

An exact account and critical examination of Sir

Walter Scott poem:

„The Lady of the Lake.“

Continuation.

Von

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Wissenschaftliche Beilage zum Programm des Königlichen Gymnasiums
zu Strasburg W.-Pr. Ostern 1880.



STRASBURG W.-PR.

Gedruckt in C. A. KÖHLER'S Buchdruckerei.

THE LADY OF THE LAKE
A TRAGEDY IN THREE ACTS
BY
SCOTT

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„I turn me from the martial roar, And seek Coir-Uriskin once more,“ says the poet, and we are willing to follow him, that we may see what of beautiful and grand, however afflicting and dreary it may be, shall be shown to our eyes in that place which Douglas, having left the small islet, has chosen as the only retreat capable of affording still a bit of safety to him and his lovely daughter. Douglas is gone; and Ellen with a grief-worn face sits on a gray stone beside the dreadful cave,*) as few rays of hope coming to her sad breast as rays of light the sun can dart through the thickets around her, though her companion, faithful Allan, exerts the utmost of his power to drive away the sorrows and the intense anxiety which rend her heart because of her departed father and her Malcolm now fettered and cast into prison for having saved Douglas from the snares of his enemies. She knows too well her parent's high-minded generosity to doubt that he goes willingly to offer his life to Scotland's throne, in order to prevent a frightful bloodshed and to avert the impending ruin from both his friends. Therefore all that Allan tries to comfort her proves to be idle and vain; but as if the maiden mild had heard her prayer of yesterday, had listened to that suppliant child, there comes another consoler more powerful and at the same time, indeed, more successful in rendering her desolate breast a great deal more cheerful. It is James Fitz-James himself whom her loveliness, the charms of her beauty and goodness have so much wrought upon that he must needs seek her again in these wilds. To be sure, being the daughter of an outlaw and, what here is still more, the bride of a noble youth, she cannot accept of his wooing nor of his promise to place her in a lovely bower, to guard her like a tender flower; but the grateful monarch's ring he places on her hand, and the words he speaks about its power, rouse, as if by spell, her dejected spirits, since now at least she feels able to do something for the deliverance of her beloved ones.

But alas! On his return generous James is beset by enemies on all sides. Ellen's warnings, red Murdock's shouts, the songs and the mortal wound of Blanche of Devan, the maniac, dragged off from the Lowlands by Roderick's furious gang, after her bridegroom has been slain by the unfeeling chieftain's hand on the same day when love should unite them for ever, convince him of the treachery of his guide and make him sure that he is waylaid. Murdoch is running away, but the sword of the avenger soars over his head; and within a moment's warning he lies lifeless in his blood. The wrongs he must look upon here, as well as the last solicitations of the dying maid awake not only his sympathy, but make him also fly in so ungovernable a passion that he swears never to rest till he has imbrued a lock of his unfortunate woman, blended with her lover's hair, in the best blood of Roderick Dhu.

To pass now through the ambush of the Gaels, the knight must turn aside from the known path and steal away through the entangled thickets of the copse, through deep ravines and clifted hollows;

*) Cfr: And Ellen sits on the gray stone
Fast by the cave; and makes her moan;

And Umland's: Frau Bertha sass in der Felsenkluft,
Sie klagt ihr bitteres Los.

one while he must pause, for a horrible precipice lies yawning before him, another while he is stopped short by a foaming torrent. Worn down with fatigue, faint for want of food and almost despairing of his escape, he is glad of finding a sculking place where he couches like the deer having eluded its pursuers, to wait for the darkening night beneath the shades of which he hopes to continue this dangerous way, unobserved by those whom he hears being still in search of him. At last the sun is gone down, the night drags on, and the clearness of the starlit sky leaves him just as much light as to see where he is to direct his steps again over cliffs and crags, across brook and dell, through brake and underwood. But all his pains are useless; for coming round the prominence of a rock, beside a watch fire close before him, he sees a mountaineer springing up with the broadsword in his hand. When the inquiry is answered with the words: „J am a stranger, lost my way, and ask for rest and a guide, and food and fire;“ perceiving that this wanderer cannot be a secret spy as he is falsely told to be, though he boldly calls himself a foe to Roderick and all his band; the Gael carves him the hardened flesh of mountain deer, puts dry fuel on the fire, promises him to be his guide as far as Coilantogle's ford on the next morning, and bids him lie down by his side on the gathered heath and share his warm plaid. As for our knight, we would now be in good hopes but for these words of the warrior:

„— upon thy fate, 't is said, A mighty augury is laid.“

5) The first beams of the sun's rosy light are twinkling through the green boughs of the hazel-wood round their lowly beds, when the warriors rise, look upon the dappled sky, say their morning prayers, take their soldier meal rude and short, and set forward. Their way leads them through the most romantic regions of the Highlands: now they tread upon the bare rock, then they are all hidden amid the green brake and black heather; now they stand on the top of a mountain surveying all the Lowlands with their green pasturages and fruitful fields, and then they walk along the silver sea of Vennachar. When here they come to a place where the wintry torrents, rushing into the lake, have often torn the path and hill, the road is so toilsome to trace that the guide begins leading on more slowly through the pass; and now he can spare breath enough to inquire of his follower after the inducement of his journey into these wilds without a passport of Roderick Dhu. „As for my pass,“ boldly answers the knight, „J think it hangs in my belt; and as for the cause,“ „J sought to drive away the lazy hours of peaceful day.“ To the question whether he did not hear of troops assembled to fight against the Highlanders, he replies with the least possible delay: he does not doubt that, as soon as the news of the mountaineer's muster will spread abroad, the bands destined to guard the sports of king James will be led with flying colours against Clan-Alpine. As after these words the Saxon is requested to tell the causes of his hatred and spite against Roderick, he freely answers, each true and loyal heart ought to shun this desperate man who, in the king's own court, stabbed a knight and, since outlawed, has for ever been the chief of a rebellious clan; that each feeling soul ought to despise and condemn the ruffian who wastes the fields, fires the dwellings and slaughters the peasants of the Lowlands; and what is to be thought of the highway-man who with his gang lies in ambush for the peaceful wanderer? The Gael, by no means embarrassed or perplexed with all these accusations, begins to justify the chieftain of his clan with reasons which he thinks must generally be admitted of as convincing and very valid ones. Roderick's stab, he says, has only revenged the infamy of a shameful blow; the waving fields, the green pastures of the valleys are the property of the Highlanders of now-a-days as well as of their forefathers of yore; and finally the knight's path would not have been waylaid, if he were not supposed to be a spy and doomed to die, in order to fulfill an augury on which the fortune of all the clan depends. When now the knight cannot abstain from threatening that, as soon as possible, he will come back with banner and brand to seek this rebel chieftain, that he will not rest till this robber stands before him to give an account for the most atrocious crimes performed under his guidance, the mountaineer whistles, and instantaneously they are surrounded on all sides by bonnets and spears and bended bows of plaided warriors. Proudly casting a glance over his true vassals along the side of the hills, then firmly fixing his eyes upon the knight and fiercely looking at him, the guide speaks these heart-appalling words: „Have, then, thy wish!

