Scott and 'Tales of My Landlord'

JOHN MACQUEEN

Waverley, with its subtitle ''Tis Sixty Years Since', was published on 7 July 1814. On 29 July Scott embarked from Leith to accompany the Commissioners for Northern Lights on what he called 'a nautical tour round Scotland, visiting all that is curious on continent and isle'. The trip lasted until 8 September, when Scott disembarked at Greenock and took the steam-boat to Glasgow on the first stage of his homeward journey. During the tour he kept a long diary, written primarily for the entertainment of himself, his family, and a few friends, but which incidentally reveals many of his imaginative and intellectual preoccupations at the time. Lockhart embodied it in volume III of his *Memoirs of the Life of Sir Walter Scott, Bart.* (7 vols., Edinburgh and London 1837).

The diary was written at the beginning of Scott's career as a novelist, but also near the beginning of his career as an improving land-owner. The two are more closely linked than one might imagine. Scott had removed to Abbotsford in May 1812, and by the summer of 1814 his baronial mansion had substantially replaced its predecessor on the same site, the small poor farmhouse 'with a common kail-yard on one flank, and a staring barn . . . on the other; while in front appeared a filthy pond covered with ducks and duckweed, from which the whole tenement had derived the unharmonious designation of Clarty Hole' (I quote Lockhart). Scott himself, in other words, had a major responsibility for the redemption of at least one piece of Scotland from the clutches of the old agricultural system, which had survived almost unchanged from the later Middle Ages. His work as landlord plays a significant part in the more general movement which has been described by the late Henry Hamilton in *An Economic History of Scotland in the Eighteenth Century* (Oxford 1963), and by T. C. Smout in *A History of the Scottish People, 1560–1830* (London 1969).

The main processes by which this transformation, the Agricultural Revolution, as it is often called, was affected, were enclosure, plantation, crop-rotation, the introduction of new crops, better animal-husbandry and better farm-machinery. As a consequence, in lowland Scotland, two generations saw the virtual disappearance of the old system of run-rig, infield, outfield, ox-plough, but-and-ben and kailyard. During Scott's lifetime, the entire appearance of the countryside, and the customs and manners of country men and women, were substantially altered—in most ways, for the better, in some for the worse. The older way of society has preserved a continuity with the culture of the past, which Scott felt as distinctively Scottish, the disappearance of which

he regretted: even when he felt that it was inescapable, and in many ways beneficial, the change still introduced an unfortunate measure of uniformity with, and subordination to, England and Europe. Scott felt nevertheless that some kind of reconciliation between new and old was possible, as it was certainly necessary.

In this, as in other ways, the tension between a retreating and an advancing way of life formed part of the framework of Scott's very existence, and his temperament was of a kind likely to be strongly affected by it. On the one hand, he was a scholar and antiquarian, conservative by imaginative bias and political conviction. On the other, he was a pragmatic lawyer, more concerned with things as they were, or would in the near future be, than with how they had been or ought to be. And of course the political and intellectual background of his own life-time—the Enlightenment, the American and French revolutions, the rise of Napoleon and the long war with France, the preliminaries of the first Reform Bill—all projected on a European and world scale the same impulse towards revolutionary change visible on the face of the Border countryside which had helped to form Scott as an imaginative and thinking being. It is not surprising that revolution, the violent confrontation of an old with a new form of society, formed the staple of his creative output, even before the Waverley novels. The Last Minstrel, as his name indicates, is the last of his ancient order, and has survived into a different world; a vital part of the old Scotland disappeared in company with Marmion at Flodden. In *The Lady of the Lake* we have the reign of James V, with its confrontation of the old, represented by the House of Douglas and the Highlands, and the new, represented by the Lowlands and King James V.

In Scott's earlier and best narrative poetry, however, the confrontation of two orders of society had invariably been seen from a substantial distance. The Last Minstrel belongs to the closing years of the seventeenth century, but his tale, like that of *Marmion* and *The Lady of the Lake*, is of the early sixteenth century. It was only when Scott turned from verse to prose, from the romance to the novel, that he began to exercise his imaginative powers on the more recent past, and to discover in it the seeds of the revolutionary present, the present which the Laird of Abbotsford and uncrowned King of Scotland was himself helping to shape. ''Tis Sixty Years Since', the subtitle of *Waverley*, immediately reveals the change of emphasis—Scott had turned to events within living memory, events which still exerted some influence on contemporary society, much as the 1914–18 War still has its effect on present-day Britain and Europe. If by historical novelist we mean one who excludes, or attempts to exclude, from his work all concern with events of his own time, Scott for the most and best part was not a historical novelist. His concern was with the past as the matrix of the present—if you like, with the birth pangs of the present in the fairly immediate past.

