to time about the whole range of dramatic art.

In the previous section, mention has been made of Scott's remarkable acquaintance with the history of the drama from its classical beginnings to his own day, a

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(1) Sir Walter Scott as a Critic of Literature (1907).

It was my original plan to discuss Scott's dramatic criticism and theatrical opinions at some length. Dr. Ball has, I find, covered the ground sketchily but fairly adequately. I propose therefore to omit all but his discussion of contemporary dramatists.

knowledge gained by frequent attendance at the theatre and by wide reading. In his essay for the encyclopaedia, naturally, he was often dependent upon "the best antiquaries" for many of his facts, but he advanced enough of his own ideas to make it a valuable piece of work. In preparing his edition of Dryden, he read deeply in the drama of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, so that the opinions he expresses are authentic and scholarly. It is not my purpose in this place to discuss Scott's critical appreciation of the drama of other days. I have referred again to these facts only to show that his criticism of contemporary dramatists had a solid historical foundation.

In Professor Nicoll's late study of Nineteenth Century Drama, Scott himself comes in for a good deal of criticism for his failure to contribute more to the drama of his day. If I seem in this section to refer rather often to these paragraphs, it should not be taken to mean that I disagree generally with Professor Nicoll. One particular remark, however, admits, I think, of some further discussion:

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(1) If one is not struck with Scott's particular knowledge of Elizabethan and Restoration drama, it would be interesting to glance through the catalogue of his own books in the library at Abbotsford. His literary lieutenants, Ballantyne, Constable and Terry had done their work well when he asked them to pick him up any old plays they came across in London. See Letters II.44, 63; cf Lockhart VI c.418.

"When Scott," he says, "boldly declared 'that this age has no reason to apprehend any decay of dramatic talent', he displayed clearly that, like his companions, he had failed to grasp those genuine essentials upon which 'dramatic talent' must be founded, or without which (1) 'dramatic talent' cannot hope to succeed."

If this were known to have been Scott's considered opinion, one could not but agree with Professor Nicoll; as it is, however, it stands several times contradicted. Nor is it difficult, really, to see why Scott should have said such a thing. He was writing an essay on the drama for an encyclopaedia, and it was as he remarked at the time, no part of his task to enter into any critical discussion of his contemporaries. (2) When we have examined his other work, it will surely be granted I think, that he was only being polite!

As early as 1808, for instance, he hoped to see Sarah Smith in a suitable part "if the real taste for the Drama, independent of shew and scenery should ever happen to revive." (3) Again, at nearly the same time as he was writing the article on Drama he spoke in a review of

(1) op.cit. p.72.

(2) Miscellaneous Prose Works.

(3) Letters II. 30.

Charles Maturin's Women of "the general decay of dramatic art that makes our age."<sup>(1)</sup>

Like most of his contemporaries, then, Scott realized that the drama had sunk to a very low ebb, without clearly understanding the reason. From our point of vantage in the Twentieth Century, it is easy enough to see the chief cause: that "the dead hand" of Elizabethan tradition had blinded literary men to the fact that new days demanded new ways. Such persuasive critics as Lamb, Hazlitt and Coleridge had convinced them that Shakespeare was the greatest dramatist of all time, with the devastating inference as a result that the only proper way to write a good drama was to ape Shakespeare and his fellows. Accordingly at the very moment when the stage was groping eagerly for a Boucicault, a Robertson, an Ibsen, a Galsworthy, men of letters were all looking backward instead of forward. All but the humble "play-carpenters" as Scott called the makers of melodrama wrote, as it were, for antiquity, producing plays foreign to their audiences in setting language and feeling, plays in which subject matter and situations alike were far-fetched and operatic,

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(1) Edinburgh Review, June, 1818; Periodical Criticism II.  
p.172.

and in which technique had hardened into a lifeless and mechanical formula. But to contemporary critics, this was not apparent. Many of them recognised plenty of minor causes, <sup>(1)</sup> such as the growing prevalence of stock types, too much "poetry" (this was "warmer") monopoly of representation, lack of efficient managers, love of scenic show, want of talented authors, and the size of the patent theatres. Scott himself ascribed the failure to external causes, emphasising the evils of the huge theatres and their strangle-hold upon the right of representation - both of which tended at once to reduce drama to mere spectacle, minimize authors' fees, remove beneficial competition, and - above all, he thought - <sup>(2)</sup> coarsen the audience. Obviously there is much truth in his suggestions; but while they are perhaps as acute as any that were offered at the time, the fundamental <sup>(3)</sup> explanation escaped Scott as it did his contemporaries.

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- (1) See e.g. Watson op.cit. 136; Nicoll op.cit. Chap.II. Blackwood's Vol.XXIII, 33, etc. Joanna Baillie was near the mark in the preface to Plays on the Passions (1797) alluded to infra p.233, but she was powerless to free herself from the faults she pointed out.
- (2) See the concluding paragraphs of the essay on Drama; Introduction to Chronicles of the Cannongate, Appendix I. XIXXI; Lockart VI. 144. Familiar Letters I.214 etc.
- (3) See, nevertheless, the Essay on Drama (Prose Works, Vol.VI). p.377.

Meanwhile, the regular drama was being rapidly eclipsed by the illegitimate melodrama; finer dramatic technique and characterization were being supplanted by incident, which alone could appeal to the audiences of the Minor theatres, and <sup>which</sup> alone could be understood by the remote patrons of the cavernous patent houses. It is quite true that Scott failed to realize that in this same crude and boisterous melodrama lay the germ of a freer, fuller and a better dramatic art. (1) He would gladly, in fact, have seen "the whole race" swept from the boards. (2) In his review of his own Tales of my Landlord in 1817 he speaks very slightly of it, alluding particularly to Pocock's The Miller and his Men, (3) "with a front crowded with soldiers and scene-shifters and a back-scene in a state of conflagration." (4) Of Charles Maturin he said "The dramatist who has been successful in exciting pity and terror in audiences assembled to gape and stare at shows and processions rather than to weep and tremble at the convulsions of human passion, has a title to the

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(1) See Professor Nicoll's discussion of the rare and often hidden potentialities of melodrama. op. cit. Chapter III, Section 1, especially e.g. p.119.

(2) Letters II. 421.

(3) Convent Garden, Oct. 21. 1813. Edinburgh, Feb.21.1814.

(4) Quarterly, January 1817: Periodical Criticism Vol.III. p.28.

early and respectful attention of the critic".<sup>(1)</sup> On another occasion, he wrote to Joanna Baillie of his plans for the Edinburgh theatre:

"I cannot believe people would be brutes enough to prefer the garbage of melo-drama and pantomime to the high tragic feast which upon a stage of moderate size and with actors of but tolerable capacity the Plays on the Passions would afford them."<sup>(2)</sup>

Scott, despite his admiration of Joanna Baillie's work, to which we shall presently refer, did not make the mistake, however, of supposing that dramatic regeneration lay in the lap of poetic drama. Even in 1808, he was convinced that tragedy was done.

"I question much if a tragedy on the ancient solemn plan would suit the taste of the modern public though something of a dramatic romance or a Melo-Drama, as it is affected stiled, [sic] might succeed."<sup>(3)</sup>

He was even more decided when eleven years later he wrote to Matthew Hartstonge:-

"It is very true that some day or other a great dramatic genius may arise to strike out a new path; but I fear till this happens no great effect will be produced

(1) Review of Maturin's Women - see supra p. note.

(2) Letters II. 118.

(3) Ibid 89.

by treading in the old one. The reign of Tragedy seems to be over and the very considerable poetic abilities which have been lately applied to it, have failed to revive it. Should the public ever be indulged with small theatres adapted to the hours of the better ranks in life, the dramatic art may recover; at present it is in abeyance."<sup>(1)</sup> In 1824 he told Joanna that Mrs. Heman's tragedy had small hope of success: "They care little about Poetry on the stage - it is situation, passion and rapidity of action which seem to be the requisites for ensuring the success of a modern drama."<sup>(2)</sup>

Several years afterwards he noted in his Journal that Home's Douglas, though "certainly one of the best acting plays going" hardly stood the closet. "Perhaps a play, to act well, should not be too poetical."<sup>(3)</sup>

Scott's extravagant eulogy of Joanna Baillie has given posterity much amusement, so much so that until recently few writers have given her such credit as she really deserved. Truly enough, Joanna was not a Shakespeare, but there can be no doubt that she struck

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(1) Lochart VI 144.

(2) Ibid. VII 236. See supra p. 206.

(3) April 25. 1827.

(4) See Marmion, Introduction to Canto III and other passages noted by Adolphus in his Letters to Heber p.295; Lochart III 269 Essay on Drama; and Familiar Letters I.p.132.

out into a new path in her Plays on the Passions, which was published in 1798. She hoped, according to the preface, to free the English stage from the blustering immoralities (amoralities, might I think have better expressed her meaning) of the German school, and so revive an intellectual and moral drama. The trouble with native dramatists, she thought acutely, was that they were being led astray by the beauties of their predecessors and so "tempted to prefer embellishment of poetry to faithfully delineated nature." It will not be necessary to discuss at any length either her theories or her positive achievement. <sup>(1)</sup> Her mistake, of course, was in tying herself down to the illustration of one emotion - pride, fear, hatred, jealousy, and so forth - at a time, for although by stressing the need for a strong central theme, the scheme undoubtedly tended to correct the romantic abstraction of contemporary poetry in general, it did not take into account the complexity of personality that enthralled and challenged the Elizabethans. <sup>(2)</sup> As has been pointed out, however, she did in some of her later plays much better than her theory, introducing interesting cross-currents of conflicting passions.

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- (1) See Margaret Carhart's Life and Work of Joanna Baillie, (1923): U.C.Nagchaudhuri: Poetic Drama of the 19th Century (Unpublished thesis in the University of London. C. p.78, Nicoll, op.cit.156 - 63, etc.
- (2) e.g. Nagchudhuri op.cit.p.78. Nicoll op.cit.p.156.

But while it is obvious enough that Scott ranked her unduly high, he was by no means completely uncritical. In spite of his opinions of other poetic plays, he did fail to realise that her language was full of echoes, and worse still, often dramatically meaningless; but he sometimes suggested changes in action, arrangement, and characterization which he thought would add strength and effect. <sup>(1)</sup> He was not, I am glad to say, an admirer of her comedies. He told Sarah Smith on one occasion that she was "certainly the best dramatic writer whom Britain had produced since the days of Shakespeare and Massinger. I hope [he continued] you have had time to look into her tragedies (the comedies you may [pass] over without any loss." <sup>(2)</sup>

Joanna Baillie was not the only dramatist in whom Scott took an interest. He was also very generous and helpful to Charles Maturin the Irish clergyman who had several plays produced in London. In 1813, Lo<sup>k</sup>chart <sup>(3)</sup> says, he sent him £50 to assist him in financial straits; and a year later he recommended to John Kemble the tragedy of Bertram which was taken up by Byron and produced at

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(1) See especially Letters II. pp. 194. 196.219; III.p.171. Lochart III 35<sup>of</sup>; Familiar Letters II.52., etc.

(2) Ibid. <sup>(Fam. Lett.)</sup> p.29.

(3) Lo<sup>k</sup>chart IV. 125.

Drury Lane June 9th 1816 with some fair success.

Scott's criticism of this play to Terry is worth quoting:

"It is one of those things which will either succeed greatly or be damned gloriously, for its merits are marked, deep and striking, and its faults of a nature obnoxious to ridicule. He had our old friend Satan (none of your sneaking St. John Street devils but the archfiend himself) brought on the stage bodily. I believe I have exorcised the foul fiend, - for, though in reading he was a most terrible fellow, I feared for his reception in public.

"He piddles (so to speak) through a cullender, and divides the whole horrors of the catastrophe (though God wot there are enough of them) into a kind of drippety-droppity of four or five scenes instead of inundating the audience with them at once in the finale, with a grand "gardez l'eau". With all this, which I should say had I written the thing myself, it is grand and powerful; the language most animated and practical; and the characters sketched with a masterly enthusiasm." (2).

This is perhaps from our point of view too lenient a verdict, but it does certainly sum up the faults and excellence of Maturin's earlier dramatic

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ref above +
- (1) Letters III. p.515. c.f. Periodical Criticism II.207.
- (2) See Ibid. p.172-3 and Supra p.

work. On Manuel (1817) and Fredolpho (1819) Scott does not seem to have made any comment. They were, as a matter of fact, very bad plays indeed. (1)

Richard Lalor Sheil he criticised less successfully perhaps. In 1814, he wrote to Matthew Hartstonge his opinion of Adelaide which had recently been produced in Dublin. (2) It breathes, he thought, "a very high spirit of Poetry - much of the language is exquisitely beautiful - and the figures, so far as I can remember, equally new and appropriate - I should only object that in some cases the language of Passion is driven to the verge of Bombast. This often happens in nature, but then the storm of actual and existing feeling will carry through expressions which appear ludicrous, when the Passion is avowedly fictitious - Much will no doubt depend on the Actor, and I have no doubt that the Graceful declamation of Powell or Betterton vindicated even the rants of Lee. But when the Actor is but of Mortal Mould we are rather startled at such expressions as, 'Hell would be Heaven if I beheld him damned!!' - I should also fear that in acting the distress comes on rather too soon -

(1) See N. Idman: Charles Robert Maturin: His Life and Works (1923)

(2) Crow Street Theatre, Feb. 19. 1814. Sarah Smith was in the Cast.

and the violence of agony continues too long to maintain the full interest of which an Author is ambitious - But on the whole the Drama is eminently beautiful, and I am curious to know who Mr. Shiels [sic] is, who has achieved such a daring and difficult task as a regular Blank Verse Tragedy, without either show, or scenery, or drums and Trumpets, or blazing Castles - "

Amid all the sorry sentimentality and lurid horror of Adelaide there is shown, it is true, a certain power that might have developed to better things, but there is nothing of sublimity, either of conception or of language. Scott seems to have sensed, at least, the artificiality of Sheil's emotion: it is rather a pity that he should have been self-tricked into thinking it highly poetical. Such lapses as these made Constable remark,

"I like well Scott's ain bairns - but heaven preserve me from those of his fathering!" (2)

Scott was often bothered by people who thought they could write blank verse, and who wanted him to criticise their plays. Several anecdotes of these importunate poetasters are related in the previous section. Scott told Joanna in 1824 that although for her sake he was willing to introduce a play of Mrs. Hemans to Manager Murray,

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(1) Letters III, 443.

(2) Lochart III. 88.

he would on no account like it to become known, for it would certainly bring upon him a torrent of applications impossible to grant yet often painful to refuse. (1)

When his friend, John Pinkerton, the historian was preparing The Heiress of Strathern for the Edinburgh Theatre-Royal in 1813, Scott wrote him a prologue, but was unwilling to say much about the manuscript, referring the author to the players and the public, who ultimately condemned it. (2)

"I don't know why," he thought, "one should take the task of damning a man's play out of the hands of the proper tribunal." (3)

Nevertheless he did occasionally do as he was asked. Lochart quotes a letter in which he kindly blasted the hopes of Matthew Hartstonge, (4) and Professor Grierson another in which he advises William Sotheby against having his Death of Darnley produced in Edinburgh. (5) A series of letters to

Allan Cunningham in 1820 on the subject of his Sir Marmaduke Maxwell, which was never produced, afford us considerable evidence of Scott's knowledge of dramatic means. (6) These letters are too long to reproduce here. We may, however, quote a sample paragraph:-

- (1) Vespers of Palermo; see supra p. 206. Lochart VII 236.  
 (2) Produced March 24. 1813. See Pinkerton's Correspondence II. pp. 404-06; Courant, March 25. 1813.  
 (3) Lochart IV 68.  
 (4) Ibid. VI 143.  
 (5) Letters III. p. 467. Professor Grierson notes that this play was unpublished. It was, however, printed with four others of Sotheby's in Tragedies 8<sup>o</sup> 1814 (London).  
 (6) Lochart VI. 277, 281, 307.

"The unities of time and place have always seemed to me fopperies so far as they require close observance of the French rules. Still, the nearer you can come to them, it is always, no doubt the better, because your action will be more probable. But the unity of action - I mean that continuity which unites every scene with the other and makes the catastrophe the natural and probable result of all that has gone before - seems to me a critical rule which cannot safely be dispensed with. Without such a regular deduction of incidents, men's attention becomes distracted, and the most beautiful language, if at all listened to, creates no interest, and is out of place. I would give as an example, the suddenly entertained, and as suddenly abandoned jealousy of Sir Marmaduke, p.85, as a useless excrescence in the action of the drama."<sup>(1)</sup>

He also advised his young friend to begin by making "a model or skeleton of your incidents, dividing them regularly into acts and scenes so as to insure the dependence of one circumstance upon another and the simplicity and union of your whole story. The common class of readers, and more especially of spectators, are thick-skulled enough and can hardly comprehend what they see and hear unless they are hemmed in and guided to the sense

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(1) Ibid p.307.

at every turn."<sup>(1)</sup> Yet his own practice was widely different. In the preface of Nigel he humourously alludes to his inability to form a plot. "I think there is a demon who seats himself on the feather of my pen when I begin to write, and leads it astray from the purpose. Characters expand under my hand; incidents are multiplied; the story lingers while materials increase; my regular mansion turns out a Gothic anomaly, and the work is closed long before I have attained the point I proposed."<sup>(2)</sup> Similarly in his Journal he wrote "I never could lay down a plan, or having laid it down I never could adhere to it."<sup>(3)</sup>

It is here that I disagree with Professor Nicoll's remark quoted some pages above. Scott may not have been capable of making practical use of the essentials of stagecraft; but that he had grasped them seems to admit of no doubt.

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(1) Ibid.

(2) Nigel Introductory Epistle XXXIX.

(3) Vol. I. p.117.

At first sight, the half dozen dramas that Scott - in Professor Nicoll's phrase - "half-heartedly scribbled" may appear completely unimportant; yet without some consideration of them, our study would be incomplete. They have, moreover, a certain definite value, in relation not only to his other work, but to the dreary dramatic history of the time. In the first place, they do, despite Lochart's loyal denial, <sup>(1)</sup> reveal Scott's limitations as a playwright, if not his essential unfitness for the dramatic form; and secondly, as they whiten in a sepulchre made only "for the convenience of those who possess former editions of the Author's Poetical Works", <sup>(2)</sup> they exemplify the failure of the literary men of his Age to contribute to the growth of English Drama.

Professor Nicoll begins his study of the Nineteenth Century Drama with a discussion of the reasons why an age so gifted with great poets and novelists and essayists should have failed to produce a single dramatist of any significance whatever. He summarises the adverse conditions

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(1) VII, 170.

(2) Preface to The Doom of Devorgoil in Poetical Works. Vol. 12.

(1)  
 under which theatrical writers worked, but he still does not consider that these exonerate the literary men of the time, including Scott, for failing to contribute more worthily to the theatre. Accordingly his second chapter is devoted to a discussion of four "independent yet connected questions:-

(1) Why was not a greater connection between the true poets of the time and the theatre?

(2) Why did not those more talented men who wrote for the stage fail to pen works of a truly permanent value?

(3) Why did not other non-poetic writers embrace a stage career more willingly?

(4) Why did the 'theatre-authors' indulge in such crude farce and extravaganza and melodrama?

While I do not agree with all of Professor Nicholl's subsequent argument and have added as an appendix to our present study a more general defense of those whom he calls "the spoiled children of our literature", I think that these questions of his may help to make clear just how far Scott himself is concerned in the dramatic failure of the age.

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- (1) op.cit. 57. Prof. Nicoll suggests as deterrents to writers:
- i. the coarseness of the audience.
  - ii. the vagaries of the actor-manager.
  - iii. the pruriency of the censor.
  - iv. the activities of the "pirate"; and
  - v. the niggardliness of the publisher.

The fourth is least important at this point and may be disposed of at once. If we leave aside the slight sketch Macduff's Cross and the longer Halidon Hill, which are Shakesperian in theme and treatment, the translated Goetz and the adapted House of Aspen, only two original stage-plays remain, both of them melodramatic. The Doom of Devorgoil Scott himself called frankly a melodrama, or an extravaganza; <sup>(1)</sup> Auchindrane or The Ayershire Tragedy was a story of cruel murder and bloody retribution that naturally inclined also to this form. When we come to a particular examination of the plays themselves, there may be more to discuss. Speaking generally for the moment, however, I should say that the first was melodramatic because Scott deliberately chose that form; and the second because he could not make it anything better.

In Scott's case, the remaining questions are really more or less one, for he was, we must remember, a Romantic poet before he found his greater talent as a novelist. We cannot make any attempt here at comparing his poetry with that of his contemporaries. It is obvious, I think, that he was always far less concerned with Scott than Shelley, for instance, was with Shelley, though Professor Nicoll holds him tarred with the same brush. As a matter of fact, Scott is not really a lyrical poet at all, in the

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(1) Preface.

dictionary meaning of the word; he is not so much concerned with his personal emotions; the secret of his power is not in the exquisite treasures brought forth from the storehouse of his own heart. In the ultimate sense of a poet who recites to the music of a lyre, however, he stands alone above his fellows, singing his rousing and tender tales of other days.

But as a minstrel, clearly he is quite as unfitted as Wordsworth or Keats to contribute anything worthy of the ancient traditions of English drama. This point covers, I think, most of the second topic as well. Scott was not the man the drama was needing, because as he himself admitted late in life, his "turn was not dramatic."<sup>(1)</sup> Why he did not, however, considering his undoubted talents for some parts at least of the playwright's art, make a more serious and sustained attempt comes under the third heading.

The theatre offered but little to the writer. On the one hand, what literary man could be expected to spend time and ingenuity in devising a play for the huge caverns of Convent Garden or Drury Lane and so risking his reputation upon a piece of which little but the bare action could be understood by those most captious and merciless critics, the gods of the gallery? And on the other, when the unreasonable salaries demanded by the stars had been paid, and the

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(1) Lochart X. 195.

remainder divided among the supporting actors and the huge stage crews who were necessary in an age of elaborate scenery, what was left for a mere author?

Throughout his career, Scott needed every penny he was able to earn. Even before his dream of Abbotsford had begun to shape, he was dependent largely upon the earnings of his pen, and his reply to such jejeune attacks as that of Byron <sup>(1)</sup> was that "no man of sense in any rank of life ought to be above accepting a just recompense for his time, or a reasonable share of the capital which owes its very existence to his exertions." <sup>(2)</sup> After he had discovered the rich store of historical romance within himself, he had no time to bother with the stage except as a recreation and a stimulant. No one who reads Lochart's Life or Professor Grierson's great collection of the Letters can fail to realise that Walter Scott was none of your rapt poets content with a garret and his dreams, but a hard-headed business man, anxious to give his small family the very best he could provide. The Doom of Devorgoil he wrote perhaps as a jeu d'esprit, or to test the ability his friends professed to see in him; but he was ready enough, when the pinch came, to convert it too into cash. So long as he could

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(1) In English Bards and Scotch Reviewers.

(2) Nigel - Introductory Epistle, XLIX.

make thousands of pounds supplying the demand for Waverley novels, he could scarcely be expected to spend much of his very valuable time writing plays for actors he disliked and audiences he despised. Are we going to blame him for this attitude? If we can show that by neglecting the drama, he deprived it of anything vital, we certainly must, however unjustly; but if on the other hand, as I believe, the evidence of his whole work goes to show that he had nothing really progressive to bring, we should be glad he did not waste his time. For after all, there was a Robertson, an Ibsen; and we have the Waverley novels.

Scott was keen enough a critic of the drama and of himself to realize from the first that his talents were not those of the playwright. Undoubtedly the cool reception of his translation of Goethe's Goetz and the failure of The House of Aspen which John Kemble had ultimately declined to produce, discouraged him for the time from any further attempt to write a drama. At any rate, when he had made something of a name as a poet, and his friends sometimes asked him why he did not have a go at writing a play, he replied that he had thought better of it. In answer to Sarah Smith's friendly enquiry, he wrote:-

"You wish me to dramatize, my dear Miss Smith, and it is an idea which has often occurred to me. But success in that line is of so very difficult attainment and depends on such a variety of requisites with which I am totally

unacquainted that I doubt if I shall ever have the courage to risque losing upon the boards of a theatre any practical reputation that I have acquired. In the days of my youth, I wrote a tragedy and I believe I have it still by me. When you come to Edinburgh you shall see it - It is upon the vile German plan which was then the rage and is in its present state unfit for any other purpose than to afford you a guess how far you could encourage me to a more serious trial of skill. I must needs say in justice to myself that my taste is so much sobered and mended since this desperate attempt, and that I see at least the faults of a bombast and turgid stile though I may be unable to attain a true tone of passion and feeling. Believe me, it would give me great pleasure indeed should it ever be my lot to see you in a character of my writing."<sup>(1)</sup>

To his close friend Joanna Baillie he replied only: "You talk of my writing a tragedy, but I am too cunning for that."<sup>(2)</sup> A year or so later, no less a person than R.W. Elliston, the manager of Drury Lane wrote to ask for an original play from his pen. Scott replied courteously but very firmly that

"Upon a mature consideration of my own powers such as they are, and of the probable consequences of any attempt to write for the theatre, which might fall short of complete

(1) Letters II. 89.

(2) Ibid. 304. c.f. Nigel Introductory Epistle XLIV.

success, I have come to the determination of declining every overture of the kind, of which I have received several."<sup>(1)</sup>

But the praise of his friends seems at length to have over-persuaded him, for in January 1818, he wrote The Doom of Devorgoil for the benefit of Dan Terry's little boy, his godson. I find the circumstances of this play perhaps the most amusing - and iconoclastic - of his whole life. For his own satisfaction, presumably, he wished to test his powers in a new line; therefore he cannily contrived to put the whole responsibility, for better or for worse on Terry's shoulders, - yet without blocking up a little loophole, by which a successful chicken might come home to roost!<sup>(2)</sup> Although Scott was at some pains, throughout his correspondence on this subject, to disclaim any technical knowledge, or real inclination for the stage, even suggesting that Terry seek further advice of some sagacious friend, he must have been rather crest-fallen when after all it was not produced. At any rate, he says to Terry a month or two later "Avowedly I will never write for the stage; if I do 'call me horse',"<sup>(3)</sup>

A year later it was still rankling, I think, when he wrote to Lady Abercorn and Southey the emphatic denials

(1) Letters III. 54.

(2) See his letter to Terry February 8th. 1818 in which he says: "If any time should come when you might wish to disclose the secret, it will be in your power, and our correspondence will always serve to show that it was only at my earnest request..... that you gave it your name". (Lochart v 291.)

(3) Lochart v 311.

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of stage ambitions already quoted. (1) His bitterness seems equally divided between the actors and the audiences. He calls Kean "a copper-laced two-penny tearmouth, rendered mad by conceit and success," (2) and the audiences "brutal assemblies" (3). He cannot abide the thought of his success being at the mercy of the actors; besides, he continues, "if this objection were out of the way, I do not think the character of the audience in London is such that one could have the least pleasure in pleasing them. One half come to prosecute their debaucheries, so openly that it would disgrace a bagnio. Another set to snooze off their beef-steak and port wine; a third are critics of the fourth column of the newspaper; fashion, wit or literature there is not; and on the whole, I would far rather write verses for mine honest friend Punch and his audience." (4)

Later in the year he wrote some very good advice to a Dublin playwright who had sent a tragedy for his consideration. Scott told him candidly that the path of the dramatic writer - "trying to please a set of conceited performers and a very motley audience" - was a very thorny one, which he could see but one reason for treading, namely the lack of money. A few lines later he makes a statement that shows the soundness of his criticism of contemporary playwrights:

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- (1) See supra pp. 193.  
 (2) Lochart VI, 44.  
 (3) Familiar Letters II. 53.  
 (4) Lochart VI, 44-5.

"It is very true that some day or other a good dramatic genius may arise to strike out a new path, but I fear till this happens no effect will be produced by treading in the old one."<sup>(1)</sup>

In the same letter, nevertheless, he shows that he has not yet forgotten the Doom: "There is something ludicrous in my being affiché as the author of an unsuccessful play." Scott was certainly fond of The Doom of Devorgoil; we should have known it even without the evidence of his Journal. After the crash in 1826, he brought it out again, but Jamie Ballantyne would have none of it. Scott wrote "'Ah', says Self-Conceit, 'but they has not read it!'"<sup>(2)</sup>

The origin of MacDuff's Cross and Halidon Hill was quite different. In 1820 Daniel Terry probably voiced the general opinion when in presenting his dramatized version of The Antiquary he expressed a wish "that the mysterious and powerful pen to which the world is so greatly indebted for the immortal productions whence these plays have been extracted, had sometimes turned its powerful force directly to the Drama, and [bewailed] the causes by which it has been diverted or withheld from raising the present state of our dramatic literature to an equality with that of its brightest age."<sup>(3)</sup> When Scott next essayed the dramatic form, however, he did so without the slightest intention of seeing his work acted. In fact in the original edition<sup>(4)</sup> he added:

(1) Lochart VI.143.

(2) Ibid VII 210.

(3) Advertisement. Terry, of course, was "in the know".

(4) Preface.

"In case any attempt shall be made to produce it in action (as has happened in similar cases) <sup>(1)</sup> the author takes the present opportunity to intimate that it shall be at the peril of those who make such an experiment."

Of course neither of these sketches ever were produced; but there were many wiseacres who asserted that Scott had deliberately intended them to be failures, in order to conceal better his authorship of the Waverley Novels. <sup>(2)</sup> It has been said over and over again, they argued for him, that the Author of Waverley must have great dramatic ability; therefore if Sir Walter Scott wishes to avoid being connected with him he must demonstrate at once that he has no talents for dramatic poetry. Personally I don't think they're so far off the mark. From all sides, even from Terry, who knew of his previous failure, Scott was besieged with suggestions that he write a drama. 'Very well,' we can imagine his saying at last, 'they shall have one - but this time it's going to be no stage play', and write these two dramatic sketches. In the preface to The Fortunes of Nigel which he finished that same week, he took up the subject of why, when the Terrified versions of the novels had been so successful, the Author had not himself written a play. "It may pass for a good reason," he says, "that I cannot form a plot."

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- (1) He probably referred to Byron's Marino Faliero, the Doge of Venice at Drury Lane. April 25th.1821.  
 (2) e.g. Edinburgh Magazine, July 1822.p.113.

In 1826, the subject was raised again, by a writer in Blackwood's, <sup>(1)</sup> who set out to demonstrate the title of the Great Unknown "to the same supremacy in the old sphere of the first glories of the British genius as in that new region which he has half-conquered, half-created for himself." This gentleman bases his remarks on Scott's opinion that the novelist's art is completely separate from the dramatist's, and that "he who applies with eminent success to the one becomes in some degree disqualified <sup>(2)</sup> for the other." He makes out a fairly convincing case and it may be that Scott began to believe again in his own possibilities. At any rate after the production of his early House of Aspen in London and Edinburgh, with some fair degree of success, he made his last attempt at writing a drama. This was Auchindrane or the Ayrshire Tragedy, which is by far the best of his dramatic works. I do not think he took it very seriously, however, after it had been damned with faint praise on its publication, for when it was produced at the Caledonian in Edinburgh on the fifth of June 1830, he apparently did not go to see it. There is certainly no reference to it in his Journal, and although he was then in town for the Court sessions he set out for home that very afternoon. This, I confess puzzles me

(1) By "π" In issue for February 1826.

(2) As appeared in the preface to Fielding in Ballantyne's Novelists Library.

greatly, for although the Caledonian was an irregular advertiser in the newspapers, Scott must certainly have known the piece was being played. I can only surmise that he had personal objections to that theatre or was angry because they had brought forward his play without the courtesy of asking his leave; <sup>(1)</sup> perhaps, even, he was piqued because his own Theatre-Royal had failed to produce it first. But whatever the reason he seems to have ignored it completely.

Scott never cared greatly for The House of Aspen, a dark and bloody drama which he adapted in his youth from one of the many imitations of Goethe and Schiller, called De Heilige Vehme (The Secret Tribunal) by G. Wachter. <sup>(2)</sup> He sent it to "Monk" Lewis, a minor poet who was just then very popular, and who had already been instrumental in the publication of his translation of Goethe's Goetz von Berlichgen. Lewis was delighted and showed it to the celebrated actress Mrs. Esten. It was then taken up by Kemble and actually put into rehearsal for Drury Lane, but it never reached the stage. <sup>(3)</sup> For years the manuscript lay unheeded in Scott's desk. According to Lochart, it was not discovered for nearly <sup>(4)</sup> thirty years, but this is an exaggeration. In 1809 Scott sent a copy to Joanna Baillie and spoke critically of it

- (1) In the days before adequate copyright a courtesy was all such a request would be.  
 (2) See advertisement to the published version. Hermann of Unna is also founded on this story. See Familiar Letters I. 218. and W. Macintosh: Scott and Goethe, p.32.  
 (3) Advertisement.  
 (4) p.82.

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"death" +  
"desk"?

to Sarah Smith. Although the story is that George Ellis had sat up on his wedding night to read it, Joanna said what she thought without trying to flatter, and concluded "There is in the whole play sufficient knowledge of nature and force of expression to make your friends look forward with a very pleasing hope to what may hereafter follow when you shall write on a better dramatic plan and allow your delightful imagination more liberally to enrich the work."<sup>(1)</sup> A few years later he referred to it in a letter to Lady Abercorn as "a sort of half-mad German tragedy written when my taste was very green, and when like the rest of the world had been taken in by the bombast of Schiller. I never set the least value upon it."<sup>(2)</sup>

The plot is exciting and sensational and the play ends in a series of bloody murders revolting to our taste. Isabella was in love with Ruddiger, but had married a brutal husband, named Arnold of Eberdorf. At length she had been driven to poisoning him and married her lover. When the play opens she has been his wife for twenty years. She has two sons, George and Henry, and in a life of piety she has been able to conceal her crime which is known only to the faithful Martin, her husband's squire. Between the House of Aspen and Roderick of Maltingen, exists one of the terrible blood feuds of the Middle Ages, and when Martin

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(2) Familiar Letters I.218.

is wounded and betrays in his delirium his mistress's secret, Roderick plans a hideous revenge. He calls a meeting of the secret tribunal, sworn above all ties of friendship, and even of blood, to punish guilt.

The scene of George's interview with his mother is reminiscent of the play scene in Hamlet. Scott himself thought it the only tolerable one in the whole play, but "which I think would have a dramatic effect." Joanna Baillie had thought it "underwritten", from a fear of being extravagant. George, having discovered his mother's guilt attempts in the secret tribunal to shield her with his own life, she also kills herself when she sees her son's body lying in a pool of blood. Meanwhile Henry had been sent to bring the grand master of the order, the King of Bavaria himself. At the moment when Roderick's vengeance seems complete, the king enters just in time to save Ruddiger. Roderick, for perverting his power, is disgraced and banished.

The play, as we have already noted, was first published in a miscellany called The Keepsake, in 1829. R.W.Elliston who had wanted a Scott play for Drury Lane sixteen years before, now had his wish. He put the play into immediate production at the Surrey where he was then the manager, and it was performed on November 17th. 1829. It had very little success, however, and soon came off, but a month later, on December 17th, Murray produced a revamped version in Edinburgh. He seems to have cut the five acts down to three and inserted a good deal of "bold spirited and

original" music by John Thompson. The playbill suggested rather timidly that it should afford "admirers of the celebrated author an opportunity to test its fitness for the stage", and although the houses were not crowded, Aspen ran nine nights and was twice repeated in the following fortnight. Scott himself was spending Christmas at Abbotsford, and was thus unable to see his play acted. The Edinburgh critics thought it "a little heavy", for though it was "probably judicious to arrange it in three acts..... each act is in consequence, too long. There is a general want of relief throughout."<sup>(1)</sup>

We have perhaps paused too long over this piece, despite the fact that it was Scott's one little success on the stage; for however he may hint that paternal vanity might see a resemblance to the father in this "illegitimate production of an early amour", we may scarcely consider it an original play.

The Doom of Devorgoil was Scott's one serious attempt to write for the stage. As early as 1808 he had made up his mind that the reign of tragedy was over. "I question very much," he told Miss Smith, "if a tragedy on the ancient solemn plan would suit the taste of the modern public though something of a dramatic romance or Melo-Drama as it is affectedly stiled might perhaps succeed."<sup>(2)</sup> Consequently when he set himself to plan a play for Terry's theatre, he

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<sup>(1)</sup> Scotsman December 18, 1829.

<sup>(2)</sup> Letters II. p. 89.

tried to pack into it all the popular elements of the melodrama, - a ruinous castle, a decayed baron, a pair of lovers, complete with humourous friends, unearthly music, a low-comedy butt, ghostly figures, flashing lightning, swirling black waters and a happy ending. "The point," he said "is to make it take if we can; - the rest is all leather and prunella."<sup>(1)</sup>

The play is founded on an old legend of Galloway, which had been related to him by Arthur Train. Oswald of Devorgoil is a decayed Scottish baron living in his solitary and ruinous castle on the Borders. Besides his pride he has now nothing left but his peasant-born wife, Eleanor, and his daughter Flora. Kathleen, the niece of Eleanor lives with them. Leonard Dacre, a handsome, if rather wooden young ranger, and Gulcrammer, an absurdly conceited divinity student are admirers of Flora. The underplot is furnished by Kathleen and her lover Lance Blackthorn, who dress up as the castle spectres and play very discomfoting tricks on Gulcrammer. There is a prophecy that the ghost of Lord Erick whose crimes had caused the fall of the family fortunes would return after fifty years, and the fate of the house of Devorgoil be fulfilled. The time has now come. A flash of lightning brings old Erick's black armour crashing down from the wall; soon afterwards his spirit enters, and after terrifying the

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(1) Lochart p. v. 286.

family, strikes the wall and lays open a great treasure chamber. The aristocratic phantom commands Oswald to put aside his obscure wife and enter into the inheritance. When Oswald refuses, a heavy portcullis falls between him and the treasure. The door must be opened within a single hour by the hand of "the heir of plundered Aglionby" to whom the gold belongs, else fate has decreed that the waters of the lake, already rising, will overwhelm the castle for ever. Leonard, of course, turns out to be the missing heir; and already the key had been obligingly if somewhat inconsistently given by the ghost to Katleen. The happy ending is at hand. Leonard unlocks the door and embraces Flora, the lake recedes, and the curtain drops on a scene of general joy.

Such was the play that Scott believed to have "the (1) infinite merit of being perfectly new in plot and structure" and which he probably took, in spite of his pretence of carelessness, (2) some pains in dramatising. "I believe there will be no medium", he wrote to Morritt, "for if it does not succeed very decidedly, it will be damn'd most infernally. I have tried to coax the public to relax some of the rules of criticism and to be amused with that medley of tragic and comic action with which life presents us, not only in the same course of action but in the same character. To

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(1) Lochart p. V 203

(2) See Lochart p. V. 286-7.

deprecate all rigidity and judgment, I introduce the marvellous, the absurd, and something like the heroic, all to make the great slab."<sup>(1)</sup>

It is most instructive to have the author's intentions so clearly set forth, and to be able to compare them with his achievement. In this case the achievement was not great. If we look at the original legend we shall see that he took from it little more than the idea. All the characters, except Oswald and his wife, are his own, as well as most of the incidents and all of the treatment. As he hastily scribbled it to Terry, moreover, he makes the legend a far more vivid thing than he does with all the melodramatic clap-trap of the play. The reason for this is not far to seek. Scott's genius, or if we like, his knack, was to provide as he wrote a setting for his story far truer and far more vivid than any brush or canvas could hope to do. When he suddenly finds himself tied down to dialogue alone he is therefore at a disadvantage. He may try, as Shakespeare could, to set his stage in the words themselves, and with some success at least.. An example is Katleen's half-serious speech in the first act, which certainly vivifies "The flat scene [ representing ] the castle of Devorgoil, decayed and partly ruinous, situated on a lake, and connected with the land by a drawbridge which is lowered":-

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(1) Familiar Letters II. p.5. (The last words are quoted from Macbeth IV.i.).

- FLORA - How call you, then, this castle of my sire, The towers of Devorgoil?
- KATHLEEN - Dungeons for men and palaces for owls  
 Yet no wise owl would change a farmer's barn  
 For yonder hungry hall - our latest mouse  
 Our last of mice, I tell you, has been found  
 Starved in the pantry; and the reverend spider,  
 Sole living tenant of the Baron's halls,  
 Who, trained to abstinence, lived a whole summer  
 Upon a single fly, he's famished, too;  
 The cat is in the kitchen-chimney seated  
 Upon our last of faggots, destined soon  
 To dress our last of suppers, and, poor soul,  
 Is starved with cold, and mewling mad with hunger.

The dialogue, on the whole, however, is not dramatic, though it is often quaint or happy. It reads a great deal better perhaps than it would act. The best scene, I think, is the first appearance of Oswald. Each year he answered his summons as the king's tenant, and for one day mingled again with his peers. He has just come home full of rage and hurt pride because he had been forced to give precedence to "a new coined viscount, whose good grand-sire

The Lord be with him, was a careful skipper,  
 And steered his paltry skiff 'twixt Leith and  
 Campvere." (1)

The smouldering resentment which he has been nursing in his heart as he rode slowly homewards bursts out in a torrent now that he has found someone to listen. He begins calmly enough by complaining that the drawbridge is left up, and ends by apostrophising his sword. I don't suppose Scott knew himself how what a delightful touch of real nature this

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(1) i.e. a smuggler.

apparently melodramatic bit is, but any wife will smile in fond appreciation. This whole scene is well conceived and vividly executed, except for the asides of Katleen, which are most annoying to modern ears. Of her thirteen speeches in this scene only three are addressed to anyone in particular - except the audience. These fingerposts to understanding may have been more acceptable perhaps even necessary to the audiences of that day, but they make us writhe.

Eleanor, the baron's humble wife, has obvious possibilities which the author fails to make the most of; but Flora is hopeless. As a person, she fails to arouse the slightest interest. She is only the peg on which hangs the "love interest" of the play. Leonard is just another Scott hero, a paragon without the least personality. Lance Blackthorn is a good enough sketch; and Katleen is full of an impish fun that does not always fail. The coxcomb Gullcrammer is not so successful. Perhaps I can't appreciate what was funny a century ago - at any rate, I couldn't even smile at Tom Morton's Roland for an Oliver, described by the publisher as having "excited more genuine laughter" than any farce of its time - but I can't see how anyone could think him funny. The character of Durward, the Palmer, too, is rather disappointing, for knowing Scott, we are quite prepared to find him in the last act somebody important to the plot; we feel distinctly let down when he turns out to be only a simple palmer after all.

The most interesting parts of the Doom are the stage directions. Even in 1818, the subject of appropriate costume gave most managers small trouble. They had, it is true, reached the point where Macbeth wore a kilt, and Brutus a sort of toga, but to the finer points of stage dress they paid no heed. Scott, on the other hand thought that the most pleasurable part of writing a play was to dress the characters according to his fancy. (1)

In this play, all the costumes - except the women's! - are described with considerable precision. Gullcrammer, for instance wears "a Geneva cloak and band with a high crowned hat; the rest of his dress [is] in the fashion of James the First's time" and Oswald "is dressed in a scarlet cloak, which should seem worn and old - a headpiece, and old-fashioned sword - the rest of his dress that of a peasant." Still more interesting are the suggestions for getting the stage effects in the play. The vivid stroke of lightning which announces in the second act that the Doom is at hand would now be contrived with the tubular lights used for electric signs; Scott's idea was to have a transparent zig-zag in the flat-scene suddenly and very strongly illuminated. (2) He suggests that the moonlight on the shafted windows may be made flitting upon the plan of the famous Eidophusikon, (3) and that the ghostly appearance of old

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(1) Familiar Letters I. 213.

(2) II.ii.

(3) III. iii. See Nicoll op.cit. 26-7, 36.

Erick he contrived by raising successive screens of crêpe.<sup>(1)</sup>  
 As a final coup-de-théâtre he would like to have the rising  
 of the lake made visible.<sup>(2)</sup> He does not indicate how this  
 was to be done, but it is certainly possible. A shimmering  
 cloth and a boat bobbing against the window might be fairly  
 suggestive, and there is never a doubt but that it would add  
 to the effect of the scene.

The reason that Devorgoil was never produced, according  
 to the preface, was that the mixture of mimic and real  
 goblins might be too puzzling for an audience! Remembering  
 the asides of Katleen, we must not be too ready to snort out  
 something about Pirandello and his Six Characters, or Hans  
 Chlumberg's Out of the Blue. To use the supernatural elements  
 seem clear to the point of absurdity; but audiences then  
 had not been trained to do much thinking in the theatre.  
 The Ghostly Barber, we are told, was another objection, for  
 he had already been introduced to the English stage in some  
 pantomime.<sup>(3)</sup>

We may object to the meagreness of the plot, the rather  
 primitive technique,<sup>(4)</sup> the abruptness, even the childishness  
 of the denouement, and the barrenness of some of the dialogue;  
 and we may shudder slightly over the monotonous humours of

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(1) III.iii See Nicoll op.cit. 26-7. 36.

(2) III. iv.

(3) Preface. I have not traced the pantomime.

(4) I refer particularly to the ill-contrived way the  
 author has adopted of giving information (See i.e.  
Katleen's first speech).

Gullcrammer; but we cannot deny that the play holds the reader's interest, once Oswald has made his appearance. Moreover there is really nothing to prevent its being equally effective on the stage. There are, for example, none of the long speeches of Halidon Hill, none of the short and ever-changing scenes of Goetz, which made these two impossible as stage-plays. As a work of dramatic art perhaps it deserves no consideration whatever, but as a robust and popular melodrama, and it never pretended to be anything more, it must take higher praise than it has previously been given. As Scott remarked later to Skene, many worse things have made their way in the world. <sup>(1)</sup> The insignificant fact remains, however, that even once it had been published and so made free for the taking, no manager ever ventured to put it on.

The style and matter of Halidon Hill and Macduff's Cross might be described genealogically as by Shakespeare out of Joanna Baillie. <sup>(2)</sup>

Halidon Hill, Scott says in the preface, is designed only "to illustrate military antiquities and the manners of chivalry. The Drama (if it can be termed one) is, in no particular, either designed or calculated for the stage."

(1) Skene Memoirs of Sir Walter Scott (1909) p.142.

(2) C.f. Saintsbury, George, Sir Walter Scott. p.27 n.

In spite of this declaration, several reviewers professed to think that he was merely being coy, and that the sketch was really capable of stage effect. The New Edinburgh Review for July 1822 says:

"We, nevertheless, do not believe that anything more essentially dramatic, in so far as it goes, more capable of stage effect, has appeared in England since the days of her greatest genius; and giving Sir Walter, therefore, full credit for his coyness on the present occasion, we ardently hope that he is but trying his strength..... and that ere long he will demonstrate his right to the highest honours of the tragic muse."

The British Critic, some months later, expressed a similar opinion:

"Though we may not accede to the author's declaration that it is 'in no particular calculated for the stage', we must not lead our readers to look for anything amounting to a regular drama. It would, we think, form an underplot of very great interest in an historical play of customary length; and although its incidents and personages are mixed up, in these scenes, with an event of real history, there is nothing in either to prevent their being interwoven in the plot of any drama of which the action should lie in the confines of England and Scotland at any of the very numerous periods of Border warfare."<sup>(1)</sup>

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(1) October 1822.