These are Clan-Alpine's warriors true; And Saxon, — J am Roderick Dhu!“

James stares at the prodigy; and however great his courage, however strong his mettle, he shudders for a moment, but instantly regaining his full vigour, he is ready to stand against the whole crowd and determined rather to be slain than fly. His cry „Come one, come all!“ surprises

and astonishes the chieftain so much that, since highly esteeming bravery and courage he delights in having found an antagonist worthy of his steel, he waves his hand; and all his men disappear as suddenly as they came. According to his promise, he leads the stranger far beyond the limits of his clan to Coilantogle ford; but when they arrive at this place from whence, as he has said last night, his guest's warrant must be his blade, he throws down his plaid and target upon the ground and bids then his companion draw his sword, that they may fight man to man, and steel to steel; for where the Gael who would not take vengeance for such injurious words as he has heard? On more than one occasion so deeply touched with the chieftain's generosity, very loath to combat against him who has given him food and couch, whom he has to thank for the preservation of his life, James is not only willing to do any thing that can atone their feud, but promises also to make his peace with the king on very honourable terms. Whatever he says to abate his enemy's fury, it is only to fire him more and more. Though in other circumstances none should have told him twice to draw, none should have seen him reluctant at the first hint; nothing but Roderick's abusive language, his mockery and sarcasm can move him to comply with his desire. Having cast a look over plain and stream, to the mountains and the sun, such a one as if it were the last time they ever might glance at something beautiful and bright, they close in contest which shall prove so very fatal for the challenger. Not accustomed to fight without a shield and less expert in fencing, though much stronger than his antagonist, soon his blood gushes from several deep wounds. It is of no use that he showers his blows like wintry rain, for his weapon being forced from his hand, he is brought down to the ground; and though he rises once more, springs at the throat, and puts his knee upon the breast of his enemy, the loss of blood has so much enfeebled his arm that it can no more direct his dagger — and valiant Roderick lies senseless backward upon the lea, while James falters thanks to Heaven for his delivery. After having washed the blood from his hands and brow, he sounds his bugle-horn, upon which four squires in Lincoln green who have been waiting for her master at some distance, come at full gallop up to him, leading two spare horses without riders. Two of them are ordered to take care for the wounded chieftain, while the other two are to follow the victor on his fleet career to Sterling. The swift-heeled steeds now hurry through the plains, dash through brooks and rapid torrents and hasten without a stop past castles, towns and villages. When they are riding up the flinty path before the residence, James perceives Douglas scaling the mountain-side at some distance; he knows him by his tall stature, by his firm and active stride. He admonishes, therefore, his followers to make haste, in order to announce at court, as soon as possible, the near approach of that dreaded outlaw.

Douglas comes from Cambus-Kenneth where he has got the abbess' promise that she will receive his dear daughter as a bride of Heaven; thus having done his last earthly business, he does not doubt to lay his head on a hard pillow in the dungeon or even upon the block, if he might only save by this his friends. But upon his entering the town, hearing the merry peal of the bells and seeing motley groups of masquers and morrice-dancers with banner and pageant, with pipe and drum upon the crowded street, he knows the burghers hold their sports to-day in the Castle-park and resolves on participating in them to try once more his strength before he dies. Amid joy and pleasure, laughter and shouting of the people the king, too, comes there surrounded by peer and knight, by noble dame and damsel bright. In every performance, Douglas carries off the prize: his second arrow splits the first in twain; of two wrestlers taller than all the rest and proudly asking for mightier foes, the one is lame for life, while the other is borne senseless home by his comrades; a huge earth-fast stone sent by him through the air flies a full rood beyond the farthest mark. Without any sign of sympathy and, as it seems, without knowing him, the king hands over to him a silver dart, a golden ring, a purse filled with gold pieces. When the victor, however, flings away the money among the crowd, not only the vale rings with loud applauses, but also whispers rise:

"That heart so free and hand so strong Must to the Douglas' blood belong."

Indignant and irritated, the hero is about to turn aside, when at the close of the festival, the king orders a gallant stag to be hunted down by two favorite greyhounds of his; but no sooner Lufra, Ellen's playmate, sees the nimble game let loose than she darts forth, leaves the royal dogs mid-way, sinks her sharp muzzle into its flank and drinks the flowing blood. When now a huntsman of the king's, angry at this defeat of those which are committed to his care, strikes with an unbound leash the fleetest hound of all the North, Douglas is out of patience — one buffet — and the groom lies in his gore.

Now good bye to festival and merriment; a wild uproar arises instead of them; the burghers as much delighting in his deeds of this day as remembering the feats done by his stalwart arm for the benefit of all the country in former times, take the part of Douglas for whom they cannot help feeling a great sympathy. This true hero, however, as noble as generous does by no means wish that Scotland's laws shall be injured, that any woman or child shall weep for his cause; therefore addressing himself to the friendly rebels, he entreats them with gentle words, full of the best of patriotism, to go peacefully home. While the offended monarch with bitter thoughts and swelling heart, is riding back to his palace complaining of the inconstant and chanceful multitude, Douglas, a prisoner now, is led to the castle.

Late in the afternoon of the same day, a messenger arrives to inform the king that John of Mar has marched from Doune against the mustered Highlanders who are told to be assembled by Roderick Dhu and Douglas, and that a battle will soon be fought against them. He is immediately sent back to tell faithful Mar that the king forbids the war, since the one of the two leaders has been vanquished by a knight on that very morning, and that the other has submitted himself and his cause to the laws of the kingdom.

6) Four persons whom we first met in the lonely isle, are already in the castle, and at dawn of day Ellen and her faithful minstrel, too, arrive there. Trusting in James' words, she has left the Goblin-cave and will now try to get an audience with the king by means of his signet-ring. All are still at rest and asleep when they come to the portal of the castle, but upon the warder's challenge a soldier appears to show them into the guard-room. Here the night is spent in the wildest way, witness of it the tables flooded with wine and covered with fragments of food, the beakers drained and cups overthrown, part of the soldiers snoring on benches and on the floor, while others still labour to quench their thirst and sing, with a very hoarse voice, the buxom-chorus of:

„Our vicar still preaches that Peter and Paul.“

Upon Ellen's entering the room, new jubilee arises, for she is thought to be a glee-maiden, accompanied by her harper. One of the rout, John de Brent, most forward in every feat or good or ill, is already advancing to have his jest with her, when she drops her tartan screen and all at once not only this man stands abashed and ashamed of what he has done and said, but all the soldiery gazes upon her as on an angel descended from Heaven. When now she boldly tells, her father, the soldier's friend, has cheered him in the camp, led him in marches, defended him under his shield and bled with him in the battle, and that, therefore, exile's daughter never expects to suffer any wrong from the valiant and the strong, her words move John so much that wiping his eyes and brow, he begs her pardon and leaves the room to call the captain of the watch, but not before he has laid strong injunctions upon his companions to beware of loose speech and rough jesting and has threatened them that his shaft shall quiver in the heart of him who ventures to do the maid injurious part. The gallant captain comes in; seeing such a beauty in such circumstances, he too is light-minded enough to indulge his imagination and to begin talking in a very loose manner, but struck with awe, he falters his excuses with deep respect and altered look, when the Lady shows him the ring. After she has divided her slender purse among the soldiers, he leads her to a splendid antechamber to wait there till the king will be awake.