Scott's improvements at Clarty Hole shared in importance with the earlier raids into Liddesdale in forcing him to become aware of the continuity between past and present in the Borders. The voyage with the Commissioners for Northern Lights helped to bring Scotland as a whole within his ken. The voyage took him to the Shetlands and

Orkneys, along the north coast of the mainland and down the west coast, with visits to the Inner and Outer Hebrides, Northern Ireland and the islands of the Firth of Clyde. Scott, as antiquary and historian, was fascinated, but it is clear that Scott, the improving landlord, also found much of importance. In the northern islands particularly, the older Scotland was alive and visible, as some passages from the account of the Shetlands will serve to illustrate.

Scott arrived in Lerwick on 4 August, and almost immediately, as was his way, went for a long exploratory walk:

> The ground is dreadfully encumbered with stones; the patches, which have been sown with oats and barley, bear very good crops, but they are mere patches, the cattle and ponies feeding among them and secured by tethers. The houses most wretched, worse than the worst herd's house I ever saw. It would be easy to form a good farm by enclosing the ground with Galloway dykes, which would answer the purpose of clearing it at the same time of stones; and as there is plenty of lime-shell, marle, and alga-marina, manure could not be wanting. But there are several obstacles to improvement, chiefly the undivided state of the properties, which lie *run-rig*; then the claims of Lord Dundas, the lord of the country; and above all, perhaps, the state of the common people, who, dividing their attention between the fishery and the cultivation, are not much interested in the latter, and are often absent at the proper times of labour. Their ground is chiefly dug with the spade, and their ploughs are beyond description awkward. An odd custom prevails—any person, without exception (if I understand rightly) who wishes to raise a few kail, fixes upon any spot he pleases, encloses it with a dry stone-wall, uses it as a kail-yard till he works out the soil, then deserts it and makes another. Some dozen of these little enclosures, about twenty or thirty feet square, are in sight at once. They are called planty-cruives. . . .
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> In our return, pass the upper end of the little lake of *Cleik-him-in*, which is divided by a rude causeway from another small loch, communicating with it, however, by a sluice, for the purpose of driving a mill. But such a mill! The wheel is horizontal, with the cogs turned diagonally to the water; the beam stands upright, and is inserted in a stone-quern of the old-fashioned construction. This simple machine is enclosed in a hovel about the size of a pig-stye, and there is the mill! There are about 500 such mills in Shetland, each incapable of grinding more than a sack at a time (pp. 143–5).

In his diary, Scott added a rough sketch to illustrate the operation of the mill.

Two days later he went to dine at the home of an improving landlord on the island of Bressay:

> Young Mr. Mowat, son of my old friend, is an improver, and a *moderate* one. He has got a ploughman from Scotland, who acts as *grieve*, but as yet with the prejudices and inconveniences which usually attach themselves to the most salutary experiments. The ploughman complains that the Zetlanders work as if a spade or hoe burned their fingers, and though they only get a shilling a-day, yet the labour of three of them does not exceed what one good hand in Berwickshire would do for 2s. 6d. The islanders retort, that a man can do no more than he can; that they are not used to be taxed to their work so severely; that they will work as their fathers did, and not otherwise; and at first the landlord found

> difficulty in getting hands to work under his Caledonian taskmaster. Besides, they find fault with his *ho*, and *gee*, and *wo*, when ploughing. 'He speaks to the horse,' they say, 'and they gang—and there's something no canny about the man'. In short, between the prejudices of laziness and superstition, the ploughman leads a sorry life of it; yet those prejudices are daily abaiting, under the steady and indulgent management of the proprietor. Indeed, nowhere is improvement in agriculture more necessary. An old-fashioned Zetland plough is a real curiosity. It had but one handle, or stilt, and a coulter, but no sock; it ripped the furrow, therefore, but did not throw it aside. When this precious machine was in motion, it was dragged by four little bullocks yoked abreast and as many ponies harnessed, or rather strung to the plough by ropes and thongs of raw hide. One man went before, walking backward; with his face to the bullocks, and pulling them forward by main strength. Another held down the plough by its single handle, and made a sort of slit in the earth, which two women, who closed the procession converted into a furrow, by throwing the earth aside with shovels. An antiquary might be of opinion that this was the very model of the original plough invented by Triptolemus: and it is but justice to Zetland to say, that these relics of ancient agricultural art will soon have all the interest attached to rarity. We could only hear of one of these ploughs within three miles of Lerwick (pp. 152–3).