Scott, however, wrote to Joanna in July:-

"I know as little about the division of a drama as a spinster about the division of a battle, to use Iago's simile. But this I know that if they should think to bring on the stage what subject and mode of treatment render alike unfit for it, I shall not grieve at any circumstance which may accelerate its downfall."<sup>(1)</sup>

Scott had given as a reason for avoiding the drama his fear of unfavourable comparison with Shakespeare, though in his criticism he had been emphatic in his reproof of others for being so deterred. Shakespeare, he said "indeed may be inimitable but there are inferior degrees of excellence, which talent and study cannot fail to attain."<sup>(2)</sup> It has been shown that fear of comparison did not prevent Scott from imitation of Shakespeare's themes and methods in his poetry and in the Waverley novels.<sup>(3)</sup> The same is true of the dramas. Even in the Doom of Devorgoil there are resemblances to the romantic comedies of Shakespeare. The general method is that of As You Like It, Twelfth Night, Much Ado, and The Merry Wives. The gulling of Falstaff in the latter play obviously provided much of the absurd adventures of Gullcrammer. There are, besides, minor

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(1) Familiar Letters II. 144.

(2) Essay on Drama p

(3) Brewer, Wilmon: Shakespeare's Influence of Sir Walter Scot (1925) Parts 4 & 6.

allusions to The Tempest, Macbeth, Othello and Julius Caesar. In Halidon Hill the influence of Shakespeare becomes very marked indeed. In dramatising this tale of chivalry which he had heard in the nursery from his great-aunt, he could scarcely avoid comparison with the historical plays, especially the First Part of King Henry the Fourth. With some ingenuity, however, he picked up the whole Scottish army and set it opposite an English force of fifty years before. He explains thus in the preface:

"It may be proper to observe that the scene of action has in the following pages, been transferred from Homildon to Halidon Hill. For this there was an obvious reason;- for who would again venture to introduce upon the scene the celebrated Hotspur who commanded the English at the former battle? (1) There are, however, several coincidences which may reconcile even the severer antiquary to the substitution of Halidon Hill for Homildon. A Scottish army was defeated by the English on both occasions and under nearly the same circumstances of address on the part of the victors and mismanagement on that of the vanquished, for the English long-bow decided the day in both cases. In both cases, also, a Gordon was left on the field of battle; and at Halidon

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(1) Dr. Brewer (op.cit.256-7) believes that Scott imitated the character of Hotspur in Captain Henry McIntyre (The Antiquary). There is certainly a marked resemblance between the two youths, but I should not care to go quite so far.

as at Homildon, the Scots were commanded by an ill-fated representative of the great house of Douglas." X

While it may be true that the long dialogue such as that in the opening scene between Vipont and Swinton, render this sketch unfit for practical stage use, it cannot be denied that it has atmosphere - something strong and very simple that reminds one not only of Scott at his best, but even of Shakespeare himself. The whole interest, of course, is in the characters of the old warrior and the noble youth who, bound by "honour" to kill him, dies by his side for Scotland against their mutual enemy. The two are imagined, it seems to me, with great power and probability, and are contrasted with skill and dramatic appeal. I agree with Professor Thorndike that "Halidon Hill has a clearness and directness of characterization, and a vigour of movement which suggest that had the auspices been more favourable, the historical drama might have had another great exponent." (1)

Of Macduff's Cross we need say little. In spite of its slight theme and rather obvious development - we know Scott's palmers of old - it gives nevertheless a certain sense of completeness, in language, and to some degree in character, it approaches the excellence of Halidon Hill.

X (1) Thorndyke: ✓ :Tragedy p.350.

X So said "breaking his skins over Hotspur"  
he expressed it to Constable (op. cit. III. 2. 3.)

Auchindrane; or The Ayrshire Tragedy is based upon a true story from Pitcairn's Ancient Scottish Trials, which Scott reviewed for the Quarterly in 1830. It is not, in the classical sense, a tragedy at all, for although it may arouse "terror" - horror, at any rate - and even "pity" there is no suggestion of a great central figure carried on and on to ruin by some fatal flaw within himself. Nor is the matter "of sufficient magnitude." Auchindrane is only a Kotzebue-like tale of dark villainy and unfortunate innocence, that no bloody ending is going to make into a tragedy. When a man ruthlessly poisons his neighbour's bull-pup, because he thinks he may one day be bitten, we think it a shame and applaud the magistrate for imposing an exemplary fine; <sup>but it is not tragic.</sup> Scott's theme has scarcely more effect.

In this case Quentin Blane, a young man in training for the ministry, whom Scott describes as "an amiable hypochondriac" has obtained, should he ever chance to discover the fact, the power to injure Mure of Auchindrane, a cold blooded and treacherous villain. Mure had packed the boy off to the wars in Flanders in the hope that he would die there, but as the play opens the homesick and mystified Quentin has come home with a party of discharged soldiers. Mure, knowing that his enemies suspected that the lad could tell them something, protects himself by doing away with him. This furtive little murder

is brought home to him by the melodramatic trick of Quentin's body floating upright in the water to the shore;<sup>①</sup> and thus he has precipitated upon his head the punishment of what were considered far more serious crimes, the very ones he had tried to conceal. The play ends as he is borne off to pay the penalty.

Scott has added a number of original scenes and characters, and filled in the dialogue. He gets, I think, as much dramatic effect as the story could furnish, and makes his figures fairly real. Some of his blank verse dialogue, varying as occasion demands, from pathos to pleasantry, also, is excellent. Despite all this, however, the piece does not rise, simply because neither the fate of poor insipid Quentin nor the punishment of the black-hearted Mure are - perhaps (even) could be - of much real concern to the audience. The dramatic critic of the Athenaeum certainly thought it far better in subject and treatment than the Doom, and even professed to find in the closing fortunes of the House of Auchindrane "a striking and almost absorbing interest."<sup>(2)</sup> Few of his colleagues, however, agreed with him. Genest, even granting his prejudice for action in plays, was nearer

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(1) This scene which Lochart thought (p.703) might "bear comparison with anything but Shakespeare", was probably based on a story related by Southey (Life of Nelson, Chapter 6.)

(2) Vol. for 1830. p.246.

the mark when he said "It is a well-written poem, but not a good play - too much is said and too little done."<sup>(1)</sup>

Scott's failure is really a question of technique. In the novels he had sufficient scope to make even some of his wooden heroes interest by means of a long series of contrasting touches; in the drama he hadn't room to work.<sup>(2)</sup> The whole arrangement of the plot is hurried and ineffective, and even the climax totally lacks snap. Several times we are on the point of becoming interested. When, for instance, Quentin sits recalling old times with his boyhood sweetheart, now the wife of his bitter rival, the henchman of Mure; or when the kindly old sergeant offers to take him as his companion and heir far from the mysterious perils of his own land; or when the villainous son of Auchindrane accuses his father of hypocrisy blacker than his crimes, we are almost eager to hear more. At once, however, we are rushed on to something else, and our interest is never really captured.

Such then, was the career of Sir Walter Scott as a playwright. All his life he protested that his friends were wrong about his talents, and his dramas only go to

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(1) op.cit. X. 245.

(2) See his own discussion of his methods in the Introductory Epistle to Nigel.

show how right he was. There is much merit in them, many scenes and characters and passages that might be worthy of any dramatist; but that close-knit unity of speech, personality and action which is the strength of a play, and gives it that satisfying sense of completeness so essential to success, that elusive sine qua non of dramatic genius, is missing.

## Chapter IV

### SCOTT'S DRAMATIC GRANDCHILDREN.

CHAPTER IV.

SCOTT'S "DRAMATIC GRAND-CHILDREN".

Scott's greatest contributions to the English drama, paradoxically enough, were written by other men for their own profit and in most cases without so much as a by-your-leave. In fact one critic in 1822 went so far as to say of one of the stage writers that the author of the Scottish novels was "in no small degree indebted to him for the continuance, or perhaps renewal of their popularity."<sup>(1)</sup> We have already seen how eagerly each novel was snapped up as soon as it appeared, and rushed with incredible speed to the theatre. Practically every playwright of note took part in the wild scramble to "cash in" on the rich dramatic ore from the Constable presses, and at the height of the vogue, very often two or three separate versions of the latest novel were playing in London at the same time. Because they were popular, because they were "not the least vital productions of the time,"<sup>(2)</sup> and because they often contained the potentialities of genuine dramatic progress, these Waverley Dramas, as we may call them, quite apart from Scott himself, deserve study.

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(1) Literary Chronicle, March 9.1822, reviewing T.Dibdin's Pirate at the Surrey.

(2) William Archer; The Old Drama and the New. (19 +) p. +

The earliest discussion of them was by J.W. Calcraft, an actor in the Edinburgh Theatre-Royal, who had himself made several adaptations, and acted in many more. For a long period Calcraft was the manager of the Dublin Theatre, and he contributed to the Dublin University Review in 1851, a series of theatrical reminiscences, one article of which dealt briefly and uncritically with this subject. A better but still rather sketchy account, by Paul Wilstack appeared in the Living Age (Boston) in May 1902. Mr. Wilstack lists a few more of the dramas and gives some interesting details, but overlooks literally dozens of versions. The most ambitious attempt was that of Henry Adelbert White in 1927. Sir Walter Scott's Novels on the Stage is a careful and often entertaining piece of work, and I must admit frankly that so far as it goes, and despite a number of unfortunate lapses, it could scarcely be improved upon as a general summary of the subject. Dr. White, however, did not include the plays made from Scott's poetical works; and even in his discussion of the Waverley dramas, he was handicapped by his residence in America. I have been perhaps more fortunate, for not <sup>only</sup> have I been able to cover inch by inch the ground of his work at close quarters, I have had the additional advantage of Professor Nicoll's mighty hand-list of plays from 1800 to 1850, which was published in 1928. Thus, I have been able to track down many transcripts from Scott which have not appeared in any previous dramatic list or stage encyclopaedia. As might

be expected the various theatres of Scott's native Edinburgh proved the most productive field of enquiry. My purpose in this chapter, therefore, is to fill in, as far as I can, the blanks in Dr. White's account, and perhaps to show more clearly than has yet been attempted, (1) their right to a modest place in English dramatic history.

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- (1) I assume on the part of the reader a knowledge of the original novel or poem; or, at least the possession of a good summary such, for example, as may be found in Henry Grey's Key to the Waverley Novels, or in the Oxford Companion to English Literature. It might be as well at this point to indicate the sources of our information about these plays. I have adopted Dr. White's plan of listing the versions as an appendix. I have tried as well, however, to give some indication of the published versions and the extant manuscript copies. Even then, of course, there are many that have vanished completely. In such cases, I have noted one or more contemporary criticism from which some idea of their form and contents may be drawn. It is not surprising, however, that the greater number of the more skilful and popular adaptations are to be found among the printed copies. Many were printed independently during the run of the play, and others were published later by such theatrical houses as Dicks, Lacy, Cumberland, Duncombe, and Anderson. Many of the Edinburgh versions were published in a collected edition in 1823, reprinted with one change only in 1872. The manuscript versions were rather more difficult of access, but the very recent removal of the Lord Chamberlain's Collection from the cellars in which Professor Nicoll was obliged to examine them, to the convenient shelves of the British Museum has helped me considerably. The so-called Larpent Collection, an earlier section of the same series, having passed through a number of hands, is now in the Henry E. Huntington Memorial Library at California. As for the new versions, most of them were found in the contemporary journals listed in my bibliography. In my footnotes enough indication will be given to enable them to be checked and I hope added to. I found, I may add, that it was in Edinburgh that the managers were most inclined to experiment with different versions.

THE LADY OF THE LAKE.

The theatre-authors were not long in discovering that Scott had something worth their attention. The honour of having written the first adaptations of Scott's work for the stage must go to the Dibdin brothers, Thomas and Charles, the former of whom became famous for his speed and facility in dramatizing the Waverley novels. Charles Dibdin, who is more noted perhaps for his sea songs than for his plays occupied Sadler's Wells for a long period and was not far behind his brother as a play-maker. Charles was actually the first in the field with an aquatic spectacle from Marmion called The Spectre Knight, at Sadler's Wells on June 4th. 1810, but it seems to have attracted little attention. The first successful play was The Lady of the Lake by his younger brother Tom at the Surrey, one of the best and most active of the unlicensed theatres, on September 24th of the same year. It was later produced successfully in practically every theatre of the British Isles, and only in Edinburgh where a version by E.J.Eyre was more popular did it fail to become the standard text.

Dibdin's play was printed several times and copies of it are by no means rare. It is rather amusing to read, for the adapter had not yet found his technique and could do no more than follow the poem with many changes of scene and directly copied dialogue. This curious scenario-like technique might best be shown by a quotation. Here, for example, is the whole of the second scene of Act One:-

"A picturesque entrance to the retreat of Douglas.  
 Music. Allan Bane cautiously enters, looking as if  
 expecting some one; seeing them [ Fitzjames and Ellen,  
 who are approaching ] expresses pleasure, and hastily  
 retires. Ellen enters, conducting Fitzjames.

ELLEN - On Heaven and on thy Lady call,  
 And enter the enchanted Hall.

FITZJ.- My hope, my heaven, my trust must be  
 My gentle guide, in following thee.

Music. Ellen enters the retreat, followed by  
Fitzjames."

The scenes illustrating the progress of the fiery  
 cross are similarly brief and episodic, for they attempt  
 to follow the poem in every detail.

During the November following the production of  
 Dibdin's play, Scott recorded that both Convent Garden  
 and the Edinburgh Royal were preparing versions of the  
Lady.<sup>(1)</sup> The latter, by an actor named Edmund John Eyre  
 of the Convent Garden company, was the first of them to  
 be produced. It opened at the Theatre-Royal on January  
 15th... 1811.

Eyre's play is rather extraordinary. He has followed  
 the original with some care, but has taken the familiar  
 Scott words and chopped them up into a curious sort of  
 blank verse that often sets one's teeth on edge.<sup>(2)</sup> One  
 random example may be interesting. In the poem, as

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(1) Letters II. p.403.

(2) See Scott's remark supra p.172

Roderick Dhu and Fitz-james are making their way toward Coilantogle Ford, the Highlander reveals himself and his clansmen with dramatic suddenness:

These are Clan Alpine's warriors true,  
 And Saxon I am Roderick Dhu.  
Fitz-James draws his sword and defies his power:  
 Come one, come all! This rock shall fly  
 From its firm base as soon as I!

This is the same incident in the play:-

ROD. - How sayest thou now?  
 These, Stranger, are Clan Alpine's warriors bold  
 And Saxon - mark me - I am Roderick Dhu.

FITZJ. (placing his back against a Rock and drawing his Sword).  
 Come on! Come all! For sooner shall this rock  
 From its firm base be moved as I. (1)

On the whole the play deviates little from its original. The first act takes the action as far as the dispatch of the fiery cross, and the second carries on to the combat between Roderick and Fitzjames. The last act begins in the guard house, but the second scene is dramatically inane. In dumb show a stranger is shown winning all the prizes at the sports and receiving the awards at the hands of Fitzjames. In the poem, where the king was still only a name, this scene was quite justified; but in the theatre, even though every person in the audience would already suspect, at least, the knight's identity, the dramatist had no business to introduce him in his kingly capacity before the denouement. Similarly, Eyre missed dramatic effectiveness by showing him already on his throne when Ellen enters the hall.

In his preface Eyre claimed little merit beyond that of the compiler. Some few flowerlets - or weeds, as he modestly suggests - at the foot of Parnassus are, however, of his own planting. The first scene between Malcolm and Ellen in which she coyly thanks him for his help:

Tho' poor the thanks I give  
 Receive the tribute of a grateful heart  
 For every danger you have wished for me  
 (Recollecting herself)  
 My father, I would say.(1)

seems to be one of his "flowerlets"; but the later incidents of the same scene, in which Malcolm and Roderick actually come to blows, were probably only a despairing effort to give his hero something interesting to do. (2)

This version had only slight success even in Edinburgh. In spite of a good cast including Daniel Terry as Roderick and Harriet Siddons as Ellen it ran but six times during the season. Mr. J.C. Dibdin records that his relative's play soon supplanted Eyre's on the Edinburgh boards, but I have not been able to verify this. (3)

The next version of the story was The Knight of Snowdon, in prose by Tom Morton with music by Henry Bishop, produced at Convent Garden, February 5th 1811, and in Edinburgh some six weeks later. Morton asked indulgence "to select rather than to copy" and trusted that "admirers of the Poem would concede to him the indulgence of making such alterations

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(1) Letters I. iii.

(2) C.f. Letters II, p.464.

(3) Annals p.264.

in the original story as their necessity has induced him to adopt."<sup>(1)</sup> The result, in the words of a contemporary critic, was "only acceptable to grown children."<sup>(2)</sup> Morton has given free play to his imagination. He changes the whole course of the action by introducing a young Douglas, brother to Ellen and Macloon, a silly buffoon of the Agnecheek type. Red Murdoch, and Norman, the bridegroom who in the poem carried the fiery cross on his wedding night, are made rivals for the hand of Alice, a pert and attractive maid-servant. As for Malcolm, the problem is solved by dropping him altogether and making a much more amiable Roderick the favoured lover of Ellen. The drama comprises in the opening act the whole of the first three cantos of the poem, from the death of the gallant Gray to the gathering of the mountain clans. The second relates the escape of the king from peril, the rescue of Young Douglas from the custody of the Earl of Mar, and finally, the capture of Douglas himself and his redemption by Roderick who, having a price on his head pays the ransom of the Douglas, by surrendering himself to Mar. The third brings us, of course to the happy denouement at Stirling.

Despite this freedom with the plot, Morton's play has some fairly good points. The grouping is very fine, especially at the end of the first act, and the music seems to have been excellent, though the absurdity of a serving

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(1) Preface.

(2) Dramatic Censor (London) February 1811.

wench singing a bravura amid the mountain bracken has been pointed out. (1) Some of the sentiments were reasonably good. Douglas's outburst of affection for his king:

"Did subjects visit on a monarch's head the evils wrought by crafty ministers, hard fate for him who wears a crown. No, beloved but misguided king, Douglas is still thy faithful liegeman. Storms may swing the oak until it groans, but cannot root it from its native soil." (2)

and Roderick's reasons for not chancing his fortunes with the king:

"Sir, I should starve at the trade - my frame's too stubborn for it; for well I know that up the courtly hill they gain the summit soonest who crawl to reach it." (3)

must have brought storms of applause. The humour strikes at least one flash of genuine fun. The craven Macloon has brought a paper which tells where young Douglas is being held.

MACL. Yes in this paper is every particular, and let me add, penned with the skill of the Southern scholar - see -

NORMAN I'm no learned clerk.

MACL. Don't you write (scornfully).

NORMAN No, but I can shrewdly comment on those who do (Shaking his sword) you understand - ?

MACL. Perfectly, - one of the keen cuts of northern criticism. How Sir Roderick will honour me - make me his sword-bearer.

NORMAN And should an enemy appear -

MACL. I would give him his sword directly.

(1) Dramatic Censor, February 1811.

(2) Letters I. ii.

However, to balance these minor excellences, there is much that is bad. Here, for example, is one of Ellen's soliloquies, which may serve to show how very far, after all, the author was from natural feeling and speech:-

"Oh Roderick! - when thy wild passions gleam like angry meteors through the midnight sky, I thrill with anguish; nay, if a Douglas may own the word, with fear. Yet, generous man, can I forget when like a stricken deer, my father was disowned by every courtly minion that thou alone gavest aid and shelter? Must not a daughter bless the hand that's raised to vindicate a parent? - Yes, Roderick, 'twas a sacred debt and I with life would repay it."

The most important revival of The Knight of Snowdon was at the English Opera House in 1823, when it was got up in splendid style with the addition of some of Rossini's music. The cast included Wallack, the favourite melo-dramatic actor, as Roderick. Miss L. Dance as Ellen, Miss Povey as Isabella and the noted T.P.Cooke as Fitzjames, and they were greeted according to the Literary Chronicle with "thunders of applause".<sup>(1)</sup> The Drama took the opposite view, for while it agreed that the acting was of a high order, it called the play an ill-written tissue of mawkish improbabilities, in which all the bad qualities of the poem were redeemed by none of its own.<sup>(2)</sup> With this criticism one can hardly but agree.

La Donna del Lago. The opera by G.A. Rossini and A.L. Tottola, owes most of its success, naturally, to its music. It was first produced at the San Carlo, Naples,

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(1) Literary Chronicle, July 19th. 1823.

(2) Supplement to Vol.IV.

October 4th. 1819, and in England four years later, when it seems to have had an excellent run. <sup>(1)</sup> Translated by Bochsa, a small part of it was combined with Morton's Knight at the same theatre a few months later. Perhaps the best English version is that of Mark Lemon <sup>(2)</sup> produced at Convent Garden January 31st. 1843.

In this opera the story suffers greatly. The scene opens at Stirling with King James inquiring about his royal ward Malcolm. He is told that the boy is in the Trossachs and James despite warnings about the presence of Black Roderick, determines to go and see what is the attraction. In the second scene Malcolm warns Douglas that the hunt is up, and James meets Ellen in the usual way, except that as they sail off in the boat, the huntsmen catch up and sing a rousing chorus. We next see James and Ellen singing love songs to each other, but are given no grounds for misunderstanding, for after a particular fervid passage, Ellen sighs aside for our benefit "Malcolm, my heart is with thee." <sup>(3)</sup> When Fitzjames has departed with words of love for her, Douglas enters and tells her in rather "heavy father" style that she is to marry Roderick next day. The finale of the first act takes place in a romantic Glen, whence the fiery cross is sent forth amid much noise and the war-songs of the bards. In Act Two, James returns to the Isle, and is warned by Ellen of his danger. In return

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(1) English Opera House, February 18. 1823.

(2) Sometime Edition of Punch.

(3) Letters 1. iii.

he gives her his ring. The next scene is a curious piece of compression. James and Roderick unknown to each other meet by a lone camp-fire in the hills. They quarrel, and at Roderick's bugle note, the clansmen pop up and proceed immediately to give battle to the forces of the king who have presumably crept up as silently as they. Malcolm and the chorus enter and describe the battle as it rages off-stage. The Highlanders are defeated. The last scenes are the usual ones at Stirling Castle. In the Guard-room Ellen, Roderick, Malcolm and Douglas sing a quartette about the illusiveness of hope, and as they leave the stage, James comes in, attended, and learns who is there. He sends away his attendants and summoning Ellen, offers to conduct her to the king. In the finale, he frees Douglas and Malcolm, though Roderick, presumably, is left to languish in a cell. This may have been all very well as an operatic plot, but dramatically its flaws are striking. It is difficult to see for instance, why all effect of surprise was sacrificed by introducing James as a king before the moment when he revealed himself to Ellen. Similarly, the scene where the lone warrior revealed himself to Fitzjames as Roderick Dhu is omitted altogether.

The other versions of the poem we may fairly sum up in a paragraph. One or two mid-century burlesques were inevitable. That by Bob Reece, for example, at the Royalty in 1866 enjoyed some success, although its humour consists of little more than the reversal of male and female roles and a

succession of fairly sprightly puns. Another musical version at Drury Lane in 1872, and one or two cantatas complete the list, but for a moving picture version by the Company which as I write is still current in the smaller Scottish cinemas.

### MARMION.

Next to The Lady of The Lake in importance and popularity on the stage is Marmion. As we have already noted it was the first of Scott's pieces to find its way to the boards, in Charles Dibdin's extraordinary aquatic spectacle at Sadler's Wells. Unfortunately, however, the various versions of Marmion have not been so well preserved, and our remarks must necessarily be more general.

The Spectre Knight, so far as we may judge from a short and naively pleased account of its plot in the published copy of the Songs, did not adhere very slavishly to the original. The high-light seems to have been a combat in the true Sadler's Wells tradition, which took place on a bridge over the famous tank. We can only imagine the rapturous applause when the bridge collapsed and the two warriors finished the battle in the water!

A few months later, Marmion, or The Battle of Flodden Field, was produced at the New Theatre in Fitzroy Square,

(1)  
 Tottenham Court Road, October 25th. 1810. Owing to the annoying habit of the contemporary newspapers, even the exclusively theatrical papers, of ignoring most of the Minor houses, there seems to be no record of its reception. The British Museum catalogue lists an octavo version published in 1811, but at the moment of writing, this has been mislaid and I cannot say whether or not this is the New Theatre play. I have some hope, however, that it is, for Professor Nicoll has identified the Edinburgh octavo edition of 1812 with another play of the same name licensed for the Norwich circuit in 1811. Dr. White<sup>(3)</sup> lists an adaptation from the Park Theatre in New York, 1812, written by James N. Barker, but credited in the advertisements to the better-known Tom Morton. In the reminiscences of W.C. Macready is mentioned still another adaptation of Marmion at Newcastle in 1814, probably arranged by the actor himself.<sup>(4)</sup> Information about all of these plays, however, is sadly lacking and we must pass on to the Drury Lane version by Stephen and Henry Kemble in January 1819.

Flodden Field was rather hurriedly produced on New Years Eve, 1818, to supply the place of Edmund Kean while he was out of town, and ran for eight or nine performances. Although the plot has been materially altered, a certain ingenuity is displayed in bringing in most of the prominent incidents of the original.

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(1) Later The Prince of Wales, made famous by Tom Robertson and the AND THE Bancrofts!

(2) Op.cit. p.490.

(3) H.A.White: Sir Walter Scott's Novels on the Stage(1927)

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(2) Op.cit. p.490.

(3) H.A.White: Sir Walter Scott's Novels on the Stage(1927) p.241.

(4) op. cit. p.

The piece opens where the poem closes with the trial and condemnation of Constance de Beverley. She is released by Clara Clare, who had fled for protection to the convent of St. Hilda. Later, disguised as a page, Constance joins Marmion's train and accompanies him to the castle of Sir Hugh Heron. Marmion accepts as guide to the Scottish count, a palmer who is soon revealed to be De Wilton in disguise. On the way north the palmer drops mysterious hints which awaken and alarm Marmion's conscience. At the same time his "page" details to him the legend of the armed sprite, whom Marmion resolves to encounter. The midnight battle is omitted, unfortunately for the full effect of the piece, but we hear Marmion cursing his faithless arm for his failure. In the next scene he declares his commission at Stirling Castle and is rather ungraciously received. In this scene the old Earl of Douglas shows his independence but reluctantly becomes a host to Marmion at Santallon. We then have the very rousing scene of the quarrel of Marmion and Douglas on the battlements from which Marmion leaps off into the arms of his followers. Meanwhile De Wilton and Clara have been united at Santallon and both the rivals join their armies. The last scene is a distant view of the English camp from the stone cross whence Clara is conveyed to await the issue of the battle, which rages off-stage. Marmion comes in, wounded and disarmed, followed by Constance, and in the mingled pangs of his defeat, his wounds and his remorse, ends his life.

Flodden Field is written in blank verse that flows along harmoniously enough, but seldom rises to the height of poetry. It is deficient in real action - for the ostentation of marching and counter-marching will scarcely do - and more than a little lacking in characterization. Nevertheless, it scarcely seems to me to deserve such a vicious condemnation as it got from the Literary Gazette:

"..... so stupefying a drama that we are quite at a loss what to do with it. No person can resist the influence of sleep while it is acting, and though one does start occasionally at the ranting of Marmion (Mr. H. Kemble) it is but for a momentary observation, and Penley's soporific drawl and Mrs. West's piteous whine speedily renews the doze. The whole is indeed a very miserable piece of work, and the only part we can express our satisfaction at is the finale when the hero 'summons all his energy to die' but cannot accomplish the job without a prodigious quantity of writhings and face-makings..... Some bad dancing and worse singing complete the attractions of this worse than indifferent composition." (1)

(2) The only other adaption<sup>(2)</sup> of the poem I have found appeared at the Royal Amphitheatre in Westminster Road, June 12th. 1848. Marmion or The Battle of Flodden Field by Edward Fitzball, makes no pretence of following its original in all details. All the spectacular effects of splendid scenery, plunging horses and jingling armour have

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(1) Literary Gazette, January 9th. 1819.

(2) There may have been a Marmion by Tom Dibdin, or one of his lieutenants at the Surrey during this decade. At any rate, it appears in a list of recent revivals at that theatre, in the Literary Gazette for September 20th. 1817. Since The Lady of the Lake appears in the same list, it would seem to argue a first production of Marmion at the Surrey rather than at some other theatre. I have found no verification of this clue, however, and so list it only for what it may be worth.

found a place in Fitzball's play and it must have been a colourful and interesting show. Before a single word is spoken, for instance, Marmion's charger rears up against the convent wall to get a key dangling out of his master's reach.

The plot is subservient to the pageantry, but it might be interesting to recall the main features. The first two scenes show Marmion carrying off Constance from the convent, and the meeting of the Lady Clare and de Wilton, disguised as a monk. The third scene is full of movement and pageantry. Lady Clare meets the hated Marmion at his castle. Constance is about to drink poison but allows Clare to take the cup. This leads to her discovery and the first act ends in a "Tableau of Consternation" as the priest Nicholas "freezes" all who try to prevent him from taking the perjured nun back to her trial. The second act shows Constance cast into the Vault of Repentance and her escape when the Smugglers Redhold and Gibby dig through in search of a cache of whisky. The remainder of the act leads up to the grand climax of Marmion's combat with the "phantom" and ends with a tableau of Marmion gazing from the ground at De Wilton, the smugglers in odd corners, and Constance silhouetted against the sky, with hair flying in the breeze and her hands raised to heaven "as if invoking maledictions on her betrayer." The last act opens in the Scottish camp where Marmion is given custody of the nuns,

including Clare whom he pretends not to recognise. In the second scene Constance urges De Wilton to resume his old life. The final scene is laid at Sibyl's cross near Flodden Field. As Marmion is about to sieze Clare, the battle, conveniently enough, begins. As Marmion rushes off, de Wilton enters in bright armour and claims his lady. Marmion then returns. In a comparatively short time he contrived to get himself desperately wounded. His death scene, however, quite lacks the affecting pathos of the poem. Constance, disguised as a monk, dies by his side and the piece ends with a "Grand tableau of victory."

#### THE LORD OF THE ISLES.

The next most important poem, dramatically, was The Lord of the Isles. It was a tale abounding with incident and lent itself well to the hand of the adapter. The first attempt seems to have been an anonymous version at the Olympic Theatre, February 27th 1815. Although this play is preserved in manuscript in the Larpent Collection I have not at present seen it nor any contemporary criticism. I must therefore omit it from this account.

Charles Dibdin used the poem in 1818 as the basis for another of his aquatic spectacles at Sadler's wells. Aside from the fact, however, that it was called The Gathering of the Clans and produced on April 6th. I know

nothing about it. The newspapers only occasionally noticed the little theatre in Islington, and the piece seems never to have been published. (1)

We are on firmer ground, however, when we come to Edward Fitzball's operetta The Lord of the Isles, or The Gathering of the Clans, at the Surrey, November 30th 1834. Aided by the music of G.H.B. Rodwell which was "very pleasing, abounding in sweet and simple melodies" the piece scored, according to the Theatrical Observer, "a brilliant success". (2) Fitzball, as usual, handled his subject with considerable skill and has made an effective play. The main incidents of course, arise from the adventurous nature of Robert Bruce, who disguises himself as a wandering knight and seeks refuge in the Castle of

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- (1) The same is true of Robert the Bruce, or The Battle of Bannockburn, produced at the Coburg, May 24th 1818. For this reason it seems impossible to discover whether or not it was actually based on Scott. The evidence seems to balance nicely. On the one hand is a similarly-named version at Perth in August 1819, which Mr. Peter Baxter (The Drama in Perth [W] p.66) says definitely was from The Lord of the Isles; and on the other, are two other plays also of the same name, at the Edinburgh minor house, December 22nd. 1818 (Edinburgh Reflector even date) and April 21st 1837 (Playbill in Edinburgh Public Library) which from their casts are quite certainly not. There was a version called The Lord of the Isles at the Caledonian, Edinburgh, June 23rd. 1824, but this, for all the evidence I have to the contrary, may well have been the Olympic play.
- (2) Theatrical Observer, November 22nd. 1834.

Astornish on the coast of Argylshire, where he is protected from the plots of the Lord of Lorn by Ronald, Lord of the Isles. The stirring adventures are mixed with a due proportion of generosity, self-devotion, sentiment and narrow escapes, and the catastrophe is full of interest. The scenery, costumes and stage-management seem to have been up to the same high standard of excellence. The piece was published, incidentally, in 1835.

#### ROKEBY.

Rokeby, too, did not have to wait long for its stage debut. Again it was Charles Dibdin who first adapted it, as one of what he called his "Aqua-Dramas" at Sadler's Wells, April 19th. 1813. The same sad story must be told, however - apart from the name Rokeby Castle, or The Spectre of the Glen, the date, and the stray fact that the music was by Reece, I can give no details.

So, also, must we pass over a Newcastle version which the famous tragedian William C. Macready mentions that he made in 1814.<sup>(1)</sup>

A piece called Rokeby, or The Buccaneer's Revenge, by one Thompson was published in Dublin in 1814. I have not seen a copy, but I fancy it is probably the same as

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(1) op.cit. p.

a version "by J.H. Thompson" published in St. Louis, 1851. The copy in the possession of the British Museum is signed by the author and dedicated to the English actress Miss Farren. Lacking the Dublin version, which Professor Nicoll<sup>(1)</sup> cites as by Benjamin Thompson, (though it doesn't seem to fit with this author's other work) it is impossible, of course to be definite. I merely record my impression for what it may be worth.

Of its kind, the St. Louis Rokeby is not at all a bad piece of work. As in Dibdin's Lady of the Lake short scenes rapidly succeed each other in the manner of a moving picture scenario. In Act One, there are seven scenes which carry the action along to the joining of the robber band by the villainous Bertram. The second act begins in the robbers' cave. It is rather long and explanatory using the conversation of Bertram and Guy Denzil to bring out the essential details of the first canto. The second scene faithfully follows the story: Matilda reads the letter to Redmond and Wilfred while Bertram lurks behind ready to shoot. In the nick of time a troop of soldiers, sent by Mortham, come galloping in, but Bertram escapes. The remainder of the act represents much of Canto Four. Edmund, disguised as a minstrel, is sent to the castle by the robbers, who later break in and cause a wild *melee*. This scene was probably very entertaining, for quite apart from the pleasurable tension felt by the audience, who know the details of the robbers' plan, the Scott choruses were used in full. The act closes in the true melodramatic tradition. Matilda  
(1) op.cit p.403.

and Wilfred have escaped to the woods, while the castle burns luridly behind them. In this scene there is a great deal of action and many stage directions, but a minimum of dialogue. The last act opens with a representation of the plot of Oswald and Guy; in the poem it was merely related to Bertram by Edmund. The play includes this scene as well, so that we next see Edmund miserably giving Bertram the details, after which they repent and say a rather touching farewell. We then return to Bernard Castle where Oswald, learning that Edmund has tricked him into thinking him Denzil's son, orders the latter's execution. As a muffled drum indicates that Denzil is dead, Oswald sets out for Eglistone, where the play ends. Wilfred dies of shame, shock and rejected love just before Bertram enters in the midst of shouts, stabs Oswald and is beaten down by the soldiers. Again there is scarcely any dialogue. Lord Mortham enters and embraces young Redmond. Edmund kneels over Bertram, who dies forgiven by Lord Mortham. The curtain falls to slow music.

This summary serves to show I think, how closely, almost slavishly, indeed, the play follows the poem. The language also is a blank verse paraphrase of Scott's. One example may be sufficient. When Bertram follows Guy Denzil away to the cave in Canto Two, Scott says he

"Then muttered It is best make sure  
Guy Denzil's faith was never pure."

In the play this becomes:

'Tis best make sure (grasping his dagger)  
 Guy Denzil's faith was never true. (1)

While going through the manuscript plays in the Lord Chamberlain's collection I came across another version of Rokeby, a Romantic Opera in three acts, called The Buccaneer. It was licensed for the English Opera House, June 28th 1824, but I have not found a record of its production. Curiously enough the name of the author has been deliberately obliterated from the first page of the manuscript. (2)

The Buccaneer, like Thompson's piece, needs a large number of scene changes; there are nineteen altogether. As an opera, of course, it calls for a good deal of singing, and the plot varies at times from the original. But like Thompson's play, it succeeds nevertheless in including nearly every significant bit of action in the story, making rather a good deal of the robbers' attack and the burning of Rokeby Castle, as a second act climax. We may content ourselves with a more detailed examination of the last act which is typical of the whole play. In the opening scene Gilbert learns that a scaffold has been erected by the Abbey Church, and fearing harm is coming to Sir Richard Rokeby, he sets out in haste for Eglistone. Next we see Oswald plotting with his prisoner Denzil. He has learned that Mortham is still alive, and Denzil

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(1) Letters I. vii.

(2) Experts at the British Museum gave me little hope of finding out what had been erased.

further dumbfounds him by offering to prove that the page Redmond is Mortham's son. Keeping Denzil as a hostage, Oswald allows Edmund, whom he believes to be the outlaw's son, to go to fetch the proofs. The third scene shows the arrest of Redmond for high crimes, as he is talking with Matilda and Wilfred. Wilfred realises that this is his father's doing and goes away in shame and despair. The officers mumble about the need for haste, but kindly wait while Matilda and Redmond sing a Scena of farewell. Next we find Edmund telling Bertram all he knows of Oswald's plots against Mortham and Redmond. Bertram repents his villainy and they join forces. Meanwhile at Barnwell Castle things are happening. Oswald learns of Denzil's ruse and condemns him to instant execution. Determined that he can only defeat Mortham by quick action, he plans to get rid of Redmond at once and to marry Matilda to his son Wilfred. The finale takes place in Eglistone Abbey. The stage is crowded with people and a scaffold is prominent in the centre. Redmond is ready for his doom. Matilda to save his life, offers to marry Wilfred. At that moment, however, a messenger announces that the boy is dead. Mad with grief and a desire for vengeance, Oswald orders the prisoners to the scaffold. Bertram rushes in and shoots the old villain dead, but is wounded by the guards. Edmund enters with Lord Mortham and his soldiers, Redmond is saved, and father and son are reunited. Bertram's death scene, as he asks and receives Mortham's forgiveness is rather affecting. There is then a spirited

glee and a "General Picture" as the curtain falls.

THE LAY OF THE LAST MINSTREL.

As Border Feuds; or The Lady of Buccleuch, The Lay of the Last Minstrel was adapted and produced in Dublin during Miss Smith's engagement in 1811. Although there seems to be no clue as to the name of the actual playwright, we know a little about it, for not only was it published, but passages in Scott's letters show that he himself was interested, and gave his friend a number of hints about (1) the appropriate costumes.

Not only the story but the dialogue is very close indeed to that of the Lay. The Play opens with Lady Buccleuch listening to the spirit voices. In the second scene she calls upon her Knight to go for the mystic book of Michael Scott the wizard. The remainder of the act concerns the eerie adventures of Sir W in receiving the book from the terrified monk, who dies beside the wizard's tomb in the streaming light of the ever-burning lamp. Act Two carries on the plot rapidly enough. The Dwarf appears, leading Cranstone through the woods. Margaret and Cranstone then meet, as in the poem. Next follows his fight with Deloraine, who falls. The Dwarf finds the book, and by smearing it with Deloraine's blood, succeeds in opening its covers. He then carries the fallen warrior away. The fourth scene

(1) Letters II. p.471.

is all in pantomime with "music all the time." Young Buccleuch discovers the Dwarf attempting to carry Deloraine into a room in the castle. The Dwarf immediately catches him and bears him off with triumphant malice and in the next scene after frightening him with blows and tricks, leaves him in the woods.. The lad is found by Lord Deloraine and his archers, and the act ends with a grand march of the clans to the accompaniment of Scottish airs. Lady Buccleuch addresses her soldiers with the famous lines "Breathes there a man with soul so dead?"

The last act opens before the castle walls. Lord Deloraine offers to give up the boy if his mother surrenders the castle. Finally a tournament is arranged and the English officers enter in peace. The second scene provides a love passage between Margaret and Cranstone who has returned in disguise. The play ends with the great combat related in The Lay. Lady Buccleugh forgives Cranstone and puts Margaret's hand in his. The unearthly voices are heard again, and as they die away the curtain falls with a grand flourish of music.

The only other production from The Lay of the Last Minstrel seems a cantata by Hamish McCunn, the words of which were adapted by James McCunn. It was published in London in 1888, but I have not found any account of its production.

THE BRIDAL OF TRIERMALN.

Although Dan Terry seems to have had some idea of re-casting this poem for the stage in 1817, and suggested it to Scott along with The Black Dwarf,<sup>(1)</sup> nothing ever came of it. The Bridal of Triermain was first adapted in 1831 as a five act operetta, by John L. Ellerton. Here, again, I am not prepared to discuss the version because, although it was published I believe no copy seems available.<sup>(2)</sup>

In 1834, Isaac Pocock, preparing an Entertainment for Drury Lane on the subject of King Arthur and his Knights found La Morte d'Arthur so voluminous that

*X word, arranged*

"the Bridal of Triermain was resorted to as affording a more connected on the same subject, and nearly an equal degree of poetic license in the formation of a tale calculated for dramatic representation, each being made subservient to the main feature - the chivalry of "The Round Table". The Baron of the poem has been made into the Sir Roland of the romance; and occasionally some of the more descriptive and applicable lines have been either abbreviated or varied to suit the musical situation" (3)

King Arthur; or The Knights of the Round Table were produced at Drury Lane on December 26th. 1834.

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(1) Lochart V. 199.

(2) The D.N.B. says that there seems to be no record of this opera except those given here. Another musical version was produced at the Wolverhampton Music Festival in 1886. The original words, as far as possible were used, and set to music by Frederick Corder.

(3) Advertisement in printed text 1834.

Merlin calls up for Sir Roland the vision of Gyneth who calls upon the knight to free her from the power of Morgana. Despite Merlin's warning, he calls for his armour and prepares to set out. Morgana appears in a burst of smoke and swears that she herself loves him, but he spurns her love and they swear mortal enmity. By her magic she turns his armour blood-red and seals his visor and his lips, as a sign of her power. The next scene provides some broad humour as Dorothy, the wife of Sir Roland's armour-bearer, Galadin, tries to persuade him not to go. The act closes with a pageant of the Round Table. King Arthur offers the hand of his daughter to the knight who shall rescue her. Seven knights determine to set forth. The Round Table sinks and the warriors march in a grand procession around the stage. In Act Two, Morgana calls upon her unearthly helpers to frighten away 'all but the knight in red armour'. Nevertheless the knights, after strange adventures, defeat the imps and gain the drawbridge. The last act finds them banqueting in the enchanted hall. Morgana pretending to be beaten, offers Sir Roland a pledge. As he raises the cup, it pours forth red fire. By his courage he has thus broken the spell, and he alone of the knights remains free. Gyneth appears and sings that she is his who first has reached the dreaded Hall of Fear. In a second scene we hear Morgana plotting against her conqueror. She commands six gigantic blacks to assume one by one the armour of the captive knights and defy

Sir Roland in the tournament. In each of her warriors who falls it appears she loses a captive knight, and if all are defeated, her spirit must dissolve into primal fire. Sir Roland restores Gyneth to her father, and in the lists conquers the six counterfeit knights. After another comedy scene showing the triumphant return of Galadin, the curtain falls on a colourful procession of victory at Carlyle Cathedral.

From this summary may be seen the way in which such play carpenters as Pocock worked. There is very little of popular appeal - adventure, romance, humour, suspense, goblins and glittering knights, combats and pageantry - that he has failed to include. As drama, perhaps, King Arthur is rather worse than useless, but it must have made a splendid show.

"The whole of the scenery was new," reports the Theatrical Observer. "Nothing could have been more perfect than the Pavilion of King Arthur, with the Round Table, the enchanted Castle and the Royal Lists and Tournament. The machinery worked with wonderful precision, and the evolutions of Mr. Ducrow's splendid stud of horses were truly surprising. The piece was received throughout with tumultuous applause by a crowded audience." (1)

#### THE VISION OF DON RODERICK.

No one seems previously to have recognised as an adaptation of Scott's poem, an anonymous melodrama at the Coburg, June 16th. 1820, called Roderick the Goth; or The Vision of the Cavern. Unfortunately, however, no

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(1) Theatrical Observer, December 27th 1834.

details whatever seem to be available in the usual channels of dramatic criticism.

THE REMAINING POEMS.

While I have not succeeded in tracing any dramatic version either of Harold the Dauntless, or The Field of Waterloo, I think it probable that were the origins known of all the plays listed in Professor Nicoll's handlist, that we should find one or two, which owing to the changes in title are not now recognized. I have included in my own list a play by Dr. Poole of Edinburgh, which is based upon an incident in Scott's Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border.<sup>(1)</sup> This play, called Willie Armstrong, or Durie in Durance, was produced at the Edinburgh Theatre-Royal with some slight success, and published "in extended form" in 1843.

Both Mr. Dibdin and Professor Nicoll have fallen in a curious error over a play called The Rose of Ettrick Vale. Mr. Dibdin possibly intended to write "national" when he mentioned it as a "Waverley"<sup>(2)</sup> drama. At any rate, Professor Nicoll lists it as from a narrative poem of Scott's having the same title, and ascribes it to W.H. Murray.<sup>(3)</sup> Both these statements are incorrect. The play was

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(1) See New Edition Vol. IV. p.91.

(2) Annals P.311.

(3) op.cit. pp.93; 355; 519.

written by T.J. Lynch, an actor in Murray's company for whose benefit it was performed in Edinburgh, May 23rd. 1825. When he went to London the play was produced at the Adelphi and the Lyceum, in 1829 and 1835. (1) It has, of course, no connection whatever with Sir Walter Scott.

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(1) Comparison of the original printed text with the MSS of the Adelphi version in the L.C. Collection provides absolute proof that they are identical.

## § 2.

THE MAJOR DRAMATIZATIONS PREVIOUS TO 1823.

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None of these dramas from Scott's poems ever achieved real popularity, or even much notice. Many of them, in fact, would probably not have been written at all, but for the remarkable success in the theatre of the Waverley novels. Dr. White, as I have said, deals rather fully with their translation to the stage, and I am conscious that there must be in our present discussion some degree of over-lapping. (1) For the sake of perspective, however, it seems best partly to ignore this fact and glance at all the versions of the novels in turn before considering more broadly their right to a place in the upward line from Holcroft to the dramatists of to-day. (2) We may omit, I think, most of the details of production to concentrate upon the plays themselves. Those that have been adequately presented

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(1) I think, however, that it will be found also that in nearly every case I have added interesting or significant details.

(2) With Holcroft melodrama may perhaps be said to begin. See, however, Nicoll op.cit. 81.

(1)  
 by Dr. White will be summarized as briefly as possible in order to give fuller treatment to others which he has merely indicated, or omitted altogether. The various adaptations for the Continental stage and the later versions for our own must be left almost unnoticed.

GUY MANNERING.

We have already noted, apart from the almost child-like interest that Sir Walter took in these "dramatic grand-children" of his, that he actually assisted Dan Terry in the adaptation of Guy Mannering. According to Lochart, he had a hand in the selection of the dialogue and in the adjustment of the characterization to suit the altered plot. He also contributed, we are told, the charming song:

"Oh slumber, my darling,  
 Thy sire is a knight,"

(2)

which is sung several times in the play.

\* The Terry and Scott version, which was produced at Covent Garden, March 12th. 1816, follows the main story of the novel, although there are some slight deviations from the groundwork. Guy Mannering himself, for instance,

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(1) These will be indicated also by an asterisk.