Ellen now being in safety, Allan asks John de Brent to let him see his master, with which request the latter willingly complies. By way of mistake, however, he leads him not to Douglas, but into the prison of Roderick. This chieftain, but yesterday representing the image of manly strength and powerfulness, today shaken by a violent fever, lies there upon his dying-bed in a state of excessive weakness; but hearing the door be opened, he raises slowly his painful head and recognising the old bard, first he asks him about Ellen, his mother and his friend, and then glad of know them at least in safety, he bids him sing the battle fought in the Trosachs, in order that he may expire during a strong war-song, fancying to be amidst his brave clansmen when the broad-sword is brandished with the utmost of vigour and the axe whizzes the loudest. So the minstrel sings the extremely beautiful ballad of the „Battle of Beal' an Duine,“ the last chords of which, however, fall only upon the deafened ear of the dead chieftain; therefore after a moment's pause he takes again his harp that has escaped his hand while he looks at stout Roderick sighing out his existence, and pours his wailing over Clan-Alpine's honoured pine.

In the mean while Ellen is sitting in her lordly bower; but by no means being at ease, she

cannot take any interest in all the magnificence, in all the luxuries which surround her, cannot taste a bit of the rich collation spread before her. Anxious about the fate of her father and her friends, her heart is almost bursting within her; and seeking some consolation in the past, she is running over in her mind the happy days she has spent in the lonely isle, when at once awaking from her cheerful reveries, she rises and walks to the window, for from a near turret the sweet sounds of a song come to her ear, and who shall be the imprisoned huntsman that so moanfully complains of being deprived of his liberty and of being separated from his beloved Ellen but her own dearest Malcolm?

While she is still listening to this lay, Fitz-James approaches to guide her before the king. They enter a bright hall where all the flower of the kingdom is assembled, but in vain Ellen's eyes look for the monarch among the crowd of knights and courtiers; she stands bewildered and amazed till at last perceiving that her guide alone wears cap and plume, she recognises him as Scotland's sovereign and at the same time throws herself to his feet clasping her hands and showing the pledged ring. The generous prince, however, rises her gently and kisses her brow. To leave her no longer in uncertainty and in concern about her father, at a sign of the king, Douglas who is restored into his former dignities and hopped to be henceforth again the friend and bulwark of the throne, comes forth to embrace his daughter. Since the ring is still in her possession, she shall ask a boon, but bashfulness as well as generosity hinders her from uttering the name of her love; and therefore she begs pardon for Roderick. When the king replies:

— „the King of Kings Alone can stay life's parting wings; she turns to her father to deliver him her pledge, that he may speak the suit that would stain her glowing cheek. However the monarch does not allow another to entreat for her, and feigning to be in a passion he cries: „Fetters and warder for the Graeme.“ But soon her heart shall be the happiest and merriest in all Sterling, for: „His chain of gold the King unstrung, The links o'er Malcolm's neck he flung,	My fairest earldom would I give To bid Clan-Alpine's chieftain live.“ Then gently drew the glittering band, And laid the clasp on Ellen's hand.“
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VII.

Characters.*)

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1) Ellen. To introduce his heroine lovely and graceful, and no less good than beautiful, the poet takes much care to paint the scene of her first appearance as such a one as might be chosen by fairies to lead up their country-dances. The glorious radiant orb begins to sink nearer and nearer to the edge of the distant western hills, irradiating every tree of the wildering forest on huge Benvenue on the south, empurpling the bald towering forehead of Ben-an on the north, and casting a lingering parting smile upon the bushy green islet which floats in the middle of the lake, while the latter all glowing with light is turned into liquid gold, and the lower parts of the wooded hills are already enveloped in the dark shades of the evening. The rich crowns of leaves on the trees are not moved by any breath of wind, and no ripple is upon the smooth golden mirror of water, while with a faint murmur some blue wavelets softly roll the snow-white pebbles and lave the hanging twigs of the weeping willow on the beach. Stillness every where; all is silence far and near. The beholder is so much delighted with this scene that he cannot abstain from exclaiming:

„What a scene were here that he cannot refrain from imagining how blithe it would be to wander about this peaceful nook of the world, if here men had built a lordly tower with a lady's bower or there the turrets of a	For princely pomp, or churchman's pride?“
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*) Since the *Lady of the Lake* is read in a great number of our schools, these characters are intended, at the same time, to be taken each of them as a pattern by the scholars of the first classes in composing their treatises on the same or similar themes; from this point of view, I entreat the gentle reader not to find fault with the recurrences which sometimes occur.

cloister. But now even no humble cottage is to be seen; and so terrified with thoughts of robbers who, perhaps, have their dire abode in the caves made in the declivities of the mountains and rove about the woods at midnight's hours, the huntsman sounds his bugle-horn, when all of a sudden the lady, angel-like, appears — and the solitary knight has no longer eyes for all the chifting lights and shadows of the delicious scenery around him, neither for that summer-sea nor for the slopes stretching into the blue skies; but quite breathless, enraptured and amazed he stand concealed amid the brake to view the lady whose small boat glides swiftly through the water to take him into a safe port before the stars begin shining out overhead. Now the boat reaches the strand; and when she stands there listening, her face uplifted as if to catch again the distant strain, the huntsman believes to see one of the goddesses who in the days of old used to play and dance on the blooming leas round the crystal sources in charming Greece and now and then graced the happy inspired artist with their appearance, that he might shape their graceful forms in gold or marble, to delight both his contemporaries and ensuing ages. But however skilful the moulder, however clever his hand, his chisel could never succeed in tracing, and the song, too, must needs fall short of depicting so fine a form, so lovely a face as here is to be gazed at.

Therefore the poet, having the advantage over the other artists, tells us only of the deep impression the Lady makes upon the beholder and, to inflame a little more our imagination, he adds but a few strokes of her beauty. Her wild luxuriant ringlets which put to shame the raven's glossy black, float back whenever a gentle breeze kisses them, her cheeks tinged with brown by the burning rays of the sun are nevertheless glowing with beauty so very bright; her breast of snow of which only short glimpses are to be seen, moves in hastier swell with her sportive toil of rowing. Though not trained to the measured mood of courtly grace, but light as the wing of a bird, her foot scarcely dashes the dew from the heath-flower, and the most delicate and tender plants upon which it treads, raise their heads again. Though the accents of the mountain tongue hang upon her speech, the silver sounds that come from her lips are so charming, so soft, so dear that

„The listener held his breath to hear.“

Her dress shows her to be the daughter of one of the Highland chieftains whose hospitality is so well known abroad that the knight may anticipate the best reception and hope for as much relief as ever host can offer to the guest who calls in his assistance; but if there any doubt should be left, the charming maid's whole demeanour is most capable of removing even the slightest shadow of fear. Her clothing, though done with carefullness, and her carriage indicate at once both modesty and simplicity. He who has the pleasure of beholding her gracefulness needs not be told of her purity, goodness and excellency; for:

„Her kindness and her worth to spy,
and: — every free-born glance confessed

Jou need but gaze on Ellen's eye;
The guileless movements of her breast.“

Every thing that moves her heart, whether it be youthful joy or woe and pity, whether it be filial love or meek devotion, is to be read upon her features; only one passion, though much stronger, perhaps, than any other, remains unrevealed within her feeling bosom.