The most direct effect of Scott's visit to Shetland is to be seen in one of his less successful novels, *The Pirate* (1821), most of all in the presentation of the anachronistic improver, Triptolemus Yellowley, but it is only necessary to think of Cuddy Headrigg, the ploughman in *Old Mortality*, to see the more generalized effect which his experiences in the Shetlands and elsewhere, sharpened by his labours as landlord of Abbotsford, exercised on Scott's creative imagination. It was not merely, or even primarily, the more glamorous incidents and people of the past—Claverhouse, for instance, the Jacobite cause in general or Prince Charles Edward in particular—which kindled Scott to his most creative achievement. By the 'teens and 'twenties of the nineteenth century, the glamour perhaps remained, but the relevance had departed. Scott's concern was with the continuous process and development which linked past with present. Above all, perhaps, he was concerned with development as it affected the land itself, as it affected Scotland, which he saw dominated by the country-side and its people. Edinburgh was also part of Scotland, but Scott's Edinburgh is a place reserved almost exclusively for lawyers and mobs, a place from which to escape. Several novels—one particularly recalls *The Antiquary* and *Redgauntlet*—begin with a happy departure from Edinburgh. Save in *Rob Roy*, Glasgow scarcely makes an appearance.

Scott only gradually, I believe, came to realise the aptness for his own purposes of the form which he first tentatively adopted in *Waverley*. *Waverley* almost certainly he wrote to be complete in itself. By 1816 when he had completed *The Antiquary*, his ideas had changed, as he indicates in the 'Advertisement' prefixed to that novel. 'The present Work', he says 'completes a series of fictitious narratives, intended to illustrate the manners of Scotland at three different periods. WAVERLEY embraced the age of our fathers, GUY MANNERING that of our youth, and the ANTIQUARY refers to the last ten years of the eighteenth century.' Here, clearly expressed, is the idea of historical

progression through some fifty years which is to unite several volumes otherwise quite distinct. Scott, as the next sentence indicates, emphasised continuity as much as change. 'I have', he says, 'in the two last narratives especially, sought my principal personages in the class of society who are the last to feel the influence of that general polish which assimilates to each other the manners of different nations.' His 'principal personages', in other words, who provide the continuity between one novel and another and between the novel and the reader, are not the titular heroes, but in *Guy Mannering* Meg Merrilees, Dandy Dinmont and Dominie Sampson: in *The Antiquary* Edie Ochiltree and the Mucklebackits—those who personify, as it were, the abiding element in the older order, while the titular heroes and their social compeers proceed towards the new. But at least to begin with not the very new—*The Antiquary* comes no nearer to the present than the 1790s.

Two other things deserve comment. Scott's realisation of his own development is shown by the way in which he sets *Waverley* somewhat apart from the two succeeding and structurally more advanced novels. Secondly, he writes in the 'Advertisement' as if with the completion of his trilogy he intended to give up the practice of novel-writing. 'I have now', he says, 'only to express my gratitude to the public for the distinguished reception which they have given to works that have little more than some truth of colouring to recommend them, and to take my respectful leave, as one who is not likely again to solicit their favour.'

In this way 'The Author of Waverley' made, or pretended to make, his *congé*. It is well known how, in the same year a few months later, a work, apparently by a new author, appeared under the title of *Tales of My Landlord, Collected and Reported by Jedediah Cleishbotham, Schoolmaster and Parish-Clerk of Gandercleugh*. Jedediah claimed to be no more than the editor of the material collected and written up by his deceased assistant, Peter Pattieson, who in turn had gathered it from visitors to the Wallace Head Inn in Gandercleugh, 'the navel (*si fas sit dicere*) of this our native realm of Scotland; so that men, from every corner thereof, when travelling on their concernments of business either towards our metropolis of law, by which I mean Edinburgh, or towards our metropolis and mart of gain, whereby I insinuate Glasgow, are frequently led to make Gandercleugh their abiding stage and place of rest for the night.' The dedication runs, 'To his loving Countrymen, whether they are denominated Men of the South, Gentlemen of the North, People of the West or Folk of Fife, these Tales, illustrative of ancient Scottish manners, and of the traditions of their respective districts, are respectfully inscribed, by their friend and liege fellow-subject, Jedediah Cleishbotham'. The first four volumes contained *The Black Dwarf* and *Old Mortality*. Whatever Scott's intention may have been, the hand of 'The Author of *Waverley*' was at once recognised in them. In the national scope of the series we may perhaps recognise one side effect of the extended voyage with the Commissioners for Northern Lights.