(2) In White (op.cit.9) by a curious misprint, this reads Lullaby of an Indian Chief!

is represented as a young man who had, as a boy, obtained a military appointment in India through the interest of Lucy Bertram's father, a person so drawn in the novel as unlikely to possess any such interest whatever. Mannering is now the brother of Julia and the ultimate lover of Lucy. The wily, but sagacious lawyer, Gilbert Glossin, is described as a drunken bully and the rejected lover of the same lady. While these changes certainly knit the drama closer together and add vividness to the whole, it must be said that they rather weaken the original characters. Dominie Sampson is a skeleton of the richly comic figure of the novel, and Meg Merrilees, though appearing with ever-growing effect as the end approaches, never attains the weird power which Scott gave to her. On the whole, however, the first Waverley drama was one of the best and most popular of the entire series. It was frequently revived in England, Scotland and America, and seldom failed to call forth applause from both the critics and the audiences. The tuneful music of Henry Bishop seems to have been admired nearly as much as the skilful presentation of the main features of the novel.

For five years, the Terry and Scott play held the stage unchallenged. On July 30th 1821, however, the English Opera House brought out The Witch of Darncliffe,<sup>(1)</sup> an early production of J. Robinson Planché. His attempt

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(1) Who turned out during his career over one hundred and fifty dramatic pieces of every sort but classical Tragedy, including four from the Waverley novels.

to vary the story effectively was a bold one, and therefore to say that he did not altogether fail is fair praise. In Planché's piece Lucy Bertram drops out of sight, but Colonel Mannering is restored to the relationship to Julia from which Terry had displaced him for the sake of marrying him to Lucy Bertram. Young Charles Hazlewood is also restored as a suitor, but, as in Scott, he loses the lady to his rival. Among the added incidents are an attack of the house of Mannering by Dirk Hatteraick and the smugglers to capture Henry Bertram, and a long interview between Dirk and the villainous Glossin explanatory of the evil they have done to Bertram and his family. It leads to the release of Dirk, whose capture had caused the firing of the Custom House, and the breaking open of the prison where Bertram had been confined under the pretence that he had taken part in the smugglers' attack on Colonel Mannering's home. The other parts of the story do not stray far from the original, but some very interesting scenes are left out, as for example, the first appearance of Meg, when Bertram and Dinmont sup in the camp of the gipsies, and the attack made on them by the smuggler band. These are blanks that do not seem compensated by any of the incidents suffered to remain. The opinion of The Literary Gazette, however, may be taken as representative: "Mr. Planché has quite altered the character of the piece; and has, we are of the opinion, greatly added to its effect

(1)  
and interest in that light."

The success of Planché's play probably induced the Sadler's Wells management to bring forward another by Douglas Jerrold, called The Gipsy of Derncleuch, on August 26th. According to the announcements in the bills (2) Jerrold followed a French adaptation by Dupetit-Mere and Ducange at the Gaieté in Paris, but when the piece was first played at the Caledonian in Edinburgh the Dramatic Review thought it nothing more than "a compilation from Terry's piece and The Witch of Derncleuch, but undoubtedly..... (3) inferior to either." According to Calcraft, however, this play was very popular indeed for some time, especially in Dublin, but it did not stand the test of time and soon (4) dropped from sight. When we read the printed version, it is not difficult to understand why, for though Jerrold followed the main course of the action, he has missed the spirit of the novel. Certainly the characters, as Dr. White (5) points out, are but pale ghosts of their former selves. Bertram and Lucy are as conventional as a pair of sticks, the good Dominie but a slight caricature and Meg Merilees has lost all her unearthliness and become only an old gipsy fortune-teller.

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- (1) August 4th 1821.  
 (2) White op.cit. 29.  
 (3) March 17th 1823.  
 (4) Dublin University Review May 1851.  
 (5) op.cit. p.29.

A month or so later the Coburg produced another version, based largely on Planché's play, but omitting both Lucy and Dandie Dinmont. Dirk Hatteraich, the Dutch Smuggler; or The Sorceress of Demcleuch does not seem to have been printed in any form, and contemporary journals seldom wasted much space upon the productions of the Coburg. It seems clear, however, that the piece was built for the company. Dr. White <sup>(1)</sup> suggests that the presence in the cast of T.P. Cooke "the best sailor..... that ever trod the stage" <sup>(2)</sup> accounts for the prominence of the smuggler. The Drama neither praises nor condemns the piece, except to say that the omission of Dandie and Lucy seemed a want of taste in the adapter, though he was probably forced to it by the nature and strength (or weakness) of the amiable <sup>(3)</sup> Coburg company.

The few other adaptations that remain need not concern us greatly. So far as I have been able to trace them, they appear in the appendix with the essential facts of their production. After all, apart from the burlesques, they are not historically important; they are rather self-conscious anomalies, too late to be straight melodramas, and too early to be modern plays.

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- (1) op.cit. 30.  
 (2) D.N.B. under Cooke.  
 (3) In 1830, on December 13th the Coburg revived one of the other Guy Mannering transcripts, "renamed out of goodly fear of the licenser, The Heir of Ellangowan." How it fared I do not know. Dramatic Gazette, December 13th 1830.

ROB ROY.

Since we have already seen something of the importance of this play in Scotland, and especially in Edinburgh, it will hardly be necessary to discuss it at great length here, especially as each of my predecessors has already done so with some degree of completeness. It is not, then, so paradoxical to say that the most important versions of it least merit our present attention.

No account seems to be extant of the first adaptation of this play. It is definitely established, however, that on January 17th 1818, within three weeks of the novel's appearance, an anonymous version was produced at Corri's Pantheon in Edinburgh. According to the Courant, it "comprehended the most striking features of the novel and was very ingeniously contrived."<sup>(1)</sup> Yet, despite the fact that the scenery was 'very good', the acting 'happy' and 'amusing' and that 'Lady Menzies and several fashionables graced the boxes' the play did not take, and was withdrawn after six nights! Edinburgh characteristically enough, was not yet ready for Rob Roy.

Meanwhile, however, two other versions were being prepared in London. The first of these, Rob Roy, or The Traveller's Portmanteau, made its appearance at the

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(1) January 19th 1818.

Olympic Theatre on the sixteenth of February. It seems to have attracted little or no attention in any of the theatrical magazines I have seen.

\* At Covent Garden on the evening of March 12th, was produced the transcript by Isaac Pocock, which was destined to be the greatest of them all. This play opens with a meeting of Rob Roy and Mr. Owen near Glasgow, somewhat as Rob and Frank Osbaldistone meet in the novel; thus, all the earlier parts are omitted, and the plot begins just where the interest begins to thicken. Following the original story rather closely, we then see in succession the Gaol at Glasgow, the Highland Inn and the tragi-comic quarrel, the capture of Rob Roy, the ambushade and the destruction of the Sassenach detachment, the restoration of the chieftain to his clan, and at last the death of the treacherous Rashleigh, altered somewhat in circumstances and transposed in time and place to give a highly theatrical finale, with Frank and Diana in each other's arms and Rob begging them never in their happiness to forget Scotland and Rob Roy.

Rob Roy, of course, was an operatic drama, and therefore the songs played an important part in its success. (1) Pocock succeeded, however, in making his play really meritorious as an acting drama. In Scotland it became

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(1) See infra p. ✓

known as "the managerial sheet anchor"<sup>(1)</sup> and was played in both the Edinburgh theatres several times a season for many years to come. In fact as late as 1850 Mr. Manager Murray declared that it could always be depended upon to draw a house.<sup>(2)</sup>

Several months before Pocock's version was played at the Edinburgh Theatre-Royal, however, Cobett Ryder, the alert and popular manager of the Aberdeen - Perth - Dundee circuit had produced it. Ryder advertised his production at Perth on June 22nd 1818, as "for the first time in Scotland,"<sup>(3)</sup> and it has long been thought that the statement was correct. However, Rob Lawton has shown definitely that Murray himself had brought out a version - probably the one used later in Edinburgh - at the Theatre-Royal in Glasgow on the 10th of June 1818, over a week before the Ryder company acted the play in the north. Besides, no historian seems to have taken notice of the interesting fact mentioned in the preface to the Waverley Dramas,<sup>(4)</sup> that one Mullander, the manager of a strolling company, produced the Pocock version or one of his own, in the far north of Scotland

- (1) The earliest use I have seen of this term is in the Dramatic Review December 6th 1822.
- (2) See supra p.47.
- (3) Perth Courier, June 18th 1818, quoted by P. Baxter: The Drama in Perth (1907) 95. The advertisement said "as now performing at Covent Garden."
- (4) 1872 edition.

about the same time as Ryder did. The following paragraph is worth quoting:-

" [Mullender] is said to have had in his company an ex-printer from Glasgow, who, from love of Mullender's daughter abjured the composing stick and took to the stage, and it is said that this worthy assumed the rôle of Baillie Nicol Jamie, while Mackay (1) appeared in the same character at Aberdeen. The inhabitants of the Granite City, and of many of the smaller towns even in the extreme North of Scotland, were thus privileged to witness the performance of 'The National Drama of ROB ROY' prior to the elite of the Scottish metropolis; and it appears that the canny denizens of the North had not only the wit to appreciate, but also the enthusiasm to greet it everywhere with 'tremendous applause'."

We have already seen the enthusiasm which greeted the play in Edinburgh when at last it was produced there on February 15th 1819, and how it set the tottering Theatre-Royal once more upon its feet financially. Murray, of course, ran it far too often for his own good, but, nevertheless, it was always a popular piece. The Caledonian Theatre, however, made it a specialty, and I have traced no fewer than five apparently different versions between 1818 and 1827.

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- (1) "The real Mackay" i.e. Charles - see Supra p. 196.  
 (2) Because they are rather confusing, and Mr. Dibdin, usually so accurate, has failed to disentangle them, it might be well to list them before proceeding.
1. The first Rob Roy in 1818, at the Pantheon, we have already discussed.
  2. The so-called Second Version, the most popular of them all, was that used by Ryder in the north. It was based upon the Pocock play, but the manager seems to have more or less re-adapted it for Scottish audiences. Ryder opened big management of the Caledonian with this piece on June 7th 1823, but it had already been played there apparently, for Anderson's benefit on March 31st 1823.
  3. The New version, as it is called in the bills, was first produced on March 29th 1825. It was also acted (as the "third version") at the Masonic performance on May 3rd, which Mr. Dibdin takes to be its debut. Cont. next page(314)

To complicate matters still further, one is never quite certain, in the few notices of these plays which do exist, which one is being discussed. The most that can be learned is the fact that the company acted Rob Roy especially well. Ryder himself was acknowledged by the captious Dramatic Review to be "the only perfect Rob Roy the stage has to boast of," although "Harry Johnston [the former lessee of the Caledonian] did it very well. The performance of Williams as the Baillie was thought superior to Mackay's in parts not peculiarly adapted to Mackay's placability of style", though, as a whole it is inferior to Mackay's." After praising Paddy Weeks as Major Galbraith and Miss Edmiston as Helen Macgregor, the Review says:

"Upon the whole, we never saw Rob Roy acted in perfection till last night; and we trust that the merit of Mr. Ryder may claim of bringing out this piece in the style he did, will be suitably rewarded."

(1)

The Dramatic Review gives also some slight indication of the second version.

"The first scene introduces us to Campbell [i.e. Rob Roy], Frank and Morris at the Country Inn; and in the third scene we find Frank examined before Justice Inglewood and his worthy clerk, Jobson, where he is rescued from the false accusations of the

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(2) CONTINUED from previous page (No.313):

4. The MacGregors, produced for Gunn's benefit, April 21st 1825. It failed.
  5. A new version from the Caledonian, of Glasgow, produced in Edinburgh on August 7th 1827.
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(1) January 12th 1825. It is worth noting that the Review accuses Macready - the original Rob Roy at Covent Garden - of making an Italian bravo of him.

cowardly Morris by the interference of Campbell. After this, the piece proceeds much in the same style as the one at the Theatre-Royal." (1)

From the same paper we get useful notices of the "new" version (the third) and of The Macgregors.

"A new version of Rob Roy was produced last night with decided success. The language is almost verbatim from the novel, and where the incidents require to be filled up, a complete variation may be observed from the text of Mr. Pocock or from that of the Theatre-Royal version. There are also some amendments, or rather improvements made to the piece, by the selection of some very pithy passages from the novel, which have escaped the notice of the original dramatizer of this celebrated opera..... The scenery is most beautiful, particularly the view of the old bridge of Glasgow, which is certainly the finest display of scenic effect and illusion that has ever been seen in this country. The piece was announced for repetition amid three distinct rounds of the most deafening applause." (2)

"The Macgregors - this was a new version of Rob Roy, got up for Gunn's benefit. Any original diction that we could detect, was most wretched and a complete distortion of the story." (3)

Details about the 1827 version are lacking except that it was produced under the temporary management of Alexander, on August 7th. According to Mr. Dibdin, it was an entirely new version, used on Alexander's circuit.

The success of the Pocock play at Covent Garden in 1818 caused the managers of Drury Lane to get busy. As a matter of fact they had been announcing the play for some weeks,

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- (1) April 1st 1823.  
 (2) March 30th 1825.  
 (3) April 21st 1825.  
 (4) Lessee of the Glasgow Caledonian and the theatres at Dumfries and Carlisle.  
 (5) Annals, 344.

only to be beaten by the rival house. The Literary Gazette<sup>(1)</sup> says that they had at least three different versions to choose from, but that the whole responsibility of selection seemed to be in the hands of the stage carpenter! One can well believe such gossip after looking through the Rob Roy which was produced on March 25th. Strictly speaking, this play by George Soane is not Rob Roy at all, for little more is retained than the names. The characterization of the original is simply outraged. For the sake of focussing attention on Rob Roy as a stage hero he is shown in love with Diana Vernon, which necessitates many indefensible adjustments. His noble wife becomes his mother, a completely heartless virago; Diana loses all her spirit and her mystery; poor Frank is lost completely; and those delightful characters Bailie Jamie and the Dougal Creature, are elbowed into the background. The acting and, as usual, the scenery, were praised by the critics but the distortion of the story caused the play to be whole-heartedly damned. The theatrical correspondent of Blackwood's Magazine, for instance, dismissed it as an ignoble attempt to draw a few good houses before reports got about, "a hoax on the public....  
..... 'a springe to catch woodcocks'."<sup>(2)</sup>

By the command of her father, General Vernon, Diana is about to marry Sir Rashleigh Osbaldistone. The marriage is to take place while the General is away campaigning

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(1) March 14th. 1818.

(2) Vol. III. 82.

against Rob Roy, unknowing that the outlaw is the favoured lover of his daughter. Rob, however, snatches her away at the very altar. Meanwhile the General has been ensnared by Dougal and made prisoner by Helen Macgregor, Rob's strong-willed mother, and is only saved from her fury by the intervention of the seer Morvyn. When she learns that her son has married Diana, she urges him to cast the girl off, and when Rob refuses, she herself leaves him with threats of vengeance. By a trick Rob is persuaded to leave his wife in Dougal's care, and Helen succeeds in administering to her what she believes to be a deadly poison obtained from Morvyn. Rob is captured by Rashleigh, escapes and soon engages in a fight with his pursuer. Rashleigh is conquered and death rewards a treacherous attack on the life of the victor. Helen falls victim to remorse and lightning, and Diana revives in due time and is reunited to her husband, his pardon having been previously secured by the General who has become reconciled to the union.

Although the play secured a certain hearing for a few performances, it was soon taken off and replaced by Pocock's version. I do not know of any production of Soane's Rob Roy in Scotland. No manager, I fancy, ever cared to take the responsibility.

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- (1) On May 14th 1821, Astley's brought out a spectacle called Gregarch, the Highland Watchword, but details of its production seem to be lacking. The Theatrical Pocket Magazine, May - June 1821, however, reports that it was "successful". Apparently the title was altered to Rob Roy the Gregarch, which suggests that it may have been Soane's. This, however, I regard as extremely doubtful. Information is lacking also about two other versions (Continued next page - 318:-

THE HEART OF MIDLOTHIAN.

Although this tale failed to achieve upon the stage the spectacular success of Rob Roy, it was very nearly as popular. Curiously enough, for six months none of the play-carpenters, as Scott himself rather aptly termed them <sup>(1)</sup>, seemed to recognise the dramatic value in the story of 'those low creatures, the cow-feeders' of the north. In December 1818, the noted Sarah Egerton recognized the possibilities of Madge Wildfire and suggested to Tom Dibdin that he adapt the novel for her. With his usual energy Dibdin set to work. He was unable, he tells us, <sup>(2)</sup> to read the novel until the last day of December; on January 2nd he began his play, which was read in the green room

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(1) CONTINUED from previous Page (No.317):-

at the Coburg in Waterloo Road. The first, Roy's Wife; or The Clachan of Aberfoyle, was produced on November 4th 1825. It was described as "the favourite Caledonian romance" and may possibly have been a revised version of one of the earlier Rob Roy plays. On July 8th.1828 the Coburg produced a melodrama called Rob Roy McGregor of which the same may well be true. We must leave it, I fear, at that. Apart from an unidentified operatic version in a London theatre in 1831, little remains but a few travesties, by such men as Burnand, Henry Byron, Reece, Plowman and the Brough brothers, which I think we may ignore. See Appendix.

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(1) Letters II. 403.

(2) Advertisement to 1819 edition.

four days later and produced at the Surrey, (or Royal Circus as it was then called) on the 13th! In spite of the haste of the compiler, he did an excellent job, and its run of one hundred and seventy performances during the next nine months was something of a record for melodrama at that time. In his Reminiscences, Dibdin relates with some glee that during the first year his play brought in nearly a hundred pounds nightly.

\* Dibdin seldom altered the story in any of his Scott adaptations, and his Heart of Mid-lothian skilfully concentrated the most significant and interesting scenes, using much of the language of the novel and carefully avoiding the more irrelevant incidents. The sore troubles of Effie Deans; the virtuous struggle and the heroic resolution of her sister Jeanie; Jeanie's application to the Laird of Dumbiedykes; her adventures on the road and in London; her return with the royal pardon, - these form the main chain of events in the play. Of course neither the attempts of Geordie Robertson to get her to commit the venial sin of perjury to save her sister's life, the wild wanderings of Madge Wildfire, her strange and romantic appearance at Muschat's Cairn, the fiendish rage of her ancient mother, nor the peculiarities of Mrs. Glass could be omitted.

Three months later, on April 17th 1819, Covent Garden announced a rival play, by Daniel Terry. In this case, however, the Grinder was without the collaboration of the novelist, for although Scott was as interested as ever, - he told his friend to "write me if I can do aught about the

play, though I fear not,"<sup>(1)</sup> and thought at one time of making "a neat comédie bourgeoise"<sup>(2)</sup> from the novel, - he was unable because of illness to be of any practical help.

"My corrections," he wrote ruefully, "would have smelled as cruelly of the lamp as the Bishop of Granada's homily did of the apoplexy." (3)

\* It was natural that Terry with his Scottish associations should have put more emphasis on the Edinburgh scenes. By departing from the original in some details, he manages adroitly to make the Porteous riots an essential part of his play. The opening scene is full of colour and movement and noise, as Robertson, disguised as Madge Wildfire, rescues poor old Dumbiedykes from the mob. Another successful scene of the same melodramatic kind shows the burning of the Edinburgh Tolbooth at their hands. Terry omits the journey of Jeanie to the Queen, which makes up a good deal of Dibdin's second act. Had he indicated in some way that she had gone, he might still have achieved the original effect; but he chose instead to make a marked alteration in the plot that drew the Scottish critics upon his head like a load of bricks. Maga acidly condemned the new characterization of a puritanical Jeanie Deans, who yet will promise to marry Dumbiedykes if he will help to get her sister released, as nothing but a "pretty mincing London

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(1) Lochart VI. 65.

(2) Ibid V. 315. c.f. 310.

(3) Ibid VI. 62.

miss" and termed this, and the omission of Jeanie's journey to London, "unwarrantable liberties." (1) The Dramatic Review some years later, recalled the play of "the pedantic and self-conceited Terry" as likely to remain, "so long as the memory of Terry endures, a memorable example of his ignorance."<sup>(2)</sup>

Robertson's father is no longer the kindly rector of Willingham, but Lord Oakdale, who has been in the caustic words of The Dramatic Review "dispatched to Scotland with extraordinary powers of hanging, drawing and quartering ad libitum. Martial law would have been bad enough..... but the idea of an English lord proceeding to Scotland with the unlimited powers of a Turkish pacha, is much more monstrous."<sup>(3)</sup> At any rate, Robertson appears in the court and takes Effie's place in the dock. As Lord Oakdale is preparing to sentence him for being concerned in the Porteous riot, Ratcliffe dashes in with news that he has the missing baby. He then assures Lord Oakdale of Robertson's innocence and shows him that Effie had not dared mention the mad nurse Madge Wildfire, for fear of betraying her husband who had left her in Madge's care. All, therefore, ends happily, even though many of the audience would perhaps agree with a critic in Birmingham who wrote "were

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(1) Blackwood's Magazine V. 320.

(2) November 27th 1824.

(3) March 10th 1824.

it possible to suppose Walter Scott deserving of punishment, what could we wish him worse than to see his matchless novels as they are now dramatized?"<sup>(1)</sup>

One may read, I think, a certain disappointment with Terry's effort between the lines of the letter Scott sent back with the manuscript.

"I send the M.S. - I wish you had written for it earlier. My touching it, or even thinking of it, was out of the question..... Indeed I hold myself inadequate to estimate those criticisms which rest on stage effect, having been of late very little of a play-going person." (2)

The tone of this last sentence, shows, we may be reasonably sure, that he had not forgotten this same Terry's refusal a few months before, of his own Doom of Devorgoil.

Later in the same year, the Dibdin and the Terry versions were combined by William Dimond of the Bath Theatre-Royal, in what John Genest thought "a most judicious manner"<sup>(3)</sup>. The play was produced in Bath on December 3rd. A few slight details from the novel had been added as well as a grand new finale, and the whole bore, so far as I have been able to make out, a greater resemblance to Dibdin's play than to Terry's.<sup>(4)</sup> Dr. White concludes, correctly

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(1) Birmingham Theatrical Looker-on, October 14th. 1822.

(2) Lochart VI. 62.

(3) John Genest: Some Account of the English Stage (1832) IX. 68. 445.

(4) See Dramatic Review, November 29th 1822.

enough, perhaps, but on what seems to me insufficient evidence, that this play came to be regarded as the standard text. <sup>(1)</sup> But although Genest reports that it received from Bath audiences then and on the revival nine years later "the highest encomiums", and it seems to have been very popular in Edinburgh, there were several other versions to demand their share of popularity.

<sup>(2)</sup>  
 In his Annals of the Edinburgh Stage Mr. J.C. Dibdin noted the need for careful investigation of the parts about the production of The Heart of Midlothian in Edinburgh. So far as I can make out, there were no less than five different versions played in the city, - the three that we have been discussing, and two revisions of the Dibdin play, by Montague and Jervis of the minor house, and Murray of the Theatre-Royal. Tom Dibdin states <sup>(3)</sup> in his Reminiscences that his play was produced at both theatres in that season of 1819-20. Mrs. Henry Siddons he says, saw his play in London and secured a copy from him for use at the Theatre-Royal. The play was sent to <sup>(4)</sup> the Lord Chamberlain for licence, and as "Dibdin's Heart of Midlothian", underlined, for production early in 1820.

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(1) op.cit. p.62.

(2) Page 294.

(3) II. 165.

(4) It is now in the Larpent Collection.

Nevertheless, when the play was announced at the Royal on February 23rd, it was not Dibdin's that was produced. The historian of the Edinburgh stage is also quite positive of this though he fails to indicate why. I presume, however, that he bases his conviction on the same point as I do, the fact that the Edinburgh Midlothian is two acts longer than the Surrey play, and contained one or two more minor characters. A comparison of the cast of this play with that of Terry's, on the other hand, makes it even more plain that it was not the Covent Garden version. It seems fairly reasonable, therefore, to suppose that the success of the Bath transcript, and the fact that both Dibdin's original piece and what was probably only a re-arrangement of it, (by Montague and Jervis) had already been produced at the Pantheon (Caledonian) caused the canny Murray to alter his plan, and bring forward Dimond's version. I firmly believe that this is the solution of the tangle. Just when Terry's version was produced in Edinburgh, however, is less clear. In the passage of Tom Dibdin's memoir referred to, he seems to say that it was also produced at the Theatre-Royal during the

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- (1) The casts are contrasted in W. <sup>Wentley</sup> Dramas (1872) which seems to see no difference.
- (2) Announced definitely as Dibdin's play, December 9th. 1819.
- (3) Produced for Montague's benefit, February 1st. 1819.

same winter, and four years later the Dramatic Review (1) recalls it as a sort of horrible example. The Edinburgh newspapers, unfortunately, afford no clue whatever. It might be supposed that it was the play produced at the re-opening of the theatre on March 6th, were there not an advertisement in the Courant of that date announcing it as the "Eleventh Night". On June 3rd it was announced as "compressed into three acts"; this might possibly have been the missing production. Since, however, it was never a really popular play and further evidence seems unobtainable, we may perhaps let the question drop.

On March 5th 1824, still another version was produced at the Royal. The Dramatic Review was convinced that Murray was the adapter, (2) but though it thought the play did him great credit, (3) was not at all enthusiastic. After all, it was no longer a novelty and the adjustments he made do not seem to have been very great.

Rather more curious than important is the play by George Dibdin Pitt, called The Whistler, produced at the Coburg on January 28th 1833, and in Edinburgh (with no more change than the omission of one song) (4) in 1841.

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(1) March 6th. 1824.

(2) March 9th. 1824.

(3) March 10th. 1824.

(4) Also at Sadler's Wells on April 8th, 1833.

(1)  
The Whistler is based upon the events which in the novel take place years after the trial of Effie Deans. Effie, now Lady Staunton, comes back seeking for her lost son whom she believes to be still alive and in the hands of an outlaw named Donacha Dhu. She is right; her son has grown up to be a wild nomadic creature who worships the ruffianly Donacha, to whom he was "sold" by Annable Bailyon. She finds the boy and brings him back to her sister's home, but though he vaguely remembers a song that his cousin Effie sings, he doubts the faith of all Sassenachs, and spurns his pleading mother. Just as his identity is proved, he seizes a sword and escapes, carrying off Jeanie's baby. Meanwhile Sir George Staunton has fallen into the hands of Donacha, who has long cherished an old score against him. They fight, and the outlaw falls, just as the Whistler comes in. With a cry of rage and grief, he plunges his sword into his father's body. In the last act, the Whistler appears upon a crag with the child, but releases it when he hears who Sir George really was. Lady Staunton has gone insane. The boy raises her from where she has fallen because he wants just once "to press a mother to his heart," then rushes up the crag again. He shoots himself and falls into the lake below as the curtain falls.

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(1) White reports this play by proxy. His assistant seems to have let him down, for a rather wild melodrama is described as a literary drama; and the summary of the action is very incorrect.

In the early sixties, there was a revival of interest in Midlothian plays, and three were produced in the London theatres within a few months of each other. According to the Parthenon,<sup>(1)</sup> beside the two about to be mentioned, a version had been produced at the Standard, Shoreditch, in September 1862, and a fourth loomed at Sadler's Wells. About the latter two plays I have no information, but The Trial of Effie Deans, by Dion Boucicault at the Westminster,<sup>(2)</sup> and Effie Deans, or The Lily of St. Leonards,<sup>(3)</sup> by George Shepherd, at the Surrey, merit a word or two. Both plays, apparently had previously been produced in America.<sup>(4)</sup> Boucicault boldly announced his play as a "sensation drama" but it is more than that, the Parthenon critic thought.

"This time it is by turning the Porteous mob into a crowd of sympathizers with Effie Deans, and flinging them to her rescue through the burning gates of the Tolbooth, he provides a finale of red fire and smoke and scuffle for the delight of the gallery..... but the story of the heroism of poor Jeanie Deans..... being preserved in its general features..... affords one piece of well developed character which saves the piece from being entirely a 'sensation drama'."

Apart from the development of this one part, however, the scenes of the original have been followed closely enough, but without taking colour or illumination. The object of

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(1) January 31st. 1863.

(2) Formerly Astley's; January 26th. 1863.

(3) February 7th. 1863.

(4) White op.cit. 67. Parthenon, February 14th. 1863.

the play, plainly enough, is to illustrate how unjust it sometimes is to judge upon circumstantial evidence. Shepherd's piece sounds as though it were built up from Tom Dibdin's play at the same theatre nearly fifty years before. While it omits some of Boucicault's stagey clap-traps this play is really more melodramatic than its predecessors, with its leaps over cataracts, flying knives, and the unfortunate Porteous dragged in by the angry mob and, with rather questionable taste, hanged on the stage as the first act ends. (1)

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(1) Half a dozen more Midlothian plays may be mentioned. George Hamilton had one at the Albion, October 29th, 1877. and the Brough Brothers brought out a travesty at the St. James in March 1863. Half way between melodrama and burlesque comes a version compiled by T.H.Lacy "from T. Dibdin's play, W. Murray's alteration of the same Eugene Scribe's opera, and Dion Boucicault's conglomeration of the above, Colin Hazlewood's adjustment and re-adjustment, J.B. Johnstone's appropriation, and other equally original versions, together with a small amount of new matter." Johnstone's and Hazlewood's plays have not been identified. White makes a curious error when he says it (Hazlewood's) was printed in Lacy # 850. It is Lacy 850 from which we are quoting. It has a rousing ending, with the gates of the prison blown up. Jeanie running in at the last possible moment with the pardon, shouts, music and red fire, as the curtain falls on a tableau. This is published in Lacy's Acting Edition, but I do not know if it was ever produced.

Before leaving this story it should be mentioned that one, Captain Rafter translated or adapted a French operatic version for use at the Princess, April 18th 1849. It was not important. White says it is a translation of Scribe's and Nicoll says it is based on Dupont. I do not know which is correct.

THE BRIDE OF LAMMERMOOR.

The story of the tragic love of Lucy Ashton and the Master of Ravenswood is, technically speaking, one of Scott's best, and excites deep and powerful interest both in the study and on the stage. Not only is it well motivated and connected, but its characters are clean-cut and clearly contrasted, making the novel altogether a splendid subject for dramatization. Strangely enough, however, no permanently successful play was made from it, though a number of operas, including Donizetti's out-moded but still famous Lucia di Lammermoor, were long popular here and on the Continent.

Tom Dibdin was once again the first to put this story on the stage. His Bride of Lammermoor, or The Spectre of the Fountain a drama in two acts, was brought forward at the Surrey on June 7th, 1819, soon after the appearance of the novel. There is no published text, (1) and the critics were divided. The Theatrical Inquirer, for instance, thought that it only confirmed the idea that the tale was not suitable for the stage, and though "intelligently dramatised", its compression of three

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(1) July 1819.

volumes of incident resulted in a piece confusing to those unacquainted with the original. The Literary Gazette (1) thought that it was rather hastily composed, and that the extra work of adding another act would have improved it greatly. The European Magazine, (2) on the other hand, praised the display of Dibdin's taste and discernment in "giving a faithful outline to the whole story, and flinging into bold relief all those parts which are susceptible of great effect." The only variations made in the plot were the gratuitous introduction of the spectre lady herself, Edgar's death at the hands of one of the Ashton retainers, (3) and the suppression of much of the faithful Caleb's humours.

The Surrey version was followed by another at Astley's on July 12th. This was called The Bride of Lammermoor; or The Mermaid's Well, and has been said to be the work of W.T. Moncrieff another prolific writer of melodrama and lighter pieces. (4) The Theatrical Inquisitor reports that it was dramatised with great judgment, only the performance was unequal. The scenery, however, was all new and good, the best pieces being a distant view of Wolf's Crag by moonlight (5) and the fatal well in the Lord Keeper's grounds.

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(1) July 24th 1819.

(2) June 1819.

(3) Theatre, July 10th 1819.

(4) Theatrical Inquisitor, July 1819, ascribes it to Moncrieff.

(5) Ibid.

\* Perhaps the best version was that compounded by J.W. Calcraft of the Edinburgh Theatre-Royal, produced in that theatre on May 1st 1822. It may be noted in passing that another version of the novel was licensed for the Royal in 1819, but I have not identified it, nor was it, so far as I know, ever produced. (1) Calcraft followed so closely the Scott story that the Theatrical Observer (2) though usually favourable to the close approximation of plots, termed his adherence "slavish", and thought that the heaviness in representation, (noted also by the Dramatic Review) (3) was caused by the inclusion of too much of the tedious portions of the tale. The latter paper came to the conclusion that it could scarcely be improved upon: "There is no modern drama, the performance of which we witness with more delight." (4) The only change Calcraft made was a slight improvement of the climax. Besides being of a rather horrible nature, the ending is so ambiguous that the reader closes the book with some uncertainty; on the stage, however, Lucy dies of a broken heart and Edgar throws himself upon his own sword, thus forming an affecting and very definite curtain to the tragedy.

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- (1) It is, however, in the Larpent Collection.  
 (2) November 24th 1823.  
 (3) January 6th 1823  
 (4) January 9th 1824.

Calcraft's version was played at the Caledonian in 1825, replacing an anonymous transcript, which had originally been produced in November 1821.<sup>(1)</sup> It was revived again and again in various theatres during the next twenty-five years or more.

(2)  
\* A version by the imaginative Soane was played in New York at Niblo's Garden, and printed in 1854.

"Some of the revisions made by Soane are not injudicious," said Dr. White (3). "Henry, for example, informs the guests that his sister hesitates to marry the lord of Bucklaw because of the recent death of Lady Ashton, who is thus at once removed from the list of characters. Lucy is restored as an independent and spirited young lady. She at last agrees to marry Bucklaw when Henry threatens to use his prerogative as guardian to bend her will to his own. No attempts are made to deceive her by forged letters or counterfeit parts of rings. Nor does the bride of Lammermoor slay the unfortunate Bucklaw on the eve of their marriage. Little is made of the madness of the heroine who is reported to be ill in her apartment. The infuriated Edgar stabs himself within sight of the wedding guests. Altogether one concludes that Soane made a good acting drama

- (1) This may be the one referred to in the Dramatic Journal (November 12th 1828) "We remember a version..... which was produced at the Minor Theatre in which there was no catastrophe, but Lucy and Edgar were made to obtain the consent of all parties and were at length happily united: this, of course, was fatal to the piece."
- (2) From an opera at the Renaissance, Paris, in 1839.
- (3) op.cit. 91. I have not seen this play.

even though it is a poor imitation of Walter Scott."(1)

#### IVANHOE.

For the same reason that the romantic tale of Ivanhoe appealed immediately to all classes, and can still hold the interest of young people in an age of motor-cars, wireless and talking pictures, the dramatisations of the novel were almost spectacularly popular upon the stage. In 1820, the play took London by storm, and no fewer than five separate versions appeared during the season. Ivanhoe had everything that made for success in the early century theatre, for leaving aside its complete novelty, such a tale of chivalry offered golden opportunities to producer and actor alike.

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- (1) Among the more obscure versions of this tale that remain, Dr. White (op.cit.92) mentions a Fatal Prophecy at the New Royal Brunswick Theatre, Goodman's Fields, in 1835. There was certainly a Bride play there, but it was called The Mermaiden's Well and produced on the opening night, February 25th 1828. Three days later, during a rehearsal, the whole structure collapsed (Nicoll op.cit.222) and so far as I can ascertain, was never rebuilt. There was an anonymous version also at the Queen's on May 9th 1831, about which information is lacking. Several of the operatic versions were played in England, both in the original and in translation, and one or two serious plays such as The Master of Ravenswood (Lyceum, December 22nd, 1865) by J.P. Simpson, and Ravenswood, (Lyceum, September 20th, 1890) by H.C. Merivale, did very well upon the stage. The latter, with the great Sir Henry Irving in the name-part ran to more than one hundred performances. The Lost Heir, by Stephen Phillips, (Glasgow King's March 23rd 1908) made an excellent plan for Sir John Martin-Harvey's particular style. Apart from these only a few burlesques, by Oxberry (1848) Byron (1865) and others remain to complete the list. White (pp. 96 - 100) gives several extracts.

Tom Dibdin again used his remarkable facility of composition to steal a march on his competitors, and produced the first of these versions at the Surrey on January 20th, 1820. The address spoken by Miss Copeland on the opening night humourously alludes to the wild bustle of preparation, for do audiences realize, she asks,

'How much we've had to do and think, and write  
compose, rehearse, paint, sew, embroider  
and so forth to bring him here to-night?  
.... If three thick volumes in three acts you ask  
It may be probably no easy task  
Your wishes to fulfill.' (1)

The author and his friends were adequately rewarded for their labours, however, for in spite of the rival plays which followed, the play enjoyed a great success.

\* Ivanhoe, or The Jew's Daughter, like most of Dibdin's work, managed admirably the task of compression without the loss of many essentials. It realized Dibdin's obvious motto of modest deference to the author, while clinging to the incidents and language with real literary ardour. Only a few touches have been added, mainly in the way of striking antithesis, as in the death scene of Brian de Bois Guilbert; but all are strictly in accord with the spirit of the romance. The return of Ivanhoe in disguise to his father's Hall, and the events leading up to the tournament at Ashby form the opening part of the play. The first act closes with the jousting of the knights, apparently in

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(1) Included in 1820 edition.

full view of the audience, and the discovery of Ivanhoe's identity. The second act comprises the highly dramatic incidents in the castle of Torquilstone, the tense interviews of Isaac, Rebecca and the pitiful Ulrica with their oppressors, providing an effective contrast to the capture and burning of the castle by Robin Hood and his band. Rebecca is the central figure of the last act, which leads up to her last-minute rescue from the Templars' death sentence, when her champion Ivanhoe defeats the Norman and restores her to her father.

The Dibdin version with few alterations and additions seems to have been used by Alfred Bunn for his production in Birmingham later in the same year. Bunn is frank enough in disclaiming particular credit. <sup>(1)</sup> In spite of a great deal of puffing, good acting and really lavish decorations, however, it was so badly attended on the second night that the Birmingham correspondent of the London Magazine reported that "a heavy loss seems certain." <sup>(2)</sup> When it was published later in the year, the Theatrical Inquisitor dismissed it as a mere amalgamation. "We have nothing to declaim against but the waste of paper and printing." <sup>(3)</sup>

W. T. Moncrieff again was not far behind Dibdin. Ivanhoe; or The Jew of York, appeared on January 24th. only four nights later. It was published soon afterwards with its sub-title changed to The Jewess, most probably

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- (1) Advertisement to 1820 edition.  
 (2) February 21st. p.195.  
 (3) October - November 1820.

to avoid confusion with Bunn's play. Dr. White is quite right in saying that Moncrieff received small attention from the critics. The Theatrical Inquisitor, however, (1) gave it a fairly good notice.

This play on the whole, follows the plan of the novel, though some variations must be noted. It opens with a glee by the Saxon peasantry after which the events at Cedric's castle are depicted as usual. The second act takes in the spoilation of Gurth by Robin Hood, the seizure of Rebecca by the Norman, the meeting of Friar Tuck and the Black Knight (which is managed with much dexterity) the coercion of Isaac in Torquilstone Castle (where both Front de Boeuf and Ulrica are omitted), the rescue of Cedric by Wamba, the burning of the castle, the flight of Brian with Rebecca and the victory achieved by Robin Hood and his allies. The rest of the story is like Dibdin's version, except that Brian perishes upon Ivanhoe's sword instead of dying in the saddle from apoplexy or his own (2) pent-up wickednesses.

The unknown published version of 1820 shows many points of difference. Whereas the humours of Gurth and Wamba and the ribald jollity of Friar Tuck play a goodly part in

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(1) March 1820.

(2) I do not know whether this play was ever played elsewhere but when the Coburg wished to revive Ivanhoe on February 5th. 1830, it was Dibdin's version that they used.

Moncrieff's transcript, they have been in this one cut to the very minimum. It contains also, a number of scenes and incidents which must surely have been mentioned by the Theatrical Inquisitor had they been in the Coburg play. After his victory over Brian at Ashby, for instance, Ivanhoe, accompanied by Richard, goes once more to Rotherwood, where the Lion-Heart succeeds in persuading the stout old Saxon to forgive his son and countenance a marriage with Rowena. At the end of the play, Rebecca gives Rowena as a wedding gift a beautiful necklace of pearls, and we are led to understand that she sometimes comes from York to visit the happy family at Rotherwood. She never marries, for she has only once been "touched by love - that was for Ivanhoe."<sup>(1)</sup> This version deserves, as Dr. White remarks, at least the credit of trying to bring about a more reasonably denouement than its rivals, or the novelist himself. Since this does not seem to fit in with any of the other versions, published or not, I cannot even suggest where, if at all, it was produced. That there were other versions than those my predecessors or I have been able to trace, however, seems evident from a statement in the London Magazine.<sup>(2)</sup> "The success with which the dramatizing of the Scotch novels has been crowned..... has induced the proprietors of all the minor theatres to cause this popular romance to be adapted for the stage."

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(1) Op.cit. 108.

(2) February 1820.

The Adelphi version, on February 14th 1820, some three weeks after the Coburg, seems to have been written by Richard Jones, an actor who produced four or five quite successful pieces in London before joining the company of the Edinburgh Theatre-Royal in 1823. Ivanhoe, or The Saxon Chief, attracted little attention, for it seems obviously built only to suit the available company at the Adelphi. Most of the leading incidents were omitted because of the deficiency of Adelphi talent. The union of the minor scenes, however, struck the London Magazine as "ingenious enough; and considering the persons who performed several of the parts, it was enacted better than we expected." Information is lacking, but I scarcely suppose Jones' play had much of a run. Even at first it received only a middling amount of applause from what the same critic thought "a good-natured audience." A month later however, he reports that it is still being played after a recess, with rather more ensemble than at first.

\* Covent Garden followed on March 2nd with Ivanhoe; or The Knight Templar by Samuel Beazley, Jr., a prolific and fairly popular playwright, who later made a dramatization of The Talisman. Beazley recognised that the best climax

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(1) Ibid.

(2) Ibid. March 1820.

of the story was really in the middle, and by re-arranging the incidents, contrived to conclude with the destruction of Torquilstone. Other important events, such as the trial of Rebecca are worked in previous to this catastrophe. (1)

The trial scene, incidentally, struck the Literary Gazette as "one of extraordinary beauty." The plot becomes fairly simple. Ivanhoe is combined with King Richard and Brian loses much of his part to Front de Boeuf. Ivanhoe, returned to England and his father's house, disguised as a pilgrim, protects Isaac from the ferocity of Sir Brian, and when afterwards his daughter has become the prey of the recreant Templar Front de Boeuf he defends her with his life as her champion in the lists. The Norman however manages to imprison her in his castle of Torquilstone, where the incidents again take the chronology of the original. With the aid of Robin Hood and his band, Ivanhoe storms the castle. Rebecca is released and the tyrant burns to death mocked by the unfortunate but revenged Ulrica who falls back into the flames as the curtain descends. (2)

The critics were not at all pleased. The London Magazine thought the play was

"miserably reduced..... lamentably deficient in the constituent qualities of a good drama, and..... indebted for its temporary success entirely to its fire, smoke, noise, splendid scenery, rattling incident, the popularity of its name and the celebrity of its performers."

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(1) March 4th 1820

(2) April 1820.

(1)

The Theatrical Inquisitor was shocked and said so in good round terms:

"If public contempt be a competent monitor, Mr. BEAZLEY must soon learn to retire from the path of adaptation which has already evinced his desperate courage and undrooping imbecility..... Mr. BEAZLEY has no further object to realize or endowment to earn, for his serious pieces have already exhausted the copious store of abhorrence, castigation and disgrace."

Critics didn't mince words in those days. <sup>ps</sup>Dr. White has (2) already pointed out, however, the play had many real excellences of tense drama, elaborate splendour of scene and impressive climax; and though I think Beazley was after all a better architect than he was a playwright, (3) I am inclined to agree that for unity and intensity of plot this drama could hardly be improved. With the great Macready as Front de Boeuf, it played for eighteen nights, which was then a rather successful run.

On the same evening of March 2nd, the other great theatre, Drury Lane, brought forward The Hebrew, a blank verse drama of five acts, by George Soane, which ran true to the Soane tradition of at least one startling alteration. In this case it was the omission of Rowena and making

(1) March 1820.

(2) Op.cit. 109.

(3) He built the Lyceum, St. James and City of London Theatres as well as others in Dublin, India and Brazil. - D.N.B.

Ivanhoe and Rebecca lovers. Apart from this, and the obvious omission of the tournament at Ashby, the story is fairly faithful to the original. Few did Soane's play the justice which it seems to me to deserve. It scarcely managed to attain a hearing at Drury Lane and was bundled off after a lingering existence of eight nights. The Theatrical Inquisitor <sup>(1)</sup> thought its innovations "trite feeble and absurd", and the Literary Gazette <sup>(2)</sup> did not hesitate to call it "a sad hotch-potch," and continues contemptuously:

"By the most perverse ingenuity every fine and striking feature in Ivanhoe is avoided during the first three acts; the main business is kept quite out of sight. All that Scott had tried to do by way of illustrating to his readers the manners and customs of the age of Coeur-de-Leon Soane and his producers contrives to annihilate. Anachronisms and absurdities abound. We have Jews shaking hands not only with Christian knights, but hugging the Grand Master of the Templars, who, above all mankind, abhorred the race; we have the Jew's wife inhabiting a tomb in a Christian burial ground cheek by jowl with monumental crosses in the abbey precincts; and bebies of nuns singing Jubilate Deos in the halls of the Templars where no woman was admitted on pain of death - a fact distinctly before the audience, too, for Rebecca is condemned upon it; we have clocks regularly striking the hours of the eleventh century; in short every species of folly in scenery and character. And this for no other purpose, apparently, than to give Kean as Isaac of York the only prominent part in the drama. He beards armed knights; he outrages every custom of the age and every natural probability; goes mad, recovers his wits, plays King Lear in a Gaberdine, and, we believe, dies of joy when his daughter is rescued and married to Ivanhoe!"

Even granting the essential truth of this heavy-handed criticism, that Soane's drama abounds with absurdities,

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(1) March 1820

(2) March 4th. 1820.

and pointing out as our own contribution the circumstance of Rebecca being in Act I toasted at Cedric's table by Prior, Aymer and Sir Brian, it is plain that he did aspire above the scissors-and-paste-pot method of writing. He selected one incident, the trial of Rebecca by combat, which seemed to him the most interesting and dramatic in the story, and upon this he built his play. But although he was careful to announce that it was founded only on an incident in the novel, he was forced by his unfortunate choice of the five act form to transpose and use many of the other incidents leading up to his climax. Soane was neither dramatist nor poet enough to give life to these alterations of his, and though they read well enough, it is easy to see that they could only bewilder and disappoint an audience. His characterization, too, was very weak and faulty. Apart altogether from the love of Ivanhoe and Rebecca which was in itself a grave error, he has made Isaac quite a different person, a benevolent, imaginative and highly strung man who on learning of his daughter's danger does not hasten at once to seek a champion for her, but broods himself into madness over the tomb of his wife. The Templar, also is made less barbarous and ferocious than he seemed in Scott's picture. There are, nevertheless, several telling scenes, brilliant passages and an occasional flash of genuine artistry. The denunciation of Bois Guilbert by Isaac in the first act when the oak branch bursts through the window of the cell, rings with the

strong sense of injustice which raised the Jew's abject and even sordid figure fairly to tower over his oppressor. Again, when Isaac is triumphing over his wounded tyrant and his better nature slowly turns malice to pity, Soane really excels himself. The mad-scene of Isaac at the beginning of the fifth act, is not so effectively done, but his last words to his compassionate niece are full of genuine understanding:

"Miriam, I love you dearly - but you are not my daughter."