What, should we not like to hear this maid speak and see her act? To be sure, nothing more beautiful could be contrived by the poet than to make first her utter the word with which the gay innocent child uses to start from the play to greet its returning parent, and could any thing speak louder of the love and care with which she cherishes him than this gentle sound of her „father“ which the mountains love to prolong? As we may guess by the hint already given by the poet that the god of Love has sent also one of his darts in to her heart, her second calling „Malcom, is thine the blast?“ which comes from her lips with so much of maidenly shyness and in so low a voice that, however frequent the echoes may be in these regions, none of them all can catch the swell, lets us suppose that it is Malcolm to whom her delicate feelings are dedicated and that he is the happy youth for whom, next to her father, she has the most ardent desire. When now instead of her father and lover, all of a sudden another person stands before her and speaks: „A stranger J“, she is so much alarmed that without harkening to him any further and even without glancing at him, quickly she pushes off her boat from the shore, of course quite instinctively as any other maid would have done on a similar occasion. On having gained, however, some space between and therefore being in security, first of all she puts in order her dress which has become deranged by the great haste she makes to get away and then she turns her head to see what is going on behind her.

Her following conversation with the minstrel is full of high and noble ideas. After having attempted to assuage Allan's fears of age with natural reasons, she continues: „My father in native virtue great is out of the reach of fortune's frowns; he resembles the oak retaining still its strength and vigour, though it is stripped of the graceful foliage by storms; thus though he has lost his lordship, lands and state, fortune's gales have but little or not at all marred his happiness. And as far as J am concerned, J have scarcely ever seen better days, and therefore this hair-bell may be my emblem; this flower of the meadow drinking heaven's dew is as blithe as any rose that blooms in the king's gardens; and thus in the verdure-clad isle, J enjoy my prime of life in as much happiness as if amid all the brilliancy of royal courts; thus the amusements which nature affords here delight me far more than all the glare and grace which would surround me, if J should wear a coronet instead of this wreath of flowers.“ But where is to be found, especially among women, a sound youthful heart that could not be touched by the tales of the splendour and merriments which use to reign in the golden palaces of kings? Indeed, our lady, too, is not a philosopher old enough to feel no longings for such wordly pleasures after Allan has told her of them and has depicted the honour due to the Lady of the Bleeding heart. She cannot help sighing and crying „Fair dreams are these;“ and on her part, we must avow, it is quite enough of philosophic thoughts, that knowing too well the dawn of those bright days is not soon to be expected, she tries to be satisfied with what she enjoys. Likewise it is but consistent with the nature of woman and youth that she likes to dance the blithe strathspey, that she is fond of wielding a little power over the hearts of men and of exerting some influence even on grim Roderick who, she is sure, at her suit, will delay a Lennox foray — for a day, that she declares with so very solemn words to prefer living a votaress in Maronnan's cell or begging the world's cold charity to wedding the man she cannot love.

When she speaks about Roderick, we admire not less her sagacity and faculty of judgement than her thankfulness to him and his mother:

„All that a mother could bestow,
To Lady Margaret's care J owe;

To her brave chiftain son —
A deeper holier debt is owed.“

That her gratitude does not consist in fair words only, she proves, when before the king, though the thoughts of Malcolm occupy her whole heart, she implores his grace for him who has so often drawn his sword for her father's sake, who has so long afforded him a shelter. — In what a lovely and graceful manner her affection for her father is delineated! Scarcely she hears the distant bugle, when like a sunbeam, swift and bright, she darts to her light shallop; and within a moment's warning she lies in her dear father's arms faltering her filial welcomes without marking any thing around her, even not her own Malcolm. — Here we have, besides, another of those beautiful, though quite natural, traits. Her father's delightful praise, that Malcolm hears, make her bashful cheeks glow brighter than the red summer rose in the morning dew; to hide this flusk and her joy, she affects not to listen to their conversation, but takes to carressing the hounds and hawk. — Though in the morning the maid has said: „My blood, my life, but not my hand,“ in the evening when Roderick shows what great dangers threaten Douglas now, she scarcely can withstand the desperate thought of buying his safety by her hand from him who cannot win her love. Her father's life is dearer to her than her own happiness and to save him she does not shrink from the greatest sacrifice woman is capable of offering. However, methinks, it would ill become her to do it calmly; no, her heart is strongly agitated, she is dizzy and astound, her face now burning, now as wan as clay.

„Douglas marked the hectic strife,

Where death seemed combating with life.“

And when Douglas' answer has already decided the matter, the storm is not yet appeased. She cannot bear the son's despair, the mother's look, she rises to leave the room; and though neither so frail nor so nervous as the ladies of now-a-days, we may suppose that near a swooning she reels and totters and that therefore Malcolm comes to aid her parting steps.

In the wild and strange retreat of the Goblin cave, terrified and frightened at the hideous objects round her and perhaps not less at the gostly tales about them, violently agitated by the occurrences of the preceding day, fearing the outbreak of war and most anxious about her father, she takes her refuge to prayer and pours forth her instant supplications in the hymn to the holy Virgin, the meaning of which is nearly as follows:

Though we be in wilds from whence no woeful cries can reach our friends nor any other pitiful soul of mankind, thou canst hear us; though we be forsaken by everybody, though banished outcast and reviled, mother, thou wilt favour us with thy aid and save us amid despair. Jf thou

of course, must give us a full account of this man's figure and clothing. The coloured image he draws is, indeed, such a one as may catch, we imagine, a maid's heart at the first glance. We see a handsome brown-faced youth, slender but stalwart, in a bold attitude, and cannot help taking with admiration note of the firm thews and sinews which it is the peculiarity of the Highland dress to set off much more than any other could; for he wears the picturesque belted plaid and the tartan hose together with the other equipments of a man of the mountains. He has curly flaxen hair the sunny hue of which would rather bespeak him to be a Saxon; his covering for the head is the broad, blue bonnet with a feather. The most beautiful part of his face, however, is the pair of his eagle eyes the piercing look of which is able to spy the ptarmigan amid the new fallen snow. While we are looking at this picture, the poet amuses us with stories of his ability and strength in bodily exercises; there is not a mountain, lac, and heath in Lennox and Mentheith which is not known to him; he overtakes the dark-brown doe, though it be winged with fear; and not a sob betrays his toil when he is pressing right up Ben-Lomond. His mind according with his form is „lively and ardent, frank and kind;“ his heart was the blithest in all these mountains before it was wounded by Ellen with the dart of love. But it is not only the poet, there are still many other friends and bards who are full of his praise; knowing his boldness, his scorn of wrong, his zeal for truth, all are ready to swear that, when grown to man hood, he will be called the first man in all the Highlands, and that even Roderick's renown will quail to his.