The dedication lays particular emphasis on 'ancient Scottish manners', yet the first readers of the volumes must have been immediately struck by the expression of one

aspect of modern Scottish life which forms the introduction to *The Black Dwarf*. The story is set in the Borders during the early eighteenth century, and demonstrates the final stages of Border life as it had been recorded in the ballads—'the auld riding days'. The modern farmer and his shepherd are introduced not merely as sources of the story but to contrast the nineteenth with the eighteenth century:

> "Hout awa' man," answered the farmer, "ye'll hae heard o' Canny Elshie the Black Dwarf, or I am muckle mistaen—A' the warld tells tales about him, but it's but daft nonsense after a'—I dinna believe a word o't frae beginning to end."
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> "Your father believed it unco stievely, though," said the old man, to whom the scepticism of his master gave obvious displeasure.
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> "Ay, very true, Bauldie, but that was in the time o' the blackfaces—they believed a hantle queer things in thae days, that naebody heeds since the lang sheep cam in."
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> "The mair's the pity, the mair's the pity," said the old man. "Your father, and sae I have aften tell'd ye, maister, wad hae been sair vexed to hae seen the auld peel-house wa's pu'd down to make park dykes; and the bonny broomy knowe, where he liked sae weel to sit at e'en, wi' his plaid about him, and look at the kye as they cam down the loaning, ill wad he hae liked to hae seen that braw sunny knowe a' riven out wi' the pleugh in the fashion it is at this day."
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> "Hout, Bauldie," replied the principal, "tak ye that dram the landlord's offering ye, and never fash your head about the changes o' the warld, sae lang as ye're blithe and bien yoursell."
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> "Wussing your health, sirs," said the shepherd; and having taken off his glass, and observed the whisky was the right thing, he continued, "It's no for the like o' us to be judging, to be sure; but it was a bonny knowe that broomy knowe, and an unco braw shelter for the lambs in a severe morning like this."
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> "Ay," said his patron, "but ye ken we maun hae turnips for the lang sheep, billie, and muckle hard wark to get them, baith wi' the pleugh and the howe; and that wad sort ill wi' sitting on the broomy knowe, and cracking about Black Dwarfs, and siccan clavers, as was the gate lang syne, when the short sheep were in the fashion."
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> "Aweel, aweel, maister," said the attendant, "short sheep had short rents, I'm thinking."
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> Here my *worthy and learned* patron again interposed, and observed, "that he could never perceive any material difference, in point of longitude, between one sheep and another."
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> This occasioned a loud hoarse laugh on the part of the farmer, and an astonished stare on the part of the shepherd. "It's the woo', man,—it's the woo', and no the beasts themsells, that makes them be ca'd lang or short. I believe if ye were to measure their backs, the short sheep wad be rather the langer-bodied o' the twa; but it's the woo' that pays the rent in thae days, and it had muckle need."
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> "Odd, Bauldie says very true,—short sheep did make short rents—my father paid for our steading just threescore punds, and it stands me in three hundred, plack and bawbee.—And that's very true—I hae nae time to be standing here clavering—Landlord, get us our breakfast, and see an' get the yauds fed—I am for doun to Christy Wilson's, to see if him and me can agree about the luckpenny I am to gie him for his year-aulds. We had drank sax mutchkins to the making the bargain at St. Boswell's fair, and some gate we canna

gree upon the particulars preceesly, for as muckle time as we took about it—I doubt we draw to a plea—But hear ye, neighbour," addressing my *worthy and learned* patron, "if ye want to hear ony thing about lang or short sheep, I will be back here to my kail against ane o'clock; or, if ye want ony auld-warld stories about the Black Dwarf, and sic-like, if ye'll ware a half mutchkin upon Bauldie there, he'll crack t'ye like a pen-gun. And I'se gie ye a mutchkin mysell, man, if I can settle weel wi' Christy Wilson."

The main conflict of the *Black Dwarf* belongs to the early eighteenth century, when the heroic age of the Borderers as displayed, for instance, in the ballad *Jamie Telfer of the Fair Dodhead* was already a thing of the past. The nurse Annaple announces the harrying of Heugh-foot in the old style—'The steading's a' in a low, and the bonny stack yard lying in the reek ashes, and the gear a' driven away'—but when it comes to organising a pursuit of the marauders who are assumed to be English, no one now clearly remembers the proper method.

"And besides," said another old man, "I dinna believe there's ane now living that kens the lawful mode of following a fray across the border. Tam o' Whittram kend a' about it; but he died in the hard winter."

"Ay", said a third, "he was at the great gathering, when they chased as far as Thirlwall; it was the year after the fight of Philiphaugh."