In the prologue to the play one R. Barlowe, Esq. asked hopefully

"If from the dull compiler's dull mechanic ways,  
He fearless turns, will you withhold your praise?"(1)

In effect both audiences and critics chorussed YES! and went their way. But let old Soane have at least the credit of manfully living up to his dramatic convictions. There were many more after him who failed quite as completely to realize that poetic drama was dead as the dodo.

Ivanhoe did not reach Edinburgh until the spring of 1823, when it was played for Miss Halford's benefit on May 19th. The bills announced that it was the play from Covent Garden, and the Dramatic Review remarked that though it was generally understood that Calcraft had already made

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(1) Included in the 1820 edition.

a version, the manager probably had good reason to prefer the London play. Calcraft's piece was definitely never produced in Edinburgh, though curiously enough it seems to have been published by John Anderson, Jr. in an obscure series of 12 no. paper-covered plays, called The Edinburgh Select British Theatre.<sup>(1)</sup> According to The Theatrical Observer,<sup>(2)</sup> some parts of Calcraft's transcript were combined by Murray with parts of Beazley's and Dibdin's to construct Ivanhoe; or The Knights of the Temple, which was produced with considerable success at the Theatre-Royal, November 24th 1823. Murray's play, like most of the others, begins at Cedric's castle where Ivanhoe, Isaac and the Normans are skilfully introduced. The first act ends as usual, with the tournament at Ashby. Murray followed Beazley in keeping King Richard completely out of sight and giving much of his part to Ivanhoe himself. In the second act Wamba takes refuge with Robin Hood and we learn that Cedric and Rowena with the Jew and his daughter have been carried off to Torquilstone by Normans in the service of Front de Boeuf

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(1) The only volume of Anderson's series that I have seen is preserved in the Lord Chamberlain's collection. It is No. 13, the Surrey Redgauntlet, which Murray used for his adaptation of that novel. In the list of previous numbers are Ivanhoe and St. Ronan's Well by Calcraft, Murray's Nigel and an anonymous Pirate, which I have not been able to trace.

(2) November 25th 1823.

Ivanhoe joins Robin Hood and they set out to the rescue. Wamba and Cedric ring the changes, and the castle is stormed. Much is made, of course, of the tense scene in which Rebecca defies her oppressor in the turret room and the interview (1) of the bull-headed Sir Reginald and the persecuted Isaac. The act closes with the burning of the castle while Brian escapes with Rebecca. The last act opens with the trial and condemnation of the Jewish maid. Ivanhoe arrives at last as her champion and in the trial by battle he slays the wicked Templar. Rebecca is restored to her father while Ivanhoe, presumably, is united to the fair Rowena.

Though they appreciated the magnificent style in which the piece was got up, the Edinburgh critics did not consider it a really good drama. One wrote flatly that to say it deserved to be a standing play would be absurd; (2) another observed that the warp was too good for the woof, - "the continuous splendour of the scenery deadened all sense of the beauty and dignity of the sentiment [and] the plot occupied too much ground." (3)

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(1) This scene The Dramatic Review (December 2nd 1823) thought scarcely surpassed in sublimity by anything in Shakespeare.

(2) Theatrical Observer November 25th. 1823.

(3) Dramatic Review December 31st. 1823.

Ivanhoe nevertheless proved rather a hit. It reached a total of seventeen nights on its first run, and was frequently revived during the next ten or fifteen years.

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- (1) We have already looked at so many versions of this story that it seems hardly necessary to mention by name the various late versions, operas, and travesties which swell the list in the appendix. Two exceptions, however, may be made. The first is a mangled, yet, somehow rather skilful adaptation by Rolphino Lacy of the Odeon version which Scott witnessed in Paris and commented upon in his Journal, October 1st 1826 (quoted by Lochart IX.26). Well might he call it nonsense, for but for the name, one might find it difficult to recognise old friends. Lacy restored a good deal of the omissions in the Odeon version and it was produced with Rossini music at Covent Garden March 7th 1829. The other is an equestrian spectacle at Astley's Royal Ampitheatre March 27th 1837, in which the incidents were well adapted to the capabilities of M. Ducrow's establishment. It presented a most exciting and pleasing series of tournaments, processions and stirring scenes, and each act terminated with a living picture of beauty and splendour. It was highly successful. (See The Literary Gazette, April 1st, 1837).

KENILWORTH.

Besides offering the playwright much opportunity for pageantry and splendour, this story had two other elements to assure its popularity on the stage. The first was the strong central figure of Good Queen Bess, who served to "place" the action even for the most ignorant spectators, and the second an appealing yet simple and well-connected story. As a matter of fact the plays of Kenilworth were at the time nearly as popular in England as Rob Roy had been in Scotland, though it must be said at once that they had nothing of Rob's sustained magic.

(1)

Tom Dibdin is probably quite truthful when he says that he had his version for the Surrey completed as early as the 28th of January 1821, but that through the vacillation of Elliston, who had wished to purchase it for Drury Lane, he had the "inexpressible mortification" of being outrun by J. Robinson Planché at the Adelphi. Planché did not bow to the gods of sentimental comedy, but "ventured" to retain the tragic ending of the novel without alteration.

(2)

Kenilworth was never published and I have not found anything to speak of in the journals of the time, but the manuscript, I may mention, is preserved in the Larpent collection.

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1894. (1) Reminiscences II. p. 89-91.

(2) J.R. Planché: Recollections and Reflections: I. 43.

Tom Dibdin had, however, the <sup>doubtful</sup> satisfaction of seeing his version become the standard text and benefit everyone concerned in its production except himself. (1) Negotiations with Manager Elliston having fallen through, he produced his play, after all, at the Surrey on St. Valentine's Day, 1821, under the title of Elizabeth and Essex; or The Days of Good Queen Bess. A week later this was altered, probably to take fuller advantage of the novel's fame and popularity, to Kenilworth; or The Countess of Essex. It was successful during the short remainder of the Surrey season, when it seems to have been transferred in a more or less altered and compressed form to Covent Garden on March 8th. (2) Dibdin does not mention the circumstances at all, but it seems evident that Alfred Bunn saw in the Queen an ideal part for his wife, who did in fact make the character peculiarly her own for many years. Dibdin's play, as altered by Bunn, however, was a failure. (3)

"After repeated announcements," said the London, "Kenilworth has made its appearance for the first and most probably the last time. (4) It met with a most frigid reception from the audience, notwithstanding the fascinating announcement in the playbill 'Grand view of the mechanical staircase in Cummor Hall'."

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(1) Op.cit. II. 192.

(2) It had been announced early in the year that Daniel Terry was dramatizing Kenilworth for Covent Garden, but whether or not he actually did, the version was never produced. (See London Magazine February 1821, p.194).

(3) April 1821. p.408.

(4) As a matter of fact, it ran five times between the 8th and 17th when it was finally withdrawn.

The play was published soon afterwards in its mutilated  
 (1)  
 form with a preface explaining that the compression had  
 been considered necessary at Covent Garden where long plays  
 were thought to be dull! The huddling of the action into  
 (2)  
 an impossibly small compass, which Genest advances as the  
 principal cause of its failure, is clearly evident in print.  
 Little opportunity occurs for characterization or even  
 emphasis as the story is rushed forward from Amy's incarceration  
 in Cumnor Hall to the scenes at Kenilworth and back  
 to Cumnor, where not she, but the villainous Varney, steps  
 (3)  
 upon the fatal trap and is hurled to death.

Mrs. Bunn had made, nevertheless, rather a hit as the  
Queen, and Dibdin was asked by Charlton, of Bath, not only  
 for a copy of his original version but even for the loan  
 of some of the Surrey costumes for use at a revival in his  
 theatre for her express benefit. William Dimond, the  
 fertile adaptor who had already had a hand in the Midlothian  
 plays, was apparently at the bottom of the scheme, and his  
 version, which seems to have been only Dibdin's with a good  
 deal of added pageantry, proved so successful in Bath,  
 (where it was lavishly produced that Genest thought it  
 "the grandest spectacle ever exhibited at a provincial

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(1) Dibdin says somewhere that it was not his custom ever  
 to publish on his own account (II.p.351) (op.cit.)

(2) Op.cit. IX. 107. 172. 232.

(3) In the Cumberland edition of the play there is a picture  
 of this scene. It looks very effective.

theatre") and in Dublin (where Harris, also, had received the author's permission to produce it) that Mrs. Bunn calmly took possession, and played it at a number of other provincial theatres contrary to the original agreement.(2)

So much Dibdin could endure, but when he was told in confidence that it was substantially his play that Bunn was announcing for production at Drury Lane in January 1824, he protested strongly both to Bunn, who gave little satisfaction and to the London newspapers which supported him strongly.<sup>(3)</sup>

The play was duly presented on January 5th. but it was thought to be far too long, and sufficient cuts were made next evening to make an hour's difference in the playing. By this time, however, not only Kenilworth but the other Waverley tales as well were no longer a novelty to London audiences. The Drury Lane offering was only mildly successful, though a great deal must have been spent upon it. Mrs. Bunn's dress, for instance, was designed from drawings by Isaac Oliver, the Queen's own painter, and is said to have

- (1) Op.cit. IX. 403. Genest, of course, was a citizen of Bath. It ran in Bath from December to February 1822. (Dibdin's Reminiscences II. 301. )
- (2) She appeared in this play at Edinburgh for a week beginning July 2nd. 1822, but the concluding pageant which was one of the features of the Bath production, was not, apparently, represented.
- (3) The story of the whole dispute is given in Dibdin's Reminiscences II. 301 f.

cost £420, a big item in those days. )1) The only differences to be noted from the Dimond rendering of Dibdin's play are the exclusion of Wayland Smith and Dicky Sludge, and a few variations in the wording. Here and there the unskilful hand of the reviewer shows itself in the repetition of such expressions as "Foul as hell", "false as hell", and in making one lady express a pious hope of "future bliss hereafter". The pageant at the end was called "stupid" and "a complete excrescence" by the critics, but the play, with (2) all its faults, did moderately well.

I have spent all this time in discussing Dibdin's play, because I do not think it has been generally understood how much his version was used by other men. In his correspondence with Bunn in 1823, (3) it comes to light that a pirated edition of his play, as performed in Bath - and a dozen other theatres, Bunn might have added! - had been printed in Edinburgh. We scarcely need the evidence of the title Kenilworth, or The Merry Days of Old England, (the name under which Dibdin's play was performed in (4) Edinburgh) to be sure that this is none other than the (5) edition published in 1822 by J.L. Huie, listed by my predecessors as a rather mysterious, but entirely separate

(1) See The Drama, January 1824.

(2) Theatrical Observer, January 6th 1824. Literary Gazette January 10th 1824.

(3) Quoted in Reminiscences, II. p.302.

(4) J.C.Dibdin's Annals of The Edinburgh Stage p.299.

(5) The Publisher of The Dramatic Review and a number of other Waverley Dramas.

version. The play published, and seemingly written, by William Oxberry in 1824 was also compiled from Dibdin's play as published by Huie, parts of others acted in London, assisted by the pens of two leading dramatists and a great literary character of Edinburgh.<sup>(1)</sup> Since, however, the text includes an account of the pageant at the end, and but for a very few minor adjustments in arrangement, scenery and dialogue, is identical with Huie's pirated edition, we may term it, at most, merely another arrangement of Dibdin. Oxberry, it is true, included the cast of the Drury Lane production, but he surely made it clear that his was not intended to be taken for a text of that play. Dr. White, however, thought that this further complicated the subject and quotes a contradiction by Genest.<sup>(2)</sup> There was also a revival of the Dibdin-Diamond-Bunn Kenilworth of 1824 at Drury Lane October 22nd 1832,<sup>(3)</sup> and what seems from the title to have been a revival of the Bath production at Astley's Royal Amphitheatre March 8th 1847.

At the Caledonian in Edinburgh, Dibdin's play, in one form or another, seems to have been used in at least two of the three versions I have traced there.

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- (1) Advertisement to published text. White (op.cit.29) toys with the suggestion that this may be Scott, but I should doubt this.
- (2) Op.cit. 129.
- (3) See Theatrical Observer 23rd October 1832.

The first was produced on December 3rd 1821, under the direction of Mason. Details are completely lacking, but this may possibly have been Planché's or the Olympic transcript, for in a criticism of another Kenilworth play, three years later, the Dramatic Review <sup>(1)</sup> seems vaguely to hint that a play having a tragic ending had been enacted at that theatre. Another, called Elizabeth, and quite as obscure, was played on June 26th 1824, and on no other occasion that I can discover. Perhaps the most popular one was produced on March 19th 1825. It was ascribed to Corbett Ryder, the manager, and mentioned as "a new version prepared especially for the Caledonian." The Dramatic Review reported that it was enthusiastically received by an overflowing house. "There is much ingenuity in conducting the plot, and the incidents are extremely well selected; but the piece is rather long, and like its predecessor, heavy. Wayland Smith and Flibbertigibbit have been very happily introduced, but by making Tony Foster an honest man, he

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(1) March 21st 1825.

loses his character. This is for the sake of a fortunate  
 (1)  
 conclusion."

There are three more variations of Kenilworth worth our brief consideration before 1850, a ballet and two closet dramas which do not seem ever to have reached the stage. Although a tragic ballet on this theme had been composed by G. Galzerani and played between the acts of Annibale in Britinia at Bologna in the spring of 1823, English audience saw one first at the King's in 1831. This ballet by M. Deshayes and Michael Costa was repeated at Covent Garden in 1833. Rather as a curiosity than an essential part of our discussion, the notice of the

(2)  
Literary Gazette is interesting:

"It is indeed a droll thing to see toe-pointing, heel-kicking, whirling, skipping, balancing, employed to express love, loyalty, gratulation, welcome and apprehension. The Earl of Leicester of our conception is a haughty politic nobleman, - almost a match for the Queen herself. When therefore he

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(1) Ibid. Apparently founded in turn upon Ryder's version was Tilbury Fort, or The Days of Good Queen Bess, "artfully rechristened" for the production at Gravesend in 1829, by Edward Stirling (See Stirling Old Drury Lane I.69). This melodrama was one of Stirling's earlier productions; he was chiefly noted in later years as the dramatizer of a dozen or more of Charles Dickens stories. Another unimportant piece was an equestrian spectacle at the Theatre-Royal, Liverpool, in 1838. Queen Elizabeth: or The Princely sports at Kenilworth, was played for the benefit of the Master of Horse, and was probably another revised version of Dibdin's piece.

(2) February 16th 1833.

comes bounding and hopping in, we experience a shock of surprise, but when he treats her majesty to a pas seul it becomes beyond measure ludicrous. There is the gallant and haughty earl with his gartered knee and starred breast, swinging away like a bad politician, first on one side and then on the other; now poking a pump almost in Elizabeth's wondering face, and now astonishing her with a statesmanlike salutation up to the moon..... The poor Queen seemed perfectly bewildered." The splendour of the Queen's landing at Greenwich however, "seemed to reconcile the audience to every anomaly."

\* Samuel Heath wrote in the preface to The Earl of Leicester in 1843: "My aim has been to avoid a close resemblance; but with the object I had in view, it would have been folly not to have made use of the tale when it suited my purpose." Considerable alterations appear in Heath's five acts. Elizabeth becomes the key character. Amy dies of poison which she is taunted into taking by Varney, who then stabs himself rather than face the vengeance of Leicester.

Another closet drama not previously recognized as derived from Kenilworth is Cumnor Hall, or The Bugle Horn, by Elijah Barnwell Impey, published as the preface states "solely at the Author's expense", in 1820. It is curious rather than important, for it was obviously never intended for the stage. The most amazing thing is that Impey has contrived to give a rather good presentation of the essential story of Kenilworth without violating the unities of time, place or action! All the action takes place at Cumnor Hall in the space of a single night. Tresselian comes with a pleading note from Amy's father,

and is imprisoned by Varney, who begins to plot how he may be revenged upon Leicester. His plan succeeds, and having with Iago-like ingenuity given the nobleman to believe that the two are still lovers, he releases Tressilian and directs him to Amy's chamber under the impression that Leicester is there, and, at the same time, sends his master rushing back just in time to see the young man enter. Leicester confronts him and demands an immediate settlement. As they draw their swords they are stopped by Amy, but merely postpone the duel. Varney insults the countess and to avoid the ire of Leicester determines that she too must die. He therefore releases the trap in the secret passage used by Leicester, as the fight begins outside. Tressilian is wounded and as he is dying the soft note of a bugle is heard, simulating Leicester's usual signal, followed by a tremendous crash and silence. Varney meets death on Lamborn's sword, but his evil work is done. The play ends with Lamborn's ironic words to the dazed and repentant Leicester

"Why, how now?  
Dost slumber? Good luck have thou in thy dreams  
But up! Awake! Thou would be king. Set forth -  
To horse! And feast the Queen at Kenilworth!  
I would not own a heart so ill at rest,  
For all the stars and ermine on thy vest."

Impey's play is cast in the conventional five act blank verse form. The first four acts have nine to eleven scenes each, and the last act has no fewer than nineteen. Only the acts, however, are given any definite setting, and the scenes change often without the curtain falling or the actors leaving the stage, as they change in the

Classical Tragedy of France. Considering that the original characterization and story, so far as they go, are not distorted out of recognition, I think Impey deserves at least a compliment for his ingenuity.

#### THE PIRATE.

After the courtly splendours of Kenilworth Castle in the days of Good Queen Bess, came this very different tale of the lovely Shetland Islanders against a background of wild storms and rugged crags. The picturesque nature appealed greatly to the playwrights and set them in immediate activity. Once again there was a neck and neck race between Dibdin and Planché, but the former wiped out his late defeat and had his version in actual rehearsal a fortnight after the novel appeared, a whole week ahead of his rival's.

\* The Pirate, or The Wild Woman of Zetland was produced at the Surrey January 7th 1822, with less success perhaps than if the company had been at full strength, but with great credit. <sup>(1)</sup> The great spread of time in the story, the multiplicity of the characters, and the fewness of the incidents made this a difficult novel to dramatize, but by "pirating" as much as he could <sup>(2)</sup> Dibdin managed ingeniously to keep all the essentials; he makes his characters very

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(1) See Dibdin (op.cit II. 212.)

(2) Ibid.

clear, and by adopting as far as possible the original language, succeeds also in recapturing much of the atmosphere of the novel. One critic even thought that Dibdin's drama gave the elements of the story "a wild and terrific interest which in their more dilated form, they do not possess,"<sup>(1)</sup> and another thought it a worthy rival to his renowned Heart of Midlothian three years before.<sup>(2)</sup> The text was published soon afterwards, and it is possible to see how well his shadow, (as he expressed it)<sup>(3)</sup> followed Scott's substance. There are no variations from the story, though a slight re-arrangement is sometimes necessary for compactness.

Planché's Pirate appeared at the Olympic on the 14th January, just a week behind Dibdin's. He also took full advantage of the unfamiliar and romantic scenery of the northern islands to give his play colour and popular appeal.<sup>(4)</sup> The Drama reported that it was very successful, Power's Captain Cleveland being especially conspicuous for merit - "a more perfect portraiture of the gentleman rover"<sup>(5)</sup> could scarcely be presented." The Literary Chronicle

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- (1) Literary Chronicle January 12th 1822.  
 (2) Theatre, II. 206.  
 (3) Op.cit. II. 212.  
 (4) The Drama II. iv. February 1822.  
 (5) January 19th 1822.

thought it quite as interesting as Dibdin's or the Drury Lane piece, which had been produced one night later. After commenting favourably on the acting, it concluded: "The piece promises from the manner in which it was received by a crowded audience to be productive to the managers." Although the piece seems to have been published in an undated edition, no copy seems to be available. The manuscript, however, is in the Larpent collection.

Drury Lane, as we have seen, was not far behind the Minor houses, and brought forward on January 15th. 1822, a version by Will Dimond, with music by W. Rooke. (1) Most of the details of the novel were preserved, but Dimond had determined upon a happy ending for the fair Minna and her pirate, and makes it clear that they are united after his pardon. This piece does not differ greatly from the others except in the exclusion of those richly comic figures Triptolemus Yellowley and his parsimonious sister Miss Baby, who in the other plays, served to relieve the rather sombre tone. Only Bryce Snailsfoot the packman, is left to provide the humour, for the rôle of Claud Halcro seems to have been quite wasted on one Gattie. The rest of the acting, however, was excellent, and the songs, which weremostly from the novel, were very pleasing. The play begins with what

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(1) It is ascribed to Dimond by the Literary Gazette (1822. p.40); the Literary Chronicle, January 19th 1822, however doubts this for unspecified reasons.

the London contemptuously calls the very old trick of dragging a man out of green canvas - that is, the rescue of Captain Cleveland by Mordaunt. The activity of Snailsfoot in securing whatever wreckage "Providence has sent", his caution to Mordaunt that according to the old superstition it was bad business - <sup>to save a drowning man,</sup> ~~bad business~~, and the interference of the mystic Norna to preserve the pirate's property are all retained. The introduction of Cleveland to Magnus Troil does not differ much from the original, except that he is made a rather more engaging person, so as to render more probable his effect upon the heart of Minna. Norna, however, arouses in Mordaunt's mind suspicion of the stranger's motives, and a coldness between the two young men results at length in Mordaunt's being wounded in a duel. Norna takes charge of him, but Cleveland accepts command of a pirate ship offered by the villainous Bunce, and at Kirkwall becomes a hostage for his crew in fulfilment of a compulsory bargain for provisions. From this point, the plot follows the novel. The destruction of the pirate ship, and the discovery that Cleveland is the son of Norna and the half-brother of Mordaunt, the release of Magnus, who had been captured by the rovers - all these are shown in fairly good perspective. The play closes with the pardon of Cleveland and the prospect of a union of the two brothers with Minna and Brenda.

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(1) London Magazine, February 1822.

It seems quite evident that the version of The Pirate first produced in Edinburgh by Johnston of the Caledonian on February 20th 1823, was Planché's only slightly touched up, for it was certainly not a locally written play. (1)  
 The inclusion of Triptolemus in the cast (2) indicates that it was not Dimond's, and the Dramatic Review says "We have read Dibdin's arrangement, - it is also bad, but superior to this one." (3) The Review is of the opinion that although the novel offered the possibilities for an excellent drama that this one was comparatively a failure. "The piece throughout is too heavy, and the comedy scenes are not sufficiently brought forward..... we would advise [the manager] to curtail it at least half an hour, and also omit the disgraceful representation of the sea-fight. A more shameful bungling we never saw exhibited on any stage." (4)  
 The acting, however, struck this critic as excellent.

The Pirate, or The Reimkennar of Zetland produced at the Theatre-Royal Edinburgh on March 29th 1824, may be definitely ascribed to J.W. Calcraft, the author of

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- (1) When it was local, it was thoroughly advertised as such!  
 (2) Playbill.  
 (3) Dramatic Review February 20th 1823.  
 (4) Ibid. February 24th 1823. The version played at the Caledonian under Ryder on March 3rd 1825 was T. Dibdin's. (Annals 343).

The Bride of Lammermoor. So far as I can ascertain, the play was never published, unless it be the same as an anonymous version sub-titled Minna and Brenda, published in Anderson's last edition, and we must depend, therefore, upon contemporary remarks for our information. The Dramatic Review was quite right in its prophecy that it would not attain the popularity it deserved, for it ran only four times in all, and was seldom, if ever, at all revived. The previous day, the same little paper had observed that the profusion of characters rendered all but Norna, Halcro, Snailsfoot and Yellowlees shadowy and unsubstantial, and that as a corollary the plot was far too intricate, faults which apparently were not atoned for by the marked elements of horror, sublimity and broad humour, coupled with appropriate new scenery and remarkably good acting. Obviously Calcraft's play had much to commend it, but it must, nevertheless, be written down a failure in Edinburgh.

#### THE FORTUNES OF NIGEL.

The Fortunes of Nigel is far from being Scott's best novel, and the dramatic versions shared its imperfections. It is quite true that in both there are many flashes of

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(1) See Supra p. 344.

(2) April 1st. 1824.

(3) The only other version of The Pirate is a transcript by Thomas H. Reynoldson, which was licensed for the Grecian in 1844.

humour, and a considerable display of character - but as for the story we may copy the very appropriate motto from the Poetry of the Anti-Jacobin which Scott himself prefixed to the work:

Knifegrinder. Story? Lord bless you! I have none to tell, sir.

Although, as we shall see, the drama of King Jamie and George Heriot found its true public in Scotland, English audiences were for a time fairly cordial, and two versions were brought out in London.

Once again the Surrey theatre had a version ready within three weeks' of the novel's publication - but it was not Dibdin's. Overwhelmed by bad luck and debt he had thrown up the management of the theatre in Blackfriars Road and was that season writing for the Haymarket. The Fortunes of Nigel, or King James First and His Times, produced on June 25th 1822, was by Edward Fitzball, the first of some half a dozen Scott dramatizations among his teeming productions of all sorts. "Dibdin could dramatize a novel in a day or two," said Fitzball years later. "I was compelled to take a week."<sup>(2)</sup> The play was a complete success, having a run of ninety-six consecutive nights, and bringing

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(1) His real name was Ball. See his Autobiography cited infra p. \*

(2) Fitzball op.cit. I. 89.

in a large sum to the treasury. (1) Fitzball was commended for his "freshness of style", and owed to this piece his entrée to Covent Garden Theatre. (2)

\* The Fitzball play follows the novel rather closely and the various scenes are arranged so as to work up to a good climax in each of the three acts. The first act opens with wounding of Richie Monoplies and ends when Nigel, having drawn upon Dalgarno in the king's own park, flies to the Rogue's Sanctuary in the Temple, known as "Alsatia". Here in the second act, he tries to borrow money from Old Trapbois on the strength of King James' promise backed by his pledge of the Crown jewels. The wily old Hebrew, however, refuses and himself steals the pledge from Nigel's pocket. Shortly afterwards old Trapbois is murdered by robbers while counting over his gold. Nigel kills one of the intruders, but the rest escape into the night. There is lots of action in the last act. Nigel escapes from this dangerous sanctuary, while Margaret Ramsay, disguised as a page, succeeds in getting him a pardon from the king. Nevertheless, he is once again arrested, and again released, through the exertions of the faithful Richie. Lord Dalgarno, who has meanwhile run off with the wife of honest John

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(1) Ibid 94.

(2) Ibid 103.

Christie, is caught and condemned to die, and to end the play with a good-natured roar of laughter Richie Monoplies leads in his bride - the somewhat ill-favoured but amiable heiress, Martha Trapbois.

The Literary Chronicle thought the piece skilful, and "exceedingly well got up. The scenery is good, and the dresses appropriate..... We must observe that the dramatist has avoided one of the sins of the author, and not made the king swearing by his 'royal saul', or using that unseemly language which forms a permanent objection to the romance." (1)

Evidently we must thank the dramas for purifying Scott!

It seems clear that Daniel Terry had, after all, written a drama on this subject for the Haymarket, but it was for some reason held in abeyance until the Surrey had beaten them to it, and then, apparently, never produced at all. (2) Thus, Fitzball's successful piece at the Surrey had no rival for nearly six months, - after the first enthusiasm had died down. On the 28th January 1823, a rather ill-starred blank verse drama called Nigel; or the Crown Jewels appeared at Drury Lane. This play had been written for Manager Charles Kemble by Isaac Pocock, whose Rob Roy had been so successful a few years before.

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(1) June 29th 1822.

(2) Literary Gazette July 20th 1822. There is some evidence that Drury Lane thought of using Terry's play, but decided on Pocock's instead.

Most of the contemporary prints damned it at once, and though White is not quite correct in his statement that it ran only one night, <sup>(1)</sup> it was definitely a failure.

The plot, though based upon the novel, departs from it in many details. Dalgarno is the chief figure, and his tools are Scourlie "a Scrivener, an exceeding knave" and Capt. Colepepper "a cowardly Bully". <sup>(2)</sup> Both Scourlie and Dalgarno have conceived a passion for Margaret, Heriot's niece. Her preference for Nigel and the circumstance of his being assisted by the king are considerations which make Dalgarno hate the young Scotsman. Nigel, as in the novel, draws his sword in the royal park, (Pocock makes it in the rescue of Margaret from an attempt of Dalgarno to carry her off) and is forced to take refuge at the house of Trapbois in Alsatia. To prevent Nigel from redeeming his estates, pledged nominally to Scourlie, Dalgarno breaks into Trapbois' house with Peppercole to seize and secrete the jewels. He accidentally strangles the old usurer in an attempt to gag him with his scarf, and though wounded by Nigel, escapes with his plunder. The play now deviates still more wildly from the track of the novel. Dalgarno, next morning, has Nigel charged with the murder of his host -

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(1) It had six performances in the first two weeks.

(2) These quotations are from the cast in the published version, 1823.

a charge which is to some degree corroborated by the failure of the daughter to appear. The mortgage is due that day, also, but a few minutes before the time is up, Strappit, a comic barber, appears and pays the money. Nigel is brought from the Tower and examined by the king as a boon claimed by Margaret who had sung before him, disguised as a page. Nigel is in grave difficulties still, but Scourlie promises to get him free in return for Margaret's hand. She is about to make the sacrifice when Martha Trapbois arrives with the money she has been away to obtain. Dalgarno is proved guilty by his wound and by the scarf (how very weak!), and Virtue once again is triumphant.

One of the curiosities of the play was a prologue in which appeared a masked author, who was not after all so mysterious, for he says

"I throw me on your honour then: you'll not  
Betray me now - my name is \*\*\*\*\*"

He goes on to explain thus the divergence from the original story:

.... this Novel, you will find had not  
Like some before it, a theatric plot.  
Be not displeas'd then, pray you, nor surpriz'd,  
If, for a Novel, closely dramatiz'd,  
You find a plain old-fashioned Play before ye,  
With the old freedom varying from the story,  
And following only one great rule and measure,  
The aim to give a gentle audience pleasure.

The first appearance of the play in Edinburgh was on February 6th, 1823, when a new version by Murray was brought forward at the Theatre-Royal, under the very canny title of George Heriot, or The Crown Jewels. I judge that

Fitzball provided the groundwork for Murray's transcript, but the death of old Trapbois at the hands of Dalgarno himself is a deviation, quite evidently from the Pocock text. Besides, Murray has made very prominent the character of George Heriot, the goldsmith whose philanthropy had done so much for the poor boys of Edinburgh. In the first act he is made to seek out Nigel, his fellow-countrymen, and the Scottish audience roared their approval as he thus concluded the act:

"My fortune shall never want inheritors  
while there are orphan lads in Auld Reekie."

In the second act we meet King Jamie, 'the wisest fool in Christendom' who at last acknowledges Nigel's claim, and pledges the crown jewels to Heriot, as in the novel. The act ends with the quarrel of Dalgarno and Nigel, and the latter's escape from the guards. The third act concerns Nigel's adventures in Alsatia, with the deviation already mentioned; and the fourth is entirely taken up with the laughable meeting of Nigel with the king in Greenwich Park and the adventures of Margaret in page's dress, (the scene in the tower is wisely omitted) and finally the recovery of the jewels and the announcement that Dalgarno is to marry Hermione. Murray's imagination was rather put to it for material to furnish out his fifth act, but he succeeds by dint of some original ideas. Dalgarno's tool Skirliewhitier kidnaps Margaret, but nemesis is at hand, in the person of the defrauded Colepepper who shoots Dalgarno dead. The last scene shows the foolish King

Jemmy uniting the hands of Nigel and Margaret and the amusing ceremony of dubbing the raw-boned Monoplies, Sir Richard.

The acting on the whole was excellent, and the scenery and costumes very effective. It was the national feeling that gripped the audiences however, and George Heriot, though it never reached the popularity of Rob Roy or Midlothian, not only enjoyed a good success on its first run, but took a place in the permanent repertory of the Theatre-Royal.<sup>(1)</sup>

In 1823 also a Nigel play was being done on the Northern circuit. While it is unlikely that a totally new version was in use, Corbett Ryder was rather a successful adaptor and had probably done much as Murray had, also using, I expect, Fitzball's as a basis.<sup>(2)</sup>

#### WAVERLEY.

I do not profess to understand why it was that during the height of the popularity of Scott's novels on the stage, no one adapted this, the first and - by name, at any rate - the best known of them all. The

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- e.g. In 1824 it played four times, while
- (1) The Heart of Midlothian played five, Rob Roy four and The Bride of Lammermoor three times.
- (2) Op.cit.169. The only other version, seemingly, is a serious play King o' Scots by that irrepressible writer of burlesques, Andrew Halliday, or Duff, at Drury Lane in September 1868, written, White says: "in honour of the Centenary of the birth of Scott"!!

fact remains that although Waverley was published in 1814, it was not taken to the theatre until 1822. Dr. White suggests that the Highland pageantry attending the king's visit to Edinburgh (he says by some unaccountable error, to Liverpool!) in that year reminded the people of several scenes in Waverley and that Ryder followed the suggestion a year later. Apart from the fact that the comparison with Waverley was Lochart's, and expressed some fifteen years later, the remark is a trifle jejune, for there was already no lack of Highland enthusiasm in Edinburgh after Rob Roy. He is correct enough in saying that Corbett Ryder produced the first transcript of Waverley, however, except that it was at Perth on October 18th 1822. I have no doubt that Waverley, or The <sup>(1)</sup> Forty-five "a serio-comic melodrama", which he brought forward at the Caledonian in Edinburgh on the following 19th of July was the same transcript. It was not, however, successful. The Dramatic Review was "highly disappointed" for although it was "amusing here and there, especially in the scenes with the Baillie..... the want of plot and connection throughout renders it, on the whole, dull." <sup>(2)</sup> The Theatrical Observer was more definite, remarking that it was a "futile attempt" utterly devoid of interest,

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(1) Advertisement in the Theatrical Observer July 19th 1825.

(2) July 21st 1823.

for what there is loses itself at once in the unconnected matter which follows. To illustrate what it termed the "total want of keeping and dependence throughout" this paper says that at the close of the scene when Waverley flies at the smith who had wantonly attacked him, he is represented as carried off by the infuriated rabble; yet at the opening of the following scene we find him in the presence of Prince Charlie without the smallest hint from action or dialogue how he escaped and arrived at Holywood. On the other hand, concluded the Observer, many beautiful incidents in the novel are entirely overlooked, which not only would have supplied these deficiencies, but produced considerable effect of their own. (1)

The play did not catch the fancy of Edinburgh though it was occasionally played on the Northern circuit during Ryder's management. For another year Waverley lay waiting for a dramatist. Then, curiously enough, three pairs of hands reached for it at the same time, - those of Fitzball, an Unknown, and Calcraft of Edinburgh. The anonymous version was duly licensed in April 1824 for performance at Covent Garden, but I find no record whatever of its production.

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(1) July 22nd 1823.

White states that Fitzball's Waverley: or 'Tis Sixty Years Since was produced at the Coburg on March 8th as well as the Adelphi on March 11th. I have no hesitation in declaring this an error, for not only does Fitz himself fail to mention such a thing, but there is no record in any of the papers, though several gave a paragraph to the Coburg. At the Adelphi, however, it had only moderate success; the vogue for red-kneed Highlanders had begun to wane.

Fitzball, by completely excising the Chevalier and consequently all the Edinburgh pageantry, concentrates on the tragedy of Fergus MacIvor and his sister. He was keen enough to see that not in the "hero", but in the people with whom he came in contact, lay the interest of the book, and his play therefore is really only a series of more or less connected scenes showing Edward against the rich and varied backgrounds of the Highlands. The early success of the rebel army and their sad retreat to the fatal Moor of Culloden are wisely compressed into a single skirmish, which may strike the novel-reader as odd, but which proves quite sufficient in the play. Fitzball believed also, in plenty of humour, and he includes some of the broader passages of the tale, especially the pranks of Davie Gallatley, with good effect.

The play begins with Waverley's visit to Bradwardine, but the second scene takes us for a moment to the lair of Donald Bean Lean in the Highlands, where the robbers learn from Fergus that the Chevalier has landed. The

remainder of the first act describes the manner of Waverley's invitation to visit the home of Fergus, and ends with the comic encounter at Luckie Macleary's change-house. The second act is concerned with the plot of Bean Lean to force Waverley's hand, by sending a note to his colonel. The plot is successful and Waverley learns that he has been superseded in the regiment as one suspected of treasonable sentiments. He declares the love which he has begun to feel for Flora, but she is too full of The Cause to return his passion. The climax is the entry of Waverley to a grand banquet of the Jacobite chiefs, (among whom we see dear old Baron Bradwardine) in full Highland dress, so implying that he had thrown in his lot with theirs. Fergus in return, wishes to bestow his sister's hand upon Waverley, and their quarrel, much compressed yet fully developed, forms the beginning of the third act. As they are about to draw, the Baron prevents them. At once there is an alarm off-stage, - the Highlanders have engaged in a skirmish with the red-coats. Balmawhipple and the Baillie dash in and take refuge in an old mill. Davie sets the place a-fire and the two heroes come rushing out again covered with flour. Waverley rescues his late commander, Colonel Talbot, from his pursuers, and Donald staggers in, conveniently enough, to confess his plot with his dying breath. The ghastly grey spectre, the Bodak Glas rises on the ridge before Fergus and warns him of the morrow. As it disappears, the English overpower the Highlanders.

Three short scenes show the escape of Waverley with Rose's help, the artful Davie stealing provisions for the Baron, who is in hiding in his own mansion, and Waverley's re-appearance at Tully Veolan with official protection. The last interview of Fergus and his sister forms the fifth scene, and the play ends in the Courtyard of Stirling Castle. A flight of steps at the back leads to the scaffold. Waverley is saying goodbye to Fergus when Flora's voice is heard. Fergus turns and goes firmly up the steps, and as he passes out of sight, Flora rushes in supported by Rose and the Baron. As a roll of drums announce that the axe has fallen, she raises a dagger, but a priest quickly calls her attention to the crossed hilt, on which she fixes her eyes, torpidly, but devoutly. The dagger falls from her hand, and "she sinks into the arms of the other characters to form a fine affecting picture."

Calcraft's treatment is totally different, though Dr. White seems to believe that he did little more than make Fitzball's version more tedious by lengthening the speeches, cutting out the odd pranks of Davie, and adding one or two spectacular processions.

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(1) White op.cit. 171. I hope I am not doing Dr. White an injustice, but at times it is difficult not to suspect him of bluffing a bit.

Calcraft, it is true, also brings his play to an end with the death of Fergus, but this is, after all, the obvious climax. The point is that he chose from the novel a different set of incidents leading up to it, emphasising, as befitted a "National Drama", the more characteristically Scottish scenes and incidents. His first act opens, like Fitzball's, with the arrival of Waverley at Tully-Veolan, and ends with the fracas at Mrs. Macleary's before he sets out with Evan Dhu to visit Fergus. The omission of his adventures in the case of Donald Bean Lean is perhaps justifiable, but it was rather a shock to the Dramatic Review to find him "all at once in the house of Fergus M'Ivor, hand in glove with that gentleman, calling him his 'dear Fergus', making love to his sister, and fully initiated in all the mysteries of conspiracy and rebellion." (1) The hiatus disappears, however, when Waverley's first soliloquy is taken into account. At any rate, the young Englishman, having learned that he has been superseded in his regiment, determines to make his way to England to clear his name. Fergus warns him how dangerous a course this is, and sends Calum Beg as his guide. As in the novel, he is captured, but rescued on the way to Stirling by the wily Calum. The adventures which then befell him

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(1) May 22nd 1824.

in the tale are rightly enough passed over, so that we find him next at Holyrood where he is so impressed by the Chevalier that he decides at last to support his cause, and the third act ends with the grand ball in the palace. By the end of the fourth act the army has begun its southward march. The dramatic economy of means by which the author omitted the known facts of its defeat again did not appeal to the Review, but it strikes one as more effective than Fitzball's little skirmish. The adventures of Baron Bradwardine and Rose are also omitted and the climax follows in the next scene. The play ends, of course, with the affecting scenes of Fergus' execution, which are conducted much as in Fitzball's version, except that Flora dies of her emotion.

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- (1) Calcraft's piece was not played in London for nine years, but on October 22nd 1932, it was well received at Drury Lane, with Sheridan Knowles' Masque of Scott The Vision of the Bard. It was occasionally revived in Edinburgh at least, for many years. It had one rival at the Theatre-Royal, but for one night only. A play called Waverley, or The Bodak Glas, by someone whose name has not come to light, was produced on March 24th 1831. The Edinburgh Literary Journal, (March 26th 1831) said only that if it were "not damned, it ought to be. We could not sit it out." The Caledonian also tried a "new" version on September 4th 1827, but with what success I do not know. In 1850, another new version appeared at the same house, now, however, under the same management as the Royal and called the Adelphi.

MINOR DRAMATIZATIONS PREVIOUS TO 1823.

For the sake of tracing the careers of the more important <sup>novels,</sup> - more important, that is to say, in a theatrical sense, - it seemed advisable to postpone mention of the plays made from The Antiquary, The Black Dwarf, Old Mortality, The Abbot, and its sequel, The Monastery, all of which were dramatized before 1822, and in many cases within a few months of their publication. Since a definite slackening of interest in the stage versions of the novels is evident after 1822 or 1823, we may at this point take in the slack, so to speak, before going on to discuss the later novels, from Peveril of the Peak to Anne of Geierstein.

Although The Antiquary was the first of the three novels published in 1816, it did not find its way through the stage door until two years later, some time after the Black Dwarf had been re-cast. Following the plan of the earlier part of this section, therefore, the tale of Elshe will be discussed first.

THE BLACK DWARF.

The extant versions of this story afford perhaps the best contrast possible of three different types of dramatization, - the careful following of the original

plot with emphasis on the most spectacular scenes and incidents; the closet drama, often faithful enough to the story, but omitting, theatrically speaking, the most telling parts; and third, the attempt to gain effect by alterations of the plot and characters. Closer examination of the plays will show, I think, that as a general thing, the popular melodrama based firmly on the novel was the best.

The Black Dwarf was dramatized first by an unknown hand, for Astley's Royal Amphitheatre, and brought forward on May 5th 1817, as The Black Dwarf; or The Reiver of Westburn Flat. The fact that details of its production seem lacking indicates clearly enough that it had small success, for although the newspaper critics, as we know, wasted little space on the Minor theatres, a success of any sort usually found mention at last. We are more fortunate with the second version, which was produced at the English Opera House on July 26th.

The Wizard, or The Brown Man of the Moor, seems to have been written by Samuel J. Arnold, a facile and experienced writer of comic operas and melodramas. This, however, was his only dramatization of Scott. The music, freely borrowed from the north, was written or arranged by C.E. Horn. The lyrics of the songs, however, are the most slap-dash sort of trash imaginable. The heroine, for instance, sings on one occasion these incomprehensible words:

Oh yes! A child may bear the heat  
A father's rage confessing.

The following song is worth quoting in full, if only as a horrible example of glittering nonsense:

As smiles when grief demands a tear  
Or joy o'er friendship's early bier  
As hope delayed from year to year,  
So fades the rose.

As spring, when autumn chills the plain  
As beauty flies from age and pain  
Or love when stung with cold disdain  
So fades the rose.

Arnold's chief deviation from the novel was also unfortunate. In an attempt to have the central figure also the romantic hero, he makes the Wizard himself the lover of Isabel Vere instead of the friend of her lover Earnscliffe, who is here relegated to the character of Ratcliffe (1) in the novel. This impossible combination of tenderness and misanthropy obviously destroys all that is natural in the character. The Arnold play, I think may be set down as an artistic failure, though in point of fact the acting and scenery prevented its immediate damnation.

The drama opens with the Elliot family anxiously awaiting the return of Hobbie from deer shooting. As they pass away the time with a glee, they are visited by the

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(1) Apparently the real Earnscliffe has assumed the name of Ratcliffe and lent his own to his friend to shield him from the attention of the uncle who believes himself long rid of him!

Red Reiver, who conducts himself exceedingly like a ruffian, and promises, or rather, warns them that he will be present at the wedding of Grace, who has rejected him for Hobbie. Meanwhile Hobbie and the Wizard, in his other shape as Earnscliff, meet on the moor. Hobbie pretends he is not afraid of bogles, but when his companion goes away and returns as the Brown Man, he is frightened speechless. The plot then proceeds through two long acts, which take in most of the events of the novel, such as the kidnapping of Isabel Vere, the burning of Hobbie's house, the restorations of Isabel and Hobbie's Grace, the shooting of the Wizard's favourite goat, and the various consultations by Hobbie, the ladies, and the Reiver. To all of these scenes, the language of the novel, as far as possible is retained. The denouement, also, is much like the original. Isabel Vere is forced to consent to a midnight marriage with Sir Frederick in order to save her father. The Wizard, however, forbids the ceremony from a tomb, and coming forward, declares who he is. Ellieslaw, confounded and ashamed is spared, however, and gives up the estate and his daughter to his wronged nephew and the man of her heart.

Theatrical Inquisitor for September 1820 reviewed an unpublished play by A.P. Carlyle, called The Recluse, based upon The Black Dwarf, and written in blank verse, not altogether devoid of energy and harmony. It opens, however, with a damning dramatic fault, for the audience is to learn at once that Sir Edward Marsley intends, because of

the tragedy in his life to assume an impenetrable disguise and dwell in the nearby moor, watching over his niece, Isabel Vere, and her lover, young Earnscliffe. Thus - is lost the whole effect of his mysterious power and knowledge, and the sudden dropping of his disguise in the last act. The second scene reveals also the plot of the present Laird of Elleslie to have his daughter kidnapped to make sure of her marriage to Sir Frederick, who holds a power over him. The act ends with the Black Dwarf building his rude hut in the moor.

The events of the second act follow the original very closely. Hobbie's house has been burned by the Red Reiver, and Grace, his sweetheart, carried off. He goes with Earnscliff to demand her release, but much to their surprise the Reiver's captive turns out to be Isabel Vere. The rescuers meet the lady's father, and she has to defend them from blame. We next learn in a short scene that the Recluse has himself rescued Grace. The act ends with the preparations at Ellislaw for the commencement of the rebellion, and the attempt of the intrepid Mareschal to cheer the timid hearts of his companions. The third act contains full details of the blasting of the revolutionaries' hopes by news of the dispersal of the fleet which was to have landed James Stuart, and how Ellislaw tries to secure his own safety by forcing his daughter to marry Sir Frederick. The scene between the mean-souled father and his daughter, torn between love, aversion and loyalty is rather good. Although she does

not visit the Recluse, as in the novel, we learn that he is aware of what has happened and determined to save her. The final scene contains more action than most of the others, and, although it is a pity that we know who the Recluse really is, his dramatic "Forbear!" has considerable effect. Sir Frederick on learning that Isabel is no heiress without Sir Edward's consent, rushes up and stabs him, and is secured, presumably for execution, by Earnscliff and his followers. The dying man then confers all his estates upon the loving couple he has watched over, and the curtain falls.

The chief merit of this play as the Inquisitor duly points out, is its close-knit representation of the story on so small a scale. It has serious faults, nevertheless, for quite apart from the loss of effect at the start, too much is related rather than shown. Examples which immediately occur are the burning of Hobbie's house and the mid-night visit of Isabella to the Dwarf's hut on the moor, of which the audience only hears. On the other hand, the plans and fears of the revolutionaries are related with a careful minuteness that gives them far more than their proper share of the audience's attention.

