more than fulfil his noble promise ; for the gigantic toil to which, during years after this, he submitted, was the im­mediate cause that shortened his life. His self-sacrifice, how­ever, effected astonishingly much towards the purpose which it was designed to serve. Between January 1826 and Janu­ary 1828, **he** had realized for the creditors the surprising sum of nearly L.40,000 ; and soon after his death the prin­cipal of the whole Ballantyne debt was paid up by his exe­cutors.

We have now briefly to describe the efforts by which this result was accomplished. After spending at Abbots­ford, in 1826, a solitary summer, very unlike its former scenes of splendour, Scott, returning to town for his win­ter duties, and compelled to leave behind him his dying wife (who survived but till the spring), took up his resi­dence in lodgings, and there continued that system of in­cessant and redoubled labour which he had already main­tained for months, and maintained afterwards till it killed him. Woodstock, published in 1826, had been written dur­ing the crisis of his distresses ; and the next fruit of his toil was the Life of Napoleon, which, commenced before the ca­tastrophe, appeared in 1827, and was followed by the First Series of Chronicles of the Canongate ; while to these again succeeded, in the end of the same year, the First Series of the Tales of a Grandfather. The year 1828 produced the Second Series of both of these works ; 1829 gave Anne of Geierstein, the first volume of a History of Scotland for Lardner's Cyclopædia, and the Third Series of the Tales of a Grandfather. The same year also witnessed the com­mencement of that annotated publication of the collected novels, which, together with the similar edition of the poeti­cal works, was so powerful an instrument in effecting Scott’s purpose of pecuniary disentanglement. In 1830 came two Dramas, the Letters on Demonology, the Fourth Series of the Tales of a Grandfather, and the second volume of the History of Scotland. If we are disappointed when we com­pare most of these works with the productions of younger and happier days, our criticism will be disarmed by a recol­lection of the honourable end which the later works pro­moted ; and as to the last productions of the mighty master, the volumes of 1831, containing Count Robert and Castle Dangerous, no one who is acquainted with the melancholy circumstances under which these were composed and pub­lished, will be capable of any feeling but that of compassion­ate respect.

The dejection which it was impossible for Scott not to feel in commencing his self-imposed task, was materially lightened, and his health invigorated, by an excursion to London and Paris in the course of 1826, for the purpose of collecting materials for the Life of Napoleon. In 1829 alarming symptoms appeared, and were followed by a para­lytic attack in February 1830, after which the tokens of the disease were always more or less perceptible to his family ; but the severity of his tasks continued unremitted, although in that year he retired from his clerkship, and took up his permanent residence at Abbotsford. The mind was now but too evidently shaken, as well as the body ; and the diary which he kept contains, about and after this time, melan­choly misgivings of his own upon this subject. In April 1831 he had the most severe shock of his disease that had yet attacked him ; and having been at length persuaded to abandon literary exertion, he left Abbotsford in September of that year, on his way to the Continent, no country of which he had ever yet visited, except some parts of France and Flanders. This new tour was undertaken with the faint hope that abstinence from mental labour might for a time avert the impending blow. A ship of war, furnished for the purpose by the Admiralty, conveyed Sir Walter, first to Mal­ta, and then to Naples ; and the accounts which we have, both of the voyage and of his residence in Italy, abound with circumstances of melancholy interest. After the beginning

of May 1832, his mind was completely overthrown ; his ner­vous impatience forced his companions to hurry him home­ward from Rome through the Tyrol to Frankfort; in June they arrived in London, whence Sir Walter was conveyed by sea to Edinburgh ; and, having reached Abbotsford on the 11th of July, he there continued to exist, with few in­tervals of consciousness, till the afternoon of the 21st of September, when he expired, having just completed the sixty-first year of his age. On the 26th he was buried in the beautiful ruins of Dryburgh Abbey.

In the article RoMANce, observations have been made on Scott’s prose works of fiction. It remains here to add a very few words on the character of his poetry. It would be rash for any who have lived only in the same age with a great poet, and still more rash for those whose earliest conceptions of poetical celebrity and poetical beauty are in­separably associated with his name and his writings, to pro­nounce peremptorily on the rank which may probably be assigned to him by posterity, among the classics of his na­tive language. But without venturing on such ground as this, there are points of comparison with himself and others, which may warrantably be applied to the illustration of his genius.

In regard to the spirit which animates the poetry of Scott, he stands entirely alone in his age ; separated indeed so far from the tendencies of the time, that his universal popula­rity seems at the first glance to have in it something unac­countable. The passionate intenseness and moody self-in­quisition of Byron, the calm thoughtfulness and universal sympathies of Wordsworth, and the wildness of Coleridge’s lyrical dreams, are in their several kinds allied to those impulses which have widest sway in these generations of our race ; while other poets, Campbell with his gentle pa­thos, Crabbe with his melancholy anatomy of life, and Moore with his overflow of voluptuous imagery, appeal to emotions which are not so much distinctive of particular periods in the history of mankind, as common to the mind in all its ages. But the world which Scott reproduced in the midst of us, the world of feudalism and chivalry, the transition-stage in the annals of Christian Europe, is one with which the men of modern times have very little communion or fellow-feeling ; and the boldness with which he chose his themes was even exceeded by that of the tone in which he ventured to treat them ; neither jesting with his own fancies, like Pulci or Ariosto, nor, like Tasso, overlaying the essential substance of the chivalrous life with a garniture of poetry and of delicate feeling which left the genuine light of elder times but few openings to glim­mer through ; but grappling with his materials in the be­lieving and lofty devotion of an historical poet, and painting for us a picture in which the fierce and fiery spirit of martial adventure inspires the leading groups, and gives the outlines of the piece, while interesting local superstitions and the ascetic religion of Catholicism, the absorbing love of coun­try and the anomalous devotedness of feudalism, form, singly or united, the colouring which is spread over different por­tions of the composition.

For, in essentials, this character of historical truth does belong to the poetry of Scott ; not indeed that his view of the old world is one which could have presented itself to those who lived nearer to the times he depicts ; but that it is almost as near to truth as consists with the united re­quirements made by the purposes of his art and the temper of his age, and probably nearer to the truth than any simi­lar attempt which has been made in modern times. Doubt­less there are many instances in which he does not preserve this fidelity to the claims of his subject ; but it is surpris­ingly preserved in his best works, and the inferiority of the others is in no small degree owing to their deficiency in it. Indeed he goes even farther than this ; for he not only pre­sents to us the scenes of old, but he invests them in a dress