"Hout", exclaimed another of these discording counsellors, "there's nae great skill needed; just put a lighted peat on the end of a spear, or hayfork, or siclike, and blaw a horn, and cry the gathering-word, and then it's lawful to follow gear into England, and recover it by the strong hand, or to take gear frae some other Englishman, providing ye lift nae mair than's been lifted frae you."

The last counsellor, although confident, is not, one must emphasise, strictly accurate. The fray, of course, peters out into almost nothing, and ends

"Hout, ay," said Elliot, "just let byganes be byganes, and a' friends again; deil ane I bear malice at but Westburnflat, and I hae gien him baith a het skin and a cauld ane."

The Black Dwarf is not a distinguished novel, but in technique it is fascinating, operating, as it does, at three levels—that of the old ballads, the events and words of which are often echoed and parodied in the main narrative; that of assumed historical actuality in the early eighteenth century, when the old Borders were in decline, and that of the nineteenth century when the old life had been replaced by something apparently quite different. Each period is counterpointed against the others. Yet the sense of continuity is also strong. The old shepherd of the Introduction rides with his master as kinsman and equal; he is mounted on a border pony, and wears the blue bonnet and long blue worsted hose which had characterised his fighting and marauding ancestors. The farmer has converted his feuds into the threat of legal proceedings, and though he poses as a sceptic, it becomes clear that ancestral superstitions have not entirely departed from his mind and imagination—at heart he still believes in the Black Dwarf. One part

of Scott is saying (and hoping) that nothing essential to the life of the Borders has been lost in the transition from short to long sheep, or with the cessation of Border forays. The novel fails, not so much in its basic structure, as in the unconvincing presentation and characterisation of the Black Dwarf himself, a figure whose natural habitat is the absurder kind of Gothic novel more than the novel of social and intellectual change and contrast, which Scott for much of the book had successfully undertaken.

Scott plays more successful variations on this basic technique throughout the three original series of *Tales of My Landlord*—in *Old Mortality*, that is to say, *The Heart of Midlothian*, *The Bride of Lammermoor* and *A Legend of Montrose*.

In *Old Mortality*, the most consistently successful of the series, the primary effect of the counterpoint is pastoral and elegaic; the figure of Old Mortality working among the tombs of the deserted country burial ground effectively distances the savagery of the Killing Times. The novel itself is concerned not merely with civil war and religion, but with reconciliation, symbolised by the wedding of old opponents Cuddie Headrigg and Jenny Dennison, Henry Morton and Edith Bellenden, in each case, to the discomfiture of rivals, Tam Halliday and Lord Evandale, who are politically more extreme than either successful suitor. So too there is much emphasis on the increase of knowledge and prosperity in the countryside. Near the beginning of the novel Cuddie and Mause Headrigg are expelled from the employment of Lady Margaret Bellenden, who exclaims 'I had rather that the rigs of Tillietudlem bare naething but windle-straes and sandy lavrocks than that they were ploughed by rebels to the king.' Cuddie's lament which appears a few pages later—'I am no clear if I can pleugh ony place but the Mains and Mucklewhame—at least, I never tried ony other grund, and it wudna come natural to me'—is reminiscent of the complaints of the Shetlanders against the Border ploughman. It is a different and more perceptive man who at the end of the book replies to the unrecognised Morton's compliment on the rich and peaceful countryside, 'It's no to compleen o', sir, and we get the crap weel in . . . but if ye had seen the blude runnin' as fast on the tap o' that brigg yonder as ever the water ran below it, ye wadna hae thought it sae bonnie a spectacle'. The Killing Time is seen as a kind of baptism of fire for the emergence of the new society.

Scott, however, is not complacent about the new society. *Old Mortality*, basically, is the story of a Whig uprising in the West of Scotland, and, as such, could not be without its painful relevance to the period which immediately followed the Napoleonic Wars, when Castlereagh was Leader of the House of Commons and another rising of the Western Whigs presented a real and dangerous possibility. Scott was a Tory, but in *Old Mortality* his presentation of the moderate Whigs who adhere to Henry Morton is reasonably sympathetic, and it is these moderate Whigs who are the eventual victors in the struggle. Even in 1819, his reaction to revolution, although strong, avoided hysteria. During that year, in Lockhart's words, 'there prevailed a spirit of alarming insubordination among the mining population of Northumberland and the weavers of the west of Scotland' (iv, p. 318). Scott's realisation of the parallel with some of the

events of *Old Mortality*, and the Covenanting period in general, is strikingly revealed in the letters which he wrote at this time:

> Glasgow is in a terrible state. The Radicals had a plan to seize on 1000 stand of arms, as well as a depôt of ammunition which had been sent from Edinburgh Castle for the use of the volunteers. The Commander-in-Chief, Sir Thomas Bradford, went to Glasgow in person, and the whole city was occupied with patrols of horse and foot, to deter them from the meditated attack on the barracks. The arms were then delivered to the volunteers, who are said to be 4000 on paper; how many effective and trustworthy, I know not. But it was a new sight in Scotland on Sunday to see all the inhabitants in arms, soldiers patroling the streets, and the utmost precaution of military service exacted and observed in an apparently peaceful city (Lockhart, IV, p. 324.)