Let us now look at a two-act play of the same name, written by "a Gentleman of Edinburgh" and licensed for production at the Edinburgh Theatre-Royal in 1825. The fact that it failed need not concern us greatly at the moment. The Recluse is a typical example of the most

successful type of transcripts from Scott, for it takes advantage of the main dramatic features, connects them smoothly and works up toward a rousing climax, occasionally, as in this case, manufacturing a happy ending as a bow to the gods of sentiment.

In this drama Elspie becomes once more the mysterious dwarf of the moor. As the play opens, he is bewailing his lonely lot, and when Isabella and Lucy ask him to tell their fortunes, he does so, promising moreover, to aid her whenever he can. When he is once more alone, he curses himself for a fool, for promising to assist the child of a bitter enemy, which is enough for the audience to know at this stage. The rest of the act makes clear her love for Earnscliff and the reasons for her kidnapping by the order of her own father. Hobbie's house is destroyed and Grace carried off. Directed by the Dwarf to seek in the west, he and Earnscliff set out for Westburn flat, the tower of Hobbie's enemy the Red Reiver, only to rescue not Grace, but Isabel. With this startling surprise the first act ends. The second ends up to the climax with commendable directness. There are nine scenes, each of which contribute something of importance to the plot, omitting very little of the original story. The last scene, of course, is the interruption of the wedding at the very altar. Instead of flying daggers, however, there is a scene of mutual forgiveness, and Sir Edward Manley resumes his proper place in life. This, it strikes me, should have been

very successful on the stage, for so well does the compiler connect his scenes that interest never is allowed to flag. Although one may cavil at the technical clumsiness of two acts and seventeen scenes, it cannot be denied that, granting the writer's purpose to be an exciting and romantic presentation of a popular tale, the attempt is a success. The fact remains, however, that it failed  
(1)  
completely in Edinburgh.

#### THE ANTIQUARY.

The Antiquary, though one of the most popular of the Waverley series, is a good illustration of an excellent novel and a poor play. Scott himself, fond as he was of this story, realized that the plot was not dramatic. "It wants the romance of Waverley," he wrote to Terry, "and the adventure of Guy Mannering;

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- (1) A play, which, from the title, I take to be Arnold's was played at the Caledonian April 13th 1825 for Clifton's benefit - See Advertisement in The Dramatic Review April 13th, 1825. It was repeated several times with some success. The Dramatic Review April 15th, says little about the play but praised the acting of the company. The only other play from The Black Dwarf was a Surrey production on July 16th 1824, called Graeme; or The Wizard of the Moor. Except that it was "effectively got up and decently performed," (Drama, August 1824) I know nothing about it.

and yet there is some salvation about it, for if a man will paint from nature, he will be likely to amuse those who are daily looking at it."<sup>(1)</sup> A novel of character, such as the Antiquary offered a problem too great for the playwrights of the time. Give them enough incidents and they'd turn out a fairly good melodrama, perhaps even managing some efficient characterization. But what were they to do with this one? From the standpoint of stage effect, Edie Ochiltree is the only strong character in the novel. The Antiquary himself was quite beyond their powers, and of the rest there was no one to hold the interest for two scenes in succession. One scarcely wonders then, that for two years, no one attempted to make this novel into a play.

In 1818, however, Isaac Pocock submitted a version at Drury Lane, which ran for exactly one performance. His play, however, formed the groundwork for Dan Terry's second attempt in 1820. In the published text of the play, Scott's friend disclaimed all title but that of Compiler. He explained however that Pocock's play had lacked two of the most successful scenes in the present version, the great storm, and the duel between Lovell and Captain MacIntyre.<sup>(2)</sup> It seems evident, therefore,

(1) Lochart V. 142.

(2) Advertisement.

although what purports to be the Pocock transcript, printed by his literary executor, is almost identical with Terry's, that Pocock had attempted, at least, to make his piece a drama of character. <sup>(1)</sup> The fact that his play was damned therefore does not necessarily mean that he was completely unsuccessful.

Terry was wiser, perhaps, to forsake the thorny path of characterization for that of spectacle and incident. He reduced his people, as Blackwood's said to "unfinished etchings from the novel" <sup>(2)</sup> and concentrated on the parts which Pocock had overlooked. In the first of these, most of the credit must go to his stage machinists, for the rescue of Sir Arthur and his daughter from the raging tide struck the London Magazine as <sup>(3)</sup>

"without doubt the most ingenious, perfect and effective piece of stage machinery we ever saw. The gradual influx of the tide upon the sand, its mounting to the rocks, the increased agitation of the waters, their ascent from one eminence to another, and the rescue of Sir Arthur and his daughter by the cord and pulley were all represented with a fidelity which cozened the imagination into a belief that Fair-port crags were before the eyes and seemed to realize the most vivid ideas which the perusal of the novel could convey." <sup>(4)</sup>

Terry also made much of the duel scene in which taking the dialogue from the novel, he succeeded in making Eddie's remonstrance to the two young men powerful and dramatic. One of the most affecting things Scott ever wrote, the funeral of the fisher lad Steenie, he was wise enough

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(1) As he did later with Woodstock.

(2) Vol. VI. p.665.

(3) February 1820.

(4) See also European Magazine. Vol. LXXVII, p.166.

however not to attempt.

In concentrating the interest upon the romance of Lucy Wardour and the lost heir of Glenallen, Terry also omitted the rogue Dousterswivel and the Antiquary's misadventures while seeking buried treasure in the ruins of the church. Apart from this, the story follows its original very closely, though the events leading up to the climax of Lovel's appearance as the son of the unhappy Earl of Glenallen are so huddled that without a previous knowledge of the novel, the third act must be almost incomprehensible.

Contemporary critics were not unanimous about The Antiquary, but the general concensus of opinion was that but for the popularity of Waverley dramas, one or two scenes of powerful (but independent) interest, some excellent acting, Henry Bishop's pretty music and superb scenery, the play would have been but a sorry production. One critic, however, stood up for the author to the extent of saying that as a compression of the incidents, apart from character, "in this light, his Antiquary must be considered not as an amusing but a skilful effort." <sup>(1)</sup> The piece met

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(1) Theatrical Inquisitor February 1820.

with considerable approval, however, from the audiences,  
 (1)  
 who were, after all, the ones that mattered.

### OLD MORTALITY.

Like the Antiquary, the novel of Old Mortality lacked a clear and connected story capable of linking up on the stage the telling scenes which it undoubtedly possessed, and thus it too lay for some time untouched by any of the play carpenters. This, "the Marmion of the novels",  
 (2)  
 Lochart reminds us, with its minute and life-like picture of a by-gone age, represented many

- (1) In London it ran for twenty-eight nights, but although when produced in Edinburgh on December 20th of the same year ran twenty-two nights, and twelve times more during the winter season, it never became one of the company's repertory of national dramas, and does not seem to have been revived. Terry's text was touched up by Murray, who seems to have done little more than re-arrange the dialogue slightly, make one or two small additions from the novel, and cut out five rather pretty but inconsequential songs. In 1832, on July 2nd, the Coburg presented a piece called The Antiquary and the Bluegown Beggar, or The Storm at Mussel Craig, which might have been from its most inclusive title, a revision of Terry and Pocock's play. The adapter is unknown and its success was not sufficiently spectacular to bring it to the particular notice of the theatrical journalists.

- (2) Lochart V. 177.

hours of poring over forgotten tracts, and demanded a far more energetic sympathy of imagination than had before been called for. The story then, was the least of the novel's charms, and no stage play, especially in those days of rather primitive theatrical art, could hope to do it justice. Besides, the poetical body of the novel, if we may so term the impassioned and scripture-quoting speeches of the Covenanters, could not in decency be represented on the stage, so that only the earthly parts, the battles, adventures and love scenes, remained. At length, however, on May 22nd. 1820, nearly four years after the appearance of the novel, an actor at Covent Garden, named Charles Farley, who ordinarily wrote the annual pantomimes, had a piece performed under the title of The Battle of Bothwell Brig, which only demonstrated how little could be done. This is a typical review of it.

"To waste either time or paper in dilating on the demerits of this tract would be to offer as unpardonable an insult to our readers as the managers have done to the public by bringing it forward. We will content ourselves with stating that a production more completely destitute of the least glimmering of human intellect never appeared in dramatic shape. Every incident at all interesting in the story has most carefully been kept out of sight and every character most effectively obscured by the clouds of insipidity. A battle concludes each act, and as specimens of spectacle, these battles are as meritorious as the literary composition. In spite of the bare-faced falsehood which appeared at the bottom of the bills, we take the liberty

to state that this wretched thing was completely and most deservedly damned on its first representation." (1)

The play was printed in 1820, but the text gives us little more to say. Farley evidently used all he could from the novel, making quite a spectacular scene of Morton's visit to Balfour's hiding place, with the leap for life across the chasm, and adding also one or two touches of his own. This play failed also in <sup>(2)</sup> Edinburgh when it was presented there.

Shortly after Farley's play appeared at Covent Garden the Surrey produced another from Tom Dibdin's own pen, Old Mortality; or Burley and Morton, was played on June 12th 1820, but apparently without great success, though <sup>(3)</sup> the author records that it was very finely acted.

An amusing feature of the printed text of Dibdin's play is a preface in dialogue between the author and Jedediah Cleishbotham, an obvious skit on Scott's own preface to The Fortunes of Nigel, published only the previous month..

- (1) London Magazine June 1820.c.f. Blackwood's Vol.III. p.210. Literary Gazette, May 27th. 1820. As a matter of fact, however, the piece was played half a dozen times or more during the season.
- (2) It was played at the Theatre-Royal for one performance (Mason's benefit)-June 3rd 1823. (Courant May 23rd 1823) and again on June 12th 1828.
- (3) Reminiscences II. p.183. "Huntley, O.Smith and Wyatt displayed skill worthy a better theatre."

Calcraft of Edinburgh, who had been so successful with The Bride of Lammermoor, brought out for his benefit, in 1822, tried to repeat on May 3rd 1823 with a new version (1) of The Battle of Bothwell Brig. The piece was very thoroughly damned at the time, but curiously enough, became quite popular after a few years and took a place in the Theatre-Royal stock of National Dramas. In the north, according to Peter Baxter, it rivalled even Rob Roy itself! (2)

The chief fault found by the Edinburgh critics with Calcraft's play was that it utterly misrepresented the historical facts. "We think it disgraceful," said the Dramatic Review, "for a Scots audience tamely (3) to witness its representation." They particularly resented the distortion of "the bloody ruffian Claverhouse" as a paragon of manly virtues while the courageous and high-principled Covenanters found their only representatives in John Burley, a murderer, and Cuddie Headrigg, "a very amusing buffoon, who doffs his principles with as much facility as he would his bonnet." Another

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- (1) The printed text which appeared on the day the play was first produced, bore this astounding "puff": "As now being acted at the Theatre-Royal with the greatest applause."!
- (2) Op.cit. p.132.
- (3) May 21st 1824.

(1)  
 more technical detail which was censured by The Review  
 was the result of ignoring the gap of nearly twenty  
 years between the battle and the last interview of Morton  
 with Burley. This scene is now supposed to be only a  
 few days later, yet the characters are made to allude  
 directly to the Revolution of 1689 which has intervened! (2)  
 It will hardly be necessary, I think, to detail the  
 plot in full. It is interesting to note, however, that  
 although Edith is kept rather in the background throughout  
 the play, lest she take away from Morton's importance  
 as a Covenant officer, the romance of these two comes  
 into its own in the final scene, when Morton receives  
 from Claverhouse a free and full pardon, and instead of  
 going into exile for several years, is united at once  
 to Edith.

Three years later, a piece called The Covenanters, (3)  
or The Battle of Drumclog was produced at the Caledonian.  
 This version found much more favour with the Review, which  
 could never resist a thrust at Calcraft.

"In respect to consistency and historical truth,  
 it is infinitely superior to Calcraft's: and it has  
 this high recommendation that it is designed to  
 exhibit the character of those men, - wise and  
 brave men, made mad by oppression, which fired the

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(1) March 10th 1824.

(2) This slip has been removed, however, from the play  
 as published in the 1872 edition of The Waverley  
Dramas.

(3) On March 8th 1825.

torch of liberty amid the gloom of despotism, - in a just and advantageous light. We never could adopt the opinion that the author of the novel intended to stigmatize the honour of those men; we think he has described them faithfully, and his description enhances our pity and esteem of them. But Calcraft's design, next putting money in his purse evidently was to display his philosophical contempt for religious zeal; and thus to propitiate the favour of the small fashionables who are shocked at zeal of any kind."(1)

In arrangement, as well as spirit, this piece differed from the Theatre-Royal play, for the early part of the story was connected up with the second and introduced Morton to the cottage of Cuddie after the Revolution, when the events follow as in the novel. The weak points seem to have been its length and a certain lack of connection between the scenes. It was repeated half a dozen times, and occasionally during the rest of the season.  
(2)

In 1835 Isaac Pocock's eighth dramatization of Scott was produced posthumously at Covent Garden.  
(3)  
The Literary Gazette reported it laconically as "no hit".  
(4) The manuscript which is preserved in the

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(1) March 9th 1825.

(2) Another version, by the actor Middleton, was written "especially for this establishment" and produced on August 9th 1827. What its fate was I have not been able to find out. - Playbill in E.P.L.

(3) On October 13th.

(4) October 17th 1835.

Lord Chamberlain's Collection shows its weaknesses. There is, we find, little connection between the scenes, although the first two acts do follow the novel to a large extent. For example, we get a scene showing the preparations for the defence of Tillyludlem castle, but there is no indication of what took place when it was besieged. Finding that the original story provided insufficient romantic interest, Pocock introduced new material to prepare for a wildly melodramatic scene in the last act where Burley, having come into possession of papers through "an especial providence," <sup>(1)</sup> holds the threat of dispossession over Edith's head, and so attempts to coerce Morton. By knocking time into a cocked hat again, this scene, incidentally, takes place in the hiding place of Burley ten years after the defeat of the Covenanters. Morton is captured, but Cuddie snatches the papers and escapes to bring Claverhouse to the rescue. The last scene is Morton's dramatic rescue from the bigoted fanatics who are about to put him to death. Balfour, by an absurd change in characterization, is made the most zealous and blood-thirsty of them all. As Morton is released, Edith appears from nowhere and the

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(1) They had fallen out of James Sharp's pocket at the Battle of Sheriffmuir!

to soft given  
"through"

play ends with these brilliant lines:

MORTON. Edith!

EDITH. Oh Morton, thou art saved! Thou art mine!

(1)

and a final chorus.

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- (1) A "new" play called The Covenanters was the opening piece at the English Opera House on August 10th of the same year. Since I know nothing about its history, I ought to indicate, at least, the possibility of its being from some other source, such as the novel of that name by John Galt, (which was published in 1823, and like most of Galt's stories completely overshadowed by those of his great fellow-townsmen). The later versions we may dismiss in a few words. Apart from an Old Mortality; or The Heir of Milnwood by W.E. Suter at Sadler's Wells September 13th 1869, and two anonymous versions at Edinburgh in 1871 and 1873 called respectively Drumclog and 1679, the latter by Charles Webb, the only one of any importance is a play called Strathmore by J.E. Marston produced at the Haymarket June 20th 1849, and printed soon afterward. At first I rather hesitated about including this piece, for apart from the inclusion of Burley it seems to differ widely from Old Mortality. On re-reading it, however, I became convinced that there were more points of resemblance than I had noted. The hero's reasons for joining the Covenanters are much like those of Morton, - a keen sense of the justice of their cause, without sharing in their blood-thirsty fanaticism. Sir Rupert Lorn, a loyalist, resembles Major Bellenden; and for Edith we have Katharine Lorn, to whom the Strathmore is betrothed, and from whom he separates, as Morton does, on account of political differences with her family. Charles Kean played the name part and the play had a very successful run.

A LEGEND OF MONTROSE.

Montrose, again, was a difficult novel to dramatize, for not only are its principal characters rather abstracted from common humanity, but the story itself is sketchy and has no clear main plot. There are, of course, some wonderfully impressive situations, containing elements of tragedy, comedy and even "slap-stick" farce. The latter difficulty was overcome by putting together the more striking scenes and by introducing a small amount of connective dialogue and Scottish songs, which produces a fair acting drama. The former problem, however, was never solved satisfactorily, for while Capt. Dalgetty stepped easily enough from one form to another, Allan and Ranald of the Mist lose on the stage their unearthly and supernatural qualities. The gallant young Earl of Monteith and the interesting Annot Lyle also must become only two rather tame young people in love. These considerations nevertheless did not deter Tom Dibdin. With his usual energy he actually produced Montrose and The Bride of Lammermoor at the Surrey on the same night, (1) three weeks after their publication in the third series

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(1) Dibdin himself says two weeks (op.cit.II.177) but this is an exaggeration; though it stands to reason that he had them written that soon. The Tales were published on June 10th.

of Tales of My Landlord! Dibdin's Legend of Montrose; or The Children of the Mist, seems never to have been printed, but the notices of the critics confirm the impression that he failed to surmount the difficulties in his way. The Literary Gazette <sup>(1)</sup> found it "animated and interesting", especially the scenes where Dalgetty is being examined by the Duke of Argyle, and where he detects the disguised visitor in his cell and forces him to change places. <sup>(2)</sup> The Theatrical Inquisitor reported that though it opened well, the conclusion was confused and rather injudiciously altered from the tale. It was rather shocked at finding "the boldly designed character of Allan with all its awful associations, boiled down to a mere walking gentleman." Dibdin himself says less than usual in his Reminiscences, but he hints that he had "no reason to regret his exertions." <sup>(3)</sup>

Again the Coburg, which, according to Dibdin, "always waited for the announcement of my selections to <sup>(4)</sup> follow them instantly by choice of the same subjects," rushed an anonymous rival (bearing the reversed title of Children of the Mist; or A Legend of Montrose) on to the stage on July 13th. Apparently during its ten days start, the Surrey version had exhausted public interest,

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- (1) July 24th 1819.  
 (2) July 1819.  
 (3) Op.cit. II. 177.  
 (4) Ibid. 209-11.

for nothing whatever seems to be recorded of the fate of its Waterloo Road competitor.

In 1820 C. Chapple published a version which I am inclined to identify with a Glasgow text discussed at some length by Dr. White. Though evidence is missing, it seems highly probable that one or other of the subsequent transcripts which we shall consider was either this one itself, or based directly upon it. In 1847, it was re-published, as revised by "a Gentleman of Glasgow". Both of these texts, as Dr. White very justly notes, have a literary charm ordinarily lacking in melodrama. "Though by no means as theatrical as some of the earlier dramas," he writes, "this Montrose play deserves a place among the best of the literary transcripts for faithfulness to the original and for that peculiar "Scotch feeling" which the residents of Glasgow could well appreciate." (1) (2) The Theatrical Inquisitor, however, in a review of probably the same text mentions that there is considerable feeling in the management of the plot though "implicit fidelity" is maintained toward the language and character.

"We are not aware of its presentation on a Scottish stage, where national ardour and literary deference might secure its success; nor, upon artistic grounds, do we believe that success

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(1) Op.cit. 152.

(2) May 1820.

would be either brilliant or secure. The quaintness of Dalgetty would furnish a great opportunity for a comedian of that humour; the fierceness of Allan McAulay might be displayed to advantage, and much sympathy would be shown to the graces of Annot Lyle. We are apprehensive, however, that the story wants interest of an abstract nature, and upon that principle, we hold it unfitted for the stage."

The re-arranged version of 1847 nevertheless achieved, according to Dr. White's information, "a triumph that was long recalled." (1)

A Montrose by Isaac Pocock was underlined at Covent Garden early in 1821, but the production was held up, the London informs us, for the want of a suitable Allan (2) McAulay. Eventually, the part was given to Abbott, who seems to have done quite well, and the play was (3) announced in January and produced February 14th 1822 as an operatic spectacle, with music by Bishop, Ware and Watson. The materials of the plot, so far as they (4) are used, are almost unaltered. The first act is a little heavy on account of the number of characters to be introduced in turn. The play begins with the hiring of Capt. Dalgetty on behalf of King Charles, and the mustering of the rebel forces. Then follows the mission of Dalgetty to the Marcuis of Argyle, his imprisonment and meeting with Ranald in the dungeon. After an encounter

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(1) Op.cit. 153.

(2) February 1821.

(3) See Literary Gazette January 26th 1822.

(4) It was published in 1823.

with the disguised Argyle, the two prisoners escape to Ranald's clan, the children of the mist. The pursuing Campbells are defeated and Dalgetty reaches Montrose. At this point some time is spent over the mysterious eloquence of Allan McAulay, After the battle between Montrose and Argyle, in which Sir Duncan Campbell is struck down by Ranald, the piece rushes to its conclusion. Ranald is also wounded by Allan, and in dying reveals that Annot is Sir Duncan's long-lost child. The catastrophe is softened somewhat at the expense of probability. Allan, seeing his jealous dagger stroke turned aside by Menteith's cuirass, relents, and after blessing the union of Annot and his rival, goes into exile, while the marriage presumably takes place immediately. Several critics<sup>(1)</sup> commend the effect of Astley's stud of sixteen horses in the battle scene, as well as the fine scenery by Grieve.

"On the whole, we think," remarked the Literary Chronicle, "that although the piece frequently languishes and in some parts is extremely vapid..... yet there are whole scenes sufficiently animated to redeem it from condemnation..... it was announced for repetition amid vociferous applause."

While still having a run of twenty-two nights in London, Pocock's play, as altered by Manager Murray, had a further eleven days at the Edinburgh Theatre-Royal from March 13th 1822. On April 20th 1825, it was cut down as an after piece,<sup>(2)</sup> probably by the same hand, and from that

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(1) e.g. Literary Gazette - Literary Chronicle, for February 16th 1822.

(2) Advertisement in Weekly Journal, March 13th 1822.

time it often appeared in one form or the other on the Royal bills. Edinburgh critics, however, were never enthusiastic. <sup>(1)</sup> The Observer said:

"Despite music and stage effect, from the want of a complete connected story in the original, and the impossibility of fully understanding it, even as it is in the drama, we feel little or no interest in the characters introduced on the stage."

<sup>(1a)</sup>  
The Dramatic Review was more favourable, and thought the opera "a tolerably good one", and that the plot was more intelligible than that of Rob Roy. But for the quarrel being here between Gael and Gael rather than Gael and Sassenach, so that audiences "are denied the exquisite pleasure of seeing Englishmen decapitated by the Highland Claymore," it seemed "awanting only half a dozen pibrocks to blow it into popularity" as great as the author's Rob Roy. <sup>(2)</sup>  
The Dramatic Review and Thespian Inquisitor, <sup>(3)</sup>  
 however, dismissed it some time later as "a sad narcotic."

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(1) August 2nd 1823. (1a) Ditto.

(2) October 26th; December 8th, 1827.

(3) During the next few years there were several Montrose plays in Edinburgh, but whether they were fresh versions of the novel, or merely more or less revised productions of those already discussed, seems impossible to say. I have not found the date of the first production at the Caledonian, but on September 8th 1826, what the playbills called a new version was acted, and in 1831, another by Atkinson of Seymore's Theatre Glasgow, and performed there earlier in the year, and brought to Edinburgh during the summer season. Meanwhile the Theatre-Royal had brought forward an anonymous Marquis of Montrose on January 15th 1829.

THE MONASTERY.

The Monastery, as is well known, was the first of Scott's novels to be called a failure. Curiously enough the causes of that failure are seen to be the very ones which made for its success when transferred later to the operatic stage. Scott had for once selected too slight a subject upon which to spin out a three volume novel, and must consequently dwell far too much upon materials which might have done well enough for a short tale. We are allowed, for instance, to become, with the proverbial result, far too familiar with the White Maid of Avenel, for when such an awful and mysterious being as she is supposed to be, descends, for instance, to practical jokes about a tailor's needle, she sacrifices much of her effect. The other characters are drawn ably enough, but we have ample opportunity of growing rather weary of their idiosyncrasies before the end. The main characters appear in an opera called La Dame Blanche, by Eugene Scribe, produced in Paris in 1825, and which, owing perhaps to the excellent music of Boieldieu, was popular in France for fifty years to come. (1) This opera, as described by White and others, is a curious patchwork, for it connects the lost

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(1) White. op.cit.161.

Heir of Avenel with the lost Heir of Ellangowan in Guy Mannering, who lived two hundred years later; and several times in the play there are casual references to Meg Merilees (who had been nursed back to health and given a little room in the castle), Dominie Sampson (who had often made use of the library) and Brown the Smuggler (who had carried Henry off and allowed him to believe himself his son). Although this constant jiggling back and forth through centuries of time and from opposites of sentiment and character produces a less ghastly effect than might be imagined, such incongruities quite spoiled its effect in England, where these names and times and places were not romantic, but commonplace, and still worse, mixed. Hence, none of the various adaptations of the Scribe-Boieldieu opera had much popularity on this side of the Channel simply because of this confused plot. Drury Lane and Covent Garden both, made the attempt to introduce it during the next two years. The former brought out The White Lady, or The Spirit of Avenel. Dr. White says this was largely the work of T.S. Cooke, who made certain changes and additions of his own, which hardly seem worth our closer consideration. It may be enough to say that Cooke made his piece into a melodrama and included the best and most popular songs of the Boieldieu opera, which had already fascinated Paris for more than one hundred and thirty nights. There were, said the Theatrical Observer, many charming parts, the moonlight scenes in particular

being very soft and lucid. The machinery also was well managed, especially with regard to the appearances of the mystic White Lady.<sup>(1)</sup> On January 2nd 1827, Covent Garden brought out a closer translation which seems to have been the work of G.H.Rodwell. There was very little action, so that its claim to support rested almost solely upon the music. Neither of these had much success, nor did a third adaption by Capt. Rafter,<sup>(2)</sup> licensed for the Grecian in 1848.

Dr. White, who discusses the Scribe opera more fully than we have space to do, believed that there were no English plays from the Monastery previous to these. As a matter of fact, the first version of the story by J. Howard Payne,<sup>(3)</sup> appeared at Sadler's Well's exactly one month from the date of its publication. "Anyone who has read the novel," said the London Magazine, "will be puzzled to conceive how

its principal incidents could be embodied in a drama; this has been effected, however, in the piece now under consideration with considerable skill and knowledge of stage effect. The appearance of the White Maid of Avenel is very happily contrived and is

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- (1) October 10th 1826.
- (2) All three of these plays are preserved in the Lord Chamberlain's Collection.
- (3) Payne was the Manager of Sadler's Wells. See a note in Theatrical Inquisitor, (May 1820, p.33) which makes me ascribe it to Payne.

productive of a beautiful effect, and the piece on the whole forms a far more amusing drama than we could have imagined formed out of the proposed piece." (1)

### THE ABBOT.

It was very natural that the story of the tragic Mary Stuart should have attracted the immediate attention of the theatre-writers. The theme, of course, was not a new one, for Schiller's Maria Stuart had been translated into English a number of times, and one adaption of it had been played at Covent Garden no longer before than December 14th 1819. Within two weeks of the publication of the Abbot, nevertheless, a stage version was produced at the New Royal West London Theatre, the tiny theatre

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- (1) June 1820. Besides Payne's piece, there was evidently a version underlined about the same time for Covent Garden. A paragraph in the Literary Gazette, as early as April 8th noted "The Monastery has already furnished a piece, arranged by Mr. T(heodore) Hook, for Covent Garden Theatre." It seems never to have been produced, however, for the review of Payne's piece just quoted compliments the manager's enterprise in the face of difficulties "to which the other theatres had yielded." Payne produced a version - which was probably his original transcript for Sadler's Wells - when he was in New York in 1852. White, incorrectly, I think, describes it as a rendering of the Scribe libretto, but he records that it won a "triumphant success" at the Park Theatre. (White op.cit.162).
- (2) September 18th 1820.

which Squire and Marie Bancroft purchased in the 'sixties as "The Dust Hole" and converted into the Prince of Wales. The author, according to the published text, was Henry Roxby Beverley, and the music was by J. Kerr. The preface asserts that the play was "nightly repeated to crowded audiences with unbounded applause," but since the Tottenham-Street house was described as "the smallest of those places devoted to the drama; and being of too humble pretensions to create jealousy is permitted to play tragedy, comedy or farce in as legitimate a manner as the company is capable of doing,"<sup>(1)</sup> we need not suppose it really attracted great attention. Certainly the critics ignored it completely.

Beverley's play omits much of the earlier part of the story, though an opening conversation between Jessy and Adam Woodcock makes clear all that is known of the origin of the page Roland Graeme. Succeeding scenes carry the action to Roland's departure, and his entrance into the service of the queen. By the way, just as Scott himself brought Marmion into Edinburgh over Blackford Hill merely for the sake of describing that glorious vista<sup>(2)</sup> so Beverley makes Roland and Adam pant their way over the north side of Arthur's Seat in order to introduce a view of Edinburgh from St. Anthony's Chapel.<sup>(3)</sup> Roland

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(1) The Percy Anecdotes Original and Select (1822)p.168.

(2) IV. xxiii - xxxii.

(3) II. i.

accompanies the queen to Lochleven Castle, where her painful interview with the Lords of the Secret Council, - in which her helplessness and her spirit are well shown, - is followed by an unsuccessful attempt to escape. In the third act we meet the Abbot of St. Mary's, who reveals himself in disguise to George Douglas, the noble and spirited heir of Lochleven, and the plans for Mary's delivery mature. Meanwhile Catherine Seyton inspires Roland to embrace the queen's cause. The escape is carried out successfully as in the novel. Only a scene showing Mary resting in a cottage separates the escape from the defeat of her supporters at Glenocle. Young Douglas dies in rescuing the queen. Suddenly, - and rather absurdly - the English Commissioner enters and offers to conduct her to England.

"Douglas expires at Mary's feet; the latter swoons in the Abbot's arms; Characteristic group; Appropriate Music; Curtain." (1)

It was only natural that to the French and the Scots, the primary appeal of this novel should be found in the adventures of the tragic young Queen in the stronghold of her bitterest enemies. Consequently, when a version appeared shortly after Beverley's at the Gaieté in Paris

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(1) Dr. White mentions an anonymous Mary of Scotland; or The Heir of Avenel, which had a good run in New York in 1821, which he considers slightly long, but none the less a noble instance of dramatic condensation. (op.cit.157).

it is not surprising to find the other parts of the story subordinated to the events at Lochleven. These, however, follow Scott's narrative very closely, except that a more theatrical climax is contrived by having George Douglas pierced by an arrow from the castle while protecting his queen with his body. The piece was very popular, and ran for some thirty nights during the season. A play called The Castle of Lochleven, produced "with complete success" at the Victoria, September 13th, 1833, may have been a translation of the Paris opera. <sup>(1)</sup>

The production of The Abbot in Scotland presents a problem that I have not solved to my own satisfaction. According to the Courant, a play called Mary Stuart, was presented as an after-piece of two acts at the Theatre-Royal, on Monday, July 4th 1825. This bill says that it is founded on the Abbot and adapted from Le Chateau de Loch-Leven. <sup>(2)</sup> This piece according to Mr. Dibdin, continued a favourite as long as there were stock companies to play it. <sup>(3)</sup> It was printed by Lacy and Dicks, the

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(1) Or 20th. Literary Gazette, September 21st. 1833. The date is not certain from the text of the notice.

(2) Advertisement in Courant, July 4th 1825.

(3) Annals 3 - 4.

(1)

former of whom attributes it to W.C.Murray.

In this play the two attempts of Mary to escape provide a climax for each act. In the first, we see her helpless, yet courageous defiance of the lords who demand her abdication, young Douglas offering his loving allegiance, and the unwitting betrayal of the plan of escape by Roland who jealously fancies it is Catherine Seyton who is going away with a man. As the castle is aroused, Douglas leaps into

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- (1) Dicks' edition gives as the night of its Edinburgh première the 3rd of October, 1825, and this date is accepted by Dr. White and Professor Nicoll. On that day, however, the celebrated Miss Foote was beginning a two weeks' engagement with The Belle's Stratagem, followed by The Spectre Bridegroom. A trifle over five years later this same lady acted at the Olympic (January 3rd 1831) in a piece called Mary Queen of Scots; or The Escape from Loch Leven, preserved in the Lord Chamberlain's Collection, and from which the printed texts were made. Contemporary reports noted that it was popular in the provinces, and was the work of Calcraft. (e.g. Literary Gazette, January 8th 1831. Edr. Literary Journal, January 15th 1831.) Who the author was, then, and what circumstances led to the error in the date of production, are matters for conjecture. The play was attributed to Murray in Perth in 1825 (Baxter op.cit. p. and Miss Foote certainly links up the Olympic version with the Edinburgh one. My own opinion is that she read the play during her engagement - perhaps performed in it, for the records of her visit are not complete - and that the publisher made an understandable mistake. As for Calcraft, I thought at one point in my investigations that there were perhaps two plays, but there is now no doubt in my mind that the two versions were the same and that Murray was the compiler.

the lake, and his Spartan grand-mother commands the guards to fire upon him. As they prepare to obey, Mary throws herself upon the levelled muskets crying:

"Hold, I command ye - as your Queen -  
command ye, Hold!"

The second act has but one scene, which deserves commendment as a forerunner of a more modern and economical technique. The earlier part concerns the resolute attempt of the revengeful steward, Dryfesdale, to poison the queen at the sacrifice of his own life. He is foiled by Roland's shifting the places at the table. The climax is the escape of Mary to the boat which disappears into the darkness as the castle wakes to the alarm. After an incredibly short time, distant shouts indicate that Queen Mary is safe, and Douglas falls pierced by a shot from his own ancestral walls. Lady Douglas shows then that her resolution is but a mask, and falls sobbing upon his body as the rest form the usual sort of tableau.

#### § 4. The Remaining Novels.

We have now completed our survey of the Scott Novels published up to 1823. Nine of them enjoyed a popularity ranging from "tremendous" to "considerable", and six, which we have last considered, were, for various reasons, only barely successful, or virtually failures. Of the twelve remaining novels, two so far as I can discover, were never dramatized at all.<sup>1</sup> The other ten, while providing on the average dramatic material quite as good and as skillfully manipulated as those adapted so successfully before 1823, failed nevertheless to score an equal success in the theatre. The reason for this has already been hinted. Like every other favourite subject, dramatization of the Waverley tales was carried too far, and with ever-recurring revivals and revisions of the previous hits, succeeding plays, like, - one whispers - the novels themselves, became rather a drug on the market. It will be, none the less, instructive to examine them with the same care as we have done their predecessors.

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1. These were Count Robert of Paris and Castle Dangerous, published in 1831. The only other omissions from the list are the short stories The Surgeon's Daughter (1827) The Tapestry Chamber (1828) The Laird's Jock (1828) and My Aunt Margaret's Mirror (1828), but it should not surprise me to find that some of these too had been dramatized and are now either lost or so titled as to be unrecognisable.

PEVERIL OF THE PEAK.

Although Sir Walter himself thought Peveril "likely to be actually dramatical,"<sup>1</sup> the play, when it appeared, shared the faults of the novel, which was as severely criticised, perhaps, as any he ever wrote. The story, said the reviewers, was clumsy and perplexed, Finella an unfortunate and not too original conception, the treatment of the Popish plot most improbable, and the catastrophe artificial yet plainly visible from the beginning. All this, as Lockhart comments loyally, may be quite true, but "did any dramatist - to say nothing of any other novelist - ever produce, in spite of all the surrounding bewilderment of fable, character more powerfully conceived, or, on the whole, more powerfully portrayed than those (I name but a few) of Christian, Bridgeworth Buckingham, and Chiffinch? - sketches more vivid than those of young Derby, Colonel Blood and the keeper of Newgate?"<sup>2</sup> None the less, a few good characters were not enough to make Peveril of the Peak successful as a play. In London and later in Edinburgh it was rather coldly received.

Once again the Surrey was first with an adaption of the latest Scotch Novel, hardly a month after its publication when Peveril; or The Days of King Charles the Second, by Edward Fitzball, was produced on February 6th, 1823. The author says nothing about it in his memoirs, but the play seems to have had

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1. Letter to Terry (Jan 9/23. (Lockhart VII. 117.)

2. Lockhart VII. 118.

a run of nearly a month. The London critics, such as noticed it, were not severe; the Theatrical Magazine<sup>1</sup>, for instance, thought it "an excellent adaptation." When, however, it was produced two months later<sup>2</sup> at the Edinburgh Theatre-Royal, with some revision, probably by Calcraft, it was severely criticised, and was withdrawn after seven nights. Shortly before, on March 19th the Caledonian had produced the Fitzball revision unaltered, apparently with as little success.

Dr White is not at his best in his short discussion of this play. I propose to quote a paragraph, not to point out his inexplicable errors of fact, but to disagree with his remarks on the treatment of Finella. The italics are mind of course.

The author, he writes,

"succeeds in making us understand her position from the start. She is feigning to be a deaf mute, is in love with Julian Peverel, but wants to be generous and self-effacing. Throughout, she is buffeted between conflicting interests, mainly between selfishness and altruistic love. During the first of the drama, she is under the baneful influence of Christian, whom she supposes to be her father, when she discovers that he is only her uncle, she throws off his tutelage, and espouses the cause of her friends. She therefore is willing to protect the King and the Countess of Derby from the plots of Christian and Hudson, the dwarf. Though Scott hints at

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1. Feb 24/23.  
 2. Apr. 12.

times that this is the situation and though at last he makes it evident enough, Fitzball at once sets us right on some obscure details. Thus, it is not surprising that Fenella willingly stands between the Countess of Derby and the dagger of Christian, after she has revealed the plot of the dwarf."

Now, quite apart from the libel upon poor little Sir Geoffrey Hudson, The Queen's dwarf, who, hiding in a violincello case, overheard the plot against the king's person, there is the question of the dramatist's success with Fenella. I agree that Fitzball does make her a more clear-cut figure, but only to make her improbability more apparent than in the novel. It is one thing for her to pretend to her friends and her mistress to be a mute - she never, pace Dr White, pretended to be deaf - and another to vent her feelings, when she is left alone, in pantomime rather than soliloquy. It is true also that her affection for Julian is made evident earlier in the play, than in the tale<sup>1</sup>, but Fitzball certainly follows Scott in making this lover, together with her horror at finding her father the bitterest enemy of her friends, (and not as Dr White suggests, her relief at finding that Christian had no more claim upon her than an uncle's) that brings about her self sacrifice to save her friends from his dagger.

Having spent so much time upon this topic, our summary of the play itself must be shortened. It is remarkable how much of the novel Fitzball contrived to include. A <sup>conversation</sup> connection between Julian and Alice's nurse Deborah makes clear the

1. I. vi.

relationships of the character, after which the interview of the lovers is melodramatically interrupted by the appearance of Major Bridgeworth from behind a rock. Julian's mission to London with papers from the Countess of Derby; his adventures on the way at Peveril Castle where he found his parents in the hands of the Puritans; his own arrest by Bridgeworth, and his rescue of his captor when the Peveril servants ride against the Puritans, - these carry the action well into the second act. The remainder of the play is in London. We learn of Christian's part in Buckingham's plot, and see the fascination of the king by Fenella's dancing. The act ends with Charles' protection of Alice from the attentions of Buckingham, after which all kneel as he makes some noble remark about the unhappiness of a people constituting the miseries of their monarch. We then see Julian's separation from Alice in a street fight and his arrest, and learn of Christian's despicable plan to help the Puritan cause by appeasing the king with Alice. Coincidence also takes part. Similarity in name leads to Julian being conducted to the cell of Sir Geoffrey Hudson in mistake for his father's. Meanwhile Fenella, taken to Buckingham's house instead of Alice, defies him and escapes through the window. Julian the dwarf and Major Bridgeworth, who agrees to settle his difficulties with Sir Geoffrey Peveril. Aided by Fenella, the dwarf overhears the plot on the king's life, and Fenella learns at last the secret of her origin from Christian. The play ends in the palace at Whitehall, where the plot is foiled

and the assassins seized. Christian however tries even yet to revenge his brother by killing The Countess of Derby, and for the sake of a better theatrical finish, Fenella is made to take the blow. Her death forms an affecting finale.

The only other play on the subject was an operatic romance by Isaac Pocock at Covent Garden October 21st, 1826. It was not a success, for though it made a praiseworthy attempt at simplifying the plot by compressing the time, and for the first two acts, throwing the main interest on the events at Peeveril Castle, it was found confusing and jumbled.<sup>1</sup>

The audience objected chiefly however to a grande finale to the jingling popular tune of Cherry Ripe ! The sins of Christian are placed on Pocock on the shoulders of Major Bridgnorth, who is finally banished by Charles. Before he goes he reveals himself to Fenella as her father, and she, having lost her Julian to her sister, goes with him into exile. Having reread the play I'm inclined after all to agree with the verdict of the Theatrical Observer:<sup>2</sup> - "Clumsily managed".<sup>3</sup>

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1. See the criticism in Theatrical Observer Oct. 23/26
  2. Oct. 23/26.
  3. The adaptation of W. G. Wills, for Drury Lane in 1877, bore even less resemblance to the original tale, and therefore need not be noticed particularly. It was called England in the Days of Charles II., and produced on Sept. and produced on September 22nd, 1877.

QUENTIN DURWARD.

This novel is neither a history nor a romance yet it partakes of both. The utter improbability of the story is relieved by the air of historical realness with which Scott was so able to invest his principal character, and with which his descriptions of the manners of past ages is so constantly filled. In Quentin Durward, however, Scott does not manage this quite so well as usual. He has, it seems, drawn too much upon his authorities, and frequently rather overwhelms the reader with descriptions of dress, etiquette and manners. From the dramatic point of view, all this is so much lumber, which must be cleared away from the story before a play can be made.

The first version, which appeared shortly after publication (this, by the way was in May 1823,<sup>1</sup> and not in June as Lockhart erroneously states!) was by an actor named Haines,<sup>2</sup> who made his first appearance in his own play.<sup>3</sup> It was produced at the Coburg on June 9th, and though the critics were divided about its merits,<sup>4</sup> it had probably a fair success.

A printed text, "by R. Hawworth", appeared shortly afterwards. Dr White suggests that the two plays are the same, but since there is no reason, apart from a certain natural resemblance, to suppose such a thing, I should hesitate to agree. The two plays, however, followed Scott fairly closely.

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1. See announcement of publication in various papers c. May 22.  
 2. John Thomas Haines, a prolific writer of melodramatic pieces.  
 3. Mirror of the Stage June 23rd, 1823.  
 4. Compare Theatre Magazine II. 304.

On June 23rd, 1823 Corbett Ryder of the Edinburgh Caledonian produced another version "by a gentleman of Edinburgh", who may have been J.L. Huie, the publisher, if not the editor, of the Dramatic Review.

The play opens where Quentin meets King Louis in disguise and confides to him his ambition to enlist with some nobleman of France. At the same time he sees Isabel, who is also disguised as a country maid because of her wish to serve the king

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On June 14th, The Dramatic Review announced the play and congratulated Ryder on his spirited management "Mr Murray, we presume will continue to nauseate the public with the offals of the London Theatres, or some of Mr Calcraft's choice productions". Reviewing the piece on June 25th, the same paper announced that it was "received with great and unbounded applause" but drew attention to its curious technique of an overheard solilquy. On July 19th, according to the Courant of that date, the play was printed by Huie, and although it was anonymous, most bibliographers follow the lead of the British Museum in ascribing it to Huie himself. So much is clear enough. In the issue of September 29 however, the Review published a biting paragraph about another Quentin, also written by an Edinburgh gentleman, who, encouraged by the fact that a similar play had succeeded in London "and another had actually been produced at The Caledonian", had offered it to Murray of the Theatre-Royal. "Murray had the piece before him for months; praised it; suggested alterations etc., and latterly declared that he had decided not to bring out any Quentin Durward at all." On October 9th we read further: "Theatrical Intelligence - our publisher having come to learn who was the author of the rejected drama of Quentin Durward has concluded a bargain with that gentleman; and the drama, accompanied by an appeal to the public, we understand, will soon make its appearance." A careful search of the publishers' announcements in the daily press for a year following has not enabled me to trace this play if indeed it was published. It is at any rate quite distinct from that by Huie, published in July.

and becomes very interested. The act ends with Quentin's cutting down Yamet a gipsy, whom he found hanging to a tree, his rescue from the peasantry by Allan Cunningham, a Scottish Archer, and his decision to join his uncle in the king's own service. Louis recognises him, and he is present when the Count of Crevecoeur the envoy of Burgandy peremptorily demands the instant surrender of the Countess of Croye who had fled to avoid a forced marriage with the Duke, and proclaims that his master has renounced his allegiance. In the second act, we learn that Quentin has saved the king's live at a boar-hunt, for which service Louis entrusts him with the duty of conducting the Countess and Lady Hamelene, ostensibly <sup>to place them in</sup> and the protection of the Bishop of Liege, but really that they might fall into the hands of William de la March, and so plant a friend to France in the bosom of Flanders. On the way, Quentin overhears a conversation between Hayraddin and Heinreck and as they withdraw, he soliloquises on his determination to change the route. Heinrich, chancing to come back, in turn overhears this, and so his precautions are defeated. Apart altogether from the improbability of the soliloquy in itself, the overhearing of one was against all precedent. It might be comforting to say that here is an attempt to free the drama of a convention admittedly silly yet apparently indispensable, were it not that the evidence is all against it. We must I fear regard it in this case only as a bit of clumsiness on the part of the dramatist. The act ends, how-

ever, with a rather good bit of compression. Omitting the safe arrival at Liege, and the scenic<sup>s</sup> incident to the bloody murder of the Bishop, the party is attacked at that point by de la Marck who captures Hameline, while Quentin escapes with the fainting Isabel. In the last act the scenes are rather forceful, leading to the climax. Burgundy defies and imprisons the King, who conducts himself with serene courage, though he reveals in private that he knows his danger is due only to his own foolhardiness. De la Marck sends a defiance to Burgundy, but Quentin learns from Hayraddin his evil scheme of inviting a siege of his castle and then sallying out in such a disguise as to make the Burgundians think the French treacherous. There is then a short scene of parting between Quentin and Countess Isabella, who loves him, but disdains his obscure birth. The play ends with the battle before the walls of Liege. The attackers were armlets to foil de la Marck's scheme. There is much noise and clashing of arms, while in the background - (what was a melodrama without a "conflagration"?) - "Presently a house is on fire which is consumed". Quentin brings in the head of de la Marck which he throws before the king and so claims the hand of Isabella. Lord Crawford declares him to be of gentle birth and Burgundy, in a flattering speech, resigns his own pretensions to the lady. And so the play ends.<sup>1</sup>

1. The only other adaptation worth mention was Fitzball's "grand opera" at Covent Garden on December 6th, 1848. Henry R. Laurent provided the music. It was not successful. (See e.g. Theatrical Times. December 7, 1848.)

ST. RONAN'S WELL.