The more love is felt, the less chat may be about it; the higher the esteem, the deeper the respect a man pays to a person, the less he will press near her, though it gives him the greatest pleasure to enjoy her society. And it may be the surest sign of first love that it is coy and timid, whereas he who has fluttered from one flower to another, cares nothing for a rebuke or repulse and ever abounds in protestations. So we may conclude it is for these reasons that, on meeting Ellen, there are no fine ceremonies, no glossy words uttered to her, but that the graceful youth stands aloof and that the fond enthusiast only sends his soul with each secret glance.

As he knows Roderick's jealousy, he carefully avoids doing anything, the day he is a guest in the green islet, to provoke this passion of his rival. When he hears of the danger impending on Douglas and Ellen, none can construe it ill that his cheek alternately becomes glowing red and wanned on account of his fear for the beloved maid. But when he becomes aware that, out of love of her father, she is willing to take Roderick's hand, eager he rises to speak — and, methinks, it is very beautifully arranged by the poet, that, before he does, Douglas has already determined on this matter. Mr. Prosch quotes Jeffrey, an English critic, who says: „There is something foppish and out of character in Malcolm's rising to lead Ellen out of her own parlour.“ As for my part, I feel inclined to deny that. Ellen blanches, is dizzy and astound as sudden ruin yawned around, wildly tossed by crossing terrors, like the sleep-walker who opening his eyes sees unmeasured depth around, her lips and eyes quiver; when now far from having got any ease of mind, she perceives the despair of her benefactor, the reproachful look of the unfortunate mother, — what shall we think but her whole frame is shaken by these violent emotions; and what can be more natural than that, seeing Ellen's weakness which the poet has taken so much care of painting us duely, Malcolm comes to aid her unsteady parting steps? — We should confess no drop of Highland blood flowed in his veins, if, when grasped and called minion, beardless boy, he would not at once display something of the activity of a tiger, the agility of a wild cat, or the bound of a lion at the throat of the insulter. But never doubt, no sooner has he felt a hand on his collar and heard the word of wrong, than eager as a grayhound on his game, the Graeme grapples with Roderick, as he is bound to do, if ever he intends to stand a honoured chieftain amidst his clan. Such an outrage cannot be borne by a man of the hills, and so much the less by him who shall be the prime of a clan. Brawling would be else a shame, but here wrestling and dagger drawing only means to act upon the principles of his race, is only to follow instinct and nature; here is the only matter of moment to show courage and strength, and never to recoil from any one whosoever he be. Therefore he burts also into these bold words:

„Perish my name, if aught offord Jts chieftain's safety, but his sword;“
and Douglas must thrust his giant strength between the stragglng foes, while dame Margaret is hanging on her son's mantle, and Ellen is screaming for her lover, before they unclasp their desperate grasp and stand there „as struck with shame,“ after they have heard Douglas taxing them with „dishonorable broil.“ When he has now regained his composure, neither Roderick's repeated

Fitz-James tell an untruth?" (Mr. Prosch.) J am of opinion that these verses may easily be interpreted in such a manner that the knight's speech, ambiguous as it ought to be, does not contain an untruth, and J should rather agree with what Mr. Wagner says viz: that he speaks too much and too confidently. — On the way back, he shows his goodness of heart as well as his gratitude to one of the meanest of his subject, to poor Blanche of Devan; for having killed red Murdoch, whose shaft quivers in her bosom instead of his own, he returns to her, tries to stanch the life-stream, and when she has expired in his arms, he swears to revenge her wrongs upon Roderick.

"No machinery can be conceived more clumsy for affecting the deliverance of a distressed hero than the introduction of a mad woman who without knowing or caring about the wanderer warns him by a song." (Jeffrey.)

By his suit of Lincoln green, she knows him to be a Lowlander, one of her own nation, the love for which even mania has not been capable of erasing, for she says herself:

„My eye has dried and wasted been, And, though mine ear is all unstrung,
But still it loves the Lincoln green; Still, still it loves the Lowland tongue;“

and this is indeed, enough for her to be as joyful as if she had met with a dear kinsman; therefore:
„As loud she laughed when near they drew, For then the Lowland garb she knew.

Moreover the poet cannot mean to represent a woman so mad as to be quite indifferent to all that goes on around her, no, he says himself: „She seemed nought to mark, yet all to spy.“ She does not rove there with the design to warn him; but when she has seen the muster of the Highlanders, when she observes a Saxon accompanied by a man so frightful to her eye, strong uncommon impressions make the last glimpse of her reason's light flame up again, to show her that they are about to rush in upon her beloved native country, to make her sure that ruin is intended for the wanderer; and so she shrieks as insane persons use to do at the sight of cruel warders who have maltreated them. Finally, and this seems to be the main point, the poet wants to paint before James' eyes the great calamity brought by the Highland plunderers on the Lowlands. Though he has told us already very much of villages burnt down and of peasants slaughtered in their beds, nothing can be more striking, nothing more touching than to look upon a person affected by all this in the utmost degree of misfortune. She has been torn from the holy shrine, just when she was to be united for ever with her true love. O! could she hear once more her native tongue, see once more the place where she was born, where she embraced her sweet William, how sweetly would she rest, how fervently would she pray that Heaven closed her wintry day?

Fitz-James's mind was passion-tossed, and fast poured his eye at pity's claim.

Should a monarch not be touched to the quick, perceiving his subjects suffer by such sorts of cruelty and barbarity, and can we wonder that some hours after, when asked if he dares to call himself a foe to Roderick, perhaps somewhat inconsiderately he answers:

„J dare! to him and all the band, He brings to aid his morderous hand,“
and professes himself to be: „Each proud oppressor's mortal foe!“

As for his fixing on his bonnet the two locks dipped in Blanche's blood which he swears to imbrue in the best of Roderick's, though it is any thing but a poetical idea, Prosch says, such disgusting customs have prevailed in the time of chivalry, and Scott is not to be blamed for the introduction of this incident into the poem. — To show all beautiful qualities of our knight, skillfulness and activity, energy, courage and bravery in all their splendour, to make the bright star of martial Faith and Courtesy shine with its loveliest light, giving to danger pride, to horror grace, and what is still more, to crown him with the heavenly virtues of thankfulness and pardon: the poet opposes him to an enemy, who on his part can claim also all our esteem and admiration upon this occasion. After a bold and nervous discourse, they sit down together beside the fire, feast upon the same meal, lie down upon the same couch, cover themselves with the same plaid. At dawn of day, they set off and begin on the road a dispute in which, by and by, they take fire. Fitz James cannot abstain from expressing his wonder by asking, how it is possible that a man of his companion's noble character can belong to the band of such a chieftain as he must reproach with murder and slaughter, with pillaging and waylaying. Having thus remembered the wrongs and injuries Roderick has inflicted upon his subjects, he lets his anger, hate, and wrath burst forth into a very threatening language. But no sooner he has done, than at a shrill whistle, he is surrounded by warriors, and his guide proudly declares himself to be Roderick Dhu. On the sudden appearance of so many enemies, for each of whom a movement of their chieftain's hand suffices to

make them do the worst, who should not have almost lost his senses? But James Fitz James is most brave; placing his back against a rock and with dountless air drawing his sword, he cries:

„Come one, come all! this rock shall fly,
From its firm base as soon as J!“

This proof of high courage cannot fail to fill with respect and esteem, with surprise and stern joy, the heart of the strong warrior who waves his hand, and all his band is disappeared. On arriving at Coilantogle ford, James, forgetting his sworn vengeance, refuses to fight with the man to whom he owes so deep a debt, promises to do whatever can atone their feud, tells him the riddle of the conquering party is already read by the death of Murdoch, and plights his honour, oath, and word, that the king will grant him full pardon and grace. However, when all is vain, when on the contrary, he hears Roderick begin contemptuously speaking of carpet-knight, when he sees the combat is unavoidable, at last with the words: „Now truce fare well! and ruth be gone!“ he consents to draw his blade, but not before, lest his antagonist shall think him to be inferior to himself in courtesy, he has reassured him that they will try this quarrel hilt to hilt, though a feeble blast of his horn would bring fearful odds to his side. Jll fared it then with Roderick Dhu, for our knight, making up by agility the want of strength, not only wounds him trice that the gushing blood dies the tartan, but forces also the weapon from his hand and brings him down to his knee. However he has not yet got the victory; we fear the worst for him, when they tug and strain, when they go down, the Gael above, Fitz James below, when the dagger of the former gleams on high — and we are relieved like the latter from agony, when breathless all, but unwounded he rises from the dreadful close. Though it disagreeably affects us that the victor now, in fact, dips Blanche's locks into the pouring blood, we feel a great delight in hearing him extoll his mortal enemy's Faith and Valour, that shunning to hurt the half-dead chieftain, he cuts short the questions of the four squires who make their appearance at the sound of his bugle, with the words: „Exclaim not, gallants! question not,“ and that directly he orders them to bind his wounds and to bring him to Sterling.

Jn assigning the reasons why the four men could come to the place of the combat, methinks, Prosch has overlooked the words: „grey palfrey — We destined for a fairer freight,“ from which follows that they were not riding there by change, but that they were placed with two horses in the vicinity, to wait for the return of Fitz James who intends leading Ellen from her ghastly Goblin-cave. —

Jt seems at least to be the sign of light-mindedness that Fitz-James, immediately after having escaped death, thinks of sports and archer-game. Upon the whole, though he complains of Albany's feeble hand, he does nothing that could show us his is stronger, on the contrary, inclined to follow his amusements, he seems to care but very little about government, and we cannot wonder at perceiving the terrible consequences of his thoughtlessness with which he must upbraid himself in this manner:

„Thou warn'st me J have done amiss, — J should have earlier looked to this:
J lost it in this bustling day.“

Jt is evident his rule of life is: first pleasure, then duty. What does it signify that he now exclaims: „Nor would we that the vulgar feel, For their chief's crimes, avenging steel,“ while the battle is already fought? As for his behaviour to Douglas, his wrong against him consists neither in showing no pity, nor in not kindly speaking to him when he gives him the prizes, for we well believe him to tell the truth:

„Thou, James of Bothwell, wert the man, The only man, in whom a foe
My woman-mercy would not know;“

but it is a great injustice that only after many years of banishment he deigns to examine the delinquencies, he finds now, slanderous tongues have charge him with.

When we have heard how eager he is to gain the love of his subjects by his bland and gentle behaviour, and that nevertheless many a man follows his train with dark brow and stern visage, it cannot take us by surprise that, when the people takes Douglas' part, the offended monarch is weary with reigning over the herd fantastic, fickle, fierce and vain, over the many-headed monster-thing. Scott has well succeeded, methinks, in drawing such a character of a Scottish king as for the most part they may have been of. However gallant and brave a knight he may be, he has not the great virtues a monarch ought to possess, and thus we may apply also to him these lines Scott writes on Robert the third: „He had many virtues and was not without talent; but it was his great misfortune, that, like others of his devoted line, his merits were not of a kind suited to the part which he was called upon to perform in life.“

5) Roderick. When Allan has told us that Roderick, the undaunted homicide, who, though himself an outlaw, has given Douglas, disowned by every noble peer, a rude refuge in his mountain land sternly kept, which nobody else would venture, and that for this boon he expects a reward from Ellen's charms and hand; when she has also painted him as brave but wild, generous but vindictive and jealous, true to friends but without any kind of mercy for foes, liberal but so rapacious, so blood-thirsty that, though she honours the hand defending her father, she cannot clasp it red from slaughtering peasants; this chieftain returns home to the lonely isle from an incursion into the Lowland with four masted barges, manned by his clansmen whose wild song does not only express the affection and enthusiasm which make their hearts swell for their leader, but glorifies also the savage feats they have performed under his guidance. — Aghast with horror, we hear him woo Ellen and add these formidable words:

„When the loud pipes my bridal tell,	And when J light the nuptial torch,
The Links of Forth shall hear the knell,	A thousand villages in flames,
The guards shall start in Stirling's porch;	Shall scare the slumbers of king James!“

When Douglas will not sacrifice his daughter's happiness for his own safety nor lend his counsel against the king, the veins of his forehead swelled, his cheek inflamed, Roderick strides twice through the hall, his dark brow showing the utmost of wrath and disappointment; an ungovernable paroxysm of passion and rage agitates his whole frame; his feelings are so strong that, losing his senses and being rendered almost mad by jealousy which has made men do the very worst both in real life and poesy, though else hospitality is so sacred and inviolable to him, he attacks Graeme, his happier rival; and though struck with shame they unclasp their desperate grasp, Roderick cannot abstain from abusive language.

However rude else this mere man of nature's creation appears, his heart is meek and soft when thoughts of love seize upon him. He has sworn to drown his love in war's wild roar, to think no more of Ellen; and yet, when he comes near his sweet-heart, he strains his anxious ear to hear that angel's voice, and during her song he is so much immersed in sorrowful thoughts that his page is obliged to awake him from his reveries.

He attends Brian when he is forming the red cross, and causes him to try the Taghairm, but we may guess that he considers the whole affair as drollery and nonsense, necessary on account of the multitude. For his independence from superstition is not only expressed in his own words: „He yield, not he, to man or Fate,“ but also, and even much better, in those of his servant which we have already cited, provided that we suppose the chief to be not inferior to this clansman of his.