Scott's own company of volunteers were to be organised in a way which recalls the tournament of the Popinjay: 'And we will have shooting at the mark, and prizes, and fun, and a little whisky, and daily pay when on duty or drill' (IV, p. 330)—and his comments on the possible defence of Berwick—'I defy the devil to pass the bridge at Berwick, if reasonably well kept by 100 men' (IV, p. 328)—show that the earlier battle at Bothwell Brig was very much present to his mind. Scott as a magistrate was primarily concerned with the issue of law and order. As a novelist, his intellectual and imaginative sympathies were considerably further to the left. In many respects *Old Mortality* is a parable for Scott's contemporaries, a parable which has not lost its relevance to the present day.

The Introduction to *The Heart of Midlothian* provides another elaborate counterpoint. The central event of the novel, set in the late 1730s, is Jeanie Deans's long barefoot trudge from Edinburgh to London to plead for her sister's life. Her sister meanwhile is lodged in the Heart of Midlothian, the Tolbooth of Edinburgh, under sentence of death by the strict and barbarous letter of a law, with which Jeanie has found herself unable to compromise. The contrast between law on the one hand and justice and mercy on the other is symbolised by the two Hearts of Midlothian, the Tolbooth in Edinburgh and Jeanie on the long road to London.

The first theme, which Scott, or rather Peter Pattieson, mischievously takes up in his introductory chapter, is travel, the journey, and the wonders and perils of modern rapid transport as compared with that of the eighteenth century. 'Mail-coach races against mail-coach and high-flyer against high-flyer, through the most remote districts of Britain. And in our village alone, three post-coaches, and four coaches with men armed and in scarlet cassocks, thunder through the streets each day.' The comparison with the journey of Jeanie Deans is obvious. Progress, however, brings new perils on the road, and it is as a result of a mail-coach crash that Peter Pattieson meets the two lawyers and the debtor recently released from the Heart of Midlothian, from whom at the Wallace Head he gathers the material which forms his own *Heart of Midlothian*. The Tolbooth, he also learns, is on the point of demolition, while the released debtor, Mr Dunover, is on a lesser scale as much a victim of the law as was Jeanie Deans's sister

Effie. Continuity is primarily represented by the constancy of injustice, and misfortune, as evident in the case of Mr Dunover as in that of Effie Deans—and also by the kindliness of the lawyers which in a minor way parallels the more heroic conduct of Jeanie.

Nor is this all. Contrast is at least as important as continuity. The most important passage of the introductory chapter is the 'Last Speech, Confession and Dying Words' of the condemned Edinburgh Tolbooth, or rather the development of the theme by the young advocate, Hardie:

> 'I have understood', said I, encouraged by the affability of my rattling entertainer, 'that less of this interest must attach to Scottish jurisprudence than to that of any other country. The general morality of our people, their sober and prudent habits—'
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> 'Secure them', said the barrister, 'against any great increase of professional thieves and depredators, but not against wild and wayward starts of fancy and passion, producing crimes of an extraordinary description, which are precisely those to the detail of which we listen with thrilling interest. England has been much longer a highly civilized country: her subjects have been very strictly amenable to laws administered without fear or favour, a complete division of labour has taken place among her subjects, and the very thieves and robbers form a distinct class in society, subdivided among themselves according to the subject of the depredations, and the mode in which they carry them on, acting upon regular habits and principles, which can be calculated and anticipated at Bow Street, Hatton Garden, or the Old Bailey. Our sister kingdom is like a cultivated field,—the farmer expects that, in spite of all his care, a certain number of weeds will rise with the corn, and can tell you beforehand their names and appearance. But Scotland is like one of her own Highland glens, and the moralist who reads the records of her criminal jurisprudence, will find as many curious anomalous facts in the history of mind, as the botanist will detect rare specimens among her dingles and cliffs.'

