

Two stanzas of the original ballad commemorating them, alone survive—

Bessie Bell and Mary Gray,
They were twa bonnie lassies,
They bigged them a bower on yon burn brae,
And theckit it over wi' rashes.

—
They wadna rest in Methvin kirk,
Among their gentle kin,
But they wad lie in Lednock braes
To beck against the sun.

Sir Walter Scott, in his "Border Minstrelsy," says: "There is, to a Scottish ear, so much of tenderness and simplicity in these verses, as must induce us to regret that the rest should have been superseded by a pedantic modern song, turning upon the most unpoetic part of the legend; the hesitation, namely, of the lover, which of the ladies to prefer." To a Scottish ear, its "tenderness and simplicity" are undoubtedly pleasing, but to the general acceptance it can not compare with the unspeakable melancholy and pathos that lulls the heart and brings tears to the eyes, in the ballad of "Auld Robin Gray," as sung in Scotland. After each verse there is a long reverie in vague notes without words, and each succeeding verse takes up the story weeping, regretting, yet resigned.

When the sheep are in the fauld and the ky at hame,
And a' the weary warld to rest are gane,
The waes o' my heart fa' in showers frae my e'e,
While my gude-man sleeps very sound by me.

Some one, I know not who, writes of it: "If the Greek strophes of Sappho are the very fire of love, these Scotch notes are the very life's blood and tears of a heart stricken to death by fate." With the writer, "I know not who wrote the music, but whoever he be, thanks to him for having found, in a few notes and in the mournful melody of a voice, the expression of infinite human sadness."

The season of the year did not favor a trip farther north, into the highlands of

Perthshire, and our disappointment was great at not seeing the lovely "Birks of Aberfeldy, sung by Burns, nor the pass of Killiecrankie, nor Birnam, with its wood of Shakespearean fame, the prophecy relating to Macbeth not to be fulfilled, as we know,

Till Birnam woods do come to Dunsinane,

with the accent on the last syllable, according to the requirement of Shakespearean rhythm, but which should be pronounced *Dun-sin-an* by local authority. It is said that if an intelligent stranger were asked to describe the most varied and the most beautiful among the provinces of Scotland, he would name the county of Perth as that where most emphatically is

Beauty found lying in the lap of terror.

Half an hour by train to Dundee took us to the hospitable home of valued friends in the environs of that city, whose acquaintance we had made nearly two years before, during a tour to the lake district of the poets, in Westmoreland and Cumberland, where we had made delightful trips in company from Keswick to Buttermere, Patterdale and Troutbeck, halting at the Falls of Lodore and enjoying the scenery from the top of one of the coaches that ply in those romantic localities, with the seats specially arranged for easy riding and sight seeing. A long-to-be-remembered day, spent partly on the Ulleswater, witnessed our parting at Penrith, and we were now to pay a long promised visit to them in their Scottish home; but alas! not until its honored head, the devoted and revered husband and father, the beloved and respected citizen, and the entertaining friend, had left it. We found the widow cheerfully serene, faithfully fulfilling life's noblest duties in the responsible care of her family of five sons and as many daughters, who had cause, in the dual relation she sustained to