Although in Scotland, St Ronan's was highly successful from the day of its publication in December 1823, it had not the same popularity south of the Tweed. Lockhart devotes considerable space to a defence of the characters as "real/<sup>1</sup> people, and makes rather a good case of it. Obviously, there was no playwright capable of dramatizing successfully the various idiocyncracies of the Well-folk (as Meg Dodds used to call them) and it is questionable if audiences would have appreciated a treatment such as C.K. <sup>n</sup>Mur<sup>o</sup>e gave in our time to the boarders At Mrs Beams. There was still a fairly good melodramatic plot,<sup>2</sup> nevertheless, and at least two adaptors, an amateur and a professional, set to work on it at once. Only one, however, was produced, that by our friend J.R. Planché, at the Adelphi on January 12th 1824. The other "from the pen of a young gentleman now completing his studies at the University and the author of one of our most successful tragedies,<sup>3</sup> was accepted three months later from Drury Lane, but in May its production was abandoned "because the leading performers were dissatisfied with the parts assigned to them."<sup>4</sup>

On June 5th, Murray of Edinburgh produced for his benefit, what Mr Dibden<sup>5</sup> states to be Planché's adaptation. Dr White<sup>6</sup>

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1. Lockhart vii. 207.  
 2. Scott wrote to Terry on Oct. 29/23 (Lockhart vii. 206) that it was "time or may be easily compressed into dramatic time; whether it is other qualified for the stage I cannot say."  
 3. According to the Literary Gazette Apr. 3/24.  
 4. Dramatic Review May 21/24.  
 5. Annals 309.  
 6. Op. cit. 180.

says it was announced as the work of R. Planché, but I have not verified this. Some revisions must have been made, though, for the Dramatic Review, which some weeks before had thought it might be the piece rejected by Drury Lane, was still undecided next day whether it were this or a composition of Murray's.<sup>1</sup> <sup>So</sup> ~~The~~ <sup>confuse</sup> the issue still further Anderson's Edition, to which we have referred,<sup>2</sup>, seems to have contained a St Ronan's Well by Calcraft! I fancy, however, that this was the same play. The Planché version, preserved in the <sup>Larpent</sup> ~~present~~ collection as far as one can judge from contemporary notices, seems to resemble the Edinburgh play at all points.

Nor is the history of the "young gentleman's" play any clearer, for there is in the Lord Chamberlain's Collection the manuscript of a St Ronan's Well, licensed for Drury Lane on December 20th 1824. Again there is no record of production, and the theatrical papers of the time reported Drury Lane pretty thoroughly. Whether or not this was the same play, which had not previously been through the licencer's hands, I'm sure I don't know. In any case, it makes little difference.

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1. Dramatic Review May 26, June 7, In the former the Review says at Covent Garden, but this obviously is only a slip of the pen.

2. See infra. p.

Scott himself was very enthusiastic. He saw St Ronan's at least twice, on the first night, when he wrote Terry that despite his thought that it would be ill-adapted for the stage it "succeeded wonderfully",<sup>1</sup> and again in December, when the Dramatic Review remarked that there was "a fashionable turn out, and among those in the boxes we observed Sir Walter Scott."<sup>2</sup> He was very pleased with the acting of Murray as the Old Nabob and with Mackay's Meg Dodds. He wrote a rather droll epilogue for Mackay to speak in character, which Lockhart says caused great merriment,<sup>3</sup> but which the Dramatic Review thought "wretched and brainless stuff" such as might be produced by any hedgepoet in Scotland<sup>4</sup>. Even later when it heard who the writer was, it called the report "utterly unfounded."<sup>5</sup>

Although it never seems to have been acted, we may find some interest in the Drury Lane play. It opens with Francis Tyrrel's decision to accept Sir Bingo's invitation to the Well, despite the disapproval of Meg Dodds, his landlady. The company at the Inn are then rather sketchily drawn. Francis refuses to answer their curious questions and leaves angrily, thrusting inside Sir Bingo on whom Captain McTurk bloodthirstily urges the claims of "honour". Mobray tells the company that the Earl of Ethrington is coming, and the audience - gratuitously enough - that his sister Clara "is an Angel - and I am - what I dare not call myself". The piece is, as we see, a

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1. Lockhart vii, 211.
  2. December 8/24.
  3. Lockhart vii. 211.
  4. November 23/24.
  5. November 26/24.

bit primitive in technique. An interview which follows between Tyrrell and Clara would certainly fail to make an audience understand what stands between them. Lord Etherington is then introduced as a suitor of Clara. He and Tyrrel meet, and after accusing each other of broken promises, fight a duel in which Tyrrel is wounded, and disappears without keeping his engagement to fight Sir Bingo. Thus the first act sets the story going very satisfactorily. The second concerns the struggles of Clara and her brother in the net of Ethrington, the strange interest of Touchwood in Tyrrel's affairs, and the latter's discovery of his legitimacy, the proofs of which are expected by next day's post. The third act begins with Ethridge's plot with Solmes to steal the packet. Meanwhile Mobray, now desperate, has heard the rumours about his sister and insists on her immediate marriage. Touchwood, who is really the younger Scroggie, reveals that she was tricked into marrying Ethridge in mistake for Tyrrel years before. Clara goes to the Inn where her dying cousin Hannah reveals that the minister was a masquerader. Mobray enters and embraces his sister. The last scene shows the triumph of Tyrrel as duplicate proofs arrive. Ethridge departs in disgrace.

"Tyrrel - Let his own feelings be his punishment - happy in  
in the possession of my Clara I can forget anything Glee.  
Curtain." 1

1. Tom Dibdin (Reminiscences II. 276) also wrote a play on St Ronan's, but whatever the matter was, it was seemingly never produced. The author, usually inclined almost to overexplain his failures, mentions only that it was refused by Morris, and quickly drops the subject. It is a mystery that we should probably never now be able to solve, even could we pause to try.

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REDGAUNTLET.

Redgauntlet, the only novel to be published in 1824, was also coldly received at first. Waverley was still too fresh in the readers' minds to welcome this story of their romantic young "Chairley" grown old and disillusioned. It was not realized either how much of himself Scott had put into this tale in the character of Alan Fairford,<sup>1</sup> Yet the drama has not dealt too kindly with Redgauntlet, in spite of the fine group of clearly drawn characters: and the somewhat rambling but most interesting plot. Possibly it was the peculiar mode of correspondence Scott made use of to tell the first part of the story that frightened off all but one anonymous playwright, whose piece was produced at the Surrey shortly over a month after publication. This play was printed in an edition now completely lost so far as I can discover, called The Edinburgh Select British Theatre, published by John Anderson Jr., of Edinburgh and Simpkins Marshall, London, in paper-covered 18 mo. The only copy I have seen is a mutilated one used by W.H. Murray in preparing his revision for the Edinburgh Theatre-Royal, which has been preserved among the manuscripts in the Lord Chamberlain's Collection.<sup>2</sup>

This play opens before the cottage of Redgauntlet where Darsie Latimer has just stayed the night, after having been saved from the tide by his saturnine host. In the next scene, he meets the Quaker Joshua, and is invited to stay for a time with him and his sister. The scene then changes to Mr Fairford's house in Edinburgh where

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1. Lockhart says that this tale contains more of Scott personally than all the other novels put together. (vii. 214.)
  2. They were announced from time to time in 1823 and 1824 in Anderson's announcements in the press.

Alan receives a letter from the mysterious Greenmantle saying that his friend is in danger. Although his father had given him as his first case that of poor tragic-comic Peter Peebles, the perpetual litigant, Alan immediately starts out to the rescue much to Peter's indignation. Next we see the dance which Darsie attends with Blind Willie the fiddler, and where he meets Lilias, the lovely girl he had first seen in the house of Redgauntlet. She warns him to escape, and he slips away. In the next scene, however, he is made a prisoner by the rioters while helping Joshua defend his nets. In the second act Alan sets out with Capt. Nancy Ewert on the Jumping Jenny, a smuggler; while Redgauntlet persuades Justice Foxley to commit Darsie to his care. Peter Peebles enters and recognizes Redgauntlet as an unpardoned Forty-five man. Redgauntlet, however, tears up the warrant and bribes Nicolas, the clerk to overlook the matter. Next Darsie learns his own name and rank and that Lilias is his sister. Redgauntlet appeals to his patriotism to support the Jacobite cause and leaves him to reflect. The next scene is missing,<sup>1</sup> but was apparently Alan's landing in Cumberland, ill, and supported by Nancy and Jephson. This formed the beginning of the third act. The second scene concerns the happenings in Crakenthorp's Inn, where Redgauntlet, to get rid of Alan for the time, pretends that Peter's warrant for his arrest is legal. At the same time he tells Joshua that Darsie has not been harmed, and Nixon informs him that the "holy father" has come and is safely lodged. Redgauntlet again pleads with Darsie - they now

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1.

Literally cut out by Murray.

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call each other "Uncle" and "Sir Arthur" - and takes him away to Fair-ladies House, while Lilias introduces herself to Alan as Greenmantle, (We have not seen their former meeting in Edinburgh) and tells him what has happened. Joshua gets rid of Peter by pretending to listen to his boring tale. Peter has given young Benjie a penny to buy snuff for him, and in rifling the lad's pockets to recover his homey he finds a paper indicating that Nixon has communicated with the government. The third scene shows the meeting of "Father Buonaventure", who is really Charles Edward, with the gentleman concerned in his cause. He is much hurt at finding all but Redgauntlet so cold and fearful. Suddenly Lilias enters with word of Nixon's treachery. During the wild confusion which follows General Campbell arrives, but announces that he proposes allowing all who wish to embark on Nanty's waiting sloop. Charles goes, out leaning upon Redgauntlet's arm. In the final scene, we have the fight between Nanty and the traitor Nixon, in which they kill each other beside the waiting ship. The prince then approaches and after a general farewell, goes aboard, accompanied by Redgauntlet. As they sail, Charles speaks his last farewell to his few but constant friends and to his friendly foe, - and last of all, to the land of his fathers. There are sobs and cheers, and General Campbell salutes, as the curtain falls.

Murray announced his version for his own benefit on May 28th 1825, as being "for the first time in any theatre" which was rather a whopper, for his version as preserved in the Lord Chamberlain's collection, is simply the printed text of the Surrey play with the complete excision of two scenes of Alan's adventures,<sup>1</sup> to focus attention more upon his friend; part of another concerning the bribing

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1. ii. i, iv.

of the law by Redgauntlet,<sup>1</sup> and a slight change at the end, whereby that sad but loyal derelict Nanty was allowed to surprise his fight with Captain Nixon. Besides this, all references to the "Forty-five" and the "Pretender" are cut out. The amusing part of this is that when the play passed through the hands of Mr Licencer Coleman, he in turn set to work and red-inked all passages which referred to Charles as a king, especially phrases such as "Majesty", "subjects", and "sire."

It will be seen, perhaps, in the rather full summary of the plot just given, how carefully the novel was followed. Apart from a few adjustments in time, and Redgauntlet's decision to accompany his prince into exile, rather than become a monk, the story is nearly all there, and presented in a rather well-connected way. The characters, though bound to lose something in translation from a three volume novel to a three act play, are as vividly drawn as one could expect. Nevertheless, The Drama,<sup>2</sup> prejudiced no doubt by a few bad performances, condemned the whole as

"a milk and water adaption... nearly unintelligible to those who had not read the novel. It was wretchedly got up and as wretchedly performed. The richly drawn characters.... were here stripped of their depth of colouring and became mere outlines....The multiplicity of characters put every performer in the theatre in requisite and shewed the poverty of the company. Nothing could have been more villainously performed than the Pretender."

#### THE BETHROTHED.

With the publication of Tales of the Crusaders in June 1825, Scott attempted to recall the popularity of Ivanhoe. The playwrights, however, who had fallen upon the tale of Norman England

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1. II. ii.  
2. July 1824.

with such enthusiasm, turned up their noses as this story of ancient Wales, - so much so that Dr White was not aware that it had been dramatized at all. It was nevertheless, the subject of Fitzball's fourth adaptation of Scott and was performed at the Olympic on January 31st, 1826 as The Betrothed; or The Spectre of the Bleeding Hand.<sup>1</sup> Contemporary criticism seems to have missed it completely, but a manuscript copy (lacking the second act) is extant in the Lord Chamberlain's Collection.

The play opens with a conversation between Dame Gillian and Raoul her huntsman husband, which explains that the Castle of Garde Doloureuse is besieged by the Welsh, and that its master Sir Raymond Berenger is dead. Sir Hugo de Lacy, the Constable of Chester is on his way, and Raoul is determined that the walls must be held. Eveline Berenger stands upon the battlements and encourages her men to stand fast. The scene then changes for a moment to the camp of Sir Hugo, where Damian Lacy, his nephew, considerably tells the audience in an aside that he is in love with Eveline. Back in the castle Eveline speaks of a mysterious resolve which she is determined to keep,<sup>2</sup> but she also is considerate enough to say aside, "But ah! if our deliverer be Damian - what rapture!" The battle rages outside, described to us by Rose upon the walls. Damian breaks in victorious, to tell her the tidings, and she is borne away overcome, brokenly promising anything as her thanks to Sir Hugo.

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1. I ascribe it to Fitzball on the authority of Prof. Nicoll.  
 2. We know of course from the novel and learn in due course from the play what this is.

The remainder of the act depicts the grief of the brave Welsh over the death of their prince, and the determination of Cadwallon and Ranald (here called Rendal) Lacy to avenge him. The act ends with a grand funeral procession. The second act is completely missing in this manuscript, but must obviously have concerned principally the warning of Eveline by the ghost of one of her ancestresses, who foretold that she would be

"Widowed wife and married maid  
Betrothed, betrayer and betrayed",

her formal engagement to old Sir Hugo and her promise, contrary to the advice of her aunt, to await his return from Palestine whence he had been ordered by the archbishop. She was to reside in her castle with Rose and Dame Gillian as her attendants and Damian as her guardian. In the third act she is bored with her life and easily persuaded by Rendal, disguised as a fowler, to go hawking. Rose, however, suspects treachery. Sir Hugo is still lurking among the hills with Wilton in the usual disguise of Pilgrims, watching to see if his lady and his nephew be true. This of course is an obvious compression of time. Having decided they are, he is about really to set out for the Crusades, when Cadwallon, who has joined his service, maliciously tells him otherwise. He is ready to forgive her, for he realizes that they are unspited to each other, but the dishonour of his house by his nephew's conduct must be punished. As he retires, shouts of outlaws are heard, and the band comes on bearing Eveline. Damian rushes in to fight for her, but is overpowered. The third scene is most melodramatic. In the tomb of the dead prince, Rendal, disguised now as a priest, is about to

kill the lovers when Damian recognises his voice and defies him. At the last moment they are saved by some archers brought there by Rose, but Randal escapes. Sir Hugo is about to be assassinated by Cadwallon when Raoul and his wife enter in great distress to say that the cattle in some have have been seized by Randal. Here again there is a not unwise compression which excludes all the misadventures which preceded the grant to him by King Henry II. Damian is a prisoner in the castle and Redfinger's fearful prediction likely to come true. Sir Hugo makes himself known and goes, in the next scene, by a secret door to Damian's dungeon. Here he tests the young man's honour, and when he comes through with flying colours, reveals himself and leads his nephew to safety. The last scene takes place before de Lacy's castle, where a great crowd of soldiers is assembled. Cadwallon exalting<sup>ly</sup> stabs Randal, who is wearing Sir Hugo's armour, which he has stolen. The villain's exultation turns to dismay as Sir Hugo himself enters immediately afterward, and he plunges the dagger in his own breast. In the confusion the portcullis falls. Sir Hugo commands an attack, but Dawfyd the outlaw holds a knife over the head of Emeline and dares them to proceed. Rose, however, lets down the drawbridge. There is then a general attack, and of course a "conflagration". As the attackers triumph Sir Hugo joins the hands of Damian and his Eveline, and to *ensue* the ne plus ultra of entertainment, the

"Spectre appears in a cloud, over which the word  
'Peace' is inscribed - Tableau and Curtain."

1. Another play, called The Betrothed: or The Eve of St Mark's, by some unknown, was produced at the tiny Tottenham-Street theatre, then called the Queen's on the 16th of December, 1836. No record seems available, but since I can see no possible connection of the sub-title with the Scott romance, I am rather dubious about following Professor Nicoll's lead in including it in the list.

THE TALISMAN.

All records for speedy dramatization of the Waverley novels were broken by this one, for the day after its publication on June 21st 1825, a version announced as the work of a local playwright was produced at the Edinburgh Theatre-Royal. I expect there were plenty of rumours at the time, but no clue to his identity has been discovered. He must, however, have been on friendly terms with Scott, - even "in" on the open secret, perhaps - to have received - as Terry was so often offered - the advance sheets of the novel to work upon. But although this was distinctly a tour de force likely to make Tom Dibdin smile ruefully, no one seems to have been very impressed. The Edinburgh newspapers had little or nothing to say, and Murray was left to blow his own trumpet in a rather humorous epilogue which was spoken by his sister, Mrs Siddons :-

I now have something for your private ear;  
 Our manager's in a scrape, I fear;  
 The charge against him's serious, I own  
 Privately stealing from the Great Unknown !  
 The book came out on Tuesday<sup>1</sup> - presto-hey !  
 On Wednesday following you beheld the play.  
 The Printers and the Booksellers turned blue,  
 When our Gazette - the play bill - met their view.  
 They all declare it passes human means,  
 In four-and-twenty hours to plan the scenes ;  
 Then get them painted - many of them new ;  
 Study the parts, and make the dresses too :  
 The thing's impossible unless you deem  
 The fellow dramatized the book by steam !  
 Or else suppose that Murray, stupid elf,  
 Will prove at last the Great Unknown himself.  
 He stole the book. Should he have done the dead (sic)  
 His sole excuse necessity must plead ;  
 The houses have been thin of late, the weather hot  
 And nothing brings you but Sir Walter ---  
 So, urged by hope and need, two strong persuaders,  
 We pounced upon the Tales of the Crusaders.<sup>2</sup>

1.

Tuesday, June 21.

2.

Published in Dramatic Review June 28/25.

The Talisman, a Tale of the Crusaders, had a run of sixteen nights in Edinburgh, but did not remain popular. At the time, however, the Dramatic Review, ordinarily most critical, said in its sixth notice of the play: "This thing has been a talisman, for so fascinating and attractive it is to us that we would consider it a penance to be absent from it."<sup>1</sup>

Unfortunately no other copies of the Review during that month seem to have survived, so that its earlier and more particular remarks are not available. The manuscript, fortunately, exists still in the Lord Chamberlain's Collection, and from it we may see how skillfully the story was adapted.

The action begins at the point where Kenneth returns to the camp of the Crusaders with Hakon, an Arab physician with whom he became friends following a duel in the desert. King Richard is lying ill and after some discussion he decides to trust his enemy, and drinks the potion Hakim prescribes. The rest of the first act introduces Queen Berengaria and Edith Plantagenet and depicts the whole episode of the rival standards. Richard leaves Kenneth in charge, and as the curtain falls, the young Scot is shown kneeling at his post while shadowy figures watch him from the background.

The second act rather unwisely omits not only the events but the causes of Kenneth's lapse from duty, though the Queen and Edith make them clear enough later on as they plead with the angry king for the innocent victim of their jest. Despite their prayers, Richard is determined that the young man must die, impressed though he is with his bold bearing. As a boon to Hakim, however, he contents himself with a decree of banishment. The dialogue of this scene, as throughout, is rather skilfully compressed from the novel. Richard and

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Phillip pledge their mutual loyalty, but Conrad and the wily Templar plot to make the latter King of Jerusalem. Richard is informing his indignant kinswoman of his plan to marry her to Saladin when a man in eastern dress is seen to secrete himself among the draperies. De Vaux brings to Richard, as a gift from Saladin, a dumb Rubian slave, who having written that he can find the miscreant who removed the royal banner, saves the king's life from the assassin behind the curtains. The third act begins with the march past and the singling out of Conrad by Kenneth's dog, held by the slave. Richard has by this time secretly penetrated the young knight's disguise, but as a joke sends him to Edith, while he announces his intention of summoning Sir Kenneth from banishment to meet Conrad in the trial by combat. After a bit of comedy over his embarrassment in not being recognised by his lady, the play becomes more spectacular. After a scene of the meeting of Saladin's and Richard's trains in the desert, preparations begin for the gay and magnificent scene of the combat. Meanwhile, Edith explains her predicament. As a Christian, she cannot wed with the Infidel; and as a Plantagenet, she will not marry the poor knight whom she loves. The final scene, in which action predominates, shows the combat and the victory of Kenneth. Saladin asks Richard for a boon, the hand of Edith, which he then bestows upon Kenneth, now revealed as the Prince Royal of Scotland, and a fit lord for even the proud Edith Plantagenet.

On the fifteenth of December, of the same year, the Caledonian  
Mr Clifton  
produced The Lion of England; or The Talisman, "dramatized by/one  
of the acting company. According to the manager, it was "honoured

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1. Advertisement in Courant Dec. 17/28.

with shouts of approbation from an elegant and overflowing audience" and was therefore repeated two nights later. Despite these "shouts of approbation", however, it never proved a success.

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London did not see The Talisman until nearly a year after Edinburgh, quite the reverse of the usual course of events. On May 29th, 1826, Drury Lane brought out The Knights of the Cross; or The Hermit's Prophecy, by Samual Beazley, whose Ivanhoe at the same theatre had been so severely criticised six years before. In this play, however, Beazley contented himself with following his original very closely indeed. As the subtitle indicates, he included rather more than the "gentleman of Edinburgh" had done, emphasising the prophecy that Edith Plantagenet should by her marriage turn a powerful foe to a powerful friend, and the manner of its fulfilment through the prince of Scotland. Accordingly, he opens the play with Kenneth's experiences at the cave of the hermit, omitting however, his recognition in the nearby chapel by Lady Edith. For the rest the events are very similar, except that Beazley made clear by action why Sir Kenneth should have deserted his post of honour by the banner. Since both authors remained fairly close to the original, whole passages at a time are similar in feeling and dialogue.

Beazley's piece was thought very satisfactory by the

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1. Advertisement in Scotsman Dec. 17/25.

critics,<sup>1</sup> who praised the music selected by Henry Bishop and the scenery by Stanfield. One critic wrote as follows :-

"The two leading performers, Sir Kenneth's dog and Wallack (who played Richard) appeared to great advantage. The dog is decidedly the most intelligent animal of its species in existence. When Richard (accuses) the Marquis.... of having carried off the royal standard of England, the indignant quadruped growls his evidence to the truth of the charge, and shows the most unequivocal symptoms of a perfect intelligence of the scene; we never saw a more powerful piece of acting, and it was not lost on an enlightened audience."<sup>1</sup>

I can't make up my mind whether or not this is intended ~~##~~ ironically.<sup>2</sup>

#### WOODSTOCK.

With this novel, Scott returned once more to the civil strifes of the House of Stuart, and to a period he had already treated in Nigel, Montrose, Old Mortality and Peveril of the Peak. For the contemporary stage, it had on the one hand the fault of too much character without enough "incidents"<sup>3</sup>; but on the other it combined its amazing variety of incident with complete unity of plot. Properly handled, Woodstock might have become the best drama of them all - but, as it was, no one was wise enough or clever enough to see the possibilities, and for that reason we must write down this novel as virtually a failure in the theatre.

Charles Dibdin, the elder brother of Tom, and himself the author of many plays and still more sea-songs, was evidently first in the field with a version produced at the Surrey May 15th 1826,

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1. Theatrical Observer May 30/26.
  2. Dr White discusses briefly one or two more adaptations but as these are mainly foreign and operatic versions of the story, they may be omitted here.
  3. i.e. big scenes.

which seems to have run only seven nights when the season closed. A note in the Gentlemen's Magazine<sup>1</sup> has been taken to mean that the piece was than transferred to Covent Garden.<sup>2</sup> Apart from the ambiguity of the note, not to mention the possibility of error, fifteen and eight (for seven performances represented eight days) do not make twenty; and it was on the twentieth of May that the piece opened at the patent theatre. Joking aside, however, the Covent Garden piece, definitely, was written by Isaac Pocol<sup>ck</sup>ke. It was not a success and was withdrawn after five nights.<sup>3</sup>

In the first act nothing really happens, but the characters are skillfully introduced and sketched in fairly well. It carries the action to the offer of help made by Everard to Sir Henry Lee and his daughter Alice, which is spurned by the proud old cavalier. The second act begins with a splendidly dramatic scene in which Cromwell discovers his own portrait upon the back of one of King Charles the First. Wildrake dares to say to him :-

"Farewell Cromwell! Rather than bear thy guilt...  
I would be poor Roger Wildrake to the end. Have  
with thee, old Scant o' grace!"

Everard is reconciled to Alice, after which Albert arrives with Louis a page, who is really the fugitive Charles II. in disguise. The third act provides a very good comedy scene as the disguised prince hears himself described, and Albert's discomfort when Alice resists that Prince Charles was remarkably ugly. It soon becomes clear that Louis is paying rather a good deal of attention to the girl, and Sir Hugo/<sup>who</sup> is here shown as suspecting who he ~~is~~ ~~is~~ suspecting who

1. Gentleman's Magazine May 126. p. 460 states that Woodstock is to be produced at Covent Garden "after having been acted for seven nights at the Surrey Theatre."  
2. Nicoll op. cit. 375.  
3. See Literary Gazette May 27/26.

he is, is not at all sure that his daughter is safe with "master page". The act ends with Alice's rebuke to her Prince and the quarrel between him and Everard which is stopped by Sir Hugo as described in the novel. In the fourth act we learn that the two are going to fight a duel and that Phoebe <sup>has</sup> ~~has~~ discovered for her mistress when it is to take place. To save the Prince she determines to risk her reputation; and is sending him a summons for the very hour of the duel as Sir Hugo comes in - a fine touch of dramatic irony - laughing about the school-boy quarrel he has just stopped. We next see Cromwell planning to capture the Prince as he escapes by a secret passage - a fine character scene in which Cromwell reveals how haunted he is by the memory of his royal victim. The act ends with another excellent scene this time of rousing action. After the discomfiture of the swaggering Wildrake by the doctor, the duel is about to begin when Alice stops them, so sacrificing Everard's love. The Prince, however, is as noble as she, and by revealing his identity to Everard, a Cromwellian officer, converts him to his cause. The last act begins with the shattering news that the "red coats" (sic!) are upon them. Everard drops the messenger out the window with a note for Woodstock Lodge just as Cromwell enters. The scene rises to the climax of Cromwell's drawing his pistol. Wildrake's attempt to stab him, and the arrest of Everard. The news reaches the Lodge just in time to send the Prince off on horseback while Albert, in his clothes, entered the secret panel in the nick of time, <sup>Cromwell</sup> now finds himself baffled, but suddenly there is a sound of confusion outside, Albert rushes in and is captured. Maddened at being tricked, Cromwell condemns them all to death, but later, stricken again by his bloodstained

conscience, relents and wishes devoutly that he too had such loyal friends. Alice comes in with a message announcing the Prince's safety and further commanding that she and Everard be united. The remainder of the novel, wisely enough, is not attempted.

In Edinburgh, the Pocock revision was produced "with a few attractions"<sup>1</sup> probably by Murray or Calcraft, on June 17th. It was no more successful however, than in London, for it ran only seven evenings, and was not again revived there.<sup>2</sup>.

#### THE TWO DROVERS.

So remarkably similar are the various dramatic versions of this story that one might be led were it not that so short a tale did not admit of much variation in treatment, to suspect that they were all one.

The earliest transcript was a piece called Second Sight, or ~~the~~ Prediction, by Henry Goff, whose only play this seems to have been. It was acted at the Surrey on February 4th, 1828, and later, according to Dr White, at the Queen's and finally during the September Race Week in Perth. I have not myself come across his authority for this statement, but since a play from the Two Drovers

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1. Advertisement in Scotsman June 17/26.
  2. Annals. One or two operas, and a late play for the Adelphi by George Sims and Robert Buchanan in 1892, which are mentioned by Dr White, complete the list, so far as I know of dramatizations from Woodstock.

was certainly played in Perth<sup>1</sup> at that time, I think his statement probably is correct. In this case, the version produced by Charles Bass at the Edinburgh Caledonian July 4th 1828, is almost certainly the same play.

The Theatre-Royal followed up with a version of their own on November 10th, which Mr Dibdin thought to be Murray's, and different from the Goff play at the Surrey.<sup>2</sup> The Dramatic Journal<sup>3</sup>, however, pronounced it "nearly verbatim with the version produced some time ago at the Minor Theatre" which we may leave for what it be worth. A short review of the piece in the Scotsman, however, compared to the published Goff text indicates a great similarity except for the inept and ruinous happy-ending which the Edinburgh dramatist originated.

"It follows the novel closely except that the catastrophe is changed. In this play, Robin does not kill Harry Wakefield in their second encounter, but merely knocks him down and after flourishing his dirk over him, is reconciled to him. This sketch is too meagre and the characters are too little developed to create sufficient interest to buoy up the piece... The dialogue is not without point. What is chiefly wanting to its success is a little expansion to the second part, and a more brilliant denouement".<sup>4</sup>

This review record<sup>s</sup> also that although the Scottish instrumental music was a treat to his ears, that there were not a few hisses as the curtain fell.

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1. Monday Sept. 29/28 Baxter op. cit p. 167.
  2. Annals. 324
  3. November 12/28
  4. Scotsman Nov. 12/28.

Both Mr Dibdin and Dr White seem to believe that this play was revived in Edinburgh in 1841. They are to some degree correct (if my suppositions are sound) but it was, actually, a second edition of the original Goff play which was licensed for the Edinburgh Theatre-Royal by the Lord Chamberlain on the 4th of August 1841.<sup>1</sup>

#### THE HIGHLAND WIDOW.

Charles Bass, of the Northern Circuit, produced two different versions of this affecting tragedy of a mother's pride. The first was by an Edinburgh writer named John Mackay Wilson, the author of a play called The Gowrie Conspiracy also acted by this company<sup>2</sup>.

The Highland Widow was probably first produced in Perth; at any rate, it was played there during the week of March 7th, 1828, and came to the Caledonian in Edinburgh over a year later, for Alexander's benefit on May 20th 1829. No record of its success or failure seems now to exist, but it is significant that when Bass reopened the theatre for the summer season on June 13th, he produced a piece from his own pen called The Woman of the Tree, which but for an indication that it was derived from the Chronicles of the Canon-gate<sup>3</sup>, might never have been recognised as still another version of The Highland Widow. Information about Bass's play however is

also lacking.

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1. The play is preserved in the Lord Chamberlain's Collection *in* of the British Museum.
  2. At Perth on September 18, 1828.
  3. Advertisement Scotsman June 13/29.

At the same theatre, by then re-named the Adelphi under Murray's management, a third version was produced on September 17th 1836.<sup>1</sup> The Manuscript preserved in the Lord Chamberlain's Collection gives the name of the author, H. Marston, whose only piece this seems to be. I consider this play, pace the Edinburgh critics, as fine a piece of adaptation as was ever made from a story by Scott. Yet it ran only seven nights. To fill out the body of the piece one or two humorous scenes and characters are introduced. Strangely enough, this does not spoil the continuity of the tragic action, which marches on relentlessly from the enlisting of Hamish as a protest against the strong-minded dominion of his remarkable mother, to the horrible catastrophe, the worse because the woman herself does not understand it. The language of the novel made good dramatic dialogue, and a close adherence to the original gives the play strong characters and unusually clear motivation.

Hamish himself realizes when he joins the army that he may be at any time subjected to the dreaded and humiliating lash ; but that, he tells himself proudly, is only for those who break their faith. His mother does not understand anything but the wild hunted life she has led with the boy's father, the first principle of which was hatred of the Camerons. The last two scenes of the first act contrast the gaiety of Hamish's farewell in the village, and the very different one in his mother's hut on the night he is to march off to join his regiment. He goes in to sleep for a little, asking her to call him when the moon rises. On the modern stage, even a significant look on the old woman's face might be deemed over-emphasis, but

1. One of the few errors I have detected in Mr Dibdin's Annals is his dating of this play three days later. (p. 369.)

Marston felt called upon to end the act with an aside to imply she would do no such a thing. After an interpolated scene of rather robust humour, the second act again takes up the threads of tragedy. Sergeant Campbell, noticing Hamish's absence at they are about to march, very decently decides, against advice, to go by way of his home and pick him up. Hamish awakes to find himself betrayed. His mother uses the only arguments she knows, and by playing on his proud fear of the scourge, the punishment meted out to deserters, incites him to resist capture. He fires, and kills Cameron, before he is secured by the soldiers. The next scene shows the village lament over the noble young sergeant. Elsbeth enters, bearing her grief proudly, and makes an impassioned outburst to the effect that if her son must die it will not be white-handed, for upon them now is the hated Cameron blood. The villagers stand staring after her. Hamish is condemned to death, though his colonel pleads with the general for a milder sentence. The last scene is horrifying. To the strains of the Dead March, Hamish passes across the stage. Elsbeth enters just in time to hear the volley, and stands in silent misery as the funeral procession returns. Suddenly galvanized into action as the numbing horror of it leaves her, she screams upon them a mother's curse and falls dead. The curtain comes down to slow music.

Two other versions of the tale may be mentioned, though more particular information about them has not been found. A play called Military Punishment; or The Fate of the Widow's Son at the Surrey August 10th 1846, is, Professor Nicoll states, from Scott.<sup>1</sup> Mr Dibdin mentions a play called Dougald the Piper at the Edinburgh

1. op. cit. 95, n. 4.

Theatre Royal on January 2nd, 1852, which he says is similarly derived.<sup>1</sup> A careful search of contemporary newspapers however has yielded exactly nothing. I include it therefore upon his authority alone.

### THE FAIR MAID OF PERTH.

The reception given at the dramatic version of this novel seems to illustrate how far indeed the vogue for Scott upon the stage had declined. In its way, the Fair Maid is composed of as good dramatic material as any of the early romances/<sup>which</sup>were rushed eagerly into the theatre still damp from the presses; yet only in the north of Scotland,<sup>and</sup>/especially,-naturally enough - in Perth, had the acting version any degree of success.

The first adaptation, nevertheless, was produced in London, not long after the publication of the story. The Coburg on June 23rd, 1828, brought out St Valentine's Eve; or The Fair Maid of Perth, by H. M. Milner,<sup>(1)</sup> a prolific writer of melodramas. I have not seen any particular notice of its production, but the fact that as The Fair Maid of Perth; or The Battle of the Inch, it was later published in Lacy's Acting Edition<sup>1</sup> indicates at least that it was not a failure. The following "Program of Scenes and Incidents" from this version gives a good idea of the play<sup>2</sup>.

#### Act. 1.

Scene 1. Simeon Glover's House - Quarrel of Harry and Conacher.

Scene 2. High Street of Perth - Attempt of Rothesay and his

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1. White is I am sure in error when he includes the publisher as a co-author.
  2. Several of the names it would be observed have been altered ; for instance Henry Gow has become Harry Smith.

followers to carry off Catherine Glover - they are attacked by Harry - Sir John Ramorney loses his hand.

Scene 3. Room at the Glovers - the stolen kiss - departure of Conacher.

Scene 4. Courtyard of the Dominican Convent - Gallantries of Rothesay with the gleewoman - indignation of the Black Douglas - the quarrel quelled by the presence of the King - Harry the champion of gleewoman - the Council - the feud of the rival clans to be terminated by a chivalric combat in the presence of the king.

Scene 5. Ramorney's Lodgings - Vengeance of the knight for the loss of his hand - conspiracy for the assassination of Harry.

Scene 6. The Wynd of Perth. Prince and his courtiers - morris dance of the masquers - penance done by the bonnet maker - his appeal to the protection of Harry - though arrayed in armour he falls a victim to vengeance - his assassination by Bonthron - Discovery of murder - mistake of the citizens - grief of Proudfoot's widow - indignation of citizens - despair of Catherine Glover.

Scene 7. Harry Smith's House. Interesting scene between Harry and Catherine.

Scene 8. Town Hall of Perth. - arrangements for the ordeal of beir-right. Harry chosen champion of the widows and orphans.

Scene 9. The Court - citizens assemble to witness the solem ordeal of bier-right - the corpse of the murdered man is exposed - Sir John Ramorney's servants make oath upon the body - Refusal of Bonthron to do so. Judicial combat between Harry and Bonthron, who is vanquished and charged with the murder. He accuses Rothesay. The King faints.

Act. II.

Scene 1. Simeon Glover's House. Simeon and his daughter accused of heresy and forced to fly.

Scene 2. The Banks of the Tay. Grand Highland banquet at the inauguration of the new chief. HIGHLAND BALLET.

Scene 3. State Apartment in Falkland Castle. Catherine in the power of Rothesay - her appeal to his generosity - magnanimity of Prince - Rothesay treacherously conveyed to a dungeon by Ramorny and his followers.

Scene 4. A Hut in the Highlands - Impressive interview between Conacher and the glover, in which the former confesses his shameful secret.

Scene 5. Gardens of Falkland Castle - Rothesay rescued from starvation by ingenuity of Catherine and Louise.

Scene 6. Dungeons of Falkland Castle - The cruel murder of the Prince by Bonthron - ineffectual attempt of Catherine to save him - assassin taken in the act by the sudden arrival of Black Douglas.

Act III.

Scene 1. View of Perth - Demise of Torquil of the Oak to screen the weaknesses of his chief.

Scene 2. North Inch of Perth - Lists prepared for the grand combat between the rival clans. Harry supplies the place of a deserter from Clan Chattan - arrival of Oliver Proudfoot with his armour. TERRIFIC COMBAT OF TWELVE - Heroic devotion of Conacher and the destruction of Clan Quhale.

Scene 3. Royal Apartment - Grief and rage of the king at Rothesay's death - his affecting reproaches to his brother.

Scene 4. Gardens of St Hunnand with Falls of Campsie Linn.

Despair and death of Conacher and union of Harry and Catherine ;  
pipers play; grand tableau.

It will be seen from such a summary how much of the story was included, and how closely the original was followed.

The standard version for Scotland, however, was written by Charles Bass, the manager of the Northern Circuit, and produced in Perth on September 23rd, 1828. Local interest, according to Mr Baxter<sup>1</sup> attracted an overflowing audience and none went away disappointed.

"If Bass did not arrange a thoroughly connected drama (always a difficult thing to do with the Waverley Novels, owing to the number of characters Sir Walter Scott has in each) he at least evinced both taste and judgment in a faithful presentation of the most striking incidents and dialogue of the original novel so far as they are suited for representation.... The dresses and scenery were new and effective.... Hal o' the Wynd who in the story is rather an unobtrusive personage, although not slack to fight either for his 'ain hand' or to revenge the wrongs of others when drawn into the vortex of contention, was made by Mr Bass into a somewhat fight loving and blustering armourer."

The play ran nine nights on its first production - a very good run for Perth - and was often revived.<sup>2</sup>

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1. Op. cit. 164 f:

2. The Bass company acted this play at the Caledonian in Edinburgh during the next season, ~~but~~ on June 29, 1829, but for some unknown reason it was never attempted at the Theatre-Royal.

Dr White (op.cit 190) mentions an original play in New York in 1828, by P.V. Bell, but this seems to complete the list.

ANNE OF GEIERSTEIN.

This was the last of Scott's novels to attract the attention of the drama makers. There is not the least doubt that had this delightful story of the Maid of the Mist, which retains so marvellously the spirit and keenness of youth been published eight or ten years before, it would have been seized upon with delight by a half dozen of them at once. It was completely ignored by the London Theatres, so much had the demand for Scott plays abated, and only an obscure Scottish dramatist named John Mackay Wilson<sup>1</sup> attempted to put Anne's romantic story on the stage. Under the title Margaret of Anjou ; or The Noble Merchants, it was produced at the Edinburgh Caledonian during August 1829, three months after its publication. What it was like, or how it fared, we shall probably never now discover. I have not found evidence of more than a single production in Edinburgh, but I have no doubt that it was played also in the northern cities under Charles Bass's management.

Dr White<sup>2</sup> gives a short account of a play produced at the Bowery Theatre in New York on March 3rd, 1834, which seems to have had some very effective and vivid scenes, including the battle of Liege, Anne's rescue of Arthur from the yawning chasm, and finally all the glittering splendour of Burgundy's court. Apart from these two lone plays however there seems to have been no attempt to dramatize the story.

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1. Author of Highland Widow.  
 2. op. cit. 191.

§ 5. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE WAVERLEY DRAMAS.

We should not leave the dramatizations of Scott without some more general attempt to unravel their faults and their merits. Have they, we must ask, any real dramatic significance? After all, the drama is a form of composition which differs essentially from every other. The novel may admit of a long, puzzling and intricate story which can be developed only in the space of hundreds of pages, - complex characters may be described as well as illustrated by a multiplicity of minute and cumulative details. But in the drama this is not possible. The story can hardly be too simple - it must need no long details to unravel it; narrative so far as possible must be excluded; everything essential must be in the dialogue and action. In a word, concentration is the great object, and a drama to be effective, must be developed by a rapid succession of very relevant actions and speeches. If delicate lines and suggestive touches can also be added, so much the better, but the real framework of a successful play must have strong and decisive features, planned and constructed especially for the object in view. All of these are good reasons why the Waverley novels might well have made very bad dramas indeed. Moreover, the enthusiasm which their general excellence had already excited, and the sort of friendly acquaintance with the characters which audiences already had, tended to disarm immediate criticism. So they were, on the whole, successful: but what do we today think of them?

The chief thing we must remember in discussing these plays is that they are no longer novels. Prejudices, therefore, must be forgotten: changes in the characterization and the plot, compressions and omissions of incident and people, alterations of

motivation or emphasis, even gratuitous additions by the adaptor, must all be considered upon their own merits. Should they prove effective dramatically, if they go to make a good play, we must accept them as elements not only justifiable but essentially excellent. We shall in the next few pages, then, glance back over the long list of adaptations and note some of their weaknesses and strengths in diction, characterization, concentration, emphasis and plot.

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DICTION - The chief weakness to be noticed in the language of these Waverley dramas is a tendency to appear rather piebald, - rising at one point to heights of forcefulness, and again dropping back to a dead level of complete commonplace. The cause, obviously was the scissors-and-paste-pot-method of construction, stringing together the best scenes verbatim from the novels with a minimum of connective material. We have already alluded to an outstanding example of this kind, the Drury Lane version of Kenilworth in which the difference between true coin and false is clearly to be noted.<sup>1</sup> Audiences, as we have seen, were inclined to think more of stage "business" than of witty or subtle dialogue. On the whole, therefore we find little ambitious writing in these plays: the dialogue is principally confined to the forwarding of the action of the story. A slavish adherence to the original, moreover, led in many cases not

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In this section, since much of the detail has already been presented, few footnotes will be necessary.

only to heaviness from the inclusion of tedious detail, as for instance Calcraft's Bride of Lammermoor,<sup>1.</sup> but even to sheer absurdity. The classical example, I suppose, is the same author's Battle of Bothwell Brig in which a character, two days after the battle, refers to the revolution, which must be supposed to have intervened. When dramatists chose, as they sometimes did, to use blank verse, they were almost invariably unsuccessful, not so much because they turned away from the original dialogue as from the fact that after all the ability to write blank verse is not as common as many of them seemed to suppose; besides it offered temptations to bombast and padding which few resisted successfully.

Upon the other side there is but little to be said. It should be noticed, however, that Scott's hasty, almost careless, method of composition often made him verbose. Like Pascal, in one of his Provincial Letters, he was 'in too much of a hurry to be more brief'. The adapters sometimes did very good work in compressing Scott's dialogue to more natural bounds. One might compare, for instance, the rather wordy quarrel between Fergus and Waverley with the short but effective scene Fitzball makes of it in his play.

CHARACTERIZATION - Weaknesses in the character-drawing of several dramas have already been pointed out. In Terry's Antiquary and both versions of the Battle of Bothwell Brig, it was caused by the essential unfitness of the novel for dramatic form. Sometimes, again, it must be charged to the sheer inability of the dramatist,

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See Theatrical Observer, November 24, 1823.

as in the anonymous Drury Lane Kenilworth. The interview of Leicester and Varney, which is a paraphrase of the grand scene between Othello and Iago, and which in the hands of a better man might have been worked up to a tremendous pitch of interest, is hurried over in such a rapid and slovenly way as to produce no effect whatever. The necessity for compression and the consequent loss of much that made the characters real in the narrative must be noticed in a number of plays. Even in Pocock's Rob Roy, the parts of Rob and the Baillie are built up at the expense of other characters: Rashleigh is relegated to a mere sketch, and the interesting Di Vernon becomes a very ordinary mawkish young lady in love, wandering about in various Highland glens singing Burns' songs. In Guy Mannering, Meg is really the only character successful on the stage; and even she Terry has made more refined and less imposing. Dominie Sampson is described in the novel as a person remarkable for his taciturnity; yet in this play, he is made to deliver long speeches and even to lift his voice in song! In all versions of The Pirate the characterization is weak because too many characters are included for clarity, let alone dramatic interest in any central figure. The same is true of Peveril of the Peak, in spite of his slight treatment of the Countess of Derby. It must be said also that both plays, in classifying the character of Fanella, only make her improbability the more apparent. The Legend of Montrose loses effective characterization because the chief figures were too dim and shadowy, too like the ghosts of Celtic poetry, to survive translation to the stage. When they are reduced to flesh, blood and grease paint they lose completely those

unearthly and superhuman qualities with which the original had invested them. The Theatrical Inquisitor complained for instance of Dibdin's play that the boldly designed character of Allan had been<sup>1.</sup> boiled down to a mere 'walking gentleman'.

Fortunately, however, quite as many of the plays succeeded much better with their characterization. In the Ivanhoe versions, for instance, minor characters are dropped completely to make room for clear and vivid chief figures; even the despised Soane is capable of making it plain that, although Brian has no intention of marrying, he does in his own way love Rebecca.<sup>2.</sup> Isaac, too, is firmly drawn as a sordid but not ungrateful usurer, who yet by his sheer sense of injustice can at moments seem to tower over the might of his oppressors. Similarly in Calcraft's Bride of Lammermoor, Sir William Ashton is divested of much of his importance, but considerable study and attention has been devoted to the character of Edgar. Lucy is particularly well drawn and is an effective contrast to some of the heroines, (like Diana in Rob Roy) who are mutilated into mere vehicles for introducing songs. Calcraft shows clearly that she was as putty in the hands of her strong-willed mother, and that she had no real freedom of choice when Bucklaw was selected as her husband. All the Nigel plays, were forced to drop interesting people, but those that remain are clearly drawn. Even Pocock's which varied widely from the original, impelled the Theatrical Observer to admit that "the play was written by no vulgar pen".<sup>3.</sup> Dibdin's Heart of Midlothian was one of the best from the

1. July, 1819.

2. II., ii.

3. February 23rd, 1823.

standpoint of effective characterization. We note especially the excellent way in which the Characters of Effie and Jeanie, Madge and old Margery, Robertson and Dumbiedykes, David Deans and the law officers are mutually contrasted. Both Murray and Beverley did well with their versions of The Abbot, preserving in both the serious and the comic characters the essential features which made them successful in the original story. Pocock's Woodstock is a drama of character rather than of action, and contains several well-rounded figures. Cromwell in particular is very sympathetically presented with all his contradictions clearly shown. Dibdin's Pirate, Milner's Fair Maid of Perth, the anonymous St. Ronan's Well and a score or more besides, have at least one or two vivid stage portraits which raise them definitely above the ruck of ordinary contemporary melodrama. Others clarify and sometimes actually improve the original characterization. Murray's Ivanhoe, by omitting some of his harsher features, makes Brian more human; he is represented as having a heart that can be touched by remorse, even by pity, and distracted at once by love and pride. Dibdin, too, straightens out some of this novel's contradictions by presenting Brian as more and Front de Boeuf as less of a gentleman. Murray was also successful with Nigel, leaving out the despicable pursuits into which he was seduced by evil example, and not only making him more of a hero than he appears in the novel, but exciting some little interest in his personal fortunes. Dibdin makes Robertson in Midlothian more probable by emphasising the fact that he dare not for his very life come into the open and acknowledge his child while he is sought by the law. The author of the Kenilworth published by Oxberry, is very successful in his presentation of

Countess Amy. He increases somewhat her dread of Tony Foster, makes her show regret that she cannot go to her father when she hears that he is ill, yet leaves no doubt that she has chosen her position as Leicester's unacknowledged wife as much from her love of power as for love of the earl himself. That Varney is impelled as strongly by his desire for Amy as hatred of his lord is also made clear.