His weeping is maintained to be out of character; but why should not a tear wet his eye, when speaking the words: „Father for child and son for sire, — Lover for maid beloved! — But why — sadness and wofulness steal again into his heart? He pauses to lay an emphasis upon „Lover for maid beloved!“ he pauses again and this added „but why“ implies: „J unfortunate, ill-stared lover, for what dear object am J to fight?“ A man like him does not weep, because a brainsick monk tells him an angury, and perhaps a good one too, nor can fear, doubt or terror move his heart, but despised love has cut it to the quick. Moreover it is quite natural that he tries to conceal his emotion both by that little boasting of his firmness and by his question: „Js it the breeze affects mine eye?“ Love causes him to lag behind his men, — unwonted sight, — and it is perhaps also for that passion that, absorbed in thought, he sits beside the fire alone and separate from his clansmen. Jn short, despised love has so totally altered him that he who did not doubt to plunge his dirk in his offenders breast in the king's own court, now can calmly endure hints and invectives, since a grief more violent than any other is tearing his heart. Jn spite of the tales which have prejudiced us against him, he gains by, and by, our sympathy and esteem. His chivalrous disposition is carried on to the utmost; he does not only spare a fatigued erring wanderer who provokes him in rather rash words, does not only share with him his meal and plaid, but, though the menaces of his guest put him out of countenance for a moment, leads him also, just to his promise, out of the mountains, out of the reach of the clansmen; and since needs he must fight to fulfill the angury, he throws down his target without which he has never been accustomed to do, in order that he may be all vantageless and armed only with a single brand in the same manner as his companion. His pride is as great as his courage and bravery; though bleeding from three deep wounds and cast down upon the lea, he cries:

„Thy threats, thy mercy, J defy!	Let recreant yield who fear to die.“
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And then „Like adder darting from his coil, Like mountain-cat who guards her young,
 Like wolf that dashes through the toil, Full at Fitz-James's throat he sprung.“

But his will is stronger than his power; and when his knee has been planted upon his antagonist's breast, when his dagger is gleaming on high, senseless he must lay down his head among the grass and flowers. — At last we see this man lying upon the sick-bed in the prison. As the ship that never is to wander again across the waves, her masts being broken, her crew being gone, lies upon the sand among the breakers, so Roderick, alone and wrecked, stretches upon his couch, forsaken by every one but a minstrel; and as the ship is beaten by winds and billows unable to heave her from the place of destruction, the fever within him shakes and tosses his frame and limbs, and he is unable to lift up his head from the pillow; but wound-fever and approaching death cannot extinguish the fire of his sentiments and pride, neither the affection of his beloved friends nor the attachment to his clan, neither the care for his beloved subjects nor the joy and delight in the honour and glory they have gained in the battle of yesterday. „Often, Allan, in happier days, thy song extolling the feats of the brave and valiant, has delighted my heart and raised my spirits, now make thy strings resound and sing once more a strong war-song that seeing in my imagination the flash of spear and lance, hearing the clash of arms, I forget these walls and rove over the field of battle, giving orders and dealing death-blows till I expire.“ At first he feebly beats the time, then his looks only show his emotion according as the song changes, and at length, his deafened ear hearing no more the minstrel's melody:

„Motionless and moanless, drew His parting breath stout Roderick Dhu.“

As for his crimes, we are glad that the poet, though he cannot entirely purify him, attempts to remove a great deal of their hatefulness. He has stabbed a knight in the Regent's court and sight, — but for shameful words, for a blow, an offence not to be borne by a man, and at a time too, when he was not likely to receive any sort of satisfaction. There are no base and vile sentiments which induce him to make his incursions into the Lowlands, but it is patriotism, mistaken as it may be, ever a laudable quality, it is national hate, implanted into his soul from his earliest childhood, to a race of strangers who, with iron hand, have taken possession of

„Deep waving fields and pastures green, These fertile plains, that softened vale,
 With gentle slopes and groves between: — Were once the birth right of the Gael;“
 who have left nothing for the former owners but the savage hills, dry shingles, where rudely swell
 crag over crag, and fell over fell.

6) Allan. Titius is of opinion that it would be more suitable, if the minstrel's place was filled up by another person, for inst. by a female companion or by an old maid-servant. I don't believe to be at variance with any one, when I assert that such persons are utterly out of question, if Scott intends to depict Highland manners and customs. Moreover I should be rather sorry, if I were obliged to agree with what Prosch writes: „The minstrel is represented as a rather foolish man,“ and in another passage: „We have not forgotten that the minstrel is a foolish man,“ for I cannot imagine that the poet intends to represent his „Pattern of old fidelity“ as such a person, or that he would cause Douglas to say of a fool, he was not so proud of all former splendour as of his old man's silent tear. — Though, indeed, the old man may acquaint us with many things we already know, though he may serve to express the poet's reflections, he is not at all, superfluous, and we delight in him the better, the more we hear of him. Being a taishatr, we may suppose him to display a large share of superstition in the poem; and he does so, but in a manner, methinks, that can never hurt us. Given to minstrel meditation, he is sitting under a blighted tree, his reverend brow raised to heaven, as if he would claim a sparkle of inspiring flame from the rising sun; no breeze dares lift one lock of his hoary hair, and thus he sings a parting song full of fine ideas. As soon as the bubble and spray, flinged away from the oars, disappear on the calm surface of the lake, nay, even sooner men forget the benefits they receive at the hands of others. Therefore, O stranger, when high-placed in royal courts or battle-line, fortune smiles upon thy way, when beauty, love, and friendship spread their wings around thee, thy memory of the lonely islet may also be lost, but whenever, beneath yon southern sky, thou seest an unfortunate plaided stranger with sunken cheek and weary eye pining for his Highland home,

„Then, warrior, then be thine to show The care that soothes a wanderer's woe.“
 Or if misfortune befall thee, though thou art faithful, brave, and wise, if woe, want and exile be thy share, do not complain of thankless courts, of faithless friends, but return, and a kind reception shall greet thee in our sylvan bower!

In the picture of old age and youth which the poet represents before our eyes, painting Ellen and Allan and the scenery around them, not only their outside, the place chosen by each of them are drawn in such a fine manner that a painter would not easily find out an idea more beautiful and picturesque, but as he wants also to express more distinctly the sentiments and feelings of their souls, the following conversation serves as well to show the bottom of their hearts, as it is quite adapted to point out the contrast of thoughts in the two ages. Old age is sad and grave, while youth is gay and somewhat light; the former sees doubts and danger where the latter finds hopes and pleasure; the one living, as if it were, in the past, rejoices at the thoughts of former happier days and cannot avoid complaining of their transitoriness, the other, not knowing what she has lost, cares very little for honours, titles and courtly amusements, but is quite satisfied and highly delighted with what she can fully enjoy, the pleasures nature and Highland feats afford.

From this point of view, J cannot find him foolish neither when like his tuneful fathers he believes in the prophetic sound of his harp, nor when he suspects that its accents of despair forbode some misfortune to Douglas' family. Nor can J find any lack of tact, when with such a look as hermit throw, when angels stoop to soothe their woe, he words his heart's dearest desire as follows: „O might J live to see thee grace, In Scotland's court, thy birth-right place!“ Jf one day he should look upon its realisation, his soul has nothing left to long for in this vale of tears. And why should he not utter this words, since no man, but perhaps a few who feign to devote themselves still more to Cynicism than Diogenes himself, need be ashamed of preferring glory and brilliancy above the miseries of exile?