'The history of mind' and in particular the history of the abnormal or non-typical mind, is what Scott here emphasises, and the metaphor which he employs is the contrast between the enclosed cornlands of the Agricultural Revolution and the unenclosed profusion of a Highland glen. As the novel advances, however, one becomes more and more aware that an almost medieval element of biblical allegory is implied by the contrast. Justice and mercy are the main themes of the novel, and time and again a parallel with the thematic development of Shakespeare's *Measure for Measure* becomes apparent. From this point of view, the old Scotland and its criminal jurisprudence becomes identified with the Old Law of preventive justice; the new and improved Scotland with the New Law of mercy, as the concepts are developed in Pauline theology. The Pauline Old Man appears in the Porteous riots and the condemnation of Effie Deans; the first stages of the transition from Old to New are represented by the end of Scottish independence in 1707, the second by Jeanie Deans's mission of mercy, and the theme is completed by the eventual settlement of Davie and Jeanie Deans and Reuben Butler in the pastoral landscape of Dumbartonshire. The novel turns on two reprieves or redemptions; that of Porteous, which leads to a recrudescence of the Old Law, and

that of Effie which goes far to establishing the New. Time and again the dialogue returns to this point:

> 'I am judging,' said Mr Plumdamas, 'that this reprieve wadna stand gude in the auld Scots law, when the kingdom *was* a kingdom.'
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> 'I dinna ken muckle about the law,' answered Mrs. Howden; 'but I ken, when we had a king, and a chancellor, and parliament-men o' our ain, we could aye peeble them wi' stanes when they werena gude bairns.'

Stoning as a punishment decidedly belongs to the Old Law. With this, contrast Jeanie's speech to Queen Caroline:

> 'O, madam, if ever ye kend what it was to sorrow for and with a sinning and a suffering creature, whose mind is sae tossed that she can be neither ca'd fit to live or die, have some compassion on our misery!—Save an honest house from dishonour, and an unhappy girl, not eighteen years of age, from an early and dreadful death! Alas! it is not when we sleep soft and wake merrily ourselves that we think on other people's sufferings. Our hearts are waxed light within us then, and we are for righting our ain wrangs and fighting our ain battles. But when the hour of trouble comes to the mind or to the body—and seldom may it visit your Leddyship—and when the hour of death comes, that comes to high and low—lang and late may it be yours!—Oh, my Leddy, then it isna what we hae dune for oursells, but what we hae dune for others, that we think on maist pleasantly. And the thought that ye hae intervened to spare the puir thing's life will be sweeter in that hour, come when it may, than if a word of your mouth could hang the haill Porteous mob at the tail of ae tow.'

Jeanie brings the Queen, who herself represents one aspect of the old regime, if not quite the Old Law, to the general level of suffering humanity, and in this, as in her entire phraseology and cast of thought, she shows the Calvinist and Covenanting ancestry which had done so much to shape the old Scotland. Redemption from the old is by way of the old, raised to the highest point of humanity. Equally, however, as Jeanie realises, the condemnation of Effie results from Calvinist church government in its less enlightened aspects.

> 'Stand up, young woman,' said the Queen, but in a kind tone, 'and tell me what sort of a barbarous people your countryfolk are, where child-murder is become so common as to require the restraint of laws like yours?'—
>
> 'Some thinks it's the Kirk-Session—that is—it's the—it's the cutty-stool, if your Leddyship pleases,' said Jeanie, looking down and curtseying.
>
> 'The what?' said Lady Suffolk, to whom the phrase was new, and who besides was rather deaf.
>
> 'That's the stool of repentance, madam, if it please your Leddyship,' answered Jeanie, 'for light life and conversation, and for breaking the seventh command.'

The Kirk-Session, in other words, is responsible for the situation which led to Effie's condemnation, even if, at the same time, the teaching of the Kirk produced Jeanie to redeem her sister.

One aspect of the Old Law is caricatured by the learned leather-merchant, Bartholomew Saddletree, while the Cameronian, Davie Deans, represents the teaching and practice of the Kirk in its most traditional form. It is his way of life which is responsible for the downfall of his daughter, Effie, and for the refusal of Jeanie to perjure herself even to save her sister's life. But Jeanie's courage and endurance is an even more significant part of her Cameronian inheritance. And Deans exhibits in himself the Cameronian adaptability to the new order when he becomes the successful and effective superintendent of the Duke of Argyle's fancy-farm in Dumbartonshire. (Here again, the novel returns to the Agricultural Revolution.) On his death he leaves a fortune of £1,500, which with Jeanie's contribution, enables the Butlers to buy the estate of Craigsture. One of her sons becomes a soldier, the other a lawyer; her daughter marries a Highland laird. Even if the process is enlightened, and typical of Scotland in the later eighteenth century, the last pages of the novel are more prosaic, even prosy, than the earlier chapters. The new Scotland is duller than the old. Scott certainly felt, however, that his Scotland needed a substantial infusion of plain, prosperous prose. The contrast of the Butlers with the Catholic, Jacobite Stauntons is self-explanatory.