MOTIVATION AND PROBABILITY - a discussion of characterization leads inevitably into one of motivation, where again we notice weak as well as strong points in the Waverley series. Many of the weaknesses are either translated directly from the novels, or are caused by the carelessness or the over-zeal of the compiler. The novel of Montrose for instance, bristles with improbabilities; we are not surprised, therefore, to find that Pocock's adaptation is never quite clear as to why the characters should have done precisely this or that. The Pirate, too, was unfortunate: in Calcraft's version, no less than seven of the characters are of equal importance so far as the catastrophe is concerned, so that Yellowley, who has no necessary connection with the plot at all, attracts far more than his share of notice. Besides, the fates of Basil, Mertoun, Cleveland, Bunce, Minna, and Lorna are made all to hang by the self-same thread so that between them and Mordaunt the nominal hero, there is a dissipation of all interest of that peculiar and exclusive kind so requisite in a drama. We have already referred to the clumsy device of an overheard soliloquy in the Caledonian Quentin Durward and the absurdity Arnold produced by trying to make the misanthropic Black Dwarf also the romantic hero.

In the original Peveril, the effrontery of Christian with the powerful Duke of Buckingham is explained, but Fitzball's play fails to make clear how any such thing could come about. Happy endings were almost never successful, because they destroyed the whole meaning and motivation of what had gone before. We have noted such silly changes in a Bride of Lammermoor at the Edinburgh Caledonian, and Murray's Two Drovers, which lose with their death, so to speak, their life. We might add The Pirate in both Fitzball's and Calcraft's versions, where the preservation of Captain Cleveland does not strike one as being sufficiently well-motivated. The same may be said, I think, of Nanty Ewart in Murray's Redgauntlet. The only happy ending that approached success was that in Dibdin's Kenilworth, where Varney instead of Amy is hurled to death in the floor-trap.

Other plays, however, show excellences in motivation quite as definite. Several compilers are successful in making their plays hang together very well. Calcraft's Bride of Lammermoor and the Oxberry Kenilworth may be mentioned again, along with Dibdin's Heart of Midlothian and Ivanhoe. The Edinburgh St. Ronan's Well, also, has an unbroken tissue of interest, and the mysteries of the story appear to be developed with even greater clearness and simplicity than they are in the novel. In Fitzball's Peveril the motives of Julian are made clearer, and so account for his strange behaviour in London. Fenella, too, however impossible she may be, is nevertheless given a logical motive for nearly everything she does; and Major Bridgenorth's feelings are never allowed to be too obscure. Marston's version of The Highland Widow seems

to me, as I have already suggested, as well constructed as any of them, in fact a model dramatization of a Scott narrative. CONCENTRATION and SUPPRESSION. Obviously, in compressing a three-volume novel into the space of three acts for the stage, the scissors had to be used ruthlessly, and it is only to be expected that little but the high lights of the novel could be included. Often, therefore, this cutting interfered seriously with the connection of the story and made the play, except in relation to the original, hard to follow. But in this case to understand all is not to forgive all: the fact that the adapter's difficulties proved insuperable is not an excuse for having the play produced. We must, for this reason, condemn the Terry-Pocock Antiquary, which completely lacks unity of action, and the denouement of which is so rapid as to be, without the novel, almost incomprehensible. This is true, even though we may admit that the fault lay not so much in the adapters as in the original story. As a further example Pocock's Peveril of the Peak leaps to the recollection, with Dibdin's Bride of Lammermoor, Ryder's Waverley, and that also by Calcraft, a scathing criticism of which by the Dramatic Review has already been mentioned. Then, there are other gaps in the plays that only strike one as rather too bad, - scenes and characters left out that might have had excellent dramatic effect. Such, it seems to me, was the omission of both Dandie Dinmont and Lucy Bertram from Dirk Hatteraick; the first meeting of Dandie with Meg and Brown in a Border inn, and the escape of Henry while the customs house burned, which do not appear in Terry's Guy Mannering; Calcraft's omission of the comical supper at Wolf's Crag in The Bride of Lammermoor, with Caleb's long apologies and the final

production of the salt herrings, and from the same tale, the prophecies of the fearsome hags whose duty it was to lay out bodies for burial may be noted. Many others would occur to the individual reader or playgoer, such as the loss of Gurth and King Richard in Ivanhoe, Triptolemus in the Drury Lane Pirate, Prince Charlie in Fitzball's Waverley, and so on. Compression led also to certain absurdities. We have already mentioned, of course, the classic example in Calcraft's Battle of Bothwell Brig. Terry, in The Heart of Midlothian omits Butler, but makes Jeanie admit she loves him; Soane is compelled by his plot changes in Ivanhoe to dispense with the Ashley tournament, but the second act opens, nevertheless, with the hero paying Isaac for the armour. Both Beazley and Murray combine the parts of Ivanhoe and Richard, Front de Boeuf and Brian. As a result Ivanhoe who is supposed to be lying seriously wounded nevertheless revels heartily with Friar Tuck, and Front de Boeuf, who should have died at the taking of Torquil stone, is seen alive and well in the last act.

Not all the "cuts" in Scott's stories resulted so badly, however; we have dozens of instances of improvement, by securing greater intensity and unity of action. The anonymous Redgauntlet cut out much of the tedious tirades of poor Peter Peebles, and Murray went even further, omitting some of Alan's adventures as well, to throw more intense light on the affairs of Darsie. Beazley's Knights of the Cross confines the interest mainly to the central incidents surrounding the theft of the royal banner with a dash of love and mystery 'to make the gruel slab'. Murray freed his George Heriot from several scenes of Margaret's doings in the

Tower, which he rightly considered to be useless, and Dibdin concentrated interest on the main events of Midlothian by suppressing most of the events of the Porteous riots. Pocock's Rob Roy and several Waverleys skipped the first few chapters of the novel and began where the plot began really to thicken. Transpositions rather than suppressions enabled Beazley to get considerable effect in Ivanhoe, but Dibdin and his sub-adaptors, if one may so term them, simplified everything in the last half of Kenilworth to bring out three good situations, - Smith's loss of the evidence against Varney, the discovery of Tressilian in Amy's tower-room at Kenilworth, and finally, the Queen's thwarted and jealous rage. Dan Terry's omission of the scenes of Jeanie's journey to London in Midlothian may seem very sad to a lover of the novel but it cannot be denied that they do in Dibdin's play tend definitely to dissipate dramatic effect; and for that reason Terry's ruthlessness must be commended.

**EMPHASIS.** We can hardly hope to divide our discussion of these plays into watertight compartments: much that would fit into this one has already been mentioned. We have noticed, for example, the loss of proper emphasis entailed by the divided interests of the Pirate and spoken at some length of the good and bad effects of compression in a number of the plays. Another weakness that we may notice under this heading, however, is the occasional clumsiness by which dramatists revealed their denouements before the proper time. As examples might be cited Eyre's Lady of the Lake, where the Knight of Snowdon was known to be King James from the beginning, Beazley's Ivanhoe, where the disguised Palmer

indulged in a long soliloquy about his affairs in the very first act, and Carlyle's Black Dwarf in which Sir Edward decides in the presence of the audience to go and live his lonely life on the moor. Such faulty technique of course was invariably ruinous to proper effect, because it destroyed completely the emphasis of the climax.

While none of these plays are perfect, many of them did make a notable effort towards securing proper emphasis. We have mentioned for instance the judicious cuts of incident in Redgauntlet and in one or two of the Waverleys. Others might be added. The first example that occurs to me is Planche's St. Ronan's, where the doings of the worshipful company at the Well are not brought in after the first act, to avoid confusing the main story. There were cuts of character as well. In Oxberry's version of Kenilworth, the emphasis upon Amy and Elizabeth is somewhat stressed, while the spectator is asked to bear in mind the plea of stern necessity when he sees Elizabeth's great statesman Lord Burleigh simply introduced as her attendant - her own relation Hunsden dwindled into a train-bearer, and her protege Sir Walter Raleigh little more than an automaton.<sup>1.</sup> The principal characters were not always developed solely at the expense of lesser ones, of course; often they were given a few deft touches by the dramatist, which made all the difference. At random we might instance Dibdin's Ivanhoe in which a definite attempt is made to portray surging and conflicting emotions in the chief scenes; the same

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1. Remarks in printed edition (1824).

writer's Heart of Midlothian where the apparent madness of Madge Wildfire is emphasised in order to bring about a more forceful climax when she is revealed as a powerful friend to several of the chief characters; and Fitzball's Nigel in which the curious character of King Jamie is emphasised as a definite strand in the plot. PLOT CHANGES. As we approach the end of our list of topics, it becomes increasingly difficult to avoid overlapping. We have already deprecated the sentimental foolishness of adaptors who tried to give happy endings to tragical tales such as The Bride of Lammermoor, The Two Drovers, Montrose and Kenilworth. We might note also one or two instances of alteration, which, being totally unnecessary do much harm to the effect of the whole. Leaving aside such wholesale plot changes as are found in Soane's Rob Roy and Ivanhoe, Pocock's Nigel and the operatic versions of Guy Mannering combined with The Monastery, there is still the anonymous Ivanhoe,<sup>1.</sup> in which Cedric is made to oppose his son's marriage with Rowena, and finally to give his consent only at the persuasion of the Lionheart himself. In Huie's Kenilworth, Amy is summoned from Cumnor by Elizabeth instead of being made to break her lord's command by her own anxiety and fear. We may remember also Terry's absurd plenipotentiary in Midlothian who turns out to be the father of Robertson but who, like Lucius Brutus, is quite prepared to send

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1. See supra p.

2. Hardly so much of a change as an example of carelessness is Calcraft's accommodation of Lucky Macleary with a pair of servants in Waverley. The great charm of the original scene, as peculiarly descriptive of ancient manners, was the effective contrast of this lone woman's habitation with her ample stores of claret and the condescension of the magnates of the neighbourhood in enjoying their carouses there.

his son to the gallows for his part in the Porteous riots.

Some changes, however, did improve the stories in a dramatic, or at least a theatrical sense. Only in a French opera by Duncange<sup>1</sup> and a late play by J.P. Simpson did the lovers in the Bride of Lammermoor die in the quicksand. Most versions ended/less<sup>the play</sup> ambiguously with Edgar's death at the end of the harrowing scene in which he learned the truth. Dibdin had him killed by a domestic as he drew his sword, but Soane and Calcraft chose the effective but more obvious course of having him stab himself. Similar is the death of Brian in the fight with Ivanhoe which Beazley found more effective than the tamer conclusion in the novel, and the capture and punishment of Dalgarno instead of his death by a chance shot while eloping with Mrs Christie in Fitzball's Nigel. We have also a number of changes which, though they might not otherwise be justifiable, must be allowed because of their consistency. Terry's alteration of relationships in Guy Mannering is as good an example as any. Dibdin re-arranged the order of incidents somewhat in the Pirate and hid the identity of Cleveland rather longer than in the novel. Dimond also, in working up the same story made Cleveland a much more agreeable person in order that his love affair with Minna might become credible. I think we might even comment on this point the much abused Ivanhoe of Will Moncrieff.

One topic remains, more as an explanation than an exposition. Every reader of these dramas must be puzzled and irritated by the constant introduction of music. It was one thing to use

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1. La Fiancee de Lammermoor (1828) See Appendix.

instrumental music to heighten emotional effect, but quite another to drag in songs at every convenient and inconvenient opportunity. Sometimes the songs blendsweetly and naturally with the story, but more often they serve only to slow up the action and dissipate dramatic effect. There are besides, many instances of the same shee<sup>y</sup> absurdity which Scott commented upon in Canning's burlesque play in the Anti-Jacobin "where to hide their conspiracy, the associates join in a chorus song."<sup>1.</sup> In the Huie Kenilworth, Tressilian sings a song at the inn while easily within hearing of his pursuers in the tap-room below. Rob Roy is as good an example as any of the plays.

In this piece there are no fewer than fourteen musical introductions such as songs, ballads, duets and nearly every one is either in circumstance or sentiment incongruous. Was it at all likely, for instance, that the Bailie and his friends Mr Owen and Francis would after the rather unceremonious departure of Rob unite with Mattie in performing a quartette? Neither the hour, nor the circumstances nor the persons authorise such an idea. Again Francis sings to his chance acquaintances in the ale house the peculiarly inappropriate "Auld Lang Syne". When he is returning, charged with Helen's stern and imperative message and just before he meets Diana and her father, Francis is given another song, which whether we look at the words or the singer is highly unnatural and improper. On Francis's part it could indicate only extreme callousness, for he had just left a place reeking with blood and echoing with the cries of the wounded and dying, a place where he had left his friend

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1. Journal, December 23/25.

in gravest danger. The songs usually introduced so carelessly here were "Life is like a summer flower" or (more usually, and for an Englishman, more inappropriately) "Macgregor's Gathering."

One more example will complete the case. The capture of Rob at Abeffoyle, by itself one of the most striking and effective scenes in the play, was usually weakened into sheer artificiality by the introduction of the gay and measured cadence of Bishop's "Tramp Chorus" sung by the women of the village.

The reason for this state of affairs is rather curious, and is bound up with the rise of melodrama and the minor theatres. In brief, audiences had by about 1800 become weary of the uninspired productions of such writers as Mrs Inchbald, Cumberland, Murphy and the elder Coleman, and wanted novelty. They found it "on the Surrey side" in the spectacles and melodramas of the unlicensed theatres. Now, according to law, music was necessary in these places (for only the patented houses were allowed to play straight drama) and consequently when the legitimate theatres in order to keep their doors open at all were forced at last to imitate, the technigue of the minors was carried over with their pieces, and music became considered an essential part of any successful play. The following item of gossip from The Edinburgh Literary Journal<sup>1.</sup> will perhaps indicate the extent to which the poison had spread by 1829.

"The performers at the Dublin Theatre hage been quarreling with the manager, Mr Brown, because he will not allow them to introduce any songs they choose into the operas....We highly approve of the manager's conduct, and wish some others would follow his example."

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1. January, 17/29.

Chapter V.

CONCLUSION.

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Now that we have examined in some detail Scott's various points of contact with the theatre we may, I think, stop a moment to ask, what did he do for the drama? what did the drama do for him?

His own dramas we may leave aside, for they have little or no practical significance; but in these "dramatic grand-children" of his, he captured, for two decades, the interest of play-goers everywhere. Professor Nicoll contents that his plots had, from their very nature, the effect of tightening the fetters of melodramatic tradition. It seems to me, nevertheless, that the Waverley dramas rendered two important services. In the first place, as I have tried to show, they gave to the bastard race of melodrama at least a few examples in which sense, feeling and historical accuracy mingled with clear characterization well-oiled motivation, and sound, but not smug morality. With the rise of melodrama, Scott had nothing to do - he would gladly have seen it "swept from the boards" - and it is obvious, when we consider how it has persisted even to our own day that there are about it many "fetters" stronger than any hammered by Scott. In rendering melodrama more artistic, therefore, I believe that the Waverley series did more good than harm. The second service is pointed out in the reminiscences of Edward Fitzball, one of the most facile of Scott's adaptors. He hails Sir Walter Scott as "the mighty luminary which reflected its lustre upon the so-called illegitimate drama" - by which he means that Scott helped to make the Minor

Theatres popular, - for the great majority of the Waverley dramatizations, so far, at least, as London was concerned, were produced outside the pale of legitimacy. The competition of these unlicensed but ambitious Minor Theatres caused eventually, - though we may smile at some of the immediate results, - the downfall of monopoly and so prepared the way for the slow but sure regeneration of dramatic art in England. It would be foolish to claim for the Waverley plays any very great part in this movement, but their influence, though small, was definite, and so, I think, deserves mention.

Scott's agreement and co-operation with John Kemble on the subject of accurate stage costume and setting was another distinct contribution to the betterment of the theatre. J. Robinson Planché, whom we remember as one of Fitzball's rivals, has in fact ascribed to Sir Walter "the honour of having first attracted public attention to the advantages derivable from the study of such subjects as a new source of effect as well as of historical illustration"<sup>1</sup>, and Professor Nicoll agrees that here, at least, Scott's influence, though he left the actual achievement, indeed, to other men, can hardly be over-exaggerated.

Worthy of mention, too, is his lifelong condemnation alike of the unwieldy size of the Major Theatres in London and the immoral conditions which were still allowed to prevail there. The opinions of a man of his eminence and popularity were not, it is easy to believe, without weight, and had effect in the campaign against both of these evils.

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1. Op. cit. I. 224.

2. Op.cit. 41.<sup>2</sup>

For the Scottish stage, Sir Walter did a great deal more. It is curious to note in passing that Fitzball's "mighty luminary" was in his own country the saviour of the patent house, the Edinburgh Theatre-Royal. As a shareholder, a public trustee, and a regular attendant, he lent the theatre the mantle of his eminent respectability; his open-hearted friendship with some of the foremost actors and actresses on the English stage and his evident fondness for their company at Ashestrill and Abbotsford, must certainly have lessened the prejudices of his countrymen toward the theatre and its folk. Not the least of his services, finally, was the entertaining tolerant and enthusiastic way he wrote of the drama in his letters, essays and review articles.

Quite apart from the pleasure and recreation which he got from the stage throughout his life, **Scott** in his turn owes much to the drama. Benson Hill, the actor, thought that "as other authors read for a style, so he drugged himself at theatres for plots and characters" and went on to point out that there were coincidences between Scott's novels and "sundry plays, those of Shakespeare in particular."<sup>1</sup> There can be no doubt, I think, that Hill's last observation at least, is perfectly true, for nothing could be more natural than a man's interests being reflected in his work.

Yet when we try to put a finger on specific instances of Scott's borrowings, we find it no simple task. "When I convey an incident or so", he wrote in his Journal, "I am at as much pains to avoid detection as if the offense could be indicted in

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1. Hill, op.cit. II. 61.

literal fact at the Old Bailey".<sup>1.</sup> Nevertheless it is sometimes possible to detect him. Hill was not the only contemporary to notice Shakespeare's importance in the works of Scott.

In 1833, several years before the material in Lockhart's memoir was available, there appeared a series of three lectures, the author of which is unknown, entitled A Parallel of Shakespeare and Scott. Recently the subject was taken up seriously by Dr Wilmon Brewer of Harvard, who set about combing the complete works of both authors. His care and accumen as well as the systematic presentation of his findings are commendable and convincing. Dr Brewer points out that Scott's writings from his novels to his Journal simply teem with Shakespearian allusions, and scarcely gives him credit in fact for an original idea. We must certainly discount to some extent the enthusiasm of the investigation, but one cannot I think escape the fact that Shakespeare was the greatest single influence on Scott's creative career.

Lesser in degree, but quite as distinct, is his debt to other English dramatists, particularly those of the late Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries. Most of them, even such forgotten men as Dekker Middleton, Brome and Southerne, furnish him with occasional mottos for his chapter headings. With others he was more intimate. Throughout his writings, he quotes freely from Ben Jonson; but he seems to have been particularly fond of Captain Bobadil who

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1. October 26, 1826. He referred, of course, to those lines in The Merry Wives of Windsor,

Steal! foh! a fico for the phrase  
Convey, the wise it call" (I,iii)

Compare his remark to Southey (Letters II. 273) "Had I meant to steal, I would have been more cautious, and disfigure the stolen goods."

was probably (with Pistol) the original of Colepepper in Nigel. Much of the atmosphere of Old London and its characters in the same novel may well have come from his recollection of Eastward Ho. Beaumont and Fletcher, also, particularly the latter partner, interested Scott greatly. I have referred already to his use of a long speech from their Bonduca to preface his war-song for the Light Dragoons.<sup>1</sup> In the heroine of this play we recognize many of the fierce traits of Helen Macgregor. To Philaster the poem of Harold the Dauntless owed the first part of the story of Eiver.

Nearly every Restoration dramatist is mentioned at least by name in The Pirate;<sup>2</sup> and in his introduction to The Fortunes of Nigel, Mr Andrew Lang says "The scenes in Alsatia are a distinct gain to literature, a pearl rescued from the unread mass of Shadwell"<sup>3</sup> - particularly, of course, The Squire of Alsatia. Scott often quoted from Otway's Venice Preserved, and he may have found in The Orphan many suggestions for the betrayal of Clara in St. Ronan's Well. Chief of the Restoration influences, naturally, was that of Dryden himself. The poetry of The Lay seems at some points to resemble passages in Tyrannic Love; but the outstanding example of borrowing, it seems to me, is Ivanhoe, which is "heroic" and Drydonian throughout. The trial of Rebecca follows closely the outline of Almahide's in The Conquest of Granada. The tournament, it is true, owes something to Dryden's Chaucerian Palamon

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1. Minstrelsy IV., 230.

2. See especially chapter XXXVI.

3. Border Edition (1892-94).

and Arcite and The Knight's Tale, but there is in it also much of the bull-fight which begins the same play. Ozymyn salutes and curvets exactly as the editor's Ivanhoe does before the Royal Box at Ashby.

From the drama of the Eighteenth and early Nineteenth Centuries, Scott appears to have drawn no more than a number of quotations and allusions.<sup>1.</sup> In our discussion of his youthful work, however, we noted his preoccupation for a time with the poetry and drama of Germany. To that literature, he owed a good deal more than merely his first appearance in print, for as Lochart hinted and Dr Macintosh has lately detailed at some length, its influence was "profound and abiding,....greatly affecting the development of (his) genius."<sup>2.</sup> To Dr Macintosh we may leave the discussion of the total influence, and content ourselves with one or two specific instances of Scott's borrowings from German drama.

He himself acknowledged in the preface to Peveril that he owed to Mignon in Goethe's Wilhelm Meister much of the character of Finella.<sup>3.</sup> The same author's Goetz von Berlichingen is, as Dr Macintosh demonstrates, clearly discernable in both Marmion and The Lay of the Last Minstrel.<sup>4.</sup> Lochart noticed it also when he

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1. He was particularly fond of the phrase "in a concatenation accordingly" which he always ascribes to Tony Lumpkin in Goldsmith's She Stoops to Conquer. (e.g. see the last sentence of his Autobiography, printed as Chapter I. of Lochart's Life; etc.) I noticed at a recent production of that play, however, that it is not Tony's line, but of one of his Tavern companions at "The Three Pigeons" (Act I.)
  2. Macintosh, Rev. Dr. W. Scott and Goethe p.4.
  3. c.f. op.cit. 110, 115.
  4. op.cit. 27-32.

wrote "who does recognise in Goethe's drama the true original of the death scene in Marmion, and the storm (i.e. the siege) in Ivanhoe"?<sup>1.</sup> Goethe's Egmont, also, provided many of the circumstances of Amy and her lord in Kenilworth.<sup>2.</sup>

To Schiller, as well, Scott owes a debt. In Kenilworth the whole of Chapter eighteen is based on Wallenstein,<sup>3.</sup> which supplied many of the picturesque details of Leicester's interview with his astrologer.<sup>4.</sup> The chapter in Ivanhoe which describes the attack on the castle of Torquilstone is headed by a quotation (probably Scott's own rendering for at that time no translation had appeared) from The Maid of Orleans, and Rebecca's description of the battle may have drawn inspiration from the play. Schiller's chief influence, however, was a matter more of method than of context, for he had developed Shakespeare's practice of combining romance and history, and must share with Shakespeare himself the credit of having passed it along to Scott.

Finally, we can hardly do better than to quote his own remark a few years before his death which sums up rather adequately our study of Walter Scott and the Drama :

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1. Lochart II. 18.
  2. Goethe himself was aware of it and once remarked to Eckermann, "Walter Scott used a scene from my 'Egmont' and he had a right to do so, and because he did it well he deserves praise". - Macintyre op.cit. 110; c.f. 115.
  3. Especially Acts I. and IV.
  4. Chapter XXIX.
  5. From V, ii.

"In short, the drama is in ours, as in most civilized countries, an engine possessing the most powerful effect on the manners of society. The frequency of reference, quotation and allusion to plays of all kinds, from the masterpieces of Shakespeare's genius down to the farce which has the run of a season, gives a dramatic colouring to the conversation and habits of expression; and those who look into the matter strictly will be surprised to find, how much our ordinary language and ordinary ideas are modified by what we have seen and heard on the stage."

### THE ABODES

1. The Abode of Mary of Scotland, by Murray  
and J. Kerr, Tottenham Street, Tottenham.
2. Mary of Scotland of the Bell of Ayr,  
New York, May 17, 1881.
3. Le Château de Loch-Leven, or L'Épave,  
R.D. Guilbert de Planchamp. - Delisle.
4. Mary Stuart, Queen of Scotland, of the  
(from B) attributed to H. C. Murray, The  
July, 4, 1885 1881.
5. Mary Queen of Scots; or the Martyr of  
Surrey, Theatre Royal, Edinburgh, October.
6. The Castle of Lochleven and the

### Appendices.

1. Margaret of France, or the Martyr of  
Wilson, Calcutta, Edinburgh, London, 1881.
2. Anne of Denmark, or the Martyr of  
Surrey

### THE ANTIQUARY

1. The Antiquary by Lewis Peacock, 1881.
2. The Antiquary (Revision of A. & J. C.  
Bishop and T. Cocks) General Society, 1881  
119 N; 8vo, 1880; 8vo 1881 - 1882, and 1883.
3. The Antiquary of the Bell of Ayr, 1881  
H.K. Murray Theatre Royal, Edinburgh.
4. The Antiquary and the Martyr of  
Surrey, Anonymous, October, 1881.

### THE BETHROTHED

1. The Betrothed, or the Martyr of  
Fitzell, Olympic January 31, 1881.
2. The Betrothed, or the Martyr of  
December 15, 1881.

THE ABBOT

- 1. <sup>The</sup> Mae Abbot or Mary of Scotland; by Henry Roxbury Beverley (music by J.Kerr) Tottenham Street, September 18, 1820. 8vo. 1820.
- 2. Mary of Scotland of the Heir of Avenel Anonymous Anthony St. New York. May 17, 1821.
- 3. Le Chateau de Loch-Leven; or L'Evasion de Marie Stuart, by R.C. Guilbert de Pixerecourt - Gaiete Paris Dec 3, 1822.
- 4. Mary Stuart, Queen of Scotland; or the Castle of Lochleven (from 3) attributed to W.C. Murray, Theatre Royal, Edinburgh. July, 4, 1825 Lacy.
- 5. Mary Queen of Scots; or the Escape from Loch Leven by W.C. Murray, Theatre Royal, Edinburgh. October, 3, 1825 Dicks, 408.
- 6. The Castle of Lochleven Anonymous Victoria September 13, 1833.

ANNE OF GEIERSTEIN.

- 1. Margaret of Anjou; or The Noble Merchants, by John Mackay Wilson, Caledonian Edinburgh, August, 1829.
- 2. Anne of Geierstein; Anonymous Bowery New York, March 3 1824.

THE ANTIQUARY.

- 1. The Antiquary by Isaac Pocock Covent Garden 1818. (One Night).
- 2. The Antiquary (Revision of 1 by J D. Terry (Music by H.R. Bishop and T. Cooke) Covent Garden January 25, 1820. Larpent 118 M; 8vo. 1820; 8vo 1820 (Songs and duets) end of item.
- 3. The Antiquary or The Heir of Glen Allen (revision of 2) by W.H. Murray Theatre Royal, Edinburgh, December, 20, 1820.
- 4. The Antiquary and The Bluegown Beggar; or The Storm of Mussel Craig. Anonymous Coburg Jul<sup>y</sup>, 2, 1832.

THE BETROTHED.

- 1. The Bethrothed; or The Spectre of The Bleeding Hand by Edward Fitzball, Olympic January 31, 1826. LC.
- 2. The Bethrothed, or The Eve of St. Marks Anonymous Queen's December 16, 1826.

THE BLACK DWARF

- 1. The Wizard; or the Brown Man Of the Moor; by S. J. Arnold (music by Horn) English Opera House, July 26, 1817. Larpent 65S.
- 2. The Black Dwarf; or The Reiver of Westburn Flat. Anonymous. Astley's Royal Amphitheatre. May 5, 1817.
- 3. The Recluse. by A. P. Cardyle (An unpublished drama reviewed in The Theatrical Inquisitor (London) September. 1820.
- 4. Groeme; or the Wizard of the Moor. Anonymous. Surrey, July 16, 1824.
- 5. The Recluse; or Elshie of the Moor. by "a Gentleman of Edinburgh" (music by Caraffa, Arranged by Horn) Drury Lane, 1825; Theatre Royal, Edinburgh, May 31, 1825. L. C.

THE BRIDAL OF TREIRMAIN

- 1. Triermain; (Operetta of 5 acts) by J. L. Ellerton, 1831.
- 1
- 2. King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table by Isaac Pocock, (Music T. Cooke) Drury Lane, December 26, 1834. L. C. 8vo. 1834.
- 3. The Bridal of Treirmain (Scott words used; music by Frederic Corder) Wolverhampton Music Festival, 1886.

THE BRIDE OF LAMMERMOOR

- 1. The Bride of Lammermoor; or The Spectre of the Fountain, by T. J. Dibdin, Surrey, June 7, 1819.
- 2. The Bride of Lammermoor; or The Mermaid's Well. By W. T. Moncreiff. Astley's, July 12, 1819.
- 3. The Bride of Lammermuir, "allowed for Edinburgh" 1819. Larpent 76s
- 4
- 4. The Bride of Lammermuir. by J. W. Calcraft. Theatre Royal, Edinburgh, May 1, 1822. Larpent 24L ; 8vo 1823 (Edinburgh); Dicks 344; Lacy 28; Duncombe 60.
- The
- The Bride of Lammermoor Anonymous. Corri's Rooms, (Caledonian) Edinburgh, November 5, 1821. (Second time)
- 6. Le Caleb de Walter Scott (One act and songs) by A. D'Artois and E. de Planard. Theatre de Nouveautes, Paris, December 17, 1827.
- 7. The Mermaid's Well Anonymous New Royal Brunswick, February 25, 1828. (This was the second last performance before the theatre collapsed.)

THE BRIDE OF LAMMERMOOR

1. The Bride of Lammermoor; of The Spectre of the Fountain. by T. J. Dibdin, June 7, 1819.
2. The Bride of Lammermuir; or The Mermaid's Well, by W. T. Moncreiff. Astley's, July 12, 1819.
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- T 5. The Bride of Lammermoor. Anonymous Corri's Rooms (Caledonian) Edinburgh, November 5, 1821 (Second time).
6. Le Caleb de Walter Scott (One act and songs) by A. D'Artois and E. de Planard, Theatre de Nouveautes, December 17, 1827.
7. The Mermaid's Well. Anonymous. New Royal Brunswick, February 25, 1828. (This was the second last performance before the theatre collapsed.)
8. La Fiancee de Lammermoor by V. J. H. B. Ducange Porte St. Martin, March 25, 1828.
9. La Fiancee de Lammermoor by E. Scribe and D. Auber Opera Comique, 1829.
10. La Nozze de Lammermoor ("Opera demi-serio" in two acts) by L. Balochi. Theatre Italien, December 12, 1829.
11. The Bride of Lammermoor. Anonymous. Queen's May 9, 1831.
12. L'Irlandais; ou L'Esprit National by M. Benjamin Gymnase, Paris, September 6, 1831.
13. Lucie de Lammermoor (Grand opera) by S. Cammerano (music by Donizetti) Naples September 26, 1835; His Majesty's, April 5, 1836. 8vo 1838 (With English Translation)
14. Lucie de Lammermoor. (Grand Opera) by A Royer and G. Vaes (Pseud.) (music Donizetti) Renaissance, Paris, August 10, 1839.
15. Lucy of Lammermoor (Based on 14.) by Geogr Soane. Niblo's Garden, New York, 184-. Printed 1854.
16. Lucy of Lammermoor (Burlesque) by W. H. Oxberry. Strand, February 14, 1848. L. C.

17. Lucy Did Sham Amour. by Dr. Notthall, Chatham, New York, July 28, 1848.
  18. The Bride of Lammermoor. (May be 4.) Anonymous, Marylebone, October 9, 1848.
  19. Lucia di Lammermoor (Parody) Text by C. Helmerding; (Music, A. Conradi.) Walner, Berlin, October 20, 1859.
  20. Lucia de Lammermoor by D. T. F. de Luna and D. V. de Lalama, Barcelona, Spain, 1864.
  21. Lucia de Lammermoor; or The Laird, the Lovér and the La dy. (Burlesque) by H. J. Byron Prince of Wales' September 25, 1865.
  22. Master of Ravenswood. by J. Palgrave Simps on Lyceum (English Opera House) December 22, 1865.
- Master of Ravenswood (Based on 14 and an older play) by George Almer. Olympic, New York. December 10, 1865.
24. Ravenswood. (Based on ~~22~~ 22) by Herman C. Merivale. Lyceum (E. O. House) September 20, 1890.
  25. Ravenswood. by F. S. Ganter and G. H. Braugham, New Orleans, 1873.
  26. The Last Heir. by Stephen Phillips (For Martin Harvey) King's, Glasgow, March 23, 1908.

#### THE FAIR MAID OF PERTH

1. St. Valentine's Eve; or The Fair Maid of Perth (also called The Fair Maid of Perth; or The Battle of the Inch) by H. M. Milner; (Music by T. Hughes) Coburg, June 23, 1828. Lacy 1051.
2. The Fair Maid of Perth. by C. Bass. Perth, September 23, 1828.
3. The Fair Maid of Perth. by D. V. Bell. Bowery, New York, June 17, 1829.
4. La Belle Drapiere by --Beethet Paris 1843.
5. The Fair Maid of Perth. by Charles Webb Surrey, June 26, 1845. L.C
6. La Jolie Fille de Perth (Opera) by H. de SainteGeorge and J. A. Denis. (Music by George Bizet) Lyrique, Paris, December 26, 1867.
7. Hal o' the Wynd. Anonymous. Standard, September 14, 1874.

THE FORTUNES OF NIGEL

1. The Fortunes of Nigel by Daniel Terry Scheduled for Production at Haymarket June 1822. Never Produced,
2. The Fortunes of Nigel; or King James First and His Times. by Edward Fitzball. Surrey, June 25, 1822. Cumberland Minor 4; 8 1822.
3. Nigel; or The Crown Jewels. by Isaac Pocock. Covent Garden, January 28, 1823. Larpent 125M. 8vo. 1823.
4. Georgr Heriot; or The Fortunes of Nigel. by W. H. Murray. Theatre Royal, Edinburgh, February 6, 1823. Larpent 127M; Anderson 1.
5. The Fortunes of Nigel Probably by Corbett Ryder Perth c.1823.
6. King o8Scots, by Andrew Halliday (Duff) (Music by W. C. Levy) Drury Lane, September 1868.

GUY MANNERING

1. Guy Mannering; or The Gipsy's Prophecy by Daniel Terry and Sir Walter Scott. Covent Garden, March 12, 1816. Larpent 107M; 8vo 1816, 1817, 1818; Oxberry 12; Dicks 80; Cumberland 43; Lacy 18; B.D.1.
2. Guy Mannering; or The Gipsy's Warning. Anonymous. Wrongly advertised as "First on any stage" Park, New York, April 16, 1818.
3. Meg Mer rilees, die Zig iguenerin; oder Guy Mannering, der Stern-deuter. by W. von Gersdorf. 8vo., 1818 (Liegniss)
4. Guy Mannering Anonymous. Surrey (Between 1819 and 1821--on the authority of The Literary Gazette, August 4, 1821.)
5. La Sorciere; ou l'Orphelin Eccosais. by Dupetit-Mere and Ducange Gaiete, Paris, May 3, 1821.
6. The Witch of Derncleuch by J. R. Planche, (Music by W. Rieve) English Opera House, July 30, 1821. Larpent 123M.
7. The Gipsy of Derncleuch, by Douglas Jerrold. (Based on 1, <sup>5</sup>4, and 6.) Sadler's Wells, August 26, 1821. Duncombe.
8. Dirk Hatteraick, the Dutch Smuggler; or The Sorceress of Derncleuch. Anonymous. (Version 6, with touches from 5, and certain omissions) Coburg, November 4, 1821.
9. Guy Mannering. (Abridgement of 1. for Hodgson's Juvenile Drama) Printed about 1823.

10. Meg Merrilies; or The Witch of Ellangowan. Anonymous. Sadler's Wells, May 7, 1832.
11. Guy Mannering ("Popular Burletta") St. James', December 13, 1838.
12. Guy Mannering. (Arranged for marrionettes) St. James', December 13, 1851.
13. The Spae Wife. by Dion Boucicault Elephant and Castle, 1866(?)
14. Guy Mannering in a New Guise. by Robert Reece. Theatre Royal, Edinburgh, De cember, 1866.
15. Here's Another Guy Mannering (Burlesque) by F. C? Burnand, circa 1866.
16. Guy Mannering. Anonymous. Queen's, Edinburgh, July 1, 1867.
17. Meg Merilies. by Henry Leslie. Glasgow, November 10. 1867.
18. Meg Merilies by by Robert W. Chambers. Daly's , New York,
- 19.

#### THE HEART OF MIDLOTHIAN

1. The Heart of Midlothian; or The Lily of St. Leonard's by T. J. Dibdin. (Music by W. Erskine) Royal Circus(Astley's) January 13, 1819. Dicks 252; Cumberland Minor 1; 8vo. 1819 (3 times)
2. The Heart of Midlothian by Daniel Terry (Music by H.Bishop) Covent Garden, April 17, 1819. Larpent 115M; 8vo. 1819; 8vo. (Songs and Choruses) 1819.
3. The Heart of Mid-lothian by -Montague and -Jervis. Pantheon (Caledonian) Edinburgh, February 1, 1819.
4. The Heart of Midlothian (Combination of 1 and 2.) by William Dimond. Bath, December 3, 1819.
5. The Heart of Midlothian (Very possibly 1.) Anonymous (Licensed for) Theatre Royal, Edinburgh 1819. Larpent 73S.
- Filial Duty; or The Heart of Midlothian. Archibald McLaren 12vo. 1819.
7. The Heart of Midlothian; or The Lily of St. Leonard's (Very prob ably 4.) Theatre Royal, Edinburgh, February 23, 1920.
8. The Heart of Midlothian, Etc., (Compresed in three acts) Anonymous (Possiby W. H. Murray) Theatre Royal, Edinburgh, June 3/20

- 9. The Heart of Midlothian by W.H. Murray, Theatre Royal, Edinburgh, March 5, 1824. 8vo 18
- 10. The Heart of Midlothian, Anonymous, Caledonian. Edinburgh. January, 18, 1829.
- 11. The Whistler; or The Fate of The Lily of St. Leonards (based on "Some unpublished chapters of the novel") by George D. Pitt. Royal Coburg (Victoria) January, 28, 1823; Sadler's Wells, April, 8, 1833. Duncombe 28; Lacy, 1907.
- 12. La Prison d'Edimbourg (Opera) by E. Scribe and E. de Planard. (music M. Carafa) Opera Comique Paris (22 times) July 20 1833.
- 13. La Vendeeenne by Paul Duport Gymnase Paris April 24, 1837.
- 14. La Prigione di Edimburgo by G. Rossi, Scala, Milan, Autumn, 1838 12vo 1838 (Milan).
- 15. The Heart of Midlothian "fresh version" Anonymous (probably Murray) Theatre Royal, Edinburgh, 1841.
- 16. The Heart of Midlothian (either based on 13 or a translation of 9) by Captain Rafter. Princess, April, 18, 1849. LC.
- 17. Jeannie Deans by Dion Boucicault at Laura Keans, New York, January 9, 1860.
- 18. The Heart of Midlothian, Anonymous, Standard, September, 1862.
- 19. The Trial of Effie Deans (sensation drama") Dion Boucicault (from 17) Westminster (Astley's) January 31, 1863.
- 20. Effie Deans; or The Lily of St Leonards (probably revised from 1) by - Shepherd Surrey, February 7, 1863.
- 21. Circumstantial Effie Deans ( travesty on 19) by R. & W. Brough St. James March, 1863.
- 22. The Heart of Midlothian by Colin H. Hazelwood. Sadler's Wells (?) 1863(?)
- 23. Jeanie Deans (Opera) by Joseph Bennett (music by H. McCunn) Prince of Wales, Liverpool, February, 22, 1872.
- 24. Effie and Jeanie Deans, by George Hamilton, Albion, October, 29, 1877.

THE HIGHLAND WIDOW.

- 1. The Highland Widow, by John Mackay Wilson, Perth, March (7-13) 1828; Caledonian, Edinburgh, May 20, 1829.
- 2. The Woman of The Tree by Charles Bass, Caledonian, Edinburgh, June 13, 1829.

3. The Highland Widow, Anonymous, Adelphi (Caledonian) Edinburgh, September, 17, 1836 LC.
4. Sarah; ou L'Orpheline de Glencoe (Opera 2 acts) by A. Melesville, (music by A. Grisar) Opera Comique Paris April 26, 1840.
5. Military Punishment or The Fate of the Widow's Son. Anonymous. Surrey, August, 10, 1846.
6. Dougald the Piper, Anonymous, Theatre Royal, Edinburgh, January 2, 1852.

### IVANHOE.

1. Ivanhoe; or The Jew's Daughter, by T.J. Dibdin, Surrey, January, 20, 1820. Lacey 92. Cumberland Minor, 2; 8vo, 1820.
2. Ivanhoe; or The Jewess by W.T. Moncrieff. Coburg, January, 24, 1820. Duncombe, 19; 8vo, 1820.
3. Ivanhoe; or The Saxon Chief by Richard Jones, Adelphi, February 14, 1820. Larpent 119 M.
4. The Hebrew by George Soane, Drury Lane, March 2, 1820. Larpent 77S; 8vo, 1820.
5. Ivanhoe; or The Knight Templar by Samuel Beazley Junior (music selected by Kitchener) Covent Garden, March 2, 1820. Larpent 118 M 8vo, 1820.
6. Ivanhoe; or Isaac of York, by Alfred Bunn, Birmingham, December, 1820, 8vo, 1820 (Birmingham).
7. Ivanhoe; or The Jew of York, Anonymous, 8vo 1820.
8. Ivanhoe ( in Hodgson's Juvenile Drama) 12vo, 1822?
9. Ivanhoe (probably a modification of 1) by J.W. Calcraft. (never produced) Anderson, 2.
10. Ivanhoe; or The Knights of the Temple (collated from 1, 5 and 9) by W.H. Murray, Theatre Royal, Edinburgh. November 24, 1823.
11. Ivanhoe by E. Deschamps and G. de Wailly, Odeon Paris, September, 15, 1826. Printed 1829.
12. The Maid of Judah; or The Knights Templars (based on 11) by R.M. Lacy (music arranged from Rossini's operas La Voyage a Rheims Il Conte Ory Pietro l'Eremita, etc.) Covent Garden, March 7, 1829. LC Cumberland 25; White (page 113n) mentions another text in the New York Public Library.

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13. Das Gericht der Templar. by J.R. Lenz-Kuehne 8vo, 1826 (Mainz).
  14. Der Templar und Die Juden by W.A. Wohlbruch (music by H.Marschner) 8vo, 1829 (Leipsig)
  15. The Templar and The Jewess (version of 14) by John P. Jackson, 8vo (c.1833).
  16. Ivanhoe by G. Rossi, Scala, Milan, (1834?) 8vo, 1834.
  17. The Lists of Ashby; or The Conquests of Ivanhoe (equestrian spectacle) Anonymous. Royal Ampitheatre, March, 27, 1837.
  18. Il Templaro (Opera) by G.-M. Marini (music by O. Nicolai) Turin Festival, 1839; Theatre-Italien, Paris, January, 28, 1868. 8vo 1868 (French and Italian Paris).
  19. The Templar and The Jewess (version of 14) Anonymous. Prince's, 1840; Drury Lane, May 26, 1841.
  20. Ivanhoe (travesty) by R.B. and W. Brough. 1850.
  21. Ivanhoe (travesty) by Henry J. Byron, Theatre Royal, Liverpool, December 25, 1862; Strand, 1862.
  22. Ivanhoe (cantata) by V. Russy (music by C.V. Sieg) Theatre Imperial de l'Opera, Paris. November, 18, 1864.
  23. Ivanhoe by Fox F. Cooper, Royal Amphitheatre (Astley's) Easter Monday, 1869. Dicks 385.
  24. Rebecca by Andrew Halliday (Duff) Drury Lane, September 23, 1871.
  25. Ivanhoe; or Rebecca of York, by D.R. Edgar, Amphitheatre, Liverpool, November, 27, 1871.
  26. Isaac of York; or Normans and Saxons at Home (travesty) by T.F. Plowman (music by A. Sullivan). Court November, 29, 1871.
  27. Ivanhoe, by R. Cowie, Theatre Royal, Dundee, February, 15, 1875.
  28. Ivanhoe Abroad; or Ivanhoe settled and Rebecca righted (travesty) T.F. Plowman, January, 15, 1878. Oxford.
  29. Rebecca (Grand Opera) by A. Castegnier 8vo, 1882.
  30. Les Normans (slightly different version of 29) by A. Castegnier, Trouville, 1886, 12vo, 1886.
  31. Ivanhoe (Opera) by Julian Sturgis (music by A. Sullivan) English Opera House, January, 31, 1891, 8vo (1892?).
  32. Ivanhoe (21 modified) by Aymer and J.R. Blake (Columbia University Dramatic Club) Irving Place, New York, May 8, 1893.
  33. Ivanhoe ( in School Drama) Maud I. Findlay, 8vo, 1817 (Oxford).

KENILWORTH

1. Kenilworth Castle; or The Days of Good Queen Bess by J. R. Planche Adelphi, February 9, 1821. Larpent 124M

2. Kenilworth; or The Countess of Leices ter (Later called Elizabeth and Essex; or The Days of Queen Bess) by T. J. Dibdin, Surrey, February 14. 1821. Cumberland 39; Dicks 334; Lacy 98.

3. Kenilworth. (Scut to an afterpiece) by Alfred Bunn. Covent Garden, March 8, 1821. Duncombe 10; Larpent 120M; 8vo. 1821.

Kenilworth. Anonymous (Possibly - Mason, actor) Pantheon, Edinburgh, December 3, 1821.

5. Kenilworth; or England's Golden Days (Version 2, with added pageantry. Attributed to William Dimond Bath, December 15, 1821.

6. Kenilworth Castle. Anonymous Olympic, October 27, 1821 Larpent 80S.

7. Kenilworth; or The Merry Days of Old England. (This was probably only only 5.) Anonymous 8vo., 1822 (Edinburgh)

8. Le Chateau de Kenilworth; ou Le Comte de Leicester. by C. de Boirie J.B.E. and H. LeMaire. (Musis by Alexander) Porte St, Martin, Paris, March 23, 1822. 8vo., 1822 (Paris)

9. Cumnor; or The Bugle Horn. E. B. Impey. 12vo., 1822.

10. The Chateau de Kenilworth; ou Le Comte de Leicester. by E. Scribe and A. Melesville. (Music by D. Auber) Opera Comiq ue, Paris, January 25, 1823.

11. Elisabetta; Regina d'Inghilterra al Castello Di Kenilworth (tragic ballet in Annibale in Bitinia) Composed by Galzerani Bologna, Spring of 1823 8vo, 1823? (Bologna).

