

appointment. I beheld a mere succession of grey, waving hills, line beyond line, as far as my eye could reach, monotonous in their aspect, and so destitute of trees, that one could almost see a stout fly walking along their profile; and the far-famed Tweed appeared a naked stream, flowing between bare hills, without a tree or thicket on its banks. I could not help giving utterance to my thoughts. Scott hummed for a moment to himself, and looked grave. He had no idea of having his muse complimented at the expense of his native hills. "It may be partiality," said he at length; "but to my eye these grey hills, and all this wild border country, have beauties peculiar to themselves. I like the very nakedness of the land: it has something bold, and stern, and solitary about it." Yes; there is no question that, had not the poets thought so, they could not have sung so honestly and warmly, and, of consequence, so successfully:

'The poet's lyre, to fix his theme,
Must be the poet's heart;'

and so let us with a good grace acquiesce in their decision. The border land, with its Silurian groundwork, has its peculiar beauties; and no one could portray them at once so graphically and so discriminately as Scott himself. Take, for instance, the passage in *Guy Mannering* where he describes his hero, Brown, and the redoubtable Dandie Dinmont, approaching Charlieshope after the rencontre with the gipsies on Bewcastle Moor:—'Night was now falling, when they came in sight of a pretty river winding its way through a pastoral country. The hills were greener and more abrupt than those which Brown had lately passed, sinking their grassy sides at once upon the stream. They had no pretensions to magnificence of height or to romantic shapes, nor did their smooth swelling slopes exhibit either rocks or woods; yet the view was wild, solitary, and pleasingly rural. No enclosures, no roads, almost no tillage: it seemed a land