Nowhere but under Roderick's roof, Douglas has found a shelter; long ago he would have suffered the pain of death but for this chieftain; the latter loves Ellen to distraction, and dispensation may soon be brought from Rome. Under such circumstances, what can there be more reasonable than to think of matching Ellen and Roderick, since, besides, in general the inclination of youthful hearts goes for nothing with the greater part of aged persons, since here especially Allan knows nothing of his mistress' revealed passion; and what can be more natural than that, though, having long turned over the matter in his mind, he draws the conclusion,

„Yet, O loved maid, thy mirth refrain, Thy hand is on the lion's mane,“
he allows himself to intercede for that lover.

Moreover he is perfectly right, when asked: „What thinkst thou of our stranger guest? he answers: „Jf courtly spy has harboured here, Jf neither spy nor foe, J pray,
What may we for the Douglas fear? What yet may jealous Roderick say?“

In all this scene Allan seems to feel an apprehension of some impending danger; far from believing in an inspiration from above, we cannot deny it very often happens that the human mind, not knowing how and why, is oppressed by the anticipation of approaching evil, almost in the same manner, as if about noon the sky still being blue and clear, we feel that in the evening a thunderstorm will come and clouds break over us. And it is this sentiment which, J believe, the poet also intends to depict in this passage.

When we meet these two companions at the Goblin-cave, they have, as it were, interchanged their parts. Allan's presentiment has proved to be true; the Highlanders are at war, and Ellen is inconsolable on account of her father's departure. The minstrel tries all possible means to scare away her sad thoughts from her mind. In vain he assures her: „He will return, Dear lady, trust! With joy return; — he will — he must; and in vain he pretends that Douglas only seeks afar a safer retreat; neither his reasons nor the favorable auguration of his lyre can soothe her heart. Now when all this is unavailable, thinking „to change such odious theme were best,“ he begins reciting that beautiful ballad of Alice Brand. This song being nothing but a poetical form of the old proverb: „When our Need is sorest, God is nearest“, far from being out of season, is quite appropriate to the situation, and so much the more, as the general idea totally coincides with what we hear of Ellen, her father, and Malcolm, who have their counter-part in Alice, Richard, and Ethert.

Alice Brand and her Richard, having been compelled to flee from their native land and their parentage, live as outlaws in woods. She whose tender fingers were only wont to tune the harp, must now make clothes of deer skins to keep the cold away, while he who formerly swung the lance and sword in battles and at tournaments, must now learn to work with the axe. Nevertheless they are happy, whilst:

„Alice has her own Richard, And he his Alice Brand.“
But to mar their happiness, the moody Elfen king sends Urgan to lay the curse of the withe-

red heart, the curse of the sleepless eye upon Richard. When the worst seems to befall them, it is by the courage of the woman that her lover is saved and her brother gains again his human shape. As it is obvious at what the poet aims with his song, I do not mean to dwell any longer upon this subject.

The last time Allan appears to sing the Battle of Beal' an Duine, he shows himself worthy of the greatest master of his art.

„To bid a last affectionate farewell to the lovely waves of Loch Achray and its delicious strand, the minstrel stands once more on the eastern ridge of Benvenue, his looks wandering over the magnificent grandeur of that region, all beacons and glittering in the full blaze of the sun. Not a bird's gay melody, not the flapping motion of wings disturb the dead silence; the slender fan of the fern does not nod, and the trembling leaves of the aspen have ceased their faint flutter. No breathe ruffles the surface of the lake, and the springing trout lies still and basking. By and by the bright lustre diminishes and dark clouds, their sides dyed with purple hues, shroud the brows of Benledi. But why, is that the distant roaring of the thunder, and are the flashes of lightning already shooting their zigzaggy lines through the trees of the wood? No, he hears the warriors' measured tread, he sees spear and lance, crest and harness, glistening in the last beams of the retiring sun. No pipe being blown, no drum being beaten, the foes to Highland men draw near and nearer; now light-armed archers swarm through the entangled thickets in search of lurking foes, while the frowning centre-ranks and the barbed horsemen of the rear move along like a deep sea-wave high swelling, dark, and slow, till when the former are diving through the Trosach's rugged jaws, they make a halt upon a narrow and broken plain. At once there rises so wild a yell, as if all the devil's imps of hell break loose; the archermen are thrust back from the pass; for the Gaels with flashing broad-swords burst in upon them with such a violence as never they can withstand, though their arrow-flight falls like rain, and they fly as chaff before the wind. In a very wild hurly-burly the mixed throng seems to be running down even the spearmen's twilight wood, when the commander's loud voice is heard:

„Down, down, your lances down! Bear back both friend and foe!“

Closely shouldering side to side, the Saxon phalanx, all horrent with projected spears, abides the onset of the savage mountaineers. Now hark! what dreadful sounds! The battle yell grows louder and fiercer; the shivering crash of the lance, the deadly clang of the broad-sword rend the sky and shake the oak and rowan on the hills, the very rocks around. In vain Clan Alpines men make violent assaults upon the living wall; they must recoil, when the horsemen dash in among them. The Gaels cannot stand their blows and strokes; in a trice the plain is cleared, and all the roaring tide has poured through the pass of fear, leaving behind but those who never shall fight again. The minstrel, too, hastens away to wait the issue of the combat on the western outlet of the Trosach's dread defile. The sun is set; the growls of the thunder are only heard from afar; all the celestial vault is covered with thick lays of black clouds; all of a sudden, strange gusts of whirlwinds raise the dust and sand and waves, shake violently the green leaviness and bend and break the stout trees of the forest. They sink, but the warriors still rage on; the battle-din and war-cry, increased by the thousand echoes of the glens, out roar storm and thunder; the ground trembles under their heavy tread, as if an earth-quake had set in. At length, however, their fury seems to abate. They come forth from the narrow gorge, but no longer engaged in close fight; the Gaels overhang the sides of the mountains, and the Saxons rank on the banks of the Lake.

Alack a-day! the enemies desery the lonely islet where only women ring their hands. Seduced by the leader's offer of purse and bonnet-pieces, a spearman plunges into the waves and swims over to loose a shallop from the opposite shore, while:

„The Saxons shout, their mate to cheer, The helpless females scream for fear,
And yells for rage the mountaineer.“

In spite of whirlwinds and high swelling billows, in spite of rain and hail and showers of vengeful arrows he approaches the point at which he aims and stretches his arm to take hold of a boat; but now every thing is fire by flashes of lightning, and Duncraggan's widowed dame stands there, her hand and dagger streaming blood, and the corse of the spearman floats beside the boats.

The rage of the elements shall no longer check the fury of the Saxons, they are hurrying to renew the desperate fight, when:

„ — in the Monarck's name, — An herald's voice forbade the war.“