12. Kenilworth or The Days of Good Queen Bess, Anonymous, Drury Lane, January, 5, 1824.

12a. Ditto, (revised to cut one hour from the playing time) Drury Lane, January, 6, 1824.

13. Elizabeth, Anonymous, Caledonian, Edinburgh, June 26, 1824.

14. Kenilworth (combination of the other plays with new material) by W. Oxberry (nearest like 7). 8vo, 1824.

15. Elisabetta; al Castello di Kenilworth by Gaetano Barbieri, Milan. 8vo, 1824, (repertorio Ital. Teat. Tom. 7)

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16. Kenilworth (attributed to) Corbett Ryder. Caledonian, Edinburgh, March, 19, 1825.
  17. Die Flucht nach Kenilworth by J.R. Lenz. 8vo, 1826 (Mainz).
  18. Emilia by Alex. Soumet Comedie Francais Paris, September, 1, 1828<sup>7</sup>.
  19. Amy Robsart by P. Foucher and V. Hugo. Odeon, Paris, February, 13, 1828.
  20. Tilbury Fort; or The Days of Good Queen Bess, by Edward Sterling Gravesend, 1829.
  21. Kenilworth (Ballet) by M. Deshayes (music M. Costa) Kings, March, 3, 1831.
  22. La Comtesse de Leicester (resume of others in French) Anonymous. Madam, Paris, October, 10, 1840.
  23. The Earl of Leicester by Samuel Heath, 8vo, 1843.
  24. Kenilworth or Ye Queen, Ye Earle and Ye Maydenne (travesty) by A. Halliday (Duff) and F. Lawrence, Strand, September 27, 1858.
  24. Kenilworth or The Golden Days of England's Elizabeth, Astley's Royal Amphitheatre, March, 8, 1847.
  25. Il Conte di Leicester, by G. Battista Canovai (music by Luigi Badia) Firenze Autumn, 1851, 8vo, 1851? (Firenze).
  26. Leicester (in Dutch) F. Roelants, 8vo, 1852 (Brussels).
  28. Kenilworth (extravaganza - possibly 27) Anonymous, Queen's, Edinburgh, August 15, 1859.
  29. Kenilworth; or Gentle Amy Robsart, Anonymous, Royal Alfred, November, 12, 1870.
  30. Amy Robsart by A. Halliday (Duff) Drury Lane, December 24, 1870.
  31. Kenilworth (travesty) by Mark Kingthorne Norwich, May, 10, 1880.
  32. Little Amyie Robsart (travesty) by G.L. Gordon and J. Mackay Philharmonic, January 28, 1882.
  33. Leicester, by J.A. Coupland, 1884.
  34. Kenilworth (travesty) by Robert Reece and H.B. Fairnie Avenue, December, 19, 1885.
  35. Kenilworth by C.J. Archer and A.E. Aubert, Croydon, April, 1, 1893.
  36. Amy Robsart (Opera) by P. Millilet (Music by I. de Lara) translated by F. Weatherly, Covent Garden, July, 20, 1893.

- 37. Kenilworth; or Amy's Aims and Leicester's Lesson (Travesty) by C. F. McMichael (Music by E. D. Beale) Penn. U. Dramatic Club, Philadelphia, April 15, 1895.
- 38. Kenilworth. by Max Goldber g Lyric, Hammersmith, Nov.25, 1895.
- 39. Kenilworth (Grand Opera) by W. Muller (Music by B. O. Klein) 1895. 8vo.,1895(Leipsig)
- 40. Kenilworth. by J. S. Blyth. Glasgow, June 5, 1899.

THE LADY OF THE LAKE

- 1. The Lady of the Lake; or Roderick Vich Alpine. by T. J. Dibdin. Surrey, September 24, 1810; Dublin, January 8, 1811. Cumberland Minor 3; Dicks 587; Lacy 493; 12vo (Dublin) 1810, 1811.
- 2. The Lady of the Lake by E. J. Eyre. (Music, J. A. Jones) Theatre Royal, Edinburgh, January 15, 1811. Larpent 93M; 8°1811(Ed<sup>r</sup>)
- 3. The Knight of Snowdon. by Thomas Morton (Music H. Bishop) Theatre Royal, Edinburgh March 18, 1811; Covent Gargen, February 5, 1811. Larpent 94M; 8vo., 1811.
- 4. La Donna del Lago. by A. L. Tottola. (Music, G. A. Rossini) San Carlo, Naples, ~~February~~ October 4, 1819; King's (in Italian) February 18, 1823. 12vo., 1825 (Firenze)
- 5. The Knight of Snowdon (Combination of 3 and 4.) Anonymous (Translated by Bochsa) English Opera House, July 14, 1823.
- 6. The Lady of the Lake and The Knight of Snowdon (Almost identical with 1.) Anonymous. Drury Lane, January 4, 1823. L. C.
- 7. La Dama del Lago. Anonymous. National, Mexice City, 1833. (Published in Mexico)
- 8. Blanche of Devon; or The Death of Roderick Dhu. Anonymous. (In Dramas for Home Representation, edited by S. S. Steele) n.d.
- 9 The Lady of the Lake. (Translation of 4.) by Mark Lemon. Covent Garden, January 31, 1843. L. C.
- 10. The Lady of The Lake (Travesty) by Mortimer Thompson, Niblo's Garden, New York, June 21, 1860.
- 11. The Lady of the Lake (Travesty) by Robert Reece. Royalty, September 8, 1866. Lacy 1064.
- 12. The Lady of the Lake. by Joseph Barton. 8vo. 1871 (Elgin, Ill.)

- 13. The Lady of the Lake by Andrew Halliday (Duff) (Music by W. C. Levy) Drury Lane, September 21, 1872.
- 14. The Lady of the Lake (Cantata) by Sir George Macfarren. Town Hall, Glasgow, November 15, 1877.
- 15. The Cross of Fire. (Cantata) by H. Bluthaupt, translated by H. D. Chapman. (Music by Max Bruch.) Published in New York, 1905.
- 16. The Lady of the Lake (Motion Picture)

THE LAY OF THE LAST MINSTREL

- 1. Border Feuds; or The Lady of Buccleuch. Anonymous. Dublin, April, 1811. 12vo., 1811 (Dublin.)
- 2. The Lay of the Last Minstrel. (Cantata) by James McCunn. (Music by Hamish McCunn.) Published in London, 1888.

THE LORD OF THE ISLES

- 1. The Lord of the Isles. Anonymous. Olympic, February 27, 1815. Larpent 105M.
- 2. The Gathering of the Clans. by Charles Dibdin. Sadler's Wells, April 6, 1818.
- 3. Robert the Bruce; or The Battle of Bannockburn. Anonymous. Coburg, May 24, 1819.
- 4. Robert the Bruce. (This may be only a revision of 1.) Perth, (Weekof) August 23, 1819. (Probably not the first production.)
- 5. The Lord of the Isles. Anonymous. Caledonian, Edinburgh, June 23, 1824.
- 6. The Lord of the Isles; or the Gathering of the Clans. (Operetta) by Edward Fitzball (Music, G. H. Rodwell) Surrey, November 20, 1834. 8vo., 1835. L. C.

MARMION

- 1. The Spectre Knight. by Charles Dibdin. (Music, Reeve.) Sadler's Wells, June 4, 1810. 8vo., 1810 (Songs and Plot)
- 2. Marmion; or The Battle of Flodden Field. Anonymous. New (later Regency) October 25, 1810. 8vo., (1811?)

3. Marmion; or the Battle of Flodden Field. Anonymous. Licensed for Norwich, 1811. Larpent 94M; 8vo., 1812 (Edinburgh and New York.)
4. Marmion. by J. N. Barker. (but credited in advertisements to Tom Morton) Park, New York, April 13, 1812. 8vo., 1816. (New York.)
5. Marmion. by W. C. Macready. Newcastle, 1814.
6. Flodden Field. by Stephen and Henry Kemble. (Music, Cooke) Drury Lane, December 31, 1818. Larpent 69S; 8vo. 1819.
7. Lochinvar; or The Bridal of Nether by. by W. T. Moncreiff. (Music by Spohr?) Royal Amphitheatre, September 24, 1832.
8. Marmion; or The Battle of Flodden Field. (Spectacle) by Edward Fitzball. Royal Amphitheatre (Astley's) June 12, 1848. Duncombe 63; L. C.

#### MINSTRELSY OF THE SCOTTISH BORDER

1. Willie Armstrong; or Durie in Durance. by Dr. Richard Poole, Theatre Royal, Edinburgh, June 17, 1829. 8fo., 1843 (Edinburgh) L. C.

#### THE MONASTERY

1. The Monastery; or The White Maid of Avenel by J. Howard Payne, Sadler's Wells, April 20, 1820.
2. The Monastery by Theodore Hook, (Written for Covent Garden, but apparently never produced.) 1820.
3. Ilda d'Avenel. by G. Rossi. (Music by Cavalier Morlacchi) Venice, Festival, 1824. 8vo., 1824 (Venice).
4. La Dame Blanche (A combination of The Monastery with parts of Guy Mannering) by A. E. Scribe. (Music by Boieldieu) Paris, December 10, 1825.
5. The White Lady; or The Spirit of Avenel. (English version of 4.) Attributed to T. S. Cooke. Drury Lane, October 9, 1826. L. C.
6. The White Maid. (Ditto) Adapted by G. H. Rodwell. Covent Garden, January 2, 1827. L. C.
7. La Donna Bianca di Avenello. Anonymous Milan, Fall, 1833. 8vo., 1833 (Milan)

8. La Dame Blanche (Ditto) by Capt. Rafter. Allowed for Grecian, 1844. L. C.

THE LEGEND OF MONTROSE

The Legend of Montrose; or The Children of the Mist. by T. J. Dibdin. Surrey, July 3, 1819.

2. The Children of the Mist; or A Legend of Mosntros e. Anonym. Coburg, July 13, 1819.

3. Montrose. Anonymous. 12vo., 1820 (Glasgow.)

4. Montrose; or The Children of the Mist. by Isaac Pocock (and others) (Music by Bis hop, Ware and Watson.) Covent Garden, February 14, 1822. Larpent 127M; 8vo., 1822.

5. Montrose. (4 adapted for Edinburgh) by W. H. Murray. Theatre Royal, May 3. 1823.

6. Montrose. (5"compressed as an afterpiece) by Murray. Theatre Royal, April 20, 1825.

7. Montrose (Abridgement of § 3 for Hodgson's Juvenile Drama(1825)

8. Montrose; or Ranald of The Mist Anonymos. Caledonian, Edinburgh, September8, 1827.

9. Montrose; or Second Sight. Anonymous. (1819) Larpent 76S.

10. The Marquis of Montrose. Anonymous. Theatre Royal, Edinburgh, Janaury 15, 1829.

11. Montrose. by --Atkinson. Seymore's Glasgow, April or May, 1831.

12. Montrose; or The Gathering of the Clans. (Resembles 3.) by an anonymous Glasgow gentleman. 8vo., 1847 (Glasgow).

OLD MORTALITY

1. The Battle of Bothwell Brig. by Charles Farley. (Music by Bishop) Covent Garden, May 22, 1820; Theatre Royal, Edinburgh, June 3, 1823. Larpent 120M; 8vo., 1820.

2. Old Mortality; or Burley and Morton. by T. J. Dibdin. Surrey, June 12, 1820.

3. The Battle of Bothwell Brig. by J. W. Calcraft (Cole) Theatre Royal, Edinburgh, May 3, 1823. Larpent 85S.

- 4. The Covenanters; or The Battle of Drumclog. Anonymous. Caledonian, Edinburgh, March 8, 1825.
- 5. L'Emile (Vaudeville) by A. D'Artois, T. Anne, and J. H. de Tully. Vaudeville, Paris. July 9, 1825. 8vo., 1825 (Paris).
- 6. The Battle of Bothwell Brig. by --Middleton. Caledonian Edinburgh. August 9, 1827.
- 7. Tetes Rondes et Cavalieri. by J. A. P. F. Ancelot and J. X. Bonniface. Vaudeville, Paris, September 25, 1833.
- 8. Il Puritani di Scozia (Opera) (Also called Il Puritani et Cavellieri by C. Pepoli (Music by V. Bellinè) Italian House, Paris, 1835.
- 9. Cavelliers and Roundheads. by Isaac Pocock, Drury Lane, October 13, 1835. L. C.
- 10. Los Puritanos de Escocia Anonymous (Music, V. Bellinè), Cruz, Spain, 1826.
- 11. Strathmore. by J.W. Marston, Haymarket, June 20, 1849. Lacy, 56, 8vo., 1849; L. C.
- 12. Old Mortality; or The Heir of Milnwood. by W. E. Sutter. Sadler's Wells, September 13, 1869.
- 13. Drumclog; or The Covenanters. Anonymous, Edinburgh, September 5, 1871
- 14. 1679. by Charles Webb. Edinburgh, Summer of 1873.
- 8a. The Covenanters . (May be from one of the others, though announced as "new") English Opera House, August 10, 1835.

PEVERIL OF THE PEAK

- 1. Peveril of the Peak. by Edward Fitzball (Ball) Surrey, February 26, 1823; Caledonian, Edinburgh, March 19, 1823. Cumberland Min. 5; 8<sup>o</sup> 1823.
- 2. Peveril of the Peak (Modification of 1) Probably by J. W. Calcraft (Cole) Theatre Royal, Edinburgh, April 12, 1823. Larpent 124M.
- 3. Peveril of the Peak. by Isaac Pocock (Music by C. E. Horn) Covent Garden, October 21, 1826. L.C.; 8vo., 1826 (Songs, etc.)
- 4. England in the Days of Charles the Second. by W. G. Willis. Drury Lane, September 22, 1877.

THE PIRATE

1. The Pirate; or The Wild Woman of Zetland. by T. J. Dibdin. Surrey. January 7, 1822. 8vo., 1822.
2. The Pirate. by J. R. Planche. Olympic, January 14, 1822. Larpent 128M; 12vo., n. d.
3. The Pirate (Later revised after nine performances) by William Dimond. (Music by W. Rooke) Drury Lane, January 15, 1822. Larpent 84S.
4. The Pirate (Revision of 2.) Anonymous Caledonian, Edinburgh, February 20, 1823.
5. The Pirate; or The Reimkennar of Zetland . by J. W. Calcraft, Theatre Royal, Edinburgh, March 29, 1824.
6. The Pirate; or Minna and Brenda. (Probably one of the Above) Anonymous. Anderson 4.
7. The Pirate. Anonymous, (Music by Bellini.) Milan August (?) 1829.
8. The Pirate. by Thomas H. Reynoldson. Licensed for Grecian, (November 15.) 1844. L. C.

QUENTIN DURWARD

1. Quentin Durward . by J. T. Haines. Coburg, June 9, 1823.
2. Quentin Durward. by R. Haworth. 8vo., 1823.
3. Quentin Durward (American version) by R. W. Ewing (No record of production.)
4. Quentin Durward by ("A gentleman of Edinburgh") ( said to be J.L. Huie) Caledonian, Edinburgh June 23, 1823. 8vo, 1823.
5. Quentin Durward (written for the Edinburgh Theatre Royal by a local writer, but never produced). Distinct from 4) 1823.
6. Quentin Durward; or The Wild Boar of the Ardennes, Anonymous in Hodgson's Juvenile Drama c.1825.
7. Quentin Durward, Anonymous, 8vo, 1825.
8. Louis the XI a Peronne by J-M Mely-Janin. Theatrea Francaise, Paris, February, 15, 1827.
9. Louis the XI. by Casimir Delavigne, 1832.

- 10. Quentin Durward ("Grand Opera") by Edward Fitzball (Ball) (music by H.R. Laurent) Covent Garden, December, 6, 1848.LC 8vo, 1848.
- 11. Louis XI; or The Wicksey Warrior and the Nicksey Monarch (Burlesque) Anonymous, West Hartlepool, July, 9, 1859.
- 12. Louis the Eleventh by J.A. Coupland 8vo, 1889.
- 13. Quentin Durward ("Schauspiel aus des Zeit Ludwigs XI") by P. Brill 12vo, 1894 (Paderhorn).
- 14. Quentin Durward by C.A. Merz and F.W. Tuttle (Yale Dramatic Assn) Newhaven, June, 13, 1914.

REDGAUNTLET.

- 1. Redgauntlet, Anonymous Surrey July 1824.Anderson 14.
- 2. Redgauntlet (slight modification of 1) by W.H. Murray, Theatre Royal, Edinburgh, May 28, 1825.LC.
- 3. La Quittance du Diable by Alfred de Musset (excepted for Theatre des Nouveautes Paris, but probably never act~~ed~~)1830. Published in Revue ~~Bloue~~ Numbers 2 and 9. 1914.
- 4. Le Revenant Anonymous (music by Gornis) Opera Comique, Paris. January, 1, 1834.
- 5. Redgauntlet (Opera) by P.H. Foucher and J.E.A. de Pujol. Ambigue-Comique Paris, February, 18, 1843.
- 6. Redgauntlet by A.D. McNeill Princess, Edinburgh. August, 8, 1871.

ROB ROY.

- 1. Rob Roy, Anonmoys, Pantheon (Caledonian Edinburgh) January, 17, 1818.
- 2. Rob Roy; or The Traveller's Portmanteau, Anonymous, Olympic, February, 16, 1818. Larpent 70 S.
- 3. Rob Roy Macgregor; or Auld Lang Syne! by Isaac Pocock (music by J. Davy) Covent Garden, March 12, 1818. Larpent 112 M. (this version includes songs by Burns and Wordsworth) 8vo, 1818. (bis); Dicks 70; Oxberry; Dicks B.D. (1867) Lacy 3; B.D. (1864) 2.
- 4. Rob Roy (from 3) by W.H. Murray, June, 10, 1818; (Theatre Royal, Glasgow); Theatre Royal, Edinburgh February 15, 1819, 12vo, 1819. 8vo, 1823 etc.
- 5. Rob Roy, the Gregarch by George Soane Drury Lane, March 25, 1818. Larpent 69 S.Cumberland 36.8vo 1818.

- 6. Gregarch, the Highland Watchword (later called Rob Roy, the Gregarch) Anonymous, Royal Amphitheatre (Astley's) May 14, 1821.
- 7. Rob Roy (from 3) ("second version") probably by C. Ryder. March 31, 1823. Caledonian, Edinburgh.
- 8. Rob Roy (third version) Anonymous Caledonian, Edinburgh, March 29, 1825.
- April
- 9. The Macgregors, Anonymous, Caledonian, Edinburgh, ~~1821~~, 1825
- 10. Rob Roy Anonymous, Caledonian, Glasgow, 1827; Caledonian, Edinburgh August, 7, 1827.
- 11. Rob Roy Macgregor, Anonymous, Coburg, July 8, 1828.
- 12. Rob Roy (Opera) Anonymous, (London) December, 6, 1831.
- 13. Rob Roy (Opera) (music by F. Von Flotow) text by P. Duport and - de Forges, Paris, 1832.
- 14. Robing Roy; or Scotched and Kilt (travesty) by F.C. Burnand (music by H.C. Stevens) Gaiety, November, 11, 1879.
- 15. Rob Roy by J.R. Park, Wishaw, September, 6, 1905.

ROKEBY.

- 1. Rokeby by W.C. Macready Newcastle, 1814.
- 2. Rokeby; or The Buccaneer's Revenge by J.H. Thomson, 8vo, 1814 (Dublin) 8vo, 1851. (St Louis, Mo.)
- 3. Rokeby Castle; or The Spectæ of the Glen by Charles Dibdin, (music by Reeve) Sadler's Wells, April, 19, 1813.
- 4. The Buccaneer (Author's name obliterated) Licensed for Lyceum (June 28, 1824) LC.

ST. RONAN'S WELL.

- 1. St Ronan's Well, by J.R. Planche, Adelphi, January, 19, 1824; Theatre Royal, Edinburgh, June, 5, 1824. Larpent 132 M.
- 2. St Ronan's Well, Anonymous (accepted for Drury Lane April, ~~18~~, 1824) but never produced)
- 3. St Ronan's Well (this may be 2) Anonymous. (Allowed for Drury Lane, December, 20, 1824, no record of production) LC.
- 4. St Ronan's Well (probably only slight modification of 1) by J.W. Calcraft. Anderson 14.

- 5. Le Comte de Sainte Ronan; ou l'Ecole et le Chateau by E. Scribe and Dupin. Palais Royal, Paris. June 21, 1831.
- 6. St. Ronan's Well by A.D. McNeill Princess', Edinburgh, March 15,/71.
- 7. St Ronan's Well by R.D. Fisher, Belfast, January 21, 1876.
- 8. St Ronan's Well by R. Davey and W.H. Pollock, Trafalgar, June 12 /93.

THE TALISMAN.

- 1. Knights of the Cross; or The Hermit's Prophecy by Samuel Beazley. (music by Bishop) Drury Lane, May 29, 1826. Cumberland 34.LC.
- 2. The Talisman, a tale of the Crusaders by an Edinburgh Author, Theatre Royal, Edinburgh, June 22, 1825.LC.
- 3. The Lion of England; or The Talisman by - Clifton, Caledonian, Edinburgh, December 15, 1825.
- 4. Il Talismano; ossia La Terzio Crociato in Palestina (Opera). by G. Pacini 1829.
- 5. The Talisman (spectacle) Anonymous Surrey April 7, 1830.
- 6. The Talisman; or King Richard Cœur de Leon and The Knight of the Couchant Leopard (travesty) by R.B. and W. Brough. Drury Lane, March 28, 1853.
- 7. The Talisman by Catherine Swanswick. Printed (London) 1864,1882.
- 8. Il Talismano; or The Knight of the Leopard by A. Mattison (music Balfe) revised by Sir G. Macfarren) Drury Lane, June 11, 1874.
- 9. The Talisman (Travesty) by J.F. McArdle, Theatre Royal, Liverpool, August, 10, 1874.
- 10. Richard en Palestine (Opera) by P. Foucher (Music by A. Adam) Opera, Paris, October 7, 1844.
- 11. Richard Coeur de Lion by A. Halliday (Duff) Drury Lane, September, 26, 1874.
- 12. The Talisman (in school dramas) by Maud L. Findlay, 8vo, 1917.
- 13. Richard the Lion Hearted (motion picture).

THE TWO DROVERS.

- 1. The Two Drovers, Anonymous (possibly Charles Bass) Caledonian, Edinburgh, July 5, 1828.

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2. The Two Drovers by W.H. Murray, Theatre Royal, Edinburgh,  
November 10, 1828.

3. Second Sight; or Prediction by Henry Goff, Surrey, February, 4  
1828, Duncombe 10.

4. The Two Drovers; or The Prophetess of the Glen by Henry Goff,  
Licensed for Edinburgh (April 7, 1841) Surrey, September 24, 1849 LC.

#### WAVERLEY.

1. Waverley by Corbett Ryder, Perth October, 18, 1822.

2. Waverley; or The Forty-five. (possibly 1) Anonymous, Caledonian,  
Edinburgh, July 19, 1823.

3. Waverley Anonymous. Licensed for Covent Garden (April 24, 1824) LC.

4. Waverley; or 'Tis Sixty Years Since by Edward Fitzball (music by  
Rodwell) Adelphi, March 11, 1824. Cumberland Minor 5. EC.

5. Waverley; or 'Tis Sixty Years Since (revision of 4) by J.W.  
Calcraft (music by J. Dewar) Theatre Royal, Edinburgh, May 22, 1824;  
Drury Lane, October 22, 1832. Anderson 12 LC.

6. Waverley; or The Forty-five. ("new version"). Anonymous, Caledonian,  
Edinburgh, September 4, 1827.

7. Waverley; or The Bodack Glas, Anonymous. Theatre Royal, Edinburgh,  
March 26, 1831.

8. Waverley, Anonymous, Adelphi, Edinburgh, September, 18, 1852.

9. Waverley; or A Rebel for Love, Anonymous, Theatre Royal, Edinburgh,  
September, 11, 1871.

#### THE VISION OF DON RODERICK.

1. Roderick, the Goth; or The Vision of the Cavern, Anonymous,  
Coburg, June 19, 1820.

#### WOODSTOCK.

1. Woodstock, by Charles Dibdin, Surrey, May 15, 1826.

2. Woodstock, by Isaac Pocock, Covent Garden, May 20, 1826. Dicks 533,  
8vo, 1826 LC.

3. Woodstock; or The Cavalier, atale of the year 1561, Anonymous.  
Theatre Royal, Edinburgh, June 17, 1826.

494  
4. Le Page de Woodstock by X.de Maistre, Duvert and Dupeuty,  
Vaudeville, Paris, March 8, 1828.

5. Charles Stuart; ou Le Chateau de Woodstock by Felix de Croisy  
and A. Beraud. Porte Saint Martin, Paris. September 8, 1826.  
8vo, 1826 (Paris).

6. Charles Stuart; ou Le Labyrinthe de Woodstock, by A. Duval,  
Odeon, Paris, March 11, 1828.

APPENDIX II.

The following list, compiled from the advertisements, playbills, and newspaper criticisms of 1819 will give the reader a fair idea of a typical year in the Edinburgh Theatre-Royal, the dramatic fare, so to speak, from which Scott chose. No further comment or explanation seems necessary, except to point out that in each case, apart from the plays of Shakespeare, I have tried to give the name of the author and the date of the original production in concise notes. For the sake of brevity, these will not be repeated.

- Jan. 2. Brutus (T. [Tragedy] by J.H. Payne, 1818); and Three Weeks After Marriage (F. [Farce] by Arthur Murphy, 1776.)
- 3. Richard III. and Valentine and Orson (MD. [Melodrama] by Tom Dibdin, 1804.)
- 5. Douglas T. by John Home, 1756) and X.Y.Z. (F. by George Colman, Jr., 1810).
- 6. The Merry Wives of Windsor and The Budget of Blunders (F. Anonymous, 1810.)
- 7. Mary Queen of Scots (T. adapted from Schiller; which particular version is uncertain) and X.Y.Z.
- 8. The Merry Wives of Windsor and Wandering Boys (P. [Play] Anonymous, 1810).
- 9. She Wou'd and She Wou'd Not (C. [Comedy] by Colley Cibber, 1703) and X.Y.Z.
- 11. The Poor Gentleman (C. by G. Colman, Jr.; 1802) and The Navigators (MD. Anonymous; licensed for Edinburgh, 1818.)
- 12. The Heir at Law (C. by George Colman, Jr., 1797) No further record.
- 13. She Wou'd and She Wou'd Not. No further record.
- 14. The Blind Boy (MD. by W.B. Hewetson, 1808) with The Sleepwalker (F. by Lady Craven, 1778) and The Agreeable Surprise (Musical F. by John O'Keefe, 1781)
- 15. The Merry Wives of Windsor and The Navigators.
- 16. The Jealous Wife (C. by George Colman, 1761) and ditto.
- 18. She Wou'd and She Wou'd Not. and X.Y.Z.
- 19. Henry IV. 1st Part and The Navigators.
- 20. Wandering Boys "and Other Entertainments".
- 21. Every Man His Own Master (F. with At Home (an entertainment made famous by Charles Mathews) and The Actor of All Work (Ditto) This was for the Benefit of Yates of Covent Garden.
- 22. The Wanderer; or The Rights of Hospitality (for the first time in Edinburgh. An adaption of Kotzebue by Charles Kemble, 1808) and The Navigators.
- 23. Ditto, with Three Weeks After Marriage and The Navigators.
- 25. Ditto with Every Man His Own Master and Ditto.
- 26. The Castle Spectre (MD by *Monk Lewis, 1798*) and The Navigators.

27. The Wanderer and The Illustrious Traveller (first time in Edinburgh;
28. The Illustrious Traveller, with Raising the Wind (F. by James Kenney, 1803) and The Navigators.
29. The Wanderer and The Illustrious Traveller.
30. Wild Oats (C. by John O'Keefe, 1794) and Ditto.
- Feb. 1. The Wanderer with The Illustrious Traveller and Barataria (F. by Fred Pilon, 1785.)
2. Jane Shore (T. by Nicholas Rowe) and Harlequin Statue (
4. The Tempest and The Budget of Blunders.
5. Ditto and The Spoiled Child (F. Anonymous, 1790).
6. Ditto and The Navigators.
8. The Magpie or the Maid? (MD by Isaac Pocock, 1815) with X.Y.Z. and The Navigators.
9. The Tempest and The Wanderer.
10. Not Recorded.
11. Romeo and Juliet with X.Y.Z. and Hooly and Fairly (Musical Interlude Anonymous, 1798).
12. The Tempest and The Magpie or the Maid?
13. Which Is the Man? (C. by Mrs Cowley, 1772) and The Navigators.
15. Rob Roy Macgregor (Murray's adaptation of Pocock's version; 1st time in Edinburgh) with Raising the Wind.
16. Ditto and The Sleeping Draught (
17. Ditto and (No record).
18. Ditto and The King and the Duke.
19. Ditto and The Hunter of the Alps (MD by Will Dimond, 1804).
20. Ditto and X.Y.Z.
22. Ditto and Modern Antiques (F. by John O'Keefe, 1789.)
23. Ditto and A Tale of Mystery, (MD by Thomas Holcroft, 1802).
24. Ditto and For England Ho! (MD by Isaac Pocock, 1813.)
25. Ditto and The Spoiled Child.
25. Ditto and The Forty Thieves (MD Anonymous, Surrey, 1812).
27. Ditto and For England Ho!
- Mar. 1 $\frac{1}{2}$  Ditto and The Spoiled Child.
2. Ditto and The Forty Thieves.
3. Ditto and Past Ten O'Clock and A Rainy Night (F. by T. Dibdin, 1815.)
4. Ditto and Wandering Boys.
5. Ditto and Teckeli (MD by T.E. Hook, 1806).
6. Ditto and The Weathercock (Musical Ent. by T. Forrest, 1775.)
8. Ditto and The Forty Thieves.
9. Ditto and X.Y.Z.
10. Ditto and Bluebeard (Musical Ent. by G. Colman, Jr., 1798.)
11. Ditto and Ditto.
12. Ditto and Ditto.
13. Ditto and Is He Jealous? (Operetta by Samuel Beazley, Jr. 1816.)
15. Ditto and Bluebeard.
16. Ditto and The Wanderer.
17. Ditto and The Navigators.
18. Ditto and Ditto.

- 19. Ditto and Mr H. (F. by Charles Lamb, Drury Lane, 1806.)
- 20. Ditto and Ditto.
- 22. Ditto and The Navigators.
- 23. Ditto and Mr H.
- 24. Ditto and (Not recorded).
- 25. Ditto and Aladdin (MD. Anonymous, Covent Garden, 1813.)
- 26. Ditto and Ditto.
- 27. Ditto and Ditto.
- 29. Ditto and Ditto.
- 30. Ditto and Ditto.
- 31. Ditto and Ditto.
- Apr. 1. Ditto and Ditto.
- 2. Ditto and Ditto.
- 3. As You Like It and Ella Rosenberg (MD by James Kenney, 1807.)
- 5. Richard III (With Edmund Kean playing an Edinburgh engagement) and The Hunter of the Alps.
- 6. Brutus (T.) and (Not recorded.)
- 7. Othello and (Not recorded.)
- 8. Macbeth and The Sleepwalker.
- 9. Theatre closed.
- 10. A New Way to Pay Old Debts (C. by P. Massenger, 1633.) and The Sleepwalker.
- 12. Bertram (T. by Charles Maturin, 1817.) and For England Ho!
- 13. Brutus and Aladdin.
- 14. Hamlet and Mr H.
- 15. The Distresst Mother (T. by Ambrose Philips ) and Mr H.
- 16. The Merchant of Venice and Garrick's Grand Jubilee for Shakespeare's Birthday.
- 17. Douglas and The Tobacconist (F. by Francis Gentleman, 1771 - altered from Ben Jonson's The Alchemist.) This was Kean's last night and Benefit.
- 18. Theatre closed.
- 26. The Country Girl (C. by D. Garrick, 1766 from Wycherley's Wife Country Wife.) and The Deserter of Naples (Pantomime, Anonymous, 1788.) Miss Kelly of Drury Lane begins engagement.
- 27. The Touchstone (Pantomime by Charles Dibdin, 1779.) with Wandering Boys, and other entertainments.
- 28. No record.
- 29. The Touchstone, with Is He Jealous? and The Hunter of the Alps.
- 30. Rich and Poor (C.) and Matrimony (Operetta by James Kenney, 1804.)
- May. 1. A Bold Stroke for a Husband (C. by Mrs Cowley, 1783.) and The Deserter of Naples.
- 3. The Country Girl and The Innkeeper's Daughter (MD. based on Southey's Mary the Maid of the Inn
- 4. Wild Oats and Of Age To-morrow (Musical entertainment - based on Kotzebue's Baron, by Tom Dibdin, 1805.)
- 5. Miss Kelly's Benefit, presenting "a variety of entertainments."
- 11. Such Things are. (Play by Elizabeth Inchbald, 1787) and The Broken Sword (MD by Will. Dimond, 1816). Mrs Eyre's Benefit.
- 12. Guy Mannering (The Terry-Scott version) and The Wanderer. Charles Mackay's Benefit.
- 15. The Busybody (C. by Mrs Centlivre, 1709) and Fontainbleu, (Comic opera by John O'Keefe, 1784.) Jones' Benefit.

- 17. Twelfth Night, with X.Y.Z. and The Day after the Wedding. (Interlude by Mrs C. Kemble,1808) Manager Murray's Benefit.
- 18. The Ultra Exquisite (F. by an anonymous local writer; first time) and other entertainments. Mrs Dobbs' Benefit.
- 19. Alexander the Great (Heroic Pantomime by J. D'Egville,1795) with The Irishman in London (F. by William Macready,1793.) and The Gentle Shepherd (Pastoral Comedy by Allan Ramsay) Alexander's Benefit.
- 20. The Road to Ruin with Matrimony and The Children in the Wood (Musical piece by Tom Morton, 1793.) Benefit of Mrs and Miss Nicol.
- 21. Guy Mannering with Valentine and Orson and The Falls of Clyde. (MD by George Soane,1817.) Duff's Benefit.
- 22. The West Indian. (C. by Richard Cumberland,1771) and Ella Rosenberg. Hemerton's Benefit.
- 27. The Tempest and The Wanderer - Benefit of J. Dewer, the leader of the orchestra.
- June 2. The Busybody and The Agreeable Surprise, Benefit of Rowley, the box-keeper.
- 5. Roby Roy and The Guardian. Benefit of the Theatrical Fund.
- 7. Merchant of Venice and the Mayor of Garret (C. by Samuel Foote, 1763.) Benefit of Everard, an old actor.
- 8. The Jew (C. by R. Cumberland, 1793) with Is He Jealous? and For England Ho! Benefit of Fraser, another ancient.
- 9. Richard III (with the child wonder, Clara Fisher as Richard). No further record.
- 10. The Merchant of Venice (Shylock,by Clara Fisher aet. 7!) and Bombastes Furioso (Burlesque by W.B. Rhodes,1810.)
- 11. Douglas, no other record.
- 12. Richard III and Lilliput (Entertainment by D. Garrick,1757). Theatre closed until June,21st.
- 21. As You Like It. (with Mrs Alsop, of Drury Lane.) and The Devil to Pay (Operetta by C. Coffey,1731.)
- 22. The Country Girl (No further record).
- 23. The Belle's Stratagem (C. by Mrs Cowley,1780.) and Ditto.
- 24. The Rivals (C. by R.B. Sheridan,1775) and The Romp (F. by - Lloyd,c.1780.)
- 25. A Trip to Scarborough (C. by R.B. Sheridan,1777) and X.Y.Z.
- 26. The Belles's Stratagem and The Actress of All Work (an imitation of one of Charles Mathews' entertainments.)
- 28. The Wonder (C. by Mrs Centlivre,1714.) with the Actress of All Work and Husbands and Wives.
- 29. Rochester(Burletta,first time in Edinburgh, by Will Moncreiff, 1818.) No further record.
- 30. Ditto and no further record.
- July 1. Ditto with The Actress of All Work and The Wanderer.
- 2. Ditto with Ditto and The Village Lawyer (F. ascribed to Macready,1795.)
- 3. Ditto and The Midnight Hour (C. by Mrs Inchbald,1788.)
- 5. Wild Oats (C. by John O'Keefe,1794) and The Boarding House. Knight of Drury Lane, engaged.
- 6. A Cure for the Heartache (C. by Thomas Morton,1797.) and Lock and Key (Musical entertainment by Prince Hoare,1796.)
- 7. No record.

- 8. The Young Quaker (C. by John O'Keefe,1783) and Is He Alive? (F. Anonymous, Drury Lane, 1818.)
- 9. The Castle of Andalusia (Comic Opera by J. O'Keefe,1782) No further record.
- 10. A Provoked Husband (C. by Colley Cibber,1728.) with Is He Alive? and The Man in the Moon (sketch by - Brewer (?) c.1799.) Knight's Benefit.
- 12. The Distressed Mother with The Weathercock and Hooly and Fairly.
- 13. Romeo and Juliet and The Hunter of the Alps.
- 14. The Earl of Warwick (T. by T. Franklin - from the French - 1766.) No further record.
- 15. Hamlet and The Forty Thieves.
- 16. No record.
- 17. Evadne; or The Statue (T. by Richard Sheil, Covent Garden, February,1819) with Three Weeks after Marriage and The Highland Reel (C.O. by John O'Keefe,1788.)
- 191 Rob Roy and The Forty Thieves.
- 20. Ditto and The Falls of Clyde.
- 21. The West Indian and The Review (Musical F. by George Colman, Jr.,1801) Emery and J. Johnson begin engagement.
- 22. John Bull; or An Englishman's Fireside (C. by George Colman, Jnr., Covent Garden,1803. This play Scott though "by far the best effort of our late comis Drama"-Essay on Drama, Prose Works VI.) and X.Y.Z.
- 23. Guy Mannering and The Forty Thieves.
- 24. The West Indian and The Review - Johnson's Benefit.
- 26. The School of Reform (Tragicomedy by Tom Morton,1805.) and The Review - Emery's Benefit.
- 27. The Beggar's Opera (by John Gay, 1728.) Miss Stephens and Smith of Drury Lane begin engagement. No further record.
- 28. No record.
- 29. Love in a Village.(C.O. by Isaac Bickerstaffe 1762.) and Raising the Wind.
- 30. The Marriage of Figaro (Opera by Mozart - first time in Edinburgh) No further record.
- 31. Ditto and Husbands and Wives.
- Aug.2. Ditto and The Wedding Day.
- 3. The Cabinet (C.O. by T. Dibdin,1802.) and The Romance of Cymon.
- 4. The Marriage of Figaro - no further record.
- 5. The Beggars' Opera and The Libertine (probably Shadwells' Tragedy,1676.
- 6. The Marriage of Figaro and The Romance of Cymon.
- 7. The Beggars' Opera and The Libertine.
- 9. Guy Mannering and Rosina.
- 10. Love in a Village and No Song, no Supper (Musical F. by Prince Hoare,1790.)
- 11. The Clandestine Marriage ( C. by G. Colman and D. Garrick 1766) No further record. Farren and Abbot of Covent Garden begin engagement.
- 12. The School for Scandal ( C. by R.B. Sheridan,1777) and Ways and Means ( F. Anonymous, Dublin,1785.)

- 13. The Rivals (C. by R.B. Sheridan,1775.) No further record.
- 14. The Clandestine Marriage and For England Ho!
- 16. The Road to Ruin, with Valentine and Orson and The Wedding Day.
- 17. A Bold Stroke for a Husband and Ella Rosenberg.
- 18. The Clandestine Marriage. No further record.
- 19. The School for Scandal and Bon Ton (F. by David Garrick,1775.)
- 20. The Busybody and The Deaf Lover.(F. by F. Pilon,1780.
- 21: The Clandestine Marriage, with Ways and Means and The Critic.  
(Drama by R.B. Sheridan,1779.)
- 23. Venice Preserved (Otway's Tragedy,1682, with Miss O'Neill  
beginning an Edinburgh engagement in the chief part) and  
The Weathercock.
- 24. The Stranger (Drama from Kotzebue's Misanthropy and Repentance,  
probably Benjamin Thompson's version,1798.) and The King and  
the Duke.
- 25. Romeo and Juliet. No further record.
- 26. Ditto and The Beehive.
- 27. The Gamester (C. by Mrs Centlivre,1705.) and La Perouse ("ballet  
of action" from Kotzebue.)
- 28. Douglas and The Beehive.
- 30. Isabella (P. altered from Southerne's "Fatal Marriage", by  
D. Garrick, 1758.) and The Wanderer.
- 31. Rob Roy and La Perouse.

Sept.

- 1 Henry VIII. No further record.
- 2. The Jealous Wife and La Perouse.
- 3. Jane Shore, with Matrimony and Where Shall I Dine?
- 4. Venice Preserved, and Ditto. Abbott's Benefit.
- 6Isabella, with Valentine and Orson, and Love a la Mode (F. by  
Charles Maclin, 1760.)
- 7. Evadne, and Raising the Wind. Miss O'Neill's Benefit .
- 8. No record.
- 9. The Mountaineers, (C. by George Colman, Jr., 1795) with Ma-  
trimony and The Falls of Clyde.
- 10. Rob Roy and The ~~Three~~ and The Deuce (C. by Prince Hoare, 1795.)
- 11. Macbeth and The Falls of Clyde. Johnston's Benefit.  
Theatre closed until the 24th.
- 24. Rob Roy and La Perouse.
- 25. Ditto and The Wanderer.
- 27. Othello, and The For ty Thieves. Kean begins another engagement.
- 28. Richard III. No Further record.
- 29. Hamlet. No Further record.
- 30. A New Way to Pay Old Debts, and The Woodman's Hut (MD.

Oct.

- 1. Macbeth and Bluebeard,
- 2. Town and Countr y. (C. by Tom Morton, 1807.) and The Wood man's  
Hut.
- 4. Alexander the Great and Bluebeard.
- 5. Town and Country. No Further record.
- 6. No record.
- 7. Bertram and Ella Rosenberg.
- 8. The Carib Chief.(MD. 1st. time in Edinburgh.) No  
Further record.
- 9. The Merchant of Venice and Of Age Tomorrow. Kean's last night  
and Benefit.

- 11. The Road to Ruin and The Actor of All Work. Charles Mathews begins an Edinburgh engagement.
- 12. A variety of entertainments, featuring Mathews.
- 13. A Trip to Paris and other of Mathews' entertainments.
- 14. Ditto and Matrimony.
- 15. Rob Roy. No Further record.
- 16. A Trip to Paris, and Husbands and Wives.
- 18. Ditto with The Hunter of the Alps. Mathews benefit and the last night of the season.  
Theatre closed until November 27.

- Nov. 27. The Belle's Stratagem and Three Weeks After Marriage.
- 29. Hamlet and The Adopted Child, (Musical P. by Samuel Birch, 1795.)
- 30. The Will (C. by Fred. Reynolds, 1797.) and Rosina. (C. O. by Mrs. Brooke, 1783.)

- Dec. 1. Guy Mannering and (No record)
- 2. Hamlet and The Weathercock.
- 3. Guy Mannering and The Spoiled Child.
- 4. The Will and The Irishman in London.
- 6. Jane Shore and A Roland For An Oliver (F. by Tom Morton, Covent Garden, April, 1819. First time in Edinburgh)
- 7. Guy Mannering and Ditto.
- 8. A Roland For An Oliver. No further record.
- 9. Inkle and Yarico (O. by George Colman, Jr., 1787.) and Ditto.
- 10. Richard III. and Ditto.
- 11. Rob Roy and Ditto.
- 12. She Stoops To Conquer C. by Goldsmith, 1773.) and Ditto.
- 14. Rob Roy and Ditto.
- 15. Macbeth and Ladies At Home
- 16. Rob Roy and A Roland For An Oliver.
- 17. Douglas and Ladies at Home.
- 18. The Honey Moon (C. O. by W. Linley, 1797.) and A Short Reign and a Merry One
- 20. Rob Roy and The Wanderer.
- 21. Ditto and A Roland For An Oliver.
- 22. Ditto and A Short Reign and A Merry One.
- 23. No Record.
- 24. Theatre Closed until the 27th.
- 27. The Will and the new Pantomime Harlequin Gulliver. (Anonymous Covent Garden, 1817.)
- She Stoops To Conquer and the new Pantomime.
- 29. The Poor Gentleman and Ditto.
- 30 and 31. No Record.

Partial Bibliography.

It was my original intention to make my footnotes serve also as a Bibliography. For certain reasons, however, I have decided to mention the following books which I have found useful in preparing this study. I must stress the fact that it is not intended to be a complete list of works which I have consulted. Capitalization of the Author's name should be taken to indicate special obligation. For the sake of convenience only I have divided them into three sections.

I

"The Edinburgh Theatrical Pamphlets"  
of the  
Edinburgh Public Reference Library.

- Account of the Entertainments of the Jubilee intended to be performed at the Theatre Royal, Edinburgh.8vo.n.d.
- A Comparative View of the Rights and Merits of Mrs Harriet Pye Esten and Mr. Stephen Kemble.8vo,1793.
- A Contract Betwixt the Proprietors of the Concert Hall Canongate and Messrs. Beatt and Dowson.Fol.1767.
- A Letter from the City of Edinburgh to the Town of Glasgow,12vo,1766.
- A Letter to David Garrick, Esq.12vo,1770.
- Alexander,John H. A Plain Statement of Facts.8vo,1821.
- An Account of the Edinburgh Theatrical Fund Dinner ... Friday, 23rd February,1827. 8vo,1827.
- An Act .... to Enable His Majesty to Grant Letters Patent for Establishing a Theatre in the City of Edinburgh.8vo,1767.
- A Series of handbills concerning the disposal of the patent and managership. 1767.
- Baine, James. The Theatre Licentious and Perverted: a Sermon for the Reformation of Manners.8vo,1770.
- Ballantyne, James. Dramatic Characters of Mrs Siddons,8vo,1812.
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- Bonar, James. Considerations on the Proposed Application ..... for the Establishment of a Licensed Theatre in Edinburgh,8vo,1767.
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- CANDIDUS, the Letters of. 12vo,1802.
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- Clericus (pseud.) On the Introduction of Italian Opera into Edinburgh,12vo,1855.
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- Considerations upon the Means of Establishing a Regular Theatre in Edinburgh,~~12vo,1855~~. 8vo,1767.
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- CRITA'S Letter to the Manager of the Edinburgh Theatre, with Additions, Alterations and the Letter of Phil-Cirto,never before published. 8vo,1800.

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 The Deputy Manager of the Theatre Royal Detected, 8vo. 1772.  
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 Dismissal from the Theatres of Newcastle and Edinburgh. Fol. 1759.  
 The Edinburgh Rosciad for 1775. 8vo, 1775.  
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 The Montrose Standard.)  
 Edinburgh Theatrical Reports for November and December 1800,  
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 Fennell, James. A Statement of Facts ....relative to the  
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 12vo, 1834.  
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 Lucifer's Letter to Tera...concerning Religion and the Theatre.  
 8vo, 1769.  
 Macdonald, Rev. John. What Is the Theatre? 12vo, 1851.  
 Nil Mortalibus Arduum or A Vindication of the Disposal of the  
 Puppet-Shew House, 8vo. 1767.  
 Observations on the Present State of the Stage; with Particular  
 Reference to that of Edinburgh, 8vo. 1826.  
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 " " Recorder, 1825.  
 " " Review, 1822.  
 " " " and Thespian Inquisitor, 1827.  
 " " Tete a tete, 1828.  
 " Theatrical Censor, 1803.  
 " " and Musical Review, 1835.  
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