Although *The Bride of Lammermoor* turns on the same contrast of old and new—the Master of Ravenswood versus Sir William Ashton—I can see minimal artistic point in the Introduction, the description of the painter, Dick Tinto. That to *A Legend of Montrose*, however, is in some ways the most striking of all, because here Scott uses, as his tragic counterpoint to Montrose and the veteran of the wars of Gustavus Adolphus, Dugald Dalgettie, a discharged and disabled Highland veteran of the Peninsular War, Sergeant More McAlpin, who has been forced as a result of the Highland Clearances, to take up residence in Gandercleugh.

> He retired with the intention of enjoying this income (his pension and prizemoney) in the wild Highland glen, in which, when a boy, he had herded black cattle and goats, ere the roll of the drum had made him cock his bonnet an inch higher, and follow its music for nearly forty years. To his recollection, this retired spot was unparalleled in beauty by the richest scenes he had visited in his wanderings. Even the Happy Valley of Rasselas would have sunk into nothing upon the comparison. He came—he revisited the loved scene; it was but a sterile glen, surrounded with rude crags, and traversed by a northern torrent. This was not the worst. The fires had been quenched upon thirty hearths—of the cottage of his fathers he could but distinguish a few rude stones—the language was almost extinguished—the ancient race from which he boasted his descent had found a refuge beyond the Atlantic. One southland farmer, three grey-plaided shepherds, and six dogs, now tenanted the whole glen, which in his youth had maintained, in content, if not in competence, upwards of two hundred inhabitants.

Emigration, depopulation, sheep taking the place of men—the perennial lament of the Highlands in modern times gives a new poignancy to a narrative primarily concerned with what Neil Munro was afterwards to call the Little Wars of Lorne.

It is probably worth while to compare the technique adopted by Scott in *Tales*

of My Landlord with that of his younger contemporary John Galt, in *Annals of the Parish* and *The Provost*. Galt's method is autobiographical. His minister, Mr Balwhidder, and his Provost Pawkie, have themselves lived through revolutionary times, and at the end of their lives set down an account of what they have seen, heard and experienced. The method has some advantages. It is more direct than that of Scott, and at the same time allows a fair number of subtleties, as for instance in Mr Balwhidder's short-sighted but appropriate recollections of the period of the French Revolution. Under 1788 he records the building of a cotton-mill in his parish, and the first 'signs of decay in the wonted simplicity of our country ways'. He mentions in passing that the affairs of the French were then gathering towards a head. Under 1789, the year of the Revolution, the French receive not a single mention. 'This I have always reflected upon as one of our blessed years', Mr Balwhidder remarks. 'It was not remarkable for any extraordinary occurrence.' A stage-coach however makes its first appearance in the parish, where a notable sermon was also preached in a new and Anglified style by a visiting clergyman. In 1790 a bookshop was opened, and a daily newspaper made its first appearance. Infidelity increased, despite the building of a bridge over the Brawl burn—'a great convenience, in the winter time, to the parishioners that lived on the north side; for when there happened to be a speat on the Sunday, it kept them from the kirk, but I did not find that the bridge mended the matter, till after the conclusion of the war against the democrats, and the beginning of that which we are now waging with Boney, their child and champion.'

The French Revolution is present, however muted, and Mr Balwhidder's limited parochial point of view serves marvellously to put even the French Revolution into the more extended perspective of intellectual and industrial change.

Galt was a remarkable man and accomplished novelist, whose work has not yet had its due. He was able, moreover, to tackle what Scott did not attempt, the growth of industrialism in Scotland and elsewhere, and the establishment of emigrant Scots overseas in Canada and the United States. His sense of change is as acute, perhaps more acute, than that of Scott. On the other hand, possibly because he spent so much of his life outside Scotland, and so in a sense lacked roots in the community, Galt in a measure fails to give us the sense of long-term continuity and growth within Scotland, which as I have tried to indicate is so characteristic of Scott. In the world of the full nineteenth century Mr Balwhidder and Provost Pawkie are clearly survivals, anachronisms; the narratives of Peter Pattieson belong to the new world without any sense of total rupture with the old.

I have several times described Scott's artistic accomplishment as one of reconciliation between new and old. In the end, however, even Scott's charity was unable to embrace every feature of the new world. The Whig revolt of the seventeenth century is paralleled by that of the nineteenth. Sergeant More McAlpin is not a figure of reconciliation, and the final impression left by *The Heart of Midlothian* is surely the continued presence of injustice and evil in the new as in the old world.