

with heather-blooms, now bright-green with bracken, now yellow with golden bent, now deepening into orange and russet as the early frosts of autumn lay their fingers on the ferns. And these colours are suffused, as it were, over the slopes, like a thin enamel, that never conceals the modulations of their form. In winter, when the ground is covered with snow, the endless diversity and grace of the curves stand out in naked beauty and offer to the student of hill-forms an admirable lesson. I cherish, as a lifelong possession, the recollection of the winter aspect of these uplands when I was snowed-up for a week under the hospitable roof of old Tibbie Shiels at St. Mary's.

The long sweeping lines of form and colour, which would be utterly lost under a covering of trees, plunge down into the flat meadows of the valley through which a clear stream is ever murmuring. We wander down the valley, and find other similar streams emerging from narrower valleys, on either hand, where still the same forms of slope and ridge rise against the sky. The very barrenness of the landscape becomes itself a charm, allowing the soft gentle outlines of the hills to have full play upon the fancy. There is a tender grace in the landscape that is offended by the protrusion of no harsh feature, no abrupt crag or yawning ravine. Moreover a pleasing loneliness broods over it all, which, in the case of sterner scenery, becomes oppressive and almost insupportable. The silence is broken fitfully by the breeze as it bears back the murmur of the distant brook, or by the curlew screaming from the nearer hill. The very sounds of the valley—the plaintive cadence of the river, and the low sad sough of the wind along the slopes—combine to produce that tone of melancholy which seems so characteristic and so inseparable from these pastoral valleys.

But who can wander by Yarrow or Ettrick without feeling